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For the youth : juvenile delinquency, colonial civil society and the late colonial state in the Netherlands Indies, 1872-1942

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**FOR THE YOUTH: JUVENILE DELINQUENCY,
COLONIAL CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE LATE
COLONIAL STATE IN THE
NETHERLANDS INDIES, 1872-1942**



The pupils and the re-education officers of the first state reformatory in Semarang, 1918

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“FOR THE YOUTH: JUVENILE DELINQUENCY, COLONIAL CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE
LATE COLONIAL STATE IN THE NETHERLANDS INDIES, 1872-1942

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See the brotherhood of all mankind as the highest order of Yogis; conquer your own mind, and conquer the world

- Japji Sahib, Pauri 28

Voor mijn geliefde en buitengewoon liefdevolle
grootouders Hans en Kings.

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Preface

In February 2009 I drove a light Honda motorcycle from Yogyakarta to Salatiga. I came through endless rice-fields at the foot of one of Java's active volcanic ranges and was greeted by surprised stares and enthusiastic waves and comments from the locals. White women on motorcycles were apparently not that common in the countryside. Buying gas and food was an adventure in itself, leading to invitations for homemade meals and a chance to practice my rudimentary Indonesian language skills. At the end of the trip waited a visit to one of the reformatories that played a large role in my research: the former White Cross Colony, now called Agrowisata Salib Putih. I arrived without any preparation and before I realized what happened I was brought to one of the oldest buildings on the colony. There it stood, dripping in the rain, with its small windows high-up in the walls: the former prison. It had only two small cells, where most of the juvenile delinquents living on the colony until 1942 had done some time. It was one of those moments where time falls away and you see and feel with different eyes and a different body.

My dear grandmother was born in the Netherlands Indies in 1927. Daughter of white Dutch parents who had come to the colony quite recently, she was part of the privileged classes and enjoyed a carefree childhood until her family's internment during World War II. I never consciously decided to study colonial history, but somewhere in my subconscious my grandmother's experiences, stories and love for the country of her childhood must have left their traces. When I first read about juvenile reformatories in the Indies in the summer of 2005 and saw the pictures of the children that lived there, I strongly felt that the story asked to be told and was inspired to do so. I have become the kind of historian that believes in the power of stories and in storytelling. I did my best to connect the small stories of 'delinquent' children and their parents to the larger story of colonialism and the development of the colonial state and civil society. The truth, however, is hard to find when we study the past.

This preface offers a chance to speak clearly from the only truth I really know. This is simply the voice of the heart and the soul, something that I have learned to trust more and more over the past four years. Writing my dissertation was not only an academic and intellectual adventure, but also a spiritual one. Seeking historical truth

and learning to write history as a discipline, I ended up finding my own truth and developing spiritual discipline. Writing a dissertation, as many of you have experienced, is not a walk in the park. It rather feels like a harrowing climb to the top of a very steep mountain. Doing my Ph.D. was a painful confrontation with the limitations of my own mind. Doubts, insecurities, boredom, lack of motivation and other demons were constant barriers that needed to be taken. On the other side of those walls were the rewards of beautiful archival discoveries and the flow of writing with joy and inspiration. I started looking for ways to make it easier to deal with my own mind and to stay happy during my intellectual crises and under the strain of dissertation stress. Practising and teaching Kundalini yoga and meditation gave me the techniques to steer my mind towards clarity and focus, to hear and be truthful to the voice of my heart and to find a way to live with joy and grace in every circumstance.

As a historian, as a yogi and as a human being I am deeply grateful to the Universe for the chances that were given to me in this lifetime. For the challenges and for the blessings and - most of all - for the people that have shared their knowledge, wisdom, skills and love with me. Most of my friends, colleagues, teachers and students are spread out over the three continents where I have lived: America, Europe and Asia. Some of you have even moved to Africa and Australia! In my mind I imagine a map of the world with thousands of golden lines from each of our hearts to the hearts of the people that are connected with us. I am grateful for each and every one of those golden chords that connects me to all of you. I believe that I do not have to write down your name. You know that I am grateful for what you have given me, for how you have supported this dissertation and my development. It does not matter if our connection is professional or private; it is a golden link nonetheless. Please, I ask you to just take a moment. To sit with your eyes closed, inhale deeply, and feel my gratitude. From my heart to yours. Thank you.

Introduction

Forced re-education is not a system that educates juvenile delinquents in a forceful and strict way, but an expression of the idea that the will of the government – often against the wishes of the caretakers and the juvenile – has decided that dangerous and unprotected children should be given an upbringing, in order to shape dangerous children in such a way that they can later live in society as quiet, peaceful, honourable citizens (*burgers*), and in order to give protection to the unprotected children when they need it [...].¹

In the early morning of 10 September 1918 – before Java started to really heat up under the tropical sun - the Resident of Semarang, the mayor of the city, educators, clerics, court counsellors and many other Dutch, Chinese and indigenous members of the colonial elite journeyed to Sompok, a neighbourhood in eastern Semarang.² They veered off the main road and went up a gravel driveway flanked by lawns and low bushes. In front of them stood a one-storey sprawling white building with a red tile roof, the entrance marked by palms in wooden pots. Above its central gated doorway the name of the building was spelled out in large black letters: *Landsopvoedingsgesticht* (state reformatory). The building – formerly a beggar's institute – now housed the first government re-education institute for juvenile delinquents in the Netherlands Indies.

Around nine o'clock director W.S. de Haas proudly received the guests in the entry hall of the reformatory and after they exchanged greetings the visitors moved to the *pendoppo* (traditional Javanese courtyard) for the official opening ceremony. According to an article in newspaper *De Locomotief* it was a solemn event:

Naturally, one does not inaugurate an institute for forced re-education [...] with flowers, singing, champagne and loud applause. Such a ceremony – this was well understood – should be conducted in earnest, with the realization that a serious step of great social importance has been made; that a new, burdensome, but promising task has been undertaken by the government.³

That the Netherlands Indies' government came to see the re-education of indigenous juvenile delinquents as its responsibility – and applauded itself for it - was a development of the early

¹ W. S. de Haas, 'De Landsopvoedingsgestichten in Nederlandsch-Indië', 37 in Jhr. S. H. H. Nahuys and J. C. Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië. Uitgegeven door de Vereeniging Pro-Juventute te Malang* (Batavia, G. Kolff & Co, 1932). All translations of Dutch sources are done by me, unless mentioned otherwise.

² The Netherlands Indies were divided in smaller administrative units called regencies. They were headed by local rulers –usually old nobility - with the title of *bupati*. The supervisor of a *bupati* was a Dutch assistant resident. The resident supervised the assistant residents and had responsibility for multiple regencies as the highest colonial authority for his region.

³ 'De officieele opening van 's Lands Opvoedingsgesticht', uit *De Locomotief*, 10 september 1919.

twentieth century. This was not because juvenile delinquency did not exist before 1918, but because the colonial state had not perceived it as a problem that should be solved by establishing its own institutions. This dissertation investigates the development of a colonial re-education system between the turn of the twentieth century, when discussions about the necessity of state reformatories started, and the Japanese invasion in 1942, which effectively ended colonial rule and the re-education system as it then existed. It argues that the core of the juvenile care and re-education system in the Indies was formed by both European and indigenous civil society organizations.

Civil associations played a crucial role in spreading 'ethical' and reformist ideas among those parts of the Indies' population that were located on the margins of society, like juvenile delinquents and orphans. The colonial state and Christian, Islamic and secular associations each had different hopes and expectations for the future of the Indies; the way they cared for, and the values with which they re-educated orphaned and delinquent youth both overlapped and differed. The first part of this dissertation (chapters 1-4) discusses why the colonial government and different civil society associations got involved and what they hoped to accomplish with the re-education of indigenous juveniles. Part two (chapters 5-7) centres on the everyday experiences of juveniles and re-educators in the reformatories, illustrating the complexity of the colonial reform system and identifying its characteristics. Although my sources almost always show juveniles and their parents and family members through European eyes, we can also glimpse how they responded to this process and what some of their ideas and values were, providing valuable insight into the lives of a marginalized part of the colonial population.

While uncovering the history of juvenile care and forced re-education in the Netherlands Indies for the first time, this study shows major developments in late colonial society, such as the advent of the 'modern' or 'late' colonial state and the existence and growth of a 'colonial civil society'. Partha Chatterjee broadly characterizes the 'modern' state as 'a regime in which power is not meant to prohibit but to facilitate, to produce.'⁴ This production of power requires a system of administrative rationalization and a corresponding growth of the state bureaucracy that is responsible for creating, reforming and overseeing

⁴ Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments, Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993) 15. Other aspects of the modern state, like political participation and fair representation of its citizens, were more problematic in the colonial context - although the Dutch colonial government did experiment with them in limited ways.

roads, education institutions, court and penal systems, agricultural and industrial enterprises, railways, etc. The proactive side of the modern state is quite visible when it comes to the Netherlands Indies in the first half of the twentieth century, and was instigated and supported by the emergence of a Dutch civilizing mission called the ethical policy (ethische politiek) around 1900. Its promises of 'uplift' and 'improvement' of the indigenous population changed the nature of colonial rule from outright and open profiteering to an arrangement that should be – or at least appear to be – beneficial for colonial subjects.⁵ The changing approach towards the 'rescue' and 'betterment' of indigenous juveniles was in line with these 'moral' politics and a symptom of the changing colonial state. But its contrasting elements of coercion and force reveal that the growth of a more 'social' state went hand-in-hand with a more invasive, ambitious, and coercive colonial regime.

Earlier research has pointed out that from its first inception around the turn of the twentieth century the term ethical policy was used to refer to diverse – and often contradictory – visions of colonial policy. The Christian supporters of Dutch moral guardianship, like anti-revolutionary Prime Minister Abraham Kuyper (1901-1905) and three-time Minister of Colonies A.W.F. Idenburg (1902-1905, 1908-1909, 1918-1919), felt that spiritual and intellectual uplift could only be reached through Christianity and that conversion formed the basis for material improvement. Christian social reformers and missionaries in the Indies also applied this approach to the treatment of indigenous juvenile delinquents.

Socialist ethics stressed that a fair and honest governing of the Indies should promote the material well being of indigenous people and should eventually lead to emancipation. This approach would also increase trust in Dutch rule. 'We should raise the child into a man', proclaimed socialist Member of Parliament H.H. Van Kol in 1901, 'And once a man, the native of our East Indian colonies can stand on his own legs, the adult will no longer need support, the ripe fruit will fall off the tree. It is only then that the hour of his complete autonomy will strike; and then our time is over, our task fulfilled.'⁶ This rhetoric of the

⁵ See for example Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in Fragmenten. Vijf studies over koloniaal denken en doen van Nederlanders in de Indonesische archipel, 1877-1942* (Utrecht, HES Publishers, 1981).

⁶ Hans van Miert, *Bevlogenheid en Onvermogen. Mr. J.H. Abendanon (1852-1925) en de ethische richting in het Nederlandse kolonialisme* (Leiden, KITLV Press, 1991) 7-8. Cornelis Fasseur, *Imperialisme en Ethische Politiek* (Leiden, Verslag van doctoraalwerkcollege Westeuropese Expansiegeschiedenis, tweede en derde semester 1982/3) 1-3.

indigene as a child that had to be protected, in order to stress the beneficial dependency of colonial relations, was persuasive in other European colonial regimes as well.

Liberal thinkers like lawyer C. Th. van Deventer and journalist P. Brooshooft felt that colonial policy should be determined by improvements in education and in the economic position of the population. Van Deventer did not only stress the moral duty of the Dutch but also targeted the anxieties of its elite. He warned: 'It is not too late yet, the majority of the natives are content, at least not discontent, under Dutch rule; they do not know any better than that it is supposed to be like this. But – *les idées marchent* - even in the Indies and among the native population!'⁷ The Dutch did not only fear local indigenous resentment, but were also influenced by international developments. Spain had lost Cuba and the Philippines after a war with the newly emerging superpower of the United States of America. The Dutch saw the Spanish defeat as a result from mismanagement in their colonies, leading to dissatisfaction and revolt among the population of Cuba and Philippines, which had invited American interference. In the first decades of the twentieth century the goals of the ethical policy - economic development and gradual emancipation of indigenous people – were defended with moral claims of repaying a 'debt of honour' but also by cruder remarks like 'think of the Philippines'.⁸

Initially, the liberal, social, and Christian founders of the ethical policy believed in the principle of association; the indigenous population should and could be taught western values and ideas which would make it possible to create a modern, democratic colonial state lead by indigenes - but remaining under Dutch rule. But around 1920, indigenous culture increasingly came to be seen as something essentially different and unique from the West that should be preserved and protected. In this vision, 'Eastern' society would always need 'the West' to lead and protect it. 'The Ethical Policy was increasingly seen in terms of a permanent welfare task, saving Indonesians because they could not – and perhaps would never be able to – save themselves.'⁹ And so the mindset, which would come to dominate colonial policy in the twentieth century, was fraught with tensions in what Elsbeth Locher-

⁷ H.W. van den Doel, *Afscheid van Indië. De val van het Nederlandse imperium in Azië* (Amsterdam, Bert Bakker 2000) 22.

⁸ Kees van Dijk, 'Een Kolonie in Beweging', 60. In *Leidschrift*, Jaargang 21, nummer 2, september 2006, 51-68; *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War, 1914-1918* (Leiden, KITLV Press, 2007) 22-26. His book offers a great deal of information about the ethical policy, Dutch fears, and the development of indigenous political movements around World War I.

⁹ R. Cribb, ed., *The Late Colonial State in Asia: Political and Economic Foundations of the Netherlands Indies, 1880-1942* (Leiden, KITLV Press, 1994) 8.

Scholten dubbed 'the colonial paradox.' The ethical policy consisted of tutelage and emancipation, rescue and coercion. Increasing welfare for local people also meant creating more markets for Dutch exports; violent expansion of Dutch rule over every remote corner of the archipelago went hand in hand with increased possibilities for education; and spreading the morals and values of Western culture did not preclude attempts to preserve 'native traditions'.¹⁰

Locher-Scholten's *Ethiek in Fragmenten* (1981) remains the classic study of these new developments in colonial thinking. Locher-Scholten defined all of the variations in the ethical policies between 1894 and 1905 as policy 'aimed at bringing the whole Indonesian archipelago under effective Dutch rule and the development of the country and people of this region in the direction of self-government under Dutch guidance and in Western fashion.'¹¹ She sees three main currents within the period of modern Dutch imperialism: expansion of rule between 1894 and 1905 (ethical imperialism), enlargement of welfare and development policies between 1905 and 1920, and consolidation and conservatism between 1920 and 1945 (conservative ethical policy). Although Locher-Scholten has been criticized for the broadness of her definition – suggesting a unity in policy that in reality did not exist – and her periodization, her study is still the only thorough attempt to theorize the ethical policy and its civilizing mission and remains a useful framework. Locher-Scholten defines four crucial aspects of the ethical policy that existed simultaneously: ethical imperialism; advancement of prosperity; the politics of emancipation towards self-government; and the ideal of assimilation.¹²

The Dutch ethical policy was not a unique development: all European powers at the end of the nineteenth century claimed to be carrying out the work of civilization in their respective overseas territories.¹³ In the Netherlands Indies, the development of the late colonial state was inextricably linked to the ideas of the Ethical Policy. On the one hand, many ethics were themselves colonial officials or metropolitan politicians and wanted to infuse colonial rule with 'moral' policies. On the other hand, officials, policy makers, academics, and parliament members opposed certain state initiatives precisely because they

¹⁰ Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 'Hybride Kolonialisme', 14. In *Leidschrift*, Jaargang 21, nummer 2, september 2006, 7-15.

¹¹ Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in Fragmenten*, 201.

¹² Van Miert, *Bevlogenheid en Onvermogen*, 8-9.

¹³ Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West-Africa, 1895-1930*. (Stanford Ca., Stanford University Press, 1997) 1.

were agreeing or disagreeing with (the lack of) ethical ideas. Ethical policies led to an expansion of colonial territory and the growth of the colonial bureaucracy, which in turn created administrative and legislative problems as well as tensions with local rulers and elites.

The rhetoric of moral rule, uplift and eventual self-rule also contributed to the rise of indigenous organizations and nationalist movements, which formed and expressed their own ideas about what they thought was necessary. Under influence of the First World War and Woodrow Wilson as champion for the rights of all people to self-determination, democratization of colonial rule became a pressing issue and in 1918 *De Volksraad* was established in the Indies as a sort of pseudo parliament.¹⁴ But while possibilities for political and organizational participation emerged gradually, indigenous demands for more freedom and participation in the rule of their country exploded onto the colonial scene. Colonial officials and the general public applauded the growth of indigenous associations as a sign of progress and uplift, but feared its political and social consequences.

In 1908 Boedi Oetomo (BO, Lofty Intent) was established by mostly Javanese intellectuals to influence government policy and promote the interests of both the educated local elite and ordinary people. Initially focusing on the social and economic wellbeing of its members, Boedi Oetomo became a political and nationalist organisation in the 1920s. Sarekat Islam (SI, Association of Islam) was founded in 1912 and stressed Islam as an organizational principle. It had strong nationalist tendencies and became a mass movement with half a million members in 1919. Muhammadiyah (MUH, followers of Mohammed) was established around the same time and ushered in a modernist Muslim movement with great social ambitions and significance.¹⁵

Dutch rulers became fearful of rising nationalism and (pan-)Islamism and drew up restrictive laws and a political police force.¹⁶ Fears of nationalism and Islamism influenced

¹⁴ For more on Wilson, his fourteen points, self-determination and anticolonialism see Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian moment. Self-determination and the international origins of anticolonial nationalism* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹⁵ See, for example, Akira Nagazumi, *The dawn of Indonesian nationalism. The early years of the Boedi Oetomo, 1908-1918* (Tokyo, Institute of Developing Economies, 1972). Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1990). Jacobus Johannes van Miert, *Een koel hoofd en een warm hart. Nationalisme, Javanisme en Jeugdbeweging in Nederlands-Indië, 1918-1930* (Leiden University, PhD thesis, 1995). Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942* (Singapore, Oxford University Press, 1973).

¹⁶ Wim van den Doel, *De stille macht. Het Europese binnenlands bestuur op Java en Madura 1808-1942* (Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 1994); J.A.A. van Doorn, *De laatste eeuw van Indië. Ontwikkeling en ondergang van een koloniaal project* (Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 1994).

the development of the juvenile reform system as well, and greatly informed the state's decisions on this topic. The state reformatories were specifically built for indigenous youngsters, and their establishment in 1918 was related to concerns among Dutch colonial elites and state officials who saw rising crime rates as a sign of budding resistance against colonial rule. This idea was exacerbated by international circumstances, such as the defeat of Russia by Japan in 1905 and a renewed rise of pan-Islamism and Muslim's identification with the Ottoman Empire and Turkey.¹⁷

How the colonial mindset linked fear of nationalism and resistance to crime, can be derived from the ideas of a colonial official like W. Boekhoudt, a lawyer and former judge who was hired by the colonial government to do research about the functioning of the police in the Netherlands Indies in the early 1900s.¹⁸ He argued, that the Javanese were inspired by the Japanese defeat of Russia and consequently committed more crimes as a form of resistance against the colonial order. 'Even in the most remote mountain dessoes we found images of the defeat of the Westerners [by the Japanese] on the walls. He [the Javanese] has been awoken from his sleep.'¹⁹

The late colonial state should not be understood as a world that was dominated by just the colonial government and its bureaucracy. The state and its institutions were the playing field for a wide array of competing individuals, organizations, interests, and ideologies, located in both the Netherlands Indies and the Dutch metropole. Individuals and organizations were operating on different levels of power and influence, often challenging these structures, and escaping the purview of the state.²⁰ While governmental involvement with juvenile care and re-education is important, it only offers a partial view of the realities

¹⁷ Van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War*, 73-77, 287-301.

¹⁸ For an in-depth study of the Dutch Indies police force and the late colonial state see Marieke Bloembergen, *Uit zorg en angst; De geschiedenis van de politie in Nederlands-Indië*. (Amsterdam/Leiden, Boom/KITLV Press, 2009).

¹⁹ Mr. W. Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen op Java en Madoera 1906-07 (Uitgezonderd de vorstenlanden, de particuliere landerijen, en de hoofdplaatsen Batavia, Semarang en Soerabaia)* (Batavia, Landsdrukkerij, 1908) 4. Dessoes are Indonesian villages. In contemporary Indonesian language it is written as desas.

²⁰ Elizabeth Thompson coined the term 'colonial civic order' to talk about the broad arena in which colonial states and citizens interacted and negotiated the terms of citizenship. She clarifies how states and their citizens were constructed under colonialism and transferred to the postcolonial order. In *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2000) Thompson specifically looks at citizenship 'from the bottom up' and her approach clarifies much about the construction of citizenship in the colonial context from the perspective of the colonized.

of Netherlands Indies' society in the first half of the twentieth century.²¹ This dissertation attempts to counter one of the tendencies of colonial historiography that allocates colonial governments too much power and influence over an almost invisible population, by making visible the workings of 'colonial civil society'.

Colonial civil society is here understood as all voluntary associations, social reform movements, political parties, business associations and religious organizations that were established - or had branches - in the Indies to promote non-governmental interests.²² 'Colonial' stands for a civil society that emerged and operated in the colonial context of twentieth century Netherlands Indies, with its specific geographic, political, social, and economic characteristics. What was specifically 'colonial' about civil society in the Indies is a question that is addressed throughout, as is the question of the colonial aspects of the re-education system in the Indies.

Studying the multifaceted nature of colonial society and its reform system reveals complicated and reciprocal relations of power. The colonial court system, with its specific cultural and political challenges, was an important gateway on the road to the reformatory and is used to analyse the interaction between parents, juveniles and the colonial authorities. Family members sometimes attempted to change the outcome of juvenile trials and both children and parents tried to use and influence the reformatory regime itself. While large-scale protests against the re-education system never took place, some parents wrote letters to the authorities to protest the re-education sentence of their children and demand their return. There are also examples of parents who fabricated their children's crimes because they could not take care of them in times of economic need. They tried to use the state's re-education

²¹ Henk Schulte Nordholt formulated similar thoughts when he criticized the idea that the colonial government and its strategy of indirect rule, violence, and innovative technological improvements kept the colony under control. He argues convincingly that the indigenous lower middle classes played a crucial role in supporting colonial rule, because they were invested in participating in its 'modern' (consumption) culture. See 'Onafhankelijkheid of moderniteit? Een geïllustreerde hypothese', in Bloembergen en Raben, eds., *Het Koloniale Beschavingsoffensief. Wegen naar het nieuwe Indië, 1890-1950* (Leiden, KITLV Press, 2009) 103-120.

²² The Centre for Civil Society of the London School of Economics uses the following working definition of civil society: 'Civil society refers to the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organisations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations, community groups, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trades unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups.' http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm, (accessed 12-07-2007, 13-05-2010).

institutes as flexible support organizations, and demanded their children back when their own economical situation got better.²³ While juveniles often resisted re-education efforts, others praised its educative opportunities. During the economic crisis of the 1930s some juvenile vagabonds even requested the authorities if they could be sent to a reformatory so they could learn a trade.²⁴

Philanthropic organizations and the colonial government, in contrast, had long-term and often conflicting objectives for the ‘improvement’ of indigenous society and saw re-education measures and institutes as inflexible and rigid; they did not want to send children back to the parents or family members before their re-education goals were met. The interaction and negotiation between parents, children, civil associations, judges, re-educators and the colonial government over diverging interests provides unique insight in the social fabric of the Netherlands Indies and the workings of the late colonial state and colonial civil society.

The late colonial state

In the historiography of the late colonial era, the state has a curious position. After independence, the achievements and victories of nationalism over colonial regimes took centre stage, attempting a clean break with the past structures of colonial rule. Instead of a ‘top-down’ view of colonialism, historians came to focus on the history of the ‘masses’ and especially their resistance against a colonial state that was pictured as a foreign and coercive force. Current historical debate stresses that the modern colonial state left a large legacy for independent Asian nation-states in terms of codified law, bureaucratic structure and even political systems. Unfortunately we know relatively little about its nature. ‘This is perhaps partly because the colonial state has seemed to represent a historical dead-end’, suggests historian Robert Cribb. ‘The colonial authorities are portrayed as having failed to recognize the gathering trend toward decolonization [...]. The result was a colonial establishment

²³ Parental clemency requests can be found in the archive of the Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta and are extensively quoted in chapter 5 of this dissertation. For example, *Clemency request from Ganai and Atjoet tot the Governor General, Amoentai 31 December 1926*, Ag 20771 – 1927, ANRI, AS.

²⁴ See the example of two vagabonding boys on Sumatra in the late 1930s, in Case report No. 111 in *Verslag der werkzaamheden van de vereniging ‘Pro Juventute’ te Medan over het jaar 1940*, p. 55. PNRI, Jakarta.

bypassed by history, doomed to powerlessness and eventual destruction because it failed to deal realistically with the forces of nationalism.’²⁵

The lack of interest in the nature of colonial government was challenged in the 1980s when Theda Skocpol launched a movement to bring ‘the state back in’.²⁶ Slowly the nation-state and the colonial state came back in focus among historians and social scientists. In his influential article *What was the Late Colonial State?* John Darwin argues that the late colonial state is a valuable concept to identify ‘the circumstances in which colonial rule became unsustainable’. He sets out the most prominent features of late colonial states, and stresses the erosion of power by domestic interference or local opposition as the similar outcome of these ‘routes to ‘lateness’’. This study is not concerned with explaining the ultimate demise of the late state, but rather focuses on how, when, and why specific patterns of institutional practice emerged.²⁷

The change from a ‘night watchman state’ - concerned mostly with keeping order - to a state dedicated to economic modernization has in the case of the Netherlands Indies been researched by J.A.A. van Doorn and R. Cribb. In *De laatste eeuw van Indië (The Indies’ last century)* Van Doorn explored how a new brand of public and private experts and advisers set out to change and ‘improve’ transportation, irrigation, taxation, labour and other aspects of the Indies’ economy. In the 1990s Cribb also addressed this aspect of the state with an edited volume on the political and economic foundations of the late colonial state in the Netherlands Indies, ranging from shipping and foreign trade, to forestry and political intelligence. *The Late Colonial State in Asia* shows how the foundations of the modern Indonesian state were laid in the colonial era. But the nature of the proactive colonial state in terms of social policies remains absent from the work of Darwin, Van Doorn and Cribb. Studying juvenile delinquency as one of the projects of the late colonial state will shed light on some of its social as well as ethical aspects.²⁸

Cribb identifies three main developments in the transformation of colonial state structures between the late eighteenth and first half of the twentieth century: ‘a growing administrative separation from the Netherlands, an increasingly complex and unified

²⁵ Cribb ed., *The Late Colonial State*, 2.

²⁶ Theda Skocpol, ‘Bringing the State Back in: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research’, in *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, 3-43 (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985).

²⁷ John Darwin, ‘What was the Late Colonial State?’ *Itinerario* 23 (1999): 73-82.

²⁸ Van Doorn, *De laatste eeuw van Indië* en Cribb, ed., *The Late Colonial State*.

administrative structure, and eventually a growing sensitivity to the issues of citizenship and democracy.’²⁹ These changes were not completed by the time of the Japanese invasion in 1942, and it was part of the colonial legacy that the Indonesian national government inherited after the war. Cribb and Darwin do not agree in their vision of the late colonial state. They each emphasize very different aspects to explain its weaknesses. Cribb considers the late colonial state an expression of modernity, which was still weak because it was not fully enforced yet. Darwin considers the late colonial state rigid despite, or even because of, its modern characteristics, and therefore essentially weak. The more traditional state-centred accounts have overlooked the critical role played by civil associations and colonial ‘citizens’ in the shaping of the late colonial state. The history of the colonial re-education system shows that the colonial state’s manpower and financial ability were not sufficient to fulfil its ambitions, and that it was heavily reliant on civil society associations to reach its goals.

Colonial civil society

The concept of civil society has spawned much debate since Alexis de Tocqueville argued in his North American travelogue - published in two volumes in 1835 and 1840 as *Democracy in America* - that voluntary associations are the bedrock of democracy. Political scientists, sociologists and historians have tried to understand the connection between civic activity and stable democratic governance, especially since the concept of civil society as a recipe against one-party rule and dictatorial regimes regained popularity in the 1980s and 1990s with the political changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. While social scientists are mostly concerned with developing models to explain and further the emergence of civil society and democracy, historians have often devoted themselves to studying the intellectual heritage of the concept. In both cases the historical narrative of the functioning of voluntary associations remains elusive and the concept of civil society seems more theoretical than grounded in practice, one of the reasons why many historians researching voluntary associations choose to avoid the concept altogether.³⁰

British historian Robert Morris has written extensively on middle class associational culture and urged fellow historians to write the history of civil society. ‘Civil society as

²⁹ Cribb, *The Late Colonial State*, 3.

³⁰ Maartje Janse pointed this out in her article ‘Towards a history of civil society’, *De Negentiende Eeuw* 32 (2008) 2. Themanummer: Civil Society, 104-121. I would also like to thank Maartje for the helpful conversations about civil society and associational culture.

presented in the current literature seems to be a *concept*, normative, descriptive, and analytical, but it is not yet at least a *narrative*,' he wrote in 2002. Stefan-Ludwig Hoffman took up the task of writing a transnational history of civil society with *Geselligkeit und Demokratie: Vereine und zivile Gesellschaft im transnationalen Vergleich, 1750-1914* (2003). In *Civil Society, 1750-1940* (2006) he argues again for a transnational approach to civil society and for looking beyond the paradigm that associational life was always a means by which the middle classes exercised power and that civil associations could only exist in democracies. He states that numerous research projects on the associational culture of North America, Western Europe, Central Europe and Russia have revealed that societies that did not have a strong middle class could still have a lively associational culture and thus a civil society. 'Ideas and practices like sociability are not bound to a specific class and its interests. Sociability was popular within the educated elites of Eastern Europe, where there was no strong middle class, as well as among the lower classes of Western Europe.'³¹

This dissertation intends to show that sociability became increasingly popular among different groups in the Netherlands Indies as well, thus broadening the transnational history of civil society. I am following the recent narrative turn in the history of civil society by trying to formulate a 'practical' concept of colonial civil society based on primary source material, rather than using the conceptual focus of political science. It seems that many historians are hesitant to discuss the development of civil society in a colonial state. For one, sociability and civil society are often associated with democratic rule and the activities of political citizens. In the case of the Netherlands Indies voluntary associations were run and supported by both citizens and subjects, but democratic equality did not exist. The nature of the Indies' government was not democratic and it never became democratic before World War II and the Indonesian war for independence overturned it. Taking juvenile care and re-education as a central theme, this dissertation shows how civil society in the specific political climate of the Netherlands Indies developed and functioned in the first half of the twentieth century.³²

³¹ Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, *Civil Society 1750-1914* (New York, MacMillan, 2006) 6-7.

³² Mrinalini Sinha discusses civil associations in the Indian colonial context in her short piece *Britishness, Clubbability, and the Colonial Public Sphere* (2005). Sinha gives a solid historical account of British social clubs in colonial India and the ways in which they enforced racial, class, and gender barriers. But despite the title, there are no attempts to show how this fits in with the theory on the public sphere or civil society. Mrinalini Sinha, 'Britishness, Clubbability, and the Colonial Public Sphere' in Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, eds., *Bodies in Contact. Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History* (Duke University Press, Durham, 2005) 183-200.

While the first associations in the Indies were established by the Dutch and Chinese, indigenous associations exploded onto the scene just before and during the politically heady times of World War I and their numbers continued to expand until World War II. Takashi Shiraishi has described the strong increase in indigenous popular organising in the first quarter of the twentieth century as the *pergerakan* (movement) in his monograph *An Age in Motion, Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (1990). It was the development ‘in which “natives” moved (*bergerak*) in their search for forms to express their new political consciousness, put in motion (*menggerakkan*) their thoughts and ideas, and confronted the realities of the Indies in the world and in an age they felt to be in motion.’³³ This ‘native awakening’ was expressed in newspapers and magazines, at meetings, rallies, and strikes, in political parties, associations and labour organisations, on the theatre stage and in novels. It gave new impulses to a colonial civil society that had been mostly dominated by European and Chinese organizations. In this organizing frenzy, the ideology of the eventual independence movement developed in a complicated interplay between Islamism, nationalism and communism.

Shiraishi acknowledges that Dutch, Indo-Europeans and Chinese figured prominently in the *pergerakan* and that the movement was larger and more complex than just the rise of Indonesian nationalism.³⁴ This dissertation expands on this and shows that European and indigenous associations were all part of the same colonial space, sometimes cooperating, sometimes contesting each other. The arena of voluntary action had an intricate relationship with the colonial government, its laws, ideas and officials, and bloomed between 1914 and 1930, when approximately 120 new associations were approved by the colonial government each year.³⁵

Indigenous and European associations often criticized or opposed governmental policies and decisions, but cooperated with and sought financial support from the government at other times. The ethnic make-up of the colonial civil space also created great variation; some organizations were strictly segregated by ethnicity or nationality, while others had members from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The dissertation aims to show the importance of social and religious reform movements in colonial society. It shows how

³³ Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*, xi.

³⁴ Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*, 339.

³⁵ This estimation is based on the yearly editions of the *Koloniale Verslag* and *Indische Verslag* 1890-1940. Also see table (no.) on page (no.)

notions of progress and civilization, of citizenship and modernity were not just developed by European groups, but were becoming increasingly prevalent in indigenous circles.³⁶ In the area of juvenile care and reform this is exemplified by the social activities of Muhammadiyah.

Muhammadiyah is an important example of how indigenous Muslims propagated notions of modernity, progress, civilization, citizenship and uplift for the indigenous population and for neglected and/or delinquent children. For example, how Muhammadiyah educated indigenous youths in its own orphanages was significantly different from how indigenous youths were educated in state reformatories and Christian institutions. This was not just caused by religious differences but especially by the vision that Muhammadiyah had about the future of the colony and the role indigenous children - as future citizens - were to play in it.

Pro Juventute (For the Youth) was a secular philanthropic association, which emerged in Batavia in 1917 and was soon established in the major urban centres across Java and Sumatra. The association's members came mostly from the European and partly from the indigenous, Chinese and Arabic elites and they saw it as their citizens (or subjects) duty to work for the betterment of society, while promoting their own position along the way. Pro Juventute devoted itself to rescuing children that were considered at-risk and became the most active civil society group in the field of juvenile delinquency and re-education. Children were 'rescued' from juvenile delinquency, abandonment, neglect, sexual promiscuity, homelessness, and abuse, and were placed under supervision or housed in the organization's temporary homes before being sent to mental institutions, orphanages, foster families and re-education institutions.³⁷ Pro Juventute members challenged and criticized what they saw as the colonial government's lack of commitment toward juvenile re-education and child protection, while at the same time cooperating with and assisting state officials, - some of whom were members of the association too. It is a key example of how a bourgeois interest group constituted a critical element of late colonialism in Indonesia and their activities are discussed throughout the book.

³⁶ Bloembergen and Raben have pointed out that 'it is doubtful that the moral motive for progress and uplift was exclusively employed by European ethical thinkers and did not motivate Indonesian civilizers just as much'. In Bloembergen and Raben (2009) 13.

³⁷ See the yearly reports of the Pro Juventute associations in the Indies, published between 1917 and 1938. They are partly available at the KIT in Amsterdam and partly at PNI in Jakarta; some editions have been lost or destroyed.

This project does not focus on nationalist and political associations, although some of them will be discussed in relation to their involvement with juvenile care.³⁸ The predominance of a nationalistic take on the associational history of the Netherlands Indies has obscured the broader history of civil society in the colony. The existence of associations defending or promoting the interests of indigenous inhabitants has usually been interpreted as signs of developing nationalism and resistance against the government. There are some exceptions to this approach, as Henk Schulte Nordholt discusses in his article ‘Onafhankelijkheid of Moderniteit?’ (2008).³⁹ William O’Malley already pointed out in 1980 that a historical focus on radical nationalist organizations obscured the fact that there were many more indigenous people who were active in moderate regional associations with a social-economic and cultural orientation.⁴⁰ Hans van Miert stated in his dissertation about nationalism, Javanism and the youth movement *Een koel hoofd en een warm hart. Nationalisme, Javanisme en Jeugdbeweging in Nederlands-Indië, 1918-1930* (1995), that the historiography of the nationalist movement has overshadowed that of more moderate and culturally orientated organizations. Schulte Nordholt himself argues that the dominant nationalist historiography also neglects to see that a majority of the indigenous lower middle class was not primarily interested in supporting a ‘risky’ nationalism, but in gaining access to the modern lifestyle that was part of colonial society.⁴¹

Building on these approaches, this dissertation shows the involvement and importance of both indigenous and European social reform associations in colonial society. Civil associations were arguably one of the few ways for people to participate in - and gain access to - a modern lifestyle and practice the rights and rituals of citizenship, while simultaneously spreading ideas about modernity and an ‘improved’ lifestyle among other inhabitants of the colony. I intend to shed light on these lesser-known examples of associational life in the Indies; organizations that did not directly focus on gaining political rights but were more concerned with the social reform of Indies’ society. The relationship between these associations and the colonial state reveals critical aspects of late colonialism in the Netherlands Indies and shows how and why people from different social and ethnic

³⁸ See for excellent studies of nationalist organizations for example Nagazumi, *The dawn of Indonesian nationalism*; Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*.

³⁹ Schulte Nordholt, ‘Onafhankelijkheid of moderniteit?’, 103-120.

⁴⁰ William O’Malley, ‘Second thoughts on Indonesian nationalism’, in: J.A.C. Mackie (ed.), *Indonesia; Australian perspectives* (Canberra, ANU, 1980) 601-613.

⁴¹ Schulte Nordholt, ‘Onafhankelijkheid of moderniteit’, 107.

backgrounds worked together in civil associations. It appears that the colonial government actively stimulated the establishment and work of voluntary associations. When it came to the juvenile care and reform system, the government could not operate it without the support of civil society associations. The emergence of a late colonial state went hand in hand with the development of a colonial civil society.

Colonial histories of youth and childhood

Colonial society's involvement with the care for indigenous juvenile delinquents and the policy of state re-education in the Netherlands Indies remains elusive. While the older (Indo-)European orphanages are better known, very few people are aware that state reformatories for indigenous youth existed in the Indies. This might be partly explained as a result of the Indonesian independence struggle and the ensuing breach in contact and the sharing of knowledge. Moreover, former indigenous juvenile delinquents may also be unwilling or unable to talk and write about their re-education experience, since there are no personal memoirs, documents or interviews I am aware of.

While there are no monographs about the care for Indo-European semi-orphans in private reformatories either, this topic is well known and often discussed in research about the broader Indo-European population of the Indies.⁴² Most ex-pupils of these institutions left Indonesia during and after the struggle for independence and moved mainly to the Netherlands, Australia, and the United States. Their stories have become part of the general body of diaspora knowledge - and myth - about life in the colony. Some groups of ex-pupils held yearly reunions, others are still involved in supporting their former orphanages in contemporary Indonesia.⁴³ Former pupils and staff members of those orphanages and childcare institutions also wrote or commissioned a variety of publications.⁴⁴

⁴² For example Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies. A history of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920* (Athens, Ohio University Press, 2008) (First published in Dutch in 2003). Hans Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld. De twintigste eeuw* (Amsterdam, Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 2004). Ann Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power. Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002).

⁴³ Informant Frits Bakker told me during an interview that the pupils of the Soekaboemische Opvoedingsgestichten (SOG, Soekaboemi Education Institutes) still held reunions into the 1990s. People connected to the Catholic St. Vincentius orphanage in Batavia also held reunions in Holland. Former inhabitants of Oranje Nassau in Magelang are still financially supporting the Indonesian orphanage that it became after WWII, called Yayasan Pa van der Steur.

⁴⁴ About Pa van der Steur and his Oranje Nassau Institute in Magelang, see for example: C.H.G.H.Brakkee, *Pa van der Steur, vader van 7000 kinderen* (Publisher unknown, 1981). Poldi Carlos Saueressig, *Johannes van der Steur. Een Haarlemse diamant in de gordel van smaragd* (Rindu Abadi,

The work on (Indo-)European children by anthropologist and historian Ann Stoler has greatly informed my research. It was in *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power. Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (2002) that I first read something about Pro Juventute and youth care in the colony. In this book Stoler thoughtfully discussed colonial fears about the ‘dangers of *métissage*’ and the identity formation and affiliations of children with mixed parentage in the Indies and Indochina. She did groundbreaking work by researching and exploring the personal and political significance of intimate relationships in 19th and 20th century colonial society. She stated in the introduction that she saw it as her task to identify ‘the regimes of truth that underwrote [...] a political discourse and a politics that made a racially coded notion of who could be intimate with whom – and in what way – a primary concern in colonial policy.’⁴⁵

In *Carnal Knowledge* Stoler focused on the Netherlands Indies and French Indochina and addressed the sort of intimate relationships and structures – like interracial love relationships and domestic master-servant arrangements – that colonial regimes were concerned with in the twentieth century. Colonial elites tried to manage and shape intimate relationships because the ways in which they were conducted were seen as crucial to what it meant to be ‘European’ or ‘native’. Who was intimate with whom, and in which way, was part of a normative and prescribed set of elite behaviour and morality that decided if one was considered to be European or not.

Stoler showed how colonial regimes were not just concerned about adult relationships, but also – and especially – tried to manage and influence the ways in which European children were raised and educated and how they related to indigenous servants/parents. ‘For officials and civilians of diverse political persuasion, the moral and physical contaminations to which European children were subject in the Indies served to measure how effective domestic arrangements might confirm or undermine the moral tenets of European privilege and security of rule. Contamination was conceived as physical and sexual but affective as well’.⁴⁶ The ways in which (Indo-)European children were raised and schooled, their parents, teachers and classmates, their relationships with indigenous servants,

1998). Joke van der Meer, *Dag Pa, ik wil er in, bij Van der Steur* (Masters’ thesis, Universiteit van Amsterdam, available at KITLV). About the childcare institutes in Soekaboemi see the work of two ex-pupils, F.C. Bakker and F. Schaller, *Tussen Djampang en Gedé. Geschiedenis der opvoedingsgestichten te Soekaboemi (SOG), 1900-1946* (privately printed, 1999). This list is by no means extensive.

⁴⁵ Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, 2.

⁴⁶ ‘A Sentimental Education. Children on the imperial divide’, 112 in Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, 112-139.

the language they spoke at home and in school, the food they ate and the clothes they wore, were all seen as crucial elements and markers of racial membership.

Owen White has studied French efforts to reform semi-orphaned *métis* children in his *Children of the French Empire, Miscegenation and Colonial Society in French West Africa 1895-1960* (1999). His focus on the formation of their identity and French debates about assimilation and the possibility of citizenship offers a fascinating insight into how children with a mixed racial background challenged the foundations of colonialism. The Dutch struggled with similar issues of identity and loyalty with regards to Indo-European children, especially when they were also impoverished and grew up in an environment that was considered indigenous. This group of children was targeted by reform and rescue efforts from the early days of Dutch presence in the Indies.

In *Colonial Childhoods, The Juvenile Periphery of India, 1850-1945* (2005), Satadru Sen looks at how childhood was (re-) constructed in British India to serve both the colonizing and the nationalizing projects. He studied reformatories and laws for juvenile delinquents, but also boarding schools for aristocratic children. His approach focuses on discourse and he concludes that in British India, where re-education efforts started half a century earlier than in the Indies, officials and re-educators stressed their doubts and sense of failure. Sen argues that reformatories were used to prove that native children were beyond reform, beyond the plasticity of childhood that was ascribed to metropolitan and ‘western’ children. Due to their perceived cultural and racial characteristics the British found that native children were not really children; their behaviour and life experience was classified as overly mature and beyond childhood already.

Because of their ‘abnormal’ childhood, native adults – who had both produced overly mature children and had suffered from their own marred upbringing - were seen as ‘abnormal’ and childlike adults. Children were not behaving like proper children were expected to behave, and the adults were not mature enough. The British constructed a colonial conundrum. According to Sen this vision gave colonial experts authority, while it denied the possibility of authority and adulthood to natives of every age.⁴⁷ In the Netherlands Indies, indigenous juveniles were often described as too mature for their age as well, but my research shows that the attitudes of re-educators were more complex than Sen suggests for British-India. While Dutch re-educators often despaired about their work, the colonial

⁴⁷ Sen, *Colonial Childhoods*, 212-213.

children they cared for were not denied the possibility to change and become ‘useful’ and responsible adults.

So far, there have been no studies about the reform of ‘abnormal’ indigenous juveniles in the Netherlands Indies. This silence seems to have been caused by two (related) issues. First, the dominant tradition in the field of twentieth century colonial history to focus on the origins and events leading up to nationalism and independence. The loss of the Netherlands Indies after World War II was an unexpected and traumatic event for the majority of the Dutch, similar to the shock felt worldwide about the suddenness of the decolonization process. Much research was invested in understanding and explaining this development.⁴⁸ From this perspective, the study of children and childhood only came into view when looking at the influence of colonial (western) education and its relation with the burgeoning nationalism of the indigenous elite and the leaders-to-be of the new Republic of Indonesia.⁴⁹ But this approach blurs other influences on Indonesia’s youth during colonial times, like the state reformatories, agricultural colonies, and (Islamic) orphanages in this study. Researching the establishment and operation of these institutes offers insight in competing ideas about youth, childhood, delinquency and the future of the Netherlands Indies in the late colonial period.

A second cause for the lack of research into colonial juvenile delinquency can be found in the historical position of childhood - and the history of childhood. Both were firmly located in the periphery of an environment in which adulthood enjoyed distinctive privileges.

⁴⁸ A selection of works dealing with the emergence of nationalism and the demise of the colonial state are: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London and New York, 1991); Hans Antlöv and Stein Tønnesen (eds.), *Imperial policy and Southeast Asian nationalism 1930-1957* (Richmond, 1995); Van den Doel, *Afscheid van Indië*; Van Doorn, *De laatste eeuw van Indië*; J. D. Legge, *Intellectuals and Nationalism in Indonesia. A study of the following recruited by Sutan Sjahrir in occupation Jakarta* (Ithaca, NY, 1988); Nagazumi, *The dawn of Indonesian nationalism*.

⁴⁹ About education and nationalism, for example, Francien van Anrooij, *Groeiend Wantrouwen. Onderwijsbeleid in Nederlands-Indië onder gouverneur-generaal D. Fock (1921-1926)* (Thela Thesis, Amsterdam, 2000). J.E.A.M. Lelyveld, ‘...Waarlijk geen overdaad, doch een dringende eis...’. *Koloniaal onderwijs en onderwijsbeleid in Nederlandsch-Indië 1893-1942* (1992). Jacobus Johannes van Miert, *Een koel hoofd en een warm hart. Nationalisme, Javanisme en Jeugdbeweging in Nederlands-Indië, 1918-1930* (Proefschrift, Universiteit Leiden, 1995). S.L. van der Wal, *Het onderwijsbeleid in Nederlands-Indië 1900-1942* (Groningen 1942). Also the nationalist novel by Soewarsih Djojopoespito, *Buiten het Gareel. Een Indonesische roman* (Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 's-Gravenhage, 1986, third edition. Originally published in 1940). She describes her own experiences as a young and well-educated Indonesian idealist working as a teacher in nationalistic ‘wild’ schools in different Javanese cities. Soewarsih was active in the young women’s movement as well. Anne Rafin wrote a fascinating book on the patriotic youth programs of Vichy France in Indochina during the Second World War, and shows how these programs influenced nationalist sentiments and the nationalist movement after the war. *Youth Mobilization in Vichy Indochina and its Legacies, 1940-1970* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005).

To be an indigenous child in a colonial context meant relegation to what can be seen as a 'double periphery'; the periphery of the colonial subject versus the dominant elite; and - within that already marginal space - the periphery of the child versus the adult.⁵⁰ But although juveniles would usually be part of a colonial periphery of which few sources remain, juveniles who broke the rules became relevant to philanthropists and the Dutch colonial government. Elite attention for their behaviour shifted these children from an invisible place to a position in society that was and remains visible because it produced historical sources.

While Ann Stoler used the Pro Juventute reports to illustrate the complex intimate ties of Indo-European and European children with non-European parents and caretakers, I became especially interested by elite concerns about the behaviour and affections of 'abnormal' indigenous youngsters, which are discussed in the same Pro Juventute reports. It has become increasingly clear to me that the Dutch colonial government and colonial elites did not only try to manage and influence the intimacies of European lives, but also extended their civilizing efforts towards the family life of indigenous populations. Stoler showed that with the onset of the Dutch civilizing mission in the late nineteenth century the loyalties and affective ties of poor (Indo-)Europeans were probed and questioned. European children were not supposed to fraternize with indigenous servants because it would make them too 'native', for example. This dissertation asserts that the intimate lives of other population groups became a matter of scrutiny and reform as well and that the personal relations of indigenous juvenile delinquents were found meaningful by the colonial elite. In the state reformatories, for example, indigenous juveniles were not supposed to be friendly with their native caretakers and guards because these 'lower-class' adults were a 'bad example' of what it was to be a 'good' native, in the eyes of Dutch re-educators.

In the field of juvenile re-education, European educators and caretakers constructed what a loyal and civilized native should be like, and how aberrant indigenous youngsters could be shaped into 'useful' members of native society. This dissertation expands further on Stoler's research by showing that intimate affiliations were not only of interest to European elites and the colonial state, but also to different indigenous groups and associations. Indigenous and Islamic re-educators developed a different – sometimes contesting - image of the 'good' native. These images and the ways in which they were imposed on 'abnormal'

⁵⁰ Sen, *Colonial Childhoods*, 2.

youngsters reflect the hopes, aims and expectations that different population groups had about the future of colonial society. Colonizing bodies and minds was a sustained but also incomplete political project that spanned both the colonies and Europe.⁵¹ There was no all-powerful state, only a state that could partially rule and influence the people living in its territory. This project reveals the people and associations on which the state depended to spread its reform policies, and the juveniles who were on the receiving end of these policies.

Use of terms and concepts

Something should be said about the words *modern* and *modernity*, and the ways I use these concepts. Henk Schulte Nordholt argued in his essay *Onafhankelijkheid of moderniteit (Independence or modernity)* (2009) that the biggest challenge with the concept of modernity is that it has come to mean so much, so many different things, for so many different people, that it has thus almost lost its meaning.⁵² In his approach the terms modernity and modern refer to ideas that are based on the Enlightenment, are connected to the development of capitalism and are mostly expressed in an urban environment. 'Modernity refers to the role of the individual and equality, the possibility of new developments and progress, mobility and speed. It creates space for the new.'⁵³

It is especially this last comment, that it is about 'the new', that describes my usage of the concept. Colonial society around the turn of the twentieth century was characterized by a sense of change and newness, and – as Frederick Cooper proposes in *Colonialism in Question* (2005) – the way in which different people, in different times and places shaped and claimed aspects of modernity is crucial to understanding it.⁵⁴ And so I do NOT see modernity as a necessarily western concept, and I do not think there is an opposing or 'alternative' colonial version of modernity. As Cooper argues, splitting the concept of modernity in many

⁵¹ See for example her discussion of critical colonial studies, or 'new imperial studies' in *Carnal Knowledge*, 10.

⁵² In the essay Schulte Nordholt tentatively explores the possibility that the indigenous lower middle class might have aspired to participate in a 'modern' lifestyle and thus supported the colonial state that provided this. Henk Schulte Nordholt, 'Onafhankelijkheid of moderniteit?', in Bloembergen en Raben, *Het Koloniale Beschavingsoffensief*, 103-120.

⁵³ Henk Schulte Nordholt, 'Onafhankelijkheid of moderniteit?', 108, in Bloembergen en Raben, *Het Koloniale Beschavingsoffensief*, 103-120.

⁵⁴ Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) 149.

alternative versions implies that there was originally just one kind of modernity, which was never there in the first place.⁵⁵

Colonial society was always connected to the Dutch metropole, Europe and other Asian countries and colonies through an exchange of goods, people, and information. Global interaction played a role in influencing colonial re-education policies through an exchange of information about re-education in the western and colonial world, both through reading material and through people who had experience with and knowledge of this topic and travelled to and fro the Indies. The greater intensity of global interaction, due to the transport and communication revolutions of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, lead to a process of modernity that is inextricably tied to changing ideas about juvenile delinquency and changing re-education policies. 'Modern' policies emerged from the solutions that the colonial state sought to deal with an increasingly connected, complicated, and challenging world - also with regards to juvenile delinquents. Looking at this modernizing process and its policies, something like an image or reflection of the 'modern colonial state' or 'late colonial state' might become visible.

The way policies were shaped with regards to juvenile delinquents are just one specific and local aspect of how colonial elites responded to the 'new' and what they perceived as the 'modern' world they were living in. While I do not attempt to analyse or make visible this specific interpretation of - or claim to - modernity, I do show how actors' ideas of what was modern childcare and reform, informed policy making and re-education practices, just as much older believes and practices did too.

In this dissertation *juvenile care* refers to all the institutions, associations and private persons that took care of orphaned, semi-orphaned and neglected children of all ethnicities. 'Care' is used as a more neutral and broader term than *re-education*, which refers to the intentions of said institutions, associations and private persons to change the already existing behaviour and knowledge of the children they were taking care of. Most institutions displayed a mix of care and re-education, because pupils were usually expected to behave, dress and speak differently than they had done at home. Until the 1900s re-education was an informal practice in the Christian institutions for (Indo-)European children in the Indies. This dissertation shows that the colonial government developed a formal re-education policy between 1906 and 1918, aimed particularly at indigenous juvenile delinquents. Delinquent

⁵⁵ Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*, 114.

children were categorized differently from orphaned and neglected children by the state, because they had been sent to court and were thus easily identifiable as ‘abnormal’ and potentially dangerous children, who supposedly needed institutionalized re-education. In this dissertation the term *delinquent* refers to children who were formally convicted for an offence by the colonial courts. Delinquent children under sixteen years old could either be sent to prison or get a re-education sentence. My research is particularly concerned with the last group of delinquent juveniles; the children who were sent to a reformatory.

In the case of indigenous juvenile delinquents the colonial government made the goal of re-education – and not care – the particular reason for their institutionalization. The state and civil associations intended to reform juveniles’ behaviour so they would fit into colonial society as they envisioned it. The system that came into being on the basis of these sentiments was called *dwangopvoedingstelsel*, which literally means ‘forced education system’. I use the term *modern* re-education or re-education system to refer to *dwangopvoeding* efforts after 1900.

When it comes to describing (perceived) differences between population groups I have chosen to use the term *race* whenever historical actors were using this word (*ras*, in Dutch). The words ‘race’ or ‘racial’ in this dissertation thus reflect that historical actors talked or thought about exterior differences between people under this banner. Because race has been thoroughly deconstructed in the past decades, and does not even exist on a physical and genetic basis, I choose to use the word *ethnicity* when I am indicating differences between population groups and cultural communities in the Indies. Ethnicity has a strong cultural meaning, since an ethnic group is usually defined as a group of people whose members identify with each other through a common background, ancestry, language, culture and often religion.

I use the term *indigenous* as the most neutral term to describe the non-European ‘original’ inhabitants what is now the Indonesian archipelago. When possible I use more specific geographical terms like Javanese, Sumatran, etc., as historical actors used them in the sources to refer to certain ethnic groups. The terms Chinese, Arab or Foreign Oriental are used to reflect how historical actors and sources used them, and to refer to specific non-indigenous population groups in the Indies. Somebody described as Chinese might have been born in the Indies or been a recent immigrant; the same stands for Arab or Foreign Oriental. I use the term *native* as a translation for the word *Inlands* in Dutch historical sources. I only use the word *Indonesian* in the context of the war for independence after World War II, or in

quotes of other authors who use this term. The term Indonesian would not become a political reality until the declaration of independence in 1945, although feelings of unity between the different indigenous population groups in the Indies started to develop in the interwar period.

The word *Indische* refers to all people with European ancestry who were born and raised in the Indies, often for many generations. It was a group that emerged due to the process of migration between Europe and the Indies, and vice versa, and included a great variety of skin and hair colours.⁵⁶ Following the definition of Bosma and Raben the word *Indische* ‘transcends the schematic interpretations that view the former Dutch colony as a strictly racially stratified society’.⁵⁷ Dutch children who were born in the Indies, children of European soldiers and indigenous women, and children of the old Indo-European elite were all part of the *Indische* community,

When I use the term *Indo-European* I specifically do so to refer to historical ideas about race. While we might have deconstructed the one-sided perspective that focused on so-called racial mixing as a defining marker of the *Indische* world, my research partly focuses on a group of children that was specifically categorised and named by white elites as Indo-European, stressing their European-Asian ancestry. When I use (Indo-)European with brackets around (Indo-) I do so to make clear that it was not always obvious to contemporaries or to me if the children or people described were actually of mixed descent or of ‘pure’ European parentage. By using (Indo-)European I show that the people it refers to

⁵⁶ For an in-depth account of the origins of the *Indische* community and culture in the Netherlands Indies see Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia. European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983). The book was translated in Dutch under the title *Smeltkroes Batavia. European en Euraziaten in de Nederlandse vestigingen in Azië* (Groningen: Wolters, 1988). Between 1650 and 1900 *Indische* families were the most important/dominant inhabitants of colonial cities, only the highest officials like the resident and assistant-resident came from outside. Batavia was the only exception to this, according to Bosma, Raben and Willems, 2006, p. 98.

⁵⁷ Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, *Being Dutch in the Indies. A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920*. (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008) xvii. In their introduction Bosma and Raben discuss the term “*Indische*” as a concept that needs to be problematised because both its generally used “colonial” and “racial” meanings are inadequate (pp. xiv-xv). Their book aims to deconstruct the notion of the *Indische* population as ‘a racially, culturally, and socially homogenous community between Totoks (European newcomers) and the indigenous population, as well as the cliché that, as a group, they were a kind of marginalised Europeans’ (p. xvii). *Being Dutch in the Indies* shows the complexity and heterogeneity of colonial society and the *Indische* world, taking into account race, class, gender, education and local conditions. I agree with their argument that the whole idea of ‘racial mixing’ is generally false, since most *Indische* families lived in the Indies for generations and married and lived in networks with strong local roots and a diverse cultural/racial ancestry. European newcomers (generally men) could be suitable marriage partners for the daughters of these better-off families and were then adopted into older networks and communities. It might have looked like “mixing” to outsiders and newcomers, but for the *Indische* population itself this would seem a shallow and empty perspective.

had or could qualify for European legal status, and that they could be ‘white’ or ‘Indo’ in terms of their looks and ancestry.

The writings of the Dutch Christian reformer Johannes (Pa) van der Steur illustrate how complicated and unclear racial and legal categories were in the Indies. He noted around 1900 that there were many boys who had no legal papers and whose legal status was unclear or not corresponding to their looks and upbringing. He knew indigenous boys who were officially adopted by a European soldier, who took them in with their mother, and now had European legal status. And there were those with the looks, dress, and speech of a European who were classified as indigenous, because their European father had not acknowledged them and an indigenous man had later adopted them. ‘What are now those boys?’ wrote Van der Steur about the last category. ‘The officials say: Native, Javanese. Their feeling says: European, because they know their father was European and not Javanese’.⁵⁸

That the colonial government and elites focused on the racial status of Indies’ inhabitants by describing them as Mestizo (*Mestiezen*) or Indo-European (*Indo-Europees* or just *Indo*) was partly caused by the fact that children with mixed parentage, who were acknowledged or adopted by a European father, were accepted in the legal category European. This group of children, of all social classes, was thus the object of a policy of Europeanization, which aimed to cultivate a loyal European population that would keep up colonial prestige by behaving according to European norms and values.⁵⁹ For the Indo-European children who were well off, their Dutch-language education in the Indies and the Netherlands shaped a strong connection with the European world; their loyalties went generally unquestioned. Children of the lower social classes, and especially children without a European parent to raise them, were specific objects of colonial state and elite attempts to keep or bring them into the fold of European culture. As we will see, it was this concern with European loyalty and prestige that lay at the core of all attempts and initiatives to (re-)educate neglected and orphaned (Indo-)European children.

Use of sources

The destruction, inaccessibility, and nature of certain archival records made numerous sources unavailable, but this project has also uncovered a wealth of unused sources. The colonial nature of this study posed some challenges in terms of available source material. The

⁵⁸ Pa van der Steur, quoted in Meijer, *In Indie geworteld*, 34-35.

⁵⁹ Bosma and Raben, *Being Dutch in the Indies*, xvii.

majority of sources dealing with juvenile re-education are only available in Indonesia because they pertained to 'local matters' that the Dutch department of Colonies in The Hague did not receive copies of. In the early twentieth century the colonial bureaucracy in the Netherlands Indies was often reorganized and this influenced where certain national, regional, and local archives were stored. Decentralization unfortunately often meant archival fragmentation. World War II and Indonesian independence did not only end Dutch colonial rule, but its sense of emergency and chaos also influenced the survival or destruction of the records of private persons, philanthropic organizations, and the colonial government.

Even if local and regional archives of – for example – colonial courts used to exist in different locations, they were often lost or destroyed in the transitional period of the 1940s and 1950s. The archive of the Indies' Department of Justice – which should have contained the personal dossiers and reports about juvenile delinquents in the reformatories – is not available anywhere and was probably destroyed. Much surviving material – even when it was stored in the Indonesian National Archive (ANRI) – has been damaged or destroyed by the heat and humidity of the tropics or was lost and misplaced when some of the archives were moved from Bogor to Jakarta a few years ago.

The archives of Pro Juventute associations have not been preserved either, but there are printed yearly reports and letters that were sent to the Justice Department available in several libraries (KIT, Amsterdam and PNRI, Jakarta) and the Dutch National Archive (NA). In combination with government records dealing with Pro Juventute these reports show much about the workings of colonial civil society and the relations between civic associations and the state. The Pro Juventute reports also contain case descriptions of the juveniles they dealt with each year. The pre-independence records of Muhammadiyah are non-existent or hard to find, although some pre-1940 editions of the organizations' journals and yearbooks could be found in the library of the head office in Jakarta, Yogyakarta and Muhammadiyah University in Yogyakarta. Most of the information about Muhammadiyah and other indigenous orphanages in this dissertation comes, however, from Malay and Javanese colonial newspapers available in PNRI, Jakarta.

For the years between 1872 and 1906 there are few sources about juvenile care and re-education; the records I have found for this period are all part of the remaining sections of the Dutch Governor General's Algemene Secretarie (AS, General Secretary or General Office) in ANRI, Jakarta. This was the office of the Governor General that dealt with all correspondence going to and from the highest authority in the Indies and contains a wealth of

information about any topic that was ever discussed with the Governor General. Unfortunately the archive of the AS did not have a functioning index at the time of my research there (2007 and 2009) and this made it difficult to request sets of documents and even harder for the archival personnel to access them. Fortunately it was possible to receive some of the documents and files, thanks to the efforts of ANRI personnel.

For the period 1872-1906 the AS has government decisions about sending individual children to philanthropic institutions and private persons for re-education. They sometimes contain sparse case descriptions and correspondence with court counsellors. Another important set of sources in the AS archive is the governments' correspondence with philanthropic institutions housing orphaned and delinquent children, like the Indo-European Oranje Nassau institute of Pa van der Steur and the indigenous agricultural colony Witte Kruis (White Cross Colony or Salib Putih in Javanese). These reports offer great insight in the importance of Christian civil society associations, life in the early institutions and the governments' appraisal of their functioning.

Between 1906 and the late 1930s, when juvenile delinquency becomes a bigger concern and state bureaucracy was expanding in general, the Algemene Secretarie archives contain more discussions about juvenile crime and reform between, for example, the heads of departments, the Governor General, the Raad van Nederlandsch-Indië (Council of the Indies), the police force, government advisors like the famous Islam scholar Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936), and philanthropic organizations. The establishment of the state reformatories is well documented in the AS, and the printed yearly reports of these institutions are available in the Leiden University Library and PNRI, Jakarta. The yearly reports form a valuable source about life in the reformatories and the government's re-education goals.

A unique set of sources in the AS are the letters from parents to the colonial authorities and the Governor General in the late 1910s, 1920s and 1930s. In these letters they request clemency for their children, coming up with arguments to get them back home. The documents paint small portraits of ordinary lives that often remain hidden. For this study they contain valuable information about the communication between indigenous inhabitants of the colony with the Dutch authorities. These files sometimes also contain court decisions, response from judges and other officials, and individual case histories of the children involved. This material offers insight in the functioning of the colonial justice system with regards to children.

The Dutch National Archive (NA) in The Hague is a main source for correspondence between the colonial government and the Ministry of Colonies in the Netherlands and reveals more about the dynamic between the colony and the metropole and the decision and law making process. Some copies of reports from the Pro Juventute associations to the Justice Department in Batavia could be found there as well. For the broader context of ideas about punishment and care, criminality and childhood, re-education and institutionalization, I used colonial magazines like the *Indische Gids* and *Indisch Tijdschrift voor het Regt*. For qualitative materials I was able to use the *Criminele Statistieken* and the *Koloniale en Indische Verslagen*, all available in KITLV and Leiden University libraries.

Outline of the dissertation

The years between 1872 and 1942 are my chronological markers. This period covers important transitions in the nature of Dutch colonial rule and the ‘maturing’ and expansion of the colonial state, as well as the transformation in its ideological claims. The first part of the dissertation consists of four chapters and focuses on the development of colonial civil society, the late colonial state, and the establishment of a modern reform system in the Indies.

Chapter 1 shows the importance of Christian philanthropic associations, the mission movement and the ethical policy for juvenile care in the Indies. It discusses why juvenile care in the Netherlands Indies was limited to private orphanages and residential homes until the early twentieth century, and shows how most juvenile delinquents ended up in the regular prison system or were sent home. In this sense the colony lagged considerably behind Western Europe where a new type of liberal reform institution for children came into being around 1850. These new reformatories were different from orphanages because they did not just try to shape orphaned children into proper adults, but intended to re-form and re-educate those who had already suffered from an upbringing that was deemed insufficient or outright deficient. In British India developments also took place earlier; after the 1850s a system of private reformatories for Indian juvenile delinquents developed and the first Reformatory School Act was implemented in 1876.⁶⁰ In the Netherlands Indies, Christian philanthropic institutions and orphanages took care of destitute Indo-European children and delinquents, but there were no facilities for indigenous juvenile delinquents until 1918.

⁶⁰ Sen, *Colonial Childhoods*, 20-23.

Chapter 2 discusses how the government tried to use Christian reformatories for its new re-education ambitions after 1900. It shows the dilemma of a state that tried to be neutral with regards to religion, but sent Islamic children to Christian re-education facilities. The chapter deals with societal fears, the growth of indigenous civil society around World War I, the (perceived) rising of juvenile crime rates, fears of Islamic protest, and dysfunctional private residential institutions. Together with the unification of the penal code and changes in the penal law for children in 1918 these forces led the colonial government to reconsider Christian philanthropic institutions as a proper environment for the re-education of indigenous juveniles. When government efforts to interest indigenous organizations to start re-educating indigenous juveniles failed, the colonial government diverged from its policy to let private associations do the work and started its own state reformatory in 1918.

Both the government and the European-dominated Pro Juventute associations hoped to interest the indigenous community to work together with them in the field of re-education. Not out of intercultural idealism, but out of practical necessity; they wanted to help children in the indigenous community and needed local informers. Chapter 3 shows how indigenous civil society eventually became more involved and started to develop its own re-education strategies. Some indigenous individuals started to work with Pro Juventute in the 1930s, but even more became active in newly founded indigenous associations and organizations. Especially the Islamic organization Muhammadiyah shows how indigenous organizers developed their own brand of 'moral uplift' and how and why they applied this to vagabonding and orphaned children in their own orphanages.

The influence of colonial interest groups and civil society associations on the development of the re-education system after 1918 is central to chapter 4. Since the establishment of the first state reformatory in Semarang the juvenile reform system almost immediately started to expand, so much so that there were not enough places in the reformatories and many children ended up waiting in prison between 1919-1922. This episode was caused by colonial anxieties about organized crime in the sugar producing areas and the ensuing pressure of the sugar industry to be very strict with young children who stole crops. Pro Juventute and other private reformers effectively campaigned the government for introduction of civil child laws between 1918 and 1927. The effects of the economic crises of the 1930s on the decline of the state reform system and the increasing importance of the private reformatories, will also be shown.

Part two of the dissertation consists of three chapters that aim to show the daily reality of the colonial reform system. Through a creative reading of court documents, memoirs, and annual reports of reformatories and civil associations, the experiences of the children and adults whose lives were touched or altered by the re-education system are partly reconstructed. These chapters show the complexity and multifaceted nature of the colonial re-education system and colonial civil society and assess what this can tell us about the nature of the late colonial state.

Chapter five is an examination of the critical role of the colonial justice system for juvenile delinquents. The general weaknesses of the colonial court system and the ways in which this influenced the communication between judges and juvenile suspects are discussed. This section reveals mistakes judges made in juvenile cases, the way they tried to correct this, and the response of the Supreme Court and colonial government. It unravels the wrongs in juvenile sentences and the far-reaching consequences of dubious verdicts. Some parents protested the re-education of their children and tried to convince the authorities to send their children back home.

From the courts we move deeper into the re-education system. Chapter 6 shows how and by which means re-educators in the state and private reformatories tried to shape their delinquent and ‘abnormal’ pupils into the sort of orderly, honest, hard-working and firm young men they envisioned. The re-education system in the Netherlands Indies consisted of a variety of institutions, before and during the operation of the state reformatories. Different organisations each had their own – sometimes related and sometimes conflicting – objectives and this influenced the way children were raised and treated. The treatment of convicted juveniles was also influenced by their social and economic background, religion and ethnicity. What were the specifically colonial aspects of the reform system, and which values did the Dutch want to teach their indigenous pupils? How did this differ between the various institutes and how was re-education raced and gendered?

The experiences and behaviour of juveniles are discussed in chapter seven. This section shows how the re-education experiences of a pupil in the Christian Witte Kruis Kolonie were of a very different nature than those of a pupil in the state reformatory in Semarang, with surprising results and consequences. Escape strategies, relations between pupils, between pupils and their families, and the role of religion are central to this chapter. By delving into the life experiences of children in a variety of institutions and showing how different re-education practices influenced their daily lives we gain a small glimpse of the

micro-realities of colonial re-education. It shows us how children responded to their incarceration and how they shaped their own experiences.

The epilogue concludes the dissertation by tracing the reform system throughout the war years and showing how (Christian) civil organizations transformed into Indonesian associations and continued their childcare work after independence.

Part I. A Civil Concern: Juvenile delinquency and re-education in the Netherlands Indies, 1872-1942.

Juvenile delinquency, and a perceived need to reform misbehaving youngsters, had not always been a problem for the Dutch colonial state and its inhabitants in the Netherlands Indies. It was only around the turn of the Twentieth century that juvenile crime started to become an apparent concern. The first part of this dissertation investigates how juvenile crime became a topic of debate and government policy. Why did the colonial government and different civil society associations become involved in juvenile reform and what did they hoped to accomplish with the re-education of ‘criminal’ youth? Civil associations played a crucial role in spreading ‘ethical’ and reformist ideas among those parts of the Indies’ population that were located on the margins of society, like juvenile delinquents and orphans. The colonial state and Christian, Islamic and secular associations each had different hopes and expectations for the future of the Indies; the way they cared for, and the values with which they re-educated orphaned and delinquent youth both overlapped and differed.

Considering the limited number of children that were sentenced to re-education between 1918 and 1938 – approximately 4,500 to 5,000 on a total population of almost 61 million in 1930 – it is safe to say that the whole venture had little social impact and mostly had moral and symbolic significance.⁶¹ The moral significance that was attached to re-education policies was not particular to the Dutch colony; the French too, were very concerned with what they called ‘the *métis* problem’ and established a system of reformatories for abandoned European-African children in their West African colony in about the same period. Considering there were just about 3,500 to 4,000 Africans ‘of European descent’ in French West Africa in the first half of the twentieth century, out of a population of about 14,5 million, this too was a case of moral politics.⁶² Consequently, this is a story about the fears, concerns, hopes and ideas that drove the colonial government and European and indigenous civil society associations to start re-educating indigenous youth; and about the values and ideas they tried to instil in these youngsters during their incarceration. The reform system that grew out of this dynamic process was diverse and

⁶¹ Thanks to the participants of the ‘Colonial Fears’ workshop in Leiden, November 2009, who pointed this out to me.

⁶² See Owen White, *Children of the French Empire. Miscegenation and Colonial Society in French West Africa 1895-1960* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1999) 2-3.

based on the work and ideas of many different parties that cooperated and conflicted with each other.

In the Netherlands Indies, the development of juvenile reform, the growth of civil society and the policies of the late colonial state were inextricably linked to the ideas of the Ethical Policy. The rhetoric of ‘do-gooders’ justified the territorial expansion of Dutch rule in the archipelago and an expansion of government services and policies that touched almost all aspects of colonial society. New ideas about moral rule, uplift and eventual self-rule also contributed to the rise of indigenous organizations and nationalist movements, which formed and expressed their own ideas about what they thought was necessary. The first four chapters of the dissertation show that European and indigenous civil associations were of crucial importance for the development of a colonial reform system for juvenile delinquents from its humble beginnings in the 1870s until the end of Dutch rule in 1942.

Chapter I. A new society requires new people: the ethical policy and juvenile re-education in the Netherlands Indies, 1872 - 1906.

In the spring of 1906 a group of twenty-four Javanese boys and a small music band marched with a white missionary on the road from Salatiga to Magelang. In the villages and markets along the way they stopped to play and sing Christian songs in Javanese and Dutch and to sell evangelical leaflets to inform Javanese people about the Christian religion and the possibility of conversion. The missionary and the boys were living at Adolf van Emmerik's Witte Kruis Kolonie [White Cross Colony or Salib Putih] that existed near Salatiga since 1902, and they were on their way to visit another youth institution in the city of Magelang.⁶³ The institution in Magelang was named Oranje-Nassau - after the last name of the Dutch royal family – and housed orphaned and delinquent Indo-European boys and girls since 1893.

Johannes van der Steur, director of the Oranje-Nassau children's home, welcomed his Javanese visitors into the big dining hall for a meal together with his pupils. At the time about 350 Indo-European boys and girls were living in the institute.⁶⁴ The visit brought together two groups of juveniles who each had the attention of philanthropists and the colonial government. But while the European colonial elite had always had an interest in childcare for Indo-European juveniles⁶⁵, attention for the upbringing and well being of indigenous youngsters was a recent development related to the (colonial) civilizing mission of the late nineteenth century. This chapter shows how nineteenth century European ideas about youth and re-education, and the reform and civilizing mission of the 1880s, changed juvenile care in the Netherlands Indies. It also reveals that Christian associations and social reformers

⁶³ Now Salatiga is a relatively small city on the busy road from Surakarta to Semarang, but in the 19th and 20th century it was an important military garrison town and one of the centers of coffee production in the Indies. Adolf van Emmerik, 'Allerlei van de Witte-Kruis-Kolonie en nog wat', 4 in *Witte Kruis Blad: Maandblad van de Witte Kruis Kolonie*, June 1906, No. 12, 4e jaargang. UB Leiden. According to the article missionary Zuppinger preached the Gospel in Javanese, trying to touch the hearts of the local population with a message of Christ's love and salvation. Crowds of people supposedly came to listen to the music and sermons and many of them bought evangelical leaflets. Before arriving in Magelang the group had already held twelve *koempoelans* [religious meetings]. The next day they sold a hundred leaflets on the busy morning market in the town itself.

⁶⁴ The number of children living on Oranje Nassau around 1906 was discussed in a government report that compared it to the Protestant Orphanage in Semarang, written by the First Government Secretary. *Verslag omtrent het Protestantsch Weeshuis te Semarang*, 20 April 1905, 4. In *GB Mgs 23-8-1906 No. 2478*. Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta.

⁶⁵ The first orphanage for children with European parentage was established in Batavia in 1629. Hendrik E. Niemeyer, *Batavia. Een koloniale samenleving in de 17de eeuw* (Amsterdam, Uitgeverij Balans, 2005) 316.

played a central role in colonial childcare, both before and after the introduction of the *ethische politiek* (ethical policy) around 1900.

The Dutch ethical policy propagated the idea that the indigenous population of the colony could be ‘uplifted’ and educated, to become part of a new colonial society that would favour more cooperation and equality between the Dutch rulers and representatives of the indigenous population. This fundamentally changed colonial involvement with indigenous youngsters. In the eyes of the Dutch this ‘new’ colonial society, with indigenous people who participated in governing and running it, would need ‘new’ people too; people who would share similar values and were willing to work for and with the ruling European elite. The colonial state thus created more educational opportunities for both European and indigenous inhabitants of the colony. This was mostly to benefit the indigenous elite; they were expected to become the future allies of the colonial government.⁶⁶

Children who were seen as ‘abnormal’ or delinquent were viewed in a different light. The turn of the century was not just marked by the optimism of ethical reform, but also saw an increased elite concern with crime and safety. Misbehaving, vagabonding and delinquent youth might become a threat to social order and they supposedly needed re-education to become ‘useful’ members of society. Some colonial officials stated that taking care of ‘abnormal’ indigenous youth was of national importance, as it would prevent them from becoming hardened criminals who had to be imprisoned at a much greater cost for the state.⁶⁷ These ideas were not just typical for colonial society around 1900, they had been uttered for decades in Western Europe when it came to the re-education of ‘paupers’ and were now applied to colonial discourse.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ See Van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, for an in-depth account of the reorganization of the Indies’ internal government structure and the participation of a new indigenous elite in the ruling structure of the colony. It is widely known by now that educational opportunities in European colonies did not just create cooperative indigenous elites, but also furthered the development of anti-imperialist movements.

⁶⁷ Director of Education, cited in Batavia, 1-05-1908, No. 4826, *Directeur van Justitie Mr. Gastmann aan de GG*, p. 6, in BT 19 juni 1909 No. 7. Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta.

⁶⁸ See, for example, Frances Gouda, *Poverty and political culture. The rhetoric of social welfare in the Netherlands and France, 1815-1854* (Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 1995); Paul Dartiguenave [et al.], *Marginalité, déviance, pauvreté en France XVe-XIXe siècles* (Caen, Annales de Normandie, 1981); Virginia Crossman, *Politics, pauperism and power in late nineteenth-century Ireland* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2006); Felix Driver, *Power and pauperism: the workhouse system, 1834-1884* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993); Rosalind Mitchison, *Coping with destitution. Poverty and relief in Western Europe* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1991); Suzanne Jansen, *Het Pauperparadijs. Een familiegeschiedenis* (Amsterdam, Uitgeverij Balans, 2008).

To understand the changes in colonial childcare and re-education practices that would take place around 1900, this chapter first gives an overview of the changing perceptions of youth, crime and reform in Europe in the nineteenth century, in comparison to colonial efforts to re-educate juvenile delinquents since 1872 (1.1). The second section takes a closer look at the long-existing care for Indo-European children and discusses the shifting focus towards indigenous juveniles caused by the ethical policy and the Christian mission around the turn of the century (1.2.). Ideas about youth, crime and parenting in the colony around 1900 will be discussed in section three (1.3.). Ethical and reformist ideas about youth and re-education travelled between Europe and the Indies, and were first applied to the colonial situation by Christian social reformers. Johannes van der Steur was an example of Christian care for Indo-European juveniles and delinquents. Adolf van Emmerik of the Witte Kruis Kolonie serves as an example of the first religious reformer who started re-educating indigenous youngsters in an institutional way in 1902. The final part of the chapter shows the importance of these social reformers for the development of juvenile care and re-education in the Indies (1.4.).

1.1. Rescuing, civilizing and controlling: the development of juvenile care in Europe and the Netherlands Indies, 1800-1900

Western Europe was affected by deep and long lasting changes in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, which reverberated throughout the colonies and the world. The British industrial revolution and its spread over Europe, the French Revolution (1789) and Napoleon's reign over most of Western Europe (1799-1815) profoundly altered production methods, political and judicial ideas, ways of life and thinking, and the physical landscape. Urbanisation made social problems more visible and more concentrated, and issues of poverty and pauperism became of greater concern, especially to elites who feared the loss of their position and the social and moral changes of the dual revolution. In this context arose more attention for neglected and criminal children and the effects they had on society as a whole. As Sarah Fishman points out: for adults, children and adolescents function both as subjects of their hopes for the future and as objects of their fears about threats to adult values.

The delinquent child was - and is - seen as a threat to social order.⁶⁹ Hence the pressing question; how could this threat be mediated and defused?

The Enlightenment strongly propagated the idea that humanity could change, and that mankind could find solutions to problems and challenges, both within individual human beings and within society. Punishment had been central in the treatment of delinquents, but now the idea that people could change and could be reformed took hold. People who supported the values of the Enlightenment and the French revolution, as well as those who rejected or protested these ideas, started to develop strategies for the rescue and re-education of 'abnormal' children. These strategies had rescuing, civilizing and controlling characteristics and were implemented in society through laws and reform homes. The Napoleonic Code (1810) represents the start of the modern French legal system and formed an example for the Dutch, Belgian and German penal laws. Its provisions for legal minors stood at the basis of the modern child laws in, amongst others, the Netherlands. The age of penal majority was set at sixteen, and the concept of *oordeel des onderscheids* was introduced for juvenile offenders. Literally translated this means 'ability to discern', and it was meant to be distinct between children who could be punished because they acted with discretion and thus knew that they did something illegal, and children who were not able to make this judgement. Children who acted with discernment would receive a correctional sentence, which was usually lower than the adult sentence for a similar offence. Children who acted without discernment could be returned to their parents or were sent to a correction or rehabilitation facility. There were also new laws that made vagrancy a misdemeanour and this, too, affected juveniles; children who ran away from home or were left on the streets could now be sent to prison or a reform institution.⁷⁰

With the onset of these laws and measures, which encouraged juvenile reform instead of just punishment, the notion that children should not be locked up with adults gained strength. Jean Jacques Rousseau already proposed in 1762 that children should develop their character and moral sense by experience and without tough punishment, so juveniles would be able to gain self-mastery and steadfast virtues. Good guidance and the right behavioural examples were crucial for this approach to childrearing. In the course of the late eighteenth

⁶⁹ Sarah Fishman bases this on sociologist Francis Bailleau in her book *The battle for children. World War II, youth crime, and juvenile justice in Twentieth-century France* (Cambridge; Harvard University Press, 2002) 11.

⁷⁰ Fishman, *The battle for children*, 13-15.

and the nineteenth century European social reformers came to believe that adults could have a bad influence on juveniles, and that juveniles who ended up in prison needed better company than adult offenders to improve their behaviour and moral compass.⁷¹

The institutions that were now established for misbehaving or delinquent youth were significantly different from already existing orphanages. Instead of focusing on sheltering children without parents or caretakers, the new facilities focused on replacing parents not because they were absent or deceased, but because they supposedly failed to raise their children in a proper manner.⁷² New reform homes were first developed in Germany and England, and these facilities were operated by civil associations, not the state. Already in 1788 the Philanthropic Society of London sought a solution for a growing number of vagabonding and begging children in the London area. They established a home that aimed to imitate family life and taught children to do agricultural work. Agricultural work as a base for rehabilitation and reform was also the core of famous juvenile facilities like the German Rauhe Haus (1833) and the French penal colony Mettray (1840).⁷³ After 1870 the different reform institutions in Western Europe responded to changing economic needs and did not only focus on agricultural activities but also started to teach juveniles more technical trades, like blacksmithing, tailoring and shoemaking.

Inspired by foreign examples and with a strong believe in the possibility for reform of both juvenile and adult offenders, Willem Hendrick Suringar established Netherlands Mettray in 1851.⁷⁴ Mettray, located in a rural area near Zutphen in the eastern Netherlands, was a Protestant re-education home for non-delinquent but misbehaving boys. Suringar was also one of the founders of the Dutch Society for the Moral Improvement of Prisoners (1823, Nederlandsch Genootschap tot Zedelijke Verbetering der Gevangenen). This association infused the Dutch penal system with a mix of enlightened-humanitarianism, Christian ideals and bourgeois morality. It had advocated since 1823 that the prison system should not just

⁷¹ Fishman, *The battle for children*, 15-16. Also, Chris Leonards, *De ontdekking van het onschuldige criminele kind. Bestrafing en opvoeding van criminele kinderen in jeugdgevangenis en opvoedingsgesticht 1833-1886* (Hilversum, Uitgeverij Verloren, 1995) 17-19.

⁷² Jeroen J.H. Dekker, *Straffen, redden en opvoeden: Het ontstaan en de ontwikkeling van de residentiële heropvoeding in West-Europa, 1814-1914, met bijzondere aandacht voor 'Nederlandsch Mettray'* (Assen, Van Gorcum, 1985) 1.

⁷³ Dekker, *Straffen, redden, opvoeden*, 20, 42-53.

⁷⁴ For more details about Netherlands Mettray see Dekker, *Straffen, redden, opvoeden*, 175-327. Mettray was the name of the village in France where the original 'Mettray' juvenile penal colony was established.

punish, but also improve the behaviour of its inmates, both adults and juveniles.⁷⁵ Suringar and his allies pressed the separation of adult and juvenile delinquents and opened the first Dutch juvenile prison in Rotterdam in 1833. Within the prison facilities there were different sections for juveniles who had acted with discernment, and those who had committed an offence without discernment. In 1852 the association opened a separate improvement home in the city of Alkmaar that allowed for a complete separation between the two categories of juvenile delinquents.⁷⁶

In the Indies there were no civil society associations advocating penitentiary reform for either adults or juveniles in the nineteenth century. Prisons were used as a means to keep the colonial population in line, to protect the safety of Europeans and social order in general, and to provide cheap indigenous labor for public works and military expeditions. The colonial government did start to think about changing the prison system in the early 1900s because there were problems with overcrowding and forced labor arrangements.⁷⁷ Dutch socialist politician H.H. van Kol observed during a study trip in 1902 that it was problematic that European prisoners were not kept in separate cells because of ‘moral depravities’ like sexual intercourse between male prisoners. He also discussed the lack of useful activities in European and indigenous prisons and propagated the introduction of ‘more humane’ penal measures.⁷⁸ While some small changes were made an Indies research report of 1908 claimed that there were still no real attempts to ‘improve’ prisoners and that ex-convicts supposedly returned to their villages more degraded and prone to crime.⁷⁹

The reform of juveniles was taken more serious than the improvement of adult prisoners, but the application of new ideas about juvenile care and reform also took place much later than in Europe; on average about fifty years later than in the Netherlands. This had everything to do with the fact that the colonial government was mostly concerned with economic activities until the late nineteenth century. Effective rule in the colony was also still

⁷⁵ Leonards, *De ontdekking van het onschuldige criminele Kind*, 69-79.

⁷⁶ Chris Leonards, ‘Het huis van verbetering en opvoeding in Alkmaar (1857-1884)’ 93-94, in S. Faber, ed., *Criminaliteit in de negentiende eeuw*. Hollandse Studiën 22 (Hilversum, Uitgeverij Verloren, 1989) 93-108.

⁷⁷ C. Bruinink-Darlang, *Hervormingen in de koloniale periode. Verbeteringen in het Nederlands-Indisch strafstelsel in de periode 1905-1940* (Kampen, Gouda Quint bv, 1993) 64-65.

⁷⁸ H.H. van Kol, *Uit onze kolonieën. Uitvoerig reisverhaal. Geïllustreerd met vele afbeeldingen en kaarten* (Leiden, A.W. Sijthoff, 1903) 651-653.

⁷⁹ Mr. W. Boekhoudt, *Rapport reorganisatie van het politiewezen op Java en Madoera 1906-07 (Uitgezonderd de vorstenlanden, de particuliere landerijen, en de hoofdplaatsen Batavia, Semarang en Soerabaia)* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1908) 57.

restricted to the larger cities, the island of Java and economically important regions like Sumatra, while many of the other islands remained largely unaffected by Dutch rule. Social work was only done by private and Christian associations and their activities were usually limited to the (Indo-) European population of the Indies.

In the mid-nineteenth century, however, the first small changes became visible, starting with judicial reforms. In 1848 a codified civil law system – dividing the population in the two legal categories of European and native persons - was implemented in the Netherlands Indies to mirror legal developments in the Netherlands.⁸⁰ The introduction of new penal laws came later: In 1866 the new penal law for Europeans was introduced in the Indies. It was based on the Code Pénal that existed in the Netherlands since 1811, but it was adapted to the colonial situation. In 1872 a similarly conceived penal law was applied to the indigenous population, which codified a development that had taken place since the 1750s, applying European law principles to the justice system for the indigenous population and moving away from the existing indigenous laws and punishments. The 1872 penal code was almost the same as the 1866 code for Europeans, although there were differences in the kinds of punishments. When Europeans were locked up in prison for certain offences, indigenous people were sentenced to forced labor in chain gangs for the same crimes. In 1872 the so-called *politie-reglementen* (police laws) were introduced for lighter offences and they were almost similar for both population groups. When a new penal code was introduced in the Netherlands in 1886, the colonial situation also had to be changed, because it had to keep following the developments in the Netherlands (*concordantie-eis*). This would eventually lead to a unified penal code for all population groups, which was introduced in 1918. This penal code officially took away the difference in penal measures, but in practice indigenous offenders were still used for forced labour on public works, in coalmines and as carriers in the army.⁸¹

The 1866 and 1872 penal laws for European and indigenous persons first mentioned the use of an improvement home (*verbeterhuis*) for juvenile delinquents under sixteen years old, who had committed a crime without discernment (*oordeel des onderscheids*). This was based on the measures that had existed in the Netherlands since the introduction of the

⁸⁰ Albert Dekker en Hanneke van Katwijk, *Recht en rechtspraak in Nederlands-Indië* (KITLV uitgeverij, Leiden 1993) 11-12.

⁸¹ Bruinink-Darlang, *Hervormingen in de koloniale periode*, 21-24.

French penal code in 1811.⁸² Sixty years later this idea also became part of the Indies law and stipulated that both European and indigenous children who had acted without discernment should not be sent to a regular prison together with adult criminals, but should spend time in an improvement home or be given back to their parents or family. The youngster could be sentenced to re-education until he or she reached the age of twenty.⁸³

But regardless of the laws that mentioned the use of improvement homes, no such homes actually existed in the Indies, and the colonial government did not think that they were particularly necessary either, supposedly because of a limited number of juveniles that came in touch with the law. In the Netherlands about 5000 children came before the court each year in the late nineteenth century. In 1893 2086 children between 10 and 16 were put behind bars. According to colonial records only 165 indigenous juveniles came before the court between 1900 and 1902. Between 1874 and 1902 only 21 juveniles were sent to the (non-existent) improvement home.⁸⁴ These numbers were an easy excuse for the colonial government to claim that juvenile crime was not a problem in the Indies and that there was no need to implement child laws and establish improvement homes. The development of the ethical policy and the start of its application to colonial society around 1900 fundamentally changed this perspective.

Until the colonial government actually started operating a re-education facility in 1918, article 5 of the transition code (*overgangsbepaling*) of the penal code for Natives and the one for Europeans allowed that - in lieu of an improvement home - the Governor General could assign a private person or philanthropic organization as re-educator and caretaker of delinquent children.⁸⁵ The Indies government paid private persons and organizations a monthly allowance of 10 guilders for (Indo-)European children and 7,50 guilders for indigenous children, since the latter supposedly lived a simpler and cheaper life. The person or organization had to have a good reputation and was supervised by the local police or a

⁸² Leonards, *De ontdekking van het onschuldige criminele Kind*, 33.

⁸³ Batavia, 1-05-1908, No. 4826, *Directeur van Justitie Mr. Gastmann aan de GG*, in BT 19 juni 1909 No. 7. Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta.

⁸⁴ Bruinink-Darlang, *Hervormingen in de koloniale periode*. 270.

⁸⁵ *Koloniaal Verslag 1884*, 56-57. Bt 27 Nov 1902 no 4, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta. Batavia, 1-05-1908, No. 4826, *Directeur van Justitie Mr. Gastmann aan de GG*, in BT 19 juni 1909 No. 7. Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta.

local government official. They also had to be of the same national character (*landaard*) and religion as the juvenile, honoring the principle of religious neutrality.⁸⁶

That this was not always strictly followed is apparent from early requests to Van Emmerik's Christian Witte Kruis association to take in non-Christian indigenous juvenile delinquents.⁸⁷ Sometimes indigenous children were also placed with individual European caretakers. Like in the 1882 case of an indigenous boy, who was sentenced to go to an improvement home for six years. Instead he was placed with a 'European person of good name and fame', because there was no suitable (elite) indigenous family willing to take him in for re-education.⁸⁸ Finding a private person or philanthropic institution was done separately for each individual case, and while there seem to have been few cases of juveniles with a re-education sentence until the 1910s, this could be a real - administrative - hassle since it was often difficult to find somebody who could and would take care of a delinquent child.⁸⁹

The case of A.H. Kwakoe and G.F.G.H. Bousfard, who probably had an Indo-European or indigenous Christian background, is an example of how the government had to improvise in finding private caretakers. Why Kwakoe was convicted is unknown, Bousfard was brought to court for stealing and sentenced to an improvement home by a Batavian court in September 1893. In the summer of 1894 Kwakoe and Bousfard were sent to colonist Ph.M. Maijer who lived and worked on an agricultural colony in Poespo, Java, and seemed willing to take care of the boys. But in July the Resident of Pasoeroean reported to the Department of Justice that the colonist was unwilling or unable to take in the boys and that they had to send the children somewhere else. Since the boys had arrived in Pasoeroean already, and the Resident did not know what to do with them, he ultimately found two other colonists in Poespo (A. Klomp and A. Kautorsky) who were willing to take them in. In late July a *controleur* (a Dutch low-level official in the local government) reported that it could be

⁸⁶ The word *landaard* (national character) was broadly used to refer to the legally defined population groups in the Indies, like Europeans and indigenous people. But it could also be used to refer to differences within a certain legal category. Germans and Dutch, Javanese and Balinese all had a different *landaard*.

⁸⁷ *Batavia*, 9-01-1904, *Director of Department of Education (OEN) to Governor General*, No. 274, p. 3. Gbag Tztag No 10282/1905, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta. See also *Buitenzorg*, 21-04-1904, *Missive Gouvernements Secretaris to Director of Justice Department*, p. 1. Gbag Tztag No 10282/1905, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta.

⁸⁸ *Koloniaal Verslag 1884*, 56-57. For another example for a juvenile who was re-educated in this way, see the case of Siman in Bt 27 Nov 1902 No 4, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta

⁸⁹ See the case of Siman in Bt 27 Nov 1902 No 4, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta.

considered ‘in the interest of the boys’ to stay with Klomp and Kautorsky, and the Governor General approved of the arrangement.⁹⁰

Despite international differences in the newly developing approach to ‘abnormal’ or delinquent juveniles, there were several important similarities. First of all, there was a generally shared belief that the treatment of problematic or criminal children should be different from the treatment and punishment of adults. The idea of moral innocence or a lack of moral discernment, the supposed plasticity of juveniles, and their responsiveness to reform efforts all became important components of reform strategies in Europe. Another commonality was the cooperation between civil associations and the state. Chris Leonards mentions Belgium as an example where the state was most influential in developing juvenile institutions, while Germany was on the other side of the scale, with a dominant role for private initiatives. France, England and the Netherlands are examples of countries where reformatories and juvenile prisons were initially established by private associations and slowly taken over by a state that became more interventionist in the late nineteenth century.⁹¹ In the Netherlands Indies Christian institutions started taking care of juvenile delinquents before the colonial government did so, and the government would later request these institutions to do this work for – and sponsored by – the state.

Another commonality between different countries was that juvenile reform was infused with a mixture of controlling tendencies, a spirit of salvation, and civilizing efforts. This mixture of different elite objectives would spread from Europe to the colonies, and back. Michel Foucault has famously stressed the controlling aspects of the social policies that developed after the French Revolution. He put forward the theory of social control in 1975 with *Surveiller and Punir. Naissance de la Prison*, which can be used as an interpretive framework for the history of juvenile delinquency and re-education.⁹²

Foucault’s theory of social control criticizes the humanistic view that individuals can live and shape their life in freedom. He argues that the enlightenment was more about power

⁹⁰ Batavia 9-08-1894, *Directeur van Justitie Stibbe aan de GG*, in Bt 20-08-1894 No. 29, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta. Poespo might not have been an ideal environment for young boys. According to an account of an Indo-European man who worked and stayed at the Witte Kruis Kolonie for a few months in 1905, many of the first Indo-European colonists at Poespo had received 300 guilders from the government to get started. According to him this money was used mostly to buy alcohol. Quoted by Van Emmerik in ‘Allerlei van de witte kruis kolonie en nog wat’, p. 4. Witte Kruis Blad, Januari 1905, No 3. 3^e Jaargang.

⁹¹ Leonards, *De ontdekking van het onschuldige criminele kind*, 19.

⁹² Michel Foucault, *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. (London, Penguin Group, 1991) Translation of *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* by Editions Gallimard in 1975.

and social control than about humanistic ideals. Foucault used the history of the development of the French prison system from the Ancien Regime till the nineteenth century to prove that people are not free but controlled by a disciplining technology. He himself sees the prison system as an example of the controlling nature of the enlightened thinking of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Instead of the violent corporal punishments of the Ancien Regime the penitentiary system uses more refined methods to reach the same goals; disciplining the individual. These 'moral' techniques shifted attention from disciplining the body to disciplining the soul: moral improvement instead of physical punishment.⁹³

According to Foucault the process of 'disciplining' and 'normalizing' Western Europe took place in a wide array of situations and institutions like prisons, asylums, hospitals, factories, the army, schools and reform houses. Foucault places the establishment of juvenile reform clearly within this context when he takes the official opening of Mettray - the first official reform institution for juvenile delinquents in France - in January 1840 as the completion of the penitentiary system. Foucault found Mettray so important within the carceral system because it was 'the most intense disciplinary form of the state, the model which concentrated all the coercive technologies for behaviour.'⁹⁴

The theory of social control is inherently critical of the role of the state, the legal system, and even the modern science of intervention that focused on prisoners and the family. Foucault sees them as instruments of the elites to control the masses. His insights about disciplining and the roots of penal and reform strategies has influenced just about everyone studying similar topics. Jacques Donzelot importantly explored and furthered Foucault's theories for the organizations interfering with family-life, like child protection agencies and welfare organizations.⁹⁵ While Foucault and Donzelot take an extreme standpoint, their stress on the efforts of elites to control supposedly dangerous population groups certainly has value for the history of juvenile care and re-education in the Netherlands Indies. As we will see

⁹³ Foucault, *Discipline and punish*, 16-31. Foucault shows how in capitalist Europe both control over the body and over the soul were at stake. Since in a free labour market the role of forced labour loses its value, it was now 'corrective' detention, at the level of both body and soul, which took centre stage. As Foucault writes about the modern prison system and the reason for prison revolts: 'It is this whole technology of power over the body that the technology of the 'soul' – that of the educationalists, psychologists and psychiatrists – fails either to conceal or to compensate, for the simple reason that it is one of its tools' (p 30).

⁹⁴ Dekker, *Straffen, redder en opvoeden*, 5-6 en Leonards, *De ontdekking van het onschuldige criminele kind*, 22-23

⁹⁵ Jacques Donzelot, *Policing the family* (New York, Pantheon Books, 1979). Translation of *La Police des Familles*, 1977.

later in this dissertation, the Dutch colonial state was as concerned with controlling as with reforming 'abnormal' juveniles and the re-education of juveniles in colonial institutions was infused with both civilizing and controlling aspects.

Authors like E. Hegel, F. Röper and H. Scherpner explained the emergence of juvenile re-education institutes not from the perspective of disciplining but take the position that it was an act of salvation, a case of solidarity inspired by religion. Especially in Germany re-education and salvation became a joint activity. In the Netherlands Indies the institutions of Van der Steur and Van Emmerik are good examples of how the spirit of - Christian - salvation infused juvenile care and re-education. Jean Heywood argued that the emergence of child institutions was a replacement of the community ties that supported neglected children during pre-industrial times. Röper also mentioned the disappearance of this informal support network and argues that the industrialization of society caused institutionalization of juvenile care.⁹⁶ Similar sentiments were expressed by colonial reformers who saw increasing urbanization and industrialization as one of the causes of juvenile misbehaviour and the need for institutional care.

Norbert Elias partly anticipated Foucault's approach, as he developed his famous civilization theory in 1939 in *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation*. He saw the civilization process as an ongoing spread of formal, polite and proper behaviour because the lower classes imitate the behaviour of higher social classes. Elias argued that this process was defined by a slow change from external pressure (*Fremdzwang*) to internal pressure (*Selbstzwang*). This is seen as an evolutionary development in which more and more people follow behaviour inspired from above, connected to state building and the monopoly on violence.⁹⁷ Chris Leonards finds that this evolutionary approach from external to internal pressure poses a problem when looking at prisons and re-education systems, because these institutions always apply external and direct force and pressure to reach socialization of their inmates and pupils. He sees the solution to this in the ideas of Bernard Kruithof and Ali de Regt, who show that the evolutionary process of Elias also consists of more intense periods of an outright bourgeois civilization offensive.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Dekker, *Straffen, redder en opvoeden*, 6-7.

⁹⁷ Norbert Elias, *Het civilisatieproces: sociogenetische en psychogenetische onderzoeken* (Utrecht/Antwerpen: Het Spectrum, 1982). Translation of *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation; Soziogenetische und psychogenetische Untersuchungen* (1939).

⁹⁸ Leonards, *De ontdekking van het onschuldige criminele kind*, 24. B. Kruithof, 'De Deugdzaam Natie. Het burgerlijk beschavingsoffensief van de Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen tussen 1784 en

Ali de Regt explored how the civilization process played out with regards to blue-collar families in the Netherlands between 1870 and 1940 and stresses the role of the middle class' 'civilizing mission'. Since the late eighteenth century enlightened middle class men and women already attempted to elevate the lower classes from their 'bestial nature'. They were motivated by humanitarian ideals, a fear of revolution and revolt from the lower classes, and aims of national integration and state building. New economic developments in the nineteenth century created more interdependence between middle and lower class and caused an intensification of these so-called civilizing missions because the middle class saw moral improvement of the blue-collar workers as a requirement for a successfully functioning nation state and economy, in which each group knew its place.

Bourgeois civilizing missions focused on imposing the values of order, decency, cleanliness, industriousness, frugality and devotion to duty through (for example) education, the prison system, hospitals, poverty relief, care of single mothers and neglected youth, abstinence societies, and public housing. De Regt focuses on modern poverty relief and housing improvement and shows how the civilizing mission explicitly tried to influence the domestic arrangements of blue-collar workers and the individual disciplining of family members, creating 'an entanglement of care and coercion that still characterizes social work today.'⁹⁹ The insights of De Regt about the role of bourgeois civilizing initiatives are relevant for the history of the Netherlands Indies as well. Philanthropic associations concerned with juvenile delinquency, like Netherlands Indies' child rescue organization Pro Juventute and Van der Steur's Oranje Nassau home for Indo-Europeans, were connected and part of the bourgeois civilizing mission in the Netherlands. Pro Juventute and Oranje Nassau were both supported (and partly financed) by the European community in the Netherlands and the Indies.

1.2. The eighteenth' century history of child care in the Indies and the changes brought by the ethical policy and the Christian mission around 1900

One of the specific characteristics of child care practices in colonial society was that there was a long-standing difference in the care for (Indo-)European children and the care for

1869' in *Symposion, Tijdschrift voor Maatschappijwetenschap*, 2 (no. 1) 1980, 22-37. Ali de Regt, *Arbeidersgezinnen en Beschavingsarbeid: Ontwikkelingen in Nederland 1870-1940; een historisch-sociologische studie* (Amsterdam, Uitgeverij Boom, 1995) (eerste druk 1984).

⁹⁹ De Regt, *Arbeidersgezinnen en beschavingsarbeid*, 240-245.

indigenous children. As in the Netherlands and other European countries, Christian orphanages formed the roots of the juvenile care and re-education system in the Indies and they solely focused on (Indo-)European children until the twentieth century. This had two reasons: First of all, the colonial government did not allow Christian missionaries to proselytize and do social work among the indigenous population of the Indies until the 1850s. Secondly, until the idea took hold that the Dutch had an ethical responsibility to care for the well-being and development of the indigenous population in the late nineteenth century, the colonial government and European elites were only interested in caring for (Indo-)European youngsters.

Christian clergy came to the Indies on the boats of the VOC since 1619, but they were confined to the European cities until the 1850s. Contrary to earlier Portuguese colonizers, who were zealously spreading Roman Catholicism on islands like Ternate and Malacca, both the VOC and - after its demise in 1800 - the Dutch government restricted Christian activities in the Indonesian archipelago. The Dutch feared that Christian proselytizing efforts would incite Islamic protest, disrupt trade and business interests, and cause disputes between Protestant and Catholic missions. Christian places of worship were restricted to cities with a European settlement and served a mostly European, Chinese and Indo-European community. There were some informal proselytizing efforts among indigenous people, often instigated by Dutch, Indo-European or indigenous women who were married to a European and had converted to Christianity, and there were early indigenous converts to Christianity, but in general the Christian religion remained a religion of the Dutch.¹⁰⁰

The local Protestant church already established the first Christian orphanage for Eurasian children in the coastal settlement of Batavia in 1629, only ten years after the conquest of the area by European sailors, soldiers, traders and administrators of the United East-Indies Company (VOC). This was destined for both European and Eurasian children who lost their parents or who, in the case of the latter, lost their European parent. Interracial relationships, especially between European men and Asian women (free and enslaved) existed in the Indies since the first encounters between the two groups. Because of the lack of

¹⁰⁰ Th. Sumartana, *Mission at the crossroads. Indigenous churches, European missionaries, Islamic association and socio-religious change in Java, 1812-1936* (Jakarta, PT BPK Gunung Mulia, 1991) 1-22. J.S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India. A study of a plural economy* (Cambridge, University Press, 1944) 17, 219.

European women in the Dutch settlement, and the perceived need for population growth, mixed relationships were generally accepted as a normal part of early colonial life. Dutch elites and governors saw Eurasian or Indo-European children as a group that could bolster the ranks of the small European community developing in the Indies at the time. Illegitimate children, who were found in Asian neighbourhoods of Batavia, or in other Javanese coastal towns, were sent to the orphanage to receive a solid Christian-Dutch upbringing.¹⁰¹ In 1709 a group of 23 children with European fathers and Javanese mothers was sent from coastal Java to the orphanage in Batavia. In Semarang, which had become the second-most important port in Java in the 18th century, an orphanage was established in 1769.¹⁰²

Discrimination on the basis of skin colour and class was common in the early colonial period, but Christianity was the most important marker of Europeanness until 1847, when the first judicial ruling divided the colonial population in a European and indigenous legal category. Until a change in article 109 of the *Regeeringsreglement* (rules of government) in 1919, which decided the three legal categories of European, Indigenous and Foreign Orientals, all Christians in the colony were classified as European, again a sign that in legal matters religion trumped race until 1919. In this legal constellation the government felt it important for Indo-European children to receive a Christian upbringing so they could be classified and treated as Europeans.¹⁰³ The early orphanages were markers of a European elite that was concerned about the loyalties of the Indo-European population and community and the prestige of the European community versus the indigenous community. If Eurasian children were raised as good Christians and behaved according to European norms they were seen as Europeans and could do the work that Europeans did; that they had an indigenous mother was less important for their acceptance and legal status.

In the 1800s the number of (Indo-)European orphanages increased because the population of - impoverished - Eurasian children grew as well. They were the children of European soldiers in the expanding colonial army. Army-concubinage was blamed for the large increase in the number of impoverished Indo-European children since the early

¹⁰¹ Niemeijer, *Batavia*, 316-317, and chapter 22 as a whole.

¹⁰² Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, 42-43.

¹⁰³ Van Marle, *De groep der Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië, iets over ontstaan en groei*, Indonesië. 5:1, 1952, 98-99. See also Niemeijer, *Batavia*, 35-39, 45-49, 261-267. An important book about the Indies colonial world is Jean Taylor's *The Social World of Batavia. European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1983). See also Bosma and Raben, *Being "Dutch" in the Indies*.

nineteenth century.¹⁰⁴ In the period 1815-1909 about 150.000 European military men – only half of them Dutch - travelled from the Netherlands to the Indies. Until 1895 soldiers formed half of all European men in the colony. According to historian Hans Meijer the great majority of the Indo-European population in the nineteenth century and afterwards, did not originate in the old Mestizo-community but was the offspring of soldiers and indigenous wives or concubines, called *njai*.¹⁰⁵ In 1904, there were a total of 12,593 European soldiers in the garrisons throughout the Indies, who had 410 recognised children and 827 illegitimate children. They might have had more children, living outside of the barracks, but these were not counted. How many of these army children were legally classified as European is unknown.¹⁰⁶

Children of European soldiers could go to a government school for free and many boys went to the military training school in Gombong, where they were prepared for the army or learned a trade.¹⁰⁷ Girls usually received some schooling as well, and then worked as household personnel in the barracks or a private home; many of them also became *njai* like their mothers or worked in prostitution.¹⁰⁸ Many army children, however, were left in poverty when their fathers died or went back to Europe.

Economic circumstances also played an important role in the growth of the number of impoverished children. The sugar crisis of the late nineteenth century led to higher unemployment levels and an increase in the number of neglected, deserted, and possibly

¹⁰⁴ The 1901 report on pauperism saw army-concubinage as the main reason for poverty among Indies-born Europeans, Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, 244. For more on the specific arrangements regarding prostitution, concubinage and the intimate life of Indies' soldiers, see for example Reggie Baay, *De Njai; Het concubinaat in Nederlands-Indië* (Amsterdam, Athenaeum-Polak en Van Gennep, 2008). Petra Groen, 'Zedelijkheid en martialiteit. Het kazernconcubinaat in Nederlands-Indië rond 1890', in Marieke Bloembergen en Remco Raben, *Het Koloniale Beschavingsoffensief. Wegen naar het nieuwe Indië, 1890-1950* (Leiden, KITLV Uitgeverij 2009) 25-52. Liesbeth Hesselink, 'Prostitution: a necessary evil, particularly in the colonies; Views on prostitution in the Netherlands Indies', in Elsbeth Locher-Scholten en Anke Niehof (eds.), *Indonesian women in focus; Past and present notions* (Leiden, KITLV Press, 1987) 205-224. Hanneke Ming, 'Barracks-concubinage in the Indies, 1887-1920', *Indonesia* nr. 35: 65-93.

¹⁰⁵ Hans Meijer, *In Indië geworteld. De twintigste eeuw* (Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 2004) 31. About the Njai, see for example Reggie Baay, *De njai. Het concubinaat in Nederlands-Indië* (2008). Their relationships were not always concubinage, some couples got married after the man left the army. European soldiers usually did not marry their local partners because they wanted to return to the Netherlands after their service was over and this was not allowed when they married an Indigenous woman.

¹⁰⁶ Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, 245.

¹⁰⁷ Meijer explains that the European child had the right to receive schooling since 1894 but that there were few schools around 1900; only 52 percent of European children went to school that year. This would improve over the course of the twentieth century. Meijer, *In Indië*, 35.

¹⁰⁸ Groen, 'Zedelijkheid en martialiteit', 41. De Moor, 1997: 76-78; Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch'*, 246-249; Meijer, *In Indië geworteld*, 34.

criminal children.¹⁰⁹ When looking at the founding dates of orphanages in the Indies we can conclude that the number of orphanages for children with a European father increased over the course of the whole nineteenth century, with a spike in the 1830s (3 orphanages), the 1850s (4 establishments) and the 1880s (another 3).¹¹⁰ In 1900 more than 2600 (Indo-) European children were admitted to orphanages.¹¹¹ These were all set-up by Christian churches and associations, and only a few of them received some state support. The indigenous world was left to its own devices and was expected to take care of (semi-) orphaned children within family or village structures.

Medical doctor J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, who worked on Java since 1892 and would later become professor of anthropology at Utrecht University in the Netherlands, mentions that adoption was practiced in the villages of Java, in the early twentieth century.¹¹² Former civil official H.E.B. Schmallhausen also observed that adoption was common among the Javanese and that family members freely shared houses and resources in times of need.¹¹³ Anthropologist Hildred Geertz did research in a Javanese community in the 1950s, and claims that it was common to ‘borrow’ or adopt children from relatives: ‘One is naturally obliged to provide a home for the child who has lost a parent by divorce or death or whose family is in a comparatively poor financial condition’, writes Geertz.¹¹⁴ Regardless of the actual support structures for orphaned or homeless children within the indigenous community, what is important here is that the colonial government was not concerned yet with the upbringing of indigenous children. A small exception were the children of the indigenous ruling elites, who could go to Dutch language schools since 1816 and to government schools since 1849. These children were considered to be the next generation of

¹⁰⁹ The details about Christian orphanages, poorhouses and state subsidies in the nineteenth century can be found in the reports of the colonial government called *Koloniaal Verslag*. See for example *Koloniaal Verslag 1872*, 98-100 and *Koloniaal Verslag 1884*, bijlage T.

¹¹⁰ For details, see the list of orphanages in appendix A, page 79.

¹¹¹ Meijer, *In Indië geworteld*, 37.

¹¹² J.H.F. Kohlbrugge, *Blikken in het zieleleven van den Javaan en zijner overheerschers* (Leiden, Drukkerij Brill, 1907) 48-49.

¹¹³ H.E.B. Schmallhausen, *Over Java en de Javanen. Nagelaten geschriften van H.E.B. Schmallhausen, Gepd. Assistant-Resident* (Amsterdam, P.N. van Kampen & Zoon, 1909) 40-41.

¹¹⁴ Hildred Geertz, *The Javanese Family. A study of kinship and socialization* (New York, The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961) 36. See also 37-44.

indigenous leaders and their education was deemed increasingly important over the course of the nineteenth century.¹¹⁵

In the 1870s the colonial government's approach towards childcare and juvenile re-education started to change in relation to larger changes in colonial society and a greater European influence on colonial life. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the abandonment of the government's economic monopoly (*Cultuurstelsel*) in favour of a free market economy and the increase of the number of European soldiers in the archipelago all added to fundamental changes in colonial society.¹¹⁶ The white European community was growing in size, now also including ever-greater numbers of white women, and colonial culture became more European-oriented.¹¹⁷ The arrival of European women changed the culture of the colony significantly, from a bachelor-concubine arrangement to a firmly bourgeois marriage ideal. Contemporaries, and later some historians as well, often blamed white women for making colonial society more racially segregated, but their role is now explained differently. White women did not cause an increase in racism in colonial society, but because society became more worried about white prestige and political status colonial elites – mostly men – allowed more white women to settle in the colonies while promoting their 'civilizing' role.¹¹⁸

Historian Ulbe Bosma claims that the increase of the number of white female newcomers was actually less influential than is usually portrayed. According to him, the white men who were not serving the army had brought their wives with them since VOC times, or married a white or Indo-European woman later in their life. The civilian culture of the colony had always been oriented towards the Netherlands, through educational opportunities and frequent migration movements within families, even before the late

¹¹⁵ Kees Groeneboer, *Weg tot het Westen. Het Nederlands voor Indië 1600-1950. Een taalpolitieke geschiedenis* (Leiden, KITLV Uitgeverij, 1993) 154. Also see the tables with numbers of pupils since 1823 on pages 478-485

¹¹⁶ For a short summary of the changes in the Netherlands Indies since 1870 see Meijer, *In Indië geworteld*, 28-31. The number of European newcomers rose from 60.000 Europeans in 1880 to 95.000 in 1905, 168.000 in 1920 and almost 300.000 in 1942.

¹¹⁷ The number of European women in the Indies rose from 18.7 percent of the total European population in 1905, to 40.6 percent in 1915. Rob Nieuwenhuys, *Oost-Indische Spiegel: Wat Nederlandse Schrijvers en Dichters over Indonesië hebben geschreven, vanaf de Eerste Jaren der Compagnie tot op Heden* (Amsterdam: E. Querido, 1978) 166.

¹¹⁸ For a broader discussion of this topic see for example Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power. Race and the intimate in colonial rule* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002) 2, 32-34, 56-57, 70-77. Also Frances Gouda, *Dutch Culture Overseas. Colonial practice in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942* (Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 1995) 162-166.

nineteenth century.¹¹⁹ But the colonial newcomers of the late nineteenth century did bring a new Victorian set of morals with them, and infused colonial society with a civilizing spirit that was racist, controlling and imperialist as well.

While the mission movements stressed the necessity of salvation as a basis for the reform of impoverished and criminal adults and children, adherents of modern science tended to have a more negative image of human behaviour and combined ideas of civilization and reform with a desire for social control. Influenced by scientific and social developments in Europe, like the fin de siècle fear of degeneration of European culture, and newly popular ideas about biological regeneration and ‘improving’ the lower classes, ideas about crime in Europe and the Indies started to change. The groundbreaking evolutionary theory of Darwin, and especially the ways in which social Darwinists used his work, fundamentally changed the analysis of social problems in the second half of the nineteenth century. Poverty was increasingly linked with crime, and impoverished Indo-Europeans were seen in a similar light as the impoverished, supposedly criminal classes in Europe. Because of their white fathers or forefathers impoverished (Indo-)Europeans were considered a threat for colonial prestige, while the indigenous poor were thought to be a risk for social order in the colony in general. These ideas fed into the idea that poor or criminal parents could not raise their children in a good way, and that children should be taken out of their environment to stop the cycle of poverty and criminality.¹²⁰

Observations that linked poverty with criminality were common in Europe and the colonies. To explain the origins of delinquency scientists used a complicated and diffuse mixture of Darwinist evolution-theory, biological ideas, and anthropological insights. From this process criminal anthropology and criminology were born as sciences that positioned parents as both biological and environmental factors for criminality in their offspring.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Ulbe Bosma, *Indiëgangsters. Verhalen van Nederlanders die naar Indië trokken* (Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 2010) 20-23.

¹²⁰ The position of the child in the family and on the labour market drew special attention from social commentators and the ‘discovery’ of the problem called ‘juvenile delinquency’ lies within this period. The rise of social-research, (criminal) statistics, social enquiries, changing penal codes and prison reforms all played their role in the discovery and visibility of this social problem. This process is analyzed in great detail by Jenneke Christiaens in *De geboorte van de jeugddelinquent (België, 1830-1930)* (Brussel, VUBPress, 1999). See especially chapter one, 19-68.

¹²¹ Jenneke Christiaens, *De geboorte van de jeugddelinquent*, 273-303, especially 281-282. Christiaens points out C. Lombroso and his theory about the ‘born delinquent’ as an infamous example of the hybrid of biological and environmental influences and suggests H. Mannheim (ed.), *Pioneers in Criminology* (London, Stevens & Son, 1960) for an overview of the people crucial to the development of criminology. In *Faces of Degeneration* D. Pick remarks that the late nineteenth century was ‘characterized

While Social Darwinism was widely accepted in Europe, in the Indies the Spencerian theory of evolution predominated. Spencer stressed social evolution instead of biological selection as the source of human ability.¹²² This gave more room to manoeuvre when it came to the desired improvement of people's behaviour, because education and upbringing could overcome 'biological disadvantages' like a mixed racial background or supposedly criminal 'genes'.

Around 1900 the government and the different political parties in the Netherlands united to transform 'pauper-children' from a danger to the state into useful citizens. In the eyes of the bourgeoisie, lower social groups were unable to properly raise and educate their children and had to be 'helped' by well-meaning outsiders.¹²³ Similar desires were applied to impoverished, vagabonding and criminal (Indo-)European and indigenous juveniles. This idea of rescuing the 'endangered child' from its own milieu was defined as the main cause for the rise of the 'policing of families', as Jacques Donzelot has called the modern scrutiny of family situations and interventions into those environments by the state and its social workers.¹²⁴ Jenneke Christiaens remarks that in Europe social enquiries played a key role in pointing out impoverished neighbourhoods and populations as the moral and material hotbeds for criminality.¹²⁵ As Ann Stoler has shown, the same development can also be seen in the European colonies, where the presence and potential danger of poor 'whites' or 'Europeans' was a shared concern that induced research inquiries in different colonies. The ensuing colonial social policies were designed to keep up the illusion that colonial settlements were a middle-class phenomenon and they safeguarded European prestige.¹²⁶

The start of research into 'pauperism' in the Indies marks a turning point in colonial social policy. There was a willingness on the part of the colonial government to identify a certain population as a 'problematic' social element. Commissions to study poverty among Europeans in the Indies were set up in 1872, 1882 and 1900. Through these research

by an enormous output of medical and natural scientific writings on social evolution, degeneration, morbidity and perversion'. D. Pick, *Faces of Degeneration. A European disorder, c. 1848-1918* (Cambridge University Press, 1993 (1989) 20.

¹²² Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch'*, 294-295.

¹²³ Ali de Regt, 'De vorming van een Opvoedings-Traditie: Arbeiderskinderen rond 1900,' in *Geschiedenis van Opvoeding en Onderwijs*, ed. B. Kruithof, J. Nordman, and Piet de Rooy (Nijmegen, SUN, 1982), 394-409. See also Nelleke Bakker, *Kind en Karakter. Nederlandse Pedagogie over opvoeding in het gezin, 1845-1925* (Amsterdam, Het Spinhuis, 1995) 2.

¹²⁴ J. Donzelot, *La police des familles. Postface de Gilles Deleuze* (Paris, Minuit, 1977).

¹²⁵ Jenneke Christiaens, *De geboorte van de jeugddelinquent*, 281.

¹²⁶ See Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, 35-36 for examples of the discovery of 'pauperism' in India, the Indies, Barbados, French North Africa and South Africa.

commissions the moral judgement of (Indo-)Europeans became strongly tied to the concept of pauperism. The term 'pauper' had been widely used in the Netherlands and other Western countries since the Industrial Revolution to refer to the poor urban proletariat, in contrast to the respectable working class. In the Indies after 1900, however, it did not refer to the large number of indigenous poor, but to the relatively small group of poor of European ancestry.¹²⁷ Fear of pauperism was intimately connected with concerns about whites or Mestizos living 'in the kampong' (the indigenous urban neighbourhoods) thus tarnishing colonial prestige and colonial rule. European children were seen as especially susceptible to the 'degenerating' effects of life among impoverished 'whites' and indigenous people.

The first Pauperism committee [1872] wrote a report that made the group of impoverished Europeans in Batavia quantitatively visible. The researchers advised the colonial government that the lot of poor (Indo-)Europeans should be improved, but - similar to the outcome of the second enquiry in 1882 - nothing was actually done. The 1872 commission advised to establish an agricultural colony, which would provide a good education and a means of existence through agricultural work. Agricultural colonies and reformatories for the poor and/or criminal were already popular and common in Europe since the eighteenth century and this idea was now applied to the colonies. This solution would supposedly pull the poor out of their misery without spending too much state money. It would also take impoverished and criminal people off the streets and keep them out of trouble until they improved their behaviour. But Governor-General Johan Wilhelm van Lansberge was not impressed by the plan and the idea fizzled out. The idea of agricultural colonies as a solution to (Indo-)European pauperism would remain popular, however, and some experiments were done in the late nineteenth century. They were never a great success, contrary to the agricultural colonies for indigenous poor and indigenous juvenile delinquents that were established later.¹²⁸ While philanthropists, Freemasons¹²⁹ and clergymen were favouring and sponsoring the establishment of orphanages, technical schools and agricultural colonies in the late nineteenth century, the colonial government did not get involved yet. The work of private associations among the poor and orphans, however, was applauded and often financially supported by the colonial state.

¹²⁷ Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, 220-221.

¹²⁸ Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, 255-256.

¹²⁹ Bosma and Raben describe how the Freemasons advocated and initiated the establishment of specialised schools for Indies-born children since the 1850s. See *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, 252.

Most of the broad recommendations of the last Pauperism commission (1900), headed by Van Rees, also fell on deaf ears. The advice of the commission to establish a central poverty board and an inspection for poverty relief was turned down, mostly because the economic crisis of the 1890s had passed and poverty relieve seemed less urgent. The state could thus hold on to the position that it should not directly interfere with poverty relief and leave this in the hands of private associations. The subsidies for private charities were increased, however, so that they could expand their activities. In this way the colonial state stimulated the activities of social activists and reformers and thus the development of a more active civil society.¹³⁰

The results of Van Rees' research into pauperism confirmed what someone like Van der Steur – who also advised the research committee - already believed on the basis of his own experiences among the (Indo-)European population. 'I am convinced that pauperism is caused most of all by recklessly conceiving children without taking care of them. When a majority of pureblood European fathers would do their duty towards their children more faithfully, the orphanages and welfare institutes would just have a third of the number of children they have now. There would not be half as much poverty among the Indos in the bigger cities.'¹³¹

The Van Rees commission confirmed that the real poverty problem was caused by white (ex-)soldiers and that pauperism among Indo-Europeans was much lower than all the alarmists had professed. This outcome was partly due to the improving economy and lower unemployment rates. While earlier on people claimed that about 27 percent of all Europeans in the colony were impoverished, the inquiry showed it was now about 17,5 percent (3711 breadwinners and their families, a total of 9381 persons). From the 17,5 percent classified as 'real' paupers one in three breadwinners was a 'totok', usually an ex-military man who could hardly survive on his pension and had taken on an indigenous lifestyle. The commission judged this group harshly as the 'cancer' of the Indies society. The great majority of Indische breadwinners (approximately 10.000) belonging to the lower middle class, however, was

¹³⁰ Meijer, *In Indië geworteld*, 45-46. When the Dutch parliament in The Hague was finally discussing the measures that should be taken against colonial pauperism in 1907, the Indies' economy had picked up and Dutch politicians argued that the problem was solving itself.

¹³¹ Geciteerd in Meijer, *In Indië geworteld*, 33. Originally cited in S. Kalff, 'Europeesch Pauperisme in Indië', in *Koloniaal Tijdschrift* 9 (1922), 573-585.

living in 'respectable poverty' - Van Rees even described them as well-dressed - and gave no reason for concern or intervention.¹³²

The reports of the pauperism committee reveal how the colonial elite judged poor (Indo-)European parents increasingly harshly. Europeans with a non-European lifestyle were seen as a threat to the image and political position of the colonial rulers. Conservatives policed the colour line more actively than before; they saw opposing mixed relationships as a means to social improvement and protection of European prestige.¹³³ The idea that children with a European parent should be saved from the 'degradation' of kampong life and be raised as proper Christians and Europeans had been around since the eighteenth century, but this rhetoric was now connected to a fear of criminality, social chaos and possible revolt against the colonial rulers. 'They [Indo-European children] are floating between the indigenous and European society, are living on the wind and form an unhappy, dissatisfied and destructive part of the population', wrote Indies specialist Muller in 1912.¹³⁴

The committee believed that one of the measures to reduce pauperism was to change how children were raised. Not just bad education was a cause of pauperism, but especially the lack of moral values and character building. Parents were blamed for neglecting the upbringing of their children, making them unable to get a decent position in society. Poorer families were supposedly not giving their children 'a domestic instruction in Christian values', but the wealthier did not escape criticism either.¹³⁵

According to commission member A. Claessens it was a fact that 'most *Indische* parents, not excluding the better off, lack the most elementary knowledge to raise [children]'. He especially blamed the influence of indigenous mothers: 'the neglected upbringing of the children who are born from Native mothers, mostly out of wedlock, is of utmost importance here. The upbringing from mother's side is not much more than the one that every Native gets. This upbringing is dominated by specifically Native ideas, grounded in Mohammedan principles or the Native adat [custom or tradition].'¹³⁶ Claessen believed that children who were raised by their indigenous mothers combined the worst of both indigenous and European characteristics. This was not corrected by their later education in school, if they got

¹³² Meijer, *In Indië geworteld*, 42-43.

¹³³ Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, 293-294.

¹³⁴ H.P.N. Muller, 'De Europeesche samenleving', 371-372, in: H. Colijn (red.), *Neerlands Indië*, deel II (Amsterdam 1912) 371-384. Cited in Meijer, *In Indië geworteld*, 33.

¹³⁵ *Rapport der Pauperisme-Commissie ingesteld bij artikel 2 van het regeeringsbesluit van 29 juni 1902 no 9* (Batavia, Landsdrukkerij, 1903) 1e bijlage, advies aan de GG, Buitenzorg 28 februari 1903, 57.

¹³⁶ *Rapport der Pauperisme-Commissie*, 1e bijlage, 58.

it, because the school was religiously neutral and did not teach them any character building, which Claessen apparently connected to a Christian upbringing. He felt that it was no wonder 'that under these circumstances it is impossible to foster good citizens for the State'. Once they became adults, these people were considered beyond improvement, because 'a tree that has grown crooked is not easily straightened'.¹³⁷

Claessen probably got his ideas about what an indigenous upbringing entailed from the observations published by European missionaries, soldiers and civil officials. These accounts about indigenous life were written with a firm European mindset and strong ideas about how people were supposed to live.¹³⁸ In 1851 former soldier J.B.J. van Doren decided to write about the lives of the Javanese from what he called his fifteen years of experience with the personal lives 'of the native families of Java'. He described the Javanese as people who neglected the upbringing of their children; this made them emotional, impulsive and carefree. Children, especially boys, spent most of their time looking after livestock and working on the fields from an early age. Because they did not get a proper education and because parents did not give the proper example of restraining their passions and impulses, boys who reached manhood had no control over their passions, reported Van Doren.¹³⁹

Van Doren observed that there was no regular elementary education within the Javanese community and that only children who felt like it learned something from their elders. Van Doren quotes a governmental letter of 1831 by Resident Valck who presided over the so-called princely holdings of Djokjakarta and Soerakarta (*Vorstenlanden*). Valck wrote that about 31 Islamic schools existed in the residency of Djokjakarta, but that there was no public education. The Islamic schools, called *pasantrian*, did not have good teachers in the eyes of the Dutch; they supposedly just taught pupils to repeat the Koran and read some Arabic script. Valck concluded that children repeated the teacher 'like parrots' and did not learn to think for themselves.¹⁴⁰ In the areas under Dutch government there were some schools for the Javanese youth since 1849, mentioned Van Doren. These facilities were for the elite and he credited the indigenous ruling class for having an interest in schooling their

¹³⁷ *Rapport der Pauperisme-Commissie, 1e bijlage*, 58.

¹³⁸ European observers liked to believe in the myth of undisturbed and peaceful Javanese villages in the nineteenth century, but were afraid of indigenous life in the *desa* as well. See for example Marieke Bloembergen, *Uit zorg en angst*, 40-41.

¹³⁹ J.B.J. van Doren, *De Javaan in het ware daglicht geschetst. Benevens eenige inlichtingen over het Binnenlandsch Bestuur op Java* ('s Gravenhage, J. en H. van Langenhuysen, 1851) 18-19.

¹⁴⁰ Van Doren, *De Javaan in het ware daglicht geschetst*, 21-22.

children in the western style.¹⁴¹ Despite his critical observations of Javanese upbringing and education he did not provide any recommendations to change the situation.

Former assistant-resident H.E.B. Schmallhausen, who worked on Java in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, published his observations of Javanese life in 1909. While Schmallhausen's observations are coloured with racist and orientalist undertones, he wrote from an ethical perspective and recommended public education as an important means to uplift the Javanese population economically and socially.¹⁴² Schmallhausen generally paints a positive picture of the Javanese childhood, with loving parents and as much food as could be provided. At the same time he also stressed the differences between a European and a Javanese upbringing, and commented upon the same parental 'failures' that Van Doren mentioned fifty years before: 'They [parents] are tyrannised by their children and have no knowledge about a true upbringing and even less of shaping the [child's] character.' Schmallhausen noted that parents spoiled their children and gave in to their whims, but at the same time children started helping their parents with their work when they were around five years old. The majority of children had no possibility to go to school. In January 1895 Java had 25.000.000 inhabitants and only 54.828 children were going to school. Compared to the number of children going to school in the Netherlands at the time, Java should have had 3.500.000 children going to school, claimed Schmallhausen.¹⁴³

Kohlbrugge repeated much of the same observations and arguments in 1907. He commented that indigenous parents did not take care of the mental characteristics of the child, but instead focused on their physical needs. Because the mother gave the child her breast or other food whenever it was hungry, the child did not learn to control its impulses. Parents were accused of weakness and the lack of a firm hand; they did not dare to refuse the child anything or to physically punish it because they believed that this would damage the child's soul, said Kohlbrugge.¹⁴⁴ Like Claessen stressed that Indo-European children should have a Christian upbringing, Kohlbrugge also believed that a spread of Christianity and education were the most important factors in changing the upbringing and character of the Javanese. The disappearance of 'animism' was crucial if 'the Javanese' was ever going to function on a similar level with 'the European', stated Kohlbrugge.¹⁴⁵ His approach was quite

¹⁴¹ Van Doren, *De Javaan in het ware daglicht geschetst*, 25-26

¹⁴² Schmallhausen, *Over Java en de Javanen*, 204-218.

¹⁴³ Schmallhausen, *Over Java en de Javanen*, 70-73

¹⁴⁴ Kohlbrugge, *Blikken in het zieleleven van den Javanen*, 52-53.

¹⁴⁵ Kohlbrugge, *Blikken in het zieleleven van den Javanen*, 68-79.

in line with other ethical thinkers, who often supported the Christian mission movement for the education and ‘uplift’ of the Javanese, as we will see in the next section.

Europeans who deemed the upbringing of Indo-European and indigenous children below standard, and feared the consequences of this, were influenced by general ideas about upbringing that had developed in Europe. The idea that the character of a child was built during the first years of its life and the importance of the proper attitude of parents had become a common idea in the mid-nineteenth century. In the Netherlands the upbringing manuals of the Amsterdam doctor G.A.N. Allebé, like *De ontwikkeling van het kind naar ligchaam en geest* [the development of the child in body and mind] of 1845, influenced generations of middle-class Dutch men and women until the early twentieth century. One of his central claims was that mothers should not spoil or give in to all the needs of their children; this would only make them weak and demanding. He also stressed the importance of giving the right behavioural example, since young children would simply ‘copy’ their parents.¹⁴⁶ So when indigenous parents were described as spoiling and weak, this was certainly meant as a negative qualification.

The 1900 Pauperism Commission recommended the establishment of more institutions for education, re-education and improvement of already neglected or deserted children but this was still focused on (Indo-)European children. Too much charity was considered dangerous, however, because parents would supposedly not feel any responsibility for their children anymore and conceive even more of them. Implicit in this statement is that indigenous mothers and European fathers did not really care about their offspring and would easily burden the state with taking care of their children. The government could by no means afford this and so the commission advised that parents should not be discharged from their responsibility. To help parents with their upbringing and make sure that children developed in a proper way the commission believed in establishing so-called *fröbel* schools (nurseries) for the youngest children. Here they would learn proper Dutch and moral values as a preparation for their school education.¹⁴⁷

These ideas were, again, echoing similar lines of thought in the Netherlands. Around 1900 the role of the mother and good upbringing in the family were seen as the most

¹⁴⁶ Allebé’s famous 1845 publication *De ontwikkeling van het kind naar ligchaam en geest* [the development of the child in body and mind] was reprinted until 1908, while ideas about hygiene and the child’s body changed in the different publications, his advice on upbringing and character stayed the same throughout these fifty years. See Bakker, *Kind en Karakter*, 11-20.

¹⁴⁷ *Rapport der Pauperisme-Commissie, 1e bijlage*, 58-60.

important and preferred pedagogical devices for young children, but nurseries were considered a good alternative for the lower classes. Through the proper education of small children poor families could supposedly be taught a healthier and more orderly way of life. The child would serve as an example for its family, and would hopefully continue to choose a different way of life than its parents.¹⁴⁸ The establishment of nurseries thus seemed an excellent way to combat pauperism in the Indies. Government officials of the colonial state had been discussing this idea since 1849 but could not reach an agreement. As long as the state did not take on this task, the (Christian) philanthropic institutions that did so should be generously supported, felt the commission. Because only when young children were 'uplifted' from their misery could the 'backward classes among the European inhabitants' be structurally improved.¹⁴⁹

1.3. Christian missionaries and the ethical policy: a marriage of convenience and conviction

Around 1900 two philanthropic institutions that benefited from the colonial state's support of missionaries and more generous subsidies for private social work were Oranje Nassau and Witte Kruis Kolonie. This development was part of the new 'moral politics' of the Dutch government towards the Indies, which gave more state support to missionaries and their reform efforts. Van der Steur and Van Emmerik were both part of the expansion of missionary activities; Van der Steur still in the older tradition of Indo-European childcare, while Van Emmerik was focussing on rescuing and reforming indigenous people and juveniles. They both saw a strong role for themselves in colonial civil society - especially in the area of social work and poverty relief - and applied Dutch ideas about pauperism and morality to colonial society and its perceived problems. Both institutions would initiate the institutional reform of juvenile delinquents in the early 1900s.

In political language the Dutch version of the colonial civilizing mission became known as the ethical policy (*ethische politiek*). This new approach to colonial policy was of crucial importance to the development of juvenile care and re-education in the Indies,

¹⁴⁸ Bakker, *Kind en Karakter*, 21-22.

¹⁴⁹ *Rapport der Pauperisme-Commissie, 1e bijlage*, 58-60. Secondly the commission mentioned the importance of regular schooling and trade schools, but not without stressing that much better results would be had if the state would start to properly shape the character of the very young. In the end, the commission argued, the state could do everything in its power but these efforts would still fail to uplift the Indo-European paupers if they did not have an attitude of hard work and the will to succeed. They believed that young children would adopt this 'proper' attitude much easier if they would spend time in a Dutch pre-school environment. *Rapport der Pauperisme-Commissie, 1e bijlage*, 70-71.

because it changed the status and importance that was given to the indigenous population of the colony. Social care had always been limited to the European population, but would now be extended over (part of) the indigenous inhabitants of the archipelago as well. The development of the ethical policy had everything to do with the economic relation between the Netherlands and the Indies. Before the 1860s the so-called *cultuurstelsel* [culture system] forced indigenous farmers to produce a certain amount of valuable cash crops, which were sold and taxed by the Dutch for good money. This money was not invested in the colony and its inhabitants, but mostly benefited the Dutch state.

In the mid-nineteenth century criticism of this system started to mount among businessmen, who wanted the freedom to start their own companies in the colonies, Christian reformers, who wanted to convert indigenous people and improve social circumstances, and the different political parties in the Netherlands. The culture system was gradually abolished in the 1860s and the colony opened up for individual entrepreneurs. A Christian-conservative Dutch politician commented in 1869 that this did not improve the situation for indigenous people very much, because the liberal slogan of ‘free cultivation, free labour and individual possession’ actually meant that the Javanese were handed over to their ‘so-called European friends, [...] leaving them to balance their love for the Native against their regards for their own pockets’.¹⁵⁰

The Christian Reformed (*gereformeerde*) Anti-Revolutionary Party (A.R.P, est. 1879) under the leadership of Abraham Kuyper, and the Socialist Party S.D.A.P. (est. 1894) were among the strongest critics of the Dutch governments’ economic policy in the Netherlands Indies. The A.R.P program of 1879 called past and current colonial policies ‘selfish’ and proposed to conduct politics of ‘moral obligation’ that would allow for the spiritual and material welfare of indigenous people. Kuyper believed that the Dutch state had to guarantee the freedom to disseminate Christian religion in the Indies, uplift and civilize the indigenous population, and should in due course allow the possibility of indigenous rule of the colony in an equal relationship to the Netherlands.¹⁵¹

In 1899 the liberal lawyer C. Th. van Deventer published a famous article about the Dutch ‘debt of honour’ in periodical *De Gids*. He argued that Dutch colonial revenues should be returned to the Indies through investments in education and social policies. A brochure from *Indische* journalist P. Brooshooft, who coined the name *ethische politiek*, also shaped

¹⁵⁰ Furnivall, *Netherlands India*, 175.

¹⁵¹ Sumartana, *Mission at the crossroads*, 70-71.

public opinion.¹⁵² The term ethical policy was used by many different people to signify many different ideas, but the common denominator was that the Dutch government could no longer justify its colonial possessions by extracting as much revenue possible, but should instead ‘civilize’ native people and develop societal structures and governing institutions after its own image.¹⁵³

When Kuyper became Prime Minister in 1901 his ethical ideas could be implemented as official state policy. At the opening of the parliamentary year 1901 the young Queen Wilhelmina voiced the new approach towards Dutch colonial policy in the Netherlands Indies: ‘As a Christian nation the Netherlands are obliged to improve the judicial position of indigenous Christians, to provide solid support for the Christian mission and to infuse all governmental policy with the realization that the Netherlands have a moral duty towards the people of these regions.’¹⁵⁴ The resulting colonial policy focused on ‘emigration, irrigation, and education’. The idea of a Dutch civilizing mission in the Indies was supported by a majority of the Dutch political parties and would become a guiding principle for decades.¹⁵⁵

The Dutch government’s outright support for Dutch missionary activities in the early twentieth century was important for the development of juvenile care and reform in the Indies because it gave missionaries a mandate to expand their social activities among both the (Indo-)European and indigenous population. Several missionaries or mission organizations established new hospitals, childcare institutions, schools and agricultural colonies around 1900. In 1881 the Mennonite missionary P.A. Jansz established the Christian agricultural colony Margoredjo for needy Javanese to the north of Semarang and Pati.¹⁵⁶ This institution also accepted orphaned and neglected indigenous children among its inhabitants, who had to work in the colony to receive food and clothing.¹⁵⁷ The Salvation Army (Leger des Heils)

¹⁵² Hans van Miert, *Bevlogenheid en Onvermogen: Mr. J. H. Abendanon en de Ethische Richting in het Nederlandse Kolonialisme*. (Leiden, KITLV, 1991) 7-8. Cees Fasseur, *Imperialisme en Ethische Politiek*, 1-3. Van den Doel, *Afscheid van Indië*, 22.

¹⁵³ Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in Fragmenten. Vijf studies over koloniaal denken en doen van Nederlanders in de Indonesische archipel, 1877-1942* (Utrecht, Hes, 1981) 201.

¹⁵⁴ Speech from the Throne (*Troonrede*) Queen Wilhelmina, 1901. The website <http://www.troonredes.nl> has a library with all the original speeches since 1814. Last checked 10-08-2010.

¹⁵⁵ Van Doorn, *De laatste eeuw*, 149-155. Herman Langeveld, *Dit leven van krachtig handelen. Hendrikus Colijn, 1869-1944. Deel één, 1869-1933* (Amsterdam, Uitgeverij Balans, 1998) 89-90.

¹⁵⁶ See for example the extensive information about mr. Jansz and his colony in the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (GAMEO), <http://www.gameo.org/encyclopedia/contents/J379.html>, last checked 08-07-2010.

¹⁵⁷ Boekhoudt mentioned that Mrs. Jansz took in indigenous juveniles in 1905-1906, in *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, 62.

sent its first two missionaries - ensign Van Emmerik and staff captain Brouwer - to Java in 1894, and they started proselytizing and doing social work among the European and indigenous population of Java. The number of Salvation Army officers grew fast and they established schools, military homes, agricultural colonies, hospitals and leper colonies.¹⁵⁸ Between May and August 1903 the Salvation Army gave almost 40.000 people accommodation for the night, they provided meals for 110.000 people, medicines for 30.398 persons and cared for 1230 people in their homes. The Salvation Army schools had 680 children in attendance in those four months.¹⁵⁹

The strong missionary and ethical spirit in the Indies was an extension of developments in Europe, where reform movements - based on new scientific insights or older religious grounds - gained in strength since the 1880s.¹⁶⁰ An increased spirit of reform, civilization, and rescue in Europe thus informed the civilizing ideals that were applied to the European colonies. But the civilizing mission also had controlling and forceful aspects, in both Europe and the colonies. This was visible in social policies, when 'abnormal' people were forced to reform, but also in matters of state building and colonial expansion. The Dutch government's support for mission activities in the Indies was not just inspired by a new commitment to social care. The ethical policy and mission activities also corresponded with the expansionist and imperialist ambition of the Dutch government.¹⁶¹ The Dutch did not try to conquer territory in Africa or outside of the Indonesian archipelago; they focused instead on bringing the Outer Islands (*Buitenbezittingen*) and independent kingdoms like Aceh under Dutch rule between the 1870s and 1910s.¹⁶² The ethical policy was also a means to create a peaceful colonial population and avoid intervention or occupation by other

¹⁵⁸ Melattie Brouwer, *History of the Salvation Army in Indonesia. Volume I. 1894-1949* (Hawthorn, Citadel Press, 1996) 14, 24, 27-28.

¹⁵⁹ Brouwer, *History of the Salvation Army in Indonesia*, 34.

¹⁶⁰ See Gertrude Himmelfarb, *Poverty and Compassion. The Moral Imagination of the Late Victorians* (New York, Knopf, 1991) 10-17. Himmelfarb discusses the 'science' of charity (chapter 13) but also opposing reform movements which were based on religious grounds like the Salvation Army (chapter 15).

¹⁶¹ This was also the case in other European empires, like the British empire. Andrew Porter stresses that missions not only supported empire building through their activities but that they also criticized and distanced themselves from it through their global contacts and universal theology. See Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire? British Protestant missionaries and overseas expansion, 1700-1914* (Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 2004).

¹⁶² The first military attack on Aceh was in 1873-1879, the conquest of Lombok took place in 1894, and another military offensive in Aceh followed between the 1890s and 1910s. For an explanation of the Dutch version of imperialism see for example H.L. Wesseling, *The European colonial empires, 1815-1919* (Harlow, Pearson Longman, 2004) 141-142. For a summary of the expeditions in Aceh and Lombok see pages 210-214.

countries. Japan had become more prominent on the imperialist world stage since its war with China in 1894-1895 and showed imperialist ambitions. New Guinea was already shared with Germany since 1884, and the British intruded on Borneo.¹⁶³

Christian mission associations actively stimulated the process of state building by pressing the Dutch government to extend effective rule to the Outer Islands to guarantee the safety of the missionaries working there. In the case of New Guinea and the Soemba islands the government responded to these requests and established a permanent local government in 1898 and 1906, respectively.¹⁶⁴ On the other hand the Dutch government consciously employed the mission movement to help with civilizing efforts and increase influence and control over the indigenous population.¹⁶⁵ In 1888 Minister of Colonies L.W.C. Keuchenius (strictly religious and a member of Kuyper's A.R.P) asked all the mission associations to send more missionaries to spread Christianity and stop the growth of Islam. The next Secretary for the Colonies (*Minister van Koloniën*), A.W.F. Idenburg, was also an A.R.P-member and continued requests to the mission movement to send more missionaries to bolster the spread of European and Christian civilization in the first years of the twentieth century.¹⁶⁶ In these ways the missions became tied to the imperial ambitions of the Dutch state by their own account, and through an active pro-mission policy of the Dutch government under Prime Minister Kuyper.

But while the Christian mission and its reformers became an important ally for the Dutch state and their civilizing ambitions in the colony, there also remained a tension between the colonial government and Christian ambitions. The colonial state had declared itself religiously neutral in the late nineteenth century as part of the Islam policy designed by the Advisor for Native Affairs Snouck Hurgronje. Religious neutrality entailed that the state would not favour one religion over the other and would not force any of its inhabitants to take on a particular religion.¹⁶⁷ Many Islamic groups condemned the government's active

¹⁶³ Kees van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War, 1914-1918* (KITLV Press, Leiden, 2007) 1-10.

¹⁶⁴ Ida Houwen, *Op luk en raak. Zending en expansie in Nederlands-Indië tussen 1885 en 1909* (Masters thesis in history, Leiden University, 1996) 28-34.

¹⁶⁵ See for an analysis of Dutch imperialism for example M. Kuitenbrouwer, *Nederland en de opkomst van het moderne imperialisme. Koloniën en buitenlandse politiek 1870-1902* (Amsterdam, De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1985) 7-24. Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in fragmenten*, 171-182, 194-200.

¹⁶⁶ Ida Houwen, *Op luk en raak*, 34-35.

¹⁶⁷ Snouck Hurgronje had introduced the twin principles of religious neutrality and political vigilance as prerequisites for his Islam policy, but the principles soon started to live their own separate lives, becoming ends in themselves, according to Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun. Indonesian Islam under the Japanese occupation, 1942-1945* (KITLV, 1983) 20-26, 69.

(financial) support of Christian activities. Islamic leaders saw religious preference in Dutch colonial policy and objected to the spread of mission activities.¹⁶⁸ With regards to Christian involvement in juvenile care and re-education the colonial government struggled with its own principles and would do so until the establishment of the first state reformatory in 1918.

Ethical politicians like H.H. van Kol were among the first to start writing about juvenile crime and the necessity for reform measures. Van Kol was a socialist and a member of parliament for the Dutch socialist party S.D.A.P from 1897 until 1909. He had a personal relationship with the Indies because he worked there as an engineer for the national water management organization (*Rijkswaterstaat*) between 1876-1884 and 1886-1892. During this time he developed radical socialist criticism of Dutch colonial policy. Back in the Netherlands his orientation became more moderate and he started to support a more moderate and democratically oriented socialism. Van Kol was one of the founders of the S.D.A.P. and wrote their colonial program (1901), which stressed that taxes raised in the Indies should be spent in the colony and that the colony should be guided towards an equal position in relation to the Dutch state.¹⁶⁹

Van Kol protested against the exploitation of the indigenous population by the Dutch government, but believed in Dutch rule in the archipelago. His mission was to improve Dutch rule to benefit the well-being and development of indigenous people. Van Kol proposed to reduce the number of European bureaucrats in the Indies, and to improve education for indigenous elites so they could fulfil a larger role in governing the colony.¹⁷⁰ He envisioned a gradual emancipation of the indigenous population so that they would eventually govern their own country in an equal relationship – but a relationship nonetheless – to the Netherlands. Van Kol was a socialist but he had great respect for the work of missionaries in the Indies. In 1902 he travelled all over the archipelago to gain knowledge about the colony and to write a socially engaged travel journal in which he also discussed juvenile crime and reform.¹⁷¹

While the colonial government claimed that juvenile crime in the colony was of no great concern (see 1.1.), Van Kol believed otherwise. He stated that the number of European and indigenous juvenile offenders that was apprehended and punished was artificially low because judges did not actually want to send them to prison, because they knew the children

¹⁶⁸ Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, 71-75.

¹⁶⁹ Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in fragmenten*, 185.

¹⁷⁰ Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in fragmenten*, 41-43.

¹⁷¹ H.H. van Kol, *Uit onze koloniën. Uitvoerig reisverhaal. Geïllustreerd met vele afbeeldingen en kaarten* (Leiden, A.W. Sijthoff, 1903).

would be corrupted there. He expressed that it was also necessary to establish reformatories in the Indies, as had been done in the Netherlands, to take children out of their ‘damaging environment’ and re-educate them. For an effective prevention of criminality one had to start with the children.¹⁷²

1.4. Christian child savers in the Indies: Oranje-Nassau and the Witte Kruis Kolonie

The first examples of men who did start with the criminal children, as Van Kol advocated, were Johannes van der Steur and Adolf van Emmerik. Van der Steur went from his reform activities in the slums of Holland to the Dutch army barracks on Java, where he arrived as an independent missionary in 1892. He found his calling in working among Dutch soldiers and their children, who were mostly born from ‘sinful’, because unmarried, relationships with local women. Between 1892 and 1945 Van der Steur became the ‘father’ - in Dutch endearingly called *Pa* - of more than 7000 mostly Indo-European orphans, neglected, and delinquent children in the Oranje-Nassau institute he founded in the mid-Javanese city of Magelang.¹⁷³

Van Emmerik was also concerned about the future of the colonies’ children, although he focused on Javanese boys and girls, instead of Indo-European youth. Van Emmerik was born and raised in the Indies, but similar to Van der Steur, he worked as a religious and social reformer in the slums of Europe before starting his social work in the Indies. Van Emmerik aimed to bring both the gospel and social reform to the Javanese. For this end he founded the Witte Kruis Kolonie with his British wife Alice Cleverly in 1902. Witte Kruis was an agricultural colony that gave destitute Javanese a place to live and work the land, near the town of Salatiga.¹⁷⁴ Van Emmerik and his wife became the patriarch and matriarch of several

¹⁷² Van Kol, *Uit onze kolonieën*, 655.

¹⁷³ It seems that Pa van der Steur was really seen as a father figure by (most of) his (ex-)pupils. According to various sources he was always available, day and night, to care for his pupils and dole out both love and punishment. He decided not to have children himself, to avoid any jealousy or favouritism, a decision that he and his wife reportedly struggled with for the rest of their lives. See C.H.G.H.Brakkee, *Pa van der Steur, vader van 7000 kinderen* (s.l. 1981) 98-99.

¹⁷⁴ The agricultural colony of Van Emmerik reflected a broadly supported idea that the overpopulation of Java could be relieved by resettling people in areas where more land was available, usually in the so-called Outer Regions (*Buitengewesten*) like the islands of Sumatra, Celebes, and Borneo. The Dutch colonial government started these migration projects in the early twentieth century. See for example Karl J. Pelzer, *Planter and peasant. Colonial policy and the agrarian struggle in East-Sumatra, 1863-1847* (‘s-Gravenhage 1978). Dik Roth and Hans Serrarens, *Sawahs en ladangs. Transmigratie in het Seblat-gebied, provincie Benkulu, Sumatra* (Amsterdam, Centre for Asian Studies, 1988). A. van Emmerik, ‘Het vormen van Javaansche dessa’s op Celebes, ook in verband met de Armenzorg van de Witte Kruis Kolonie’, *Koloniaal Weekblad*, 08-06-1906. D. Fock, *Beschouwingen en voorstellen ter verbetering van*

thousands of impoverished Javanese women, men, and children who lived and worked on Witte Kruis between 1902 and 1946. Van Emmerik and Van der Steur became lifelong friends and regularly visited each other's institutions.¹⁷⁵

Van Kol praised both men for their social work after he visited them in 1902. He complimented Van Emmerik for taking in orphaned and delinquent indigenous children who never had 'a true upbringing'; children who were growing up 'like mushrooms on the dung heaps of our society'.¹⁷⁶ Van der Steur was praised for reforming Indo-European children who were 'paupers by our own fault' and 'pariahs in their own land'.¹⁷⁷ Both men believed in the power of Christian salvation and applied reform ideas they had developed during their work in Europe. Importantly, Oranje-Nassau and Witte Kruis were Christian philanthropic institutions that would take in juvenile delinquents for the colonial government in the early twentieth century. In 1905 Oranje-Nassau was the first to take in Indo-European juvenile delinquents for 'improvement'; around the same time Witte Kruis was the first institution that admitted indigenous juveniles with a criminal record.¹⁷⁸ Through these activities, the two institutions stood at the basis of a colonial re-education system that would expand in the first half of the twentieth century.

Between the late 1870s and the early 1890s, Johannes van der Steur was a Seventh-day Baptist and worked as a young missionary in the slums of Haarlem and Amsterdam. As a seventeen-year old he already felt the need to relieve the suffering of children who were living in want because of the alcoholism of their fathers; he bought bread and food for them with the little money he made as a baker's assistant. Together with a friend he also started a Sunday school and evening education for poor boys in Haarlem, who had to work during the

den economischen toestand der inlandsche bevolking van Java en Madoera ('s-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, 1904).

¹⁷⁵ In various editions of the monthly magazine of the Witte Kruis Kolonie the Van Emmeriks mention their visits to Oranje-Nassau and praise the work of their friend Van der Steur. During Van Emmerik's funeral on Wednesday the ninth of July 1924 Pa van der Steur and a group of his pupils came to Salatiga to speak, pray, and sing at his grave. 'The most touching moment was when the grey Van der Steur came forward to say goodbye to his friend. [...] Each person was deeply moved; tears welled up in every eye,' stated a journalist of the *Algemeen Handelsblad* newspaper. 'De begrafenis van den Heer van Emmerik', overgenomen uit het *Algemeen Handelsblad* in *Witte-Kruisblad: Maandblad Witte Kruis Kolonie Salatiga*, No. 7-8, Juli en Augustus 1924, 22^e jaargang, 17. B619, Magazine and Newspaper collection, PNRI.

¹⁷⁶ Van Kol, *Uit onze kolonieën*, 761.

¹⁷⁷ Van Kol, *Uit onze kolonieën*, 768, 770.

¹⁷⁸ Joh. Van der Steur, *Jaarverslag over 1904*, 4-5. Before this time children who were sentenced to re-education were placed with private persons, a practice that was discredited in the early years of the twentieth century under the influence of 'modern' ideas about re-education and changes in colonial society. This will be discussed in chapter two.

day and could not go to school.¹⁷⁹ After 1888 he worked as one of the first two missionaries of the Midnight Mission (*Middernachtzending*) in the Netherlands. The organisation was strictly Protestant and part of the larger moral reform movement that developed in the Netherlands and Western Europe in the 1880s. The Midnight Mission fought prostitution, which was legal in the Netherlands at the time, by focusing on customers instead of prostitutes. Van der Steur would go out into the red light districts and drinking halls to tell men and women about Jesus Christ and try to convince them to better themselves and live a Christian life. 'Fallen women' were informed that there was a rescue home in the Dutch countryside where they could go.¹⁸⁰ With this mission he ended up in the port city of Harderwijk, where newly conscripted colonial soldiers departed for the Indies. The stories he heard about life in the colonial army barracks - about concubinage, drinking, and illegitimate children - made him decide to go to the colony to start military homes where soldiers could relax in a Christian environment. A committee of wealthy Dutch men and women supported him financially.¹⁸¹

Van der Steur arrived in Java in 1892 to establish a home for ex-soldiers in the Mid-Javanese garrison city Magelang, but instead he started to take care of their orphaned and impoverished children. Within a few years, more neglected and orphaned soldiers' children than ex-soldiers lived with Pa van der Steur, a total of 40 in 1895.¹⁸² When he visited the kampongs and barracks and saw European-looking children he would try to convince their mothers to give them up for adoption into his institution. Many children also came to him because their families or the church sent them.¹⁸³ A few of them would visit his school and continue to live at home.¹⁸⁴ In this sense Van der Steur was a precursor of the Pro Juventute social workers who would venture into the kampongs after 1918 to do the same thing: remove children from indigenous culture and supposedly harmful influences in order to educate them properly. This was obviously not only justified by well-meaning efforts to help

¹⁷⁹ Brakkee, *Pa van der Steur*, 14-15.

¹⁸⁰ Rudolf Dekker, 'De Middernachtzending: een buitenparlementaire actiegroep', in S. Faber, S. Van Ruller, eds. *Criminaliteit in de negentiende eeuw*, (Hilversum, Uitgeverij Verloren, 1989), 109-115.

¹⁸¹ Poldi Carlos Saueressig, *Johannes van der Steur. Een Haarlemse diamant in de gordel van smaragd* (s.l. 1998) 52-66.

¹⁸² Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, 249.

¹⁸³ In one story Van der Steur visited a military funeral and talked to the widow about giving her child to him. He also gave the mother some money to support her temporarily. This story was told by a certain Jan, from Magelang, who witnessed this as the child of the widow and was indeed sent to Van der Steur in 1937. Jan, 'Magelang', p 124, in Tjaal Aeckerlin and Rick Schoonenberg, *Lied van een tokeh. Verhalen uit voormalig Nederlands-Indië* (Amsterdam: KIT Publishers, 2004).

¹⁸⁴ Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch'*, 249-250.

children in need but also by negative judgements about poor families' upbringing and parenting. After a short time children from all over the colony and with different social backgrounds found their way to Van der Steur. He explained; 'we have the child of the fusilier and his adjutant, of the clerk, the assistant-resident, the modest gardener and the most arrogant administrators of plantations. There were children of the French, Belgians, Italians, Germans, Swiss, though in most cases of the Dutch.'¹⁸⁵

Less well known is that the Dutch colonial government asked Van der Steur in 1909 to also take care of Indo-European juvenile delinquents and re-educate them, which he did until the opening of the first state re-education institute in Semarang in 1918. Between 1905 and 1909 the colonial government started doubting its existing re-education measures and became convinced that (Indo-) European juvenile delinquents were better off in an institution, instead of with families, because 'strict discipline is better guaranteed in an institution'. The Council of the Indies claimed that only people who needed the money (10 guilders a month) were taking in delinquents, and that these 'needy' families would not give the moral education that the youngster needed to improve his behaviour.¹⁸⁶ Governor General J.B. Van Heutsz came to an agreement with Van der Steur in 1909. From now on European juvenile delinquents who were sent to an improvement home by the government under article 5 would no longer live with private persons, but would be institutionalized with Van der Steur.¹⁸⁷

While Van der Steur was taking care of several hundred orphaned and a few delinquent children in the city of Magelang, Adolf van Emmerik and his wife Alice were living with Javanese adults and children on their agricultural colony on the slopes of the Merbabu volcano. Similar to Van der Steur, the Van Emmeriks felt a strong religious calling for their work among impoverished indigenous people. Van Emmerik had grown up in the Indies, in a social climate that was not very conducive to religion. The colony was famously

¹⁸⁵ Cited in Th. Stevens, 'Indo-Europeanen in Nederlands-Indië: sociale positie en welvaartsontwikkeling', in P.J.Drooglever (red.), *Indisch Intermezzo. Geschiedenis van de Nederlanders in Indonesië* (Amsterdam 1994) 38. Quoted again from this article by Meijer, *In Indië*, 38.

¹⁸⁶ Kommissoriaal van den 6den April 1909 No 27, aan den Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie om met terugzending te dienen van consideratien en advies. No XII. *Advies van den Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie*, uitgebracht in de buitengewone vergadering van 24 April 1909, pp. 5-6. In BT 19-06-09, No. 7, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI. *Advies van de leden van de Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie, Mr. C.H.Nieuwenhuys en R.H.Ebbink, overgelegd bij dat van den raad van 24 april 1909 No. XII, op het commissoriaal van den 6den dier maand No. 27*, pp. 1-2, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI.

¹⁸⁷ 's-Gravenhage, 6 January 1910, *Department of Colonies to the Governor General*, p 2. In Ag 3520/1910, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta. See the decision of the Governor General, *Bt 19 June 1909 No. 7*, pp 5-7, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI.

‘uncultured’ and ‘unreligious’ compared to life in the Netherlands.¹⁸⁸ The couple was an example of the newer ‘ethical’ ideal of uplifting and rescuing the Javanese. They not only wanted to feed and provide for impoverished people, but aimed to change their outlook and behaviour by civilizing and especially Christianizing them. Van Emmerik had high hopes for the future of the Javanese, as long as they embraced the message of Jesus Christ and certain aspects of Western civilization. Indigenous children, including juvenile delinquents, played an important role in his vision.

In the 1880s - when he was in his late twenties - Van Emmerik experienced a religious revelation that told him to bring the Javanese ‘a song of hope and happiness’.¹⁸⁹ Despite his secular upbringing this mission never left him and would quite literally become the guiding force of his life: Christian songs in Dutch, Javanese, and English were one of his favourite ways to spread the Gospel among the Javanese. This religious calling happened ‘despite himself’, felt Van Emmerik, ‘I was trying to douse the burning fire in my soul and my longing for God’.¹⁹⁰ This seemed more convenient than giving into his religious longings, since he worked as a government official (*commies*) in the Governor General’s general office (*Algemene Secretarie*) between 1874 and 1881. In later years he would often sigh with despair about what he felt was the ‘atheistic’ government of the colony.¹⁹¹

Van Emmerik was honourably discharged from his work as a civil service employee after he was struck by grief because of the death of his first wife. He returned to Europe in 1892 for a period of recovery.¹⁹² In later years Van Emmerik and his wife often referred to his weak nerves and physical weakness, he was deeply affected by the death and suffering of the Javanese around him, had temporary paralysis due to malaria, and was generally weak. ‘If I am victorious I am so because of the Faith’, he declared frequently.¹⁹³ His work would have been impossible without his second wife, the British Alice van Emmerik-Cleverly, her sister,

¹⁸⁸ Van Doorn, *De laatste eeuw*, 46.

¹⁸⁹ A. Van Emmerik, ‘Het eeuwig menselijke’, p 17. *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1902, No. 3. 1e jaargang. UB Leiden.

¹⁹⁰ A. Van Emmerik, ‘Het eeuwig menselijke’, p 17. *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1902, No. 3. 1e jaargang. UB Leiden.

¹⁹¹ Van Emmerik wrote in 1924 that not individual government employees but ‘the system’ was atheist, ‘as I got to know it during my work at the Algemeene Sekretarie between 1874 until 1881.’ In ‘Voorwoord’, p 10. In *Jaarverslag over 1923, tevens Witte-Kruisblad No 3. Voor Maart 1924*, 22^e jaargang, B619, Magazine and Newspaper collection, PNRI.

¹⁹² Brouwer, *History of the Salvation Army in Indonesia*, 1-2.

¹⁹³ A. Van Emmerik, ‘Het Afgelopen Jaar’, p 2. *Witte-Kruisblad: Maandblad Witte Kruis Kolonie Salatiga*, December 1904, No 6, 3e jaargang. UB Leiden.

and later on his children. According to Van Emmerik they were keeping the agricultural colony afloat and saved 'the most hopeless human wretches'.¹⁹⁴

Van Emmerik recounted that he felt 'a terrible pressure on his soul due to the spiritual death of Java', until he came in contact with the Salvation Army during his visit to the Paris world exhibition of 1889. He became a member of the Salvation Army and later worked as an officer in London, the Netherlands and the Indies for 8 years. Alice and Adolf met and married during his Salvation Army work in London in the 1890s.¹⁹⁵ He was convinced that the organization should come to Java to 'save the native people', as they were already doing in colonial India, and tried desperately to convince General William Booth to do so. According to Van Emmerik, Booth did not believe that the Army could be a success in an Islamic country, and he also felt that Van Emmerik himself was too weak to lead this effort in the Indies. Money was apparently a concern as well, three years later, however, a female benefactor donated 2000 guilders to send the first officers to Java, and Booth finally agreed to try it.¹⁹⁶

In 1894 Van Emmerik was sent to Java with Staff Captain Brouwer. One of their younger colleagues remembered seeing them just before they departed: 'There they stood: two firm and educated young men, devoted to the holy work: to preach the Gospel for Java's millions: - Staff captain Brouwer, the lovingly peaceful one and Ensign van Emmerik, the fiery, the 'son of thunder', one in their burning love for Christ.'¹⁹⁷ Initially the two men worked among the European population of the colony, but Van Emmerik was always longing

¹⁹⁴ A. Van Emmerik, 'Voorwoord', p 5. In *Jaarverslag over 1923, tevens Witte-Kruisblad No 3. Voor Maart 1924, 22^e jaargang*, B619, Magazine and Newspaper collection, PNRI. Alice was the sole director of the Witte Kruis Kolonie for most of the 1910s when her husband was in Switzerland to recover from a particularly long bout of malaria, depression, and overexertion. She was also the one who traveled all over Java to raise money for the colony, regularly paying the Governor General a visit as well. The Witte Kruis Kolonie usually received a yearly subsidy from the Indies government but this was a sensitive topic for Adolf van Emmerik, he often criticized the government for its lack of care for poor Javanese and did not like to beg. He believed that God's will would prevail and that they could survive without government support as well. He accepted the fact that his wife still went to Batavia to talk to the government about financial support. He explains this situation in 'Voorwoord', pp 6-7. In *Jaarverslag over 1923, tevens Witte-Kruisblad No 3. Voor Maart 1924, 22^e jaargang*, B619, Magazine and Newspaper collection, PNRI.

¹⁹⁵ Obituary for A.Th.J. van Emmerik as published in the *Locomotief*, reprinted in *Witte-Kruisblad: Maandblad Witte Kruis Kolonie Salatiga*, No. 7-8, *Juli en Augustus 1924, 22^e jaargang*, pp 10-12. B619, Magazine and Newspaper collection, PNRI. Brouwer, *History of the Salvation Army*, 1-2.

¹⁹⁶ A. van Emmerik, 'Voorwoord', pp 15-17. In *Jaarverslag over 1923, tevens Witte-Kruisblad No 3. Voor Maart 1924, 22^e jaargang*, B619, Magazine and Newspaper collection, PNRI. See also A. van Emmerik, 'Licht en Schaduw van de Witte-Kruis-Kolonie', p 29. *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1902, No. 3. *1e jaargang*. UB Leiden. Brouwer, *History of the Salvation Army*, 1-2.

¹⁹⁷ M.J. van der Werken, Leader of the Salvation Army, in her obituary for Van Emmerik. Published in *Witte-Kruisblad: Maandblad Witte Kruis Kolonie Salatiga*, No. 7-8, *Juli en Augustus 1924, 22^e jaargang*, p 9-10. B619, Magazine and Newspaper collection, PNRI.

to spread their work among the indigenous population. Alice Van Emmerik followed her husband later and the couple worked as caretakers of the resting and recovery home for officers of the Salvation Army in Salatiga when a great famine struck Mid-Java in 1901 and 1902.

Due to floods, failing crops, and the eruption of the Kloet (Kelud) volcano Salatiga and other cities were overflowing with destitute Javanese.¹⁹⁸ The Van Emmerik family was asked by a committee of Salatiga citizens to distribute food to the swelling number of poor coming into the city. 'Women like skeletons, in dirty rags, with weary children; skinny, exhausted men, often with disgusting leg wounds; the blind and handicapped; and everybody with an expression of terrible want for food on their faces', described Van Emmerik the Javanese seeking help at their house.¹⁹⁹ They often felt powerless, knowing the situation in other places on Java was similar.²⁰⁰ Sometimes there were about 400 to 500 people in their compound, which they could feed but were unable to shelter. They had already dreamt for several years of leaving the Salvation Army, because Van Emmerik felt that he could not make himself 'perfectly fit into the system' of this organization, and wanted to open a Christian agricultural colony to structurally help poor Javanese; the famine made this idea feel more urgent. Van Emmerik was specifically concerned about the fate of Javanese children, particularly those at risk for delinquency. Two years earlier he formed a plan to write and sell a book to raise money for neglected children.²⁰¹

The Resident of Semarang and Assistant-Resident Quarles de Quarles from Salatiga - a former colleague of Van Emmerik at the *Algemene Secretarie* - supported the idea of an agricultural colony, and asked the Van Emmers to take in a great number of indigenous orphans roaming the area. The famines and death of many people at the same time created an

¹⁹⁸ Van Emmerik recounted in 1924 that an indigenous doctor, a so-called *dokter-Java*, told him that in 1901 and 1902 a few hundred thousand people died from hunger in mid-Java, especially in the area of Demak. 'Voorwoord', in *Jaarverslag over 1923. Tevens Witte-Kruisblad No 3. Voor Maart 1924*, p 9.

¹⁹⁹ 'Uittreksel van de lezing over de 'Witte-Kruis-Kolonie'', by S.A. van Emmerik, son of the founder, in *Witte-Kruisblad: Maandblad Witte Kruis Kolonie Salatiga*, No 5, mei 1937, p. 8. B 619, Magazine and Newspaper collection, PNRI.

²⁰⁰ A. Van Emmerik, 'De genesis van de Witte-kruis-kolonie', p 1. *Witte Kruis Blad, juli 1902, No. 1. 1e jaargang*. UB Leiden

²⁰¹ Van Emmerik remained positive about the Salvation Army. According to him its officers really gave up their own comfort to preach the gospel and relieve suffering. A. van Emmerik in 'Een veel besproken zaak', p 41-42, *Witte Kruis Blad, December 1902, No 6. 1e jaargang*. UB Leiden. In later editions of the magazine the Van Emmers often talked about visits to Witte Kruis from their Salvation Army friends and former colleagues. Eventually the Salvation Army would also take over the agricultural colony Kalawara Napoeti that Van Emmerik had established on Celebes in the 1910s to try and relieve the overpopulation of Java and create Indigenous Christian communities on Celebes.

overwhelming number of destitute children. Indigenous orphanages were still non-existent and many orphans were living on the streets and most likely survived by stealing and begging. In April 1902 Van Emmerik managed to get land in use from the colonial government on the slope of the Merbabu volcano. In May the couple moved there and in July there were 320 people living on the colony, 220 of them were children, mostly orphans from Godong (Demak), a region that had been especially hard hit by the emergency.²⁰²

When we compare the aims of Oranje Nassau and Witte Kruis Kolonie, the different expectations that private organizations - and the state that sponsored them - had of Indo-European and Indigenous children is revealed. The colonial government was interested in the work of both Oranje-Nassau and Witte Kruis because the institutions did social work that the state was unwilling - and financially unable - to carry out by itself. At the same time the authorities were worried about funding these particular institutions, because of their Christian orientation and the possible consequences this would have for the upbringing of non-Christian children living there. The state's need to fund and work with Christian philanthropic associations, while governing a population that was an Islamic majority, proved a typical colonial dilemma - one that would come to play a significant role in the state's decision to establish its own 'neutral' juvenile re-education institutes in 1918. In the early twentieth century, however, the religious orientation of social reformers was still a minor point of debate.

A government official who visited Oranje-Nassau in 1905 to see if the home was suitable for juvenile delinquents was clearly impressed with the institution. From the civil servant's report to the Governor General we can deduce how children were raised in Oranje-Nassau and what the expectations and assumptions about the place of these children in colonial society were. Van der Steur's approach to caring for Indo-European children was very different from the one of Van Emmerik used towards Javanese children.

In 1905 Oranje-Nassau had an elementary school, a cobblers' shop, carpenters' workplace, blacksmith, tailors' shop, painters' workplace and a vegetable garden to provide the boys with practical trade education. Girls learned everything about household skills. If possible the more academically inclined boys and girls received higher education. Everything that was needed by the 350 children living there at the time was made in the institution's workplaces and pupils did all the cleaning, upkeep, and other jobs in the reformatory as well.

²⁰² A. Van Emmerik, 'De genesis van de Witte-kruis-kolonie', pp 2-4. *Witte Kruis Blad*, juli 1902, No. 1. 1e jaargang. UB Leiden.

Van der Steur did not have a paid administrative assistant because he trained some pupils for this work. There were hardly any indigenous personnel, a rarity at the time, and only four ladies were hired to help with the small children (under 6) and girls.²⁰³ The children lived on a very strict schedule from dusk till dawn, with the ringing of a bell as their clue for their next activity. The official language was Dutch, since mastery of Dutch was an important marker of social and legal position.

Van der Steur did not believe that the great mass of Indo-European children should be raised to become clerks and white-collar workers and compete for government and office jobs with the increasing number of freshly arriving Dutchmen, called ‘belanda totok bau kedju’ (literally: Dutchman who smells like cheese) or just *totok* or *boeleh* (white) in the local parlance. According to Pa van der Steur life as a clerk was usually much suffering, and little benefit.²⁰⁴ His male pupils were trained as artisans and blue-collar workers and most of them did not immediately enter civilian life but first served in the army. ‘We get them from the army and give them back to the army’, stated Van der Steur, even though not every pupil was fathered by a soldier.²⁰⁵ According to the observer from the Indies’ government, life in the Oranje-Nassau institution could be compared to ‘a big workman’s family, where the struggle for existence is fought with manual labour’.²⁰⁶ Around 1900 Oranje-Nassau was seen as a solid institution that did important welfare work among Mestizos and thus helped to keep the prestige of the ruling classes intact.

Van der Steur’s approach was quite novel compared to the outlook of longer existing homes for (Indo-)Europeans like the Protestantsch Weeshuis (Protestant Orphanage) in Semarang, established in 1832. This orphanage reflected the sentiments of the Indische community in general, where keeping up a certain social status was very much defined by being a white-collar worker. Working with your hands was for ‘natives’, as many believed. At the same time there were hardly any options in the colony to get a good technical education and owning land was forbidden for people with European legal status. Even if you did have a technical education or could work a piece of land, competing with the low wages of indigenous farmers and Chinese craftsmen was almost impossible. The (Indo-)European

²⁰³ Oranje Nassau was discussed in a report that compared it to the Protestant Orphanage in Semarang, written by the First Government Secretary. *Verslag omtrent het Protestantsch Weeshuis te Semarang*, 20 April 1905, p 4. In GB Mgs 23-8-1906 No. 2478. Algemene Secretarie, ANRI.

²⁰⁴ Meijer, *In Indië geworteld*, 35.

²⁰⁵ *Verslag omtrent het Protestantsch Weeshuis te Semarang*, 20 April 1905, p 5.

²⁰⁶ *Verslag omtrent het Protestantsch Weeshuis te Semarang*, 20 April 1905, p 6.

preference for white-collar jobs was not only a question of prestige; there were hardly any alternatives either.²⁰⁷ But with a greater number of European newcomers, and the rise of the ethical policy and increasing educational and employment opportunities for the indigenous (elite) population, the competition for white-collar jobs became much heavier in the twentieth century.²⁰⁸

In 1905 the First Government Secretary criticised the approach of the *Protestantsch Weeshuis* in Semarang, which he compared to ‘a bourgeois family, where they strive for the best possible, both mentally and materially’. He compared the *Oranje-Nassau* institute and the *Protestantsch Weeshuis* by saying that ‘in the one artisans and the wives of artisans are shaped, in the other gentlemen and ladies’.²⁰⁹ This was not to his liking because he felt the orphanage was overly luxurious, and this was too expensive for the government. In Magelang the average yearly costs for a pupil’s food were 78 guilders, in Semarang 98 guilders. The costs for the remaining expenses (clothing, laundry, personnel and electricity) came to 33 guilders with Van der Steur and 89.72 guilders in Semarang. ‘Because the pupils of Van der Steur live modestly but well, this comparison shows that budget cuts should be possible in Semarang’, concluded the Secretary.²¹⁰

According to the Secretary it was not just an overly expensive way of life that was bothersome about the *Protestantsch Weeshuis*, it was the atmosphere in which the children were brought up. Contrary to life in *Oranje-Nassau*, the boys did not have to help at all with running the institution, and the girls just a little. This was not a good preparation for the rest of their lives, felt the Secretary. ‘To get the orphans, who for the majority are probably not destined to live a life of luxury, used to getting served in their childhood, does not seem pedagogic’.²¹¹ Having orphans live in luxury, while the state could not even afford to place all deprived European orphans in institutions, was also unfair towards the latter, argued the official. The state should just pay for orphans’ basic needs and for enough education so they could later make a decent living; any extras were actually taken away from the ones who

²⁰⁷ Meijer, *In Indië*, 38-40

²⁰⁸ This was part of the reason for the establishment of a political party that had to protect and bolster the rights and social position of the Indische community, the *Indische Europese Verbond* (IEV), est. 1919. See Meijer, *In Indië Geworteld*. This book is a social and political study of the Indische world of the twentieth century interwoven with the developments in the IEV and other Indo-European political parties.

²⁰⁹ *Verslag omtrent het Protestantsch Weeshuis te Semarang*, 20 April 1905, p 6.

²¹⁰ *Verslag omtrent het Protestantsch Weeshuis te Semarang*, 20 April 1905, p 8.

²¹¹ *Verslag omtrent het Protestantsch Weeshuis te Semarang*, 20 April 1905, p 9.

were still living in need. The Protestantsch Weeshuis saw its state budget reduced and had to scale down expenses.²¹²

This government attitude would stay the same throughout the twentieth century, also with regard to juvenile delinquents: both Indo-European and indigenous children-at-risk should be re-educated so they would be able to make a living and behave like good citizens and subjects, but they were seen as subservient to the higher goals of the state and their social class. They should not get aspirations and desires for a future life that was beyond their social and racial status. Attention for the children's talents and wishes was secondary to the needs of the state and the limits of their social class and ethnic group. This was not just a colonial phenomenon, Western orphanages and re-education homes had the same outlook. Education and re-education are always a means for the elite to shape, reshape and enforce individual and societal power relations, even today. Because of this, life for indigenous children in the Witte Kruis Kolonie was significantly different than in the Indo-European urban institutions.

Pa van Emmerik had high hopes for the children he started to bring up. He believed that Christian optimism would 'save' indigenous people from the 'fatalism and inertia' they were supposedly suffering from. In his view the children stood at the basis of this spiritual and social transformation; they were the future. 'I cannot make these children into Christians, and I don't want that. What I do want is to preach the Gospel, convinced that the Truth will do her job without pressure from my side', he wrote in 1902.²¹³ Not only the Gospel, but also working the land and migration projects to thinner populated parts of Java and the other islands in the archipelago was part of his reform and rescue efforts.²¹⁴ These ideas were similar to longer existing ideas and initiatives for the reform of poor Indo-Europeans. Van Emmerik believed that children raised at Witte Kruis would naturally bond to his family and the colony, marry each other, 'and become families who can start colonies and make the

²¹² *Verslag omtrent het Protestantsch Weeshuis te Semarang*, 20 April 1905, p 10.

²¹³ A. van Emmerik, 'Fragment uit een particulier schrijven aan een Hoofd van Gewestelijk bestuur', pp 22-23. *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1902, No. 3. 1e jaargang. UB Leiden.

²¹⁴ Van Emmerik founded the colony Kalawara Napoetih on Celebes in the 1910s. The tough life and difficult climate were too much for Van Emmerik's weak health and he had to leave the colony after a few years. Two other evangelists stayed behind to lead the colony and eventually the Salvation Army took over the colony from Van Emmerik. Kalawara Napoetih also became one of the agricultural colonies where the government would send juvenile delinquents in the 1910s, as we will see in chapter 3. See also the article an anonymous friend of Van Emmerik wrote in the *Algemeen Handelsblad* after his death in 1924, which reminisces about his commitment to migration projects as a means to lighten poverty in Java. 'Wijlen de Heer Van Emmerik', 12-15, in *Witte-Kruisblad: Maandblad Witte Kruis Kolonie Salatiga*, No. 7-8, Juli en Augustus 1924, 22^e jaargang, p. 17. B619, Magazine and Newspaper collection, PNRI.

flame of Javanese migration grow stronger.’²¹⁵ In his mind Christian colonies on the outer islands would not only offer a better life to landless Javanese, but also form a dam against the further spread of Islam. Likewise he saw the Witte Kruis Kolonie as a wedge that had to be driven into Java to stop or even drive back the spread of Islam. Alice van Emmerik was also optimistic about the future of the colonies’ children; ‘something good can grow out of this ‘hope of Java’, she declared.²¹⁶

Daily life for the orphans and delinquent children in the colony was pretty much the same as for children who were there with their parents. But the children who lived in Witte Kruis without parents were obviously a bit more isolated from Javanese family life and upbringing, because they lived in barracks with other children and the caretakers. The strong Evangelical calling of Van Emmerik, his wife and their family permeated the rhythm of everyday life. People got up around five for the compulsory prayer meeting, and then there was breakfast, and the start of school and work. Children only went to school in the morning, where they got an elementary school education in Javanese, with a strong Christian undertone. Moe van Emmerik and her eldest daughter Tresna [Javanese for love] were the first teachers at the colony school, which taught between 200 and 320 pupils in different classes each year.²¹⁷ There was also a Fröbel School for the youngest children.²¹⁸ Indigenous teachers, who came from outside, or ex-pupils who had received a higher education and returned to serve at the colony, were soon hired to enable education for all the children. In the afternoon the children helped adults with working the fields and learned practical skills or a trade like weaving, braiding baskets, etc. Sometimes there were optional prayer meetings in the evening too, and on Sunday there was a compulsory church service. The children learned religious songs in school, during prayer meetings, church, and Sunday school, and were actively participating in the evangelical meetings and trips carried out by the Van Emmeriks and Witte Kruis colonists in the surrounding *desas* and cities.²¹⁹

²¹⁵ A. van Emmerik, ‘Fragment uit een particulier schrijven aan een Hoofd van Gewestelijk bestuur’, pp 22-23.

²¹⁶ Alice van Emmerik, ‘Pa Tjepogo’, p. 26. *Witte Kruis Blad*, October 1902, No. 4. 1e jaargang.

²¹⁷ Moe van Emmerik soon left the school in the care of her daughter and the assistants to help her husband directing the colony and its administration.

²¹⁸ See for example the *Jaarverslag Witte Kruis Kolonie 1940*, which states there were 342 elementary school students, 98 at the Fröbel school, 4 blind children, and 8 older girls who went to school separately. The total was 452 children.

²¹⁹ In April 1905, for example, Van Emmerik reported that approximately thirty converted colonist were going to the surrounding *desas* every Sunday to make house calls and preach the Gospel. ‘Usually they are not refused and they are often received heartily, even by Mohammedan village preachers

For juvenile delinquents, who were sent to the colony by the colonial authorities, Van Emmerik made no exceptions in terms of religious education and participation, even though this was requested by the government in 1904 to uphold the principle of religious neutrality. Van Emmerik vividly recalled a confrontation about this with the inspector of the prison section of the Justice Department, who came to see how he felt about taking in indigenous juvenile delinquents as government pupils in 1904. The inspector told him that if he would take in juvenile delinquents that were sent and paid for by the government, Van Emmerik could not force the children to attend the Christian *koempoelans* (prayer meetings). Van Emmerik described that he ‘looked at the fat little man and was thinking: if only I had the power to force him to attend Christian koempoelans, he would probably not have said something stupid like that... I replied something like: ‘Let the government then keep its delinquent boys’.’²²⁰

The inspector then assured Van Emmerik that if the latter would make them attend Christian services he would not personally object. Religiously ‘neutral’ was apparently a flexible term for the government. The evangelist was not convinced and replied: ‘you are in many ways a one-day butterfly. Now you are responsible for the inspection here, but tomorrow it is someone else, who does not want to allow exceptions. Do you think that we want to live this life of worry, disappointment, and hard work to make the children into good people, only to become unsalaried officials of an atheistic government? Our calling is to preach of Christ and his death on the cross, all other labour is of minor importance.’²²¹

While Pa Van Emmerik was not directly educating the children - who were cared for by his wife and European and indigenous assistants - he did interact with them regularly during religious meetings and evangelization and propaganda efforts for the colony amongst both the indigenous and European communities.²²² Some of the propaganda activities included giving singing and flute concerts in front of the residency of the Assistant Resident of Salatiga, during visits of the Governor General or during public festivities for the Dutch royal family. Van Emmerik’s pedagogic principles were based on the bible and were

(modins).’ Pa van Emmerik, without title, p 6-7, in *Witte Kruis Blad*, April 1905, No. 10, 3e Jaargang. UB Leiden.

²²⁰ Pa van Emmerik in *Jaarverslag Witte Kruis Kolonie*, mei 1922, p. 33. B 619, Magazine and Newspaper collection, PNRI.

²²¹ *Jaarverslag Witte Kruis Kolonie*, mei 1922, p. 33.

²²² For example in 1923 when 250 colony children went with Van Emmerik to Salatiga to sing in honour of the Dutch Queen with other school children from the area In *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1923, No. 9. 21e jaargang. UB Leiden.

probably shared by his wife. It is challenging to reconstruct the pedagogic environment of the colony, since there were no (known) uniform rules and regulations for the children's upbringing and education. Van Emmerik regularly wrote about children's upbringing and education in his monthly magazine *Witte Kruis Blad*, often inspired by stories or magazines from Europe and America. He did not seem to have any reservations about applying these culturally bound ideas in the Javanese context, even though he often stated that Javanese culture was so far removed from European culture.²²³ From his publications we can see no more than a few fragmented ideas about educating and upbringing children, which possibly informed how children were treated in the colony. It cannot give us any insight, however, into how the children were really brought up.

Van Emmerik's main idea was that children were really shaped between 7 and 14 years old and that how they behaved then was evidence of the kind of person they would become in the future; teaching them well at this age was of utmost importance. He also stressed that it was very important that children learned to speak the truth. He advised not to punish them too hard when they were not honest, but to find out why they lied and try to fix it.²²⁴ He expected children to have respect for their elders, since 'honour your father and your mother' is a biblical command, and he believed that the disintegration of this relationship would cause the collapse of society. He lamented the state of the youth and family in Europe because he often read in magazines like *De Gong* from the Dutch Tuchtunie, which literally translates as the Discipline Union, that children did no longer respect their parents, and that families were destroyed by 'lack of order and rule'. But he felt it went too far to only blame parents for this situation, since modern society and the schools also contributed to educating

²²³ See for example A. Van Emmerik, 'Het eeuwig menschelijke', p 17. *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1902, No. 3. 1e jaargang. UB Leiden. Van Emmerik argues here that Europeans and Javanese are far removed from each other and do not understand each others, which makes life for Europeans on Java 'dead', since they are surrounded by an alien culture. Later in the article, however, he claims that essentially everybody is the same, when it comes to 'the heart', and that he does not believe the 'Indies sceptics' who state that the Javanese are only interested in 'money and *karbouwen*' (a certain type of cow/ox). Both Pa and Moe seemed perpetually torn between their love and devotion for the Javanese, and their condescendence and despair about their situation and behaviour. Pa van Emmerik, for example, feels it is only through his love of God and God's grace that he can take care of 'the poor, ugly, disgusting Javanese' in the colony. He describes that many of them are sick, handicapped, demoralized, and have led lives of prostitution, gambling, stealing, and opium. But because of his faith he now sees them as 'fellow beings, as sisters, as fellow travellers to eternity'. In Pa van Emmerik, 'Licht en schaduw van de Witte-kruis-kolonie', p 21, in *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1902, No. 3. 1e jaargang. UB Leiden.

²²⁴ A. van Emmerik, 'Een veel besproken zaak', p 45-46, *Witte Kruis Blad*, December 1902, No 6. 1^e jaargang. UB Leiden.

and bringing up the youth.²²⁵ Informed by his religion and his social reform work in Europe alcohol was absolutely forbidden on the colony, while smoking was discouraged among adults and forbidden for children. Corporal punishment of children in the form of smacking with the bare hand or a cane was accepted, like in almost all Western countries and childcare institutions at the time.²²⁶

Orphaned and delinquent children lived in large groups, under the leadership of just one or two Dutch and Javanese caretakers who were supported by older and well-behaving pupils. They interacted and worked together with the mostly Javanese adult population of the colony and the Van Emmeriks and they all communicated in Javanese. Language was an important marker of what was expected of the children in the colony and served to shape their loyalties. The Indo-European children in Oranje-Nassau, for example were taught and addressed in Dutch, even though they spoke their own variation of *petjoh* among each other.²²⁷ In the later established state reformatories Malay would be the general language, signifying the desire of the Dutch to spread a common language among the diverse indigenous population. Significantly they did not use the language spoken by the ruling elite – Dutch – to do so, contrary to the French who did use their own language as part of the civilizing mission in their colonies. On the Witte Kruis Kolonie the day-to-day language was Javanese. It was not the intention of the Van Emmeriks to remove children from Javanese culture, but to ‘improve’ Javanese culture - as they believed - by adding Dutch elements and Christianity. This was the typical attitude of the early ethics who believed in association between East and West. Children were expected to become ‘improved’ Javanese, not semi-Europeans.

²²⁵ Pa van Emmerik, ‘Een “j’accuse” tegen de ouders’, pp 4-8, in *Witte Kruis Blad Januari 1924, No. 1. 22e Jaargang*, UB Leiden.

²²⁶ Pa van Emmerik, ‘Het rooken van kinderen’, p 6, in *Witte Kruis Blad, April 1905, No. 10, 3e Jaargang*. UB Leiden.

²²⁷ *Petjoh* was a dynamic local vernacular of Dutch, Malay and local indigenous languages that was spoken by many Indo-Europeans.

Appendix A: Orphanages and rescue homes for (Indo-)European children established until 1900.

The following list is not complete, but serves to give an impression of the number of orphanages and rescue homes for (Indo-)European children established until 1900. This selection is taken from a booklet written by the Pro Juventute society in 1942; with the aim of giving an overview of all the existing youth care facilities in the Indies. *Overzicht van bestaande tehuizen van jeugdzorg in Nederlandsch-Indie. Samengesteld door het Verbond der Vereenigingen Pro Juventute in Nederlandsch-Indie.* (Batavia, Hamilton, 1942) PNRI.

For each institution I have stated the year of establishment; name; location; religious denomination; the kind of children they took in; and if they were willing to take care of government pupils (juvenile delinquents who had been tried in court and were put under tutelage of the government for re-education). The last point – willingness to take in government pupils - is only valid for the year the booklet was published (1942) because some institutions used to take in government pupils at some point, but did not do so in later years, after establishment of the state's LOG's.

The willingness to care for government pupils did not always mean the state would actually place them there, since the government tried to concentrate delinquent youngsters in a few facilities that were deemed suitable for their re-education.

1809: R.K. Weeshuis, Semarang, Roman Catholic, boys and girls with European ancestry or European legal status. Willing to take care of government pupils.

1832: Parapattan Weezengesticht, Batavia, Protestant, European and Indo-European boys and girls. Willing to take care of government pupils.

1832: Protestantsch Weeshuis, Semarang, Protestant, European boys and girls. No government pupils.

1835: Weezengesticht der Protestantsche Gemeente, Soerabaia, Protestant, boys and girls with European ancestry or European legal status. No government pupils.

1854: Djati-Gesticht, Batavia, Neutral, for needy and neglected girls of European status, between 2-15 years old. Willing to take care of government pupils.

1856: Batavia's Vincentius Vereeniging, Batavia, Roman-Catholic, European and Indo-European boys and girls between 6-21 years. Willing to take care of government pupils.

1858: Soerabaiasche Inrichting voor Jongens-Weezen, Soerabaia, Neutral, boys with European ancestry or European legal status. Willing to take care of government pupils.

1858: R.K. Meisjes Weeshuis, Soerabaia, Roman Catholic, European underage girls. Government pupils only accepted through Don Bosco Stichting Soerabaia.

1886: Vincentius Gesticht, Buitenzorg, Roman Catholic, Indo-European boys. Willing to take care of government pupils.

1886: Vereeniging tot Weezenverpleging, Padang, ?, boys and girls from European and Indo-European origins, orphans and semi-orphans (mother still alive). No government pupils.

1888: Kindertehuis der Vereeniging Dorcas, Batavia, Christian, European and Indo-European girls and boys till the age of 12. Willing to take care of government pupils.

1893: Gesticht Oranje-Nassau, Magelang, Protestant, boys and girls of European, Amboinese, Menadonese, Timorese, and Ternatan origin. Unwilling to take care of government pupils. (N.B. government pupils lived there in earlier years, before establishment of the *Landsopvoedingsgestichten* in 1918)

1900: Soekaboemische Opvoedingsgestichten, Soekaboemi, Protestant, neglected or endangered European and Indo-European children from two years old. Willing to take care of government pupils.

Chapter II. The expansion of colonial civil society and the establishment of the first government institute for juvenile re-education in the Netherlands Indies, 1906-1918

Rapid change characterized Indies' society around the turn of the century, and colonial elites felt both optimistic about the 'improvement' of indigenous society, and insecure about their own safety. '[...] Criminality is steadily rising, both because of population growth [...] and because of the growth in means of transportation and centres of transportation (factories, etc). Due to improved transportation it becomes easier for riff-raff to commit crimes, and to escape the police afterwards. Good natives are getting in touch with bad strangers more often and are infected with their vice.' With this ominous statement W. Boekhoudt, an experienced *landraad* judge, described what he saw as the causes for increasing crime rates in the Indies around 1900. Modernization, industrialization, and the influences of 'bad' outsiders were corrupting the 'good natives', infecting the population of the colony with vice.²²⁸

New transportation and communication networks influenced the nature of colonial crime and made colonial inhabitants better informed about what was going on in the Indies and in the world around them. More information fed people's concerns as well. Recently formulated ideas of a 'debt of honour' and the moral imperative of ethically uplifting the indigenous population went hand in hand with imperial expansion and consolidation of European rule.²²⁹ Indigenous social and political organizations became more active and more visible, as a response to and as part of a changing and more 'modern' society. Already in the 1890s the first Javanese periodicals, advancing and debating the position of the native *prijaji* aristocracy, were published. Advisor for Native Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu remarked in 1908 that the indigenous world had been slowly changing and developing new ideals and desires for several decades; '[t]his fact just did not catch the eyes of many Europeans.'²³⁰

In the early twentieth century, however, changes in indigenous society did catch the eyes of Europeans, especially around World War I. Apparently the mission of civilizing and uplifting the *Inlander* (native) was working - progressives felt - but an active and increasingly

²²⁸ Mr. W. Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen op Java en Madoera 1906-07 (Uitgezonderd de vorstenlanden, de particuliere landerijen, en de hoofdplaatsen Batavia, Semarang en Soerabaia)* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1908) 55.

²²⁹ Langeveld, *Dit leven van krachtig handelen*, 89-90. Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in fragmenten*, 194-200.

²³⁰ Quote by Hazeu in Akira Nagazumi, *The dawn of Indonesian nationalism. The early years of the Boedi Oetomo, 1908-1918* (Tokyo, 1972) 25. See the same work for early examples of a Javanese 'awakening', 26-36.

politicized colonial population seemed threatening to many Europeans at the same time. Rising crime rates and local unrest were not only seen as individual events caused by a rapidly urbanizing and changing society, but also as a sign of organized and possibly even politically inspired resistance against colonial rule. If dangerous outsiders could spread criminal behaviour among the ‘good natives’, they might also spread more dangerous political ideas.²³¹

In the context of these fears juvenile delinquency became a more important topic for the state. Rather than taking the government’s involvement with juvenile re-education for granted, this chapter seeks to broadly analyse the reasons for the establishment of the first state reformatory in the Netherlands Indies. Government discussions about this topic took place over a decade, between 1906 and 1918. For the colonial state the debate eventually came down to a choice between letting the Salvation Army run a new reformatory for indigenous boys in Christian fashion, or having the government run the facility by itself as a religiously neutral institute. Throughout the debate there were two recurrent themes: government finances and religious matters.

The first part of this chapter demonstrates why the colonial government no longer wanted to place juvenile delinquents with private persons for re-education after 1906. Instead, the government tried to cooperate with existing philanthropic institutions like Oranje-Nassau, the Witte Kruis Kolonie and the Salvation Army (2.1.). The second part of the chapter analyzes the general political and social awakening of indigenous society in the Indies. The (Islamic) voice of the indigenous population was especially important and frightening to the Dutch colonial elite, and was – in the mind of government officials – tied to the decision to create the first state re-education institution (2.2.). Part three (2.3.) explores how weaknesses in the system of private re-education for indigenous juveniles led the government to reconsider their re-education policy. The Christian private reformatories were no longer seen as the right place for indigenous juveniles in the 1910s. The fourth section (2.4.) explains how ideas about the importance of religiously ‘neutral’ juvenile re-education developed between 1909 and 1918. This section also shows how the government tried to enlist the support of indigenous organisations for juvenile re-education. Part five (2.5.) explains the early ties between the new Pro Juventute association and the colonial government and the effect of the new penal code (1918) on the re-education policy.

²³¹ See for example Bloembergen, *De geschiedenis van de politie in NI*, 71-77, 156-161, 174-177. Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, 4.

2.1. The Dutch colonial state and its cooperation with Christian institutions for juvenile re-education, 1906-1910

After Adolf Van Emmerik started taking in indigenous orphans in his Witte Kruis Kolonie in 1902, the colonial state became interested in placing juvenile delinquents with a re-education sentence in his care. Instead of housing these youngsters with private persons, as was custom since 1872, the colonial state started to debate the merits of institutionalization. A mix of fear and concern, which was a typical aspect of the ethical policy, informed this development. Marieke Bloembergen shows in her study of the changes in colonial policing in the Indies, entitled *De Geschiedenis van de Politie in Nederlands-Indië. Uit Zorg en Angst* (2009), how ethical concerns about the well-being of indigenous people in the *desas*, as well as European fears about their own safety in a changing colonial world, caused various police reforms in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Bloembergen gives an overview of a situation on Java that, besides the usual thefts and break-ins, was marked by an increasing number of armed robberies, the so-called *rampokpartijen*, sugarcane fires and religious peasant rebellions. The latter especially increased fears of the supposedly anti-European attitude of Muslims. The police had not anticipated any of these events - something that did not help to assure Europeans about their safety.²³²

In 1906 the Indies government asked W. Boekhoudt, an experienced judge in the colonial court system, to investigate how the security situation on Java and Madura could be improved by reorganizing the police force.²³³ While the topic of juvenile delinquency was only a small part of Boekhoudt's research, his findings played a crucial role in the discussion about the proper treatment of juvenile delinquents that emerged in the early twentieth century. Boekhoudt's informers were the heads of the local governments and their accounts shocked him, so he said.²³⁴ He stated that there was an increase in juvenile criminality, which

²³² Bloembergen, *De geschiedenis van de politie in NI*, 71-74. For more about robbery and banditry in the Netherlands Indies see Margreet Van Till, *Batavia bij nacht. Bloei en ondergang van het Indonesisch roverswezen in Batavia en de Ommelanden, 1869-1942* (Aksant, Amsterdam, 2006). Chapters 9 and 10 discuss robbery and policing in the twentieth century.

²³³ Boekhoudt's results and recommendations were published in *Rapport reorganisatie van het politiewezen op Java en Madoera 1906-07 (Uitgezonderd de vorstenlanden, de particuliere landerijen en de hoofdplaatsen Batavia, Semarang en Soerabaia)*.

²³⁴ It is unclear if Boekhoudt's informers were European civil servants or indigenous local heads, or both.

was caused by ‘neglecting the education of the youth’.²³⁵ Juveniles without parents or caretakers reportedly congregated at the markets to steal or beg, and many of them showed surprising ‘criminal talent’. There were accounts about well-organized bands of juvenile thieves who cunningly stole food and money from market salesmen and buyers. Boekhoudt believed that juvenile delinquents in the Indies showed many of the same characteristics as juvenile criminals in the European metropolis and mentioned the latest literature on crime in Paris and Vienna. He blamed indigenous society - especially its teachers and clergy – for not helping parents to properly educate their children, but he also criticized parents for not taking on their responsibilities.²³⁶ This left the door open to claim the role of the state as the corrector for bad parenting and showed the need for re-education.

Boekhoudt did not only argue that there was an increase in juvenile criminality, he also compiled the first statistics about juvenile offenders on Java.²³⁷ He had asked the heads of the local governments on Java and Madura (excluding the *Vorstenlanden*) to send him their numbers on juvenile crime. Approximately 7116 children under the age of sixteen were brought in front of the various courts in Java and Madoera in 1906. Of these children 1579 were younger than ten years. The majority (7064) was indigenous or of Chinese descent and came before the *politierechters* (police judges), a few mostly (Indo-)European offenders came before the *landraden* (52).²³⁸ About one third of these 7116 juveniles were sentenced to serve time in prison and they were imprisoned with adult offenders, since no youth prison facilities existed in the Netherlands Indies.²³⁹ The courts judged close to five thousand children to be ‘incapable of sound moral judgment’ (*zonder oordeel des onderscheids*) and sent them back to their parents or guardians with a serious warning. Only twenty juvenile delinquents were sentenced to spend time in so-called improvement homes (*verbeterhuizen*)

²³⁵ Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, 58.

²³⁶ Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, 58-59.

²³⁷ See Boekhoudt, *Rapport reorganisatie van het politiewezen*, 59-60, and the table published in his *bijlage B*.

²³⁸ Before the penal law of 1918 non-Europeans appeared before the *Politierechters* and Europeans before the *Landraden*. After 1918 the *Politierechters* were abolished and people appeared before the *Landraden* regardless of nationality. This means that the numbers of 1906 show that there were about 7064 juvenile offenders with Indigenous status (including Chinese) and a mere 52 with European status.

²³⁹ In a resolution of May 20, 1906 (*Staatsblad* no. 257) the colonial government stated that juvenile prisoners (not to be confused with juvenile delinquents with a re-education sentence) under the age of eighteen had to be separated from adult prisoners. The old prison in Madioen became a temporary youth prison, but the majority of youth was not separated from adults until the opening of the youth prison in Tanah Tinggi in 1923. See P.J.F.Ophof, ‘Jeugdgevangenissen en Jeugdafdeelingen’, in Jhr. S. H. H. Nahuys and J. C. Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië. Uitgegeven door de Vereeniging Pro-Juventute te Malang* (G. Kolff & Co, Batavia 1932) 29-30.

and they were either sent to private families or to the existing Christian institutes.²⁴⁰ Government discussions rarely commented upon what crime juvenile delinquents had actually committed, but Boekhoudt again provides some information that gives us an idea of the image of the indigenous juvenile delinquent in the early twentieth century. From his statistical information, it becomes clear that the overall majority were accused of stealing: 4458 out of 7116. Some 189 children were accused of bodily harm and 49 of arson, while the deeds of the remaining 2420 children were not mentioned.²⁴¹ While these numbers were far from reliable, as Boekhoudt himself admitted, colonial officials readily used them when discussing the issue of juvenile crime and re-education.²⁴²

In the first years of the twentieth century the existing practice of placing juvenile offenders with private persons came under fire. In June of 1905 the director of the Justice Department still argued that it was no problem to follow the course taken so far, because there would always be enough 'suitable individuals belonging to the juveniles' *volk* [nation]' willing to accept the children, 'as long as a decent fee [is] awarded'.²⁴³ But in 1909 Governor General Van Heutsz - or one of his assistants in the Algemene Secretarie - scribbled in the margins next to this comment that placing juveniles with private persons was problematic, because 'in this manner the evil [juvenile crime] is not sufficiently countered.' The comment explained that judges did not send juveniles to an individual person or improvement home often enough. The judges knew that no actual improvement homes existed in the Indies, and that private persons or organizations had to be found for each case; they apparently did not favour this option very much because they often sent the misbehaving child back to its parents or family instead. The comment referred to Boekhoudt's recently published report to support this claim.²⁴⁴

²⁴⁰ The information on juvenile crime rates in 1904 can be found in Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, on pages 58-62.

²⁴¹ Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, 59.

²⁴² Boekhoudt notes that his research is not complete and that the numbers for 1906 are only the tip of the iceberg because many offenders were never caught and brought to court and the registration of offenders was not always done properly either. The actual number of juvenile offenders would be much higher than 7116, and even the number brought before the court was probably higher, Boekhoudt believed. Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, 59-60.

²⁴³ Opinion of the Director of the Justice Department, which he reportedly expressed in his Missive 10-06-1905 No. 5275, as quoted in the *summary of the discussion about the education of neglected and criminal children*, *Algemene Secretarie*, Ag. 27/1909, p. 10, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁴⁴ Opinion of anonymous reader, scribbled in the margins of the *summary of the discussion about the education of neglected and criminal children*, *Algemene Secretarie*, Ag. 27/1909, p. 10, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

Boekhoudt indeed identified the reluctant attitude of judges as a problem in his research report, but his analysis brings a more complicated story to the fore. Influential social democrats in the Dutch Parliament, like Hendrikus Hubertus van Kol and Frederik Willem Nicolaas Hugenholtz, had been pressuring the Dutch government since 1902 to separate juvenile prisoners from adult prisoners in the Indies, as was done in Holland. Both men found it abhorrent that children were still locked up with adults, and they advocated the introduction of the Dutch child laws of 1901 in the colony as well. This pressed the government to look into juvenile crime in the colony.²⁴⁵ The government was reluctant to introduce comprehensive child laws in the colonies, as will be discussed in chapter four, but they made a small concession to the penal code in 1906: both (Indo-) European and indigenous juvenile offenders now had to be incarcerated separately from other prisoners.

Boekhoudt's government-sponsored research into juvenile crime was partly a response to the issues raised by men like Van Kol and Hugenholtz. Boekhoudt stated that the separation of juvenile and adult prisoners could be possible in the future, but that for the time being – taking the arrangements in the colonial prisons into account – the old situation was actually continued and condoned.²⁴⁶ This meant that children under the age of sixteen, judged able of sound moral judgement and guilty of a felony, would continue to be incarcerated with adult prisoners. 'This contact has a dreadful influence on them [the juveniles], since it raises them to be complete villains (*volslagen booswichten*),' stated Boekhoudt.²⁴⁷ Similar ideas had already been propagated in Holland almost a century earlier; the first legal instruction to separate children 'as much as possible' from adults in prison was given in 1821.²⁴⁸ Influenced by the ethical policy and a 'modernizing' colonial society, these notions were now slowly making their way to the Netherlands Indies and informed the local debates and policies.

Boekhoudt argued that it was the continuing lack of separation between adults and juveniles in the colonial prisons that encouraged Indies judges to state – even if they felt otherwise – that a minor had committed a crime without sound moral awareness, without *oordeel des onderscheids*. This was the easiest way to keep a juvenile offender out of prison, because it was then that the judge could either decide to send the child home or to an

²⁴⁵ A. De Braconier, *Kindercriminaliteit en de verzorging van misdadig aangelegde en verwaarloosde minderjarigen in Nederlandsch-Indië* (Hollandia Drukkerij, Baarn, 1918) 9.

²⁴⁶ Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, 61.

²⁴⁷ Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, 61.

²⁴⁸ L.M. Olton, *Van Bewaking naar Bescherming. De zorg voor misdadige en verwaarloosde kinderen gedurende de 19e eeuw* (Publikatiereeks Sociologisch Instituut, Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1986) 32-33.

improvement home. Boekhoudt did not like it when children were sent back home to their parents because he was not impressed with the corrective quality of parents who punished their offspring. According to him – and possibly based on his experience as a judge - this was usually ‘an annoying chastisement, lacking any educational authority, and the young sinner returns home to continue the same life.’²⁴⁹ He clearly favoured the placement of young offenders in improvement homes and insisted that there were private institutions on Java that took in juveniles. He mentioned the colony of Mrs. Jansz in Pati, the Salvation Army’s Boegangan institution for sick and needy natives in Semarang, and the Witte Kruis Kolonie in Salatiga. According to Boekhoudt, the police brought ‘little *pasar*-thieves without family who cares about them’ to all three institutions, while only the Witte Kruis Kolonie accepted youngsters who had been officially sentenced to re-education and were placed there on the Governor General’s order on a case-by-case basis.

Boekhoudt admitted the three institutions had their problems though: ‘they have great difficulty to keep these young people in the institution. Many run away. And only the few who have been submitted by order of the judge can be tracked and returned by the police. However, this is of no avail either since one cannot prevent them from running away again.’²⁵⁰ But Boekhoudt felt the institutions were doing a good job in educating the children. ‘The boys do the same work as Javanese boys do in the *desa* at that age. Moreover, they are educated in reading, writing, arithmetic, and music.’²⁵¹ He recommended that the state ask the institutes of the Salvation Army and Van Emmerik to become formal partners of the state in the re-education project and fund improvement of the institutes so youngsters could not escape as easily.²⁵²

Because these facilities would be prison-like, Boekhoudt recommended the foundation of a new re-education institute and agricultural colony in the outer regions (*buitenbezittingen*). This would only be for children who wanted to go there themselves and whose parents or family had given permission for them to go. He also recommended that the government allow parents and family members to go there together with their children. Boekhoudt’s other arguments for the establishment of an agricultural facility in the outer

²⁴⁹ Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, 62.

²⁵⁰ Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, 61.

²⁵¹ Boekhoudt, *Rapport Reorganisatie van het Politiewezen*, 62.

²⁵² 12 May 1908, No 94, Boekhoudt to Internal Affairs, cited in *Batavia*, 20 July 1908, No. 2185, *Director of Department of Internal Affairs De Graaff to Governor General Van Heutsz*, pp 6-7, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

regions was that the children would feel freer there and would not try to escape from this location either because it was too far away from home. The youngsters would slowly become happier in their new situation and bond with their caretakers. When they were released the government should allow them to settle as farmers in the outer regions or return to Java or Madura as tradesmen. He believed that it should be an institute under the supervision and with financial support of the state but ran by a philanthropic organization. This would be cheaper and the educational personnel would be more devoted, which would benefit both the state and the youngsters. Boekhoudt advised the government to wait to establish this agricultural colony for delinquent juveniles until they had more information from Van Emmerik and the Salvation Army about their willingness to participate in government directed re-education in their institutions.²⁵³ This part of Boekhoudt's proposal was not put into practice; instead the state established a network of reformatories on Java.

In May 1906, the director of the department of Justice Mr. A.L.E. Gastmann (Mr., signifies a Dutch law degree) asked permission from the Governor General to get in touch with 'leaders of already existing and still to be established re-education institutes (*opvoedingsgestichten*) for both Europeans and Natives, to discuss the admittance in such institutions of children who are falling under article 5.'²⁵⁴ In 1908 the head of the department of Education also argued for placing children in actual improvement or re-education homes. He felt that juveniles who were living with private persons like agricultural colonists did not get what they needed, 'a moral education from loving caretakers', and that they were primarily seen and exploited as cheap labour.²⁵⁵ The Council of the Indies expressed a similar opinion a year later, specifically with regard to placing 'young Native delinquents with persons of their national character [*landaard*]'. The council doubted whether this policy reached the stated goal of 'morally improving juvenile criminals'. The council expressed concerns that '[t]he reality, in so far this is known to the Council, has shown that the persons who were entrusted to take care of juvenile Native criminals, simply used them as servants

²⁵³ 12 May 1908, No 94, Boekhoudt to Internal Affairs, cited in *Batavia*, 20 July 1908, No. 2185, *Director of Department of Internal Affairs De Graaff to Governor General Van Heutsz*, pp 1-3, 6-7, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁵⁴ In the Netherlands Indies the director of a government ministry, like the department of Justice, was a colonial civil servant appointed by the Governor General. Description of the content of Mgs 20-05-1906 no 1423a, quoted on page 1 of the *summary of the discussion about the education of neglected and criminal children*, *Algemene Secretarie*, Ag. 27/1909, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁵⁵ Opinion of the Director of the Department of Education, quoted in the *summary of the discussion about the education of neglected and criminal children*, *Algemene Secretarie*, Ag. 27/1909, p. 9, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

without further involvement in raising them to be useful people [*nuttige mensen*].²⁵⁶ A general conviction developed among government officials that private persons did not re-educate children for the benefit of the state, but for their own benefit.

The discussion about the merits of institutionalization versus private re-education culminated in a broader debate about juvenile reform that lasted until 1918. Two broad themes influenced the development of the colonial re-education system. First there was the tight budget the Dutch parliament allowed for administration of the colony, which made it necessary to rely as much as possible on the work and money of philanthropic institutions. Secondly, the colonial government feared possible protests from the Islamic population about the re-education of indigenous juveniles in Christian institutions. Beyond the criticism of the role of private persons as re-educators, actual pedagogic concerns did not inform government discussions much. In the first decades of the twentieth century the colonial state viewed juvenile delinquents mostly from a financial and political standpoint.

Central to the financial concerns of both the Indies and the Dutch government was a debate about different perceptions of criminality. The government tried to distinguish between delinquent youth, who were apprehended by the police and sent to court, and neglected or homeless youth, who were often stealing as well but might not have been caught just yet. Should the government take care of both groups? The 1902 Pauperism committee and Boekhoudt both advised that the state should not only re-educate children who were already marked as ‘delinquent’, but should also take care of neglected children, to prevent criminality and poverty.²⁵⁷ Influenced by these proposals the Department of Justice, the Department of Education, the Department of Internal Affairs, the Governors General and the *Algemene Secretarie* discussed the feasibility of including abandoned and neglected youth in their plans for possible institutional care for European and indigenous juveniles.²⁵⁸ Their opinions varied widely, showing that the Indies government was as fragmented in its ideas as the rest of society.

²⁵⁶ Kommissoriaal van den 6den April 1909 No 27, aan den Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie om met terugzending te dienen van consideratien en advies. No XII. *Advies van den Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie*, uitgebracht in de buitengewone vergadering van 24 April 1909, p 7. In BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁵⁷ See *Summary of the discussion about the education of neglected and criminal children*, *Algemene Secretarie*, Ag. 27/1909, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI. Also Meijer, *In Indie geworteld*, 44-46. Also, 12 May 1908, No 94, Boekhoudt to Internal Affairs, cited in *Batavia*, 20 July 1908, No. 2185, *Director of Department of Internal Affairs De Graaff to Governor General Van Heutsz*, pp 5-7, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁵⁸ Both Van Heutsz (1904-1909) and Idenburg (1909-1916) would participate in the discussion.

Director of Internal Affairs De Graaff felt that Boekhoudts' proposal for juvenile crime prevention was too wide reaching and expensive.²⁵⁹ Governor General Van Heutsz and Director of the Justice Department Gastmann were also against institutional care for neglected or homeless youth. While Boekhoudts' plan dealt with both indigenous and Indo-European youth, Van Heutsz and Gastmann focused mostly on Indo-European youth. They felt that governmental care for neglected and homeless youth would encourage Europeans to desert and neglect their Indo-European offspring even more, and they argued that it was the duty of philanthropy to take care of the homeless. Van Heutsz and Gastmann believed that the state could not afford to take care of impoverished youth, even if they were European, and they claimed that the state was certainly not able to take care of the far greater number of neglected and homeless indigenous children.²⁶⁰ Moreover, nobody even knew how many neglected indigenous children were actually living on Java and Madura. Gastmann complained that nobody had any statistics, and he worried that it would be 'an enormous number.' Gastmann felt that it was simply too risky to commit to a plan that had unknown financial consequences.²⁶¹

The director of the Education department disagreed. He believed that taking care of neglected children would prevent them from becoming criminals - a case of 'national importance' that it was well worth investing money in.²⁶² Especially because this money would be eventually saved by keeping youngsters out of prison. According to him, there would be about 4000 of these children and 250.000 guilders per year would be enough to institutionalize them. Gastmann laughed at that. He thought that in a population of almost 30 million indigenous people 4000 children were no more than one percent of the neglected and homeless children. 'It might be tempting to follow the example of the Motherland, which seriously cares for this topic since the law of 1901, [...] but it seems adventurous politics to me to do this without proper knowledge of the situation.'²⁶³

²⁵⁹ Batavia, 20 July 1908, No. 2185, *Director of Department of Internal Affairs De Graaff to Governor General Van Heutsz*, p. 10, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁶⁰ *Department of Justice, Batavia 31 December 1908, No. 14047, Director of department Mr. Gastmann to Governor General*, pp. 3, 9-12. In BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁶¹ Batavia, 31 December 1908, No. 14047, *Director of the Department of Justice Gastmann to Governor General Van Heutsz*, pp. 8-9, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁶² Director of Education, cited in Batavia, 1-05-1908, No. 4826, *Directeur van Justitie Mr. Gastmann aan de GG*, p. 6, in BT 19 juni 1909 No. 7. AS, ANRI.

²⁶³ Batavia, 31 December 1908, No. 14047, *Director of the Department of Justice Gastmann to Governor General Van Heutsz*, pp. 9-10, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

The director of Education tried to find support for his all-inclusive policy by arguing that costs would go down. Parents and even the mosques could be asked to contribute to their children's re-education, and the agricultural colonies would eventually be self-sufficient so the government could stop its subsidies. Moreover, he said, it would eventually be cheaper for the state if they would take care of all neglected youth because the system of forced re-education would have a preventative influence, with the result that the number of neglected children, and thus of delinquent children and adults would decrease.²⁶⁴

The Council of the Indies did not support this view. They referred to the 1907 decision by the Dutch parliament and government to refrain from a central welfare council for Europeans in the Indies and to only support poor Europeans indirectly by subsidies to churches and local philanthropy. The Council also reminded the different parties of the decision made by the colonial government in 1904; government welfare for poor indigenous people was both 'financially and socially' unwelcome and would only be extended to better health care.²⁶⁵ The Ethical Policy could only go so far when money was at stake, and thus it was decided by the Governor General that the state would not concern itself with the re-education of neglected youth and focus only on the small fraction of delinquent youth that 'qualified' for re-education.²⁶⁶

With this out of the way there was one more complication: religion. The colonial state had declared itself religiously neutral and that meant that the state would not favour one religion over the other and would not force any of its inhabitants to take on a particular religion.²⁶⁷ When the Justice Department had asked existing philanthropic institutions if they

²⁶⁴ Letter from the director of Education, 14-09-1908 No. 13817, cited in *Batavia*, 20 July 1908, No. 2185, *Director of Department of Internal Affairs De Graaff to Governor General Van Heutsz*, p. 14, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁶⁵ Kommissoriaal van den 6den April 1909 No. 27, aan den Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie om met terugzending te dienen van consideratie en advies. No XII. *Advies van den Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie*, uitgebracht in de buitengewone vergadering van 24 April 1909, pp 3-4. In BT 19-06-09, No. 7, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta. See also Meijer, *In Indie Geworteld*, 46. For the original discussion about extending state welfare to poor indigenous people see for example *Batavia*, 5-10-1903, *Considerations and advice of the Director of Internal Affairs to the Governor General*, No 229/A, p. 4, in Gbag Tzgag no 10282/1905, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta. Van Emmerik had a radically different view; he criticized the government repeatedly for their lack of will to 'relieve the enormous despair among thousands of lamentable beings'. See *Warak*, 3-10-1904, *Letter Van Emmerik to the Algemene Secretarie Gouvernement Nederlandsch-Indie*, p. 3. Gbag Tzgag No. 10282/1905, AS, ANRI.

²⁶⁶ See BT 19-06-09, No. 7, pp 4-5. In BT 19-06-09, No. 7, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta.

²⁶⁷ Snouck Hurgronje had introduced the twin principles of religious neutrality and political vigilance as prerequisites for his Islam policy, but the principles soon started to live their own separate lives, becoming ends in themselves, according to Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun. Indonesian Islam under the Japanese occupation, 1942-1945* (KITLV, 1983) 20-26, 69.

were interested in a contract with the state to take care of juvenile delinquents, Van der Steur of the Oranje-Nassau institute was the only one who was willing to take in (Indo-)Europeans. This meant that there was only a Protestant and no Catholic institution available, something that complicated the placement of Roman Catholic delinquents according to Gastmann, director of the Justice Department.²⁶⁸ Governor General Van Heutsz commented that he wondered if the Roman Catholics would prefer a Catholic criminal instead of a decent non-Catholic man. The *Algemene Secretarie* held the same opinion that saving children from vice and raising them into ‘useful members of society’ was more important than religion.²⁶⁹

C.H. Nieuwenhuys and R.H. Ebbink of the Council of the Indies also argued that an (Indo-) European juvenile delinquent was always better off in an institution, regardless of religion, because ‘strict discipline is better guaranteed in an institution than in a private family’. They claimed that only people who needed the money (10 guilders per month) would be willing to take in a delinquent, and that these ‘needy’ families would not give the moral education that the youngster needed to improve his behaviour. They were probably worried that the delinquent would still end up in the same ‘kampong milieu’ the judge tried to remove him from. Nieuwenhuys and Ebbink proposed to send all European juveniles to Van der Steur.²⁷⁰ Governor General Van Heutsz and the Minister of Colonies in the Netherlands eventually decided to take this approach and came to an agreement with Van der Steur in 1909.²⁷¹ From then on European juvenile delinquents who were sent to an improvement home by the government under article 5 would no longer live with private persons, but would be institutionalized.²⁷²

Religion played a more problematic role in the institutionalization of indigenous juvenile delinquents. Van Emmerik’s Witte Kruis Kolonie and the Salvation Army in Semarang were the only two institutions that volunteered to care for indigenous youth who

²⁶⁸ Batavia, 1-05-1908, No. 4826, *Directeur van Justitie Mr. Gastmann aan de GG*, pp. 1-2, in BT 19 juni 1909 No. 7. AS, ANRI.

²⁶⁹ *Summary of the discussion about the education of neglected and criminal children, Algemene Secretarie, Ag. 27/1909*, pp 2-3, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁷⁰ Kommissoriaal van den 6den April 1909 No 27, aan den Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie om met terugzending te dienen van consideratien en advies. No XII. *Advies van den Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie*, uitgebracht in de buitengewone vergadering van 24 April 1909, pp. 5-6. In BT 19-06-09, No. 7, *Algemene Secretarie*, ANRI, Jakarta. *Advies van de leden van de Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie, Mr. C.H.Nieuwenhuys en R.H.Ebbink, overgelegd bij dat van den raad van 24 april 1909 No. XII, op het commissoriaal van den 6den dier maand* No. 27, pp 1-2, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁷¹ ‘s-Gravenhage, 6 January 1910, *Department of Colonies to the Governor General*, p 2. In Ag 3520/1910, AS, ANRI.

²⁷² See the decision of the Governor General, *Bt 19 June 1909 No. 7*, pp. 5-7, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

were sent to an improvement home under article 5. Van Emmerik had accepted indigenous children on a personal basis since 1904, and he continued proselytizing among them. The Salvation Army also had an evangelical Christian outlook; while its members aimed to relieve human suffering and poverty, they felt that this could only truly be obtained by spreading the word of Jesus Christ as the one true saviour. Indigenous people who were living at Witte Kruis or Salvation Army locations were not obliged to convert, but conversion was clearly and openly encouraged, and daily prayers and Christian education permeated daily life in the facilities. The Indies' government was very much aware of the Christian outlook of the two organizations and struggled to decide its position. Most indigenous people were Muslims and antagonizing the Islamic community was something the government tried to avoid.

Boekhoudt strongly recommended that the government contracted both the Witte Kruis Kolonie and the Salvation Army for re-educating delinquents, and he advised that the contracts state that there would be no pressure on religious orientation. But De Graaff - of the government's internal affairs - was not convinced and commented in 1908 that Boekhoudt's plans were unsuitable: 'both philanthropic institutions have a Christian nature; they aim to convert, to educate in the Christian orientation; [...] Islamic religious education is impossible there'.²⁷³ This was unacceptable for De Graaff, which reminded Van Heutsz of the state's commitment to religious neutrality and encouraged him to stick to this principle. He opposed the official placement of Muslim juvenile offenders in Christian institutions. 'Just like the government would not even think about entrusting Christian children for education with Mohammedan persons or institutions, She can – in my eyes - not place children of the Mohammedan faith with Christian caretakers, neither individuals nor institutions.'²⁷⁴ De Graaff preferred to see juvenile offenders with private individuals who had the same faith, and if this proved impossible he recommended establishing Islamic re-education institutes, 'possibly partly staffed with European personnel'. Next to this statement someone in the Algemene Secretarie, or the GG himself, scribbled in the margins that 'this [Islamic reformatory] was not neutral either'.²⁷⁵ For De Graaff religious arguments were most

²⁷³ Batavia, 20 July 1908, No. 2185, *Director of Department of Internal Affairs De Graaff to Governor General Van Heutsz*, p. 10, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁷⁴ Batavia, 20 July 1908, No. 2185, *Director of Department of Internal Affairs De Graaff to Governor General Van Heutsz*, p. 11, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁷⁵ Batavia, 20 July 1908, No. 2185, *Director of Department of Internal Affairs De Graaff to Governor General Van Heutsz*, p. 11, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

important, and with his objections against Christian re-education institutes for Muslim youngsters he was about ten years ahead of his time.

Koster, the director of the department of Education did not believe it was such a problem. He argued that religious opposition could arise if the government would force '[n]ative chiefs, religious leaders, and hadjis to have their sons raised in a Salvation Army institute'. But indigenous society on Java and Madura was not fanatically Islamic, he believed, and they would not care if abandoned or neglected children, who were a burden for society, were getting a Christian education. Even the elites of their own ethnic and/or religious group considered these children to be marginal. Moreover, the Salvation Army said they would allow pupils to continue 'non damaging traditions' like circumcision, and the director of Education believed that the majority was mostly interested in these 'exterior markers of Islam'. He felt that Boekhoudt's proposition to let the institutions sign a declaration that they would not force any of the pupils to participate in religious meetings was enough.²⁷⁶

Eventually the Council of the Indies, the Minister of Colonies in The Hague, and Snouck Hurgronje (the advisor for native affairs) gave their opinions. The Council came to the conclusion that the principle of religious neutrality would not be broken if the government would send juvenile delinquents to a Christian institution, as long as no institutions affiliated with the religion of the parents existed. They advised waiting for the recommendations of the Advisor for Native Affairs, but were positive about contracts for the re-education of juvenile delinquents with the Witte Kruis Kolonie and the Salvation Army.²⁷⁷

Snouck Hurgronje stressed the fact that the government, according to its own penal law, was responsible for placing juvenile delinquents in a proper institute for re-education. Since it had become clear that (indigenous) private persons were unsuitable for the re-education of juveniles and since Islamic or neutral institutions did not exist, the government could not do anything but place them in Christian institutions. As long as there was a measure of oversight from the government, and as long as the children were not participating

²⁷⁶ Hadjis (currently spelled hajjis) are Muslims who have made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Letter from the director of Education, Batavia, 14-09-1908 No. 13817, included as appendix to *Batavia, 20 July 1908, No. 2185, Director of Department of Internal Affairs De Graaff to Governor General Van Heutsz*, pp. 16-17, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

²⁷⁷ Kommissoriaal van den 6den April 1909 No 27, aan den Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie om met terugzending te dienen van consideratien en advies. No XII. *Advies van den Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie*, uitgebracht in de buitengewone vergadering van 24 April 1909, pp. 8-10. In BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

in religious education that was different from their own religion, there should not be a problem, Snouck Hurgronje believed. He concluded that if these prerequisites were not met it would be unavoidable to establish a government reformatory.²⁷⁸

Van Emmerik, however, refused to accept a re-education contract with the government that stated in article 2: ‘no pressure whatsoever will be put on the religious conviction of the inmate [*verpleegde*]’.²⁷⁹ Nienhuis, one of the Justice Department’s inspectors for the penal system, could not convince him otherwise and the contract remained unsigned. Nevertheless, the colonial government kept sending Van Emmerik juveniles on a case-by-case basis, without any of the restrictions and control mechanisms that the government wanted to include in the re-education contract.²⁸⁰ The Salvation Army was willing to sign a re-education contract that included Article 2, and despite the different concerns among government personnel and the Resident of Semarang about the ‘soft pressure’ on the religious beliefs of inhabitants, the state was happy to work with them. The Indies government needed places to re-educate its indigenous juvenile delinquents, and the department of Justice felt that article 2 was enough to guarantee religious ‘neutrality’, or at least keep up the appearance that the Indies’ government was guaranteeing this.²⁸¹

2.2. The expansion of indigenous civil society around World War I (1914-1918)

The great increase in indigenous popular organising that arose in the Indies in the first decades of the twentieth century is known as the *pergerakan* (movement). Shiraishi’s detailed account of the origins and development of the *pergerakan* tells us much about indigenous civic activity in the colony, and the challenges it posed for the colonial government, but his focus on ‘revolutionary’ movements gives a limited view of civil developments in the Indies in the twentieth century. Less radical ideologies of reform and

²⁷⁸ *Leiden, 30-11-1909, to the Minister of Colonies from Professor and Advisor for Native and Arabic Affairs C. Snouck Hurgronje*, pp. 4-5, in Ag. 3520/1910. AS, ANRI.

²⁷⁹ *Concept Contract with the Re-education Institutes*, p. 2. Part of Afschrift Mailrapport No 385/14, in Gb. Ag. No 3616/1914. AS, ANRI.

²⁸⁰ *Djakakarta, 30 January 1911, Inspector of the Penal System Nienhuis to the Head of the Penal System P.J. Gebel in Batavia*, pp. 7-9. Part of Afschrift Mailrapport No 385/14, in Gb. Ag. No 3616/1914. AS, ANRI.

²⁸¹ *Semarang, 12 November 1910, The Resident of Semarang Vogel to the Director of the Justice Department in Batavia*, p. 1. Part of Afschrift Mailrapport No 385/14, in Gb. Ag. No 3616/1914. AS, ANRI. *Semarang, 5 November 1910, Leader of the Salvation Army in the N.I. Goovaars to the Resident of Semarang Vogel*, p. 3. Part of Afschrift Mailrapport No 385/14, in Gb. Ag. No 3616/1914. AS, ANRI. *Leader of the S.A. Van Rossum as cited in Batavia, 20 July 1908, No. 2185, Director of Department of Internal Affairs De Graaff to Governor General Van Heutsz*, p. 11, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI.

improvement were also gaining strength, and both European and indigenous inhabitants of the colony were becoming more active in expressing their views on how society should 'progress' and 'modernize'.

One of the characteristics of colonial civil society in the Indies was its multi-ethnic composition and its 'global' ideological influences. This was obviously a result of the cultural make-up of colonial society, inhabited by people from all over the world. Racial distinctions (officially between 'Europeans', 'Natives', and 'Foreign Orientals', but in reality much more complex) set people legally, socially, and economically apart, which led to bitterness about the nature of colonial rule. For example, inequality and discrimination were visible in the differences between the severity of punishments for Europeans and the other legal groups, job opportunities and in codes of dress (it was forbidden to wear the apparel of another race or ethnic group). Around the turn of the century dress codes had not yet been abandoned, but they were broken more and more by indigenous people and Chinese who had started wearing European clothing, who enjoyed listening and dancing to Western music, and who refused to squat but insisted on sitting on chairs – like Europeans did - instead.²⁸²

It was precisely this growing resentment and the wish to emancipate that led to the increase in associations, political parties, newspapers, social clubs, etc., in the early twentieth century. Modern means of communication and the promises and possibilities of the ethical policy facilitated this development and legal distinctions between population groups did not prevent people from mixing and influencing each other in various ways. The first 'modern' non-European associations in the Indies developed among the social and ethnic groups that felt most pressure from social changes and seemed to fall between legal categories, like the Chinese and Indo-European population. Van Dijk points out how these examples of political agitation inspired indigenous organizations.²⁸³

Research on newly founded associations and organizations, which were legally approved by the government each year, supports these claims. The colonial government registered the number of associations that it approved each year, and registered to which population group each organization belonged. The graph and table on the next pages show clearly that the number of Chinese associations started to rise in the 1890s, before any other

²⁸² Kees van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and the Great War, 1914-1918* (KITLV Press, Leiden, 2007) pp. 22-26. His book provides a great deal of information about the development of the *pergerakan* and developments in indigenous circles around World War I.

²⁸³ Van Dijk, *The Great War*, 26-33, 52.

non-European associations. In 1906, the government approved the first indigenous association, and the period 1914-1918 formed the peak of the establishment of indigenous associations. In this period they established more associations than any other population group and even outnumbered newly founded European associations. The establishment of European associations peaked in 1920 and 1921; after this period there was a decrease in the number of European and indigenous associations that were established each year. This does not indicate, however, that associational life floundered after World War I. The associations that had been founded in earlier years remained active, as will be shown in chapter 3.

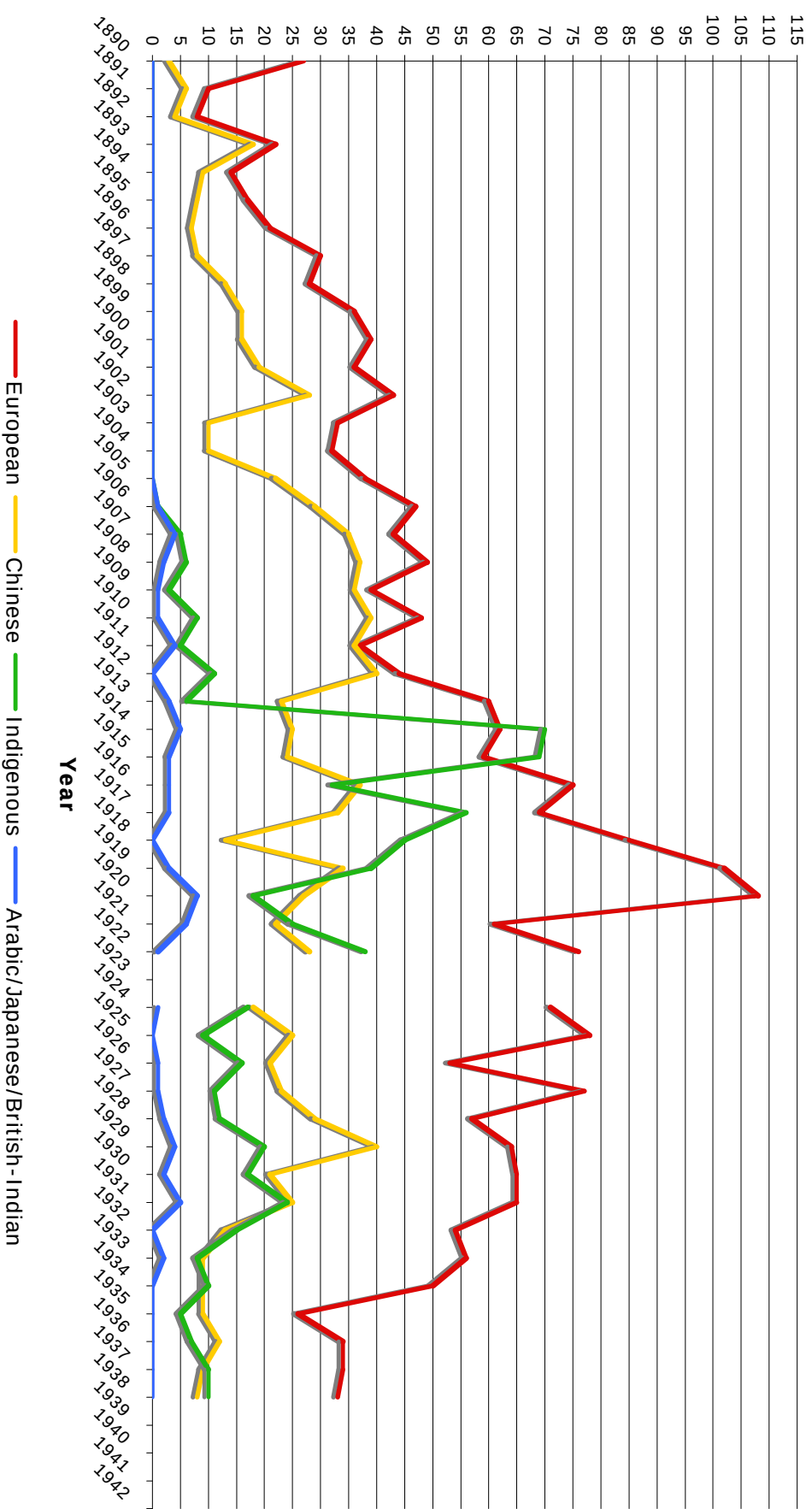
New associations approved by colonial government, per legal group, 1890-1938

Year	Total	Eur.	Chin.	Indig.	Arab./ Jap./ Br-Ind.
1890	30	27	3	0	0
1891	16	10	6	0	0
1892	12	8	4	0	0
1893	40	22	18	0	0
1894	23	14	9	0	0
1895	25	17	8	0	0
1896	28	21	7	0	0
1897	38	30	8	0	0
1898	41	28	13	0	0
1899	52	36	16	0	0
1900	55	39	16	0	0
1901	55	36	19	0	0
1902	71	43	28	0	0
1903	43	33	10	0	0
1904	42	32	10	0	0
1905	60	38	22	0	0
1906	78	47	29	1	1
1907	87	43	35	5	4
1908	94	49	37	6	2
1909	79	39	36	3	1
1910	96	48	39	8	1
1911	82	37	36	5	4
1912	95	44	40	11	0
1913	92	60	23	6	3
1914	162	62	25	70	5
1915	155	59	24	69	3
1916	147	75	37	32	3
1917	161	69	33	56	3
1918	143	85	13	45	0
1919	178	102	34	39	3
1920	161	108	27	18	8

Year	Total	Eur.	Chin.	Indig.	Arab./ Jap./ Br-Ind.
1921	114	61	22	25	6
1922	143	76	28	38	1
1923					
1924	107	71	18	17	1
1925	112	78	25	9	0
1926	91	53	21	16	1
1927	112	77	23	11	1
1928	100	57	29	12	2
1929	128	64	40	20	4
1930	105	65	21	17	2
1931	119	65	25	24	5
1932	82	54	13	15	0
1933	75	56	9	8	2
1934	69	50	9	10	0
1935	40	26	9	5	0
1936	53	34	12	7	0
1937	53	34	9	10	0
1938	51	33	8	10	0
Total	3995	2315	986	628	66

(Sources: *Koloniale Verslag/Indisch Verslag*, 1890-1940)

Government approved associations, per year, per legal group, Netherlands Indies 1890-1942



The rise of new ideas and movements in Indies' civil society was not only inspired by local events but also by the spread of new ideologies and notions of democracy and emancipation among different ethnic groups. Modern means of communication, books, newspapers and magazines, and Western education, all contributed to the indigenous elite's growing awareness of their lack of political possibilities and rights. From Europe the nineteenth-century ideologies of Marxism and Socialism started trickling down into colonial society, and the Middle East and Turkey provided the ideas of Islamic modernism and revival that influenced the reformist Muhammadiyah movement. Combined with Asian examples of modernization and progress, like China and Japan, this became the fuel of the *pergerakan*. In the twentieth century colonial civil society grew into a patchwork of different ethnic (and sometimes multi-ethnic) organisations and expressions, led by individuals who drew upon ideas and political and religious ideologies from many different parts of the globe.

In 1908 Boedi Oetomo (BO) was founded and legally approved by Governor General Idenburg. It promoted native progress in the language of social Darwinism's survival of the fittest and was, in its early years, predominantly supported by upper *class priyayi* Javanese who were western educated. The Dutch colonial establishment embraced BO as a proper expression of 'native progress and awakening' that seemed to fit with the ideas of 'uplift' of the Ethical policy, unlike the more radical ideas of Indo-European Douwes Dekker and his indigenous comrades.²⁸⁴ The birth of Sarekat Islam (SI) in May of 1912 was more challenging for colonial authorities. Just like with BO the statutes of the first SI branch in Soerakarta were full of the ethical language of progress, uplift, prosperity and welfare, but the organizations' unifying principle was the Islamic religion and lifestyle of its members. In this sense, SI drew on a much broader and less elitist indigenous membership base than BO. Starting in September 1912 Sarekat Islam branches spread out quickly over Java by means of indigenous newspapers and public rallies – attended by ten thousand people in Surabaya in January 1913. In March the organization reportedly had forty-eight branches with a membership of approximately two hundred thousand.²⁸⁵

The white community and the government - extremely sensitive to any signs of possible disorder or protest - watched the vigorous and somewhat chaotic growth of SI with concern. The government apparatus collected information about the organisation and its leaders while the government's official stance remained unclear. Despite 'irregularities'

²⁸⁴ For more on Douwes Dekker and the Indische Partij, see Van Dijk, *The Great War*, 45-71.
²⁸⁵ Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*, 34-49.

surrounding rallies and some ‘disrespectful’ and ‘rebellious’ attitudes from SI members towards local governments, Governor General Idenburg interpreted SI as a sign of positive native developments, and he did not want to ban the organisation. He did not have to either, because initially the leaders of SI stressed that native progress was the same as the ethical progress the government sought. As Siraishi explains: ‘Various complaints were voiced about taxes, rent, corvee labor, wages, encroachments on native rights, and private estates, but the question of colonial domination and subordination was never raised.’²⁸⁶ In June 1913 the Governor General decided that he did not approve of a unified SI, but he allowed local SI organisations with a central coordinating body. This would give the government and local colonial rulers considerable influence and control over the affairs and expansion of the organisation, and this seemed the least threatening way to guide this kind of massive ‘native awakening’.²⁸⁷

Colonial civil society was also comprised of smaller, more socially oriented, indigenous associations that had a less critical stance towards the central government. For example, in February 1914 the Madjoe-Kamoeljan (Progress to Nobility) Association was founded to combat ‘immorality’ among indigenous people, in particular concubinage and the traffic in women and children. To do so the association distributed pamphlets, sent speakers to villages, held public meetings, promoted work creation for indigenous women, gathered information to pass on to the government, and lent moral and financial support whenever needed to battle ‘immoral evils’. Madjoe-Kamoeljan’s first public meeting attracted a crowd of about 600 that included Europeans, Chinese, Arabs, and Indians in addition to an overwhelming majority of indigenous people. About half of the indigenous attendees were female and there were a few European women as well. Madjoe-Kamoeljan had a European woman as its First Treasurer and two white female members. The association was run and broadly supported by natives, but stressed that membership was open for everyone and that prostitution was a concern of every ethnic group.²⁸⁸

The association Ati Soetji (Pure Heart), also founded in 1914, tried to prevent Chinese women and girls from falling into prostitution or from continuing this line of work. They ran a home for Chinese girls in Batavia where they either received a proper school

²⁸⁶ Siraishi, *An Age in Motion*, 62.

²⁸⁷ Siraishi, *An Age in Motion*, 49-90.

²⁸⁸ Andrew Jimenez Abalahin, *Prostitution Policy and the Project of Modernity: A Comparative Study of Colonial Indonesia and the Philippines, 1850-1940* (Dissertation Cornell University, 2003) 398-404.

education or domestic training so they could earn their money with ‘honest’ work – how it was decided which girls received what kind of training is unclear. These indigenous associations – and these are just a few examples - worked together with the Government Bureau for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children (and Obscene Publications) established in 1915 and they actively supported the governments’ version of indigenous ‘uplift’ and ‘progress’.²⁸⁹

World War I was a turning point for the history of the Indies and the *pergerakan*. The colony and the Netherlands were not directly involved in the war, but their relationship was still greatly influenced by it. Both governments feared that the colony might be attacked. Governor General Idenburg was asked to stay on beyond his term to ensure the defence of the Indies, and fear of foreign aggression only abated a bit in late 1915. When J.P. Graaf van Limburg Stirum replaced Idenburg as Governor General in March 1916, the war had made communication between the colony and the metropole very difficult, and Van Limburg Stirum steered the colony onto a more autonomous path. Dynamics within the Indies were taking a radical turn as well. Problems with shipping transportation and the chaotic situation of the world markets hurt the colonial economy. Prices went up while wages stayed the same, and the decline of the living standard made people more restless and dissatisfied than before the war.²⁹⁰

By 1917 different groups in the Netherlands Indies became more and more vocal about their dissatisfaction with Dutch rule. The government had hoped in vain that, out of commiseration with the war threat in both the mother country and the colony, the opposition would silence. In Celebes rumours about the Dutch leaving the island were fed by the withdrawal of troops to increase the defensive power of Java after July 1914. In West Seram similar stories spread when discontent local leaders believed that the colonial army did not have enough troops to keep the region under control. In August 1916 anti-Dutch violence broke out in Jambi, Tapanuli, and Palembang, on Sumatra. The resistance in Jambi was fortified by stories about Turkish military support and the recognition of the insurrection by Istanbul. Turkish participation in the war had contributed to the general revival of Islam, brought to the fore and stimulated by Sarekat Islam, and fed the already existing anti-Dutch undercurrents in the colony. Smaller armed resistance took place in Flores, South and East Borneo, South Celebes, and the Tanimbar and Babar Islands in 1916 and later years. To

²⁸⁹ Abalahin, *Prostitution Policy and the Project of Modernity*, 405-408.

²⁹⁰ Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*, 91-93.

enforce Dutch rule, ships and troops had to be deployed to the outer islands, diverting army and navy power from the government's main concerns: guarding neutrality and defending the colony against foreign enemies.²⁹¹

The white colonial community and its press blamed Sarekat Islam for the unrest on Sumatra and the other islands, and used this to condemn the moderate approach to the new political organisations that had been founded before the war. But the colonial government and some politicians in The Hague, who believed that organisations like SI and BO had an important emancipating role to play, stressed that outsiders had infiltrated the local Sarekat Islam branches that had participated in the protests. Later this claim was actually supported by investigations into the source of the unrest. For moderate Dutch and Dutch Indies politicians and bureaucrats the disturbances had another rather inconvenient implication: they felt that outside of Java the colonial government had failed to conduct proper benevolent rule - one of the pillars of the ethical policy in which many of them believed. Benevolent rule should have convinced the indigenous population and its leaders that Dutch rule was not that bad and definitely preferable over any other foreign domination. The protests proved to them that the population did not agree with these premises.²⁹²

J.H. Liefcrinck, one of the members of the Council of the Indies, was asked in October 1916 to research the causes of discontent in Jambi and Palembang. To find out if the malaise was more general, he also looked into the situation in East Java, Borneo, Lombok, Bali, Timor and the Minahasa. Reports by Liefcrinck and others concluded that the diligence of the Dutch civil service in the outer regions was the source of the problems. They had been so eager to 'modernize' and 'uplift' their territories – especially by constructing motor roads - that they had put too much pressure on the population without the necessary tact and know-how. According to Pleyte they had not realized that they had put 'excessive heavy demands on the means and energy of the population.' The civil servants, however, rebutted that they had warned Batavia of the negative consequences of government policies, but that their warnings had been ignored and that they had even been punished for such criticism.²⁹³

Thus, the first two decades of the twentieth century, and especially the years 1914-1918 were marked by great changes in Indies' colonial civil society, its economy, and

²⁹¹ Van Dijk, *The Great War*, 453-454.

²⁹² Van Dijk, *The Great War*, 454-455

²⁹³ Van Dijk, *The Great War*, 455. Van Dijk quotes Pleyte from the *Handelingen Eerste Kamer* 1917-18: 469.

political climate. The birth of the *pergerakan* and the birth of an Islamic mass movement posed new challenges for the colonial government – and brought already existing concerns to the fore. On the one hand, progressive ethical politicians and bureaucrats applauded or at least condoned ‘native awakening’, but, on the other hand, they distrusted the intentions of organisations like Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Islam. The indigenous local rebellions, protests, and killings that took place in the cities and countryside of the whole archipelago during the course of World War I - combined with the revolutions taking place all over Europe - fed anxiety about the security of their rule among colonial elites. It was in this atmosphere of great civic activity, public organising, rebellion, and anxiety that the colonial state made a major change in its re-education policies for juvenile delinquents.

2.3. Freedom loving ‘criminals’ and the weaknesses of the private re-education system

On the evening of March 12 1916, around midnight, the village head of Kedoeng Pani, located in the Residency of Semarang, Java, ran into a strange procession on the country road to the village of Midjen. Several members of the local *desa*-police²⁹⁴ and Salvation Army captain L.Glover were carrying a rattan reclining chair, and on that chair sat a teenage boy about 15 years old, tied to his seat by hands and feet. The village head could hardly believe his eyes, and quickly checked if the tied-down boy was injured. Since the teenager seemed unharmed and lucid the village head asked his name. ‘I am Endoen, from Madjalengka, Cheribon’, answered the boy.²⁹⁵

Endoen had been living in the agricultural colony Boemi Ajoe since he was fourteen, after the judge of the local court of Tjiamis, Cheribon sent him there for stealing in September 1914. The Salvation Army had originally established the colony to teach indigenous landless free families and individuals, who migrated to the colony from different parts of the archipelago, how they could make a living by farming. Endoen was one of approximately ten juvenile delinquents living in the Tehuis voor Inlandsche Jongens (Home for Native boys) that the Salvation Army was running together with the agricultural colony. The colonial state sent indigenous juvenile delinquents there for re-education, as well as

²⁹⁴ *Desa* is the Malay for a village used in colonial times; the village police was called *desa*-police and was run by local men. Currently the word is spelled as *desa*.

²⁹⁵ *Case report Endoen, written by the Head of the Wedana Police, under supervisor of the Bupati of Kendal, Residency Semarang, Regency Kendal, ANRI, Algemene Secretarie, Bt 28-06-1916 no. 16.* This report is in Malay and consists of the statements and observations of several witnesses in the Endoen-case. The actual conversations between witnesses and the boy are written down (almost) sentence-by-sentence.

sending them to the Witte Kruis Kolonie. They were kept busy with basic education and learning how to farm, sometimes they could learn a simple trade like tailoring as well.

According to inspector Van Walsem, an official with the Justice Department who was responsible for overseeing juvenile re-education, Endoen had always behaved well at the colony. 'From all his conduct speaks that he is a bit more than a simple village-boy. He is industrious and always goes beyond what he is told to do. His garden is well-kept and he recently requested to work an extra piece of land - that coincidentally came available - in his own time, which was granted. The boy is undisputedly one of the best workers of the colony,' reported Van Walsem after a supervising visit to the re-education facility in November 1915.²⁹⁶

But in March 1916 Endoen was very homesick. According to one of his overseers this started when some of his free older friends moved to Kalawara, a new agricultural colony on Celebes, and he had to work with the younger boys. Endoen had apparently asked J.Scheffer, the director of the colony, if he could go back to his parents in *desa* Sindang, in Northwest Java, but that was denied. He also asked Captain L. Glover if he could become a soldier and leave the colony that way. Endoen shared his feelings with a friend on Monday the 12th of March 1916. After the daily meeting between the pupils and their supervisors Endoen took Wasdi aside and told him how miserable he felt about life in *Boemi Ajoë*. 'So what are you planning to do, where are you going to go?' asked Wasdi. 'Well, I think it is better for me to hang myself,' answered Endoen. Wasdi was so shocked by this statement that he told director Scheffer about it right away, but at the same time he did not really believe Endoen would do it.²⁹⁷

Endoen did not use empty words, however, as he explained later that night to the village head of Kedoeng Pani: 'Tonight, when everybody was asleep, I tried to hang myself in the communal bedroom with my headband and my scarf. But a friend found out what I was doing and he took a knife and cut the rope. I don't know who it was because I fainted', said Endoen. 'Why did you do it?' asked the village head. 'Because I am feeling so unhappy, I

²⁹⁶ Van Walsem, *Report of an official visit to the reformatory 'Oranje Nassau' at Magelang, the 'Witte Kruis Kolonie' at Warak, Salatiga, and the Home for Native boys 'Boemi Ajoë' of the Salvation Army at Kedoeng Pani, Semarang, respectively on 8 and 9 November, 12 and 15 November 1915*. Bgs 2-04-1917 no. 838. Algemene Secretarie, ANRI,

²⁹⁷ *Case report Endoen*, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Bt 28-06-1916 no. 16.

miss my mom and dad and want to go home. I asked *toean Stafkapitein*²⁹⁸ but he didn't allow it. So I wanted to kill myself because I am so homesick.'²⁹⁹

Endoen's suicide attempt had taken place around nine o'clock at night. As soon as Captain Glover heard about it, he ran to the sleeping quarters, where Endoen was still lying unconscious on the floor with the improvised rope around his neck. Next to him sat his friend Dopa, who was only twelve years old but had managed to find a knife and cut the older and bigger boy loose. When Endoen regained consciousness he was so out of his mind - according to Glover - that the captain feared he would hurt others so he decided to tie him to the rattan chair and immediately carry him away from the colony. Glover planned to send him to the Assistant-Resident of Kendal with the message that 'Endoen could no longer be taken care of at the colony'. His superior, director Scheffer, agreed with Glover that Endoen was a possible danger for the other children at the colony and should be removed right away.³⁰⁰

While the sources stress Endoen's problems and his suicide attempt, it should be considered that possibly the boy was not actually trying to kill himself but rather had come up with a desperate measure to try to get out of the re-education facility. After all, telling his friend about his suicide plan seems asking for trouble. What friend would remain silent with a secret like that? And the communal bedroom could hardly be the right place to successfully commit suicide, with the likely chance of other people waking up. During the day there was plenty of opportunity to roam the colony and find a more private location. It is impossible to discover Endoen's real motives but it is good to keep in mind that he should not just be seen as a 'victim' of the re-education system.

After the nightly trip to Midjen, where the *Assistant-Wedana* recorded the next day in his daily report that the Salvation Army no longer wanted to care for Endoen, the teenager ended up in the prison of Kendal. The *djaksa* (indigenous prosecutor) of the local *landraad*³⁰¹ looked into the case and advised sending the boy back to his father Soebrata. Assistant-Resident C. De Groot supported this on the basis that Endoen had always behaved well during his initial time in the prison of Tjiamis and during his re-education sentence at the

²⁹⁸ *Toean* means 'mister' or 'sir' in Malay. *Stafkapitein* is the Dutch word for 'Staff Captain' and was used to signify a certain rank within the Salvation Army.

²⁹⁹ *Case report Endoen*, Bt 28-06-1916 no. 16. AS, ANRI.

³⁰⁰ *Case report Endoen*, Bt 28-06-1916 no. 16. AS, ANRI.

³⁰¹ The *Landraad* is the Dutch name for the local court for non-Europeans in the Netherlands Indies. It literally means 'country counsel'. The *Djaksa* was the native prosecutor for the *Landraad*.

agricultural colony. But Endoen still had to wait in jail for a month, until the Assistant-Resident in his parents' region had sent word to his colleague in Kendal that his family was of 'decent standing' and could be expected to take good care of the boy. After that news, the Assistant-Resident of Kendal moved him from the prison to an institution for 'sick and destitute natives' in Semarang, where Endoen waited for another month. Finally, in June 1916, the Governor General approved that Endoen could go home to finish his 're-education sentence' in the house of his parents.³⁰²

Endoen's suicide attempt eventually gave him what he longed for. After more than two and a half years in various prisons and on the agricultural colony, and after a lengthy journey from West to East Java and back, he was reunited with his parents and family in Cheribon in the summer of 1916. The colonial government was less than happy with the whole episode. When Van Walsem visited Boemi Ajoë again for inspection in October 1916, and heard about Endoen's story, he was very upset. '[I] Can not approve of a treatment like this for a sick Government pupil,' noted Van Walsem in his report for the department of justice. 'It is just not done to simply remove a boy who makes a suicide attempt - but who does not create any other trouble - from the reformatory, in the middle of the night, tied to a chair, and lead him in front of the Assistant Resident as if he had committed a crime.' Van Walsem argued that the colony leaders should have cared for Endoen until the department of Justice and the Governor General had made their decision about a proper course of action.³⁰³

Based on the case of Endoen - and another unauthorized (but less dramatic) transfer of a teenage delinquent to a different institution - Van Walsem concluded that director Scheffer of Boemi Ajoë was simply too eager to rid himself of 'difficult' pupils. To prevent this from happening in the future, Van Walsem asked the Assistant-Resident of Kendal to decline any other requests for transfers of juvenile delinquents from Scheffer and instead send the boys back to Boemi Ajoë with the message that 'without previous knowledge from the Director of the Justice Department it is not allowed to change institutions.'³⁰⁴ In February

³⁰² Decision Governor General 28 June 1916 no. 16, and letters from local officials to the Governor General, Bt 28-06-1916 no. 16. AS, ANRI.

³⁰³ Van Walsem, *Report of an official visit to the reformatory 'Oranje Nassau' at Magelang, the Home for Native boys 'Boemi Ajoë' of the Salvation Army at Kedoeng Pani, Semarang, the Home for Sick and Destitute Natives, also from the Salvation Army in Semarang and the 'Witte Kruis Kolonie' at Warak, Salatiga, respectively on the dates 24 and 25 September, 16, 17 October and 19 October 1916.* Bgs 2-04-1917 No. 838. AS, ANRI.

³⁰⁴ Van Walsem, *Report of an official visit to the reformatory 'Oranje Nassau' at Magelang, the Home for Native boys 'Boemi Ajoë' of the Salvation Army at Kedoeng Pani, Semarang, the Home for Sick and Destitute Natives, also from the Salvation Army in Semarang and the 'Witte Kruis Kolonie' at Warak,*

1917 Mr. W. Sonneveld, the director of the Justice Department from July 1916 until July 1917, used Endoen's story in a letter to Governor General Idenburg to prove that the care for juvenile delinquents in private philanthropic institutions was inadequate. He argued that a government-run re-education facility was needed to prevent 'abnormal' pupils from falling between the cracks of the re-education system.³⁰⁵

Another serious point of criticism that the Justice Department had about private institutions was the high number of escapes. In March 1917 Ruempol, Head of the Police Force in Semarang and one of the most important police officers in the colony, received three different letters of Scheffers, the leader of the Salvation Army juvenile re-education home in Kedoeng Pani. Each time Scheffers reported to the police that a small group of indigenous juvenile delinquents had managed to escape from the institution. The boys were usually trying to go back home or were drawn to the city of Semarang, where they could merge with other young boys roaming the town. Ruempol was displeased; his manpower was precious in a time when the economic pressures of World War I caused rising prices and a restless population. The recently formed city police was a relatively young organization as well.³⁰⁶ Not only did his men have to go out and look for escaped children, Ruempol also had to report all escapes from juvenile delinquents to Nienhuis, the head of the prison system of the Department of Justice in Weltevreden. Ruempol had already written Nienhuis on March the third, notifying him that two boys had escaped the institution in late February and had politely suggested that some measures should be taken by the Justice Department to prevent these escapes. Apparently nothing – or not enough – had been done because it was four weeks had gone by and since the first letter of that month there had already been two more escapes.³⁰⁷

What was even more frustrating for Ruempol than the lack of action from the Justice Department was the fact that one of the boys who had run away -- twelve-year-old Moesah -- had just been caught two weeks earlier. In late February Moesah had partnered up with Tan A. Koen, a Chinese boy from Batavia, and the two had managed to sneak away in the late morning. Tan A. Koen was just twelve years old and had been sentenced to ten years of re-

Salatiga, respectively on the dates 24 and 25 September, 16, 17 October and 19 October 1916. Bgs 2-04-1917 No. 838. AS, ANRI.

³⁰⁵ *Director of Justice Department to Governor General, 24-02-1917 no 3786, p 2. Bgs 2-04-1917 No. 838. AS, ANRI.*

³⁰⁶ For more about the reorganization of the city police (stadpolitie), see Bloembergen, *De geschiedenis van de politie in NI*, 143-151.

³⁰⁷ Ruempol to Nienhuis, Semarang 3-03-1917, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

education at the agricultural colony, where he had arrived in November 1916. Ruempol did not exactly know what the boy had done to deserve a ten-year re-education sentence, but Tan A. Koen apparently did not care for life in Kedoeng Pani and attempted to get away. It had not taken very long for the police to track him down and send him back to the Salvation Army. He was an ethnic Chinese and it was difficult for him to blend in with the local population. His head was shaven, and he had a big scar behind his ear where no hair would grow at all. This Chinese boy did not escape again with the group that got away in mid-March; Moesah had apparently managed to find two other boys to partner with.³⁰⁸

Moesah's perseverance to live a free life is impressive; the boy was sent to Java from the Benkoelen region in Sumatra and had arrived on the eight of December 1916. He had to stay in the agricultural colony for five years. This was his second escape in a month's time, and he did not seem daunted by the fact that he had been caught the first time and that it would be very difficult for him to get home to Sumatra without being caught again. According to Rieklef Scheffers, the director of Boemi Ajoë, Moesah spoke 'in a nervous way' and was 'a notorious little thief'. He had tried again and again to steal soap, clothes and other belongings of the pupils in the institution. This time Moesah was with 15 year old Westi, the child of a European soldier and an indigenous woman from Bandoeng. Westi was officially called Willem and spoke both Dutch and Malay. He had only arrived from Batavia a month earlier, on February the eighteenth, and had been sentenced to stay for ten years in the agricultural institution. In Batavia Westi had already successfully escaped from the police office in Pasar Baroe by climbing over a wall. He had managed to stay out of prison for about three months and, like Moesah, seemed quite determined to choose his own living situation by attempting another escape right after arriving in the Salvation Army reformatory.³⁰⁹

The third juvenile in the group was Amsir, and he and Westi knew each other from their escape attempt in Batavia, when Amsir had not been so lucky and was caught right away. He was sent to Boemi Ajoë in early December 1916 – arriving in the same transport with Moesah - at the age of about 16 years old. He had been sentenced to stay in the colony till he was twenty. His reunion with Westi apparently stirred something up and they ran off again. Scheffers reported to Ruempol that the three boys had escaped between two and three in the afternoon – while the intense heat kept most people inside or in the shade - and had

³⁰⁸ Scheffers to Assistant-Resident Semarang, 25-02-1917. Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

³⁰⁹ Scheffers to Assistant-Resident Semarang, 25-02-1917 and Scheffers to Ruempol, 21-03-1917, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

been spotted by locals on the road to Semarang around four o'clock. It was about eight days later, and they had not been caught yet. To make matters worse, two more boys – Wagimin and Amat - had escaped separately from each other just a few days after the breakout of Moesah, Westi and Amsir.³¹⁰

Because something had to be done, Ruempol decided to phrase his letter to Nienhuis a bit more strongly than before. Referring to his first letter about the Boemi Ajoe escapes of that month he stressed - 'politely but urgently' - that measures should be taken right away to prevent any more breakouts: 'Otherwise the police of Semarang can just keep searching for escaped youngsters from the aforementioned penal institution'.³¹¹ Despite police commander Ruempol's urgent letters it took the colonial government in Semarang almost six months to change the situation. During which time there were several more escapes. In early May Ruempol wrote to the Justice Department that 'I am asking your attention for several cases of escaped juvenile delinquents - more than before - from the institution for Native boys of the Salvation Army in Kedoeng Pani'. Ruempol felt that the new wave of escapes was caused by a change of leadership in the agricultural colony: 'director Scheffers transferred to the institution at Boegangan, and the boys escaped just after that. Scheffers seemed to be in good standing [...] and had a tactful way of dealing with them, considering the fact that the boys who escaped last week returned to him voluntarily'.³¹²

It seems as if the Justice Department did not do much with Ruempol's information about Boemi Ajoe. He was not kept very well informed either; the department had already been discussing the problems of the institution with the leader of the Salvation Army for almost a year. The Salvation Army had communicated to the department that Boemi Ajoe had become too small to properly re-educate juvenile delinquents. The Justice Department had looked into it and came to the conclusion that it was too difficult to improve the day-to-day situation in the agricultural colony. First of all the layout of the colony made it almost impossible to prevent escapes, secondly the soil was so hard and rocky that working on the land was unreasonably difficult for the youngsters (making resentment against their sentence all the more likely), and lastly the proximity of a large urban centre like Semarang made escaping even more attractive. Both the leader of the Salvation Army and head of the Justice Department Mr. H.J. Scheuer concluded that 'with the continuing increase in the number of

³¹⁰ Scheffers to Ruempol, 21-03-1917, 26-03-1917, and 28-03-1917, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

³¹¹ Ruempol to Nienhuis, 31-03-1917, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

³¹² Ruempol to Nienhuis, 11-05-1917, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

juvenile delinquents' the agricultural colony at Kedoeng Pani was no longer suitable as a re-education institute. The Salvation Army proposed to start using their agricultural colony at Kalawara on the island of Celebes as a second re-education institution. The head of the Justice Department accepted this as a proper solution: '[b]ecause by appointing the agricultural colony in Kalawara instead of the one in Kedoeng Pani as a suitable home for this category of young persons no new course of action was taken, at least it did not change the policy adopted by the Government since 1910 that in absence of an Islamic or neutral institution Native fellows can be placed in a Christian institution.'³¹³

In July 1917 Scheuer advised the Governor General that because of the long list of successful breakouts from Kedoeng Pani in the recent months delinquents should not be sent to the agricultural colony any more. The head of the Justice Department qualified the state of affairs as an extremely undesirable situation that made a correct treatment of delinquent youth impossible. He specifically mentioned that the boys who escaped from Kedoeng Pani were kept in a regular prison in Semarang now, something that the government wanted to prevent at all costs. 'Moreover', Scheuer reported, 'many youngsters who were sent to a re-education institute by the judge are now waiting for their placement [usually in regular prisons], while at the same time there are constant requests for new institutional placements'.³¹⁴

In his letter to the Governor General, Scheuer also worried that the judges would stop sending juvenile delinquents to re-education institutions if they realised that placement in private institutions would either lead to escape or further postponement because of lack of space. '[The judge] might return to his old standpoint and send juvenile delinquents back to their parents without any punishment, which in most cases will not benefit the fight against the increasing criminality among indigenous youth.'³¹⁵ The situation was even more embarrassing because in April 1916 the head of the Justice Department at the time, Mr. J.W.C. Cordes, had sent a letter to all the courts, judges and police judges in the Netherlands Indies in which he pointed out that the courts hardly ever sent any juvenile delinquents under the age of sixteen to an 'improvement home' to be raised there. Judges were allowed to take

³¹³ Director of Justice Department Scheuer to Governor General, 27-07-1917, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

³¹⁴ Director of Justice Department Scheuer to Governor General, 27-07-1917, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

³¹⁵ Director of Justice Department Scheuer to Governor General, 27-07-1917, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

this measure according to article 32 of the European penal code and article 35 of the indigenous penal code, and even though the Government had not set up an institution like that in the colony, the penal code also provided a transitional article (article 5) that ruled that juvenile delinquents could be sent to any residence that was deemed suitable by the judge and the Governor General. Cordes encouraged the judges to reconsider their options and informed them 'that in a number of private institutions there is suitable opportunity to place juvenile delinquents, with either a European or indigenous origin.'³¹⁶

Apparently the judges had followed the advice from the Department of Justice; the increase in the number of indigenous children given a re-education sentence and sent to Kedoeng Pani was significant. In 1914 only four boys were sent to Boemi Ajoë, out of a total number of four convictions registered by the office of the Governor General that year. After the letter to the courts in April 1916, 21 children (out of 21 convictions) were sent to the colony by the judges.³¹⁷ The rise in the number of inhabitants of Boemi Ajoë created so many problems with security that it now led to a complete reconsideration of the suitability of this Salvation Army institution. Besides recommending the colony in Kalawara as a better place for indigenous juveniles, Scheuer also strongly advised the Governor General to let the Netherlands Indies government - instead of the Salvation Army - run the new re-education facility in Semarang that was almost ready to be opened.³¹⁸

Initially the governments' former beggars institute in Semarang had been redesigned and rebuilt by the Indies government to function as a re-education institute for indigenous children that would be run by a private association. The Salvation Army had offered to run the institute for the Indies government, but, with the problems they were having in the existing re-education facilities, some government officials started to doubt if the Salvation Army was the right organization.³¹⁹ If the government would run the institute itself, however, it would mean a firm departure from the existing re-education policy and its implications

³¹⁶ Circulaire Justice Department, Cordes to all the courts and judges in Netherlands Indies, 15-04-1916, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

³¹⁷ Calculations are based on the entries of the Governor's decisions about the placement of juvenile delinquents in the folios of the office of the Governor General, ANRI, Algemene Secretarie, microfilms 1914 and 1916. The microfilm for 1915 is missing. The entries in the administration of the Algemene Secretarie do not give a complete idea of how many juvenile came before the court and were sentenced to re-education. The books simply show the cases that were corresponded about between the Governor General's office and other parts of the government or private persons.

³¹⁸ Director of Justice Department Scheuer to Governor General, 27-07-1917, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

³¹⁹ Bt 24-8-1917 and also Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

were discussed broadly. Eventually the debate about the suitability of Kalawara and the possibility of opening a state re-education facility became one and the same in the mind of many government officials.

2.4. The times are changing: fears of Islam, the search for indigenous allies and the development of juvenile re-education.

With all the escapes from Boemi Ajoë, the unauthorized transfers of 'difficult' juveniles to other institutions or family homes, and mounting concerns about resistance and criminality in the colony, the Justice Department explored all possible alternatives for the re-education of indigenous juveniles. After his visit to the Salvation Army's Kalawara colony on Celebes, inspector Van Walsem was certain it could be made into an alternative to Boemi Ajoë, and he communicated this to Governor General J.P. van Limburg Stirum (who replaced Idenburg in march 1916) in spring 1917. Van Limburg Stirum found the issue important enough - or did not just want to rely on the uniformly optimistic information the Justice Department sent him - to ask Adviser for Native Affairs G.A.J. Hazeu in May if he saw any objections against 'the placement of youngsters with a Native nationality in the Salvation's Army agricultural colony at Kalawara.'³²⁰

In late June 1917 Hazeu sent back a six-page report in which he discussed the matter broadly. First of all, he expressed his scepticism about the urgency of reforming juvenile delinquents: '[e]ventually it should be considered necessary that the Government takes efficient measures that will step by step lead to a proper realization of the Governmental duty to morally educate the delinquent youth, but I feel that with the current consideration of measures that should be taken to fulfill this goal we should keep the urgency of other provisions into account.' Hazeu then explained that in his opinion the low salaries of the indigenous government officials - and especially the problems they faced in paying for their children's education - were a more urgent matter. He felt that: 'the money spent on raising good leaders for this society shall be much better spent than expenses to attempt the betterment of the juvenile delinquents produced by this society, and if there are not enough funds available for both it might be considered that the first objective should be given primary attention.'³²¹

³²⁰ First Government Secretary to Advisor for Native Affairs, 18-05-1917, Mgs. May 1917 No. 1229. AS, ANRI.

³²¹ Hazeu to the Governor General, Weltevreden 30-06-1917, pp. 1-2. Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

This view was typical of Hazeu's ethical stance and his concern with the proper development and emancipation of indigenous people. In his eyes the colonial government had to invest in good future leaders instead of spending money on dropouts. The office of the Governor General was not convinced that this slightly elitist view of the direction in which indigenous society should develop diminished the importance of re-education initiatives. In a memo written in August, one of the Governor's assistants commented that Hazeu's ideas about the urgencies and priority of juvenile re-education had only 'academic value'. It would be irresponsible to force the judges to depart from 'the modern ideas regarding the fight against juvenile criminality' by suddenly abstaining from establishing proper re-education institutes, so he wrote.³²² If the colonial state wanted to appear as a 'modern' state, initiatives in the field of juvenile re-education were considered a requirement.

Hazeu also worried about the financial implications of juvenile re-education. He predicted that even if the colonial administration was currently only thinking about tens of pupils it wanted to institutionalize, this number would grow into the hundreds or even thousands if the government opened up the options for institutional re-education. This would greatly increase the costs of re-education for the colonial government, which in 1917 amounted to about 120 guilders per year for each indigenous child in the system. Hazeu was not convinced by the reports of Van Walsem that the investments in re-education would lead to good enough results to warrant the expenses. He also doubted that the majority of the boys belonged in a re-education institute in the first place: '[t]he copies of the court sentences that were included with your letter have caused me – as a lay person - to question if it is really necessary that boys of thirteen and fourteen years old, who have wrongly taken some property, should be immediately placed in an improvement home for four, five, or six years (the court sentences are not mentioning recidivism).'³²³

The Governor General's office initially agreed with these statements. The financial burden of the colony was a permanent worry for the upper echelons of the administration, and the more eager judges were to send delinquent juveniles to re-education homes, the higher the costs for the state. But, at the same time, Van Walsem's opinion -- that other responsibilities and possible financial problems of the government were no excuse to refrain from adapting the re-education system - was well received. Moreover, Van Walsem

³²² *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, pp. 6-7. Belonging to Mgs. 29 August 1917 No. 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

³²³ Hazeu to the Governor General, Weltevreden 30-06-1917, pp. 2-3. Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

convincingly argued that in the end juvenile re-education would save the government both money and bigger trouble. 'Especially in the big cities society has come to a point where the criminal child as a social evil can no longer be ignored. In the towns in the interior and on the country side the situation is simpler and indigenous society can still correct this evil herself, however, in the big centres nowadays too many children come to no good, making a living by stealing on the *passers* [markets], already habitual thieves on a young age.' Even though it would cost the government money to bring these boys back on 'the moral path', it would safeguard society against 'many dangerous and costly criminals' in later years. And so juvenile re-education should be a priority right now, argued Van Walsem.³²⁴

Hazeu saw two other specific drawbacks of Kalawara in addition to his scepticism about the general importance of juvenile re-education. First of all, he thought that the regular colonists who were trying to make a living in Kalawara would not receive the juvenile delinquents with open arms, and so the presence of 'unruly' boys might have an adverse effect on the recruitment of new colonists.³²⁵ Hazeu also feared that the far away location of Kalawara on the island of Celebes would create the feeling among the population that juvenile delinquents were exiled, which could lead to protests. Since the colonial government did not hesitate to exile political opponents, and the Indies population was aware of this, they wanted to avoid any semblance of exile for criminal children. Considering the many riots and protests that had intensified since the beginning of World War I this seemed a legitimate concern. Van Walsem responded that even now some boys were sent from the other islands to Kedoeng Pani on Java. He felt that once the government institution in Semarang was ready, the Javanese delinquents could stay on Java while those from the outer islands could be sent to Kalawara. This arrangement would show that the government and the courts did not intend to exile any indigenous children.³²⁶

But above and beyond Hazeu's worries about the financial costs, the necessity, and the effectiveness of institutional re-education, he was most worried about the Christian nature of facilities that were reforming Islamic children. A former government Adviser for Native Affairs, the famous Islam specialist Dr. Snouck Hurgronje, had already brought up this issue in a report about juvenile re-education written in November 1909. At the time Hurgronje

³²⁴ *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, p. 18-19. Belonging to Mgs. 29 August 1917 no 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

³²⁵ Hazeu to the Governor General, Weltevreden 30-06-1917, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

³²⁶ *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, p. 16-17. Belonging to Mgs. 29 August 1917 No. 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

expressed that the colonial government should be grateful that the Indies' population was not too strict in their Islamic faith:

For the large majority of the Mohammedan population of the East Indies Islam has not extended more than a light influence on the thought and behaviour of the masses. Countless Native Mohammedan parents are not really looking for specific religious education. Many of them, who find the opportunity to raise their children with European aid, are not opposed against an education in Christian spirit, because in the Europeans who have their trust, they see their intellectual superiors. But it is different, when one makes propaganda for the Christian teachings. They see this as an attack on the heritage of their forefathers, and this feeling is provoked and heightened by the intellectuals who profess Islam. The government needs to wisely keep these facts in mind for all measures taken to benefit the education of Natives of the Mohammedan faith.³²⁷

In 1917 Hazeu largely agreed with these statements, but insisted that they were outdated since it was an 'undeniable fact' that since 1912 - when Sarekat Islam was founded - the times were changing: '[m]ore than before Native parents are looking for specifically religious education for their children, and they – and especially their leaders - pay more attention than before to the religious conviction of their children's educators.' Hazeu argued that when parents sent their children to a Christian school it could essentially be considered a voluntary deed, but he predicted that the (large-scale) court placement of Muslim youth in Christian re-education institutes would quickly lead to 'pretty serious protest from the side of the population.' Hazeu suggested that Muslim children should only be placed in Islamic re-education institutes, or at least in what he called 'neutral' institutions, where there was a possibility for the youth to be educated in their own religion and fulfil the duties belonging to it.³²⁸

In August 1917 an employee of the Governor General's office wrote a report about the status of the re-education debate and also considered Hazeu's ideas. He noted that on the Kalawara colony bible study and prayer were not compulsory and that Christianity was not forced on anyone. But he also doubted 'if this condition is enough [...] to remove all distrust from the indigenous society [...]. We are writing 1917.'³²⁹ These kinds of remarks clearly show how the changes in Indies' civil society and 'native awakening' were on the minds of policy makers. Van Walsem, from the Justice Department, also acknowledged that if the government decided to send all indigenous juvenile delinquents to private Christian

³²⁷ C. Snouck Hurgronje to Minister of Colonies, Leiden 30-11-1909, Ag 3520/1910. AS, ANRI.

³²⁸ Hazeu to the Governor General, Weltevreden 30-06-1917, Bt 24-8-1917. AS, ANRI.

³²⁹ *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, p. 8. Belonging to Mgs. 29 August 1917 No. 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

institutions, the situation could theoretically lead to protests. For him, this was an extra argument to plead for the establishment of the new institute in Semarang as a state reformatory, instead of a Salvation Army institution. But Van Walsem admitted as well that the Salvation Army did not force anyone to convert and that so far hardly any pupils had changed their religious adherence to become Christian. Moreover, there had not yet been any critique of the juvenile re-education system from Islamic society.

Rather than just changing direction from a Salvation Army to a state reformatory – which was expensive and potentially controversial too – the colonial administration tried to enlist support from indigenous organisations and individuals for the sake of juvenile re-education. Using private institutions for government purposes was a familiar strategy - as we saw in the case of Oranje-Nassau, Witte Kruis, and the Salvation Army - since the state did not have the money and the personnel to stretch its influence over the whole archipelago. Cooperation from philanthropic and political associations could also be a way to minimize societal protest against government policy. Van Walsem had encouraged the issue of juvenile re-education to be raised during the Sarekat Islam and Boedi Oetomo congresses in 1917. A report about the conversation between Van Walsem and an employee of the Governor General's office stated that: 'S.I. had remained deaf for those voices. *Boedi Oetomo* had put the issue low on its program, but had not yet undertaken any action.' The state officials felt that since the indigenous organisations did not really take on the challenge, any indigenous critique on the government's re-education policy could be countered by asking; 'why does indigenous society not take the issue in its own hands?'³³⁰ Nevertheless, Van Walsem stressed that it would be preferable for the indigenous community to open an institution where juvenile delinquents could be raised. He felt this was possible as long as – 'based on the results of family care for these boys' – there would be 'benevolent yet strict and orderly supervision'.³³¹

According to Van Walsem and one of the secretaries of the Governor General, there had been several prominent inhabitants of the Javanese royal city of Solo who were planning to establish an institution for neglected and criminal children. One of them was Dr. Radjiman (alias Raden Ngabehi Wediodipoero), doctor of the *kraton* (royal court), a man of influence

³³⁰ *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, p. 16. Belonging to Mgs. 29 August 1917 no 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

³³¹ *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, p. 16. Belonging to Mgs. 29 August 1917 No. 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

in B.O., and later a member of the Volksraad (People's Council, inaugurated in May 1918).³³² But the only result of these ideas was that Boedi Oetomo mentioned juvenile re-education in its program.³³³ Dr. Radjiman, however, did support the state reform system and especially the work of the Pro Juventute associations. Radjiman and R.M.T.A. Koesoemo Oetoyo apparently lobbied in the Volksraad for subsidies for the Pro Juventute association and their temporary homes and re-education facilities.³³⁴

After a Boedi Oetomo meeting in Batavia, Raden Mas Soerjopranoto – a respected teacher of agriculture, living in Jogjakarta - visited the Governor General's office to speak with one of the secretaries. He had been to the Boedi Oetomo congress and mentioned the need for educating neglected children, outcasts, young thieves, etc. The Governor's assistant advised him to get in touch with Van Walsem and to start with the work by watching over a few neglected children that had not been in touch with the judge yet. Van Walsem mentioned later that Soerjopranoto had never come to see him, but that he would be very happy with any indigenous initiatives in his field. The Governor's assistant who wrote the re-education report of August 1917 apparently had some private contacts in Solo, because he offered to ask Soerjopranoto, Dr. Radjiman, and some other prominent people if they were serious about their plans and if they could begin their work.³³⁵ But in the late 1910s Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Islam were busy with issues they felt were more urgent, like good public education for all indigenous children, and they did not participate in the government's re-education project. At the same time the Islamic organization Muhammadiyah became interested in the care for orphaned and neglected children, but the government did not pick this up until the 1920s. The development of indigenous involvement in the reform system will be discussed in the following chapter.

2.5. Partners in crime: *Pro Juventute* and the colonial government

³³² *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, pp. 22-23. Belonging to Mgs. 29 August 1917 No. 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

³³³ Boedi Oetomo wrote in its party program that it recommended establishing re-education or detention centres for juvenile delinquents but never took action. See for example the 1928 'Werkprogram' of Boedi Oetomo on pp. 26-27 of the *Officieel Orgaan dari perkoempoelan Boedi Oetomo*, No. 6-7, June-July 1928. PNRI, Jakarta. Translated by my research assistant Mohammad Reiza. The reasons for this apparent lack of interest are difficult to establish since I have not found any direct statements about the topic from either BO or SI or from individual members of the organizations.

³³⁴ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1919*, p. 4. Verbalen, 2222. MvK, NA.

³³⁵ *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, p. 22-23. Belonging to Mgs. 29 August 1917 no 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

While Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Islam were not keen to get involved with the government's re-education plans, there were other associations that were more willing to cooperate. During World War I there were discussions in both the Netherlands and the Indies to establish an association that would concern itself with 'neglected and delinquent' children in the colony.³³⁶ Here, it was also Van Walsem who urged Batavia's European elite to become active in the fight against juvenile crime and neglect, and among Europeans he was more successful than among politicized indigenous inhabitants. The ideals of 'uplift' and 'progress' – so prevalent in the governments' desire for 'benevolent rule' – were also part of bourgeois attempts to 'civilize' the 'lower' classes, both in Europe and in the colonies, and Van Walsem played into these sentiments among the Dutch colonial bourgeoisie.³³⁷ Pro Juventute associations sprang up in all the major European centres from 1916 onward, and they became an active and sometimes critical ally in the states' attempt to battle juvenile criminality and conduct re-education efforts.

State officials played a large role in the establishment of the different Pro Juventute associations in the Indies. Van Walsem was credited with the establishment of Pro Juventute Batavia in 1916, while director of the Justice Department Sonneveld became the chairman of the association and *landrechter* (judge) Mr. G. Deketh its first secretary.³³⁸ Sonneveld played a crucial role in the establishment of PJ Soerabaja in 1917; he asked Mr. G.N. Bouma, a judiciary working in the East Javanese port city, to start generating publicity and establish an association. In the Netherlands government officials were also active in associational life. Establishing and participating in voluntary associations offered possibilities to further a cause on personal terms, with more liberty than most government officials had.

Judges, lawyers, public prosecutors and the famous professor of criminal justice Mr. G.A. van Hamel dominated the board of the first Pro Juventute association in Amsterdam

³³⁶ Voor *Indische Kinderen*, artikel uit de Javabode, 16-08-1917 (In Bt 5 Oktober 1917, No. 3, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI).

³³⁷ Van Walsem: 'Wie door den aard van zijn betrekking in aanraking komt met de onderste lagen der maatschappij, van dichtbij heeft gezien, wat daar in de kampongs aan Inlandsch en Europeesch proletariaat in den slechtste zin van het woord bezig is op te groeien zonder dat aan dit verschijnsel van Regeeringswege en van particuliere zijde voldoende aandacht wordt geschonken, hij voelt dit als een leemte [...].' 'Pro Juventute. Lezing door Mr. F.M.G. van Walsem op Maandag 5 Februari te Batavia gehouden', in *Indisch Tijdschrift van het Regt*, 1918, no. 108, 2. See also the discussion of the European civilizing mission in chapter one.

³³⁸ J. C. Vunderink and R. C. Sloos, 'Vereeniging "Pro Juventute" Batavia', 97-98 in Jhr. S. H. H. Nahuys and J. C. Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië. Uitgegeven door de Vereeniging Pro-Juventute te Malang* (G. Kolff & Co, Batavia 1932).

(established in 1896).³³⁹ These law specialists were proponents of the ‘new direction’ in criminal justice and argued for reforms on the basis of new anthropological and sociological ideas. While criminal anthropology stressed that criminal behaviour was hereditary and a sign of degeneration, criminal sociology saw a relation between environmental circumstances and criminal behaviour. Both sides believed that the individual person was not solely responsible for his/her behaviour and the ‘new direction’ in criminal justice stressed the person and personality of an offender instead of just the criminal act. In the case of children it was obviously easier to question their level of personal responsibility for their actions, and they were also considered better candidates for reform than adults. Van Hamel and others proposed reform of the penal code for children and greater liberty for judges to decide punishment on the basis of the background of juvenile offenders.³⁴⁰ In such a system there was a role for social workers *avant la lettre* who could do background research into juvenile cases and inform the judges.

New ideas about juvenile crime spread to the Indies in the early twentieth century through books, newspapers, and magazines, as well as through personal contacts. Judicial officials were educated in the Netherlands, and during their work in the Indies they went on leave to their mother country every few years. Boats to and from the Indies did not just carry people and suitcases, but ideas as well. Van Walsem, for example, was a vocal supporter of the new juvenile laws introduced in the Netherlands in 1901 (and in effect in 1905) and wanted similar laws for the Indies.³⁴¹ Mr. H. J. Boswijk, a judge who was the first chairman of Pro Juventute in Medan, Sumatra, also had ‘modern’ ideas about juvenile criminal justice and severely criticized the penal code and judicial realities in the Indies, which stayed far behind the Dutch laws. Boswijk referred to a meeting of the Dutch Association of Judges (Nederlandse Vereniging van Rechters) on 29 and 30 June 1917 to support his claims that it was necessary to establish juvenile judges in the Indies.³⁴²

³³⁹ Dr. Jan-Paul Verkaik, *Voor de Jeugd van Tegenwoordig. Kinderbescherming en jeugdhulpverlening door Pro Juventute in Amsterdam, 1896-1994* (Utrecht, Uitgeverij SWP, 1996) 160, note 12. See page 13 and notes 2-12 on page 160 for a list of the names and professions of the first board of Pro Juventute Amsterdam.

³⁴⁰ Verkaik, *Voor de Jeugd van Tegenwoordig*, 15-18.

³⁴¹ ‘Pro Juventute. Lezing door Mr. F.M.G. van Walsem op Maandag 5 Februari te Batavia gehouden’, afgedrukt in *Indisch Tijdschrift van het Regt*, 1918, no. 108, 17-20.

³⁴² The judicial reality of the Indies will be discussed in detail in chapter 4 and 5. *Oprichtingsvoordracht van Mr. H. J. Boswijk* in “Verslag der Werkzaamheden van de Vereeniging “Pro Juventute” te Medan over het jaar 1918” (Varekamp & Co. Medan; 1919) 24-25. Jaarverslag “Vereeniging Pro Juventute” te Medan, 1918-1938, microfilm collection, MM14T-100230. KIT, Amsterdam.

Pro Juventute members became active champions for the establishment of state reformatories in the Indies. Contrary to discussions within the government about the problems with private Christian institutes and concerns about Islam, Pro Juventute stressed that the introduction of the new unified penal code in January 1918 lay at the base of state re-education. W.S. De Haas, who became the first director of the reformatory in Semarang, was also an active member of Pro Juventute and claimed in an article for the magazine of Pro Juventute in the city of Malang that while the old penal code had already stipulated the possibility to send juvenile delinquents to so-called improvement institutions instead of prisons, nothing was ever done about founding and running an institution like this until 1918. According to him the government ‘wanted to prevent this [the lack of facilities] against all cost from happening in 1918. They made sure that with the introduction of the new laws regarding deserted, neglected and criminally inclined children there would indeed be an institution in which the new rules could be applied, even if this institution was not yet pedagogically and technically perfect.’³⁴³ This was only partly true, but it sounded a lot nobler than admitting that the private re-education system for indigenous children was failing, and that the government feared Islamic protest if they continued to send Islamic youth to Christian reformatories.

The 1918 penal code did make it easier for judges to sentence juvenile offenders to re-education homes, and this quickly led to an increase in the number of children admitted into the system. The Governor General was aware of this dynamic, but seemed to use it primarily to approve Kalawara as a re-education institute instead of as a reason to open a state institute. According to a letter dated 29 August 1917, the Governor General supported the proposal of the Justice Department to transfer juvenile delinquents from Boemi Ajoë to the colony in Kalawara. The Governor General also agreed to send ‘rascals from Native nationalities who have lately been referred to an improvement home by court sentence – but who have not been given a place of residence yet -’ to Kalawara. Between thirty to forty of these boys had been waiting in prisons and at home – which was both considered undesirable - because the government could not agree on where to send them. Boemi Ajoë had fallen out of grace, Kalawara had not been approved, and the future reformatory in Semarang was not open yet. The Governor General noted that the number of sentenced boys was expected to

³⁴³ W. S. de Haas, ‘De Landsopvoedingsgestichten in Nederlandsch-Indië’, 40 in Jhr. S. H. H. Nahuys and J. C. Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië. Uitgegeven door de Vereeniging Pro-Juventute te Malang* (Batavia: G. Kolff & Co, 1932).

rise as soon as the new Penal Code was introduced, because in the new law there was no longer a distinction between juveniles under the age of 16 who had committed a crime with or without 'sound moral judgement'.³⁴⁴ This gave the judge much more freedom to send juveniles to a reformatory, regardless of their ability to be responsible for their own actions.

In the summer of 1917 the government was still debating who should run the new institution in Semarang: the Salvation Army or the government itself. The Governor General was hesitant about the proposal of Justice Department director Sonneveld to create a state reformatory in Semarang where all juvenile delinquents would first be sent and where they would be observed with two goals. The first of which was to separate the 'abnormal' from 'normal' pupils and keep the 'abnormal' children in a separate wing of the reformatory for re-education, because they would not be able to function in the private institutions, as previous experiences had shown. The second goal was to observe the 'normal' children to discover if they were more inclined to agricultural labour or more apt to learn the trade of carpenter or blacksmith. The 'normal' children who were potential farmers would then be sent to the Salvation Army agricultural colony Kalawara-Napoetih (Celebes, close to Menado) and the Witte Kruis Kolonie, while the rest would stay in Semarang to learn a trade.³⁴⁵

The Governor General resisted this proposal because it would change the nature of the juvenile re-education system. So far all the pupils, both European and indigenous, were sent to private institutions and re-educated there with government subsidies. Because some of the pupils were removed from the private re-education institutes due to 'abnormality' the government felt it should take care of these delinquents, but it wanted the selection process to remain with the private sector because the government feared the financial consequences. The proposal of the director of justice turned the selection of pupils over to the state, and the Governor Generals' office was not convinced this was necessary. First of all, the Justice Department could not provide any statistics about the number of pupils actually cast out of the private system, which weakened their case for the necessity of a state reformatory. Secondly, the Governor General argued that it was unclear how effective the selection

³⁴⁴ *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, p. 14. Mgs. 29 August 1917 No. 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

³⁴⁵ *Directeur van Justitie Sonneveld aan Gouverneur Generaal, 12 Mei 1917, Batavia*. See also *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, p. 1-7. Mgs. 29 August 1917 No. 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

procedure in Semarang would be; it might still go wrong once the boys were sent from there to a private reformatory.³⁴⁶

The Justice Department stressed pedagogical arguments in order to convince Governor General Van Limburg Stirum to make the Semarang institute a state reformatory.³⁴⁷ Van Limburg Stirum was not sure what to do and asked the Council of the Indies for advice in the matter.³⁴⁸ The answer of the Council shows how several developments within the re-education system and colonial society converged and led to the eventual decision to make the new Semarang institute a state reformatory in the fall of 1917. The Council agreed with the Justice Department that it was the state's responsibility to take care of 'abnormal' pupils if the private institutions were unable to do so. The new facility in Semarang should serve as an observation and selection centre, in line with 'modern' ideas about juvenile re-education and penal institutions, and could be either ran by the Salvation Army under supervision of the government, or directly by the government itself.³⁴⁹

Although the Council believed that re-education should be conducted as much as possible by private institutions, it advised the Governor General to make Semarang a state reformatory on the basis of the religious fears that had been debated by the different government departments, Snouck Hurgronje and Hazeu before and during WW I: '[n]owadays we should be extra careful to do anything that could give the Mohammedan world an excuse to blame the government of a lack of neutrality in religious matters'. Lack of government money was not the right reason to avoid this responsibility, concluded the Council.³⁵⁰ On October 5, 1917 the Governor General decided that Semarang would become a state reformatory and notified the Justice Department that they should find a director and two 'educational officers' for the new institution.³⁵¹ Wakidjan from Soerabaja, a twelve-year-

³⁴⁶ *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, pp. 1-7. Mgs. 29 August 1917 no 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

³⁴⁷ See *Directeur van Justitie Sonneveld aan Gouverneur Generaal, 12 Mei 1917, Batavia*. And *Opvoeding van Regeeringspupillen*, Nota Algemeene Secretarie, pp. 1-7. Mgs. 29 August 1917 no 2071/II, Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

³⁴⁸ *Letter from the office of the GG to Council of the Indies*, 5 September 1917, No. 2141, Buitenzorg. Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

³⁴⁹ *Advies van de Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie*, vergadering 14 September 1914. Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

³⁵⁰ *Advies van de Raad van Nederlandsch-Indie*, vergadering 14 September 1914. Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

³⁵¹ *Besluit GG, 5 October 1917 and MGS to Justice Department, 5 October 1917*, in Bt 5 October 1917 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

old vagabond who had stolen a piece of wood, was one of the first boys to arrive at the reformatory, in March 1918.³⁵²

³⁵² BT 12 March 1918 No. 3, Wakidjan, in Bt 12 March 1918 No. 3. AS, ANRI.

Chapter III. Indigenous civil society and Muhammadiyah: ideas about youth and (re-)education, 1912-1938

In 1912 Van Emmerik fervently spread the gospel among the Javanese residents of the Witte Kruis Kolonie and held Christian prayer meetings in the surrounding desas. The Salvation Army was active in Semarang with a hospital, schools, and a poorhouse, and busily spread its charity all over Java. Religious fervour – partly in response to Christian activities - could also be found on the other side of the volcanic range between Salatiga and Jogjakarta; this revival was Islamic and was led by a Javanese man named Kiyai Hadji Ahmad Dahlan (1868-1923). Dahlan was one of the imams of the Jogjakarta Sultan Mosque, but also a successful batik-merchant with a strong network of other Muslim traders all over Java and the archipelago. He believed that Islam was compatible with modern society and the western sciences and felt that Muslims should be taught both the purely orthodox teachings and western secular subjects to be able to be successful in Indies society.³⁵³

Inspired by the Islamic reform movement in Egypt, Dahlan founded Muhammadiyah (MU) in November 1912, together with a group of likeminded friends and colleagues. Muhammadiyah's main goal was to spread orthodox Islamic religious teachings – based on the original Arabic scriptures - and to become an agent of social change for the indigenous population of Java and Madura.³⁵⁴ After Sarekat Islam and their split-off Partai Islam Indonesia (PARII) became less popular among indigenous people in the 1930s, Muhammadiyah became the most important Islamic organization in the Indies. In 1938 there were 852 branches, 898 groups, 1,774 schools and a total of 250,000 members.³⁵⁵ While the

This chapter could not have been written without the research assistance and the translations of Malay and Javanese sources done by Mohammad Reiza. I am very grateful for his assistance and for our pleasant cooperation in Jakarta in January-March 2009. I remain solely responsible, however, for the content of this chapter and for any misinterpretations of translations and sources.

³⁵³ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah. The Political behaviour of a Muslim modernist organisation under Dutch colonialism* (Yogyakarta, Gadjah Mada University Press, 1989) 145-150.

³⁵⁴ Muhammadiyah's wide scope and ambition was cautiously received by the colonial state; similar to the debate surrounding the ratification of Sarekat Islam the government decided to limit the license of the organization to the Residency of Jogjakarta. In this way each new branch of Muhammadiyah would have to apply to the government for approval, thus giving the state a check on the development of the organization. Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 153-154. According to anthropologist James L. Peacock the Dutch government later took a favourable view of Dahlan and the activities of Muhammadiyah, especially in contrast to Sarekat Islam founder Hadji Samanoedi and the activities of SI. See *Purifying The Faith. The Muhammadiyah movement in Indonesian Islam* (Menlo Park, Ca., The Benjamin/Cummings Publishing Company, 1978) 36-37.

³⁵⁵ On the founding of Muhammadiyah and Dahlan see Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 136-159, and Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942* (Singapore, Oxford University Press,

Dutch state was initially looking at Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Islam as possible allies for their re-education project, it was Muhammadiyah that started establishing its own orphanages and that would later also cooperate with the Dutch in the after-care for indigenous juvenile delinquents.

Marieke Bloembergen and Remco Raben (2009) aptly wrote that ‘it is doubtful that the moral motive for progress and uplift was exclusively employed by European ethical thinkers and did not motivate Indonesian civilizers just as much’.³⁵⁶ This chapter seeks to expose indigenous involvement in the re-education project that was instigated by the Dutch colonizers. When and why did indigenous inhabitants become involved – or not - and what were their roles? How did they participate in and respond to a societal climate suffused by European moral notions of progress and civilization? I aim to show that indigenous participation in colonial civil society was shaped by alternative ideas about progress and reform that were not only employed by nationalists, but also by Islamic religious thinkers and organizations.

Muhammadiyah is an important example of how indigenous people propagated notions of modernity, progress, civilization, citizenship and uplift for the indigenous population and for neglected and/or delinquent children. For example, how Muhammadiyah educated indigenous youth in its own orphanages was significantly different from how indigenous youth were educated in state reformatories and Christian institutions. I argue that this was not just caused by religious differences but especially by the vision that Muhammadiyah had about the future of the colony and the role children - as future citizens - were to play in it. This vision was distinct from the ideas of Dutch philanthropists and the colonial government, thus this chapter gives another perspective on how ideas about reform, citizenship and uplift were contested and developed in the late colonial period. Due to a lack of source material on indigenous opinions about orphans and juvenile delinquents my information is often fragmentary and I have chosen to include ideas about schools and curricula as one way to establish indigenous ideas about youth and their role in society.

In the first section (3.1.) we will look at the reasons for Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Islam to refuse cooperation in the reform system and the importance of Dutch-language

1973) 73-83. For a general discussion of the ideas of the modernist (also called reformist) Muslim movement see also Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia*, 302-308. On why Muhammadiyah became most influential, see Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 299-302. For the membership numbers between 1925 and 1938 see Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement*, 83.

³⁵⁶ Bloembergen en Raben, eds., *Het Koloniale Beschavingsoffensief*, 13.

public education for the nationalist movement. Section two (3.2.) delves into indigenous ideas about youth and future, and shows how different groups, and especially Muhammadiyah, tried to further these ideas by establishing alternative schools. The third part (3.3.) analyses Muhammadiyah's efforts to (re)-educate orphans and its aims for their re-education. In section four (3.4.) I discuss how the government, Pro Juventute, and indigenous individuals and associations eventually started to work together in the field of juvenile reform.

3.1. Indigenous political parties and the importance of educational access

The colonial government, and especially Van Walsem of the Justice Department, was not very successful in interesting the indigenous elite in its re-education enterprise in the 1910s. As we saw in the previous chapter, Sarekat Islam never showed any obvious interest in the re-education of juvenile delinquents. Boedi Oetomo merely wrote in its party program that it recommended establishing re-education or detention centres for juvenile delinquents, but it never took action.³⁵⁷ When looking at the activities that SI and BO did develop, it seems obvious that juvenile delinquency was just not an urgent issue for the nationalist parties, at least not in the way that it was of importance to the colonial state. The government operated from a perspective in which juvenile delinquents formed a disturbance of law and order and a potential source of greater unrest in the colony. Re-education had to shape them into well-behaved and self-providing subjects who respected the law and colonial rule. Their improvement was also used to show indigenous parents how they should be raising and educating their children, and seen as a form of social care, thus serving the ethical project on different levels. All in all the colonial state was seeing the issue of juvenile delinquency through lenses that were tinted by the same mix of fear and care that also influenced other twentieth century policies, like the reform of the colonial police system.³⁵⁸

Sarekat Islam and Boedi Oetomo were probably not too concerned about the few hundred indigenous juveniles that ended up in the colonial re-education system each year, because they had more pressing matters on their mind. With respect to children and childcare broad access to modern education was issue number one for the nationalist parties. This was

³⁵⁷ See for example the 1928 'Werkprogram' of Boedi Oetomo on pp 26-27 of the *Officieel Orgaan dari perkoempoelan Boedi Oetomo*, No. 6-7, June-July 1928. PNRI. Translated by research assistant Mohammad Reiza. The reasons for BO's and SI's apparent lack of interest are difficult to establish since I have not found any direct statements about the topic from either organization or from individual members.

³⁵⁸ Bloembergen, *De geschiedenis van de politie in NI*, 355.

something that pertained to millions of indigenous children and their parents and was intimately tied to indigenous notions of progress and reform. A few hundred or thousand re-educated juvenile delinquents would not be decisive in the struggle for indigenous emancipation and independence, whilst millions of educated indigenous people would be. J.F.W. van der Meulen, director of the Department of Education, stated in 1922 that the majority of the representatives of the indigenous population regarded education as the best way to realize nationalistic ideals and to improve the general standard of living. If the government would not provide enough affordable education it would be interpreted as a suppression of indigenous development. Again the theme of fear and concern surfaces when Van der Meulen stated that the population would respond to a lack of educational opportunity by starting insufficient private schools that would breed discontent and could become a possible threat for the Indies government.³⁵⁹

Broader educational access was one of the pillars of the Ethical policy; in the minds of Dutch reformers this was aimed at teaching indigenous elites to combine all the good of Dutch culture with the best of their own traditions, eventually uplifting them to Western development levels. This policy of association was embraced by the Western-oriented indigenous elites as well: Holland was seen as the guardian that could raise the indigenous child to its proper height and capabilities. But there were also dissonant voices, from nationalists and Islamic reformers alike, which claimed that Western education was alienating indigenous youth from their parents and culture and created colonial allies instead of independent thinkers. How the fulfilment of the project towards indigenous 'adulthood' could be measured, and what the consequences for colonial rule would be, was a source of disagreement in many different Dutch and indigenous circles; it would remain the great-unsolved question until the independence of Indonesia.³⁶⁰

The nature of colonial education, and especially in which language indigenous children would be educated, remained a topic of discussion and discontent between various groups in colonial society as well; not only between the government and indigenous inhabitants, but also within the indigenous population. While the government only wanted to offer Dutch language education to the indigenous elite and higher middle classes - so they could work for the modern colonial state and western enterprises - many more indigenous

³⁵⁹ Francien van Anrooij, *Groeiend Wantrouwen. Onderwijsbeleid in Nederlands-Indië onder gouverneur-generaal D. Fock (1921-1926)* (Amsterdam, Thela Thesis, 2000) 48-49.

³⁶⁰ Van Anrooij, *Groeiend Wantrouwen*, 29-31.

parents generally wanted their children to learn Dutch. There was a discrepancy between the number of Dutch-educated indigenous inhabitants that colonial rulers felt they ‘needed’ in order to run the colony, and the hopes and aspirations of indigenous people who knew that speaking Dutch meant an opportunity to rise on the social ladder. Even more than just material benefits, learning and speaking Dutch was also felt as a political right, as acknowledgement of equality or at least the possibility for equality with Europeans.³⁶¹

To counter the lack of Dutch education indigenous individuals and organizations started their own schools in the late 1910s, the so-called ‘wild’ Dutch-Indigenous Schools (Wilde HIS, Hollands-Inlandse Scholen). Obviously the colonial government gave them the moniker ‘wild’ to imply that they were not conforming to official standards and rules and were of low quality. The ‘wild’ HIS schools started in the relatively affluent Priangan region in West Java, where many locals wanted their children to follow Dutch education while the public schools did not offer enough places, and spread over the archipelago. This initiative sought equal education for indigenous children; a few years later other organizations would start schools that stressed the differences from the colonial rulers by offering a more local and nationalist or religiously inspired curriculum.³⁶²

In the early 1920s the Indies government experienced the consequences of an economic downturn and cut its budgets while raising tuition for the public schools. Combined with a restriction of political meetings, tight press laws, a decline of wages, and higher taxes, the indigenous population and its organizations felt disappointment and resentment towards the government. Educational budget cuts and other measures were interpreted as a way to curb indigenous development and set back the clock. Sarekat Islam, influenced more and more by communist ideology, stated in 1925 that it no longer wanted to cooperate with a government that was seen as the embodiment of capitalism and imperialism.³⁶³ Boedi Oetomo had struggled for years to find a balance between promoting Javanese nationalism and working together with the state, but decided in 1926 that the organization would no longer participate in politics and focus instead on social activities. If its members wanted to participate in representative bodies like the Volksraad (People’s Council) they had to do so on personal title.³⁶⁴

³⁶¹ Van Anrooij, *Groeiend Wantrouwen*, 54-55.

³⁶² Van Anrooij, *Groeiend Wantrouwen*, 91, 107.

³⁶³ For SI and its non-cooperation or *Hidjrah* policy see, for example, Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement*, 134, 137-148.

³⁶⁴ Van Anrooij, *Groeiend Wantrouwen*, 60-65, 124.

With this widening gap between the colonial government and indigenous political organizations it had become truly impossible that any of these organizations would ever be willing to run a re-education facility that was supervised and financed by the state. After 1918 government debates about the need to establish more reformatories sometimes still discussed the idea that indigenous society should run its own institute, but these notions were rejected by the department of Justice. In 1928 for example, the colonial government felt they should open at least two new state reformatories to create enough space for the number of juveniles sent to re-education institutes. According to the Justice Department the courts put approximately 360 juveniles per year under government supervision, while – due to the length of re-education sentences – just 75 pupils per year were discharged. This meant that every year 275 new places were needed, something that the existing system could not handle at all. The state planned to finish two new reformatories in late 1929; one in Bandoeng and one in Jogjakarta, but these offered only 250 beds each. This meant that there was already a shortage of seventy beds even after these institutes were opened.³⁶⁵

The Council of the Indies proposed (again) that indigenous associations should be involved more and could open state-sponsored re-education institutes.³⁶⁶ This idea was rejected by the Justice Department, with support of the opinion of Volksraad member Raden Djajadiningrat. Djajadiningrat declared that indigenous society was not ready to take direct responsibility for re-educating delinquent youth and that the government should continue to run reformatories as an ‘example’ to the indigenous community. The director of the Justice Department agreed with this opinion and stated that even European organizations like Pro Juventute had a very hard time running a well-organized re-education institute in their agricultural colony in Klakah, near Soerabaja. This was normal, he argued, because it was very hard to take care of ‘defect’ children and Pro Juventute volunteers had to do all their work in their free time. Moreover, due to the nature of colonial society higher educated people frequently moved to a new place to fulfil their jobs and thus there was a high turnover rate in civil associations.³⁶⁷ This is why the usual government attitude, which declared that private initiative should be the rule and government care the exception, was practically

³⁶⁵ *Directeur Rutgers van het Departement van Justitie aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, Weltevreden, 14 Februari 1928*, in Ag 21714/1930, AS, ANRI.

³⁶⁶ *Raad van Nederlandsch-Indië, Commissoriaal van den 3den Maart 1928, No. 232 geh.* In Ag 21714/1930, AS, ANRI.

³⁶⁷ *Directeur van Justitie aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, 2 December 1928, Weltevreden*, in Ag 21714/1930, AS, ANRI.

reversed in colonial society. It seems that after 1928 the colonial government accepted that it had to run its own religiously neutral reformatories; there was no more talk about indigenous organizations establishing these institutions.

Instead of working for the government, indigenous organizations started to develop their own facilities, especially alternative schools and orphanages. The Justice Department also noted this development in 1930. Schrieke, its director at the time, was enthusiastic that there were small-scale initiatives to care for indigenous orphans and neglected children. He stated that while the indigenous community was not able to take on the large-scale re-education of juvenile delinquents, they did take work out of the hands of the state by taking care of youngsters who would otherwise have become convicted juveniles. Schrieke expressed that he wanted to help indigenous private initiatives by giving them encouragement, information, and financial support through shares in the national lotteries. He regretted that they could not give out regular subsidies due to the state's lack of finances.³⁶⁸

Indigenous re-education institutes, in the style of the state reformatories, never surfaced before the end of the colonial era; together with the lack of protest against Dutch re-education policies this was a sign that juvenile delinquency was not an issue that concerned indigenous civil society and political parties too much. It was one of those areas in colonial life, like the regular prison system, that was probably seen by most inhabitants of the Indies as a state responsibility.

3.2. Indigenous ideas about youth and future: the development of an alternative school system

Francien van Anrooij showed how the development of alternative schools that sought a balance between indigenous and western culture, and met the increasing need for Dutch-language education, was a natural consequence of the ethical policy.³⁶⁹ This section shows how indigenous individuals and organizations developed and applied their own specific ideas about the future of the youth in a changing society. Education also served the need to raise supporters and cadres for indigenous organizations, as I show for the schools of

³⁶⁸ *Directeur van Justitie Schrieke aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, 17 Juli 1930, Weltevreden, in Ag 21714/1930, AS, ANRI.*

³⁶⁹ Van Anrooij, *Groeiend Wantrouwen*.

Muhammadijah. Schools were seen as a crucial part of state building by the government, Christian philanthropists and indigenous nationalists and reformers.³⁷⁰

In 1921 the educator and political activist Tan Malaka opened the first Sarekat Islam School in Semarang. Malaka believed that the end of colonial rule was necessary to create advancement and progress in his country, but as long as the Dutch were in charge he felt pupils should also know their rulers' language and be able to follow affordable education. The Sarekat Islam schools were partly based on the curriculum of the lower government schools for indigenous students; students learned reading, writing, calculating, geography, Malay, Javanese, and Dutch. Contrary to the government schools the SI-schools also made time for manual skills and labour with the idea that this kept students in touch with the great mass of the population and created a feeling of solidarity. Javanese song, dance and wayang play was taught to create more national awareness. In this way pupils would not estrange from their parents and their culture the way government schools propagated, felt Malaka. After 1923 SI-schools (called Sarekat Rajat schools after 1924) became increasingly anti-capitalist and communist inspired, something that greatly worried the colonial government. In 1924 there were 24 SI-schools and they would keep spreading over the archipelago.³⁷¹

The Javanese Soewardi Soerianingrat, a member of the Pakoe Alam royal family of Jogjakarta, was first active in Boedi Oetomo, then in the more radical Indische Partij (IP) of Douwes Dekker, and also founded a branch of Sarekat Islam. Soewardi was exiled to Holland for his political activities and learned about the pedagogical ideas of Maria Montessori during his time in The Hague. After his return to the Indies in 1917 he mostly focused on education. Influenced as well by the ideas of the Indian pedagogue, philosopher, poet and Nobel Prize winner Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1916) Soewardi started the so-called Taman Siswa (Student Garden) movement. These alternative schools in Jogjakarta and the surrounding areas stressed Javanese culture, the Javanese and Malay languages, and taught older students Dutch so they could also function in colonial society and government functions. The Taman Siswa movement aimed toward a 'free' development of pupils who would have a firm Javanese/indigenous basis. By establishing their own identity they could then use both

³⁷⁰ For examples of education and state building in the Netherlands, see Henk te Velde, Hans Verhage, eds., *De eenheid en de delen. Zuilvorming, onderwijs en natievorming in Nederland, 1850-1900* (Amsterdam, Het Spinhuis, 1996). For an example of Japan, see Brian Platt, *Burning and building. Schooling and state formation in Japan, 1750-1890* (Cambridge, Ma., Harvard University Asia Centre, 2004).

³⁷¹ Van Anrooij, *Groeidend Wantrouwen*, 101, 110-111.

Eastern and Western knowledge to make their own responsible choices as adults. There was no religious education and teachers were not allowed to be members of political parties, this would force ideas on students and hamper their 'free' individual development. Taman Siswa schools did not receive government support and were funded by the community and the royal family, who sent their children there.³⁷²

Dahlan and fellow Muhammadiyah members had yet another vision of what the education of indigenous youngsters should entail. According to researcher Mitsuo Nakamura, Dahlan - who was active in both BO and SI - established Muhammadiyah as an organization because neither party could fully meet his ideal of propagating pure Islam and furthering educational issues.³⁷³ Muhammadiyah's involvement with youth, schools, and social work was a response to several developments. It was first of all a way to teach indigenous youth the 'true Islam' as the reformers saw it, closely based on the scriptures instead of later interpretations, while simultaneously educating children more about Western life principles and knowledge. Secondly Muhammadiyah aimed to counter the increasing activities and influence of people like Van Emmerik, the Salvation Army, and other missionaries, whom operated schools and orphanages to Christianize the population. And finally the organization sought to offer an alternative to Western secular education, which was indifferent to religion or saw it as an obstacle to progress.³⁷⁴

Muhammadiyah believed that these three influences created either mis-informed Muslims or 'disabled' Muslims who were either too religious and not practically educated, or who became too Westernized and estranged from their parents and people. The organization wanted to counter this development and create strong modern Muslims who could combine knowledge of western sciences with a strong faith. Thus Muhammadiyah schools sought a

³⁷² Van Anrooij, *Groeiend Wantrouwen*, 101-107. There is not much information available about the number of Taman Siswa schools and students, but it seems the influence of Taman Siswa was quite limited.

³⁷³ Mitsuo Nakamura. *The crescent arises over the Banyan tree: A Study of the Muhammadiyah Movement in a Central Javanese town* (Yogyakarta, UGM Press, 1983) 47.

³⁷⁴ See for example the critical article by Muhammad Dimiyati, redaksis ADIL Solo, 'Perpoestakaan Islam dan soesoenan peladjaran agama di negeri kita' [Islamic library and the religious curriculum system of this country] pp 86-89 in the *Almanak Moehammadiyah 1361 (1942-1943)*. National office of Moehammadiyah, Madjilis Taman-Poestaka, Jogjakarta. Dimiyati writes that traditional Islamic education is often 'backwards' and does not allow for any development of real-life skills like entrepreneurship; it is too focused on the after-life. Also see R.C. Kwantes, *De ontwikkeling van de nationalistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië. Bronnenpublikatie. 2e stuk: Medio 1923 - 1928* (Groningen, Wolters-Noordhoff, 1978) 264. Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 208-211.

balance between western subjects and Islamic teachings, believing that this would cause the social progress of indigenous Muslims.³⁷⁵

The Muhammadiyah schools expanded rapidly after 1912, mostly with the financial support of local Muslim traders and religious officials, and amounted to a reported total of 688 schools in Java and Madura in 1932, of which 7 schools were specifically for orphans and probably connected to Muhammadiyah orphanages. The majority of these schools were centred in Central Java, around Jogjakarta and Solo.³⁷⁶ In the Sumatran Minangkabau region there were 57 schools, 8 that corresponded to the public school system, 45 religious schools, and 4 in the category 'other' schools.³⁷⁷ This was still only a fraction compared to the number of public and western private schools, in 1927-1928 for example, there were 319 public HIS-schools, 237 private HIS-schools, and 25 Muhammadiyah HIS-schools on Java.³⁷⁸ In 1938 Muhammadiyah claimed to have a total number of 1,774 schools.³⁷⁹ In the eyes of Sarekat Islam the Muhammadiyah schools were not nationalist enough, since they did not pay much attention to knowledge of Javanese language and culture.³⁸⁰

Unfortunately there has been no extensive research yet into the curricula and student population of the different types of Muhammadiyah schools, but some scattered information about these schools could be found.³⁸¹ I use the curricula of the schools as a means to get some idea about what Muhammadiyah hoped for and expected of indigenous children (including orphans). While criticizing and resisting Christian missionary schools, like the so-called 'HIS with the Bible', these Christian schools were used as examples to set up Muhammadiyah schools, like the 'HIS with the Koran'. Dahlan reportedly associated with theosophists, mystics, and Christians; their ways inspired the missionary activities of his own organization. According to a Catholic missionary, Dahlan was widely respected by the colonial establishment as a man of personal tolerance towards Christians.³⁸²

³⁷⁵ Dimiyati, 'Perpoestakaan Islam dan soesoenan peladjaran agama di negeri kita', 86-89.

³⁷⁶ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 189, 190.

³⁷⁷ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 251.

³⁷⁸ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 191-192.

³⁷⁹ Noer, *The modernist Muslim movement*, 83.

³⁸⁰ For SI commentary on the curriculum of Muhammadiyah schools see Kwantes, *De ontwikkeling van de nationalistische beweging*, 2^e stuk, 324-323. For the statement that Dutch was taught in pesantrens see Dimiyati, 'Perpoestakaan Islam dan soesoenan peladjaran agama di negeri kita', 88. Pesantrens were Islamic (boarding) schools in the countryside, which usually had an 'old-fashioned' image. Madrasahs were Islamic schools in the cities, with a more modern curriculum and teaching methods.

³⁸¹ Van Anrooij was also unable to find specific data about the 'wild' HIS-schools and Muhammadiyah HIS with the Koran, see *Groeiend Wantrouwen*, 107.

³⁸² Peacock, *Purifying the Faith*, 37 and Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 150.

Muhammadiyah HIS-schools, being recognized and partly subsidized by the state, had to conform to Dutch standards; the only difference with the public school system was probably the variety of Islamic classes they taught. These schools aimed to give indigenous children a Western education and make them into good Muslims, corresponding to the overall aim of the organization. There is no data available about the background of parents who sent their children to these schools, but they were probably from the more affluent, Islamic-oriented indigenous families, who wanted their children's education to comply with the standards public higher education in the colony.

The many religious schools Muhammadiyah operated, for example the *pesantrens* and *madrasas*, instead served a clientele that was more interested in creating a religious cadre. These institutions also became more Western oriented between the 1920s and 1940s. In the early 1940s Muhammad Dimiyati, a member and magazine editor of Muhammadiyah in Solo, criticized Islamic education for still being too traditional, but also praised the changes in the *pesantrens'* curricula. His account shows how Muhammadiyah *pesantrens* sought to raise faithful Muslims who could operate and become successful in a western-style economic and societal system. Contrary to the Sarekat Islam/Sarekat Rajat schools, capitalism was accepted, but it had to be a capitalism that was socially oriented and combined with Islamic principles. This was seen as more humane than the 'empty-hearted and greedy capitalism' that was supposedly propagated in a purely western and non-Islamic education.³⁸³ Dimiyati praised *pesantrens* that were keeping up with 'modern times'; 'Twenty years ago they taught only Islamic teachings but now they are teaching other skills and subjects. For example the students now understand Dutch, English, Social Studies, Anthropology, General History, etc – studies that were once defined *haram* (forbidden) by the old fashioned religious men and teachers.'³⁸⁴

Dimiyati - like Dahlan - also saw Christian schools as an example, and stated that the curricula in Christian schools were well planned and carried out in similar fashion in schools all-over the archipelago, with specific lesson plans, orderly teaching manuals and standardized textbooks. 'And once in a while they do evaluation and monitoring of their curriculum. If they find changes in the spirit of the times they will make a new one and update it', Dimiyati wrote. He felt that this was right and should be copied by Muhammadiyah schools and *pesantrens* because 'the mentality and intelligence of children changes over

³⁸³ Dimiyati, 'Perpoestakaan Islam dan soesoenan peladjaran agama di negeri kita', 87.

³⁸⁴ Dimiyati, 'Perpoestakaan Islam dan soesoenan peladjaran agama di negeri kita', 88.

time'. 'It is odd that in the Islamic community and especially in the mosques they still keep the old system that has been around for hundreds of years and which is no longer valid today.'³⁸⁵

That Muhammadiyah paid special attention to the education of poor children becomes clear from articles in its own monthly magazine *Soeara Moehammadijah*. In June 1921 there was an announcement in Javanese that an Islamic boarding school, adapted from the curriculum of the Dutch Normaalschool, would be founded in Jogjakarta. The curriculum would balance religious teachings with subjects like languages, science and social science. Muhammadiyah announced that it would cover the expenses of stationary, meals, and lodging for those who could not afford it.³⁸⁶

The schools and orphanages were not only established as charities, but also had a strategic function for Muhammadiyah. Dahlan himself already educated close friends and students in the Kauman neighborhood of Jogjakarta and in the pesantrens he was connected to, proving that educational institutions were an important way to spread his ideas to the broader community. Teachers and government officials fulfilled strategic positions in the local communities and if the educated ones followed Dahlan and Muhammadiyah's teachings these would become more widespread.³⁸⁷ The first leaders of Aisjiah, the women section of Muhammadiyah, were graduates of Muhammadiyah schools, and Dahlan even sent some of them to the Dutch Kweekschool (teacher education school) with the aim to realize an Aisjiah Kweekschool, which was founded in 1924. Thus more cadres for the organization were created through educational institutions and orphanages.³⁸⁸

The colonial government was fearful of the political implication of the 'wild schools', as shown by the government's accusations that the Sarekat Islam schools and its (supposedly) communist teachers seduced the youth with destructive political ideas. The 'wild' HIS-schools were feared for their bad educational quality and the creation of a supposedly ignorant proletariat that would fall victim to political propaganda, but Taman Siswa and

³⁸⁵ Dimiyati, 'Perpoestakaan Islam dan soesoenan peladjaran agama di negeri kita', 89.

³⁸⁶ 'Kabar Moehammadijah: Pondok Islam (Normaalschool) Islam bade ngadek wonten ing Ngajogyakarta' (Eng: Muhammadiyah News: Islamic Boarding School (Normaalschool) Islam will be established in Yogyakarta). *Soeara Moehammadijah*, monthly (Yogyakarta), 1 June 1921, No. 6, Year 2, pp 41-45, B 893/PNI Jakarta.

³⁸⁷ Achmad Jainuri, *The Muhammadiyah Movement in Twentieth-century Indonesia. A Socio-Religious Study*. (Montreal, Masters Thesis McGill University, 1992) 24.

³⁸⁸ For more information on the foundation of Aisjiah and its goals see Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 171-172.

Muhammadiyah schools were thought to be relatively harmless.³⁸⁹ While the state's response might have been a bit overdrawn, it does show how important the education of the youth in a quickly developing colonial society was. Both Dutch and indigenous groups had a feeling that the future they envisioned for the colony had to be made by the youth, and education was crucial to this.

3.3. Muhammadiyah and its orphanages: Islamic (re-)education

The desire and initiative to create alternative facilities for children gained strength in the late 1920s and especially in the 1930s, when many new indigenous schools and orphanages sprang up in the colony. Muhammadiyah was the most important indigenous organization when it came to the care for indigenous orphans. While they did not operate reformatories, they did partly take in the same group of neglected children as the state reformatories and Christian institutions did. They raised these children with a strong focus on the improvement and progress of the individual, and eventually all of indigenous society, in a way that was both similar and different from European re-education.

It is unclear when exactly the first orphanages were established. From the early days of Muhammadiyah in the 1910s, Dahlan often lectured about the Koranic obligation for rich Muslims to help their poor brothers. The story goes that he did not stop lecturing about these verses until participants of the morning prayers took on his challenge of finding a poor Muslim and bringing him home to bathe, eat, and sleep. Once his followers became motivated to do social work, the organization created a specific department for helping the poor: *Penoeloeng Kesengsaraan Oemoem* (P.K.O. Help for Public Woes). This department started operating facilities for the poor, orphaned, and sick.³⁹⁰ The first reported establishment of a Muhammadiyah orphanage was the one in Soerakarta in 1919, and around the same time the orphanage in Jogjakarta was established.³⁹¹ In 1923 there were a

³⁸⁹ Van Anrooij, *Groeiend Wantrouwen*, 107-112.

³⁹⁰ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 173. See also 'P.K.O. (Penoeloeng Kesengsaraan Oemoem) jang menjadi ketetapan orang Islam, setjara ke-Islaman djoega' (Eng: P.K.O (Help for Public Woes) in *Soeara Moehammadiyah*, 1 January 1924, No. 1, Year 5, p 184, B 893/PNI Jakarta. This article highlights that the Koran instructs to help the poor and wanting, referring to a chapter in the Koran, the sura *Al-Ma'un*, on the care of poor people and orphan children. The article states that it is the duty of prosperous or rich Muslims to help the poor and orphaned children and give them proper education for their self-empowerment.

³⁹¹ About Soerakarta: 'Makloemat: Komite memelihara anak-anak jati "Tarbijatul-'Aitam"' terdiri pada tahun 1919 di Soerakarta. (Eng: Announcement: Committee for Orphan Children Care "Tarbijatul Aitam" Established in 1919 in Surakarta) in *Soeara Moehammadiyah*, 1 November 1922, No. 11, Year 3, p 14, B 893/PNI Jakarta. The orphanage in Jogja was definitely in existence by 1921, but probably a bit earlier. Interview with Mr. Abdul Hadi, the Head of the Muhammadiyah Panti Asuhan Lowanu (Lowanu

poorhouse, a clinic, a polyclinic and several orphanages in different Javanese cities, and their numbers would grow in the course of the 1920s and 1930s.

Why were the orphanages established, who were admitted to the orphanages, and what did they teach the children? Besides the broader conviction that it was the duty of a good Muslim to help his or her poorer fellows, there were usually some direct reasons for the establishment of orphanages. In Soerakarta, for example, the death toll of the severe worldwide influenza epidemic called ‘the Spanish flu’, left so many children orphaned and neglected to the extent that it became problematic. In 1919 a Muhammadiyah committee aimed to take care of these neglected children and reduce the problems they were causing in the community. While the nature of their ‘troublesome actions’ was not mentioned, neglected and vagabonding children were usually resorting to small theft and prostitution to be able to eat. The committee managed to raise enough money, mostly from the Batik business people in town, to establish an orphanage and a madrasah without school fees that followed the curriculum of a second-class indigenous school, but maintained its Islamic credentials. The school and the orphanage were built on land borrowed from Raden Pangoeloe Tafsiranom, north of the Grand Mosque in Soerakarta. The committee stated that their goal was to establish a *weeshuis* (orphanage) that combined ‘Muhammadiyah religion [modernist Islam] with good education, care, and meals’.³⁹²

According to the elderly Mr. Abdul Hadi, the head of the Muhammadiyah orphanage in Lowanu, the orphanage in Jogjakarta was established because Dahlan believed in following the instructions of the Koranic sura Al-Ma’un and because he saw that there were a lot of street children and poor orphans in Jogjakarta in the 1910s and 1920s.³⁹³ A committee of Muhammadiyah members raised money and sent a proposal to Sultan Hamengkoeboewono VIII to buy land for the orphanage. Apparently the Sultan gave the land for free use to the committee, and the orphanage was established.³⁹⁴ Mr. Abdul Hadi still remembered the early days of the orphanage, when he was a young man who lived in the neighborhood. His parents

Orphanage) in Yogyakarta. Conducted by Mohammad Reiza and Annelieke Dirks, Friday, 27 February 2009 at the orphanage on Lowanu MG III/1361, Yogyakarta, 55153.

³⁹² ‘Makloemat: Komite memelihara anak-anak jati *“Tarbijatul-‘Aitam”*. *Soeara Moehammadiyah*, 1 November 1922, No. 11, Year 3, p 14.

³⁹³ Interview with Mr. Abdul Hadi, 27 February 2009.

³⁹⁴ The current orphanage is still standing on the same location, although the original buildings were partly destroyed by time and finally by the 2007 earthquake.

were batik traders and active members of Muhammadiyah, and Abdul Hadi would often go to the orphanage to play with the children and help out if needed.³⁹⁵

He recalled that the committee members of the orphanage actively sought out neglected and homeless children living at the north side of the Aloen-Aloen (city square) of Jogjakarta. They also took in children who were living in very poor families and were neglected or underfed. Other indigenous organizations in the city, and single or impoverished parents, would also send children to the orphanage. Abdul Hadi claimed, though, that they did not take in sick or criminal children through contacts with the hospitals or the police.³⁹⁶ With the exception of their lack of contacts with the police and court system, it seems that the committee of the Muhammadiyah orphanage operated in a way that was quite similar to Pro Juventute. Both organizations relied on networks in the local community and visited impoverished neighborhoods and families. Although Abdul Hadi does not mention the role of mosques, it might very well be that mosques and religious leaders also played a role in selecting children that were supposed to be better off in the orphanage, similar to the role churches often played in the European community. While Muhammadiyah reportedly never took in children who were caught by the police, brought before the court, and sentenced to re-education, they did take in street children who could have easily fallen in this category.

A 1925 article reveals more about the admission rules of the Jogjakarta Muhammadiyah orphanage. It states that not only orphaned but also neglected children, living without the care of family or relatives, between the ages of 6 and 10 years old, in the Residentie of Jogjakarta could be admitted. Why they only took in children under ten years of age is not mentioned anywhere, but it might be because it was easier for younger children to get adjusted to institutional life.³⁹⁷ Poverty of the parents was mentioned as another reason for the admittance of children, but in that case the parents or the warden had to give permission. Children were usually cared for until they were eighteen years old, but could stay longer if the supervising board of the orphanage agreed. The board of the orphanage looked into each

³⁹⁵ Interview with Mr. Abdul Hadi, 27 February 2009.

³⁹⁶ The only confirmation I could find for this statement is that the Moehammadijah orphanage in Malang (established 1931) did not accept government pupils according to Pro Juventute. *Overzicht van bestaande tehuizen van jeugdzorg in Nederlandsch-Indie. Samengesteld door het Verbond der Vereenigingen Pro Juventute in Nederlandsch-Indie* (Hamilton, Batavia: 1942) 11. None of my government sources mention Moehammadijah when it comes to housing juvenile delinquents either.

³⁹⁷ For example, Van Emmerik also preferred taking in young children because they were easier to care for, and possibly more easily converted to Christianity as well. The state reformatories also mentioned in their yearly reports that the younger children gave fewer problems, in contrast to the teenagers.

case before a child was officially admitted.³⁹⁸ In a 1929 admission agreement, used by all orphanages, the same admission criteria are stated, but there are also more rules to regulate pupils' and relatives' behavior once the children were admitted.

The children were not allowed to visit their place of origin or relatives without permission from the supervising board, and the same counted for visits of relatives to the orphanage. Children also had to get approval from the board before accepting gifts of money or food from other people and relatives. Apparently, spontaneous visits and gifts disturbed the pupils and life in the orphanage enough to be put under supervision of the boards. That children also ran away from the Muhammadiyah orphanages is shown implicitly in the statement that, if a child escaped, it had to be reported to the relatives (if relatives had agreed to admitting the child in the orphanage). If runaways were actively pursued, and re-admitted or not, unfortunately remains unclear. Parents and relatives who agreed to place their child in an institute were not allowed to just take the child home again, this had to be negotiated with the board first. This point was probably added to prevent sudden removal of children, something that happened frequently in other youth facilities, and frustrated educators, who felt that it was usually to the detriment of the child and hindered re-education efforts.³⁹⁹ Finally, the admission agreement stated that children could only be allowed into the orphanage if the parents agreed to the entire set of rules and regulations and signed the statement.⁴⁰⁰

Once children were admitted into a Muhammadiyah orphanage, they were bathed and given proper clothing. In Jogjakarta, boys and girls were living in the same building until 1931, according to Mr. Abdul Hadi. After that time, the kids - there were about a hundred at the time - were separated in different buildings on the same piece of land.⁴⁰¹ Life in the orphanage was very structured, similar to the rhythm of life in other (European) childcare facilities, with the difference that Islamic prayers structured the day. While there might have

³⁹⁸ 'Pemeliharaan Anak Yatim; Moehammadijah Bagijan P.K.O. (Weeshuis Moehammadijah)' (Eng: the Care for Orphan Children; Muhammadiyah P.K.O Section—*Weeshuis Muhammadiyah*) in *Soera Moehammadijah*, unknown month (torn cover page), 1925 edition, Year 6, pp 113-115, B 893/PNI Jakarta.

³⁹⁹ See for example, 'Kort overzicht', *Witte Kruis Blad*, 1919, no. 7, 9-11. Also, the letters of the reformatory 'Bethanie' in Soekaboemi (13-01-1917) and the Roman Catholic Orphanage in Semarang (date unknown) to the Governor General in NA. Min. v. Kol. Inv.nr 990.

⁴⁰⁰ Chapter XVI. 'Pemeliharaan Anak Yatim dan Piatoe' (Eng: The Nurture of Orphan Children), by Moehammadijah Section P.K.O (Penolong Kesangseraan Oemoem) in Djokjakarta. (Admission agreement sample) pp 129-130, in *Almanak Muhammadiyah*, Yogyakarta 1929, 2X6.6103, Muh, a, 134, Central Office of Muhammadiyah, Jogjakarta.

⁴⁰¹ Interview with Mr. Abdul Hadi, 27 February 2009.

been small local variations, there was a standardized schedule that was published in the yearly *Muhammadiyah Almanac* of 1929.

Children were woken up at 5 a.m., washed, and came together for the *Subuh* prayer congregation. Half an hour later they read the Koran, and at 6.30 a.m. they had to make their beds and sweep the house and the yard. At 7 a.m. there was breakfast and afterwards they washed the dishes. Half an hour later most children went to school, and those who did not attend stayed in the house and were given craftwork lessons. At noon everybody returned from school and there was a communal *Dzuhur* prayer. At 1.30 p.m. there was lunch and again dishwashing to do. Between 2.00 p.m. and 3.00 p.m. an hour of free time was allotted, and then children who did not go to the afternoon schools did their handicrafts. At 3.30 p.m. there was time to sweep the house again, and care for the plants in the garden, at 4 p.m. the *Ashar* prayer and at 5.30 p.m. the evening meal, dishwashing, and preparation for the *Maghrib* prayer. After *Maghrib* the children were supposed to read the Koran until *Isya'* time. At 7.30 p.m. there was a review of the school lessons of the afternoon and at 9 p.m. everybody went to bed. Fridays were special because of the Friday prayer, and that day children washed their bed sheets and their own clothes. At 11.30 a.m. everybody took a bath, did the ritual washing, and got ready for the 12 o'clock prayer at the Mosque.⁴⁰²

What did the children in the orphanage learn? One of the important principles of Dahlan and Muhammadiyah as an organization was that boys and girls got the same educational opportunities; it is likely that this was also the case in the orphanages.⁴⁰³ A 1924 article highlights that all the children of the Jogjakarta orphanage received formal education, physical education, and agricultural practice. In the evening, they got religious education, reviewed schoolwork, and studied hygiene and health education. Once a week they were taught how to make batik. The caretakers working in the orphanage taught all these subjects. The education they gave was both practical and academic, but the article stated that it was hoped that the orphans would become 'intellectual people' in the future.⁴⁰⁴ There was high regard for a good education and intellectual achievement, something that was also considered appropriate for orphans or children from poor families. This contrasts with government and

⁴⁰² 'Pendidikan dan Pengadjaran Anak-anak Jatim' (Eng: Education and Learning of Orphan Children) (Rules and Regulations of their daily activity) pp 130 – 131, in *Almanak Muhammadiyah*, Yogyakarta 1929, 2X6.6103, Muh, a, 134, Central Office of Muhammadiyah, Jogjakarta.

⁴⁰³ Jainuri, *The Muhammadiyah Movement*, 93-94.

⁴⁰⁴ 'Pemijaraan Anak2 jatim' (Eng: the Care for Orphan Children) in *Soeara Moehammadiyah*, 1 January 1924, No. 1, Year 5, p 9, B 893/PNI Jakarta.

Christian re-education efforts, which focused on learning children a trade, as we saw in chapter one.

Mr. Abdul Hadi essentially mentions the same things. According to him the children stayed and studied in the orphanage compound and were given education from elementary to high school levels. They were taught ‘formal and informal education subjects with the value of Islam’. Those who did really well in their studies were allowed to continue their higher education in the secondary education system, usually one of Muhammadiyah’s Islamic boarding schools at college level. Those who were not going to university, left school after their high school graduation, and went into society to look for jobs, run businesses, and work for government institutions. Some opted to stay in the orphanage, thus becoming the new generation of caretakers. According to Abdul Hadi there were usually a few children in the Jogjakarta orphanage who were sent there by (Muhammadiyah) organizations outside Java. They would return to their place of origin to find a job and further the work of Muhammadiyah in those locations. Lastly, some pupils became Muhammadiyah schoolteachers and *muballighin* in remote places like Flores or elsewhere.⁴⁰⁵

Similar to the Muhammadiyah schooling system, the orphanages were not only a way to rescue children from poverty and neglect, but were also a reliable way to create Muhammadiyah cadres. In this sense the organization also re-educated children, teaching them a form of modernist Islam that was spreading gradually throughout colonial society. While there is not (yet) enough information about the background of the staff members, educational personnel, and pupils at the orphanages, it is probably safe to say that the differences between them and the pupils were less pronounced in terms of language, ethnicity, and religion, than in Christian or state facilities.

The main difference between Muhammadiyah orphanages and the other institutions was that the first aimed to raise children in the image of the leaders of the orphanage and the community, while the European institutions aimed to raise children to a standard and behavior that was very different from its staff members. The Witte Kruis Kolonie and the Dutch government wanted to raise children not in their white European image, but in their image of what a well-behaved native should be like: Someone who knew his place, did not critique the colonial government, and was able to make his or her way in the world with a modest, preferably manual, profession. Intellectual development and creating future leaders

⁴⁰⁵ Interview with Mr. Abdul Hadi, 27 February 2009.

was reserved for the indigenous elite, not for ‘commoners’. In this sense the European institutions might have been more stuck in their beliefs about social class and race than the more emancipatory oriented indigenous institutions, and the latter did probably more in terms of truly ‘uplifting’ the poor and neglected.

3.4. Working together: government, European, and Indigenous associations

While indigenous political, social, and religious groups were not interested in working for the state when it came to operating reformatories, in the late twenties there were some social policies that helped develop cooperation between the colonial government and organizations like Muhammadiyah. Some of this was purely financial; a few Muhammadiyah schools and orphanages received state subsidies, for the same reasons that Christian charities and schools could get state support. The Muhammadiyah Sekolah Klas II in Jogjakarta, for example, managed to qualify for government subsidies, and the Jogjakarta orphanage also received subsidies.⁴⁰⁶ In comparison to the Christian missions, however, who almost always managed to run their institutions in such a way that they qualified for subsidies, the financial support for Muhammadiyah was minimal.⁴⁰⁷ It appears that these government subsidies were not as much a sign that the colonial state accepted or agreed with the activities of Muhammadiyah, but had to be given because the organization met the criteria for financial support. Some civil servants saw subsidies as a way to keep organizations loyal and conformist.

In 1928, Sarekat Islam heavily criticized Muhammadiyah for accepting government subsidies for schools, hospitals, and orphanages and thus becoming ‘slaves’ of the Dutch rulers. When the government discussed this situation the Advisor for Native Affairs Ch.O. van der Plas urged the government to keep supporting the organization’s social work, but do it as covert as possible. ‘The nationalists are not wrong, when they see every subsidy as a threat to their independence. Moreover, a careful government policy makes it attractive for associations like Muhammadiyah to stay loyal in their actions.’⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁶ Directeur van Justitie Schrieke aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, 17 Juli 1930, Weltevreden, in Ag 21714/1930, AS, ANRI.

⁴⁰⁷ Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 178. The great imbalance in government support for Christian and Islamic organizations and schools, and the general support of the government for Christian missionary activities, was one of the great complaints of Islamic leaders against the colonial government. See also Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, 78-77.

⁴⁰⁸ Adviseur voor Inlandsche Zaken Van der Plas aan de GG, 23 November 1928, Weltevreden, in Moehammadijah 1928 critique from nationalist, ANRI. Moehammadijah Archive, A.9. Benda also mentions criticism of Muhammadiyah for accepting state subsidies. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, 77.

There was not only some degree of cooperation between the state and civil society organizations but also between the different ethnic groups within society. It was not uncommon for the elites of different ethnic groups to work together; organizations committed to combating social vices and rescuing the ‘fallen’ often showed some form of cooperation. Colonial officials, often involved in civil organizations themselves, encouraged this and thus spread the associational ideas of the ethical policy. Both in politics (Volksraad) and civil society, the idea that the participation of the indigenous population would create a broader base of support for colonial rule was visible.

In 1914, for example, the ‘Association for combating immorality among the natives in the Netherlands Indies *Madjoe Kamoeljan*’ was founded.⁴⁰⁹ The position of president and vice-president of the association were reserved for indigenous people, while other positions and regular membership were open to any ethnic group and consisted of Europeans too. *Madjoe Kamoeljan* stated that it wanted to strengthen the ‘moral judgement’ of the indigenous population. The organization sought to counter vice, concubinage, and the trafficking of women and children through distributing folders, organizing meetings, giving financial and moral support, and collecting information.⁴¹⁰ The founders of *Madjoe Kamoeljan* felt that a mix of European and indigenous members would increase the success of the organization, and it is not difficult to imagine why; prostitution, human trafficking, and concubinage involved members of different ethnic and language groups. Mixed membership would create broader financial support and a widespread network that could help to fulfil the goals of the organization.

Similarly, Pro Juventute branches in the Netherlands Indies also wanted to cooperate with (elite) indigenous inhabitants since the establishment of its first branches in Batavia in 1916 and Soerabaja in 1917. These two branches were both founded with strong encouragement from, and at the instigation of, colonial officials, as we saw in chapter two. Van Walsem, who was the director of the government bureau for combating human trafficking, had a lot of experience in cooperating with civil society organizations that

⁴⁰⁹ In Dutch the organization was called ‘Vereeniging ter bestrijding der onzedelijkheid onder de inlanders in Nederlandsch-Indië *Madjoe Kamoeljan*’. A. Jimenez Abalahin, *Prostitution Policy*, 398.

⁴¹⁰ Statuten van de Vereniging ter bestrijding der onzedelijkheid onder inlanders in Nederlands-Indië *Madjoe Kamoeljan*, in Bt 1-3-1915 no. 28, AS, ANRI, cited by Lisette Schouten in unpublished BA thesis *Morele Plicht of Noodzakelijk Kwaad?* (Leiden University, 2008) 29-30.

worked to eradicate prostitution in Batavia.⁴¹¹ His boss at the Justice Department, Mr. W. Sonneveld, was also convinced of the importance of cooperation and advised the founders of Pro Juventute Soerabaja to establish a committee ‘in which the most diverse directions [opinions] and different population groups are represented as best as possible’⁴¹²

Pro Juventute in the Netherlands, founded in 1896, showed the same strategy; although ethnic diversity did not get any attention in Holland at that time, religious and occupational diversity was an important strength of the boards of directors. Having board members from a diversity of occupations and churches ensured that the organization had powerful networks among clerics, judges, educators, the police, and politicians.⁴¹³ The founding committee and the first board of PJ Soerabaja also managed to create a board that was represented by different occupations, religions, and ethnic groups. As in the Netherlands, this did not extend across social divides, philanthropic work was a typical bastion of bourgeois and elite citizens who saw this as their duty. Van Walsem summarised this stance by saying that: “‘Pro Juventute’ brings those who, because of their societal position, have a duty to understand the people [*volk*], closer to those people [*volk*].”⁴¹⁴

The idea that ‘the people’ should possibly have a say in the organizations that were supposed to help and ‘rescue’ them had not yet evolved in either the Indies or the Netherlands. While Pro Juventute was especially focused on juvenile delinquency among the ‘lower classes’, representatives of those social groups remained absent. Pro Juventute Soerabaja was aware that they needed to find people who could ‘inform them of the state of affairs in the less privileged neighbourhoods of the different population groups of Soerabaja’.⁴¹⁵ Inviting board members who worked among those groups, or had their connections there, solved this: midwives, religious officials, judicial officials, social workers, teachers, and high-ranked army personnel. Other members of the Soerabaja board included the chief of police, the head inspector of the finance department, a female Salvation Army

⁴¹¹ For prostitution policies in the Netherlands Indies and the role of Van Walsem, see Abalahin, *Prostitution Policy and the Project of Modernity*, 280, 357-362. About the involvement of different indigenous organizations, 398-453.

⁴¹² Mr. G.N. Bouma, ‘Kort overzicht van den “Pro Juventute” arbeid te Malang’, in Jhr. S. H. H. Nahuys and J. C. Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië. Uitgegeven door de Vereeniging Pro-Juventute te Malang* (G. Kolff & Co, Batavia 1932) 13

⁴¹³ Verkaik, *Voor de Jeugd van Tegenwoordig*, 160, note 12. See page 13 and notes 2-12 on page 160 for a list of the names and professions of the first board of Pro Juventute Amsterdam.

⁴¹⁴ ‘Pro Juventute. Lezing door Mr. F.M.G. van Walsem op Maandag 5 Februari te Batavia gehouden’, afgedrukt in *Indisch Tijdschrift van het Regt*, 1918, no. 108, 27.

⁴¹⁵ *Vereeniging Pro Juventute te Soerabaia. Jaarverslag over 1917*. (G.C.T. Van Dorp & Co, Semarang-Soerabaia, 1918) p. 4, PNRI.

captain, and a medical doctor. The indigenous population was represented by board membership of the Regent of Soerabaja, and two 'representatives of the Chinese' were among the regular members of the association.⁴¹⁶

Between 1918 and 1927 Pro Juventute organizations were founded in cities like Medan, Semarang, Bandoeng, Malang, and Jogjakarta.⁴¹⁷ These were separate associations with their own boards and they only cooperated and communicated with each other about children who moved from own area to another, or who needed work or a place to stay in the region where another PJ association operated. In these organizations board members also tried to enlist indigenous, Chinese, and Arab members, but similar to PJ Soerabaja these representatives were a minority. In 1923 Pro Juventute Malang tried to 'get in closer contact with the prominent Native world, to encourage them to participate in Pro Juventute work among their race [*rasgenooten*]'. This statement clearly shows the motivation of Europeans for recruiting non-European members in the organization: each 'race' was supposed to work within its own group. The response of the 'Native judicial specialist' who was approached by PJ Malang about the possibility of creating more indigenous involvement was short and clear. According to him the 'Native chiefs' did not believe in the work of Pro Juventute. Pro Juventute chairman G.N. Bouma concluded a bit disappointed that nothing much could be expected of 'the Natives working for the Natives'.⁴¹⁸ In 1923 he also complained that while the European press showed a lot of interest for the association and gave it publicity, the 'Native and Chinese press' did not do this, even though most of Pro Juventute's work concerned 'their race'.⁴¹⁹

During the course of the twentieth century, and especially in the late 1920s and 1930s, this attitude started to change. Indigenous newspapers wrote about the work of Pro Juventute, and more and more representatives of different ethnic groups supported or became actively involved in its work. In 1938, for example, PJ Malang proudly announced that there were three indigenous and one Chinese board member. The association hoped that these contacts would make it easier to research the background of the indigenous and Chinese

⁴¹⁶ *Vereeniging Pro Juventute te Soerabaia. Jaarverslag over 1917.* (G.C.T. Van Dorp & Co, Semarang-Soerabaia, 1918) p 10, PNRI.

⁴¹⁷ Nahuys and Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië*, 97-124.

⁴¹⁸ Mr. G.N. Bouma, 'Kort overzicht van den "Pro Juventute" arbeid te Malang', in *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië*, 17.

⁴¹⁹ 'Algemeene beschouwingen en afscheidswoord van den Voorzitter' in *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1922*, pp 53-54, PNRI.

youth they were trying to help.⁴²⁰ The development of Pro Juventute Soerabaja also shows a strong increase in the number of indigenous supporters. In 1917 PJ Soerabaja had 222 members, including the board of directors, of whom just three had a Chinese last name, three an Arabic name, and two a Javanese name.⁴²¹ Ten years later, in 1927, not only the city of Soerabaja (about 300.000 inhabitants at the time) and the fight against juvenile delinquency had expanded, but also the Pro Juventute membership. They now had 506 members of whom 15 had a Chinese name, 3 an Arabic name, and 11 a Javanese name.⁴²² The secretary of the board was an indigenous man by the name of Mr. R.Ng. Soebroto and there was a second Javanese board member as well. One board member was Chinese, and two had Arabic names. So, from a total of 13 board members, five were non-Europeans in 1927.⁴²³ In 1917 only one of the 17 board members was a non-European, the Javanese Regent R. Toemenggoeng Ario Niti Adiningrat.⁴²⁴

Another eight years later, in 1935, support from the indigenous community really boomed. Due to the worldwide economic depression, 1935 was a difficult financial year for Pro Juventute Soerabaja, but the association was jubilant about its inter-cultural cooperation. In the yearly report, the board of directors admitted ‘surprise’ about the broad support of the indigenous community after a new propaganda drive for Pro Juventute work. ‘We succeeded in winning active fellow workers from the most diverse and prominent Native circles, who are organized in the Native Contact Committee [Inheems Contact-Comité] and regularly support us with actions and advice when it comes to the treatment of Native minors.’⁴²⁵ The new committee consisted of eight indigenous notables, six men and two women, and was chaired by the European chair of the board of directors. In a picture that was taken during the first meeting of the committee, many more indigenous participants, about 27 persons, can be counted. At this meeting Europeans were a minority, as there were just five of them.⁴²⁶ One of the stated reasons for a renewed attempt to cooperate with the indigenous community, was

⁴²⁰ Reportedly the 1938 board included R. Sanjoto, R. Soeridikoesoema, R. Soedono, Dr. Tjan Eng Yong. ‘Malang—Pro Juventute: Verslag tahoenan’ [Pro Juventute: Annual Report]. *Soeara Oemoem*, daily newspaper, Surabaya, Wednesday, 13 April 1938, p. 10. 1315/PNRI

⁴²¹ *Vereeniging Pro Juventute te Soerabaia. Jaarverslag over 1917*. (G.C.T. Van Dorp & Co, Semarang-Soerabaia, 1918) pp 10, 14-16, PNRI.

⁴²² *Vereeniging Pro Juventute te Soerabaia. Jaarverslag over 1927*, pp 56-63. MM14T-100233, KIT.

⁴²³ *Vereeniging Pro Juventute te Soerabaia. Jaarverslag over 1927*, p 5, MM14T-100233, KIT.

⁴²⁴ *Vereeniging Pro Juventute te Soerabaia. Jaarverslag over 1917*, PNRI.

⁴²⁵ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1935*, p 5, PNRI.

⁴²⁶ Picture with the title ‘Founding meeting of the Native Contact Committee at the house of the Chair, Mr. J. Andre Jansma, in *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1935*, p 49, PNRI.

that in this way the board expected to save money on the re-education of indigenous juveniles. According to Pro Juventute, it was especially due to the work of R.A.A. Soerjowinoto, Regent of Soerabaja and member of the board of directors, that so much indigenous support was generated.⁴²⁷ Pro Juventute now also kept a separate list of indigenous supporters, 114 of whom were financially contributing to Pro Juventute's work.⁴²⁸

The Native Committee organized meetings to spread knowledge about Pro Juventute among the indigenous community and register more members. During these evenings both European and indigenous members of Pro Juventute lectured about the work of the association. The indigenous police chief [wedono politie] of Soerabaja, Siratoe Rachmi, explained for example, what kinds of indigenous children were 'rescued' by Pro Juventute. The committee also showed a silent movie about the agricultural colony in Klakah, with live comments by the director of the colony. The daughter of the Regent of Soerabaja, Haninah Soerjowinoto, also supported these membership drives, and wrote about one of these evenings in the women's magazine *Widoeri*, a monthly magazine in Dutch for educated - and westernized - indigenous women. She felt it was her duty to spread knowledge about the 'good work' of Pro Juventute among her 'sisters'.⁴²⁹

Pro Juventute also became more visible in the 1920s and 1930s through stories in Malay newspapers, and all of these publications clearly approved of the associations' efforts. A 1927 article in the *Bintang Hindia* newspaper, for example, tried to generate more support for Pro Juventute. The writer claimed that this charity organization had made an important contribution to society, but was only known among a few indigenous people. The article explained that Pro Juventute tried to eradicate criminal acts of indigenous children and reform them so they would not grow up 'with the seed of criminality' and endanger society in later years. If naughty children were sent to prison, they would spend time with real gangsters (boeaja boeaja, literally meaning 'crocodiles'), and this would 'destroy any hope for improvement in their life'. The writer described how judges now sent these children to the care of organizations like Pro Juventute, so they could be placed in the 'verbeterhuis' (improvement home) in Tangerang or in the agricultural colony in Klakah, near Soerabaja.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁷ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1935*, pp 5-6, PNRI.

⁴²⁸ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1935*, pp 87-88, PNRI.

⁴²⁹ H. Soerjowinoto, 'Een propaganda-avond voor "Pro Juventute"', *Widoeri*, 5e jaargang, 20 februari 1936, aflevering 2, pp 84-86. PNRI.

⁴³⁰ 'Landbouw Kolonie di Klakah', *Bintang Hindia*, Weltevreden, : Monday, 17 October 1927, No. 42 Year IV, pp. 6-9. Editor: Parada Harahap, 3516/PNRI.

The article stressed that these facilities were not prisons ‘because there is a school for agricultural education, modern farming, construction, etc.’. While Pro Juventute was applauded, ‘Boemipoetra’ (children of the country, e.g. indigenous inhabitants) were criticized for not having the ‘awareness’ or ‘condition’ yet to take care of their own troubled children. The writer wanted this to change, and expressed hope that there would be more indigenous charity organizations, because these were important when it came to the improvement of society. He concluded by urging his readers to found such organizations and (financially) support the work of Pro Juventute.⁴³¹

Articles in the Soerabaja Soeara Oemoem newspaper in the late 1930s show a slightly more balanced, but still optimistic view of Pro Juventute work. This newspaper reported cases of young people who had committed criminal acts and were put under surveillance of Pro Juventute or sent to a reformatory.⁴³² Other articles dealt with orphans or street children who were placed in Pro Juventute homes, like the two boys Tamo (11) and Maadi (10) who were found living on the streets and were brought to Pro Juventute. The writer expressed the hope that ‘these boys could get a good education, so that later on they can be good people too’.⁴³³ From remarks like this, and increasing involvement in Pro Juventute’s and other charity activities, it seems that more and more indigenous people believed in the cause of juvenile re-education. In 1937 Soeara Oemoem congratulated Pro Juventute Soerabaja with its twentieth anniversary. The article stated that the organization did a very difficult job, because there was not much experience with the eradication of youth crime in the Indies. Nevertheless, the association was determined and reached its goals, said the article, and PJ was offered congratulations and encouragement to continue its work ‘for the sake of humanity’.⁴³⁴

A changing attitude among indigenous inhabitants to participate in social work together with Europeans might have different reasons. With the growth of the *pergerakan*, and indigenous political involvement and critique of colonial society, there was probably a

⁴³¹ ‘Landbouw Kolonie di Klakah’, *Bintang Hindia*, Weltevreden, Monday, 17 October 1927, No. 42 Year IV, pp. 6-9. Editor: Parada Harahap, 3516/PNRI.

⁴³² For example, the case of 11-year-old Koesmin who stole f4.80 from his friend’s mother. ‘Anak oemoer 11 tahoen: Soedah beladjar mentjoeri dihoekem 2 tahoen tucht’ [A boy aged 11 years old: Has learned to steal and has been punished for 2 years of *tucht*]. *Soeara Oemoem*, Surabaya, Daily newspaper, Wednesday, 3 March 1937, p. 6, cc. 5-6. 1312/PNRI.

⁴³³ ‘Diserahkan kepada Pro Juventute’ [Given to Pro Juventute]. Thursday, 27 May 1937, p. 2, c. 1. 1312/PNRI.

⁴³⁴ ‘Pro Juventute Soerabaja: Genap 20 tahoen.’ [Pro Juventute Surabaya: Exactly 20 years]. *Soeara Oemoem*, Surabaya, Daily newspaper, Friday, 15 October 1937, p. 2, c. 4, 1313/PNRI.

more general feeling among (educated) indigenous people that one should do something to further the development of his/her own country and people. Indigenous associations focused on topics from prostitution, to schooling, sports and scouting, better housing, healthcare and orphans. An example of this dedication to furthering the lives of their own people were the indigenous teachers who chose to work for the 'wild' schools instead of the better paying colonial government.⁴³⁵ At the same time, associational life in cooperation with Europeans could have an emancipatory role and was a way for different ethnic and social groups to make themselves visible, respectable, and further their careers. Some indigenous people might have been able to gain useful and more informal contacts among the Dutch. There were more and more higher-educated indigenous people who aspired to a middle-class lifestyle, including taking on the 'duty' and networking benefits of doing philanthropic work. While supporting Pro Juventute obviously did not rule out simultaneous participation in more nationalistic or religiously inspired organizations, like Sarekat Islam or Muhammadiyah, it did mean that these members of the indigenous community were still positive about cooperation with the Europeans in colonial society, even in the late thirties. This confirms Schulte-Nordholts suggestion that the study of the indigenous (lower) middle-class and their lifestyle can shed a different light on the late colonial period, which is usually dominated by nationalist perspectives.⁴³⁶

For indigenous inhabitants who were not interested in cooperating with European organizations, there were more and more opportunities to participate in, or finance, social work through indigenous organizations. For example, in 1930 the *Perkoempoelan Pembasmi Pendjoelan Perempoean dan Anak-Anak* (P.P.P.P.A., Association for the eradication of the trafficking of women and children) was founded to fight the trade in women and children. About 25 women associations from different religious backgrounds worked together in the *Perikatan Perkoempoelan Istri Indonesia* (P.P.I.I., Union of Indonesian Women Associations) to combat forms of social evil like the trade in women and children, child

⁴³⁵ See, for example, the nationalistic novel by Soewarsih Djojopoespito, *Buiten het Gareel. Een Indonesische roman* ('s-Gravenhage, Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 1986, third print. Originally published in 1940). She describes her own experiences as a young and well-educated idealist working as a teacher in nationalistic 'wild' schools in different Javanese cities. Soewarsih was active in the young women's movement as well.

⁴³⁶ The article by Henk Schulte-Nordholt (in Bloembergen and Raben, 2009), offers an alternative perspective on the late colonial period by suggesting that many middle-class Indonesians wanted to partake in 'modern' colonial society, instead of protesting colonial rule.

marriages, and polygamy.⁴³⁷ Muhammadiyah continued to establish hospitals and orphanages all over Java: in 1927 a polyclinic was opened in Malang, in 1932 an orphanage in the same city, and in 1934 the organization started caring for orphans in Modjokerto.⁴³⁸ In Bondowoso supporters were collecting money to fund a host of Muhammadiyah activities, like the boy scouts, the orphanage, mass circumcision events, and schools.⁴³⁹ In 1932, an association in Batavia founded an Indigenous Islamic orphanage; in 1937 the same association started with a 'reformatory bureau' that could be visited by parents with 'problematic children' under the age of ten years old.⁴⁴⁰ Another indigenous childcare initiative, that received a lot of publicity from Soeara Oemoem, was the Soerabaja Perkoempoelan Pemeliharaan Anak Jawa Timoer (P.P.A.J., The Association of Orphan Children Care East Java, also called Perpaja). This was apparently due to the fact that Dr. Soetomo, who was the director of Soeara Oemoem as well as chairman of the Parindra (Partai Indonesia Raya) Branch Surabaya, was involved in the board of the orphanage.⁴⁴¹

The articles about Perpaja have a much more nationalist tone than any of the articles about Pro Juventute or indigenous childcare. It is constantly mentioned, or implied, that a good nationalist should work for the future of society, and should therefore care about orphans and other social ills, and contribute money to these causes. The founding story of Perpaja also rings with nationalism. The orphanage was established on 18 November 1931, supposedly after the wives of some prominent Soerabaja nationalists went to a political meeting where they heard a lecture about 'Iboe sedjati' [the true mother] from Dr. Soetomo.⁴⁴² 'The women from the nationalist movement [class] felt that their heart was awakened and that they should roll up their shirtsleeves to give help to neglected orphan

⁴³⁷ *De Inheemsche Vrouwenbeweging, 1932. De Inheemsche vrouwenbeweging in Nederlandsch-Indië en het aandeel daarin van het Inheemsche meisje* (Batavia, 1932) 28. P. Tromp, *Indische Burgerschapskunde* (Batavia 1934) 244-245 en J. Paulus, D. Stibbe en S. de Graaff, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië, IV* (2^e druk; 's-Gravenhage en Leiden 1917).

⁴³⁸ Malang: P.K.O. Moehammadijah' [Malang: Muhammadiyah P.K.O.], *Soeara Oemoem*, Surabaya, Wednesday 22 December 1937, p. 10, c. 1. 1314/PN. Title unknown, *Soeara Oemoem*, Surabaya, Tuesday, 30 October 1934, p. 5, c. 4, 1721/PNRI.

⁴³⁹ 'Bondowoso: Kalangan P.K.O.' [Bondowoso: P.K.O. Aspect], *Soeara Oemoem*, Surabaya, Wednesday 4 November 1936, p. 9, c. 3. 1311/PNRI.

⁴⁴⁰ 'Roemah-Piatoe-Moeslimin' [Muslim Orphan House], *Soeara Oemoem*, Surabaya, Wednesday, 3 March 1937, p. 6, cc. 5-6. Article 1312/PNRI.

⁴⁴¹ Mr. Imam Soepardi, 'Nasib anak Jatim: Jang dipelihara oleh P.P.A.J. Soerabaja' [The Destiny of the Orphan Children: That are nurtured by P.P.A.J. Surabaya] *Soeara Oemoem*, Surabaya, Thursday, 26 November 1936, p.2, cc. 1-2. 1311/PNRI.

⁴⁴² Mr. S. Sin, 'Pemeliharaan anak jatim: Oesaha social kaoem iboe Soerabaja. Perloe mendapat sokongan' [The care of orphan children: The social efforts of Surabaya mothers. Needs to get support] *Soeara Oemoem*, Surabaya, Monday 1 February 1937, p. 1, cc. 1-3, 1311/PNRI.

children, something which is encouraged and enforced by every religion.’ The chair and most of the board of the orphanage were women, and their social work was considered a form of political participation.⁴⁴³

Perpaja did not have sufficient money and space to take in the great number of orphans, abandoned or neglected children, that were brought to the orphanage by their family and community members. Only children with an endorsement letter from the district or village head were accepted, to make sure the children were really orphaned or neglected. Eventually the organization found a base of financial support in what was called ‘the nationalist and Muslim community’, and after 1934 they also received European financial support through the Provincial government of East Java and the Municipality of Surabaya.⁴⁴⁴ They were nationalist oriented but apparently not taking the non-cooperative road. Perpaja could now rent a proper building, which housed between 35 and 40 boys and girls, but there were about two or three times as many requests for orphan placements. Financial problems continued to plague the organization, as their expenses were f 180 per month, while the combination of government support and community donations only brought in f 80 a month. Because of financial problems in 1936 and 1937, Perpaja moved from a big house on a main street to a smaller house in an alley. The newspaper articles about Perpaja, similar to those about Pro Juventute and the like, were always urging people to donate money. If only the sixty million indigenous people would each save one or two cents a month, sighed the newspaper, than none of the charity organizations would have to worry about their existence.⁴⁴⁵

Three months later, another writer brought a visit to the orphanage to be able to ‘elaborate further on the goals and the form of education for the orphan children that our nationalists have been dreaming of’.⁴⁴⁶ He described that the Perpaja orphanage intended to care for and educate indigenous youth so they could get jobs after they left the institute. From the 38 kids living there in 1937 (8 girls and 30 boys), 33 were going to school. Supporters of this orphanage used similar reasoning as Pro Juventute and the colonial

⁴⁴³ Mr. Imam Soepardi, ‘Nasib anak Jatim: Jang dipelihara oleh P.P.A.J. Soerabaja’ [The Destiny of the Orphan Children: That are nurtured by P.P.A.J. Surabaya] *Soeara Oemoem*, Surabaya, Thursday, 26 November 1936, p.2, cc. 1-2. 1311/PNRI.

⁴⁴⁴ They received f2000 from the province in 1934, but only f263 in 1935, while they received f600 from the municipality every year. Mr. Imam Soepardi, ‘Nasib anak Jatim: Jang dipelihara oleh P.P.A.J. Soerabaja’ [The Destiny of the Orphan Children: That are nurtured by P.P.A.J. Surabaya] *Soeara Oemoem*, Surabaya, Thursday, 26 November 1936, p.2, cc. 1-2. 1311/PNRI.

⁴⁴⁵ Mr. S. Sin, ‘Pemeliharaan anak jatim’, p. 1.

⁴⁴⁶ Mr. S. Sin, ‘Pemeliharaan anak jatim’, p. 1.

government to raise money and establish reformatories; it was necessary to spend money on the (re-)education of orphans and neglected children now, so they would become ‘useful citizens’, rather than ‘disturb society’ in the future.⁴⁴⁷ In this sense, it seems that indigenous and European philanthropists had similar motivations for reforming orphaned, neglected, and delinquent youth; not only the individual child was improved, but society benefited from it as well.

A sign of (at least minimal) cooperation between indigenous associations and Pro Juventute was the publishing, in 1942, of a booklet listing all existing youth facilities, by the *Verbond der Vereenigingen Pro Juventute in Nederlandsch-Indie* (the Union of Pro Juventute Associations Netherlands-Indies, est. 1932).⁴⁴⁸ According to this publication there were five children homes, eleven private re-education facilities (among these the Pro Juventute facilities in Klakah and Tangerang), twenty-two orphanages, nine Pro Juventute associations with five temporary youth homes (*doorgangshuizen*), and five miscellaneous institutions like the Witte Kruis Kolonie, a mental institution which also accepted children, and homes for pregnant girls or young prostitutes. The list did not include the six reformatories the government was still operating at the time, and - besides the one in Malang - also left out most of the Muhammadijah orphanages. The publication was not complete but its aim was to give Pro Juventute associations and other interested individuals and associations an overview of facilities and the kind of children they accepted.⁴⁴⁹ The booklet shows that there were at least 3 Islamic institutions, 3 ‘neutral’ indigenous institutions, and three Chinese child facilities in the 1920s and 1930s. This must have been a fraction of the total number of indigenous associations and orphanages, considering the many orphanages of Muhammadijah that were not included. Probably there were other organizations as well, and Pro Juventute asked readers to send more information about institutions that were not listed.

Muhammadijah worked together with Pro Juventute on a more day-to-day level as well: the Islamic teachers gave religious education on the agricultural colony of Pro Juventute Soerabaja. This re-education colony, mostly for indigenous juvenile delinquents

⁴⁴⁷ Mr. Achmad Natakoesoema, ‘Keadaan 38 anak Jatim: Dan kewadajiban kita bersama’ [The condition of 38 Orphan children: And our responsibility together], *Soeara Oemoem*, Surabaya, Thursday 3 December 1936, p. 2, cc. 1-2. 1311/PNRI.

⁴⁴⁸ The Verbond was founded especially to care for and guide juvenile delinquents after they were released from a variety of institutions. *Overzicht van bestaande tehuizen van jeugdzorg in Nederlandsch-Indië. Samengesteld door het Verbond der Vereenigingen Pro Juventute in Nederlandsch-Indie* (Batavia, Hamilton, 1942) p. 25-26. PNRI.

⁴⁴⁹ Voorwoord, in *Overzicht van bestaande tehuizen van jeugdzorg in Nederlandsch-Indië*.

and neglected children, was established with financial support from the colonial government and funds from Pro Juventute itself. The colony officially opened in October 1921, and could house 160 pupils. The first children were sent there the same year, and in 1922 about 157 pupils lived and worked in Klakah.⁴⁵⁰ They were mostly government pupils, who were sent to a reformatory by the courts, and whose re-education was paid for by the state, but some were so-called 'free pupils', who were sent there with agreement of their parents or guardians through the channels of Pro Juventute.⁴⁵¹ The agricultural colony aimed to give the pupils a basic school education but mostly focused on teaching them construction and agricultural skills and knowledge. The idea was to teach the boys - because only boys were sent to Klakah - a broad variety of practical skills they could bring back to their desa and their family. According to Pro Juventute pupils had to become 'practical people, who will really move the Native world forward'.⁴⁵²

Like the state reformatories, the agricultural colony was religiously 'neutral', and there were no daily communal prayers or religious services, as in the Witte Kruis Kolonie and the Salvation Army agricultural colonies. The boys received religious education that matched their religious orientation upon arrival, and while there were some Christian pupils, the majority was Muslim. Reports about the agricultural colony mention religious education for the first time in the daily schedule in 1927. There was Islamic education between 3 and 5 pm on Saturdays, taught by teacher Ponidjo from Loemadjang. Once a month, a Dutch church leader from Pasoeroean taught classes for the European Protestants, a Dutch pastor visited the Roman-Catholic boys, and for the four indigenous Protestant Christians there was one hour of religious education on Thursday mornings, taught by an indigenous volunteer from Probolinggo.⁴⁵³

In a 1929 annual report from Muhammadijah, the agricultural colony is mentioned as one of the many places where *muballighin* (Islamic missionaries or teachers) were organising

⁴⁵⁰ In 1922 there were a total of 145 government pupils and 12 free pupils, totalling 157 pupils. Of this group there were 12 boys with European and Chinese names. *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1922*, pp 25, 29-36, PNRI. Also *Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1921*, p 11, 38, PNRI.

⁴⁵¹ See, for example, the description of mr. Heijman, who worked for the railways and asked to have his son sent to Klakah, in 'Jaarverslag 1922 Vereeniging Pro Juventute Afdeeling Malang' in *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1922*, p 12, PNRI.

⁴⁵² *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1921*, p 17, PNRI.

⁴⁵³ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1927*, p 14, 17, MM14T-100233, KIT.

tabligh (congregation) to teach Islam to ‘problem, neglected, and criminal children’.⁴⁵⁴ The article does not clarify how often Muhammadiyah was teaching at the colony, and the Pro Juventute annual reports do not specifically mention any religious education from Muhammadiyah, but it might have been unknown to the director of the colony if a religious teacher was connected to Muhammadiyah or not. The annual report highlighted that conducting *tabligh* in general was a way for Muhammadiyah teachers to encourage good deeds and behaviour and to prevent cruelty and crime. ‘All malicious action and destructive behaviour should be changed and improved, as to the command of Allah, and the teaching of Muhammad.’ Spreading the proper Islamic teachings was believed to have a beneficial effect on people’s behaviour, a thought that was similar to the Christian beliefs of Van Emmerik and Salvation Army soldiers.⁴⁵⁵ The Muhammadiyah branch in Soerabaja was also providing Islamic education to the Perpaja orphanage.⁴⁵⁶ Teaching in orphanages and childcare facilities was apparently a good way to reach the indigenous youth and influence their religious beliefs.

Another activity that brought Muhammadiyah members in touch with juvenile delinquents was after-care and rehabilitation work among discharged youngsters. In a 1928 government report about probation and rehabilitation in the Indies, Muhammadiyah was mentioned as the only indigenous organization that asked the government for information about doing this work among youngsters who were released from prisons or reformatories. There were several meetings between the Muhammadiyah central board, regional boards and employees of the Justice Department. The report stated that it could be expected that Muhammadiyah would soon ‘earnestly’ participate in rehabilitation work.⁴⁵⁷ A year later both Pro Juventute and Muhammadiyah were mentioned in the annual report of the state reformatories as ‘very forthcoming’ in helping out with the aftercare of discharged pupils

⁴⁵⁴ ‘Chapter X. Djadjahan’ [Colonization/Mission], p 135. In *Berita Tahunan: Moehammadijah Hindia Timoer* [Annual News: Muhammadiyah East Indies] Published by Pengoeroes Besar Moehammadijah; Hindia Timoer with financial support from Hoofdcomite Congres Moehammadijah Djokjakarta. (Landsdrukkerij Weltevreden, 1929) Located in the Central Office of Muhammadiyah, Jogjakarta. *Muballighin* are male and female religious instructors who explain the scripture and the principles of Islam and Muhammadiyah during meetings (*tabligh*). See for example Alfian, *Muhammadiyah*, 167. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, 74.

⁴⁵⁵ ‘Chapter X. Djadjahan’ [Colonization/Mission], pp 119, 122.

⁴⁵⁶ ‘Anak-anak yatim: akan mendapat pendidikan agama Islam’ [Orphan children: Will receive Islamic religion education]. Soeara Oemoem, Surabaya, Saturday 13 February 1937, p. 2, c. 4. 1312/PNRI.

⁴⁵⁷ *Verslag betreffende de Reclasseering in Nederlandsch-Indie over het jaar 1928. Samengesteld bij het hoofdkantoor van het gevangeniswezen (Departement van Justitie).* p 6. PNRI.

‘[...] almost every request [for help] ... was honored.’⁴⁵⁸ Muhammadijah was also mentioned in 1940, in a letter from the Supreme Court of the Indies about a lack of space in the state reformatories. The Supreme Court instructed all of its judges and courtrooms to sharply restrict the number of juvenile delinquents who were sent to reformatories, because there was no space and the government had no financial means to create more space. The Supreme Court recommended placing the pupils who were not living in ‘a criminal environment’ and did not have ‘an irredeemable character’ under court ordered supervision of organizations like Pro Juventute, Muhammadijah, and other childcare and rehabilitation associations, showing the state’s continuing reliance on civil associations.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁸ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 38.

⁴⁵⁹ *Batavia-Centrum, 6 November 1940, Rondschriften van het Hooggerechtshof aan de Raden van Justitie, Voorzitters van de Landraden, Landrechters, Magistraten, Residentierechters in de buitengewesten*, in Ag 26135/1940. AS, ANRI. Cases that were a little more serious could be given a fine and/or be sent to the regular prisons that had special juvenile departments. To ensure that judges were prudent and giving the correct sentences, the Supreme Court asked them to sent all the cases in which juveniles were sent to a reformatory to the Court so they could check their decisions.

Chapter IV. Civil associations, social pressures and the expansion and decline of the colonial reform system, 1918-1942

In early 1920 the Chinese widow Ong Pat Sing from Soerabaja was terribly worried about her youngest son Twan Po. The ten-year-old had left the house and did not return; nobody knew what had happened to him. In a bustling port-city like Soerabaja this could mean anything; maybe he had had an accident on the increasingly busy and car-filled roads; run away; gone to sea; or been taken advantage off. It was only after a tormenting wait that she found out that her boy had apparently stolen a piece of bread, had been caught by the police, and brought before the court to be judged for his misbehaviour. To Pat Sings surprise and despair she was informed that Twan Po was sentenced to live in a re-education home until he reached the age of twenty-one. To make matters worse he was put in prison to wait for his transfer to the reformatory.⁴⁶⁰

Juvenile offenders like Twan Po, who were waiting in prisons by the hundreds in the early 1920s, would become a huge problem for the colonial government and undermined the goals and the functioning of the reform system. Between 1918 and 1942 the number of juvenile offenders put under tutelage of the government as so-called government pupils in state and private reformatories was on the rise, and in the early twenties there were not enough state reformatories to place all the juveniles who received a re-education sentence. After the opening of the first state reformatory in Semarang (1918) the reformatory filled up quickly and the government had to open more facilities. Many government pupils were placed in the state-sponsored Pro Juventute agricultural colony in Klakah (1922) and a temporary state reformatory opened in Malang in 1923. The reformatory in Ngawi was opened in 1926, and was followed by a large reformatory for boys and girls in Tangerang (1927), one in Blitar (1929) and finally a facility in Bandoeng (1930). At the same time the Witte Kruis Kolonie in Salatiga and the Salvation Army colony in Kalawara still accepted juvenile delinquents as well. Sometimes Pro Juventute placed juvenile offenders with private families who were willing and able to take care of them, but this usually happened only once or twice per year.

⁴⁶⁰ Soerabaja, 24 Maart 1920, *Mevrouw J. Grippeling voor Njonja Ong Pat Sing, aan de GG te Batavia*, in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI. See also the yearly report of Pro Juventute Soerabaja about 1920, they mention that forty to fifty young children are regularly waiting in prison. The association was disappointed and upset by this because they had offered the government to operate a temporary shelter for these children and the government declined to pay for this so it could not be established. *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1920*, pp 14, 26-27.

This chapter intends to show in which context and force field the colonial state operated when it came to juvenile reform, and analyses two significant moments of crisis; one in the reform systems' early years and one in the 1930s. It lays out how business interest groups (like the Sugar Syndicate) and reform association (like Pro Juventute) influenced the development and expansion of the governments' reform policy. First we will discuss the meaning and likely causes of an increase in the number of juveniles with a reform sentence after 1918, and the problems and scandals accompanying a rapid growth of re-education sentences between 1919 and 1922. We will take a look at the meaning of rising crime rates and the role of the Sugar Syndicate in the expansion of the reform system, (4.1). Secondly, we will discuss how and why Pro Juventute criticized the colonial penal laws for juveniles and how the colonial government responded to this (4.2). Lastly the effects of the economic crisis of the 1930s on both state and private reformatories will be shown (4.3). All episodes reveal a crucial aspect of the late colonial state; namely that it was a state that was on the one hand ambitious to implement new juvenile reform policies, while it was on the other hand plagued by a lack of finances and personnel to effectively do so.

4.1. 1919-1924: A growing number of convicted juveniles and a failing re-education system

After 1918 the number of juveniles that was sent to a reformatory by a judge increased every year, a situation that soon created problems because there was not enough space to place pupils. The newly opened LOG Semarang could house a hundred boys and that seemed a lot in a time when only a few - mostly indigenous boys - were sentenced to re-education each year; in 1916 only 21 juveniles were put at the disposal of the government (*ter beschikking gesteld*) and sent to a private reformatory for lack of a state reformatory.⁴⁶¹ This rose to 73 in 1918 (70 boys, 3 girls; 66 of these children were indigenous, 1 European and 6 Chinese) and the much greater number of 343 in 1919 (332 boys, 11 girls, 332 indigenous, 8 Chinese, and 3

⁴⁶¹ These numbers are unreliable and only of value to get some idea of the numbers that historical actors were dealing with. They are based on the index of the AS of the Governor General in ANRI. The folios were the registration of every correspondence that was sent to and from the AS. There was significant correspondence about boys being sent to different reformatories, but courts and judges did probably not send all their cases to the AS. Some were directly sent to the Justice Department, and there is no record of those files. The number of cases mentioned in the folios of the AS are not the same as the numbers in the *Crimineele Statistiek van Nederlandsch-Indië over het jaar 1916*. In this source is mentioned that of a total of 80 registered cases of juvenile offence under the age of 16 only four cases were placed in a reformatory (p. 200-201). The *Crimineele Statistiek van 1918* mentions that the statistics were usually incorrect because the courts made mistakes in sending their numbers to the Justice Department. This is way I have chosen to mention the numbers in the AS, they mention more cases and that seems realistic.

European) and 290 pupils in 1920. The table below and graph on the next page gives an overview of available data on re-education sentences since 1918, although it should be noted that this material is incomplete due to a lack of sources several years.

Yearly re-education sentences

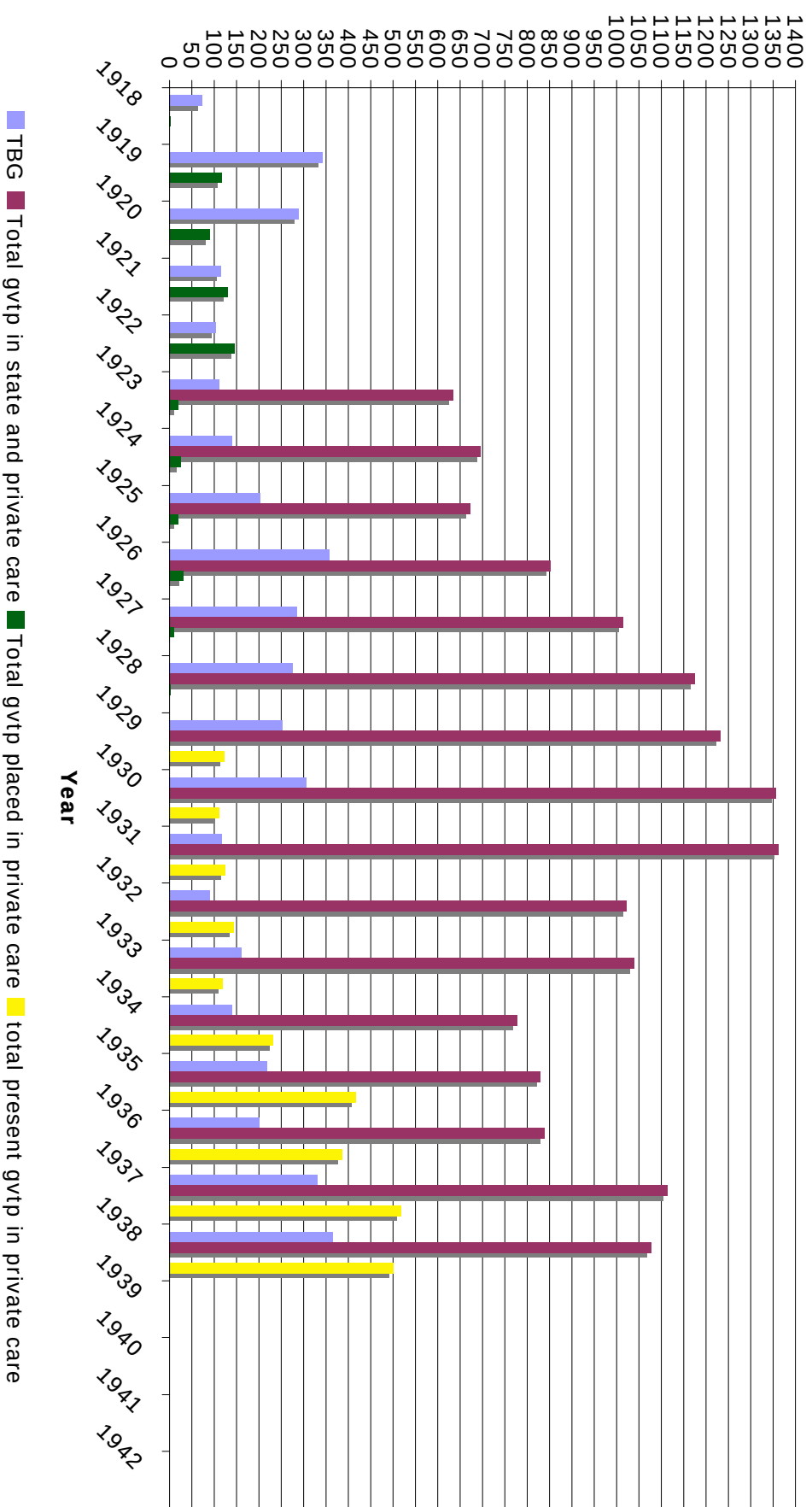
Year	TBG per given year	Total gvtp in state and private care in given year
1918	73	
1919	343	
1920	290	
1921	115	
1922	104	
1923	112	635
1924	140	697
1925	204	673
1926	358	852
1927	285	1015
1928	276	1174
1929	254	1232
1930	307	1357
1931	116	1363
1932	89	1023
1933	161	1040
1934	140	778
1935	219	830
1936	201	839
1937	330	1114
1938	365	1078
1939		
1940		
1941		
1942		
TOTAL	4482	

(Sources: *Verslag Landsopvoedingsgestichten 1918-1929*, *Koloniale Verslag/Indisch Verslag 1890-1940*, *Crimineele Statistiek, 1918-1933*)

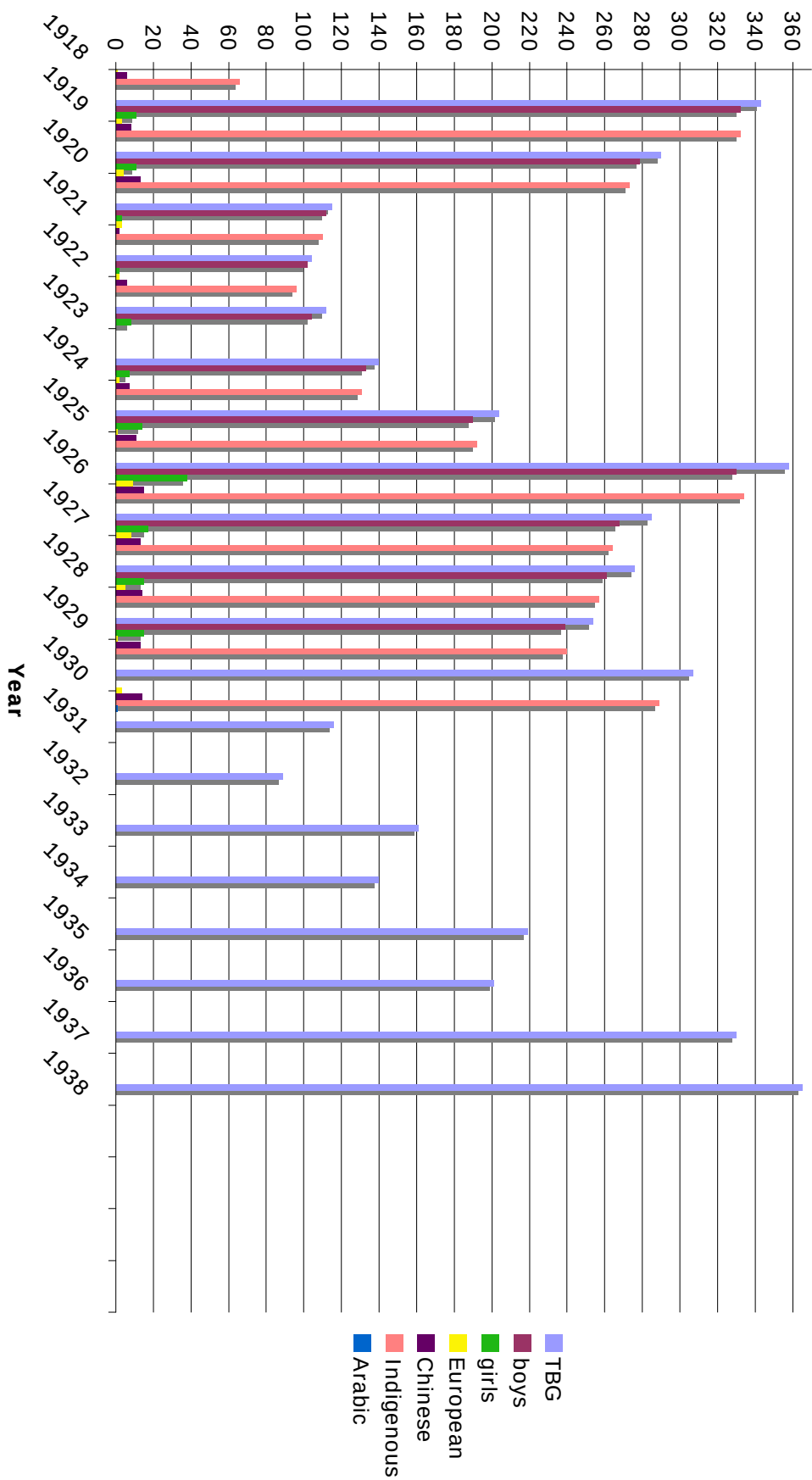
TBG = children who received a re-education sentence were 'put at disposal of the government'
[ter beschikking gesteld]
Empty cells = data unknown or unavailable

Re-education sentences (TBG) per year

(empty spaces mean that no date was available for that year)



Re-education sentence per year, per legal category and gender, 1918-1938



To put the rise of juvenile re-education sentences in perspective - and to be able to interpret any criminal statistics from that period - it is important to discuss the social context of the years 1918-1920. While numbers seem solid, they are actually not more representative of past events than any other sources and should be used with a critical eye. Statistics do not necessarily give any real indication of rising crime rates.

The European population perceived the years 1918 and 1919 as a threatening time for the colonial state; the end of World War I, communist revolutions in Europe, the intensification of the *pergerakan*, and growing indigenous unrest and rural protest due to a lack of food all seemed connected and were interpreted as signs of a possible revolution in the Indies.⁴⁶² In Batavia and the region around it, the number of armed robberies increased significantly in the years between 1915 and 1920, with the highest numbers of armed robberies in 1919 and 1920. European newspapers published sensationalist stories, and the media hype added to the fears of the European population for its safety and that of its property.⁴⁶³ In August 1919 the local government of Djokjakarta - part of the *Vorstenlanden* (princely holdings), an area that was especially troubled by unrest - requested the addition of three indigenous policemen because of rising crime rates in the area. A month later two newspaper articles explained that indigenous criminality in the region of Djokjakarta and Soerakarta (Solo) was increasing because of the desperate economic situation on the countryside.⁴⁶⁴ A third article listed the criminal statistics for the Klaten region (covering a large area around the cities Djokjakarta, Soerakarta and Klaten), which showed an increase in crime rates over the period 1917-1919. The newspaper did not quote its sources, but reported that the region had 141 registered cases of grand theft (*groote diefstal*) in 1917, 268 in 1918 and 285 until September 1919. For street robbery (*straatroof*) the numbers were increasing from 5, till 11, till 24 a year. House burnings (*huisbranden*) happened 49, 521 and 326 times, while there were 3 cases of cattle theft (*veediefstal*) in 1917, 31 in 1918 and 80 in 1919.⁴⁶⁵

The British colonial official and historian J.S. Furnivall observed in his essay *The fashioning of Leviathan. The beginnings of British rule in Burma* (1939, reprinted 1991), that the colonial state was plagued by a paradox. The more the colonial state tried to maintain

⁴⁶² Van Dijk, *The Netherlands Indies and The Great War*, especially chapter XXI. For the effects of this chaotic time on the re-organization of the police see Bloembergen, 2009, chapter three.

⁴⁶³ Van Till, *Batavia bij Nacht*, 63, 64. For a statistical overview of armed robberies see page 227.

⁴⁶⁴ 'Politie-vermeerdering', *Het Nieuws voor den Dag van Nederlansch-Indië*, 7-08-1919. 'De toenemende armoede', *Het Nieuws voor den Dag van Nederlansch-Indië*, 23-09-1919. 'Uit het Solosche', *Het Nieuws voor den Dag van Nederlansch-Indië*, 16-09-1919.

⁴⁶⁵ 'De toename der criminaliteit', *Het Nieuws voor den Dag van Nederlansch-Indië*, 17-09-1919.

order by increasing law and order and police activity to prevent and punish crime, the more crime there appeared. Under the rule of *Leviathan* – in this case referring to British colonial rule – ‘the ties of social life are loosened and men become, as it were, free among the dead, one thing is as reasonable as another; theft becomes as reasonable as honesty, provided it is not discovered. Leviathan may be omnipresent and all powerful, but he does not, like your neighbour, live next door, or, like your conscience, nearer still’. Furnivall believed that the often-abstract presence of colonial rule loosened the old personal and communal loyalties and moral that prevented most people from committing crimes.⁴⁶⁶ While Furnivall stresses that greater policing increased crime because it disrupted indigenous forms of social control and social ties, I would also point out that developments in the colonial state like new state reformatories create a certain ‘demand’ for (juvenile) criminals to fill these facilities with. Moreover, when the colonial state increased police surveillance, misbehaviour could possibly be detected and punished more often, even if, as Furnivall says, it also invited rising crime rates at the same time.

In the twentieth century the ambitions of the colonial state to control, civilize and uplift her subjects were on the rise. In the modern colonial period three reforms of the Indies police force (in 1897, 1912-1914, and 1918-1920) and improvements in policing methods (like the use of fingerprints) were expected to increase safety and internal control in the colony.⁴⁶⁷ The introduction of the unified Penal Code for the Netherlands Indies on the first of January 1918 and the opening of the first state reformatory in the same year also made it easier for judges to put juveniles in the hands of the government.⁴⁶⁸ Due to earlier problems with the re-education of children in private reformatories and with private persons, judges had often abstained from sentencing juveniles to re-education.⁴⁶⁹ After the opening of Semarang

⁴⁶⁶ J.S. Furnivall, *The fashioning of Leviathan. The beginnings of British rule in India* (Australian National University, Canberra 1991) 58. Originally published in *The Journal of the Burma Research Society* vol. 29, no. 1, April 1939, pp 3-137.

⁴⁶⁷ This was a general pattern of increasing state intervention in the 19th and 20th century. See John D. Rogers, *Crime, Justice and Society in Colonial Sri Lanka* (London, Curzon, 1987) 6. For a history of the Indies police force, its reforms and police methods see Bloembergen, 2009.

⁴⁶⁸ The Penal Code for the Indies that was introduced in January 1918 was derived from the Dutch Penal Code of 1881 (introduced in 1886). In the late 19th century a new penal code for the colony, which would be for all inhabitants, was developed under the influence of the ethical policy. This penal code was quite similar to the Dutch law, but with some significant differences in terms of punishments and specific laws that were aimed at keeping colonial order. For more details see Fasseur, *De weg naar het Paradijs*, 177-181.

⁴⁶⁹ See for these claims Boekhoudt's report, *Crimineele Statistiek van Nederlandsch-Indië over het jaar 1918*, p. III. *Procureur-Generaal Cordes to all the courts and judges in Netherlands Indies*, *Circulaire Departement van Justitie*, 15 April 1916, in Bt 24-8-1917, AS, ANRI.

in 1918 the colonial government actively encouraged judges to send young offenders to the new reformatory, and judges apparently felt more inclined to do so.⁴⁷⁰ Thus the increase in the number of juvenile re-education sentences might not necessarily have been caused by a real increase in crime, but also by greater policing, the opening of the new reformatory and laws that made it easier to sentence juveniles to re-education.

Seen in this light it was not surprising that more juveniles came in contact with the colonial justice system between 1918 and 1942; not only was colonial society becoming more urban and industrialized, with its well-known effects on traditional social structures, there was also much greater state presence and control. Because the administrative and statistical methods of the colonial state improved as well, more court cases ended up in the yearly judicial statistics. Thus the fear of contemporaries that (juvenile) crime was on the rise was supported by changes in the make-up of the colonial state, colonial policing and record keeping.⁴⁷¹ The idea that crime was becoming more prevalent thus legitimized the existence of the juvenile reform system and its subsequent expansion with a growing number of state reformatories. To illustrate that European fears about crime influenced the growth of the reform system in the period 1918-1920, we will look at how and why the colonial sugar and agricultural associations influenced the prosecution of juvenile offenders and played a crucial role in increasing the number of juveniles with a reform sentence; causing a serious problem for the colonial government.

Let us return to the case of Twan Po, who was sentenced to go to a reformatory in 1920 but instead was sitting in a prison in Soerabaja. Twan Po's mother did not just accept her son's fate. She was a seamstress and could not read or write – at least not in Dutch – but she asked her employer, the Dutch lady Ms. Jeanne Grippeling, to write a letter to the Governor General and ask for her son's release. Ms. Grippeling wrote that the boy had never done anything like stealing before, and she openly questioned the wisdom of the judge to send this generally well-behaved boy to a reformatory. She pleaded that mother Pat Sing was already struck with grief because of the sudden death of her eldest son two months earlier;

⁴⁷⁰ *Procureur-generaal Uhlenbeck van het Hooggerechtshof van NI aan de Hoofden van Gewestelijk en Plaatselijk Bestuur in NI, Weltevreden, 11 Augustus 1920*, in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

⁴⁷¹ The preface of the *Crimineele Statistiek van Nederlandsch-Indië over het jaar 1918* mentions that with the introduction of the new Penal Code on 1 January 1918 the statistics were changed to fit the new penal measures. The collection of the statistics was improved upon as well. Instead of the unreliable counting cards (*telkaarten*) the courts had been using so far, the new method of data collection was to send summaries of all the sentences from the Supreme Court, Councils of Justice, and Landraden to the department of justice. With this information the statistics were made after January 1920.

losing another child would be too much to bear.⁴⁷² The Justice Department and the Attorney General in Batavia asked local authorities for more information about the case. According to the local government of Soerabaja Twan Po had indeed not made any missteps before, but was rightly sent to a reformatory, since his widowed mother worked full days and could not keep an eye on him. Being a single mother was not judged upon very favourably at the time, in either the Indies or Western countries.⁴⁷³ Without further arguments the Dutch bureaucrat concluded that she lacked 'all the qualities' to raise a child. He believed that the mother actually agreed with this and would accept the sentence as long as her son stayed in Soerabaja so she could visit him.⁴⁷⁴

The officials in Batavia concluded that they did not need to reconsider the verdict and that Twan Po could be re-educated under the guidance of Pro Juventute in Soerabaja. They did believe, however, that he had to be removed from adult prison as soon as possible.⁴⁷⁵ This was easier said than done, since Twan Po was one of many juveniles who waited in the Soerabaja prison for transfer to a re-education facility. While this was considered more secure than placing them temporarily with private persons, several of the incarcerated youth had already escaped the prison regime.⁴⁷⁶ Pro Juventute Soerabaja felt slighted because the government had failed to support them financially when they wanted to change this situation and establish a temporary shelter for children who were sentenced to re-education but could not be placed yet. The board members of Pro Juventute published several negative stories about excesses in the prison of Soerabaja in their yearly report 1920, in the hope that the government would improve the situation and finance their shelter.

According to Pro Juventute thirty juveniles had escaped from the prison in one night, and they took the table silver from the recently arrived prison director - who had put his suitcases in a nearby room - with them. Another incident almost led to the death of one of the

⁴⁷² *Mevrouw J. Grippeling voor Njonja Ong Pat Sing, aan de GG te Batavia, Soerabaja, 24 Maart 1920*, in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

⁴⁷³ See, for example, the article about single mothers in connection to judgments about their ability to care for children in North America. by Linda Gordon, 'Single mothers and child neglect, 1880-1920', *American Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (Summer 1985) 173-192.

⁴⁷⁴ *Assistant-Resident van Soerabaja aan de Procureur-Generaal van het Hooggerechtshof in NI, Soerabaja, 17 April 1920*. In Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI. Also *afschrift telegram Procureur-Generaal*, in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

⁴⁷⁵ *Director Scheuer of the Justice department to AS/Governor General. Weltevreden, 3 Augustus 1920, No. G15/18/8*, in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

⁴⁷⁶ *Assistant-Resident van Soerabaja aan de Procureur-Generaal van het Hooggerechtshof in NI, Soerabaja, 17 April 1920*. In Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI. Also *afschrift telegram Procureur-Generaal*, in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

children because he tried to draw on the walls of his cell. This was strictly forbidden and would lead to punishment of everybody in the cell; his young cellmates beat him senseless to make him stop drawing. Another case of abuse involved an older boy who stabbed a younger one with a piece of iron, because the latter refused to give him part of his meat ration. According to the older boy it was the *adat* (customary law) of their culture that younger people gave part of their food to the older ones.⁴⁷⁷

The juvenile re-education system in the Indies was failing the children that it set out to reform. To turn them into exemplary subjects the colonial state felt they had to be properly re-educated, not turned into more hardened criminals by a stay in prison with adult criminals and lack of any useful activity. Obviously the predominant rhetoric at the time was that the re-education system was established because the state sought to protect children, something that many re-educators ardently and honestly believed. Government officials and private persons working in the field of re-education cringed at the thought of young children spending months in local prisons or police cells between adult criminals. But between 1919 and 1924 ten-year-old Twan Po was one of the hundreds of children who spent months to a year waiting in prisons and police cells before they were placed in a state or private reformatory. This situation went against all the intentions and rules of the colonial re-education policy and threatened to turn it into a failure that only brought more youth in touch with adult criminals and left them in unsafe environments without proper reforming activities.

This development could hardly be called surprising, since the establishment of the first re-education institute in Semarang was already fraught with logistic problems. While the various state departments discussed if they should give the reformatory to the Salvation Army or run it themselves, great numbers of delinquent youth with a re-education sentence were already sent back to their parents, or got stuck in police cells and prisons. In August 1914 the Justice Department reported to Governor General A.W.F. Idenburg that there were at least thirty youngsters who were waiting for placement, and they already warned that this would increase quickly once the new law would go into effect in 1918. Since the new penal code no longer required a judge to establish if a minor below sixteen years of age had acted

⁴⁷⁷ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1920*, pp 14, 26-28. PNRI.

with or without understanding of his or her actions to be able to sentence them to re-education, it became a lot easier to give juveniles a re-education punishment.⁴⁷⁸

The newly opened reformatory in Semarang quickly reached its maximum capacity of 100 pupils. In 1919 343 juveniles were sentenced to re-education, a sharp increase from the mere 73 verdicts in 1918. Only 124 of those 343 juveniles could be placed in the Semarang LOG and with various associations like Pro Juventute and the Witte Kruis Kolonie in Salatiga. Over a hundred pupils were temporarily placed in locations that the re-education law rejected as a proper environment for juveniles. In 1920 the situation was even worse; 290 youngsters received a re-education verdict and - together with the unexecuted sentences from 1919 - almost four hundred children were waiting for placement in a proper reformatory. They had to wait for months and even up to a year to be placed in a state or private reformatory. In a few years time hundreds of pupils were threatened with moral and physical 'corruption' due to their incarceration with 'hardened' criminals, or so contemporaries feared.⁴⁷⁹

The people in the Justice Department and the Supreme Court were acutely aware of the situation and tried to figure out what had gone wrong and how they could solve it. Scheuer, the director of the Justice Department, proposed in March 1920 that the problem would solve itself in a few years time through the growth of Pro Juventute's private reformatories and temporary shelters, and the opening of more state reformatories. Nevertheless, this did not offer an immediate solution for the children who were sentenced to re-education right now. Scheuer sought the problem and the solution in the functioning of the police and court system; he wrote the attorney general that in a country with millions of inhabitants the courts had to be extremely selective in their application of the 1918 re-education law. He questioned the verdicts of the judges; on the basis of the court documents he concluded that judges did not always restrict re-education sentences to juveniles who had an 'extremely corrupted character' or were living in 'an environment, which can be considered highly corrupting'.

Moreover, too many of the 343 convicted juveniles in 1919 - 64 of them - were only between 6 and 11 years old, and had displayed behaviour that could be considered mischief

⁴⁷⁸ *Nota Algemeene Secretarie, August 1917, p 14, in BT 5-10-1917, No. 3. AS, ANRI.*

⁴⁷⁹ *Directeur Scheuer van het departement van Justitie, afdeling Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen, aan de Procureur-Generaal bij het Hooggerechtshof van NI. Weltevreden, 29 Maart 1920, Ag 41814/21, AS, ANRI. Also Departement van Justitie aan de GG, Weltevreden, 14 Februari 1928, p 2. Ag 21714/1930. AS, ANRI.*

as much as it could be seen as criminality. Scheuer mentioned examples like the theft of a pineapple, stealing two katela knolls (yams), a chicken, a piece of sugar cane, an old shirt, and a simple cloth. He doubted if sentencing young children (under the age of twelve) to re-education for the next ten years – until they were twenty-one – was the proper measure for these kind of offences and asked the attorney general if he could ask his personnel to restrict the number of sentences by being more cautious in judging children between five and twelve years old.⁴⁸⁰

Attorney general G.W. Uhlenbeck was not happy with Scheuer's critique and proposal; he believed that the rapid establishment of more state and private re-education homes could solve the problem. The pupils who were waiting in the prisons should be placed with private organizations like Pro Juventute and the Salvation Army, and with private persons.⁴⁸¹ Uhlenbeck was apparently unaware, or ignored the fact, that local officials already tried this but that it failed miserably due to lack of space, money, and man-power.⁴⁸² Besides, there was already a request from the Justice Department for money to build two more state reformatories, but this was stuck in the slow machinations of the colonial bureaucracy. Scheuer and his colleague De Haas, former director of LOG Semarang and now the inspector of the re-education system for the Justice Department, eventually invited the attorney general for a talk to straighten things out and convince him of the need to temporarily slow down on re-education verdicts, especially for the very young.⁴⁸³

This meeting in the summer of 1920 proved fruitful; G.W. Uhlenbeck found out – so he claimed – what had caused the high number of re-education sentences meted out to small children in 1919 and was now willing to send a dispatch to the local governments and courts to instruct them about a more prudent use of the re-education law. According to Uhlenbeck the statistics over 1919 showed that the courts in the *residenties* (local government units) Djokjakarta, Soerakarta, and Kediri had given the highest number of re-education verdicts.

⁴⁸⁰ *Directeur Scheuer van het departement van Justitie, afdeling Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen, aan de Procureur-Generaal bij het Hooggerechtshof van NI, Weltevreden, 28 April 1920, Ag 41814/21, AS, ANRI.*

⁴⁸¹ *Procureur-Generaal Uhlenbeck bij het Hooggerechtshof van NI aan directeur Scheuer van het departement van Justitie, afdeling Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen. Weltevreden, 29 Maart 1920, Ag 41814/21, AS, ANRI.*

⁴⁸² See for example the account of the assistant resident of Soerabaja, in *Assistant-Resident van Soerabaja aan de Procureur-Generaal van het Hooggerechtshof in NI, Weltevreden. Soerabaja, 17 April 1920, In Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.*

⁴⁸³ *Scheuer and De Haas of the Justice Department to attorney general Uhlenbeck. Weltevreden, 28 Juni 1920. In Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.*

The 'unruly spirit of the population' in that area, and the conviction that 'many Native parents encouraged their children to steal sugarcane, cassava, etc.' had led the police and the courts to go after juvenile misbehaviour in a radical fashion. Uhlenbeck now believed that 'rest and order' had returned and was willing to discuss with the local governments to see if the prosecution of children could be limited.⁴⁸⁴

Marieke Bloembergen shows that there was an increase of cane burnings in the Netherlands Indies during the years 1918-1919 and that especially the plantations in Kediri suffered from a high rate of cassava- and sugarcane thefts and cane fires. The sugarcane plantations and factories contributed a significant amount of money to the expansion of the privately funded *cultuurpolitie* (lit. 'crops police') to protect their crops and profits against angry and hungry villagers.⁴⁸⁵ In this fearful climate, colonial policing and the criminalization of social protest like theft and the destruction of cash crops like cassava and sugarcane intensified.⁴⁸⁶ The great expansion of the police force, intensified prosecution, and a general climate of fear and repression also touched the lives of children in the countryside. They were seen as an extension of their parents' behaviour and intentions; actions that would normally be seen as mischief or a small misstep were now criminalized and judged accordingly.

The sugar industry played a significant role in the general criminalization and prosecution of cane fires and crop thefts, also when perpetrated by children. The sugar planters formed one of the most important cash crop industries in the Netherlands Indies; sugar was the biggest export product in both volume and value. Between 1900 and 1920 the total number of factories stayed around 180, but acreage grew from 91.049 hectare in 1900 to 153.366 in 1920.⁴⁸⁷ In 1894 the sugar enterprises united themselves in the largest lobby of the

⁴⁸⁴ Director Scheuer of the Justice department to AS/Governor General. *Weltevreden*, 3 Augustus 1920, No.G15/18/8, In Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

⁴⁸⁵ Bloembergen, *Uit zorg en angst*, 118-123. According to her note number 63, on page 128, the Handelsvereniging Amsterdam spent fl. 14.000,- per year to increase the number of police. In March 1919 several enterprises in Ngandjoek, Djati en Mjitran spent fl. 8944,- and in January 1919 companies in Lestarie (f. 5808,-), Baron (f. 4240,-), Koedjonmanis (f. 6810), Djoewono (f. 3238,-) en Tjeweng (f.668) also paid considerable amounts to expand the police force. NA, MvK, V 22-2-1919, 28 & V 27-5-1919, 67.

⁴⁸⁶ Bloembergen, *Uit zorg en angst*, 112-117. She concludes that the criminalization of the cane fires started in the late nineteenth century, and that active prosecution was very visible in 1908, 1911-1912, and 1918-1919. For cane burning as a form of social protest see Bob Elson, *Javanese peasants and the colonial Sugar Industry. Impact and Change in an East Java Residency 1830-1940* (Singapore, Oxford University Press, 1984).

⁴⁸⁷ Bloembergen, *Uit zorg en angst*, 111. She cites W.C. Dickhoff, "De Java-suikerindustrie gedurende het tijdvak 1894-1918," *Archief voor de Java Suikerindustrie in Nederlandsch-Indië* (1919),

Indies, the Algemeen Syndicaat van Suikerfabrikanten in Nederlandsch-Indië (usually called the Suikersyndicaat (sugar syndicate). The syndicate sought to protect the interest of its members and actively lobbied local and state governments to get help and reduce the number of cane fires. In April 1908 the daily board of the sugar syndicate requested that Governor General J.B. van Heutsz and the colonial state would take strict measures to make everybody in the colony aware that cane burning was a serious crime that had to end. An increase of police protection and more active prosecution of cane burners led to a general decrease in the number of cane fires and higher conviction rates between 1911 and 1917. The area of Kediri remained an exception; the number of fires stayed high, around 400 per year, and even increased to 510 fires in 1918.⁴⁸⁸

But besides a general intensification of policing and prosecution of crop theft and destruction in the Javanese countryside there were more specific reasons why the police and courts had caught and prosecuted so many young children. An August 1920 letter from attorney general Uhlenbeck to the local governments shows that he had actually played a role in this development himself, because he had informed the local governments in June 1919 that juveniles, who had committed minor crimes like small theft, could be sentenced to re-education, even if it was their first (known) criminal act. Uhlenbeck explained that he had sent this instruction to the heads of the local governments because there were so many complaints at the time about groups of children who went around stealing crops. According to rumours parents and families had instructed their children to do so because they believed that the children would not be (heavily) punished for these acts.⁴⁸⁹ This episode clearly shows that children were seen as an extension of their criminal or rebellious parents and were treated accordingly.

Uhlenbeck told the Governor General in April 1922 that the sugar producers had spread these stories in 1918 and 1919 through the newspapers, ‘which are under their influence’. He felt now that these accounts were highly exaggerated.⁴⁹⁰ After informing the courts that they could send children who were first-time offenders to the reformatory, he had

and Arjen Taselaar, *De Nederlandse koloniale lobby. Ondernemers en de Indische politiek 1914-1940* (Leiden, 1998). 38-41.

⁴⁸⁸ Bloembergen, *Uit zorg en angst*, 111, 117-119, also, table 31. on cane fires in Besoeki, 1897-1918, page 124.

⁴⁸⁹ *Procureur-generaal Uhlenbeck van het Hooggerechtshof van NI aan de Hoofden van Gewestelijk en Plaatselijk Bestuur in NI, Weltevreden, 11 Augustus 1920*, in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

⁴⁹⁰ *Procureur-generaal Uhlenbeck van het Hooggerechtshof van NI aan de Gouverneur-Generaal van NI, Weltevreden, 4 April 1922*, in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

asked the heads of the local governments in the Vorstenlanden and Kediri to inform him about the validity of the accusations. They had told him in 1920 that there was no such thing as organized thievery from child-gangs. On the contrary, they said that the complaints were overdrawn and did not give a realistic image of the current situation.⁴⁹¹ Margreet van Till shows in her monograph about robbery in Batavia and its region between 1869 and 1942 that the colonial press created a romanticised and overdrawn image of armed robbers in the Indies, based on European ideas about Italian bandits and the mob. Similar dynamics might have been at work when it came to crime on the countryside. The European population had a tendency to think that colonial crime was more organized and coordinated than it actually was.⁴⁹²

To redress his earlier instructions, the ensuing growth in the number of re-education sentences, and the high number of children waiting in prisons Uhlenbeck now declared that ‘it should be avoided that children who have stolen a few sticks of sugarcane are incarcerated for years in prisons among the trash of the population’.⁴⁹³ From this comment it is clear that the colonial government did not think it problematic to re-educate very young children, but only wanted to avoid sending them to prison to wait for their placement in a reformatory. As long as there were not enough state and private reformatories the courts were instructed to be very conservative when it came to sentencing children to re-education. If judges really felt that a child had to be re-educated and – for their own or the community’s safety – had to be placed temporarily in a prison or police cell, they had to inform the attorney general and the Justice Department right away.⁴⁹⁴

Uhlenbeck was not worried that a more conservative prosecution and punishment of children would lead to an increase in juvenile delinquency. According to him the safety in Kediri and the Vorstenlanden had returned since the increase in the number of agents of the *cultuurpolitie* and the newly installed *veldpolitie* (field police). Since his instructions to the local governments of August 1921 and a more prudent prosecution of children there had not

⁴⁹¹ *Procureur-generaal Uhlenbeck van het Hooggerechtshof van NI aan de Hoofden van Gewestelijk en Plaatselijk Bestuur in NI, Weltevreden, 11 Augustus 1920*, in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

⁴⁹² Van Till, *Batavia bij Nacht*, 18, 19, 167-172, 215, 216.

⁴⁹³ *Procureur-generaal Uhlenbeck van het Hooggerechtshof van NI aan de Gouverneur-Generaal van NI, Weltevreden, 4 April 1922* in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

⁴⁹⁴ *Procureur-generaal Uhlenbeck van het Hooggerechtshof van NI aan de Hoofden van Gewestelijk en Plaatselijk Bestuur in NI, Weltevreden, 11 Augustus 1920*, in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

been a notable change in the number of juvenile transgressions in the sugar areas and he did not expect that this would change.⁴⁹⁵

The associations of sugar producers and other producers of cash crops were a part of colonial civil society that remained invested in the strict prosecution of children and they tried to influence government policies. Governor General D. Fock received at least two letters from business associations in 1922; one from the sugar syndicate and the other from the Vorstenlandsche Landbouw Vereniging [Agricultural Association of the Princely Holdings]. The sugar syndicate was well informed about the changes the attorney general requested from local judges and, while they agreed that children should not sit around in prison and undergo ‘unhealthy’ influences, they objected to a relaxation of the prosecution of young sugar thieves. The sugar lobby still believed that juveniles were responsible for the majority of sugar thefts and they felt that the new instructions would basically encourage them to steal more. The chairman of the syndicate, D. Talma, reminded the Governor General that the sugar producers invested great sums of money in the *cultuurpolitie* and guards for the plantations and that they now felt their investments were undermined by the governments’ lenient re-education policy.⁴⁹⁶

Two months later the agricultural association of the Jogjakarta and Soerakarta residencies repeated similar arguments of money, investments, and government betrayal. According to this association, it was a bad idea to leave young offenders in their own environment because Javanese family life was ‘loose’ and lacked a ‘moral education, as is practiced in Western countries’. The association argued that juveniles were not disciplined and properly raised by their parents or the leaders of the *desa*, especially when these juveniles were part of ‘the criminal element’ of the community. The ‘good’ villagers supposedly tried to stay away as far as they could from the police or courts because of the ‘efforts and burdens’ these institutions imposed on them and would not take any responsibility for unruly youngsters. The letter of the agricultural association described with pathos how a lack of parental oversight and lax prosecution of juvenile offenders would drive youngsters in the arms of ‘bad’ villagers, who would use them for their illicit intentions and turn them into seasoned criminals. There was only one way the government could solve the problem, argued

⁴⁹⁵ *Procureur-generaal Uhlenbeck van het Hooggerechtshof van NI aan de Gouverneur-Generaal van NI, Weltevreden, 4 April 1922* in Ag 41814/1921, AS, ANRI.

⁴⁹⁶ *Talma, voorzitter van het Algemeen Syndicaat van Suikerfabrikanten in NI, aan de Goeverneur-Generaal, Soerabaja, 24 Maart 1922, in Ag 41814/1921. AS, ANRI.*

both the sugar industry and the agricultural lobby; the opening of enough re-education facilities and youth prisons.⁴⁹⁷ These business associations clearly saw juvenile re-education as a way to create peace and order in the colony and thus protect their own business interests. Governor General Fock was not impressed; he retorted that large-scale juvenile theft did not exist any more, and that it was doubtful that it ever had been a real problem. A limited prosecution of young children was the way to go, and the government was not planning to do otherwise unless great problems with juvenile sugar theft arose.⁴⁹⁸

The local governments and courts faithfully executed the new instructions from the attorney general and the Justice Department; in 1919 and 1920 the average number of re-education verdicts was 315 per year, between 1921 and 1925 the average number of convictions decreased to about hundred per year.⁴⁹⁹ The approximately 400 pupils who could not be placed in reformatories in 1919 and 1920 were slowly transferred to other institutions. Between 1918 and 1923 the Witte Kruis Kolonie took in 79 government pupils and Pro Juventute chapters in various cities housed 38 government pupils with families or in small shelters. The opening of the Pro Juventute agricultural colony in Klakah in 1922 created place for 117 pupils, and the opening of the temporary state reformatory in Malang placed another 87 youngsters in 1923. In the years 1921-1923 the state managed to place more pupils than were convicted each year so that the problem was slowly solved.⁵⁰⁰

In 1928 Schrieke, director of the Justice Department, predicted that the re-education system would overflow again with more cases than it could handle. At the time there were state reformatories in Semarang (1918), Malang (1923), Ngawi (1926), and Tangerang (1927). Many government pupils also found a place in the state sponsored Pro Juventute agricultural colony in Klakah (1922). But the number of yearly convictions was increasing again after 1925 and Schrieke predicted that it would go up to 360 re-education verdicts per year in 1928 and 1929. Because approximately 150 pupils were discharged from the reformatories every year, this prognosis meant that the total number of government pupils would grow with 285 children per year. Even with the imminent opening of two new

⁴⁹⁷ Voorzitter van de Vorstenlandsche Landbouw Vereniging aan de Goeverneur-Generaal, Djokjakarta, 7 Mei 1922, in Ag 41814/1921. AS, ANRI.

⁴⁹⁸ Brief Gouvernements-Secretaris aan het Syndicaat van Suikerfabrikanten, Buitenzorg, 9 mei 1922, in Ag 41814/1921. AS, ANRI.

⁴⁹⁹ Departement van Justitie, directeur Schrieke aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, Weltevreden, 17 Juli 1930, in Ag 21714/1930. AS, ANRI.

⁵⁰⁰ Refer to table 'heropvoedingcijfers', based on Koloniale Verslagen, Indische Verslag, Verslag Landsopvoedingsgestichten.

reformatories in Bandoeng and Djokjakarta there would not be enough space for all the convicted juveniles. These reformatories would have 250 places each, so there would still be 70 pupils who could not be placed, expected Schrieke. He referred to the problems of 1919 and the early twenties to support his argument that another reformatory should be built right away.⁵⁰¹

The Council of the Indies, however, sought the solution elsewhere; like in the early twenties they blamed the judges of being too 'generous' in meting out re-education verdicts for 'minor cases'. They also repeated the – by now familiar – mantra that private associations and persons should be involved more to relieve the financial burdens and general responsibilities of the state.⁵⁰² Schrieke eventually convinced the council and Governor General A.C.D. de Graeff that there was no way that they could expect more from the private sector, even though the indigenous community slowly became more involved too. He also argued that the judges only convicted the most serious cases to re-education; otherwise there would be 4000 convictions per year, instead of 350, he commented, still on the basis of Boekhoudts 1906 report.⁵⁰³ The Council of the Indies and the Governor General eventually conceded and agreed to request money for another reformatory, but the economic crises that hit the Indies hard in 1930 made this impossible.⁵⁰⁴

In July 1930, it became clear that the lack of money to establish more reformatories did not lead to the same unlawful situations as a decade earlier. Schrieke realised that the number of yearly verdicts was not increasing as much as he had feared in 1928; according to his information – which differs slightly from the information in the government's Koloniale Verslagen - there were 358 verdicts in 1926, 285 in 1927, 276 in 1928 and 270 in 1929. In the same period more pupils reached maturity and could be released; an average of 80 pupils per year now left the reformatory because they turned eighteen. Without a big investment the colonial state had rebuilt an old oil factory in Blitar and this location had space for a few

⁵⁰¹ Department van Justitie, directeur Schrieke aan de Gouverneur Genraal, Weltevreden, 14 Februari 1928, in Ag 21714/1930. AS, ANRI.

⁵⁰² Advies van de Raad van NI uitgebracht in de vergadering van 26 Maart 1928. Antwoord op Kommissoriaal van 3 Maart 1928, No. 323 geh. In Ag 21714/1930. AS, ANRI.

⁵⁰³ Department van Justitie, directeur Schrieke aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, Weltevreden, 5 November 1928, in Ag 21714/1930. AS, ANRI.

⁵⁰⁴ Department van Justitie, directeur Schrieke aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, Weltevreden, 7 Maart 1930, See also Advies van de Raad van NI uitgebracht in de vergadering van 11 April 1930. Antwoord op Kommissoriaal van 7 Maart 1930, No. 7327. In Ag 21714/1930. AS, ANRI.

hundred extra pupils since 1929. All in all there proved to be enough space to accommodate all the children with a re-education sentence.⁵⁰⁵

The government did not discuss the sudden increase of the number of yearly re-education sentences and there is no clear reason to explain why they were rising in 1925. The 1926 and 1927 increase might be related to an increase in European fears of the indigenous population that was caused by the Communist revolts in 1926.⁵⁰⁶ This led to the incarceration of a few thousand extra prisoners, a logistical challenge for the crowded prison system that was met by opening a few new prisons and re-opening some older, abandoned facilities.⁵⁰⁷ Increased fears and watchfulness of the European population, the police and the court system might have led to less leniency towards juveniles as well, although this is speculative. In the yearly reports of the state reformatories and the Pro Juventute reports about 1926 and 1927, there are no references to the communist revolts or any involvement of juveniles in this. Another explanation might be the opening of three more LOG's between 1923 and 1927, which might have encouraged judges to increase the number of re-education sentences.

The cause of the decline of yearly convictions after 1926 was discussed in government circles, and the Justice Department suggested to the Governor General De Graeff that the work of civil associations had a preventative effect. The Justice Department used Pro Juventute's agricultural colony in Klakah as an example, because PJ took vagabonding and homeless youngsters off the street to re-educate them there, without sending them to the courts first. The Justice Department believed this lowered the number of verdicts, because many of these youngsters would probably end up committing crimes and it was only a matter of time before the police would catch them. The government mentioned the growing deterring influence of indigenous organizations and orphanages like Muhammadijah as well.⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁵ Department van Justitie, directeur Schrieke aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, Weltevreden, 17 Juli 1930, in Ag 21714/1930. AS, ANRI.

⁵⁰⁶ For more on the Communist revolt, see for example, Michael C. Williams, *Sickle and Crescent. The Communist Revolt of 1926 in Banten* (Cornell Southeast Asia, Singapore 1983). Harry J. Benda, 'The Communist Rebellions of 1926-1927', Indonesia. *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (May, 1955), pp. 139-152.

⁵⁰⁷ *Verslag van het gevangeniswezen over het jaar 1927. Deel I: Verslag*. Samengesteld bij het hoofdkantoor van het Gevangeniswezen (Departement van Justitie) (Strafgevangenis Pekalongan 1929) pp 1-3. PNRI.

⁵⁰⁸ Department van Justitie, directeur Schrieke aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, Weltevreden, 17 Juli 1930, in Ag 21714/1930. AS, ANRI.

In 1931 the yearly government report (*Indisch Verslag*) also applauded the role of private associations. By now there were PJ associations in Medan, Padang, Batavia, Bandoeng, Jogjakarta, Semarang, Malang, and Soerabaja, which took care of 845 cases of child neglect, abuse, and delinquency in 1930. The government guessed that Pro Juventute's work kept around fifty percent of these cases out of the prisons and reformatories; without their work the yearly number of re-education sentences meted out by the judges would double. PJ and Moehammadijah were also recommended for the aftercare to discharged pupils from state or private institutions.⁵⁰⁹ Indigenous associations were generally considered to become more involved in child protection activities, and also in the aftercare of prisoners.⁵¹⁰ The government was extremely pleased with this; it was saving them time and money and the growth of indigenous civil society was seen as a sign of societal improvement and modernization. When indigenous organizations were involved in social and political life in a way that seemed to support colonial rule, colonial elites saw it as a validation of colonialism, the ethical policy, and its supposed beneficial influence on the indigenous population.

4.2. Critiquing the Law: Pro Juventute and the development of child laws in the Netherlands-Indies

While the colonial government was applauding the role of civil reform associations in the re-education system, those associations were not always as positive about the government and its laws. The opening of the first state reformatory in Semarang went hand in hand with the implementation of new penal measures for children in the Netherlands Indies. This was part of the unification of the colonial penal code in 1918, which merged the separate codes for European and indigenous inhabitants of the colony.⁵¹¹ The new penal codes for children made it easier for judges to assess each individual case and decide on a punishment or reform sentence without legal restrictions, because the idea of sound moral judgement [*oordeel des onderscheids*] was abolished as a defining measure for the judgement of juveniles. According to a colonial contemporary it was especially necessary to abolish this accountability criterion

⁵⁰⁹ *Indisch Verslag 1931, over 1930, deel I*, pp 362.

⁵¹⁰ *Indisch Verslag 1931, over 1930, deel I*, pp 363.

⁵¹¹ While this might seem a significant change, the original criminal codes were actually already quite similar. See Charles A. Coppel, 'The Indonesian Chinese: 'Foreign Orientals', Netherlands Subjects, and Indonesian Citizens', 136-137, in M. Barry Hooker, ed., *Law and the Chinese in Southeast Asia* (Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2002) 131-149.

in the colony – compared to the Netherlands, where it was also abolished in 1901 - because of the supposedly ‘precocious and inscrutable nature of Indische youngsters.’⁵¹²

For many members of Pro Juventute, some of who were working for the state as judges or re-educators, the changes in the juvenile penal codes was not sufficient and they openly criticized the colonial government for its lack of legal reform. The association and its publications soon became a forum for discussions about the penal laws and re-education measures. The organization probably created a space for criticism that government officials might not be able to express on professional basis, because they were working for the same government they were criticizing. W. S. de Haas, for example, worked for the colonial government in the Justice Department and was appointed as the first director of the state reformatory in Semarang. He was also a prominent and active member of Pro Juventute and in this capacity he criticized the 1918 penal law in a Pro Juventute publication. De Haas believed that the lawmakers had not made enough new provisions regarding juvenile delinquency.⁵¹³ The colonial juvenile penal law was a combination between the old Indies law and the Dutch Child law introduced in the Netherlands in 1901 (and effective in 1905), but the colonial laws were not as far-reaching as those in the metropole.

In the Netherlands the 1901 child laws were both penal and civil as part of a larger development in Western Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to focus increasingly on child protection and re-education instead of punishment.⁵¹⁴ At the time of their introduction pedagogical sciences were also introduced in the Dutch universities, marking a new approach towards juvenile behaviour.⁵¹⁵ In the Netherlands Indies these ideas were known as well, and they did influence juvenile care and reform policies, but - as the limited introduction of the child law shows - they were not implemented to the same extent as in Europe. This was due to a lack of political urgency and to the limited finances of the colonial government.

With the introduction of the child laws in the Netherlands, children under the age of sixteen could no longer be sent to prison. This was in contrast to the Indies, where the 1918

⁵¹² *Dwangopvoeding in Nederlandsch-Indie. Overgenomen uit het Srb. Handelsblad en geschreven door een onzer leden.* In ‘Onze Stem. Orgaan van het Indo Europees Verbond, 7^e jaargang no. 20. 31 oktober 1926’, p. 862-865. The writer of the article signed only with ‘B.’

⁵¹³ W. S. de Haas, ‘De Landsopvoedingsgestichten in Nederlandsch-Indië’, p. 38 in Nahuys and Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië*.

⁵¹⁴ Dekker, *Straffen, reddten, opvoeden*, 90-95.

⁵¹⁵ Leonards, *De ontdekking van het onschuldige criminele kind*, 270-271. Dekker, *Straffen, reddten, opvoeden*, 155-161.

penal measures still allowed judges to give prison sentences to juveniles under sixteen. Only in the Netherlands could judges take away parental rights if children committed a crime and were considered to be better off in a different environment. In the metropole judges were given more options for punishing and reforming juveniles under the age of eighteen because the *oordeel des onderscheids* (sound moral judgement) was abolished. It no longer mattered if a child was capable of sound moral judgement about their actions and crimes or not.⁵¹⁶ In the colony this was only applicable to children under the age of sixteen; reflecting the colonial mindset that indigenous and Indo-European children were mature at an earlier age than in Europe. The abolishment of the idea of sound moral judgement meant that judges could now look at each individual case and the background of the child to decide the proper measures. The child's behaviour before its arrest and its living environment could be taken into account. Was a young thief part of a hardworking and decent family, or did he or she live in a slum with a drunken father? Since alcohol abuse was often seen as a cause of poverty and criminality, also in children, this might be a reason to take away parental rights and sent the child to a reformatory. If a child came from a good family, or had behaved well, the same misstep might lead to a warning or a relatively light punishment. Another novelty about the Dutch penal child law was that children could be released from reformatories on probation and the establishment of reform schools for juveniles who served short sentences.⁵¹⁷

The Dutch civil child law made it possible that parents could be relieved from parental care before the child had even committed a crime, if the parents were unwilling or unable to raise the child or if children were threatened with perceived moral corruption or abuse.⁵¹⁸ Thus the child laws became a potent measure in the bourgeois civilizing mission that aimed to reduce the perceived danger of a growing working class. 'State and society have to do everything in their power to improve the moral, physical and mental state of the people and especially counter alcohol abuse', wrote a Dutch contemporary in the *Tijdschrift voor Armenzorg* (Magazine for Care of the Poor) about the fight against juvenile crime in 1901.⁵¹⁹

The changes in the colonial penal laws pertaining to juveniles under the age of sixteen were much more limited. First of all there were no real separate juvenile laws in the Indies,

⁵¹⁶ Dr. Jan-Paul Verkaik, *Voor de jeugd van tegenwoordig. Kinderbescherming en jeugdhulpverlening door Pro Juventute in Amsterdam 1896-1994* (Utrecht, Uitgeverij SWP, 1996) 28. Zie ook Dekker, *Straffen, Redden en Opvoeden*, 153

⁵¹⁷ Verkaik, *Voor de jeugd van tegenwoordig*, 22.

⁵¹⁸ Verkaik, *Voor de jeugd van tegenwoordig*, 28.

⁵¹⁹ Verkaik, *Voor de jeugd van tegenwoordig*, 22.

but just two articles in the 1918 penal law (articles 45 and 46), which contained the penal measures for juveniles. Article 45 stipulated that in the case of a juvenile offence the judge could choose to either return the offender to the parents, guardian or caregivers without punishment or, if the offence was more serious or if it was a second offence within two years, to put the offender at the disposal of the government [*ter beschikking van de Regering stellen*]. Article 46 specifically described the laws for forced re-education (*dwangopvoeding*) and stipulated that a juvenile who had been put under tutelage of the government would be raised in a state reformatory (*Landsopvoedingsgesticht*) or would be committed to the care of a specific tutor, association or private reform institution that would ensure the child's upbringing and rehabilitation till the age of twenty-one (this was lowered to eighteen on September 1, 1925). If government pupils were re-educated in a private house or reformatory the state would pay for this, and also oversee the re-education efforts.⁵²⁰

In contrast to the Dutch juvenile laws, youngsters in the Indies could still be sent to adult prison. Article 47 stipulated that if a judge sentenced a juvenile under sixteen or between sixteen and twenty-one years old to serve time in prison the maximum adult prison sentence set for that specific crime had to be lowered by two thirds. The death penalty was abolished for juveniles and life long prison sentences were reduced to fifteen years. Judges could sentence juveniles to pay a fine, do forced labour (but not in the chain-gangs), and a variety of other punishments used in the colonial penal system.⁵²¹ Young people between sixteen and twenty-one years old were considered too old to be sent to a reformatory, but they did receive a milder punishment than adults. In 1921 the first juvenile prison was established in the Indies for youth above sixteen years old, with a prison sentence of more than six months. Ideas of reform and re-education were also applied in this facility, probably with the state reformatory as an example.⁵²²

⁵²⁰ For a detailed description of article 46 and the specific re-education measures in the Indies see *Dwangopvoedingregeling*, NA, MvK, V. 2 juli 1918, 1. Also *Verslag omtrent het Landsopvoedingsgesticht te Semarang*, 1918, p. 77. Zie ook *Dwangopvoeding in Nederlandsch-Indië* in 'Onze Stem. 7^e jaargang no. 20. 31 oktober 1926', p. 862-865. De Haas, 'De Landsopvoedingsgestichten in Nederlandsch-Indië', p. 36-37. N.B. Heropvoeding lijkt misschien een 'mildere' straf dan dwangarbeid of gevangenisstraf, maar dit kan in twijfel getrokken worden. Een heropvoedingstraf kon een kind tot zijn of haar eenentwintigste in een gesticht houden, voor jonge kinderen betekende dit soms dat ze ruim tien jaar in een gesticht verbleven, terwijl een andere straf misschien met een paar maanden of jaren achter de rug was. Hier wil ik in het volgende hoofdstuk op terugkomen.

⁵²¹ De Haas, 'De Landsopvoedingsgestichten in Nederlandsch-Indië', p. 36-37.

⁵²² Curiously juvenile prisons opened in the Netherlands before the establishment of reformatories. In the Indies it was just the other way around. See Leonards, *De ontdekking van het onschuldige criminele*

Considering the glaring differences between the Dutch child laws of 1901 and those of the Indies in 1918, it was no wonder that people who were working in the field of juvenile care and reform were not particularly happy. De Haas felt that the laws were too restrictive and he argued that it would have been possible to introduce a specific juvenile penal code dealing with the situation of neglected children and the prevention of delinquency, even when lawmakers claimed that it was too difficult to foresee the consequences and effects this would have on Indies' society.⁵²³ From earlier discussions about the terms of re-education in the Indies we know that the colonial state was unwilling to run the risk that it would have to take care of thousands of neglected or poor Indo-European and indigenous children. It was again a question of money and priorities. Poor children did not threaten society, criminal children supposedly did. Thus the child laws in the Indies were designed to exclude a large group of children, instead of including as many endangered juveniles as possible.⁵²⁴

Mr. H. J. Boswijk – who was a judge and the first chairman of Pro Juventute in Medan, Sumatra, in 1918 – criticized the juvenile laws for different reasons than De Haas. Boswijk wanted Pro Juventute to work closely together with the courts in the Medan area, to guarantee that the judges had good background information about the juveniles they tried and could thus decide on a sentence that would befit the child and its deeds. His experiences as a judge and a Pro Juventute member made him critical of the administration of criminal justice concerning juveniles. 'All the formalities we have in our criminal prosecution still exist and because they hinder the quick trial that is desired for children, the procedures should be simplified,' Boswijk believed. From a pedagogical viewpoint Boswijk deemed it unfavourable that the child first had to be questioned by the public prosecutor, then by the examining judge and finally by the court. 'It is important that one person will take care of the case and that his tactful behaviour will cause the child and its caretakers to start seeing this person no longer as a strict judge, but as a man who just decides what arrangement is best for the child.'⁵²⁵

kind, for a discussion of the establishment of juvenile prisons in the Netherlands in the mid-nineteenth century.

⁵²³ De Haas did well in his career, after a year at the state reformatory he became the director of the Discipline, Upbringing and Poverty section (TOA, *Tucht-, Opvoedings- en Armwezen*) of the Justice department. W. S. de Haas, 'De Landsopvoedingsgestichten in Nederlandsch-Indië', p. 38 in Nahuys and Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië*.

⁵²⁴ This is discussed in chapter two, section 2.1.

⁵²⁵ *Oprichtingsvoordracht van Mr. H. J. Boswijk* in 'Verslag der Werkzaamheden van de Vereeniging 'Pro Juventute' te Medan over het jaar 1918' (Varekamp & Co. Medan; 1919), p. 24-25. KIT, microfilm collection, MM14T-100230.

Boswijk also felt that children could only be kept in custody in exceptional cases, and should never be kept in custody in a prison. The juvenile offender should also get legal aid from the beginning of its confrontation with the law, criminal trials should be held behind closed doors, and parents, guardians and caretakers should be heard as well. He also argued that the judge should have the jurisdiction to discharge the offender from prosecution, even if an offence was proven. 'We have all these improvements in the Netherlands and they still experience that mistakes are made. This was uttered during a meeting of the Dutch association of lawyers on June 29 and 30 of 1917, during which it was declared desirable and necessary to install judges in juvenile courts.' Boswijk expected that juvenile courts would be established in the Netherlands and he hoped that the Netherlands Indies would soon follow this example. He would have to wait till May 1931 before the government decided to install a committee that would research how simplifications and revisions of laws regarding juveniles could be applied in the Indies.⁵²⁶ But nothing ever came of these changes, so it seems.

In 1921 a fellow Pro Juventute member of Boswijk in Medan, Mr. A.L.A. van Unen, criticized the unification of the penal code as well. Van Unen, who had a judicial degree too, felt that the code was introduced too quickly in the Netherlands Indies, solely 'to keep up the glory of appearance of making a stride towards a unified law for all population groups of the Netherlands Indies.' He claimed that this had been done without decent research and without making the necessary adjustments to laws for juvenile offenders. He criticized the government for not having established the Dutch rules for legal proceedings for juveniles; juvenile delinquents in the Indies still had to stand a public trial. Moreover, with the current laws a European juvenile offender had the right to free support by a lawyer while an indigenous juvenile offender did not have this right.⁵²⁷

For the people who worked with neglected or misbehaving children on a daily basis, the absence of civil child laws was a recurring complaint. Most of the (Indo-)European children in the private reformatories had been sent there without a court sentence and were institutionalized through mediation of Pro Juventute, family members or the church. Parents who might initially agree to send their children to an orphanage or reformatory could decide

⁵²⁶ *Oprichtingsvoordracht van Mr. H. J. Boswijk* in 'Verslag der Werkzaamheden van de Vereeniging 'Pro Juventute' te Medan over het jaar 1918' (Varekamp & Co. Medan; 1919), p. 24-25. KIT, microfilm collection, MM14T-100230. W. S. de Haas, *De Landsopvoedingsgestichten in Nederlandsch-Indië*, p. 38 in Nahuys and Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië*.

⁵²⁷ *Voordracht van Mr. A. L. A. Van Unen* in 'Verslag der Werkzaamheden van de Vereeniging 'Pro Juventute' te Medan over het jaar 1921' (Varekamp & Co. Medan; 1922), p. 33-34.

to take back their children at any moment, even if they were considered to be neglecting or abusive. This was incredibly frustrating for the personnel of the reformatories who generally felt that their efforts and the child's progress were undermined by the child's return to its family.⁵²⁸

Pa and Moe Van Emmerik had the same complaints about the fate of some of the non-orphaned indigenous children on the Witte Kruis Kolonie. In 1920 they wrote in their monthly magazine that some of the children would be better off as orphans because it would make it easier to keep them safe in the colony. The Van Emmeriks gave several examples of children who first came to the colony with their parents or were sent there by family, but who were taken back home later by their family members. Pa and Moe claimed that these parents and family members were often known thieves and ex-convicts, or abused their children. Some of the children returned to the colony after time with their families and were suffering from all kinds of diseases and handicaps due to abuse and neglect. Others had started to steal themselves and kept out of the hands of the police by returning to Witte Kruis. Pa and Moe regretted the absence of civil child laws that could take away guardianship from parents who were criminally active, or abused and neglected their children.⁵²⁹

Complaints and pressure from Pro Juventute members and other re-educators apparently had effect, in 1927, almost ten years after the 1918 penal provisions, a civil child law was introduced in the Indies as well.⁵³⁰ To bring the laws into practice Guardianship Boards (*Voogdijraden*) were established in Batavia, Semarang, Soerabaja, Padang, Medan and Makassar. When possible a Pro Juventute member served on these boards to increase cooperation and communication about cases of parental abuse and neglect.⁵³¹ The private reformatories and Pro Juventute associations that took in these children could now get guardianship over them, so that parents could not remove them from the institutions when they felt like it.⁵³² Between 1928 and 1931 the judge took away guardianship from parents in 150 cases; according to a report that was presented on the conference for youth care in Soerabaja in December 1931. The mentioned reasons for removal of guardianship were

⁵²⁸ See for example the letters of the reformatory 'Bethanie' in Soekaboemi (13-01-1917) and the Roman Catholic Orphanage in Semarang (date unknown) to the Governor General in NA. Min. v. Kol. Inv.nr 990.

⁵²⁹ 'Kort overzicht', *Witte Kruis Blad*, 1919, no. 7, 9-11.

⁵³⁰ See Staatsblad NI, 1927 no 31, in Archief Ministerie van Koloniën, 2.10.01, NA.

⁵³¹ *Indisch Verslag 1931, over het jaar 1930*, 390. *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1927*, 37-38. KIT. microfilm MM 14T-100233.

⁵³² *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1928*, 2. KIT. microfilm MM 14T-100233.

poverty, neglect, abuse, lack of development of indigenous mothers and a lack of authority or criminal behaviour of parents.⁵³³

For the years 1930 – 1938 the colonial reports (*Indisch Verslagen*) mention the number of children that fell under the civil child laws and were released from their parents' authority each year. One of the examples given by Pro Juventute Soerabaja in 1928 was a fourteen year old girl who had been in the girls' home of the association for two years when the father came to get her back. The association could not do anything to prevent her from going home and was worried about the fate of their protégé. Pro Juventute's social worker kept checking up on the girl and soon concluded that he was leading an immoral lifestyle and drank too much. He ended up with his daughter in a dilapidated building with a group of other 'lowlifes', who warned the social worker that the father allowed his daughter to receive male visitors until late into the night. Pro Juventute warned the Guardianship Board and the district attorney, who sent the child back to Pro Juventute and took away parental authority and guardianship from the father. As we can see from the table below, this would never become a large group, but among re-educators and Pro Juventute workers the civil child laws were considered a great victory and a great help in the re-education children who had 'bad parents'.⁵³⁴

The only serious weakness of the civil child laws in the Indies was that they were only applied to the European population of the colony. In 1935 the board of Pro Juventute Soerabaja complained that it was regrettable that they could not protect indigenous children from their parents. Children who were exploited as beggars were admitted in Pro Juventute homes when the parents were in jail. But when the parents were released they had every right to take their children with them and this pained the association, who felt the children were better off in one of their homes.⁵³⁵

⁵³³ Notulen van het Congres voor Maatschappelijke Kinderzorg te Soerabaja, 14-14 December 1931, p. IV, in Ag 23621/1932, AS, ANRI.

⁵³⁴ Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1928, 2, 14. KIT. microfilm MM 14T-100233.

⁵³⁵ Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1925, 5. KIT. microfilm MM 14T-100233.

Children removed from parental care under civil law, 1918-1938

Overview of the available data about the number of children who were removed from parental care under civil law (after 1927) and under criminal law (TBG). Civil law only pertained to European children, criminal law (TBG) included children from all ethnicities (see the graph on page 163).

	Civil law	TBG
1918		73
1919		343
1920		290
1921		115
1922		104
1923		112
1924		140
1925		204
1926		358
1927	?	285
1928	?	276
1929	?	254
1930	13	307
1931	40	116
1932	27	89
1933	27	161
1934	10	140
1935	9	219
1936	11	201
1937	19	330
1938	25	365
1939		
1940		
1941		
1942		
TOTAL	181	4482

(Sources: *Verslag Landsopvoedingsgestichten 1918-1929*, *Koloniale Verslag/Indisch Verslag 1890-1940*, *Crimineele Statistiek, 1918-1933*)

TBG = children put at disposal of the government [ter beschikking gesteld]
Empty cells = data unknown or unavailable

4.3. 1930-1942: economic crisis and the increasing importance of civil associations

As an exporter of raw materials the worldwide economic depression of the late 1920s and 1930s hit the Indies hard and the government felt forced to cut its budget. Already in 1931 there was a shortage of 102 Million guilders on a total budget of 482 Million. Not only new projects – like the building of the new reformatory in Jogjakarta – were cancelled, but the salaries of state officials were also frozen or cut.⁵³⁶ The effects of income cuts and job loss on all levels of colonial society were soon visible. In 1932 a young and well-educated indigenous woman, who worked as a teacher in Tegal, observed that many of the common labourers on the coffee, tea, and sugar plantations and in the factories lost their jobs. ‘Especially before and during *lebaran* [the celebration at the end of the fasting month of Ramadan] the number of beggars overwhelmed us and everywhere schools and offices are closed and teachers and employees are fired... as a result, many people leave town to look for work elsewhere. Numerous houses are empty and no longer rented: what a disaster for the owners!’⁵³⁷ Both the effects of the depression on the Indies’ population and the government’s response to it greatly influenced the state reform system, and increased the importance of Pro Juventute. Both state and private reform initiatives suffered from the economic downturn.

Pro Juventute Soerabaja stated in 1931 that the depression and economic problems within families increased the neglect - and criminality - of children in the city and caused more work for the association.⁵³⁸ At the same time the amount of private financial gifts for Pro Juventute decreased. In this sense the organization was hit doubly hard. In 1928 PJ Soerabaja processed 2118 administrative pieces, in 1929 the number was 1801 and in 1930 this exploded to a record number of 3008 pieces. The increased correspondence was mostly caused by an increase in the number of cases and the number of children who were housed in the temporary shelter of the association, and partly due to more precise record keeping. At the same time memberships went down after 1930, and while the association received 7438.53 guilders in private gifts in 1929, in 1930 it was just 3929.96 guilders.⁵³⁹

⁵³⁶ Van den Doel, *De Stille Macht*, 410-412.

⁵³⁷ *Letter from Soeparni to Ms. Hoorn, March 14, 1932*, NA, Collection 424, Van Deventer en Van Deventer-Maas, No. 16. As quoted by Gouda, *Dutch culture overseas*, 104

⁵³⁸ Other researchers have concluded that blaming the parents and the family situation was often used to absolve delinquent minors for what was essentially their own rational response to economic cues. Blaming the family deflected possible cries for a harsher punishment of juveniles. See for example Sarah Fishman, *The Battle for Children. World War II, Youth Crime, and Juvenile Justice in Twentieth-Century France* (Cambridge; Harvard University Press, 2002) 52-60, 145.

⁵³⁹ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1930*, p. 3. *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1929*, p. 1, 9, 12.

Pro Juventute Malang also noted a huge increase in the number of cases as a result of the depression. In the years between 1920 and 1929 PJ Malang was a small association that dealt with a total of just 54 juvenile cases; in 1930 there were 171 cases and in 1931 182. According to the association the plight of the European community was ‘more visible’ and the majority of the cases in 1930 concerned (Indo-)European children (104 cases). Family members, neighbours, teachers, and other concerned citizens reported cases of neglected, abused, or criminal children more often than in the indigenous community. Pro Juventute blamed this on the ‘minimal interest of the Native intellectuals, who are apparently too busy with political humdrum to really work for the mental and material uplift of their compatriots’.⁵⁴⁰ Without the help of indigenous liaisons Pro Juventute was apparently unable – or unwilling – to ‘rescue’ children in the indigenous community. Of the 49 indigenous cases that the association in Malang dealt with in 1930 the great majority were ex-pupils from the state reformatory in Malang who could not find work or afford a place to live. They were already ‘visible’ for both the government and Pro Juventute workers, unlike children who might be in dire circumstances as well but had not been in touch with the police yet.

During the economic crisis the colonial government sought new ways to keep sponsoring private childcare institutions and associations while cutting the state budget at the same time. The solution was found in allowing private institutions a larger share in the national lotteries, in the same amounts that they would have received directly from the state before the depression hit.⁵⁴¹ As far as state subsidies went, juvenile associations were not disadvantaged, because they were considered to keep work out of the hands of the government. Since the colonial state was cutting the budget of its penal and re-education system they needed the help of civil society organizations more than ever. In 1931 there was for the first time a balance between the number of youth that was sentenced to re-education and the number that was released, so that the average number of youth in the system remained stable. In 1932 this number lowered drastically, however, so that the number of juveniles in the system amounted to 1023 in late 1932, while there were 1363 juveniles in late 1931. This strong reduction was due to the economic crisis; the state closed the

⁵⁴⁰ Mr. G.N.Bouma, ‘Kort overzicht van den ‘Pro Juventute’ Arbeid te Malang’, in Nahuys and Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië*, pp. 23-24.

⁵⁴¹ *Indisch Verslag 1933, over 1932, deel I*, p 344.

reformatories in Semarang and Ngawi. Closing the oldest and smallest institution in Semarang saved the government 54.000 guilders a year.⁵⁴²

To avoid overpopulation due to transferring all the pupils living in the Semarang and Ngawi reformatories to the remaining four reformatories for boys, the pupils in Semarang and Ngawi who would turn eighteen that year were released, and a second group of well-behaved older pupils was released on parole. Release on parole had been used more and more for the more mature pupils since 1930. It was a way to reward those who were doing well, and to let them get used to life outside the reformatory under the supervision of Pro Juventute or a probation association.⁵⁴³ Government pupils who were living, eating and working outside of the reformatories were obviously less expensive for the state as well. The aftercare for these pupils was difficult, like all probation efforts, because the associations and people involved in aftercare were most active in the cities. Once pupils on parole moved to the countryside it was difficult to keep track of them. The same was true for the pupils who received a regular discharge.⁵⁴⁴ The sudden release of 340 pupils in 1932 must have made the aftercare of this group even more challenging than it already was. In comparison; in 1930 just 114 government pupils were released, in 1933 a total of 154.⁵⁴⁵

In 1931 the educational program that trained new prison employees was closed and the school opportunities for regular inmates were cut from the budget as well. The prison system gave priority to re-educating juvenile offenders between 16 and 18 years old; in the youth prisons the education program remained intact, 'because of the great influence of schooling on these youth'.⁵⁴⁶ At the time there were three youth prisons in Tanah-Tinggi, Ambarawa and Pamekasan for juvenile delinquents under 19 years old who had to serve a prison sentence of six months or more. In the prisons of Meester-Cornelis (Tjipinang), Malang, and Madioen were separate sections for youngsters who had to serve a sentence of three to six months. The Huis van Bewaring in Batavia also had a separate youth section with a recreation and sports room for young offenders. According to the director of penal facilities in the Indies, P.J.F. Ophof, the results of these youth prisons were excellent, and with

⁵⁴² *Indisch Verslag 1933, over 1932, deel I*, p 309. For the financial considerations see *Departement van Justitie aan Gouverneur-Generaal, Batavia, 5 Maart 1931* in Tzgag 34319/31 in AS, ANRI.

⁵⁴³ See for examples case reports no. 1, 3, 13, 15, 23, 54 about helping/overseeing discharged government pupils *Verslag Pro Juventute Batavia over 1930*, p 13-36, PNRI.

⁵⁴⁴ *Indisch Verslag 1933, over 1932, deel I*, p 309. And *Indisch Verslag 1932, over 1931, deel I*, p 280.

⁵⁴⁵ *Indisch Verslag 1933, over 1932, deel I*, p 309. *Indisch Verslag 1932, over 1931, deel I*, p 280. *Indisch Verslag 1931, over 1930, deel I*, p 305.

⁵⁴⁶ *Indisch Verslag 1932, over 1931, deel I*, p 277.

reported recidivism rates of just about 17 percent Ophof believed they managed to ‘give the many hopeless, who used to persevere in evilness, back to society as decent humans beings’.⁵⁴⁷

Juveniles who were released from the prisons were aided and supervised for a period of two years, similar to the government pupils who were released from the state reformatories. The aftercare for both juveniles and adults attempted to prevent a fall back into a vagabonding or criminal life style and tried to support them to find a place in society. Private associations like Pro Juventute and ‘Reclasseeringsvereniging West-Java’ (RVWJ, Probation association West Java) were very important for juvenile rehabilitation efforts; the latter took over a Pro Juventute building in Batavia in 1929 and turned it into a temporary home for ex-convicts. They especially took care of everybody who was released from the Tanah-Tinggi (Tangerang) youth prison facility near Batavia, while Pro Juventute focused on the aftercare of ex-government pupils. In 1930 RVWJ started an agricultural colony in Karet, where the temporary home was transferred to as well. Here the pupils could immediately be put to work but with less supervision than in prison, so they could get used to working for them selves instead of being forced to work.⁵⁴⁸ The crisis affected the aftercare for all ex-convicts, since funds for this work were redirected towards supporting people who had lost their job due to the depression. At the same time there was less work for everybody and unemployment was rising, something that was also felt by ex-government pupils. The director of Klakah agricultural colony complained that it was extremely difficult in 1931 to find jobs for ex-pupils, especially because they could not just place ex-pupils anywhere. Most of them wanted to live close to their families after years of separation.⁵⁴⁹

At the White Cross Colony Moe van Emmerik noticed that in the 1930s more and more ex-government pupils, but also free pupils and other former inhabitants, turned to the colony when they could no longer survive due to lack of work and jobs. ‘Some young men who used to live in the colony as boys have returned from the outer regions where they went as contract labourers’, wrote Moe. ‘They are firm young lads but have nothing and nobody in

⁵⁴⁷ *Indisch Verslag 1931, over 1930, deel I*, p 360. See also P.J.F.Ophof, ‘Jeugdgevangenissen en Jeugdafdeelingen’, pp. 29-35 in Nahuys and Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk in Nederlandsch-Indië*. Quote Ophof, p 33.

⁵⁴⁸ *Indisch Verslag 1931, over 1930, deel I*, pp 359-360.

⁵⁴⁹ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1931*, pp. 55-56. See also *Indisch Verslag 1933, over 1932, deel I*, p 309. *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1932*, p. 5.

this world and they struggle to find work during these difficult times'.⁵⁵⁰ Other impoverished Indonesians also found their way to the colony; which experienced a tremendous population growth. As always most newcomers were very poor or vagabonds.⁵⁵¹ At the end of 1932 there were 903 inhabitants, of which 16 were government pupils. In December 1940 the population had grown to 1333 people in Salib Poetih and 727 in the sister colony in Kaleksanan, totalling 2060 people. The Van Emmeriks founded the new settlement in February 1937 because there was just not enough place, land and food on Salib Poetih to sustain the large population.⁵⁵²

Luckily there was enough running water on Salib Poetih after July 1930, which came through pipes from a water reservoir the government had built uphill. Before that time residents had had to carry most of the water for animals and people from a source down to the colony, even though there had been a primitive pipe system since 1923.⁵⁵³ The economic crises not only brought more ex-pupils and newcomers to the colony, but the income of the colony was also reduced because outsiders bought less of the goods they produced – like soap, lace, cloth, towels, sisal mats – and because the prices were very low. Pro Juventute also lowered the amount of money they paid for the re-education of pupils they sent to institutions like White Cross, and the government sent fewer government pupils, while more and more of the colony's pupils were released each year because they reached their legal age. This also meant a loss of income.⁵⁵⁴

In 1934 Moe despaired, complaining that the prices were so low that they hardly earned anything with their labour and that they did not have enough agricultural land anymore to give everybody work and grow enough food for the large population (1134 people in 1934).⁵⁵⁵ Moe wrote that newcomers were 'completely exhausted by lack of food, dead-tired from vagabonding, their bodies greatly neglected [...]. Some children looked like skeletons.' It reminded her of the desperate situation of the Javanese people in the early twentieth century, when she and her husband started Salib Poetih.⁵⁵⁶ Some ex-inhabitants of the colony, who had a job outside, sent a little money to help them out. This greatly touched

⁵⁵⁰ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Februari 1932, p. 3.

⁵⁵¹ *Witte Kruis* Jaarverslag 1932, p. 1-2.

⁵⁵² *Witte Kruis* Jaarverslag 1932 en *Witte Kruis* Jaarverslag 1940.

⁵⁵³ *Witte Kruis* Jaarverslag over 1923, p. 24.

⁵⁵⁴ *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1930, p. 2.

⁵⁵⁵ *Witte Kruis* Jaarverslag 1934, p. 1-3.

⁵⁵⁶ *Witte Kruis* Jaarverslag 1934, p. 4.

the Van Emmeriks, although it did not relieve any of the colony's problems.⁵⁵⁷ A few years later, in 1937, Moe was outraged that some white people claimed that indigenous people were not really suffering from the depression. She felt they would soon change their mind after a visit to the colony. 'But', she declared, 'I fear these people keep their heads stuck in the sand, they do not want to contribute anything to relieve the suffering of the people in whose country they live, and from whose country they benefit so much.'⁵⁵⁸

Civil associations and private reformatories were suffering from a lack of income, but at the same time their importance for the people they served and for the colonial government increased. The function and activities of Pro Juventute in Soerabaja, for example, broadened during the early crisis years. More and more people found the way to the association's headquarters where Mrs. W.F. Misset-Stein, the full-time employee who did most of the organization's daily work (including neighbourhood and house visits, background research, court sessions, administration, etc.), held office. Many guardians and parents requested help with the upbringing of their children. But the association did not always applaud this. 'Often a regretful attitude was noted to hand over the upbringing of these children to third parties or reformatories, usually just to relieve the financial worries of the family', noted the chairman in 1931.⁵⁵⁹ In 1932 the association reported that she had to watch out that families did not try to use her services for 'poverty relief' instead of child protection.⁵⁶⁰

Pro Juventute's work kept growing; according to her own reports the number of registered thefts was rising and an increasing number of juvenile vagabonds and thieves was sent to the temporary home of the Pro Juventute associations in 1932.⁵⁶¹ By sending most of these children to Pro Juventute instead of bringing them to court the local police helped to keep the number of government pupils relatively stable. Pro Juventute often managed to place indigenous vagabonds in agricultural colonies, while Indo-European children were sent to the reform institutions in Soekaboemi (SOG). PJ also tried to return vagabonding children to their families or relatives, where they remained under supervision of Pro Juventute. The number of kampong and house visits in Soerabaja increased; the association noted that especially European families needed more help and supervision.⁵⁶² All in all the organization

⁵⁵⁷ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Mei 1935, p. 3.

⁵⁵⁸ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juli 1937, p. 3.

⁵⁵⁹ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1931*, p. 3.

⁵⁶⁰ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1932*, p. 4.

⁵⁶¹ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1932*, p. 4.

⁵⁶² *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1933*, p. 20.

did significant preventative work. The government guessed that Pro Juventute's work kept around fifty percent of her juvenile cases out of the prisons and reformatories.⁵⁶³

PJ's cooperation with other organizations and government services intensified too, a development that had started in the early years of the organization to make sure that juveniles in trouble received the punishment or warning that fitted their case and family background. Since the civil child laws of 1927, which implemented civil procedures to relieve parents of guardianship for the benefit/protection of children, the Voogdijraden (Guardianship boards) were an important ally for Pro Juventute in the prevention of juvenile crime and in cases of child protection. Other crucial contacts were the local police officers; various courts and judges; civil servants of the Binnenlands Bestuur (Home Affairs); other Pro Juventute organizations; and child care institutions like the White Cross Colony, Oranje Nassau and the SOG.⁵⁶⁴

Pro Juventute did not only note the influence of the depression and financial problems on the behaviour of parents and families, who were more eager to send their children to an institution to relieve financial stress, but also saw that children behaved differently. 'Society is not just touched financially by the economic crisis, another, perhaps more serious, consequence of the depression is the visible weakening of social ties, [...] a dissolution of morality, in which the youth is involved as well', reported PJ Soerabaja in 1933. According to her yearly report the Indies youth no longer believed in a bright future and was feeling hopeless because they could not find work after they finished their school. Juveniles no longer had proper adult examples because their parents were unemployed. 'It is no wonder that depravity and moral degradation start to spread', concluded Pro Juventute.⁵⁶⁵

The association concluded that after a few crisis years many girls no longer believed in the possibility of a marriage and worked as prostitutes, which was illegal but widespread in Soerabaja, to earn some money.⁵⁶⁶ Vagabonding boys supposedly became involved in prostitution by picking up men and bringing them to the houses of prostitutes for a small fee.⁵⁶⁷ The associations' concerns about especially Indo-European and European female

⁵⁶³ Indisch Verslag 1931, over 1930, deel I, p. 362.

⁵⁶⁴ Notes about the cooperation with other organizations and the colonial state can be found in every yearly report of the Pro Juventute associations. For example, *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1931*, pp. 3-7. *Jaarverslag 1932*, pp. 3-7.

⁵⁶⁵ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1933*, p. 4.

⁵⁶⁶ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1934*, p. 4.

⁵⁶⁷ For a detailed description of cases like this see *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1933*, pp. 24-25.

prostitutes were part of a larger and much older colonial fear. White or light-skinned women who worked as prostitutes visibly tarnished European elite status, thus challenging the fundamentals of European rule in the Indies. When the police caught juveniles who were prostituting or pimping Pro Juventute placed them in different private institutions or the Klakah agricultural colony, either as free or government pupils. PJ believed that the agricultural colony in particular was able to redeem vagabonding and corrupted boys by teaching them everything an indigenous *tani* needed. The statistics of the organization showed that the majority of the discharged pupils lived a decent and common life.⁵⁶⁸

Pro Juventute generally despaired about moral decline during the depression, but failed to note that the responses of youngsters to economic problems like unemployment (of parents and of themselves) and possibly food shortages and hunger was a natural human reaction, similar to adult behaviour. Self-preservation through ‘creative’ use of talents and resources (including theft, lying, black market trading, prostitution, etc.) are a logical consequence of societal problems caused by economic depression and war. Sarah Fishman shows in *The Battle for Children. World War II, youth crime, and juvenile justice in Twentieth-century France* (2002) that in France the number of juveniles charged with theft rose in similar patterns as adults charged with theft in times of war and economic crises.⁵⁶⁹

Vagabonding indigenous children had been common before the depression, but Pro Juventute Soerabaja noted that their number rose sharply in the early nineteen thirties. The harbour of Soerabaja and the plantations of East Java were hard hit by the depression. The director of the agricultural colony noted that incoming pupils suffered from malnutrition and disease more often than before. Many vagabonding children - who were stealing to survive - were sentenced to re-education as government pupils and sent to the state reformatory or the PJ agricultural colony.⁵⁷⁰ Other vagabonds were sent to Klakah as free pupils. In 1934 there were 202 boys in the colony, of which 87 were indigenous ‘free pupils’ and 6 were (Indo-) European ‘free pupils’. 65 Of the 202 boys were there for vagrancy, 67 for small theft (often committed by vagrants as well), 4 pupils had killed somebody accidentally and 1 was

⁵⁶⁸ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1934*, p. 4-5. See also the yearly descriptions of discharged pupils in the yearly reports of the Klakah colony, which can be found in the yearly reports of Pro Juventute Soerabaja between 1923 and 1940.

⁵⁶⁹ Sarah Fishman, *The Battle for Children. World War II, Youth Crime, and Juvenile Justice in Twentieth-Century France* (Cambridge; Harvard University Press, 2002). See the tables on page 84-85 and the descriptions on 48-60 for the responses of children to hunger, war, etc.

⁵⁷⁰ See for several examples the case descriptions nos. 12, 44, 62-64, 81, 92, 100, 102, 111 in *Verslag der werkzaamheden van de vereniging ‘Pro Juventute’ te Medan over het jaar 1940*, pp. 19-57. PNRI, Jakarta. Also *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1934*, p. 4-5.

sentenced for murder. The rest of the pupils had committed various small transgressions and eleven of the free pupils were sent there as a disciplinary measure for 'unruly behaviour'.⁵⁷¹

That vagabonding children sometimes preferred institutionalization to a vagrant lifestyle and felt they could benefit from the reform system becomes clear from a case near Medan, Sumatra. Two vagabonding 12-year-old indigenous boys, surviving through stealing and working odd jobs, came up with a solution for their situation themselves. When the police apprehended them they requested if they could be sent to a state reformatory on Java, because they had heard one could learn a trade there. The judge agreed to do so and they were sent to LOG Tangerang.⁵⁷² Many children, however, tried to avoid institutionalization at all costs and escaped from a variety of temporary homes, parental homes, and prison or re-education facilities.⁵⁷³

The economic crises caused some small changes in the ethnic make-up of the population of PJ's agricultural colony. Usually only indigenous boys and Indo-European lads who were not acknowledged by their European father (and thus had indigenous legal status) were sent to Klakah, but in the mid-thirties the Indo-European institutions like Oranje Nassau and the Soekaboemi Institutes were so full that Pro Juventute Soerabaja could no longer send all the Indo-European boys there. The director's comments on this situation reveal some of the racial and social attitudes of the time. C.J. de Vulder van Noorden commented in 1934 that the six (Indo-)European boys received a good education on the colony but did not really belong there because they were living in an indigenous 'milieu'. De Vulder complained that they did not speak Dutch outside of their school hours and preferred to speak Javanese and Malay with the other boys. They also befriended Javanese boys instead of sticking to their European 'compatriots'. De Vulder wrote that he warned the European boys that this was wrong, but it proved fruitless; in the great majority of indigenous pupils the Indo-Europeans simply preferred to fit in with the rest and 'go native'. He suggested that these boys should be separated completely from the indigenous pupils, but this was impossible so far due to lack of funds.⁵⁷⁴

⁵⁷¹ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1934*, p. 44.

⁵⁷² Case report no. 111 in *Verslag der werkzaamheden van de vereniging 'Pro Juventute' te Medan over het jaar 1940*, p. 55. PNRI, Jakarta.

⁵⁷³ All *Pro Juventute* reports mention cases of boys (and sometimes girls) who were vagabonds and kept running away from every place they were committed to. See for example *Pro Juventute Batavia 1930* case numbers 71, 80, 84, 95, PNRI.

⁵⁷⁴ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1934*, pp. 43-44.

The colonial government obviously appreciated and needed the work of the Pro Juventute associations to keep the re-education system going during the 1930s. This became very clear in 1934 when the Justice Department felt forced to close another reformatory to comply with the government's budget cutting. Shutting down a fourth LOG, however, would cause great problems in the re-education system; even with the courts' prudent use of re-education sentences there would soon be more pupils than reformatory beds. The Justice Department came up with the plan to give the large boys and girls' reformatory in Tangerang, near Batavia, to the League of Pro Juventute Associations. In this way the reformatory would continue to exist but would no longer cut into the treasury.⁵⁷⁵

The League of Pro Juventute Associations had been established in October 1932 to be able to represent and support all Pro Juventute associations in the Indies and focused especially on rehabilitation work with ex-delinquents – which was a colony-wide enterprise – and any other cases that were hard to deal with for the local associations.⁵⁷⁶ While the league was more than willing to take over the Tangerang LOG, it did not have an independent financial basis and its members were not able to raise much money either; they had a hard time already keeping their own associations, temporary homes, and the Klakah colony afloat. The solution to the problem was found by allotting the Pro Juventute Tangerang facility shares in the national lotteries to sponsor the free pupils and the material costs of the institution. The treasury would still pay the standard subsidy for government pupils. Thus the Justice Department saved an additional 50.000 guilders a year and the Pro Juventute League became an important player in the field of re-education.⁵⁷⁷

Despite an increase in societal problems and vagabonding, neglected, hungry and criminally behaving children, the number of yearly re-education sentences that the courts meted out remained quite low in the 1930s. Between 1931 and 1936 around a hundred to two hundred pupils per year were put under government care (and thus re-educated on state money), another ten to twenty children a year received government support because their parents were disqualified as guardians by civil procedure. After 1936, however, the number

⁵⁷⁵ *Directeur van Justitie Schrieke aan de Gouverneur-Generaal*, Batavia-centrum, 3 Maart 1934, in BT 17-3-1934 no. 19, AS, ANRI.

⁵⁷⁶ *Overzicht van Tehuizen van Jeugdzorg in NI*, p. 25.

⁵⁷⁷ *Verbond der Vereenigingen Pro Juventute aan de Directeur van Justitie*, Batavia-Centrum, 26 Februari 1934. Also *Directeur van Justitie Schrieke aan de Gouverneur-Generaal*, Batavia-centrum, 3 Maart 1934, in BT 17-3-1934 no. 19, AS, ANRI.

of convictions started to rise sharply, to 330 convictions in 1937 and 365 in 1938.⁵⁷⁸ Was there a sudden breakdown in societal norms, or could Pro Juventute associations no longer handle the number of cases they were dealing with? No clear explanation emerges from the extant sources. The Justice Department had no means to handle this increase, however, and the ensuing measures are reminiscent of the letters that were sent to the court in the 1920s. While the colonial reform system had expanded significantly and civil society organizations had carried a larger share of the responsibilities since 1918, some problems apparently remained the same; lack of reformatory beds was a recurring problem.

In November 1940 the Supreme Court of the colony informed all courts and judges that there were too many juvenile delinquents who were sentenced to re-education who could not be placed in the reformatories. Since there was no money available in the near future to establish more reformatories the Supreme Court once again asked its judges to restrict the number of re-education sentences. Only children with a ‘spoiled character’ or living in ‘a criminal milieu’ should be sent to the reformatory; others should be sent home with a warning, placed under supervision of European and indigenous civil associations, or given a small fine or short prison punishment. Since many prisons now had departments for youth and kept them separated from adults, a prison sentence should now be considered an appropriate measure. The Court asked its employees to send in a copy of the files of each re-education sentence they meted out, so the Supreme Court could check if the sentence was correct.⁵⁷⁹ Whether this instruction helped at all to lower the number of reform sentences is unknown. Due to the German occupation of the Netherlands in May 1940, and the Japanese invasion of the Indies in 1942, there are no records and statistics about juvenile re-education available for the period 1939-1942.

⁵⁷⁸ See the table and graph on page 153.

⁵⁷⁹ *Supreme Court of the NI to all judges and courts*, Batavia, 6 November 1940, Ag 26135/1940, AS, ANRI.

Part II. Fragments of everyday life: the complexities of childcare and re-education practices in the Netherlands Indies, 1900-1942

After laying out the development of colonial civil society in the Indies, and the changing involvement of the colonial state in juvenile care, part two of this dissertation delves into the daily reality of the colonial reform system. Through a creative reading of court documents, memoirs, and annual reports of reformatories and civil associations, the experiences of the children and adults whose lives were touched or altered by the re-education system are partly uncovered.

Henri Lefebvre put forward ideas about social control that influenced historians after him towards a methodology called ‘the history of everyday life.’ Lefebvre argued in 1947 that social control was not defined by what was said by elites, but by what was practiced on a daily basis. The banal elements of every day life were seen as a site where one could recover the voice of the downtrodden and disenfranchised, but also find a critical ground of social revolutions. Lefebvre put this idea forward in a dense Marxist approach and while the emphasis on revolution has disappeared, his ideas have inspired a continuing debate about the relevance of everyday life to political and societal structures.⁵⁸⁰

Social and cultural historians have shown a growing interest in looking at the larger themes of social analysis through the lens of daily experience. Among German historians, Alf Lüdtke, Hans Medick, and Lutz Niethammer have pioneered the approach now known as *Alltagsgeschichte*. In this view everyday life is not socially transformative but can still be subversive, a notion that has been used by scholars studying resistance and revolutionary movements.⁵⁸¹

Frederick Cooper has recently argued that the study of resistance itself long eclipsed the study of what was being resisted, a balance that can be restored by focusing ‘on the

⁵⁸⁰ Henri Lefebvre, *The Critique of Everyday Life* (Volume 1, John Moore trans., London, Verso, 1991. Originally published 1947).

⁵⁸¹ I am grateful to David Dennis, friend and colleague during my two years as a PhD student at the Ohio State University, for showing me the relevance of *Alltagsgeschichte* for my research. For a comprehensive description of the methods and practice of the history of everyday life see Alf Lüdtke ed., *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995). Among historians studying African American resistance to white dominance, Robin Kelley has used the history of everyday life to show political resistance on a micro level in ‘We Are Not What We Seem: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South,’ *Journal of American History* 80 (June 1993), 75-112.

complexity and mutual constitution of both phenomena.’⁵⁸² To uncover ‘what was being resisted’, chapters five and six focus on the workings of the colonial court system and the aims and goals of the colonial state and re-educators for the re-education of juveniles. In combination with chapter seven these chapters also show how penal and re-education measures were resisted or appropriated by juveniles and their parents. To do so I apply the theory of everyday life to the state and philanthropic reformatories. This approach focuses - in Lüdtke’s words - on ‘the multifaceted ways in which individuals and groups make know (or conceal), implement (or block) their considerations of cost and utility [...] The thrust here is to demonstrate how social impositions or stimuli are perceived and processed [...] The focus is on the forms in which people have ‘appropriated’ – while simultaneously transforming – ‘their’ world.’⁵⁸³

In this way we can acquire insight in the dynamics and impact of power relations from the position of marginalized or underrepresented people, something especially relevant to colonial history. However, my dissertation also probes the dynamics of power relations between the colonial government and colonial civil society. The aim of part two of this dissertation is to show the complexity and multifaceted nature of the colonial re-education system and colonial civil society, and to assess what this can tell us about the nature of the late colonial state.

⁵⁸² Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) 50.

⁵⁸³ Alf Lüdtke, introduction to *The History of Everyday Life*, 6-7.

Chapter V. The road to the reformatory: (mis-)communication in the colonial courts between judges, juveniles, and parents

At ten o'clock in the morning, on April 24, 1926, twelve-year old Peri entered the courtroom of Pematang Siantar, East Sumatra. He was accompanied by an indigenous policeman who told him to sit down on the floor, in front of the table of Landrechter J. de Kruyff. For Sumatran Peri it was a strange experience to suddenly sit in front of a Dutch judge and indigenous council members. He had come to the city alone, for a pleasant excursion and with permission of his dad, and now he was sitting in court, charged with theft, while his father had no idea.⁵⁸⁴ Just behind him on the floor sat Siau Kim Tong, the 37-year old Chinese shopkeeper who acted as the witness in his case.

The court was a place where different actors in colonial society came together and the setting in which judges had to decide if a juvenile defendant was innocent, would receive a simple punishment, or had to be re-educated. Sources show that this process was often complicated and fraught with difficulties. This chapter looks at the court system and its judges - as representatives of the colonial state - and analyzes how the police, court officials, children, and parents communicated with each other and why mistakes were made. Court records, clemency requests from parents, and other judicial documents are used to offer a rare view of the way the juvenile reform system worked on a micro-level. The stories and behaviour of juvenile offenders in the courts rooms of the Netherlands Indies and the requests and protests of their parents give a voice to usually 'invisible'⁵⁸⁵ members of indigenous society and the way they interacted with representatives of the colonial government. This might give us an idea of the practical administration of justice in the colony and how social relations and cultural differences in colonial society affected it.

In the first part of the chapter we will take a close look at the general weaknesses of the colonial court system and the ways in which this influenced the communication between judges and juvenile suspects. The behaviour and working tactics of the defendant, witnesses, police functionaries, *djaksa*⁵⁸⁶ and judges can only be understood in this context (5.1). The second section focuses on the mistakes judges made in juvenile cases, the way they tried to

⁵⁸⁴ *Clemency request of Jason Loembantobing from Taroetoeng to the Governor General, Pematang Siantar, 1 mei 1926. AS, ANRI., Ag 29870–1926.*

⁵⁸⁵ 'Invisible' because their activities and opinions are usually difficult to research because of a lack of sources and records dealing with 'subaltern' groups.

⁵⁸⁶ The *djaksa* was the indigenous public prosecutor

correct this, and the response of the Supreme Court and colonial government. It unravels the wrongs in juvenile sentences and the far-reaching consequences of faulty verdicts (5.2). In the third part we will see how parents protested the re-education of their children and tried to convince the authorities to give them back their offspring. It looks at how the colonial authorities responded to the parental protest letters and clemency requests to get more insight in the attitude of court officials and civil servants, and find out how the late colonial state dealt with problems in its penal system (5.3).

Juvenile court cases can give us insight in the pressures and challenges judges faced, and show the limits of a formalistic way of thinking on the side of the colonial government. In this section we will discuss how judges discovered and treated their own mistakes, and look at the responses of other civil servants, the Supreme Court and the colonial government. It becomes clear that the limits of both ethical and formalistic thinking hindered the colonial government to respond adequately to the practical problems of colonial rule.

5.1. ‘The lack of mental contact between judge and judiciable’: the causes of miscommunication between judges and children

When judge De Kruyff started questioning Peri – which probably happened by means of a translator – the boy admitted right away that he had made a transgression. He could not really do much else, since he was caught in the act two days earlier, when he had stolen a jacket from the shop window of Siau Kim Tong. Siau had stepped outside for a cup of coffee and when he returned to the shop he had seen a boy walk away with one of his jackets. He had caught the culprit himself and brought him to the police. During the court session Peri told the judge that he had stolen the jacket because he ran out of money and hoped to sell the jacket and get some cash.⁵⁸⁷

It was not difficult for De Kruyff to decide that Peri was guilty of minor theft; the boy had confessed and his story matched that of the witness. De Kruyff could choose between different penalties for youngsters under the age of sixteen, like a fine or a prison sentence, but he also had the possibility to send the boy back to his parents or put him under care of the government for a re-education term. This last option was supposed to be only used if the juvenile had an undeniably criminal and corrupted character or if the juvenile was growing up in a criminal and corrupted environment. De Kruyff chose to send Peri to a reformatory,

⁵⁸⁷ *Summons recorded by the Adjunct Djaksa of the Landraad Pematang Siantar, no. 98, 24 April 1926. AS, ANRI. Ag 29870–1926.*

so he must have believed that either the boy or his living environment qualified as ‘corrupted’ or ‘criminal’.⁵⁸⁸

From the remaining records it does not appear what De Kruijff exactly believed or knew, but chances are that Peri became a government pupil because his parents were not present during his trial. Maybe Peri had stated he did not have any, or the judge believed that they were not doing a good job raising the boy. Because all of the five state reformatories in the Indies were established on Java, the judge placed Peri under the care of Pro Juventute Medan.⁵⁸⁹ This association was an active partner of the colonial state in the fight against juvenile delinquency since 1918 and it would make sure that Peri would be placed in a private family or a private reformatory. The full-time Pro Juventute civil servant – a social worker *avant la lettre* – would keep an eye on the re-education of the boy and regularly report to the Justice Department.⁵⁹⁰ The cooperation between the colonial state and a civil association like Pro Juventute prevented the boy from being sent all the way to Java, far away from his familiar surroundings.

While the case of Peri seemed simple enough, the ways of the colonial courts and the establishment of a proper sentence were inherently problematic because of the social relations in colonial society.⁵⁹¹ The majority of the colonial courts were presided over by Europeans but they mostly judged indigenous suspects, even in the 1930s when indigenous judges became more prevalent. This was also true for juvenile delinquents, the majority of which

⁵⁸⁸ Letter from Landrechter J. De Kruijff to the Governor General, Pematang Siantar, 5 May 1926. AS, ANRI. Ag 29870–1926.

⁵⁸⁹ Clemency request of Jason Loembantobing from Taroetoeng to the Governor General, Pematang Siantar, 1 mei 1926. AS, ANRI. Ag 29870–1926.

⁵⁹⁰ See for an example *Verslag Pro Juventute Medan, January-June 1920*, NA, MvK, Verbalen, inv. no. 2222. For similar reports from Semarang, Soerabaja, Batavia, V. inv. no. 2361, V. inv. no. 2588.

⁵⁹¹ For a short and clear overview of the Indies justice system see Albert Dekker en Hanneke van Katwijk, *Recht en Rechtspraak in Nederlands-Indië* (Leiden, KITLV uitgeverij, 1993). In this dissertation ‘colonial courts’ is used as a general term for the different courts of justice that juvenile delinquents were confronted with. The great majority of juvenile suspects appeared in front of the so-called *Landraad*. This was the daily court for the non-European population. These councils were established in the capital of each residency, a total of about 75 courts. The *Landraad* was presided over by a so-called judicial official [rechtskundig ambtenaar] and had three or four ‘respectable indigenous chiefs’ as council members. The *Raad van Justitie* (council of justice) was the daily judge for Europeans, established in six big cities; Batavia, Semarang, and Soerabaja on Java; Padang and Medan on Sumatra; and Makassar on Celebes. This council could also re-assess the verdicts of the *landraden* and revise them if necessary. For simple penal cases committed by Europeans the Council of Justice had the *politierechter* (police judge). (Dekker en Van Katwijk, *Recht en Rechtspraak*, 23-28.) There was also a system of ‘lower’ courts in less populated areas, which were chaired by local government officials and indigenous heads. There were also ‘traditional indigenous courts’, the adat courts, which did not administer justice in the name of the Dutch queen but in name of local traditions and authorities. Juvenile delinquents, however, were usually brought before the regular colonial courts.

where indigenous. At the first meeting between a judge and an indigenous suspect the gap between their worlds became apparent right away. The white judge was sitting sternly behind his table, dressed in a formal black gown with a white band.⁵⁹² Next to him sat the ‘respectable indigenous chiefs’, who served as council members, and the clerk of the court. The juvenile suspect, in contrast, entered bowing - *djongkokkend* – and was usually dressed in rags, underfed and diseased.⁵⁹³ Suspects, witnesses and other parties had to sit down on the floor in front of the judges’ table, so they had to look up to the judge and council. Most of the suspects did not know the role of the people behind the table, apart from maybe the judge, who was easier to recognize. They were also unfamiliar with the content of the law and the ways in which the courts functioned.⁵⁹⁴ Obviously children found themselves in an unequal situation *vis a vis* the judge because of their age difference as well. All in all an intimidating situation that could hinder the judicial process.

For most juvenile suspects their appearance in the formalised world of the court was a surreal experience. Some of them were not just daunted by court proceedings but had also been intimidated during the police interrogation. Noer bin Kontong from Meester Cornelis, on the outskirts of Batavia, had admitted the theft of a chicken in front of the *landrechter* ‘in fear of the first *Wijkmeester* of Lenteng Agoeng, who had forced him to confess with threats and beatings.’⁵⁹⁵ Noer and his grandparents, Hadji Moekminin en his wife Meniah, worked as farmers in kampong Lenteng Agoeng. One day in June 1930 Noer was accused of stealing chickens, together with three other boys, and brought in front of the judge. The verdict was that Noer and another boy were re-educated as government pupils, while the two others were handed a short prison sentence.⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁹² About the clothing of judges, see A.W.H. Massier, *Van ‘Recht’ naar ‘Hukum’*. *Indonesische juristen en hun taal, 1915-2000* (Proefschrift Universiteit Leiden, 2003) 96, footnote 181.

⁵⁹³ This is a description of how juveniles arrived at the reformatory once they had been sentenced by the judge, so they probably looked the same during their trial. Taken from *Verslag omtrent het beheer en den toestand van de Landsopvoedingsgestichten te Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, en Tangerang. Gedurende de dienstjaren 1926 en 1927. Samengesteld bij de afdeling Tucht-, Opvoedings- en Armwezen (Departement van Justitie)* (1928, Strafgevangenis te Pekalongan) 3.

⁵⁹⁴ Massier, *Van ‘Recht’ naar ‘Hukum’*, 89.

⁵⁹⁵ *Letter from Noer bin Kontong, Hadji Moekminin and Meniah to the Governor General, Meester Cornelis*, 20 juni 1930. AS, ANRI. Bt 14 augustus 1930.

⁵⁹⁶ Noer’s case came before the Landrechter of Meester Cornelis on 17 June 1930. His fellows Oesin bin Tinggal was also sentenced to re-education, Saimi received two months in prison and Nasir two weeks in prison. *Letter from Noer bin Kontong, Hadji Moekminin and Meniah to the Governor General, Meester Cornelis*, 20 juni 1930. AS, ANRI. Bt 14 augustus 1930.

The judge might have thought that Noer did not have any parents or caretakers, something that was often seen as a good reason to send juveniles to the reformatory.⁵⁹⁷ The idea was that children without caretakers stood more risk of becoming ‘hardened criminals’ because they would end up on the street again after a short prison sentence and resort to crime to survive. Judges did not just look at the nature of the crime but also looked at age and family circumstances to decide a proper verdict.⁵⁹⁸ Even so, it was very difficult for judges to get a good idea of the background of the suspect. Pro Juventute associations aimed to do background research into each case of juvenile crime and inform the judges, but they were often unable to find proper information about (especially) indigenous suspects.⁵⁹⁹ This is why children who did not really belong in the reformatory – even in the eyes of the judges - ended up there nevertheless.

The absence of parents and caretakers was a common problem; it was not written in the law or court procedures that parents or caretakers had to be informed when their children were brought to trial. In 1931 a member of the Volksraad, mister Soangkoepon, even asked the government if it was possible to include such a measure in the penal law.⁶⁰⁰ But according to attorney general R. Verheyen this was unnecessary; that parents had to be informed was ‘implicitly clear’ from the various instructions regarding juvenile delinquents his office had been sending to courts in the Indies over the years. To be on the safe side, however, he sent out another instruction to remind judges of the guidelines for prosecuting juvenile suspects.⁶⁰¹ It remained a difficult issue however, because parents were often hard to locate. Sometimes they could not attend due to their work or the distance from their home, or because children told the police and judge that they had no family.

⁵⁹⁷ In the case of Idik, who came before the Landrechter of Bandoeng on 26 May 1925, the judge argued that he gave him a re-education sentence because he had not parents or caretakers and was too young to be in prison. *The Landrechter of Bandoeng to the Governor General*, Bandoeng, 25 Maart 1926. AS, ANRI. Ag 13706-26.

⁵⁹⁸ The *Landrechter* in Malang, Mr. C.T. Bertling, described that he tried to discern if a child stood under proper guidance from parents or caretakers, and if the transgression of the child came from a ‘truly criminal psyche’ or was situational behavior. See ‘Pro Juventute en rechter’, p. 52, in Nahuys and Hoekstra, eds. *Vijftien Jaar Pro-Juventute Werk*.

⁵⁹⁹ See the many yearly reports and detailed case studies of the Pro Juventute Associations in the Indies for the background stories of juvenile suspects and neglected children. For examples of the reports written by Pro Juventute workers to send to the Justice Department, see, NA, MvK, V. inv.no. 2588 and inv.no. 2361.

⁶⁰⁰ *Chairman of the Volksraad J.W.Meijer Ranneft to the Governor General*, Batavia, 3 september 1931, Volksraad no. 2450. AS, ANRI. Bgs 16-02-1932 245/a.

⁶⁰¹ *Attorney General to the Governor General*, Batavia-Centrum, 21 januari 1932, no. 307. AS, ANRI. Bgs 16-02-1932 245/a, AS, ANRI.

Noer's parents were indeed divorced and did not look after the boy. But the judge was unaware that his grandparents had cared for him since he was a little boy and were still doing so. Hadji Moekminin and Meniah were not present during the court case, most likely because Noer had not admitted their existence and they were not informed of his arrest and trial. But after Noer was prosecuted and came back home to tell about his imminent departure for the reformatory, his caretakers took action right away. The three of them went to the notary's office of Dirk de Hondt in Batavia to draw up a statement protesting Noer's reform sentence. They signed with three thumbprints, one each, since they could not write. The letter also stated that Noer was innocent of the chicken theft and had just confessed out of fear for threats and beatings.⁶⁰² Fear of authority figures and the police is also mentioned in other cases, like the one of nine-year old Idik who declared in front of judge Mr. A.W. ten Bosch in Bandoeng that he had only confessed to have stolen a wallet out of fear for a beating by the police.⁶⁰³ If Noer and Idik were really beaten is impossible to gauge, but their accusation of police violence was at least slightly believable, otherwise they would not have used it to plea themselves free. Intimidation and manipulation of suspects and witnesses were part and parcel of the colonial police and justice system. Apparently the judge was not impressed by stories about forced confessions or protests of their caretakers that they would do a better job raising the children; both Noer and Idik were sent to the reformatory without further ado, regardless of the requests of their family members to have their sentences revoked.⁶⁰⁴

Employees of the courts also used threats and pressure to influence witnesses and suspects. The *djaksa* – indigenous prosecutor – had a bad reputation among most judges because he was known to unduly influence the judicial procedure. Massier gives a detailed analysis of the *djaksa* position in the colonial court system. Because of his local background and language knowledge he was usually able to communicate more directly with the suspects and witnesses than the judge. He often had a different idea about right and wrong too, some

⁶⁰² Letter from Noer bin Kontong, Hadji Moekminin and Meniah to the Governor General, Meester Cornelis, 20 juni 1930. AS, ANRI. Bt 14 augustus 1930.

⁶⁰³ Copy of the record of penal cases of the *Landgerecht te Bandoeng*, 26/5/25. AS, ANRI. Ag 13706-26. The policeman involved (Salim, 29 years old, agent second class at the general police in Tjimahi) denied he had slapped Idik and said he did not even threaten him. Salim also stated he had taken the wallet out of Idik's pants himself. Idik kept claiming the opposite.

⁶⁰⁴ A certain Iswat wrote a clemency request, stating he was Idik's father. He asked to raise the boy himself. The judge was not sure he was really the father and even if he was the father, the judge argued, he had not done a good job raising the boy. He felt that the boy needed 'strict discipline' to learn better behaviour and that this was better done in the reformatory. In *The Landrechter of Bandoeng to the Governor General*, Bandoeng, 25 Maart 1926. AS, ANRI. Ag 13706-26.

djaksa were mired in local intrigues and power games and used trick questions and suggestions during the cross-examination. Massier describes a case in which the *djaksa* managed to convince both the suspect and the witnesses to confess a murder that had never happened. After the verdict the victim, supposedly dead, suddenly walked into the courtroom, which made it abundantly clear that the whole case was built on lies.⁶⁰⁵ The judge had apparently failed to notice any of this.

While judges did not trust the *djaksa*, they did not shy away from using their own ways to intimidate in the courtroom. W. Boekhoudt, former president of the *landraad* and former council member of the Supreme Court, wrote that he immediately looked the suspect sternly in the eye when this person was entering the courtroom and kept doing this while the defendant sat down. This was meant to show ‘overconfident suspects’ that they should not underestimate the judge. Boekhoudt also employed a stern voice as long as ‘a defendant continued his game to mislead the judge with fallacy.’ Boekhoudt felt that most defendants changed their attitude after a while and became susceptible to a ‘jovial chat’.⁶⁰⁶ He apparently felt confident that he was able to discern when defendants were lying and when they were honest, but our juvenile cases show that he was probably overestimating himself. That both defendants and witnesses used false reasons and lied in court is an image that appears frequently in the writings of colonial court officials. Contemporaries did not just blame this on the ‘character’ or ‘culture’ of the indigenous population; in other words, it was not just blamed on race; but was also an indication of frustration with the colonial court system. The colonial court system suffered from a huge cultural and linguistic divide; and most people involved were acutely aware of this.

Snouck Hurgronje, for example, concluded in 1904 that ‘lack of mental contact between the judge and judiciable’ played the largest part in the ‘ineffectiveness, even unreliability of the European administration of justice over Natives’.⁶⁰⁷ This lack of mental and emotional contact was caused by many different factors. Until 1925, when the first indigenous judicial official was installed as judge of the *landraad*, all judges came from the Netherlands.⁶⁰⁸ These Dutchmen had learned some Malay and sometimes Javanese during

⁶⁰⁵ Massier, *Van ‘Recht’ naar ‘Hukum’*, 84-85, also footnotes 108-112.

⁶⁰⁶ Boekhoudt, 1916, 341 also cited by Massier, *Van ‘Recht’ naar ‘Hukum’*, 91-92.

⁶⁰⁷ E. Gobée en C. Adriaanse (red.), *Ambtelijke adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936. Eerste deel*. (’s Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1957) 496.

⁶⁰⁸ The first indigenous judge was Moehamad Hamid, who became chairman of the *Landraad* in Kraksaän, Eastern Java on 16 januari 1925. According to Massier, *Van ‘Recht’ naar ‘Hukum’*, 78, noot 66.

their studies in Holland, but they did not speak these languages fluently. ‘A judge who knew Javanese, let alone the local vernacular used by suspects and witnesses, was a great exception’, according to historian C. Fasseur.⁶⁰⁹ Because there were no official translators working at the courts the judges were thus dependent on the services of the clerk of the court or the *djaksa*. The judge would speak to them in Malay, and they would translate to the local language of the defendants and witnesses, then translate the answers back to Malay, which was anyhow the second language of the judge. Colonial administration of law was a messy business. No wonder that court officials could greatly influence the proceedings; even with good intentions much of the nuances were lost in translation.⁶¹⁰

Language was not the only weak link in the colonial court, the judge usually also had other handicaps that made it hard to penetrate the cases he had to preside over. He was often a loner within the court system, with his law degree and as Dutch newcomer in colonial society. The clerks were usually Indo-European and the *djaksa* and other members of the court were indigenous. The judge was only living in a community for a few years, before he would move on to a new assignment and another newcomer would take his place, while the other personnel stayed connected to the court and the community for most of their lives. Class and ethnic/racial divides between the different employees of the court and between court officials and community members also created potential miscommunications or bad feelings. Consequently, there was a significant chance that the judge did not understand much about what was happening in the community he was presiding over.⁶¹¹ ‘His contacts with the Native community are much too superficial and short lived to give him some of that indispensable understanding of what is happening in the community, and of the motives that influence the actions and utterances of individuals’, summarized Snouck Hurgronje.⁶¹²

During the formalistic and multi-lingual court proceedings judge and judiciable struggled to understand each other. So much so that even judges who spoke fluent Malay

For the background of Dutch judges see C. Fasseur, *De Indologen. Ambtenaren voor de Oost, 1825-1950* (Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 1993) 436. There were no female judges in either the Indies and the Netherlands until after WW II. Women did work in administrative government functions in the Indies, for more about this see Fasseur, *De Indologen*, 386.

⁶⁰⁹ Fasseur, *De Indologen*, 246-247.

⁶¹⁰ Massier, *Van ‘Recht’ naar ‘Hukum’*, 68. Massier describes a beautiful literary fragment about the translation procedures in court from Augusta de Wit’s famous novel *De Godin die Wacht*, in footnote 9, 68-69.

⁶¹¹ Massier, *Van ‘Recht’ naar ‘Hukum’*, 79-80.

⁶¹² E. Gobée en C. Adriaanse (red.), *Ambtelijke adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936. Eerste deel.* (’s Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1957) 497.

and/or local languages did not speak with the indigenous defendants or witnesses directly. ‘Even if he knows the language well, nervous witnesses *never* understand a European, even if he says exactly the same thing as the Djaksa’⁶¹³ In this context it seems more understandable that defendants and witnesses often lied – or seemed to lie – in front of a judge; juvenile delinquents were no exception. The cases of Noer and Idik show that it had not become clear during their trial that they did have caretakers. In both cases the judges believed the boys were not taken care off by anyone. During his cross-examination by the judge Idik answered ‘no’ on every question. He even denied he had stolen a wallet, which was found in his pants according to the police. He also denied he had parents or caretakers.⁶¹⁴ The judge decided that the only proper decision was to send the boy to a reformatory, since he was caught in the act, denied everything, and claimed to be an orphan.

The reports of the re-educators in the reformatories confirm that many pupils denied the existence of parents or caretakers in court and continued to do so during their first months in the reformatory. The 1919 report of the Semarang reformatory claimed that lying ‘was, without exaggeration, their second nature. Very few pupils are truthful or become more or less honest in the reformatory.’⁶¹⁵ There were many examples of boys who lied in front of the judge. ‘This is usually about their name, their parents, place of origin, etc. It happened regularly that lads who said their name was Sidin, later seemed to carry the name Karta; or that they said to be from Wonigiri but were actually from a completely different place; or that they claimed to have no parents or family, while later on their father and/or mother came to visit them in the institution.’⁶¹⁶

There are no thoughts offered on why the boys were lying to the judge and their educators, but the director of the reformatory did reflect on the difficulties in observing and judging the behaviour of the boys. His account of the chasm between educator and pupils is similar to Snouck Hurgronje’s description about the divide between judge and judiciable. Director De Haas felt it was very difficult to determine the mental state of his pupils. ‘Not just because of [the fact that] their character traits are almost melting into each other, but even more because of the difference in mental faculties that exist between the pupils and their

⁶¹³ Article by Rutgers, 1911, in Massier, *Van ‘Recht’ naar ‘Hukum’*, 83.

⁶¹⁴ *Copy of the record of penal cases of the Landgerecht te Bandoeng*, 26/5/25. AS, ANRI. Ag 13706-26.

⁶¹⁵ *Verslag omtrent het beheer en den toestand van het Landsopvoedingsgesticht te Semarang gedurende het dienstjaar 1919* (Weltevreden: N.V. Boekh. Visser & Co., 1920) p. 8.

⁶¹⁶ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, pp. 8-9.

educators.’ His tone is almost despairing when he exclaims that ‘the Eastern psyche’ is really very different from the ‘Western’ one. ‘Almost every pedagogue in the Indies, who has tried to penetrate the depths of the souls of his pupils, will agree with this remark.’⁶¹⁷ If it was this difficult for educators to understand their pupils, while they stood in daily contact with the boys, it must have been significantly more challenging for a judge who was always pressed for time and who only met the defendant during a short court session.

Why juvenile delinquents did not tell police, judges and educating personnel in the reformatories the information they were asked for remains guesswork. Part of it can be explained from the inherently confusing and unequal situation in the courts that I laid out. Another part might be explained by a wish to resist or reject the situation at hand; lying or ‘bending the truth’ can be a powerful weapon, as many historians have shown. Other explanations might be related to cultural beliefs and sensitivities and general relations between parents and children. Fear about punishment from parents, for example, and especially fear of bringing shame upon the family are common sentiments in different parts of the world. In Javanese culture, for example, the value of ‘respect’ is a crucial aspect of social behaviour and sentiments. Hiding or concealing certain sentiments, feelings, or actions to keep up respect for elders and people of higher rank or income is completely acceptable. Respectful behaviour is supported by sentiments of *wedi* (fear), *isin* (shame, guilt, embarrassment, shyness) and *sungkan* (respectful politeness). Children who feel *isin*, for example, can be completely still, unresponsive and outwardly patient or aloof in a certain situation where respect is expected and demanded.⁶¹⁸ It might well be that Javanese children displayed this type of behaviour when questioned by the judge in the courtroom.

Since many court cases were not well researched by the officials responsible for this – usually due to lack of time but also because the officials involved might have their own reasons to bend the truth – there were serious consequences for defendants who were lying or not giving correct information about their background.⁶¹⁹ The background research and court related work of Pro Juventute might have corrected some of these problems, especially in the late twenties and the thirties, when the associations became more experienced and influential, as we saw in chapter IV. From its inception Pro Juventute associations saw a role for

⁶¹⁷ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 7.

⁶¹⁸ See the classic study by Hildred Geertz, *The Javanese Family. A study of Kinship and Socialization* (New York, The Free Press of Glencoe Inc., 1961) 110-114.

⁶¹⁹ Massier, *Van ‘Recht’ naar ‘Hukum’*, 92, and footnote 166.

themselves in all the cases of juvenile delinquency and aimed to have a close working relationship with the court system.⁶²⁰ After a few years each PJ association in the Indies had its own full time civil servant, a social worker *avant la lettre* who was paid by the government, and who did the brunt of the organizations' daily work. A large part of this work consisted of background research about juveniles who had been reported to the organization as 'problem cases' or who had been caught by the authorities for misbehaviour and were scheduled to come before the court. To do research and check out possible problem cases 'the association's arm reached deep into the darkest kampong to give a helping hand to the child in danger of falling down and perishing', stated Pro Juventute Batavia dramatically.⁶²¹

A civil servant of PJ Medan described his work in detail in a report to the Justice Department. In the first six months of 1920 the organization was responsible for keeping an eye on 106 children who were already placed in different reformatories and families. He also researched 25 new cases of 'juvenile criminality, or neglect that can lead to criminal behaviour'. To do so he often had to bring more than one visit to the neighbourhood or home of the child and he talked to parents (if available), family members, teachers, heads of the kampong, police and justice, acquaintances and neighbours. 'These visits had to be conducted by daylight and in the evening, depending on the circumstances, usually in far-out kampongs and outskirts, a few times even outside of the city. They [...] take a lot of time, stamina and experience.' The 'social worker' also met with the juveniles a few times, to establish their mental and physical condition. The board of the association discussed all cases weekly and they decided on a course of action.⁶²²

The aim of the research, so explained PJ chairman Boswijk, was establishing 'if the character [of the child] is not all too depraved (*verdorven*), in which environment it is living, etc.' The association had to decide if it was a one-time offence or not, if the parents or caregivers were able 'to punish the child judiciously for the offence', 'if the further upbringing was in good hands' and if the child was not yet too depraved to be redeemed at home. If Pro Juventute thought it was the right thing to do, the association would advise the public prosecutor or the magistrate to drop the prosecution and place the juvenile under supervision of Pro Juventute. Its general committee would then seek out one of its members

⁶²⁰ See for example the statements of Boswijk, chairman of PJ Medan, in *Oprichtingsvoordracht van Mr. H. J. Boswijk* in 'Verslag der Werkzaamheden van de Vereeniging 'Pro Juventute' te Medan over het jaar 1918' (Varekamp & Co. Medan; 1919) p. 22. KIT, microfilm collection, MM14T-100230.

⁶²¹ *Verslag PJ Soerabaja, 1927*, p. 3. KIT, microfilm collection, MM14T-100230.

⁶²² *Verslag Pro Juventute Medan, January-June 1920*, NA, MvK, V. inv. no. 2222.

to become a patron. 'If the child does not behave according to the orders of its patron prosecution could still be started.' The association was cautious with re-education sentences because it meant that the government would take the child under its wing for many years. 'So in most cases this measure has far-reaching consequences and before it is used it should have been clearly established that the child has an extremely depraved character and lives in an unwholesome environment.'⁶²³

If the judge did decide to commit a child at the disposal of the government, Pro Juventute could still fulfil an important task. The association would collect information about the child and its environment to advise the government about the trajectory deemed most suitable for each specific child. The options that were considered by Pro Juventute were sending the child to a state reformatory, placing it with a family that was deemed 'suitable and willing' to take care of the child, or send the child to a 'charitable institution that P. J. sees as fitting for that child.'⁶²⁴ The PJ civil servant talked informally to court officials, some of who were members of the organizations too, and went to court sessions of the Landgerecht and Landraad. During the sessions he would give the judge all the information he had about the child, and give an advice.⁶²⁵ Because the archives and records of the colonial courts were destroyed during and after World War Two it is impossible to find out how many cases Pro Juventute was actually involved in, and what the results of its research and advice were. But it seems likely that the research of Pro Juventute provided the judges with much needed information and might have prevented some of the mistakes that will be discussed in the next section.

5.2. 'To the best knowledge and in concordance with the law': mistakes in juvenile verdicts

Judges were often aware of the fallacies of their own rule of law. Snouck Hurgronje described judicial officials who doubted their own ability to properly judge court cases in the Indies. These judges feared that their verdicts, 'while wrought according to the best knowledge and in concordance with the law', were lacking a reliable underpinning.⁶²⁶ The challenges of the colonial court system were a source of frustration and anxiety for many of

⁶²³ *Oprichtingsvoordracht van Mr. H. J. Boswijk* in 'Verslag der Werkzaamheden van de Vereeniging 'Pro Juventute' te Medan over het jaar 1918' (Varekamp & Co. Medan; 1919) pp. 22-23. KIT, microfilm collection, MM14T-100230.

⁶²⁴ *Oprichtingsvoordracht van Mr. H. J. Boswijk*, pp. 22-23.

⁶²⁵ *Verslag Pro Juventute Medan, January-June 1920*, NA, MvK, V. inv. no. 2222.

⁶²⁶ Gobeë en Adriaanse, *Ambtelijke adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje, Deel I*, 497.

them. In the course of the twentieth century lawyers often came to the Indies with lofty expectations and the intention 'to do good'. Under the influence of the Leiden University professor Cornelis Van Vollenhoven (1874-1933), specialist in customary law [*adatrecht*] and colonial law, the idea that lawyers could promote the welfare of the inhabitants of the colony became commonplace.⁶²⁷ Van Vollenhoven was a staunch supporter and promoter of the ethical colonial policy, which was intended to both bring the colony under a firm rule and uplift and educate the population of the colony until they were able to administer their own independent country.⁶²⁸ To be clear, even the 'progressive' ethics saw this as a process that would take an indefinite amount of time and effort, and independence was always seen in the light of a strong relationship with the Netherlands.

The ethical policy was a product of noble ideas and most ethics felt it as their duty to improve life in the colonies. But their concerns were also driven by international politics and the wish to firmly remain in power. The early liberal, social, and Christian founders of the ethical policy believed in an Association Principle; the Indonesians should and could be taught western values and ideas which would make it possible to create a modern, democratic colonial state lead by Indonesians - but remaining under Dutch rule. But around 1920 indigenous culture increasingly came to be seen as something essentially different and unique from the West that should be preserved and protected. In this vision 'Eastern' society would always need 'the West' to lead and protect it. 'The Ethical Policy was increasingly seen in terms of a permanent welfare task, saving Indonesians because they could not – and perhaps would never be able to – save themselves.'⁶²⁹

Van Vollenhoven promoted that lawyers had the duty and ability to promote 'order and civilization' in the colony. Many of his students were infected with this zeal and saw their judicial career in the Indies as something that would not only benefit their career but also benefit the people they would be administering. 'A more beautiful working environment than that of the chairman of the *Landraad* is difficult to imagine', stated Boekhoudt in

⁶²⁷ Van Vollenhoven's ethical idealism was not restricted to the Dutch colonies, he also believed the Dutch had to conduct a broader international ethical politics. He wrote in 1910 that the Netherlands had a calling to promote worldwide peace by establishing an international peace corps. See Henk te Velde, *Gemeenschapszin en Plichtsbef. Liberalisme en Nationalisme in Nederland 1870-1918* (Proefschrift, Groningen 1992) 233.

⁶²⁸ For a proper discussion of the many aspects of the ethical policy, see Elsbeth Locher Scholten, *Ethiek in Fragmenten*.

⁶²⁹ Cribb, *The Late Colonial State in Indonesia*, 8

1916.⁶³⁰ But for quite a few judges the unfamiliar, complicated - and often impenetrable - reality of colonial society was a shock. Some managed to overcome this and made an honest effort to learn the local language, build strong networks and relations with indigenous officials and clerks, and thoroughly administer the law.⁶³¹ But not everyone was able to adapt, excel, and find creative solutions for the colonial conundrum; there were a lot of dropouts and complaints. One judge told Snouck Hurgronje that his nerves had suffered heavily under the pressure of a responsibility he felt unable to carry.⁶³²

Judges were sometimes willing to admit their mistakes to their superiors and tried to correct them. An example of this is the case of the nine-year old Jahmad, a cattle herder from Papoengan (Blitar, Java). Jahmad was brought before the *landgerecht* of Kanigoro on 27 March 1926 because he had admitted to taking two pieces of sugarcane from the field of the local sugar plantation. He explained that he was thirsty after working on the *sawa* (fields) of his father. The boy was caught by *djogabajo* Soekarto, the local member of the village board responsible for policing, and was summoned to come before the court. Soekarto declared during the court session that he had told the parents of the boy to accompany him to the courts, so they could immediately pay a fine if they had to. 'But the father did not want to have anything to do with his son. He did not want to accompany him, and in the case his son was fined he did not want to pay the fine', declared Soekarto.⁶³³ It is unclear if Soekarto had also explained the father the consequences of his refusal to come to court with his son.

Because of Soekarto's story judge Mr. F.L. Cayaux decided to send Jahmad to the reformatory as a government pupil, something he would usually avoid. 'It is my habit to let juvenile sugarcane thieves pay a fine, with the intention that the father or caretaker, who pays this fine, gives his son or pupil a good spanking at home,' he wrote on 15 May 1926 to the recently appointed Governor General De Graeff. But if Jahmad or someone else could or would not pay the fine the boy would automatically be sent to prison. This was against all principles and rules of the re-education law and this led Cayaux to think that the only proper solution was sending the boy to a reformatory as a government pupil; 'especially because the

⁶³⁰ Massier, *Van 'Recht' naar 'Hukum'*, 92.

⁶³¹ Based on the articles of Boekhoudt (1916) and Sibenius Trip (1905), Massier concludes that these judges had a 'calm, thorough approach and the capacity to understand indigenous social life, respect for the other person and a dislike of rushed work'. Both judges also tried to learn the local languages better. See *Van 'Recht' naar 'Hukum'*, 92.

⁶³² Gobee en Adriaanse, *Ambtelijke adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje, Deel I*, 497.

⁶³³ *Afschrift van de rol van de Landrechter, mr. F.L.Cayaux, zitting 27 maart 1926 te Kanigoro and Korte aantekening van de terechtzitting*, in Ag 19552-1926. ANRI, AS.

father [...] seemed to be a bad parent and educator'.⁶³⁴ Cayaux felt he had made a mistake, however, after he received a request from Jahmad's father Kasanredjo. Kasanredjo wrote Cayaux that he had been ill and bound to his bed, and had not come to the court because he did not understand why this was necessary.⁶³⁵ Cayaux suggested to the GG that his mistake should be corrected and the boy should be returned to his father.⁶³⁶

The office of the Supreme Court, responsible for reviewing the verdicts of the lower courts, decided differently. According to attorney general Nauta there were no special reasons to change the verdict of this case and Jahmad was kept under tutelage of the government. Nauta reasoned that a re-education sentence was an 'administrative measure', which did not qualify for clemency requests.⁶³⁷ The result was that the verdict of a child who had been sentenced to re-education could not be changed. The Governor General agreed and his office sent a message with a rejection of their request to Jahmad's parents and judge Cayaux in June 1926.⁶³⁸ This might have been hard to swallow for judge Cayaux. Sending a nine-year old boy, without prior problems and with a caring father, to a reformatory for seven years, for stealing two pieces of sugarcane, was a punishment that stood out of all proportion to his actions.

In the case of Peri, from the first part of the chapter, Judge De Kruffyff also admitted that he had sent the boy to a reformatory based on incomplete and wrongful information. Again a letter from a parent made the judge change his mind; indigenous parents who wrote clemency requests to judges were apparently taken serious. Jason Loembantobing had also missed the court session and only heard a few days after the court case that his son had been put under the care of the government to be reformed. He wrote an elegant clemency request to the Governor General to protest the verdict. Loembantobing was a well-educated Christian merchant, living in Taroetoeng in the Batak area of Sumatra, and he wrote that he felt ashamed about his son. Loembantobing had given Peri thirty guilders to travel to Pematang Siantar and visit the city, and he had thought this amount would be sufficient. The boy had apparently spent more money than he could afford and tried to solve the situation by stealing.

⁶³⁴ Blitar, 15 mei 1926, *Landrechter Cayaux aan de GG*, in Ag 19552-1926. ANRI, AS.

⁶³⁵ *Ongedateerde Brief van Kasanredjo aan de Gouverneur-Generaal*, in Ag 19552-1926. ANRI, AS. Kasanredjo could probably not read and write because he signed the letter with a cross at his name. Thanks to my friend Yudi Bachri for helping with the translation.

⁶³⁶ Blitar, 15 mei 1926, *Landrechter Cayaux aan de GG*, in Ag 19552-1926. ANRI, AS.

⁶³⁷ *Weltevreden 27 mei 1926, Consideratieen en advies van den Procureur-Generaal Nauta*, in Ag 19552-1926. ANRI, AS.

⁶³⁸ *BT 10 juni 1926 no 7*, in Ag 19552-1926. ANRI, AS.

Loembantobing felt that Peri had committed his crime under the influence of bad friends and explained why he felt justified to ask for mercy: ‘I send this petition to ask for clemency, since he has committed this crime in his stupidity and innocence. He has never stolen or committed another crime before. Moreover, I am willing and able to raise the child’, stated Loembantobing.⁶³⁹ Judge De Kruyff believed the explanation of Peri’s father and requested the Governor General to change the reform sentence and give the child back to his parents. For De Kruyff the background of Peri’s family was the most important factor in the case, more important than the boy’s crime: ‘The parents of the little boy are wealthy enough to give him an education and are very upset that their child will be taken away from them.’⁶⁴⁰

The letter from Loembantobing and the advice from De Kruyff were first sent to the Governor of Sumatra’s Eastcoast, who agreed with De Kruyff and also advised the attorney general to acknowledge Loembantobing’s request and give the boy back to his parents.⁶⁴¹ Attorney general Nauta in the far-away capital of Batavia, however, just looked if the verdicts were made according to the proper procedures and rules of the law and again rejected the idea of clemency on the basis of judicial arguments. Four months later Peri was put under the care of Pro Juventute Medan and placed in a family or in the small childcare facility of the association until he was eighteen years old.⁶⁴² It is with the help of these cases that we can see that the judicial realities of the colony – bad communication between judge and juvenile defendant, the absence of parents during the court case, insufficient background information, etc. – clashed with the formalities of the law system and its upper level enforcers like the attorney general and the Governor General.

Nauta acknowledged that mistakes had been made, but felt supported by the rule of law to uphold the verdict. Instead of criticizing the system he blamed judge De Kruyff: ‘It is regretful that the judge has taken this extreme measure without being properly informed about the background, parents and family of the child,’ wrote Nauta in his advice to the Governor General.⁶⁴³ We know now that this criticism was not completely fair, because most judges had

⁶³⁹ Jason Loembantobing aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, via tussenkomst van het Landgerecht te Pematang Siantar, Pematang Siantar, 1 Mei 1926, Ag 29870 – 1926, ANRI, AS.

⁶⁴⁰ Landrechter J. De Kruyff to the Governor General, Pematang Siantar, 5 May 1926, Ag 29870 – 1926, ANRI, AS.

⁶⁴¹ Gouverneur der Oostkust van Sumatra aan de Procureur-Generaal te Weltevreden, Medan, 21 mei 1926, Ag 29870 – 1926, ANRI, AS.

⁶⁴² W.S. de Haas (Director of the Disciplinary and Education system of the Department of Justice) to the Algemene Secretarie, Weltevreden 15 October 1926, Ag 29870 – 1926, ANRI, AS.

⁶⁴³ Attorney General Nauta to the Governor General, Weltevreden 5 June 1926, Ag 29870 – 1926, ANRI, AS.

to deal with huge restrictions in their ability to gain access to background information about the defendants in their courts. Parents were often not informed or misinformed about the upcoming trial of their children, and could thus not provide essential information either. This situation is indicative for the limited insight and oversight that the colonial state had over the society it ruled.

The failure to inform the parents seems a common malfunction in the colonial court system, because it was not stated anywhere that parents actually had to be informed if their child was prosecuted.⁶⁴⁴ In 1931 attorney general R. Verheyen declared, after questions from a member of the People's Council, that these instructions did not exist but were implicit in the instructions that had been sent to police and court officials over the years. He nevertheless decided to send out another circular to remind the local administrators and everybody involved in the prosecution of minors that they had to inform the parents. According to Verheyen the interests of prosecuted minors were sufficiently protected in this way and no further legislation was necessary.⁶⁴⁵ In the late thirties, however, a commission was established to research the changes that had to be made in the juvenile laws. Something that was especially necessary according to Pro Juventute members and other people who worked with juveniles and the colonial law and reform system.

But even for parents who did know about the prosecution of their child there could be other reasons to stay away from the court session. The courts were usually only established in the regional capitals and this meant that people from the small villages had to travel far to attend trials. Distances might have been too big to cover in the short time between notification and the actual court session. Or parents might have been unable to miss a day of work, for financial or practical reasons. Moe van Emmerik described the hassle and discomfort of the colonial justice system for ordinary people in 1924. She told how a boy who had stolen a chest full of clothes from another family on the colony had been caught and sent to the local police headman (assistent wedono). The elderly owner of the clothes and his son were summoned five times by the police in Getassan to come to them to give information, the court

⁶⁴⁴ Voorzitter van de Volksraad J.W.Meijer Ranneft aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, Batavia, 3 september 1931, Volksraad no. 2450, Bgs 16-02-1932 245/a, ANRI, AS. On the third of September 1931 mister Soangkoepon, a member of the People's Council, asked the government if there existed an instruction for the police to inform the parents of juvenile offenders about the intention to bring their child to trial. Soangkoepon was concerned about the way juvenile trials were conducted after he heard about an eleven-year old and thirteen-year old who had been fined by the *landrechter* of Batavia.

⁶⁴⁵ Procureur-Generaal aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, Batavia-Centrum, 21 januari 1932, no. 307, Bgs 16-02-1932 245/a, ANRI, AS.

in Semarang also requested their attendance four times. This was not only a long walk to either place, but they also lost nine workdays each. Moe van Emmerik calculated that the father and his son each missed 7,20 guilders in income. On top of it all the authorities kept the chest with clothes for months, because they served as evidence for the theft. Moe van Emmerik declared that it was easily understandable why the Javanese avoided any involvement with police and courts, if they could.⁶⁴⁶

Not only did judges turn juveniles into government pupils who could have been safely sent home with a fine and a parental spanking, they also sent juvenile offenders who were officially too old for a re-education sentence to the reformatory. Juvenile reform was only allowed for children under sixteen years old, but the age of a defendant was often unknown and hard to establish. While European children were registered with the local authorities at birth, for the other ethnicities no civil registry existed. Children often did not know their own year of birth or age, and when parents and proper background information were absent as well this became hard to establish for the police and the judge. The law did not prescribe how and who should establish the age of the juvenile defendants. In daily practice it was the police, who came in touch with juvenile offenders first, who made an estimate of their age and recorded this in the summons. The judge often accepted their judgement without questioning.⁶⁴⁷

A 1924 article in a colonial judicial magazine stated that almost everyone failed to establish the proper age of indigenous and Chinese juveniles. 'In general we can state that Europeans, including medical doctors, think that indigenous people are significantly younger than they really are,' wrote M. Tuiten, who was the director of the state reformatory Semarang in the nineteen twenties.⁶⁴⁸ He concluded that indigenous doctors almost always established the age of the boys in the reformatory two or three years above the estimation of European doctors and laypersons, like judges. Tuiten believed that Europeans had no good insight in the age of indigenous and Chinese youngsters because they were from a different 'race'.⁶⁴⁹ The consequence of these mistakes was that some juveniles who ended up in the reform system were technically too old to be in there, and this caused significant problems.

⁶⁴⁶ Moe van Emmerik, *Witte Kruis Blad*, April 1924, p.3

⁶⁴⁷ M. Tuiten, *Over leeftijd en leeftijdsvaststelling van Regeeringspupillen*, 'Indisch Tijdschrift van het Regt' 121, 1924, 274-276.

⁶⁴⁸ Tuiten, *Over leeftijd en leeftijdsvaststelling*, 276.

⁶⁴⁹ Tuiten, *Over leeftijd en leeftijdsvaststelling*, 276.

In indigenous society, stated Tuiten – who did not make an effort to note that indigenous society consisted of hundreds (thousands?) of different cultures and ethnicities -, juveniles became adults much earlier than in Europe; they usually married when they were sixteen or seventeen. Indonesians who were thought to be younger than they actually were ended up in a reformatory and were treated as children, while they had already been living adult lives in their own environment. ‘Consequentially, there is often unrest among the older pupils; indifference, mental depression, or recalcitrance; sometimes a tendency to satisfy sexual urges in an unnatural manner and especially attempts to gain freedom by their own authority (escapes),’ concluded Tuiten.⁶⁵⁰ In the state reformatories they tried to re-adjust the assigned ages of pupils through a thorough physical examination by the director and the institution’s physician, who both had a lot of experience with indigenous juveniles. They almost always increased the age of their pupils by two or three years, in comparison with the ages the police and judges had estimated. This eventually benefited the pupils since they would be released sooner; the maximum age of discharge was twenty-one until 1925 and eighteen after that.⁶⁵¹ But this adjustment did not solve the problem of pupils who came to the reformatory when they were already too old; for this the judges and police needed to do better work. Tuiten proposed that the courts would consult an indigenous physician in cases where juveniles were thought to be approximately sixteen years old.⁶⁵² This did not become a rule, due to financial and practical reasons, but the work of Pro Juventute did solve some of these issues because they provided more detailed background information about defendants.

5.3. The image of parenthood in the communication between parents and the colonial justice system

Sarpani from Kampong Mlajo (Semarang) was illiterate but he did manage to send a clemency request to the Governor General in far-away Batavia in 1917. Darmono also signed the letter, although he could not read and write either. It is unknown who wrote their letter, but from other clemency requests becomes clear that the majority of the letters of illiterate parents was written by an employee, notary, lawyer, or a local court official.⁶⁵³ The majority

⁶⁵⁰ Tuiten, *Over leeftijd en leeftijdsvaststelling*, 280.

⁶⁵¹ Tuiten, *Over leeftijd en leeftijdsvaststelling*, 278.

⁶⁵² Tuiten, *Over leeftijd en leeftijdsvaststelling*, 277.

⁶⁵³ The letter of Darmono and Sarpani is the earliest clemency request that is available in the archives of the Algemene Secretarie. In other cases it is often clear who wrote the clemency request for parents. Matseman, Doegal and Dirdja from Kandangan, Borneo, for example, asked the chairman of the local

of the letter writers had not been present during the trial of their child, and writing or commissioning the writing of a letter was probably their only way to be heard and tell their version of what happened. The letter of Sarpani and Darmo was a plea for mercy in formal and humble Javanese, meant to get back their sons. Darmo was the father of eight-year old Sarban, and Sarpani had two boys, Basinan (seven years) and Soedjono (six years old). The little fellows had been caught in the act by the Semarang police when they tried to steal bricks, and were brought before the court of Semarang, despite their young age. The court decided on the fifteenth of December 1917, just a day after their offence, to send them to a reformatory. The court documents that can explain why the judge decided on such a serious course of action are missing, but the parents of the boys did not accept the verdict.⁶⁵⁴ Darmo and Sarpani promised that they would look after their boys really well and keep a close eye on them, they begged the authorities to send the boys home so they could give them a proper punishment themselves.⁶⁵⁵

Before the opening of LOG Semarang in March 1918 it had not been uncommon for the Governor General to send government pupils back to their own parental home for ‘re-education’. This was a temporary measure that was allowed by law as long as the colony did not have a proper and official reformatory, and because private families were often hard to find. But Darmo, Sarpani, and their sons were out of luck. The director of the Justice department responded to their request with the argument that the recently opened reformatory in Semarang was a real reform institution – as described in the law – and that the old temporary measures were void. He argued that all juvenile delinquents with a reform sentence could automatically be sent to LOG Semarang and that the Governor General no longer had the authority to decide the place where a juvenile should be re-educated; the judges now decided this.⁶⁵⁶ The Governor General and his advisors accepted this idea, and supported the rejection of the clemency request by Darmo and Sarpani.

landraad to write their letter for them. Meester Raden Mas Gondowinoto was one of the first indigenous judges in the colony, he declared that Matseman, Doegal and Dirdja were brought to him by the *pembekal* (member of the village government) Matali and that he had clearly explained the content of the letter to them, after which they put their thumbprints on the letter. This is explained in various documents from Ag 21008-1926, ANRI, AS.

⁶⁵⁴ Darmo and Sarpani to Governor General, Semarang 19-01-1918, in BT 23-10-1918, no 2. ANRI, AS.

⁶⁵⁵ Darmo and Sarpani to Governor General, Semarang 19-01-1918, in BT 23-10-1918, no 2. ANRI, AS.

⁶⁵⁶ Director of Justice to Governor General, Batavia 28-09-1918, in BT 23-10-1918, no 2. ANRI, AS.

The two fathers had written their requests in January 1918 – two months prior to the opening of LOG Semarang – but it took the government nine months to reply. The letter had been lying around in the court office in Semarang, waiting to be forwarded to the Justice Department in Batavia. When it finally arrived there, the civil servant responsible for dealing with juvenile reform cases was away on an inspection journey of the different private reformatories, explained the director of the department later.⁶⁵⁷ The director of the Justice Department then set a precedent with his argument that the Governor General could no longer decide the place of residence of government pupils. Later rejections were often based on this reasoning or on the argument that a re-education verdict was not a punishment but an administrative measure that did not qualify for a pardon. Whatever argument was used, and regardless of known mistakes and misinformation during the trial, the reality was that none of the parental clemency letters that were sent to the authorities between 1918 and 1940 were honoured.⁶⁵⁸

The written clemency requests offer a fascinating view of colonial society. The fact that they were taken serious by the government and the formalistic refusal of the requests show us a side of the late colonial state that we do not know so well. It is a side that reveals the benefits of following ‘the rules’, in which security and safety could be found. Mistakes might be made, but the rules could be trusted. The requests also show us something about the kind of image parents chose to depict to the colonial authorities to convince them of giving back their child. While the letters do not paint a representative picture of the true feelings and behaviour of parents, they do give an idea of how parents thought they could convince the government of their good parenting – and sometimes of the innocence of their children as well.

The father of Peri, for example, wrote that he had the money and ability to raise his son. He also showed that he had a true bond with his son by saying he and his wife were extremely upset that the boy was gone from their home. Lastly he proved that he knew right from wrong by saying he felt ‘ashamed’ or ‘embarrassed’ about his son’s behaviour and his prosecution. The Europeans in the re-education system saw a feeling of shame as one of the

⁶⁵⁷ *Director of Justice to Governor General, Batavia 28-09-1918*, in BT 23-10-1918, no 2. ANRI, AS.

⁶⁵⁸ I was able to find approximately 65 of these letters in the archives of the Algemene Secretarie, there might have been more that never made it from the local authorities to the Governor General, or were lost and went unregistered for other reasons. Thanks to the wonderful Indonesian Encompass students in Leiden, 2006-2009, who helped me with translating these letters.

‘higher’ emotions, as we will see in the next chapter about the goals of re-education. Educational officials were preoccupied with instilling the ability to feel regret, guilt, and shame in their pupils. Peri’s judge was sensitive to father Loembantobing’s arguments, especially his wealthy background as a Christian merchant and his sadness about the loss of his son were mentioned as reasons to let the boy go back home.⁶⁵⁹

The arguments that parents used to get back their children played subtly with the expectations and values of the colonial rulers. Parents spoke a ‘language of power’, using the official and desired stories of colonialism, to try and convince the authorities; their letters show many similarities in the use of language and arguments. Jenneke Christiaens, a Belgian researcher, came to similar conclusions with regards to Belgian parents who tried to get their sons out of the youth prison in Gent in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. They wrote letters to the director of the prison facility to ask for clemency for their offspring. Many of their arguments are similar to the ones used by Indonesian parents, but the Belgian parents often discuss their own failure and previous inability to educate their children, while this is hardly hinted at in colonial clemency requests. In colonial letters the innocence or ignorance of both parents and the child is often a central argument. This might be explained by the difference in the crimes of juveniles in the Indies and in Belgium. Christiaens is discussing letters about children who were considered ‘unimprovable’ and were placed in the strictest section of a juvenile prison. The government pupils in the Indies were often re-educated for much lighter offenses.⁶⁶⁰

Almost all Indies parents wrote that they would keep a closer eye on their children and keep them on a shorter leash from now on.⁶⁶¹ Just like Darmo and Sarpani other parents also promised to give their child a fitting punishment at home. In many clemency requests are promises about a good education and a better upbringing, like in the letters about Samil bin Ganai from Borneo. According to the number of letters his parents could not accept the loss of their child and did not give up hope that he would return home. Father Ganai bin Sihai and mother Atjoet binti Tjoeloek wrote three letters to ask for the release of their twelve-year old son between July and December 1926.⁶⁶² ‘I promise I will properly care for the boy and will

⁶⁵⁹ See the various letters in Ag 29870-1926. ANRI, AS.

⁶⁶⁰ Jenneke Christiaens, *De Geboorte van de Jeugddelinquent*, 248-253.

⁶⁶¹ See for example the letter of Matseman, Doegal, and Dirdja for their cousin Toepa, in Ag 21008-1926, ANRI, AS.

⁶⁶² Ag 30080 – 1926 and Ag 20771 – 1927, both dealing with the case of Samil bin Ganai, ANRI, AS.

educate him by sending him to the government school in Moeara Baroe, to make him a better man,' wrote Ganal.⁶⁶³

The ethical and enlightenment ideas of improvement are also found in the letter from the Javanese Hadji Sapei, a farmer in desa Nagrak in West-Priangan. He promised to take good care of his son Djoemsari 'so he will grow up to be a useful member of society'.⁶⁶⁴ This was obviously exactly what the colonial elite aimed at with the re-education of juvenile offenders; turning them into better men (and sometimes women) who would be useful to society and docile followers of the colonial regime. Parents used this rhetoric to convince the government to release their children. Both Ganal and Hadji Sapei wrote their own letters and seem familiar with the ethical-liberal ideals of improvement and uplift. Maybe they even believed in these notions; they were able to read and write and had possibly benefited from colonial schooling themselves to raise their position in their family or community. It is not impossible that they had experienced some form of 'uplift' and development themselves.

Besides promises about proper chastisement and education of their children, parents also tried to get their offspring absolved by writing about mitigating circumstances. They carefully questioned the judge's decision and tried to give another perspective on the behaviour of their child. Ganal wrote about his son Samil, who had hit an older boy on the head, that Samil had no idea what he had done and did not understand the difference between right and wrong. 'Moreover, [Samil] would never hurt someone of his own age on purpose, and especially not a person who is older.' He pleaded the Governor General to forgive the deeds of his son and argued that it was just a fight between children. He also asked understanding for the suffering of him and his wife as parents. Samil was their only child and had never been separated from his parents; this made it very difficult for them to miss their son.⁶⁶⁵ All layers of the colonial administration read Ganal's letters, from the judge to the resident, the attorney general and the office of the Governor General, but they failed to impress. Everyone involved rejected the first two letters, of July and August 1927, but seven months later the resident of South and East Borneo changed his mind. He stressed that the boy

⁶⁶³ *Clemency request from Ganal and Atjoet tot the Governor General, Amoentai 31 December 1926, Ag 20771 – 1927, ANRI, AS.* These request was also written by someone else and signed with thumbprints, of both the father and mother of Samil bin Ganal. According to Yudi Bachri, who helped to translate the documents, the letters was very well written in a style that is close to current-day Bahasa Indonesia. The writer was probably well-educated in a modern school/university.

⁶⁶⁴ See Ag 8945-1928, ANRI, AS.

⁶⁶⁵ *Clemency request from Ganal and Atjoet tot the Governor General, Amoentai 31 December 1926, Ag 20771 – 1927, ANRI, AS.*

had never been in touch with the court before and that this could be a reason to send the boy home.⁶⁶⁶ This was rejected, as usual, by the higher echelons.

Not all parents wrote 'the language of power', some wrote their own language. The mother and stepfather of fifteen-year old Richart Eisar Pinontoan from Tateloe, Celebes, believed they were not to be blamed for the theft their son had committed in late 1929. It had happened outside of their home and was outside of their range of influence, they wrote. They wanted the boy back home because they needed him to work in their home and on the land. No promises about a good education here, but purely economic arguments.⁶⁶⁷ The judge who had sentenced the boy was not impressed; the content of the letter only confirmed his verdict. He wrote that he would only take a child away from the parents after careful deliberation, but that the boy had such a bad life at home that it was the only proper action. Richart was growing up in a terrible way in the kampong and got involved with criminal activities because his stepfather was 'a source of misery' who treated him bad and neglected him. 'Because of this neglect other disreputable characters take their chance to let [Richart] do their dirty work.' Only a strict re-education could save the boy from life as a criminal and turn him into the desired 'useful member of society', or so the judge believed.⁶⁶⁸

In all indigenous clemency requests judicial arguments for an early release or reconsideration of the verdict were missing. Apparently indigenous parents were not informed about possibilities to challenge the validity of the trial. They did not complain about the court procedures, their own absence during the trial, or incomplete background research. The few cases where parents used somewhat judicial arguments all concerned Indo-European children with a European father. Ex-soldier Petelle wrote in 1923 to the Governor General to further the release of his son Johann from the state reformatory in Semarang. He dared to complain about the quality of the institution because his son was refusing to write in Dutch and only communicated in Malay since he entered the reformatory. He also argued that many adults had received pardons in honour of the government jubilee of Queen Wilhelmina, why could

⁶⁶⁶ Letter from the Resident of Borneo to the Attorney General and Governor General, written by his secretary H. de Heanen, Bandjermasin 23 April 1927, in Ag 20771 – 1927, ANRI, AS.

⁶⁶⁷ Verzoekschrift van A. Sibij en A. Kamagi aan de GG van Nederlands-Indië, Tateloe, 4 januari 1930, in Bt 18 Maart 1930 no. 10, ANRI, AS.

⁶⁶⁸ Van de fd. Magistraat aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, Manado, 25 januari 1930, in Bt 18 Maart 1930 no. 10, ANRI, AS.

this not be applied to his son?⁶⁶⁹ He received the same answer as most other letter writers; there existed no clemency for juvenile government pupils.

Frederikus and Elize van der Bruggen from Jogjakarta used a very complicated story to get their children back home. It came down to the argument that both the police summons and court verdict were based on wrongful information that was fed to the law on purpose. They wrote a total of three letters to the Governor General and the head of the reform system at the Justice Department, to explain the fact of the matter and ask for the release of their fifteen and sixteen year old daughters. According to their own story they had turned their children into government pupils on purpose, because of the difficult financial situation of the family. While it was not uncommon that European parents sent their children to a private institution because they could or would not care for them, this is the only known case of parents who actually chose to send their offspring to a state reformatory as government pupils. Their story offers a whole new perspective on the ways parents tried to appropriate the reform system for their own benefit.

It all started in the summer of 1926, when the Van der Bruggen family moved to the Semarang area. 'It was during my short stay in Tjiandjoer that I realised – because of my continuing financial plight – that my children would be suffering from want and neglect if they were not admitted soon in a cheap institution or boarding house,' Frederikus wrote in early July. His father-in-law – a certain Joän Weijschenk, part-owner of the sugar factories 'Padokan' and 'Barongan' in the Jogjakarta residency – would have been able to help them out, according to Frederikus. He was wealthy enough, but at that moment 'did not possess the faculties of his own will; he was completely under the influence of his indigenous mistress'. The story continued with complaints about a white man who was under the spell of his exotic mistress and wasted money on her without restraint.⁶⁷⁰ These colonial stereotypes were apparently real enough for the protagonists to write about in a letter to the Governor General.

Frederikus was not very concerned with the religious education of his children; he claimed to have asked institutions of all denominations to accept them. But the Protestant orphanage and the Catholic St. Vincentius home in Semarang, and the Oranje Nassau reformatory in Magelang all rejected his requests, he wrote. At this point a friend of his

⁶⁶⁹ *Brief van J.C.D. Pettelle aan Mr. D. Fock, Gouverneur-Generaal van Nederlands-Indie. Bandoeng, 17 september 1923.* In Ag 39013/1923, ANRI, AS.

⁶⁷⁰ *Frederikus van der Bruggen aan het Hoofd van het Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen te Weltevreden, Djokjakarta, 2 juli 1927,* in Ag 29902-1927. ANRI, AS.

father-in-law, a certain Janssen, who was a commander of the rural police force (*veldpolitie*) in Tjiandjoer, was willing to do Frederikus a favour. 'This policeman (Janssen) declared [...] that he could relieve me of the care for my children by getting them admitted to a state reformatory, until I would get back on my feet again.'⁶⁷¹

It was not that easy to make this happen, there had to be a reason to bring the children before the court. Soon enough, however, Janssen received complaints about the children from 'a Native' because they had been 'throwing stones, calling names, stealing fruits and killing some goldfish.' Hendrikus explained that Janssen – 'following his intention to have my children admitted in a state reformatory' – exaggerated the misbehaviour of his children in the summons so they would be criminal offences.⁶⁷² On 23 September 1926 Elisa Emilia Maria, Elexta Katarina Gertruda, and their brother Frits Johan van der Bruggen appeared before the Landrechter of Soekaboemi, who held court in Tjiandjoer. The three teenagers were put under tutelage of the government for vandalism and theft.⁶⁷³

In the eyes of De Haas – director of the reform system at the Justice Department – the story of Van der Bruggen was totally unbelievable. He wrote to the Governor General on 21 September 1927 that it had been extremely difficult in the first place to get the children admitted. Frederikus had requested that he wanted his children admitted in LOG Semarang, but this was only possible for boys. The girls were supposed to go to the Soekaboemi reformatory, where female Indo-European government pupils could be re-educated on government money. De Haas stated that it took five months after the verdict to get the children admitted, 'because the parents suddenly disappeared from Tjiandjoer and lived in several different locations on Java, probably to withdraw their children from their court ordered admittance in a reformatory.' Eventually both the girls and the boy were admitted to the Soekaboemi and Semarang reformatories in February 1927.⁶⁷⁴

Frederikus did not give an explanation about the reasons for his wanderings, but wrote that he had returned to Jogjakarta in May, together with his wife and second son. His extended family had asked him to come back and offered some financial support, if needed. It

⁶⁷¹ Frederikus van der Bruggen aan het Hoofd van het Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen te Weltevreden, Djokjakarta, 2 juli 1927, in Ag 29902-1927. ANRI, AS.

⁶⁷² Frederikus van der Bruggen aan het Hoofd van het Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen te Weltevreden, Djokjakarta, 2 juli 1927, in Ag 29902-1927. ANRI, AS.

⁶⁷³ Van de directeur van het Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen, W.S. de Haas, aan de GG, Weltevreden, 21 September 1927, in Ag 29902-1927, ANRI, AS. Because the original court sentence is not included in the file it is impossible to reconstruct why the judge reasoned that the children should go to a reformatory.

⁶⁷⁴ Van de directeur van het Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen, W.S. de Haas, aan de GG, Weltevreden, 21 September 1927, in Ag 29902-1927, ANRI, AS.

is not clear why the Van der Bruggen's only asked for clemency for their daughters, they did not discuss the fate of their son Frits at all. According to Frederikus they could not be happy without their girls and in a letter of July 1927 he stated that he had solved his financial problems and could care for them again. The father-in-law had apparently decided to help as well, because mother Van der Bruggen now received a 'monthly allowance [...] from her wealthy father [...] that gives us the possibility to keep a household with the children'.⁶⁷⁵

But most of all Frederikus stressed the fact that his children had never been 'truly criminal'. The complaints about their behaviour were filed by an influential Sundanese neighbour, the pensioned Assistant-Wedono, and his 25 year-old son, who worked as a *djaksa* of the court. While the relations between the teenaged daughters and son of Van der Bruggen and the son of the neighbour had been good at first, the friendship ended on bad terms and hostilities from both sides. 'Said Native and his son did not refrain from calling names and throwing stones, but this was not mentioned in the summons of mister Janssen.' Frederikus concluded by expressing hope that he had explained his case well enough and had managed to establish a new perspective on the behaviour of his children.⁶⁷⁶

All the letters and stories from Van der Bruggen, however, did not impress De Haas of the Justice Department. Van der Bruggen did not speak a language, and come up with arguments, which tapped into the ideals and goals of the state reform system. According to De Haas the whole case just proved that the parents 'did not take care of their children in a proper manner and did not have any authority over them'. His advice to the Governor General was to reject the request, this time not for standard judicial reasons, but because he feared that the children would sink even deeper if they were returned to their parents. In his eyes Frederikus and his wife were unfit to take further care of them. De Haas left the option open that the children might qualify for release on parole in a few years, something that had become possible with a redraft of the re-education law in 1927 (article 50 of the re-education measures).⁶⁷⁷

Release on parole was possible if the goal(s) of re-education had been reached, for instance, if the juvenile had become well behaved in the eyes of the educators, or if it was

⁶⁷⁵ *Frederikus van der Bruggen aan de Gouverneur-Generaal, Djokjakarta, 24 juli 1927*, in Ag 29902-1927. ANRI, AS.

⁶⁷⁶ *Frederikus van der Bruggen aan het Hoofd van het Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen te Weltevreden, Djokjakarta, 2 juli 1927*, in Ag 29902-1927. ANRI, AS.

⁶⁷⁷ *Van de directeur van het Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen, W.S. de Haas, aan de GG, Weltevreden, 21 September 1927*, in Ag 29902-1927, ANRI, AS.

better to continue the re-education of the juvenile in a different manner. Early release on parole was often used for older and well-behaved pupils of the state reformatories so they could get used to working and living outside the reformatory walls. The staff and Pro Juventute workers could still keep an eye on them and could exert the threat of re-admittance in the reformatory, if necessary. Early release was based on the advice of the director of the reformatory and needed approval from the director of the reform system of the Justice Department. De Haas stressed that the Van der Bruggen girls had only just been admitted to the Soekaboemi institution and would get an excellent education there. 'If it appears, in due time, that the behaviour of the children has improved significantly a release on parole and a return to the parental home for further education might be considered; if the parents are clearly able to give them decent guidance at that time.'⁶⁷⁸

It did not happen often that a parental clemency request led to a consideration of release on parole. While the great majority of clemency requests came from indigenous parents, the only other known example of possible parole pertained an Indo-European boy as well.⁶⁷⁹ In this case the Justice Department asked for the opinion of his educators in the reformatory, but they felt the boy was unfit for release. Their judgement was obviously subjective and depended on their own opinion of the pupil's behaviour. Not only the behaviour of the juvenile but also that of the parents was judged. Most educators believed that the children were better off with them than at home. The subjectivity of the parole procedure, and the unwillingness to consider the release of (indigenous) juveniles that had already been admitted, did not help any parents to get their children back.

How colonial officials felt about the personal letters from parents is hard to find out. Because some judges were willing to reconsider their verdict on the basis of these letters, it is probably safe to say that they took them seriously. Others might have found them sentimental, unreliable or irrelevant. But one judge in Manado, Sulawesi, was outright enthusiastic about a clemency request he received in January 1930. While he stated that he disapproved of the way the parents treated their son, the earlier mentioned Richart Eisar Pinontoan, who had stolen something and was abused by his step-father, the judge was pleased with the fact that parents had made an effort to step up for their child. 'The request itself I was happy to receive

⁶⁷⁸ *Van de directeur van het Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen, W.S. de Haas, aan de GG, Weltevreden, 21 September 1927, in Ag 29902-1927, ANRI, AS.*

⁶⁷⁹ The case of Johan Petelle, in Ag 39013/1923. ANRI, AS. See also the next chapter for more about his case.

because this is the first protest from parents whose child has been put under tutelage of the government. So far I have sent more than ten children from Minahasa to Java,' wrote the judge.⁶⁸⁰ He apparently saw the clemency letter as a sign that parents cared for or were concerned about their children, despite the functional language that was used in the request (the parents wanted their son back so he could help them with the work in and around the house).⁶⁸¹

Applauding and stimulating the participation of indigenous individuals in the colonial justice system fitted with ideas of the 'ethical' civilizing mission, which many government workers still believed they were carrying out. Indigenous individuals and groups who became more outspoken were seen as prove that assimilation, emancipation, and maybe even self-government was possible. As long as 'the Natives' were not voicing or attempting outright attacks on the colonial rulers, state officials could see their protest letters and clemency requests as a sign of progress and civilization, especially when it was easy to dismiss those requests without further consequences.

The authorities refused to acknowledge the lawful basis of clemency requests and parents stood virtually powerless once their children were sentenced to re-education. They could write letters and those were read, commented upon, and eventually forwarded to the office of the Governor General, but in every case the writers of clemency requests received a letter or telegram from the government with a rejection of their request. The protests against juvenile re-education (in Christian institutions) that the state government had worried about in 1917 and 1918 never broke out. There are no stories, documents, or newspaper articles that indicate any serious upheaval about the colonial reform system. Individual parents and family members could oppose what happened to their child, but the indigenous political parties and the general population seemed to accept its existence, its purpose, and the way it functioned.

⁶⁸⁰ In Bt 18 Maart 1930 no. 10, ANRI, AS.

⁶⁸¹ *Verzoekschrift van A. Sibij en A. Kamagi aan de GG van Nederlands-Indië. Tateloë, 4 januari 1930*, Bt 18 Maart 1930 no. 10, ANRI, AS.

Chapter VI. 'Civilizing' in Earnest: re-education facilities and their reform strategies

‘The little rogue, who entered the reformatory indolent and lazy, improved a lot in a short time span. The firm, military posture of the boys, impresses many visitors. It should also be said that order and discipline have improved because of the gymnastics.’⁶⁸²

In state and private reformatories, both pupils' physical health and their behaviour became the direct object of the colonial state's reform efforts. The bodies of juveniles were used during opening ceremonies, visits, and in published reports (through photographs and statistics of weight and height) as a site of display for the intentions and results of re-education: turning their supposedly neglected and lazy bodies into firm and healthy ones, an analogy for the changes that were supposed to take place in their minds and spirits as well. While physical improvements could be measured by the boys' looks, gymnastic prowess, and their height and weight gain, 'moral improvement' was much more difficult to gauge. This was problematic to contemporaries since behavioural changes were at the heart and soul of the re-education project. A disciplinary system purely based on punishment was no longer acceptable, but simply feeding and caring for the physical body of delinquent youth was not the aim either.⁶⁸³

This chapter will take a close look at the goals and daily realities of the government's re-education policy in both state and private reformatories. The ways in which pupils of different ethnicities, religions and gender were shaped - and the type of people they were expected to become - varied greatly. This chapter exposes the varying goals and attitudes of reformers in the different institutions, and the ways in which they judged, observed, educated and treated the children in their care. The differences between state and private re-education help show some of the different ideas about the future of the colony, which were developing in colonial civil society between the 1910s and 1940s.

While private reformatories were used by the state to support their re-education goals, the *Landsopvoedingsgestichten* (LOG) were seen as the flagships of the reform system. Not

⁶⁸² *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 29. Also see pictures of pupils exercising, etc. During the official opening ceremony of LOG Semarang in 1918 the physical state of the pupils was used to prove the beneficiary effects of re-education to Dutch and indigenous guests. After a speech from the director of the Justice Department H.J. Scheuer, the guests were shown around the buildings and the opening was concluded by a public display of the pupils, who reportedly 'boldly executed a series of exercises with sticks in military fashion.'

⁶⁸³ For more on how colonial authorities dealt with the bodies of delinquents see Clare Anderson, *Legible Bodies, Race, Criminality and Colonialism in South Asia* (Berg, Oxford, 2004). She wrote a fascinating book about the way the British marked, measured, tattooed, photographed and described the bodies of convicts in South Asia.

only did the largest numbers of pupils with a re-education sentence spend their time there, the reformatories were also presented to the public as exemplary and ‘modern’ institutes. By looking at re-education practices in the state reformatories we can discern more about the Dutch colonial vision on Netherlands Indies’ society and its future, and the daily realities and challenges they faced. These facilities – and the pupils they released - were supposed to show both the European and indigenous inhabitants of the colony how children should be raised. For the colonial government the way the reformatories were run and the results they booked were of utmost importance; to secure the future of the reform project itself but also for the symbolic function they had in showing the progressive and modern nature of the colonial state. The different newspapers in the Indies and the Netherlands were interested in the results of re-education and regularly covered news about the reformatories. It was after all ‘Dutch’ government and tax money that was spent on just the state reformatories, an amount that had grown from a mere 30.000 guilders in 1919 to 377.033 guilders in 1929.⁶⁸⁴

The first part of the chapter (6.1) delves into how European and Indigenous personnel of the reformatories tried to shape their delinquent pupils into the sort of orderly, honest, hard-working and firm young men they envisioned. They aimed to change both the physical characteristics and the ‘moral’ behaviour of the youngsters entrusted to them. From the notes educational officers wrote about character traits and behaviours that were encouraged or discouraged, we can learn a lot about the expectations and wishes that European elites had of Indonesian children and adults. Secondly, we will turn to the specifically ‘colonial’ characteristics of the reformatories (6.2). This section explains the role of ethnicity, language, and ‘race’ in the relations between supervisors and pupils, and pupils among each other. Educators tried to instil pupils from different backgrounds with a sense of unity and equality, revealing that the reform system served a process of nation building that might have unforeseen consequences. The third section (6.3) discusses the gendered and racialized education of juvenile delinquents, looking at which practical skills they were taught and why. This gives insight in how juvenile delinquents were prepared for their lives outside of the

⁶⁸⁴ In 1929 the re-education costs per pupil were approximately 1 guilder per day, so 365 guilders per year. These amounts can be found in the different annual reports of the reformatories. This just indicates the money that the government was spending for the state reformatories, the total costs of juvenile re-education were much higher since the government also subsidized the Pro Juventute chapters and the private reformatories and orphanages that took care of juvenile delinquents re-educated by private initiative instead of the state.

state reformatory.⁶⁸⁵ The last section (6.4) evaluates if re-education of juvenile delinquents was seen as a successful project, or not.

6.1. Disciplining and improving body and mind

To discipline pupils' behaviour, a regular daily schedule of physical exercise, schooling, working and learning a trade, and enough good food and sleep was considered crucial. As the physical body was improved by good food and exercise, the mental and emotional body was believed to benefit from a life of order and devoted work that replaced 'tramping and criminality'. 'Strict discipline prevented the acts that were committed earlier through senselessness or a deficient moral development,' wrote one of the directors of the state reformatories in the late 1920s.⁶⁸⁶ This approach was followed in the private reformatories and orphanages as well, but schedules and discipline seem to have been much stricter in the 'modern' state reformatories (LOG). Since the state reformatories became the official face of the colonial re-education system, this section focuses on these facilities to show the priorities and re-education goals of the colonial government and its officials.

The descriptions that the annual reports give of life in the state reformatories show that it was highly regimented and left little to the imagination. This approach was similar to institutions in the Netherlands, Europe, and other colonial reformatories and orphanages.⁶⁸⁷ The inmates were woken up at five in the morning and were rushed to the washrooms to clean themselves and get dressed. After that they cleaned the dormitories and made their beds, until breakfast was served around 6.30 a.m. Then it was time for physical exercise,

⁶⁸⁵ The chapter relies heavily on the annual reports of the reformatories, written by the directors of the different institutions. The lack of sources from the side of (former) pupils naturally makes it difficult to come up with a balanced two-sided perspective of life in the reformatories. What emerges from this chapter is an image of life in the reformatories through the eyes and experiences of European educational officers, especially the directors who wrote the reports. The material shows us a lot about the way they perceived and treated the delinquent children they were trying to reform, but cannot give us the personal experiences of the pupils. For these annual reports I have been able to find the years 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921-1922, 1923-1925 (all dealing with LOG Semarang), and 1926-1927 (covering the LOG's Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, and Tangerang) in the Leiden University library. A separate 1925 report about the Malang reformatory is located in Jakarta in ANRI, while the PNRI in Jakarta has the annual report of the reformatories operating in 1928-1929 (LOG Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, Blitar) (B 1368) and also owns a copy of the report of 1923-1925 (B 640). Unfortunately I was unable to track down any annual reports for the 1930s and early 1940s. Other sources do not give reason to think that re-education practice changed radically during this time, but of course minor changes in policy and practice occurred, if only because of new personnel, changing insights and ideas about re-education, or budget cuts during the Great Depression.

⁶⁸⁶ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 11.

⁶⁸⁷ For example, Dekker, *Straffen, Redden, Opvoeden*; Sen, *Colonial Childhoods*; Owen, *Children of the French empire*.

daily inspection and sick reports. At eight the workday started with practical education (masonry, tailoring, ironwork, gardening, etc.) and household chores like cooking, laundry, and repair work. Between noon and one o'clock there was lunch and time to rest, and the afternoon was filled with the same activities as the morning hours. Around four the pupils ended their workday, bathed, and went to school until dinner was served at six. After the meal, school hours continued for some juveniles, while others made their homework or played games until everybody went to bed at eight o'clock.⁶⁸⁸ The regimen left very little time for unsupervised free time, which was exactly what re-educators aimed for since it minimized the opportunity pupils had to get in trouble or relapse in old behaviour.

Strict time schedules were also necessary because the institutions had relatively little personnel – compared to similar institutions in the Netherlands - and this did not allow for much flexibility. In general, four to six European educational officers, assisted by 10-15 indigenous workers and *mandoers* (overseers) would have to supervise between 140 and 300 pupils. The lack of Dutch personnel made work in the colonial reformatories much more challenging than working in the Netherlands, some re-educators felt.⁶⁸⁹ The Dutch supervisors and indigenous 'lower' personnel like teachers, supporting personnel, and guards were expected to have a 'proper' attitude towards the pupils: 'Immorality should be countered with the right measures, not with the supposed 'indifference' or cruel punishments of the pupil's former milieu, and good character traits [should be] rewarded with appreciation and encouragement.'⁶⁹⁰ Inspired by Western institutions like the George Junior Republic in the United States of America, well-behaved pupils participated in keeping order and worked as liaisons between supervisors and fellow-pupils. They were called monitors, with the idea behind this system that it would teach pupils responsibility, honest judgement of each other's behaviour, and a sense of fairness.⁶⁹¹

While discipline and order was at the core of life in the state reformatories, re-educators were worried that too much routine would make life boring and would not satisfy and sufficiently stimulate the boys. To counter this, the Justice Department allowed re-

⁶⁸⁸ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 85. Also *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 3-6.

⁶⁸⁹ *Verslag Semarang, 1923 t/m 1925*. Written by director H.G. Binnendijk, Semarang December 1925, p. 38.

⁶⁹⁰ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 11.

⁶⁹¹ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 44. W.S. de Haas, director of the Semarang LOG until February 1919, mentioned the American example. De Haas became head of the department of re-education in the Justice Department after his year as the first director of the Semarang LOG.

educators to give out financial rewards to pupils with good behaviour and high labour productivity. There were also special outings and activities on Sundays and holidays. Children who had behaved well went on supervised hikes outside the institution grounds, usually accompanied with music from their own flute and drum band. According to their caretakers, the boys showed remarkable discipline during the hikes, with the boys doing their best to look orderly and firm, purposely trying to make a good impression on the outside world. Soccer was very popular too; pupils usually made two teams and played each other, with the rest watching and cheering them on. In some of the institutions well-behaved pupils were allowed to form teams and join the local indigenous soccer competitions.⁶⁹²

Educational officers employed different means, to try and create a bond with pupils. Directors felt that it was important that educational officers did not change their workplace too often, so pupils and supervisors could get used to each other and develop a bond.⁶⁹³ When they had a private conversation, they tried to speak in the mother language of the pupil instead of the commonly used Malay.⁶⁹⁴ This made it easier to have an open conversation, while also adding to a feeling of trust and intimacy. The Sunday hikes were popular with pupils and supervisors, not only because the change of environment and contact with the outside world improved the mood of the pupils, but also because they created better relationships. ‘They [the hikes] open the soul for a good word and greatly foster confidentiality between the educator and his apprentice, which is a first requirement to get moral influence,’ commented Tuiten.⁶⁹⁵ Another way to get to know pupils better, educators felt, were the weekly ‘story-telling nights’ that were meant to stimulate the moral improvement of pupils. Educational personnel gave lectures in Malay about a variety of topics like: ‘bathing, sleeping, working, being ill, punishment, physical exercise, gas lamps, electrical lights, animal abuse, the loyalty of animals, the danger of flies and rats, the enjoyment of music, gratefulness from men and animals’.⁶⁹⁶

Pupils could ask questions to the speaker, who tried to use examples from their daily life to explain. Usually it was the director who conducted these evenings and held talks, and he felt it was not only an effective way to morally educate the pupils, to get to know pupils

⁶⁹² *Verslag Semarang, 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 23. *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 37. *Verslag Malang 1925*, p. 17.

⁶⁹³ *Verslag Semarang 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 37.

⁶⁹⁴ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 24.

⁶⁹⁵ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 50.

⁶⁹⁶ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 50-51.

more personally, and ‘get to know their thoughts and development levels’. According to Tuiten, pupils enjoyed the story nights a lot, especially the ones whose mother tongue was Malay. To make the lectures more attractive for a large population group in the reformatory, he also wanted to hold them in Javanese.⁶⁹⁷ The lecture evenings and weekend outings were one of the few moments when a more informal, less disciplinary, contact between pupils and supervisors was possible, and therefore they were considered crucial in creating more understanding and trust between the two. Both activities became part of daily life in the other reformatories as well.⁶⁹⁸

Improving the physical health of the pupils was the first and most easily achieved aim of the reformatories. Besides good medical care, the reformatories tried to improve overall health with sufficient and well-prepared food, regular bathing and sleeping, and daily physical exercise and manual labour. To keep track of the effect of this regime, the pupils were measured and weighed every three months in both the state reformatories and the private institutions (see picture).⁶⁹⁹ Since improvements in physical health were a lot easier to measure than improvements in the boys’ attitudes and behaviour, changes in the body were used to claim and showcase the beneficial effects of re-education. The body thus became a literal site of colonialism and re-education. Commenting on the general effects and benefits of re-education, one director stated that he could only say something definitive about the physical wellbeing of the pupils, not about their mental or moral wellbeing. According to him the physical effects of re-education were very positive: ‘The boys are here during a time in their life when they need healthy and powerful nutrition as a first requirement for their development and it can be safely said that the food in the reformatory is much better than most of the lads would have enjoyed outside the institute.’⁷⁰⁰

Descriptions about the state in which juvenile offenders arrived at the reformatories were popular to claim the physical benefits of re-education. ‘Dressed in rags, long hair wildly in their face, the body covered by wounds, underfed, and with furtive eyes... that is how they arrived’, reported De Haas, director of the Semarang reformatory, about his pupils in 1919. According to the different annual reports of the *Landsopvoedingsgestichten*, the boys usually

⁶⁹⁷ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 51.

⁶⁹⁸ *Verslag Semarang 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 37.

⁶⁹⁹ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 8.

⁷⁰⁰ Binnendijk in *Verslag Semarang, 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 27. He then continued by giving an overview of their daily diet; consisting of rice, meat, fish, or egg, fresh vegetables and fruits, coffee and tea, a fermented soy product called tempeh, the local red peppers called lombok, salt, Javanese sugar, palm oil, and cassava or bread

arrived there underfed, neglected, and suffering from various diseases such as chronic malaria and scabies. This remained the case throughout the twentieth century, and directors kept commenting each year on the miserable state in which their pupils arrived.⁷⁰¹

Immediately upon arrival the pupils were washed by their new white caretakers (see picture)⁷⁰² and got their heads shaved to eliminate lice. This not only served hygienic purposes, but also robbed juvenile offenders of part of their individual appearance; the simple uniform did the rest. In this way the looks of pupils were changed to fit the new role and behaviour that was expected of them.⁷⁰³ Next the reformatory doctor gave them a full physical check-up, including checks for venereal diseases. If necessary, sick pupils were isolated in the infirmary or, if their afflictions were more serious than the reformatory could handle, they were sent to a nearby hospital.⁷⁰⁴ The population of the institutes received a health check once a week, and more often if necessary. Everybody received regular vaccinations against cholera, typhus, dysentery, and pox. The most frequent serious afflictions were malaria and tuberculosis, but they were rarely deadly. On average, reformatories lost one pupil every two years to diseases like malaria and pneumonia, and this was usually because a pupil arrived with afflictions that had not been treated on time. Skin and eye diseases were part of the usual discomforts, but they were usually treated effectively. In general these measures seem to have been sufficient to avoid general health problems in the reformatories.⁷⁰⁵

Once every year large-scale influenza epidemics took place in most of the reformatories, like in November 1918 when the worldwide Spanish Flu epidemic also reached the Semarang institution. Fifty-four of the seventy-eight pupils fell ill, but

⁷⁰¹ See the different annual reports under the headings of 'lichamelijke toestand der pupillen' (physical state of pupils).

⁷⁰² When I showed this picture to a group of Indonesian students at University Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta during a presentation in February 2009, it elicited a lot of response. The students were shocked to see an Indonesian boy naked and being washed by a *white* person. They felt it was quite embarrassing, which made me wonder how the pupils who had to undergo it would have experienced this treatment. Was it embarrassing or humiliating to them as well? Remember, they just arrived and did not know any of their caretakers yet. Most of them probably did not live in close contact with any white people, so having to be washed by one might have been intimidating and uncomfortable.

⁷⁰³ For an in-depth discussion of the meanings of convict dress and the response of convicts to the forced changes in their appearance, see Anderson, *Legible Bodies*, 101-130.

⁷⁰⁴ *Verslag Semarang, 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 2, 32 and *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 2-5. *Verslag Malang 1925*, p. 1-3. The doctor was usually the local indigenous physician employed by the colonial government to serve the indigenous hospital and indigenous government workers in the area.

⁷⁰⁵ See *Verslag Semarang, 1923 t/m 1925*, p 2-5 and *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 7-10.

surprisingly enough they all recovered in two weeks time and there were no deaths. Considering the high death rate of the Spanish Flu, medical care must have been quite good.⁷⁰⁶ An influenza outbreak in the Malang reformatory in August and September 1925 was more severe; it affected the lungs especially, and cost the lives of three pupils.⁷⁰⁷

Besides good food, physical exercise was seen as an essential part of (re-)education efforts, and was practiced for a minimum of thirty minutes a day, six days a week. This usually took place just after breakfast, at 7 in the morning, to avoid the worst of the tropical heat. The annual reports all claimed that pupils were hesitant about exercising at first, but soon participated fanatically and with good results.⁷⁰⁸ When the first reformatory opened in Semarang in 1918, the staff adopted the instructions for physical exercise as practiced by the infantry of the Netherlands-Indies army, and other reformatories copied these exercises. The regulations stated that 'gymnastics improve the body in terms of health, muscle strength, dexterity, and immune system and contribute to moral values like courage, mental capacity, willpower, self confidence, determination.'⁷⁰⁹ The right physical exercise was thus believed to form a bridge between the body and the mind of pupils.

Daily exercises consisted of general fitness exercises like knee-bends and push-ups, but also gymnastics on the bridge, the horizontal bar, and the jumping pole and games like soccer, rope pulling, tag, etc. Occasionally pupils went swimming in local bathing places. They were also trained in military style exercises like marching and practicing with sticks (in lieu of weapons).⁷¹⁰ Why would educators teach the boys a stick practice that would be done with weapons in the military, one wonders? Would this not convey a message of physical strength and violence to pupils, which could potentially put colonial rule in question? Apparently supervisors did not see any harm or threat in exercises or skills like this; strength and discipline was fostered in service of the state and was not considered threatening.

Throughout the reformatories' existence, registering moral improvement remained much more problematic. The observation of the boys' daily behaviour by caretakers and psychiatrists was as close as they could get, and these observations were difficult to capture in 'objective' numbers and tables, - unlike physical developments, which could be measured

⁷⁰⁶ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 3.

⁷⁰⁷ *Verslag Malang 1925*, p. 2.

⁷⁰⁸ For an assessment of pupil's enthusiasm, see *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 29. Also, *Verslag Semarang, 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 5.

⁷⁰⁹ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 26.

⁷¹⁰ *Verslag Semarang, 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 23-24. *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 8-9.

and weighed. Educational officers were instructed to observe and make notes of ‘special facts’ with regards to pupils, and report those to the director. Every three months, the Justice Department received a report about each pupil. Pupil’s personal files consisted of their court sentence and regularly updated notes about each pupil regarding their behaviour, school progress, work attitude, health, and any special observations.⁷¹¹ While the personal files have been destroyed, a blank copy of one of the standard forms used in 1918 reveals a lot about the characteristics that were important to supervisors and the colonial state. From the character traits and behaviours that were described and noted in the annual reports of the reformatories we can learn more about the general expectations and wishes that the educational officers projected onto the pupils entrusted in their care, and what they wanted to convey to their superiors at the Justice Department and to the general public.

There was a wide range of attitudes and behaviours that educational officers wanted to teach their pupils. In 1919 director De Haas wrote about the supposed ‘psychological make-up’ of pupils under headings like ‘lying’, ‘regret’, ‘love for parents’, ‘friendship and loyalty’, ‘vanity’, ‘courage and cowardice’, and ‘abnormal sexual tendencies’. The three-monthly report form shows similar characteristics that supervisors had to comment on with respect to pupils. The following categories were mentioned on the form: Calm or active, angry, stubborn, fearful, messy or neat, stealing, mean, honest, lying, obedient or resisting, good or bad relations with comrades, regret, perseverance, industrious or lazy.⁷¹² From these categories and notes the image appears of educational officers who were firmly stuck in a cultural arrogance that propagated Dutch-European values as a way to moral improvement. The annual reports show that educators desired honesty and frankness, firm bodies and straight backs, close and manly friendships, loyalty towards friends and educators, diligence, hard work, and visible love for parents and family. Trying to convey these values to pupils from many different backgrounds, languages, cultures, levels of education and predominantly Islamic religious convictions met with limited success. Three important themes illustrate this: lying and honesty, crime and regret, and friendship and sexuality.

First of all, there was the aim to teach the pupils honesty and openness, instead of what the educators perceived as dishonest behaviour. Most of the annual reports state that the pupils lied in almost all situations. They lied before the judge, and, when they arrived at the

⁷¹¹ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 31-32. The archives of the reformatories and those of the Justice Department were destroyed or lost. Regretfully, it proved impossible to find these personal files.

⁷¹² Quarterly report form, Bijlage IV in *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 62.

institution, about their background, their parents, and the crimes they committed. They also lied about their deeds and mishaps once they were living in the reformatory. ‘Without exaggeration lying is their second nature’, wrote Tuiten with an air of despair.⁷¹³ Educational officers characterized this behaviour as an attempt to escape punishment and felt it was not just a moral defect. They referred to the statements of well-known pedagogues and criminologists who claimed that fidgeting, lying and keeping silent were the only means of defence that children had to escape punishment. Not only delinquent children, but any individual that was physically or economically suppressed, would use these defensive measures against the stronger or superior person.⁷¹⁴ This dynamic made it exceptionally difficult to encourage honest behaviour towards the educational officers, who were always in a position of power and were supposed to punish when pupils broke the rules. As one of the students reportedly said, ‘if you do wrong and speak the truth about it, you always get punished. If you deny there is at least a chance that you go free. This is why you are stupid for admitting your sins.’⁷¹⁵ Supervisors failed, however, to analyze pupils’ behaviour in a cultural sense and did not seem to be aware of different notions about the social meanings of shame, truth, lying, and politeness.

In later years the director of the Semarang reformatory sounded more hopeful. He felt that there was a bigger tendency among pupils to admit guilt because the educational officers were encouraging and rewarding them when they spoke the truth. According to Binnendijk, there grew trust between pupils and educators and they understood each other better. He saw this as an accomplishment from the educational officers, who supposedly understood how to deal with the pupils. This was done through a fine balance between persuasion and punishment; the cane had to stand behind the door but should be used as little as possible.⁷¹⁶ The director of the Malang LOG noted in 1925 that the boys who – with their good behaviour - deserved a position in the marching band or the soccer club, or were working outside the walls of the reformatory, also were more trusting and truthful and did not always try to escape punishment or a reprimand by lying. He felt they were having a good influence on the

⁷¹³ Quote Tuiten in *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 8-9. Other comments about lying can be found, for example, in *Verslag Malang 1925*, p. 4. *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 7.

⁷¹⁴ On the tactics of lying among slaves in the American South, see Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll. The world the slaves made* (New York, Random House, 1976. First edition 1972) 599-612.

⁷¹⁵ *Verslag Semarang 1921/1922*, p. 15.

⁷¹⁶ *Verslag Semarang, 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 6-7 en 18.

rest of the pupils.⁷¹⁷ When pupils were entrusted with more freedom and privileges they seemed to return the favour with greater truthfulness and trust. To which extent this behaviour was truly internalized or just a temporary attitude to make life in the reformatory more bearable remains an open question.

Secondly, signs of moral uplift and improvement were sought in an attitude of regret about past crimes and misbehaviour. According to D. Goorissen, director of the Malang institute since 1925, regret about the acts that had led to their conviction and confinement was very rare among pupils, and if they expressed or showed regret it was mostly because of the consequences their deeds had for themselves, not for their victims. His analysis about the origins of this attitude provides insight into the different categories of criminal acts and how the educational officers perceived them. Goorissen basically felt that his pupils were not able to feel regret because of the context in which they had committed their crimes.

‘The deeds that were aimed against the life or safety of persons were usually committed by lads from those regions where killing others – who had committed something against them – is considered adat. The more serious offences against property were usually committed together with older members of their race – even parents – and those elders abused the boys. The lighter offences against property were predominantly committed out of want, some by request of elders, and some out of having a sweet tooth. These circumstances do not really help the boys to look back on their deeds with regret.’⁷¹⁸

But, said Goorissen, after a few years of a regulated and orderly life in the institution this attitude usually changed a bit, and pupils showed regret about their misdeeds in the institution, because this hurt their caretakers.⁷¹⁹

De Haas commented that most pupils felt that stealing was completely acceptable. For some killing was considered normal too. He told the story of two boys from Celebes who had willingly killed a younger friend because they suspected him of stealing a bird from them. When De Haas was grilling them in his office about their deed, they openly admitted that they did not regret it at all. ‘The boy had stolen and should be killed for that, this was the adat on Celebes.’ The only change De Haas noted was that they now openly admitted their act; during the court case they had stubbornly refused to admit anything.⁷²⁰ The fact that they had already received their punishment might account for their openness to De Haas; they were in the reformatory already anyway. Their comment about *adat* customs clearly shows,

⁷¹⁷ *Verslag Malang, 1925*, p. 4.

⁷¹⁸ *Verslag Malang, 1925*, p. 5.

⁷¹⁹ *Verslag Malang, 1925*, p. 6. Also, *Verslag Semarang 1921/1922*, p. 9.

⁷²⁰ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 8.

however, how ‘modern’ and ‘western’ colonial ideas about the nature of crime and punishment conflicted with indigenous ideas about crime and how it should be punished. The colonial regime did not allow for ‘people’s justice’, even if it did not harm or conflict with European interests and safety, but felt that justice should be controlled and sanctioned by the state.

Friendship and compassion was a third theme that was always discussed in the annual reports. These characteristics both stimulated and scared the educational officers. It was generally felt that friendship, as Europeans defined it, was hard to come by in the institutions and that ‘where they occurred they were not yet on a high level’, whatever that might mean.⁷²¹ Even though many boys wrote letters to their friends in the institution after being released, educational officers had a low opinion of their friendships. This becomes evident from descriptions about times of sickness and death in the reformatory, when pupils, to the noted surprise of educational officers, asked to visit their sick friends and gave highly prized items like marbles to them. The educators noted that when fellow-pupils died, it depressed the others and they took much care in carrying their friends to their grave and making a simple grave marker.⁷²² The fact that this behaviour surprised educational officers shows how their caretakers did not consider the ways in which the boys usually related to each other ‘real’ friendships.

While signs of friendships and kindness were considered a positive marker of pupils’ moral development, they were also watched with apprehension. In the Semarang reformatory, the educational officers observed a tendency among boys from the same region or ethnicity to spend too much time together and form clubs to defend their rights or dominate other pupils - in today’s parlance we would probably speak of gangs. One of these gangs was exposed as a ‘secret association’ that planned to disrupt life in the reformatory by staging some sort of revolt. It was disbanded before anything really happened. ‘Even so, there was hardly ever a strict or remaining separation between the different races and permanent disputes were never found’, concluded the institutes’ director in 1922.⁷²³

That loyalty among pupils sometimes included their caretakers became apparent in 1925, when a newly arrived Chinese pupil tried to gain support for an attack he planned on one of the educational officers. While the plot was not reported to the leaders of the

⁷²¹ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 8.

⁷²² *Verslag Malang, 1925*, p. 4-5.

⁷²³ *Verslag Semarang 1921/1922*, p. 16.

reformatory, none of the pupils participated. When the Chinese boy attacked one of the educators with a piece of wood and shouted to the others to join him, the remaining boys grabbed every object they could find and jumped to the defence of the educational officer, who was already bleeding from a head wound. The attacker reportedly had to be rescued from their hands to prevent him from serious harm. This pupil, who also proved to be older than the legal age for re-education, was then removed from the institution and handed over to the police to be sent to court again and serve time in prison.⁷²⁴ The story seems to confirm the general feeling of the director that there was growing trust and loyalty between pupils and their caretakers. But it also shows that new arrivals had to work their way into the system and that it took time to build relationships among fellow pupils. Moreover, since there were only twelve Chinese boys in the institution at the time, and about 135 boys classified as 'Inlanders', things might have gone slightly different if the troublemaker had been from Java or Soenda for example, where the majority of pupils originated from.⁷²⁵

A bigger cause of concern surrounding friendships or alliances between pupils was the possibility of sexual activities and relationships. 'In friendship can be found much good, but danger lurks in it too', stated an educator in 1927. 'Sometimes it can develop into a relationship that is too intimate, mixed with a strong element of eroticism.'⁷²⁶ Educational officers – and the general public at the time – feared the sexuality of their protégés (and of the youth in general) and cloaked the whole issue in muted tones and silent implications. Childlike naïveté and innocence were highly priced qualities for children and teenagers, something that stood counter to the earlier mentioned adult-like knowledge of many pupils.⁷²⁷ Small and rather vague remarks about sexuality can be found in the annual reports, but detailed discussions of the topic are non-existent. It is illustrating that comments about the sexuality of pupils are always noted under the entry 'abnormal sexual tendencies'. Just

⁷²⁴ *Verslag Semarang 1925*, p. 18.

⁷²⁵ *Verslag Semarang 1925*, p. 2, has an overview of the ethnic background of pupils, besides 12 Chinese and 135 'Inlanders' there were also 8 'Europeans' (a category including Indo-Europeans with a European father). *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, gives a more detailed overview of the ethnicity of the population of the five reformatories, girls included, on p. 7. On the 31st of December 1929 this consisted of 20 Europeans, 665 Javanese, 15 Madoerese, 156 Soendanese, 59 Malay, 2 Atjehnese, 16 Bataks, 20 Menadonese, 33 Boeginese, 5 Bandjarese, 14 Ambonese, 57 Chinese, 4 Arabians, 1 Dajak, 36 Batavianese, 4 Balinese, 1 British-Indian, 2 Timorese, 1 Niasser. A total of 1111 pupils.

⁷²⁶ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 6.

⁷²⁷ *Verslag Semarang 1925*, p. 8.

normal sexual tendencies apparently did not exist in the minds of educators, at least not for boys in the reformatory.

The 1918 report about Semarang concludes that there was nothing amiss in this department in the first ten months the reformatory operated. It was duly noted however that ‘some lads already had contact with women before their admission into the reformatory’.⁷²⁸ A year later, in 1919, there is a one-liner about some ‘abnormal sexual tendencies’ that were discovered, but were supposedly an exception.⁷²⁹ In the period 1921/1922, however, the Semarang institution was reportedly troubled by ‘budding sexual tendencies’ among the pupils, which they tried to satisfy in ‘unnatural ways’. What they were exactly doing – masturbation and/or same-sex encounters and/or something else – remains unclear, but disciplinary punishments were used to discourage the boys from these practices. According to the director this ‘evil’ was brought into the LOG by a pupil that was formerly living in a private institution and was already known there as a ‘dangerous lad’ for similar behaviour. Strict policing and guards in the dormitories supposedly kept ‘this deficiency’ restricted to a minimum.⁷³⁰ In the next two years, the director of the same reformatory felt that social relations did not take any dangerous forms, but a few times too much affection and intimacy was punished as a proof of ‘perverse’ tendencies.⁷³¹

In the report of 1926-1927, the entry about sexuality shows clearly that it was homosexuality that educational officers were mostly worried about. The report stated that sexual ‘abnormalities’ developed in any institution where a lot of people from the same gender were kept together in seclusion: ‘This is also the case in the *Landsopvoedingsgestichten*, especially among the older pupils who sometimes try to connect to younger individuals for that reason.’ The writer then reassured his readers that there was no reason to worry, since there was enough supervision and the possibility of separating the boys who displayed these ‘tendencies’.⁷³² In general, sport and physical exercise, games, manual work, school and other ‘useful’ activities were considered preventative measures. Educators believed that as long as the boys were kept busy, stayed under the watchful eyes of the staff, and went to bed tired, sexual ‘abnormalities’ could be prevented.

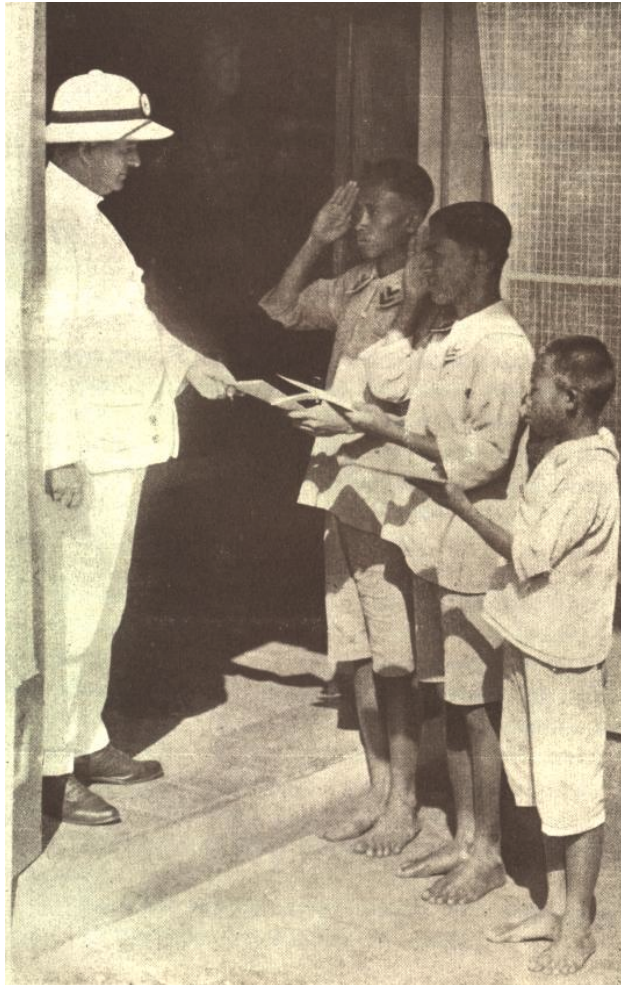
⁷²⁸ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 8.

⁷²⁹ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 10.

⁷³⁰ *Verslag Semarang 1921/1922*, p. 34.

⁷³¹ *Verslag Semarang 1923/1925*, p. 18-19. Similar comments can be found in *Verslag Malang 1925*, p. 6.

⁷³² *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang 1926 en 1927*, p. 6.



State reformatory Malang – Monitors reporting to educational official.

Source: *Verslag LOG Semarang, Malang, Ngawi en Tangerang, 1926-1927*, p. 24-25.

Original title of picture: L.O.G. te Malang – Monitors rapporteerend aan opvoedend ambtenaar.



Quarterly weighing and measuring

Source: *Verslag LOG Semarang, Malang, Ngawi en Tangerang, 1926-1927*, p. 4-5.

Original title of picture: Driemaandelijksch meten en wegen.



An 'extra cleansing' at the first arrival

Source: *Verslag LOG Semarang, Malang, Ngawi en Tangerang, 1926-1927*, p. 2-3

Original title of picture: Een 'extra beurt' bij eerste opname.



State Reformatory Ngawi: Exercises in formation.

Source: *Verslag LOG Semarang, Malang, Ngawi en Tangerang, 1926-1927*, p. 22-23.

Original title of picture: L.O.G. Ngawi – Ordeoefeningen.



State Reformatory Ngawi: Free exercises.

Source: *Verslag LOG Semarang, Malang, Ngawi en Tangerang, 1926-1927*, p. 22-23.

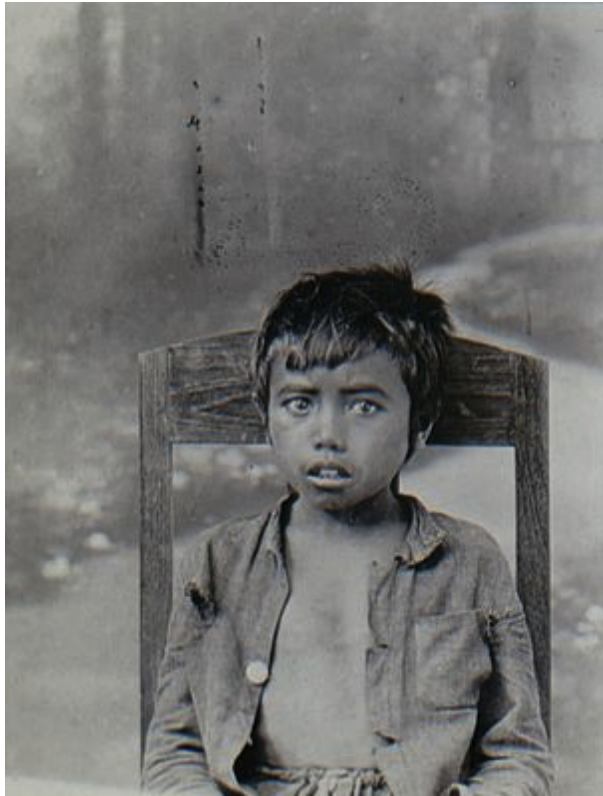
Original title of picture: L.O.G. Ngawi – Vrije spelen.



Source: *Verslag Semarang 1919* Title: *Gymnastische oefeningen* (Gymnastic exercises). LOG Semarang, 1918



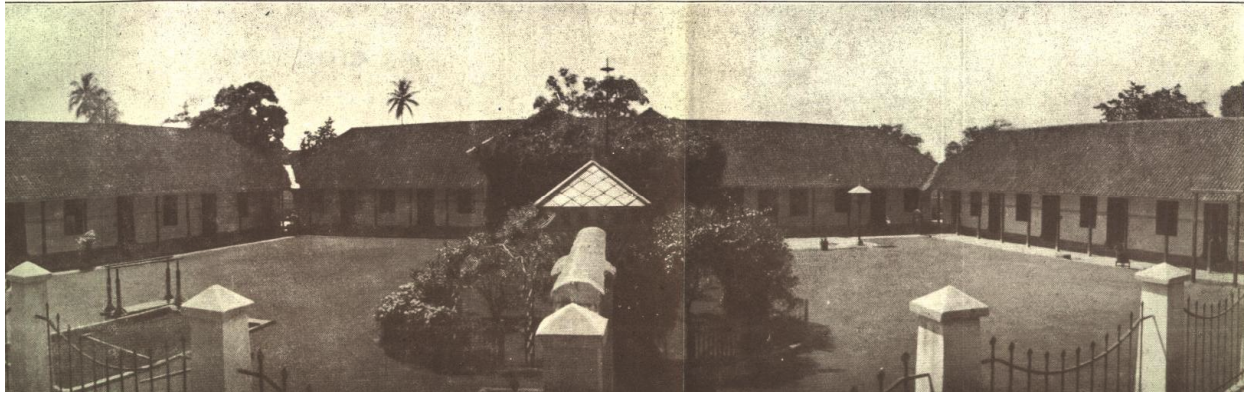
Children on the playground during some sparse playtime. Malang Reformatory
Source: *Verslag LOG Semarang, Malang, Ngawi en Tangerang, 1926-1927*, p. 14-15.
Original title of picture: LOG Malang – Op de speelplaats



Child, just after arriving at Pro Juventute agricultural colony Pasoeroean (Klakah), 1925.
Source: KITLV beeldbank.



Child, three weeks after arriving at Pro Juventute agricultural colony Pasoeroean (Klakah), 1925.
Source: KITLV beeldbank.



State reformatory Malang: inner courtyard with view of cellblocks and sleeping quarters. On the left we see equipment for physical exercises.

Source: *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 30-31.

Original title of picture: Landsopvoedingsgesticht te Malang - Binnenpleinen



The marching band of the Malang state reformatory in the inner courtyard of the reformatory with cellblocks in the background.

Source: *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 12-13.

Original title of picture: L.O.G. te Malang – Blaas en tokkelmuziek

6.2. Specifically colonial aspects of life in the state reformatories

All in all, daily life in the state reformatories was pretty much the same as in other reformatories in other countries, based as they were on contemporary pedagogical and criminological ideas. But there were also specific colonial sides to the Indies' re-education system. The ethnic and religious diversity of the reformatory population posed specific challenges for both educators and pupils. Sources about life in the state reformatories often mention the complexity of colonial society and a perceived rift between 'East and West'.

Like European judges, European supervisors often had problems understanding the nature of the youngsters they had to educate. They perceived this in a specifically colonial way, with a focus on a supposed East-West dichotomy, comparing the character and behaviour of indigenous youngsters with Dutch or Western children. This comparison was undeniably coloured by the racist and Orientalist outlook prevalent in colonial and metropolitan society at the time. The annual reports convey images of Eastern youth as more closed off than their Western peers, too mature for their age, naturally lazy, and almost always dishonest and cowardly. European educators felt that they could hardly understand the children they were entrusted with.⁷³³ Director Tuiten mentioned in his 1919 report about the second year of LOG Semarang that pupils in the Indies had a 'fundamentally different psyche' when compared to Western ones.⁷³⁴ This was not a reason to despair that re-education in the Indies would fail, officials felt, but just an extra challenge. Obviously they were not going to discredit their own work by concluding that these cultural or racial differences could not be overcome.

In 1922 director Binnendijk of LOG Semarang noted 'a general lack of direction and willpower' on the one hand – a typical Orientalist image of the lazy native - and on the other hand a generally much earlier and greater independence and in-depth knowledge about 'adult topics' like marriage, birth, death, sexuality, financial affairs and 'the origins of venereal disease.' This early adulthood was not seen as something natural or healthy to local culture, but as a possibly dangerous trait or attitude that stemmed from the failing pedagogical skills of Indonesian parents and had to be corrected. Binnendijk described the case of a fourteen

⁷³³ See the remarks of De Haas about the 'closed nature' of the pupils, in *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 4. Tuiten commented that the Eastern psyche was so different from the Western, that 'we do not dare to claim that we are able to see through and understand the character of all the boys in the reformatory', in *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 7. Similar comments by director Binnendijk in *Verslag Semarang 1921/1922*, p. 6.

⁷³⁴ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 48-49.

year-old from Madura who was working completely independent as a coolie on a tract of sharecroppers land in East Java. This boy provided for himself, and when a thirty-year-old compatriot did not want to return the money he had borrowed from him, he seriously hurt his debtor with a *patjoel* (hand plough). ‘This pupil is like an adult in his whole being. Always serious, never exuberant, constantly industrious. He knows the *struggle for life* and the seriousness of life to the smallest details.’⁷³⁵

These claims and descriptions about the unhealthy maturity of indigenous youngsters were very similar to what educators in British India wrote about their pupils. Colonial discourse had a tendency to stress that something was inherently wrong with indigenous children (and adults), which did – as Sen already concluded – provide an easy argument for the necessity of colonial rule. But instead of concluding that re-education of indigenous youngsters did not work, Dutch re-educators concluded quite the opposite: re-educating indigenous youngsters might be challenging, but it was possible. The annual reports could be critical of pupils’ abilities, but they also painted a rose-colored picture of the effects of re-education. No wonder, if we keep in mind that these reports were published and were a means to prove the worthiness and effectiveness of the colonial re-education project to both the colonial and the Dutch government and the general public.

Educators never failed to stress that the ‘general atmosphere’ in the reformatory was good, that the majority of the boys turned out to be industrious and eager, liked going to school, developed activities like playing sports, singing and create theatre plays, and that most boys seemed to feel ‘at the right place’ in the *Landsopvoedingsgesticht*.⁷³⁶ Especially in the early years of the reformatory in Semarang, when expansion of the system was still unsure, claims about the effectiveness of re-education can be found throughout the annual reports. ‘Under knowledgeable and enduring moral leadership the pupils can be shaped into something good. The experiences of this year, just as those from last year, have repeatedly proven this, so one does not have to doubt the good results of *Dwangopvoeding* (re-education) for the *Indische* youth.’⁷³⁷

The view of educational supervisors and the colonial government was that something was inherently wrong with indigenous delinquent youth - similar to European elite ideas about the poor and criminal - but that through their own ‘knowledgeable’ and moral

⁷³⁵ *Verslag Semarang 1921/1922*, p. 7-9.

⁷³⁶ *Verslag Semarang, 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 14.

⁷³⁷ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 13.

leadership, they could be fashioned into something good. This rhetoric was a micro version of the larger macro version of twentieth century colonial discourse; something good could come of 'Native society', if only the superior westerner was allowed to teach and lead 'the natives' to their improved future. And this was related again to the bourgeois civilizing mission in the metropole. But when carefully reading and re-reading the annual reformatory reports, a more complex picture emerges; a picture rife with contradictions, hopes and expectations, disappointments and victories, acts of compliance and resistance.

Pupils had a hard time relating to their caretakers and supervisors too. While there seem to be no direct sources in which pupils expand on this, the annual reports give plenty of hints. Each year there are remarks about how closed off pupils are, for example, and how they do not easily trust their supervisors.⁷³⁸ They were forced into a living situation they most of them did not freely choose, as a subordinated category, under the dominance of white people from a different culture. Often they did not speak the same language, especially in the beginning when some detainees still had to learn Malay, which was the lingua franca of the colony and the reformatory. Developing understanding and trust between detained juveniles and their supervisors would be hard in a more homogenous environment too, but the difference in language and ethnicity, and possible resentment against colonial rule, made the situation in the Indies likely more complex.

Because of the enormous diversity of the Indonesian archipelago, the reformatory drew pupils from many different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. In general the published statistics just show a division in four legal categories: European (often Indo-European), Chinese, Foreign Oriental, and Indigenous - with Indigenous pupils always the overwhelming majority. But in daily life educators and pupils experienced ethnic and cultural variation as a much broader and more complicated aspect. Only in the annual report of 1928-1929 do we find a table that gives an impression of all the ethnicities present in the five reformatories operating at that time.⁷³⁹ On 31 December 1929 a total of 1111 boys and girls were living in the reformatories, and they represented nineteen different ethnicities.

Not surprisingly, Javanese pupils formed a huge majority (665), because Java was both the most closely governed and controlled, and most densely populated island of the archipelago. Next to the Javanese there were large groups of Soendanese (156), so-called Malays (59), Chinese (57), and Betawi/Batavian (36) youngsters. There were only twenty

⁷³⁸ See, for example, *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 21.

⁷³⁹ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 7.

European pupils, who were predominantly of Indo-European origin. More interesting than just the plain numbers is that the table shows us something that is also confirmed by the court documents and letters to the Justice Department in the archive of the *Algemene Secretarie*; pupils were sent to the reformatory from all over the archipelago, even if pupils from the so-called *Buitengewesten* (outer regions) were a clear minority: two from Timor, two from Atjeh, one Dajak from Borneo, four from Bali, and a few more from other places.⁷⁴⁰ The predominance of Javanese pupils in the re-education system is comparable to regular higher educational institutions in the Indies, where pupils from the outer regions were also a minority. Java was governed most closely and the most densely populated island of the archipelago, and this was visible in all aspects of colonial life.

In the early years of the reformatories, matters of race and ethnicity outwardly played a much larger role than in later years. Until the late 1920s, matters of race were always discussed in the annual reports, but in 1929 ethnicity was either less on the mind of educators and officials, or it was no longer thought relevant or appropriate to openly discuss supposed ethnic differences among pupils. In the 1928/1929 report there were no specific comments about ethnicity, although there was a detailed statistic overview of the ethnic make-up of the reformatory population. In earlier years, the perceived 'racial differences' between the different groups of pupils was a common topic and there was a great deal of stereotyping. According to director De Haas of LOG Semarang, Chinese boys were much more frank, and even 'impertinent' upon arrival. The indigenous pupils were described as 'quiet, shy, and fearful' during their first month in the reformatory.⁷⁴¹ Tuiten felt that there was significant difference between pupils from Java and those from the other islands. The Javanese were supposedly closed off, seemingly meek, and protective of their feelings, while the other ethnicities were more confident, frank, showed their opinions, and sometimes gave supervisors the impression that they were pedant or impolite.

Tuiten was quite taken with the frankness of the non-Javanese boys, since they honestly admitted to their wrongdoings. This was considered more 'firm' than the attitude of

⁷⁴⁰ *Buitengewesten* was the name for all the islands surrounding Java and means 'outer districts', it was a broadly used term for anything that was far away from colonial headquarters in Batavia.

⁷⁴¹ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 16. In late 1918, when the Semarang reformatory operated for almost a year, 78 boys had gradually entered the reformatory from private institutions and through court sentences. Three of the pupils were European, three Chinese, one boy was called 'Indo-Arabic', and the overall majority of 71 was classified as Indigenous.

the ‘scared’ pupils from Java who were less honest and tried to escape punishment.⁷⁴² De Haas also singled out Chinese boys when it came to perceived qualities like perseverance and industriousness, something that the Indo-Europeans and Javanese supposedly did not have, and the pupils from the outer islands just a little.⁷⁴³ Chinese boys were also considered to better and more precise carpenters and chair- or basket weavers. The industriousness and business talents of the Chinese were praised and feared in general, as strong competition for the ex-pupils who would try to find a job in professions dominated by Chinese.⁷⁴⁴

It is striking how easily De Haas – and in later years Tuiten as well – spoke about ‘the Javanese’ and ‘the Chinese’ as general categories to whom can be ascribed certain strengths and weaknesses: ‘The Javanese is quickly discouraged. If he is interested in something (for example learning a trade or regular school subjects) but there are difficulties he has a tendency to quit easily,’ wrote De Haas. He then warned that ‘the Javanese’ needed constant supervision and encouragement from Europeans, even after his discharge, to keep him on the right path.⁷⁴⁵ Depicting the Javanese in this way obviously had its purposes for De Haas and other reformers; if not only delinquent boys, but a whole ethnic and cultural group was so weak, forced education could be seen and defended as something that was absolutely necessary and justified. ‘The Javanese’ could not take care of himself, so it was natural that the government developed ways to do so. In later years these sorts of comments came back, but not directly linked to ethnicity. The writer of the 1928-1929 report wrote that some pupils, who did well in the institution, could not cope with the freedom after their release. They supposedly still needed restrictive measures, encouragement, and leadership.⁷⁴⁶

The ethnic diversity of the pupils also influenced their relations with each other. Not everybody in colonial society spoke Malay at the time; especially boys from the countryside who spoke just their own local and regional language.⁷⁴⁷ Besides language differences, pupils also had to overcome age and cultural differences. ‘In the beginning the different races were pretty distrustful towards each other’, wrote director De Haas in 1918. ‘The educators are consequent in treating everybody as equals [*op voet van gelijkheid*] – and this proves to be

⁷⁴² *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 16-17.

⁷⁴³ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 20. Zie ook: *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 22-23.

⁷⁴⁴ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 36.

⁷⁴⁵ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 20-21. Zie ook *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 22-23.

⁷⁴⁶ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 12.

⁷⁴⁷ See comments on language difficulties, in *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 22.

very productive. It is repeatedly pointed out to the lads that they should be united as members of the same society and that they have an obligation to help each other accordingly.⁷⁴⁸

Educational officers apparently wanted pupils to feel and behave as equals, and to associate with each other beyond ethnic differences. This tendency was also visible among indigenous civil society organisations. While Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah had strong local and regional branches, the yearly national congresses and meetings stimulated their members to start relating to their own struggles and problems as part of a larger, national, development. Benedict Anderson pointed out the unique role of colonial school systems in promoting colonial nationalism in *Imagined Communities* (1983). The government schools brought indigenous youngsters from different regions together in a standardized and equalized system. A similar trend is visible in the state reformatories, where re-educators consciously stimulated a sense of unity and equality to further the reform of their pupils.⁷⁴⁹

Colonial society was deeply racist - and also discriminated on the basis of gender and social class - and privileges were distributed unequally among different ethnic and social groups. Binnendijk, director of LOG Semarang, noted this himself when he wrote in 1925 that on average the pupils got along well with each other and with the educators because 'naturally, nobody gains any privilege from background, colour, or race, while outside in the Indies society these differences are markedly felt'.⁷⁵⁰ He believed that this approach was crucial to build trust in the supervisors and to maintain order in the reformatory. The youngsters demanded just treatment, because if they felt slighted, outbursts followed, and the supervisors tried to avoid this as much as possible. In this sense, the pupils exerted their own power on the regime in the reformatory. An unintended consequence of the equal treatment and encouraged unity might have been a growing sense of nationalism (and even anti-Dutch sentiments), similar to the process Peter Zinoman describes in his work about prisons as unintended brewing places for Vietnamese nationalism.⁷⁵¹

The strong stress on equality and unity in the yearly reports proves that this was not something that developed naturally. In 1919, the director in Semarang observed that different races preferred to spend time with their own kind, and he thought that language was at the core of this preference. But he also pointed out that the bonds of friendship often went

⁷⁴⁸ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 21.

⁷⁴⁹ Anderson, *Imagined communities*, 119-134.

⁷⁵⁰ *Verslag Semarang 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 15.

⁷⁵¹ Zinoman, *The colonial Bastille*, 38-39, 63-70.

beyond racial and language differences and that there existed no 'definite distrust' between different ethnicities. In his eyes, it was possible to get the pupils to associate with each other more, through equal treatment in terms of food, clothes, sleeping arrangements, and language. Everybody was addressed in Malay, except the ones who spoke and understood Dutch; this was apparently not considered to be unequal treatment.⁷⁵²

Despite all the talk about fostering equality and harmonious relationships there were conflicts between pupils too, and some of them were ethnic conflicts. Director Binnendijk, who replaced Tuiten in LOG Semarang in 1922, felt that it would be preferable to separate the pupils in different reformatories on the basis of ethnicity to avoid or solve conflicts.⁷⁵³ Elsewhere he stressed that the relations between pupils were usually good, but that there had been a long dragging conflict between Javanese and Bandjarese pupils (from South Borneo) that flared up once in a while and led to several violent attacks. For this reasons most pupils from South Borneo had been transferred to the newly opened institute in Malang.⁷⁵⁴

While pupils were supposedly never segregated on the basis of 'race' or ethnicity, there were Indo-European pupils who were kept together in one reformatory on the basis of 'language'. It is easy to imagine that there were larger things at stake than their language. Binnendijk had advised to keep them generally separate from Indigenous pupils in 1922, when the institution in Malang opened, '[b]ecause their mixing with Indigenous pupils creates the risk of degeneration to the Indigenous level, for example when it comes to their knowledge of the Dutch language.'⁷⁵⁵ Total segregation of Indo-European pupils in a separate department never happened, there were simply not enough of them to warrant this. Since there were only a handful of them in the re-education system it was easy, however, to house them in one reformatory. Indo-European pupils were always sent to Semarang, the only reformatory where Dutch was taught in school. After the closure of this facility in the early 1930s, they were sent to Tangerang.

Teaching Indo-European pupils Dutch and keeping them together in Semarang did not guarantee the desired effect, however. In 1923 Johann Petelle wrote several letters to his parents in Malay, something that displeased his European father greatly. Johann asked his

⁷⁵² *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 24.

⁷⁵³ *Verslag Semarang 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 37.

⁷⁵⁴ *Verslag Semarang 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 15.

⁷⁵⁵ *Verslag Semarang 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 37.

father not to be mad about him writing in Malay, 'since he had forgotten all his Dutch'.⁷⁵⁶ When his father wrote the Justice Department to complain about this, and asked for his son's probation on the basis of his general improvement and the lack of good Dutch education in the reformatory, Binnendijk advised the department to keep the boy in Semarang.⁷⁵⁷ According to the director, Johann had not 'improved' himself enough. He was described as a slow boy who lacked firmness. 'He is very nervous and doubtful, moreover extremely dishonest and when he would not get constant supervision he would surely also neglect his body. Since he is not firm and vigorous the reformatory discipline is tough for him and he constantly tries to withdraw from it.' He argued that the boy received Dutch lessons five days a week and that it was a 'symptom of his weakness' that he was writing in Malay.⁷⁵⁸

Binnendijk's report to the head of the Justice Department shows once again what was expected of pupils: they had to become firm and dynamic, speak the truth and be hygienic. If this was not the case going home was not an option. 'Only under very strict leadership something good can be made out of this boy', felt Binnendijk. He described the father as 'a feeble, weak man, who is without doubt unbefitting to give strict leadership to his son'. His mother was also unsuitable since she was 'an undeveloped Indigenous woman'.⁷⁵⁹ All the colonial stereotypes about the Indo-European milieu from the lower social classes were present in his letter, and served as arguments to keep Johann incarcerated.

6.3. Gendered and 'racialized' re-education

Life in all the different reformatories was geared towards preparing pupils for their - hopefully honourable - future life in colonial society. Not only were pupils expected to become able workers for their own sake, they should also be contributors to society. Reformatories offered an education that was considered to be useful for society and would provide a solid base of income for pupils. Which skills and trades pupils should learn,

⁷⁵⁶ *Johann Carl Petelle aan zijn ouders, L.O.G. Semarang, 17 Juli 1923.* In Ag 39013/1923. AS, ANRI. The letters of Johann are a unique source, so far they are the only letters written by a reformatory pupil that I have found. They offer a small glimpse of the way he told his parents about life in the reformatory.

⁷⁵⁷ *Brief van J.C.D. Pettelle aan Mr. D. Fock, Gouverneur-Generaal van Nederlands-Indie. Bandoeng, 17 september 1923.* Also *Directeur van het Landsopvoedingsgesticht H.G. Binnendijk aan de Inspecteur van het Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen W.S. de Haas. Semarang 30 oktober 1923.* In Ag 39013/1923. AS, ANRI.

⁷⁵⁸ *Directeur van het Landsopvoedingsgesticht H.G. Binnendijk aan de Inspecteur van het Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen W.S. de Haas. Semarang 30 oktober 1923.* In Ag 39013/1923. AS, ANRI.

⁷⁵⁹ *Directeur van het Landsopvoedingsgesticht H.G. Binnendijk aan de Inspecteur van het Tucht- en Opvoedingswezen W.S. de Haas. Semarang 30 oktober 1923.* In Ag 39013/1923. AS, ANRI.

however, was something that differed per institution, and was also dependent on the ethnicity and gender of the pupil. First I will discuss the state reformatories, with their focus on indigenous pupils. Secondly, the Pro Juventute agricultural colony for indigenous children – in Klakah, near Soerabaja - is analysed.

Ethnicity and gender in the state reformatories: creating housewives and tradesmen.

In 1918, at the time the reformatory in Semarang was opened, the dominant idea was that colonial society needed skilled tradesmen, like carpenters, blacksmiths, and tailors.⁷⁶⁰ This would remain the prevailing notion throughout the 1920s and 1930s, but ‘modern’ agricultural education was added to the curriculum in LOG Tangerang in 1927. Due to the overpopulation of Java, farming was considered less valuable and prestigious, while there would always be a market for houseboys, gardeners and cooks. Reformatory education was copied from the vocational colleges for indigenous students, and the experiences of the directors of these schools was that graduates could find employment in the large European industrial and agricultural companies. Students usually did not have the investment capital to start an independent business.⁷⁶¹

Life expectations for ex-delinquents were clearly gendered and racialized. While vocational work and farming was considered a proper position for the average indigenous boy, Indo-European and Christian Ambonese pupils were considered suitable to work in the offices of the reformatories to train as clerks or secretaries. They were taught typing and secretarial skills.⁷⁶² Indigenous girls in the state reformatories had completely different opportunities; they were prepared for a life as housewives and learned domestic skills and needlework. First of all this section will delve into the situation of the girls, if only to give them a slightly more prominent place in this account than they ever got in any of the annual reports.

Girls were a general minority among government pupils, as we can see in appendix X. In the Indo-European orphanages, the agricultural colonies, and the Pro Juventute shelters girls were more common, but in the state reformatories they only had a marginal place, and it is difficult to find information about their experiences. First of all the state’s first girls’ reformatory in Tangerang was only opened in 1927 – before that time the few girls sentenced

⁷⁶⁰ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 26. Dutch reformatories also focused on agriculture and teaching pupils a trade, see for example Dekker, *Straffen, Redden, Opvoeden*, 288-289.

⁷⁶¹ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 29-30.

⁷⁶² *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 32-33. *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 25.

to re-education were always sent to private reformatories. Therefore there is only annual report information from the state reformatories available for three years, compared to eleven years of state reports about delinquent boys. Secondly, the girls' state reformatory was very small: in 1927 there were 21 girls, which grew to 37 in 1928 and a total of 50 in 1929. Compared to the total number of boys in the state reformatories in those years (823 in 1927, 962 in 1928, 1061 in 1929) it becomes clear that they were numerically underrepresented.⁷⁶³ Lastly, the reformatory directors and Justice Department officials, who were all male and did not take care of the girls, wrote and edited the annual reports. The people taking care of the girls were all female, with their female director officially second in command to the male director of the Tangerang reformatory. It is likely that the female supervisors had less chance and received less space to write about their experiences with the girls they cared for. And if they did, men always edited their work before it appeared in the annual reports. These three factors make it difficult to hear the female voices in the yearly reports.

When it comes to the usually elaborate descriptions about the behaviour and attitude of pupils, the girls are not mentioned at all, thus it is impossible to find out if the moral requirements and expectations for girls were similar to those for the boys. The only time female pupils come into view is when the annual reports dealt with education and personnel. What can we learn from this? Not much, but it does give a glimpse of the expectations that educators, the reform system, the Justice Department, and possibly European elites as a whole, had of the societal position for Indigenous women. First of all, the proper education of the girls in Tangerang did not start until early 1928, because the director felt that the 21 girls placed there in 1927 were not enough to hire a teacher and open a school for them.⁷⁶⁴ Instead they were kept busy with domestic skills like sewing, cooking and needlework. A picture shows all of them sitting inside the reformatory. Four of them are seated in the last row, behind a sewing machine. A second row is sitting on benches with knitting and needlework in their hand. In the front, six girls are sitting on the floor, busy with needlework as well. In the right hand corner an Indigenous woman (who is probably their caretaker, overseer, and/or teacher) is standing at a bit of a distance, as if she does not belong to the group or in the picture. All the girls are looking straight at the camera, wearing white blouses (*kain*) and batik skirts (*sarong*). Their hair is not shaved off, like with the boys, but is combed back and

⁷⁶³ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 1-2 en *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 5-6.

⁷⁶⁴ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 8.

fashioned into neat buns behind their head. The contrasts with pictures of the boys are evident. These girls look like docile, soft, and neat little housewives, nothing like the tough military looking outfits, firm postures, and shaved heads of the boys.⁷⁶⁵

Not only the looks and photographic display of the girls, but also the way the girls' reformatory was built shows a clear difference with that of the boys. Both institutions were on the same grounds and were newly built. The building plan of the boys' reformatory was designed according to the experience that was gained with re-education since 1918.⁷⁶⁶ It shows a continuous rectangular building, completely closing off the inner space of the reformatory from the outside world. This rectangular building consisted of living rooms, sleeping halls, schoolrooms, working spaces, etc. Inside the courtyard, two more lines of buildings (sleeping cells, a hospital, and solitary confinement cells) divided the complex into three separate areas, each with a big open square, covered with grass and lined with some trees. Two of the three departments could hold 100 pupils, the other one 50 pupils.

The building plan for the girls had a village-like atmosphere, open to the outside world, with 5 separate pavilions, each for 15 to 25 girls and their caretaker. There was a separate front building and green spaces and small squares everywhere.⁷⁶⁷ There was a very big kitchen as well, where the girls cooked not only for themselves, but also for the boys' reformatory, which totalled 250 pupils. Teaching the girls to be good housewives, Dutch colonial style, also proved a good way to reduce expenses for the state. (This was similar to all the building and production work that the boys did in the reformatory.) When looking at dress and reformatory design, it seems clear that the boys were seen and treated much more like prisoners than the girls. The girls were considered less of a risk and less dangerous, and received a different treatment. While the boys lived and worked in large groups, the girls were contained in a smaller, family-like setting. While the boys were disciplined, the girls were 'refined'.

Starting in 1928, the female pupils had an Indigenous female teacher and they could go to school. What they were taught exactly is not mentioned, but it is most likely the same basic curriculum that the boys received: reading and writing in the Malay language, and

⁷⁶⁵ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, picture between page 8 and 9. In British India hair cropping was a gendered punishment for disciplining female prisoners. Anderson, *Legible Bodies*, 125-126. None of the documents I found mentioned this as a punishment for female juveniles in the Indies.

⁷⁶⁶ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 32.

⁷⁶⁷ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, building plans between page 32 and 35.

arithmetic. The annual report of 1928-1929 stated that the girls did not receive a trade education but were taught 'domestic subjects'. 'Under the leadership of the reformatory assistants they took care of the upkeep of the reformatory; did their own laundry; and cooked for both reformatories, the boys and girls.' They also learned to take care of the garden of the girls' reformatory – all the green space on the building plans – and were taught to grow 'modest' vegetables and flowers. 'Lastly the pupils received education in decorative and useful handwork, which was also taught by an assistant.'⁷⁶⁸

In 1929 the girls also had a female Islamic teacher who – like the religious instructor of the boys - came once a week to teach them about Islamic religion.⁷⁶⁹ In the 38 pages with descriptions of life in the reformatories in 1928-1929, this is all it says about the girls. And while it is not clearly stated, from these few traces it seems that female juvenile delinquents were treated more like wayward girls than potentially dangerous criminals. The future that was envisioned for them consisted of cooking, laundry, sewing and handwork, gardening, having children and caring for their families. Not surprising for that time, they were expected and trained to live the life of a good housewife. Instead of becoming 'regular' indigenous housewives, however, these girls received an education that stressed European values and skills. In the Muhammadiyah orphanages they taught the girls batik, but in the state reformatory it was needlework.

Expectations and curricula for the male pupils were of a very different kind. In their regimen the focus was clearly on learning a trade. If they could make a decent living and live a regulated and orderly life their prospects would be good, so educators thought.⁷⁷⁰ A solid job, income and regular working hours would prevent them from 'a return to vagabondage and crime', explained the annual report of the reformatories in 1929.⁷⁷¹ In the institutions several different trade educations were offered, like carpentry, blacksmithing, tailoring and sewing, agricultural skills, weaving and wickerwork. These subjects were taught by a combination of European educational officers and indigenous tradesmen.⁷⁷²

Upon arrival, educational officers did their best to find out which skill suited a pupil best, and they were consequently assigned to learn that specific trade for between 6 and 8 hours per day. If pupils could express any preference is unclear, but supervisors often

⁷⁶⁸ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 32.

⁷⁶⁹ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 34.

⁷⁷⁰ *Verslag Malang 1925*, p. 18.

⁷⁷¹ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 16.

⁷⁷² *Verslag Semarang 1923/1925*, p. 32-33.

remarked that pupils regularly changed their minds about what they wanted to do. This was seen as a weakness and these requests were usually ignored.⁷⁷³ Regular school education only took two hours a day and was geared towards teaching the practical skills that pupils needed for their trade; mostly reading and writing, calculating, simple mathematics and geometry. For pupils who spoke Dutch, who were usually Indo-European and Christian Ambonese pupils with some prior education, there was a European teacher who taught in Dutch. Next to the standard subjects, their lessons included geography and history and some time for expanding their 'general knowledge'. Indigenous teachers from the local government schools for Indonesians taught the others in Malay and taught natural science and geography of the Indies as extra subjects.⁷⁷⁴

Tradesmen were expected to find their future employment in a bigger factory or company, since 'none of them have enough means to establish themselves as carpenter or blacksmith in the kampong or desa.'⁷⁷⁵ Boys who were deemed less apt at learning the 'real' trades like carpentry or blacksmithing, or only stayed in the institution for a relatively short time, were trained in others skills. Some institutions taught braiding straw and Rotan for hats and baskets, others focused on agricultural activities, and all of them used some of their least intelligent or ambitious pupils for cooking and doing laundry. For the last category the idea was that they could at least become house servants.⁷⁷⁶ A more professional agricultural training was started in LOG Tangerang in 1927, because re-educators realised that most of the pupils with a rural background wanted to return to their desa and farm life.

That some of the pupils became productive and able workers may be concluded from the fact that they constructed the wooden structures for the new workshops in Semarang in 1923 and 1925 themselves, under the guidance of their teachers.⁷⁷⁷ Experience with the work of pupils was so good, and their labour obviously so much cheaper, that the department of justice planned to have them construct the new reformatory in Blitar. In 1928, the older and more advanced pupils were selected from the different existing reformatories and sent to Blitar, where they built the reformatory between 1929 and 1932. 'While it was originally expected that some experienced workmen from outside would have to be employed, it

⁷⁷³ For example, *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 6.

⁷⁷⁴ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 14-15. Zie ook *Verslag Semarang 1923/1925*, p. 9-10.

⁷⁷⁵ *Verslag Malang 1925*, p. 18.

⁷⁷⁶ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 16-17. *Verslag Malang 1925*, p. 18.

⁷⁷⁷ *Verslag Semarang 1923/1925*, p. 10-11.

became clear that the pupils were able to do practically all of the work themselves,' exclaimed the annual report of 1928/1929.⁷⁷⁸ Supervisors usually praised the skills of their pupils in the annual reports, and the Justice Department eventually conducted research to see if ex-pupils were doing as well as their former educators hoped. But before looking at the results of re-education after pupils' release, we will first discuss the education of pupils in private reformatories.

⁷⁷⁸ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 1, 33.



The girls of the state reformatory for girls in Tangerang, doing needlework and sewing.

Source: *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 8-9.

Original title of picture: Landsopvoedingsgesticht voor meisjes te Tangerang.



Under the waringin tree. Female pupils of the state reformatory for girls in Tangerang.

Source: *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 8-9.

Original title of picture: 'Onder den waringin'. Meisjes pupillen L.O.G. voor meisjes te Tangerang.



The oldest and youngest pupil of the state reformatory for boys in Tangerang. Note that the oldest boy does not have a shaven head, this was allowed for the older pupils who worked outside of the reformatory and would be released soon, so they would not stand out among the general population as government pupils or ex-convicts.

Source: *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 8-9.

Original title of picture: Pupillen L.O.G. voor jongens te Tangerang. De oudste en de jongste.



Male pupils in their woodworking shop at the state reformatory for boys Tangerang.

Source: *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 8-9.

Original title of picture: Timmerij L.O.G. voor jongens te Tangerang.



Front view of the state reformatory Tangerang for boys.

Source: *Verslag LOG Semarang, Malang, Ngawi en Tangerang, 1926-1927*, p. 1.

Original title of picture: Voorzijde van het Landsopvoedingsgesticht voor jongens te Tangerang.



A pavilion of the state reformatory for girls, Tangerang.

Source: *Verslag LOG Semarang, Malang, Ngawi en Tangerang, 1926-1927*, p. 8-9.

Original title of picture: Een paviljoen van het L.O.G. voor meisjes te Tangerang.

Creating the 'practical' indigenous farmer: Pro Juventute Colony, Klakah.

In October 1921, Pro Juventute Soerabaja opened its agricultural colony for juvenile delinquents and neglected children in Klakah, in the countryside of the Loemadjang Regency. The government financially supported the colony, which could house 160 male pupils, because the state reform system urgently needed more places for juvenile delinquents.⁷⁷⁹ The first boys were sent there the same year, and in 1922 about 157 pupils lived and worked in Klakah.⁷⁸⁰ They were mostly juveniles with a re-education sentence, who were directed there by the colonial courts, but some pupils were so-called 'free pupils', who were sent by Pro Juventute social workers with agreement of the children's parents or guardians.⁷⁸¹

In 1922 there were a total of 145 government pupils and 12 free pupils, totalling 157 boys. Of this group there were 12 boys with European and Chinese names, but the majority were indigenous pupils.⁷⁸² This was the target group of the agricultural colony; Pro Juventute re-educators wanted to create 'practical people, who will really move the Native world forward'. The colony aimed to teach pupils a broad variety of practical skills that they could bring back to their desa and their family.⁷⁸³ The boys received a basic school education, but mostly learned construction work and agricultural skills and knowledge. Like the state reformatories, the agricultural colony was religiously 'neutral' and there was religious instruction for each denomination. Communal prayers or religious services, like in the Christian Witte Kruis Kolonie and the Salvation Army agricultural colonies, were not part of daily life in Klakah and the majority of the pupils were Muslim.⁷⁸⁴

The first director of the colony, K. Heijbroek, had his own approach to re-education and believed it was much better to educate his pupils without 'educational officers' like in the state reformatories. He did not need other Europeans there, he stated, and educational officers would only disturb the bond between him and the indigenous boys, except if such a government official had 'heart' for his job. Heijbroek obviously believed that government officials who worked as re-educators were not doing this for the right reasons and did not have a good effect on the pupils. The government did not accept this approach; they felt that

⁷⁷⁹ See chapter five for the full story of the lack of spaces in the reformatories between 1919-1922.

⁷⁸⁰ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1921*, p 11, 38, PNRI.

⁷⁸¹ See for example the description of the European mr. Heijman who worked for the railways and asked to have his son sent to Klakah, in 'Jaarverslag 1922 Vereeniging Pro Juventute Afdeeling Malang' in *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1922*, p 12, PNRI.

⁷⁸² *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1922*, pp 25, 29-36, PNRI.

⁷⁸³ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1921*, p 17, PNRI.

⁷⁸⁴ See chapter three, paragraph 3.4. for more about religious instruction in Klakah.

more European supervision was necessary when the colony grew above fifty pupils, and the first European assistant was hired in 1922.⁷⁸⁵

The director – and the European assistant - worked together with indigenous *mandoeers* to teach pupils how to work the land and construct buildings, and taught them other skills that were useful on a farm. Heijbroek believed that indigenous society needed men who could take care of their own farms, homes, and tools, and who knew how to cook their own meals. Only children with special talents were trained in one specific trade or skill, the others changed their activities every week and worked in the kitchens, on the land, in the workplace, etc.⁷⁸⁶

The rhythm of life was pretty much the same as in the other reformatories; they woke up before sunrise, worked all day, had some supervised free time, and went to bed early. Heijbroek had a lot of faith in this work-regime and did not discuss the ‘moral qualities’ or character of the boys in his annual reports. Good food, hard work, and enough resting time would benefit even the most criminal child, he stated.⁷⁸⁷ While there was discipline, there was no disciplinary regime like in the state reformatories, with lots of rules and regulations. Klakah operated on a much more informal and personal basis, with the director as the centre of the reformatory. According to the board of Pro Juventute Soerabaja, he was ‘devoted’ to his work and his pupils respected and loved him.⁷⁸⁸ It is important to note, however, that private reformatories like Klakah and Salib Poetih received government pupils who had first been ‘observed’ in the state reformatories. The most difficult pupils remained in the LOG, while the more docile were transferred to institutions that offered more freedom (and chances to escape). Boys also escaped from Klakah, however, especially the ones who had just arrived and struggled with their new lifestyle.⁷⁸⁹

The tone of the yearly reports about the Klakah colony was markedly different from that of the state reformatories. The leadership in Klakah seemed much more positive about the behaviour of the boys than in the LOG. Director Heijbroek even said in 1923 that the character of the boys was not different from those of European children of the same age.

⁷⁸⁵ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1921*, p. 17. PNRI. *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1922*, p. 18. PNRI.

⁷⁸⁶ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1921*, p. 17. PNRI.

⁷⁸⁷ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1921*, pp. 18-19. PNRI.

⁷⁸⁸ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1921*, p. 33. PNRI.

⁷⁸⁹ Of the first group of 35 pupils that arrived between 1 November and 30 December only one escaped. *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1921*, p. 16. PNRI. In 1922, 27 pupils escaped, on a population of 160 pupils, twenty of them were caught, and 7 stayed free. *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1922*, pp. 16-17. PNRI.

‘Their affection, their needs and pleasures, are the same. The relation between me and the children is like that of a father with his children.’ Heijbroek described how the older pupils soon started to help him with running the reformatory and helped newcomers to feel at home soon.⁷⁹⁰ This was very different compared to the opinion in the state reformatories, where directors stressed a rift between ‘East and West’. Heijbroek himself noted that the positive behaviour of the juveniles at Klakah had something to do with the fact that they were not the most difficult characters – those stayed in the LOG – and had usually not committed serious crimes, but were sentenced for small theft and vagabonding. Reading his reports it is easy to wonder if it was necessary to send these children to a reformatory, but Pro Juventute was convinced they were well off there in terms of food and education. Another difference with the state reformatories was that older pupils who behaved well were not made monitors, but were hired as *mandoers*. They also worked the night shifts to guard the machine room of the colony. The money they earned was partly given to them and partly put aside for their time of release (as we will see later in the chapter the state reformatories had a similar reward system for pupils who worked in- and outside of the reformatory).⁷⁹¹

In the early years of the agricultural colony (until 1926/1927) school education was conducted differently, in comparison to the state reformatories. The focus was really on creating ‘practical’ rural men and an official education was not thought necessary for this. After a few years the older boys – who had received some informal instruction from the Dutch wife of the director - became the teachers of the younger ones, and this seemed to work very well since all of them were good at reading, writing, and calculating, according to the director. That ethnicity also played a role in the agricultural colony shows in the education of the few Indo-European pupils, who were taught separately by Mrs. Heijbroek. These pupils received education as a reward for good behaviour, and this motivated them much more than if they automatically went to school, Heijbroek observed.⁷⁹² The pupils with a European education were stimulated to do the exams for government officials, and in 1922 one pupil passed his *kleinambtenaarsexamen* (exam for low-level bureaucrats).⁷⁹³ It again becomes clear that Indo-European pupils were re-educated to fulfil a role in society that befitted their skin colour and their status as Europeans.

⁷⁹⁰ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1922*, p. 15. PNRI.

⁷⁹¹ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1922*, p. 16. PNRI.

⁷⁹² *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1925*, p. 33. PNRI.

⁷⁹³ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1922*, p. 49. PNRI.

In later years school education in Klakah was formalized by hiring the Head of the Indigenous School of the village of Klakah to teach in the afternoons, between 2.30 and 5.00 pm., with three indigenous teachers with an official diploma to assist him. Dutch language education for the European pupils - and Ambonese, Menadonese, Chinese and indigenous pupils who spoke Dutch - was given by the Head of the European Public School in Klakah, a certain Mister Van 't Slot.⁷⁹⁴ In the late 1920s, vocational training in the colony was also professionalized, even though the main intention of the colony remained the same and focused on agriculture. The introduction of tractors added to the 'modern' character of the enterprise, and pupils who could work with those machines easily found jobs on larger farms and plantations after their release.⁷⁹⁵ Other modernizations on the colony included the discharge of the colony's resident doctor, who was replaced by two-weekly visits from the doctor in Loemadjang.⁷⁹⁶ In the early 1920s, this was considered undesirable because it took the doctor from Loemadjang too long to get to the colony, in later years the more common use of the automobile provided a solution. It obviously saved money to hire a doctor from somewhere else instead of employing one.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the reform system in Klakah was characterized by a great deal of freedom and independent labour for pupils; as soon as possible they received their own plots of lands and specific responsibilities. They might be growing tobacco or taking care of livestock, but the aim of this system was to make them independent and able farmers. Director Heijbroek claimed in 1925 that this method was working well; he had been able to release two free pupils and eighteen Government pupils before their official time of discharge at age twenty-one. Another seven boys were waiting for approval from the Justice Department to be released as well; they were under eighteen and had not been in the colony for more than three years. In 1925 the director hoped to release another twenty boys, if the Justice Department gave him permission to do so.

⁷⁹⁴ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1927*, pp. 14-15. KIT, MT14T-100233.

⁷⁹⁵ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1927*, pp. 15-16. KIT, MT14T-100233.

⁷⁹⁶ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1927*, p. 19. KIT, MT14T-100233.



The front gates of Pro Juventute agricultural colony Klakah (Beeldbank KITLV)



View of the Klakah colony from the surrounding fields (Beeldbank KITLV)



Pupils in their work clothes in the courtyard of the reformatory (Beeldbank KITLV)



Mrs. Heybroek, the wife of the director, is teaching Dutch to a select group of (probably) Indo-European pupils (Beeldbank KITLV)

6.4. The future of juvenile delinquents

Dutch government officials and re-educators preferred to stress the success of the colonial reform system. Both the private and the state reformatories frequently published their 'success stories'. Director Binnendijk of LOG Semarang boasted in 1922, four years after the reformatory first opened, that most of the boys changed so much during their time in the reformatory - at least in the way they looked - that visiting parents hardly recognised them, and sometimes even thanked the supervisors for their work.⁷⁹⁷ Moe van Emmerik's notes reveal similar stories, which were obviously published to collect sympathy and money from the general public and the government. In October 1929 for example, a little boy who had run away from home because he could not get along with his stepmother, and had arrived at White Cross through Pro Juventute Semarang, was allowed to visit his father for a few days. When his father returned him to the colony he expressed how happy he was that 'little Djani had learned to love Lord Jesus and had changed so much.'⁷⁹⁸

Examples like these, however, did not prove the long-term effectiveness of the reform system; the ultimate test was how pupils behaved after they were released from the reformatory. A healthy physique and improved behaviour were not enough to stay on the right path, pupils also had to acquire the skills that would help them to earn money or be a good housewife. The intention of the reform system, in all its variety, was to change young vagabonds and 'criminals' into orderly, honest, hard-working and firm young men and neat, modest and practical young women. Despite frequent claims about laziness, supervisors described their pupils as eager to attend school – for many of them it was the first time they could do so – and motivated for their practical education.⁷⁹⁹ But educators also feared that their pupils' industrious behaviour was only caused by the strict regime of the reformatory, and that it would falter as soon as they were released.⁸⁰⁰ This essential element of forced re-education, namely that it was through discipline and order that pupils' behaviour was shaped, always left space to doubt the 'real' internal development and character of the pupils. What would become of them without external pressure and strict rules? This became increasingly important when more and more pupils reached the age of discharge in the 1920s and 1930s.

⁷⁹⁷ See for example the story of a visiting father in *Verslag Semarang 1921/1922*, p. 24.

⁷⁹⁸ *Witte Kruis Blad*, October 1929, p. 3.

⁷⁹⁹ In all the yearly reports directors expressed as an overall conclusion that the boys were doing their best and working hard to learn, with some exceptions, mostly caused by what were called 'mental incapacities'. See for examples *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 11. *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 13. *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 10 and 12.

⁸⁰⁰ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 11. *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 10.

Educational officers in Klakah and the state reformatories were confident that pupils had the skills to find work after their release. Their success, however, was not only dependent on their own education and good behaviour but also on how society received them. This was generally considered unproblematic because colonial society supposedly became more 'social minded' over the course of the twentieth century; most people and companies apparently did not object to hiring an ex-juvenile delinquent.⁸⁰¹ The same was true for Indo-European pupils who came from the private reformatories; a certificate from Oranje-Nassau was generally seen as a recommendation instead of a drawback.⁸⁰² This was comparable to the experiences of juveniles who left the Mettray reformatory in the Netherlands; employers were usually positive about their behaviour and capacities.⁸⁰³

Until the mid-twenties an organized attempt to support released pupils was absent, and they were set free without much preparation. The only aid available to ex-pupils had to come from their family or friends, if those were still present and willing to help. Upon discharge, the government and the reformatory tried to keep track of their lives, however, by sending a letter to the Head of the Local Government (*Hoofd Plaatselijk Bestuur*) of the pupils' residence. This letter stated the profession of the pupil and requested the government official to keep an eye on him for some time. How effective this policy was is unclear, although one of the excerpts of a letter from a recently released pupil stated that he was doing very well, 'thanks to the help of the Controleur te'⁸⁰⁴

Director Binnendijk, from the Semarang LOG, wrote in 1923 that the economic situation was not helping things, but that of the five pupils who were released that year, most could at least earn 'their plate of rice'.⁸⁰⁵ He noted that they kept an eye on the young men who were on probation. A year later, 27 pupils were released because they came of age. 'Because many went to *desas* deep in the interior, and from there even to other places, it was difficult to track where these boys landed, with exception of the few who found work in Semarang and sometimes got a good position. From one of our bookbinding students we

⁸⁰¹ Quote in *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 33. For more on positive expectations see *Verslag Malang 1925*, p. 18-19.

⁸⁰² For example, Poldi, *Een Haarlemse diamant in de Gordel van Smaragd*, 170.

⁸⁰³ Dekker, *Straffen, redder, opvoeden*, 289-293.

⁸⁰⁴ *Verslag Semarang 1923/1925*, p. 25-26. Excerpt from letter in *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang*, 1926 en 1927, p. 43. The name of the Controleur's location was left out of the letter, probably for privacy reasons.

⁸⁰⁵ Four pupils were released because of reaching the maximum age of discharge, which was 21 at the time, and one younger pupil was allowed to go on probation for unknown reasons. He might have been a troublemaker or was doing exceptionally well. *Verslag Semarang 1923/1925*, p. 25.

know he found work in a bookbindery, immediately after arriving in his place of residence, earning f40 a month.⁸⁰⁶

To make the transition between the reformatory and life in the free world easier, the Department of Justice allowed older pupils, who were well behaved and skilled enough, to work outside of the reformatory after 1924. This was considered a successful and important method to increase the chances of ex-pupils to succeed in society: 'In this way they get used to relations in the free society, increase their knowledge and ability and moral strength and, moreover, are able to save a significant amount of money from their earned salary that allows them to buy a decent set of tools and other important items after their release', stated one of the annual reports.⁸⁰⁷ The head of the re-education section in the Justice Department, De Haas, was enthusiastic about this system, especially since there were hardly any escapes, and the boys who were working outside the walls did their best to behave well.⁸⁰⁸

The Klakah colony employed a similar method to prepare older pupils for their release. Starting in September 1924, the colony started a second enterprise nearby, in Pasirian, where the older boys had their own piece of land and were working and living together under supervision of a *mandoer*. The director visited them once a week to see how they were doing, and described enthusiastically how they were making agricultural land out of primal forest. Because malaria was common in that area, all pupils received a *klamboe* (mosquito net) to keep them healthy.⁸⁰⁹ In the same year, the colony acquired the use of nearby *sawah* (rice fields) for the same purpose. Pupils who worked on this land could buy it from the government as soon as they turned twenty-one, and could pay in instalments. This way, the colony tried to guarantee a good future for pupils who could not - or did not want to - return to their families. At the same time they hoped that these 'satellite' colonies could be a source of income for the Pro Juventute association and the main colony.⁸¹⁰

In the mid-1920s more and more pupils ended their re-education sentence each year, especially after September 1925 when the age of release was lowered from 21 to 18 years old

⁸⁰⁶ *Verslag Semarang 1923/1925*, p. 25.

⁸⁰⁷ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 24.

⁸⁰⁸ De Haas explained the benefits of this system in a newspaper interview. 'Tucht en Opvoedingswezen. Een interview met het hoofd van den dienst'. *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 13-09-1927, Avondblad A.

⁸⁰⁹ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1925*, p. 29. PNRI.

⁸¹⁰ *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1925*, pp. 29-30. PNRI. *Jaarverslag van de Vereeniging Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1922*, p. 50. PNRI.

and 49 pupils in the state reformatories were allowed to go.⁸¹¹ The Justice Department and educational officers realized that it was necessary to support ex-pupils with their transition to a free life. The government discussed this with the Pro Juventute branches and different probation associations for adults. De Haas, as director of TOA, also started an inquiry to find out what had happened to the pupils that had been released since 1920. He claimed in 1927 that early results showed that about 60 percent of the ex-pupils behaved well. 'A number that corresponds with the results of re-education in other countries,' announced the annual report.⁸¹²

In the summer of 1927 De Haas told the Dutch-Indies press agency Aneta that he had discussed the issue of ex-pupils' employment with the directors of the reformatories. He explained that the boys were usually sent back to their family, but that they first checked the living circumstances there to make sure the boys did not return to an 'unbeneficial' environment. If they had no family, Pro Juventute helped them to find a fitting home and job.⁸¹³ But this was not always a recipe for success. According to a Dutch newspaper, which based its reporting on colonial newspapers, some pupils were wandering around in their old *desas* for months, without anybody able or willing to give them a job in 1928. They came back to the gates of the reformatory starving and neglected, begging for work and food. This was not blamed on the pupils, who were described 'almost without fail' as industrious, well-behaved and capable *toekangs*, but on their milieu. Most were originally from the lower classes of society, wrote the newspaper, and they usually lacked family, friends and parents. And if they still had parents or family, the newspaper sneered, 'it is doubtful that they care more about their grown-up child than they did before they were admitted to the institution'.⁸¹⁴ It was not re-educational practice that took the blame for ex-pupils who failed to become self-sufficient and successful workers, but the parents and lower-class indigenous 'milieu'.

⁸¹¹ In 1918 and 1920 there were no boys yet who had reached the end of their sentence or fulfilled the age of re-education. This was usually the same since judges tended to sentence youngsters to be re-educated until reaching adulthood. This was 21 until 1 September 1925 when it became 21. In 1920 1 boy was released, in 1921: 11, 1922: 2, 1923: 4, 1924: 27, 1925: 49, 1926: 33, 1927: 64, 1928: 77, 1929: 106. (All numbers can be found in the tables in the *Verslagen Landsopvoedingsgestichten 1918-1929*.) Educational officers had requested for several years to lower the age of discharge, because they struggled every day with older boys who became more and more difficult and were getting too mature to be in the reformatory. *Verslag Semarang, 1923-1925*, p. 15-16.

⁸¹² *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 35.

⁸¹³ 'Tucht en Opvoedingswezen. Een interview met het hoofd van den dienst'. *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 13-09-1927, Avondblad A.

⁸¹⁴ 'Nazorg van verpleegden in opvoedingsgestichten. Pupillen uit de landsopvoedingsgestichten kunnen geen werk vinden. Overleg met Pro Juventute'. *Het Vaderland*, 2-8-1928

These ideas and complaints are found in the annual reports as well. One of the assessments of why former pupils failed to work as skilled tradesmen after release was that they often, too often, changed their minds. ‘The government pupils naturally suffer from a desire for change. One day they want to be a carpenter, then tailor, soldier or clerk. Of course we do not give in to this desire for variation and try to grow a more stable mind, but this does not always happen. And when trying to find a decent living after discharge, this desire for change can have a negative effect.’⁸¹⁵ Another thought was that the return to their old environment led them away from their trade. Supervisors felt that ex-pupils usually considered it more important to go back to their place of origin, regardless if they could practice their skilled trade there or not. Educational officers and directors regretted this, because even some of the ex-pupils who had good positions left their jobs to go back home, to a ‘lesser’ quality of life, according to the annual reports.⁸¹⁶ These comments show that ex-pupils, who could now make their own choices and establish their own priorities, again, were still very much attached to their roots and did not always meet the expectations of supervisors and the colonial government.

The Justice Department and the reformatories did learn, however, from the information they had about the career perspectives and behaviour of their ex-pupils. In 1927, the new institute in Tangerang started agricultural training under the leadership of an educational officer with a degree from the Agricultural College in the Dutch town of Frederiksoord.⁸¹⁷ The agricultural education in Tangerang was of higher level than in other reformatories, where working on the land was usually reserved for pupils without any talent or will to learn a ‘real’ trade. In LOG Tangerang agriculture was meant especially for those pupils who came from an agricultural background. They learned technical skills like irrigation and fertilization and were growing vegetables, fruits, cassava, corn and other foods.⁸¹⁸ This would be a better investment to their future than learning a trade, so educators thought, because if they went back home anyway their agricultural knowledge and experience would be much more useful in their village environment. They might even bring

⁸¹⁵ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 23.

⁸¹⁶ *Verslag Semarang, 1923-1925*, p. 25. *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 38.

⁸¹⁷ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 31.

⁸¹⁸ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 11. *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 31-32.

new agricultural knowledge and practices to their village this way, spreading ‘modernity’ and setting new examples.

In 1927, the annual report differentiated between the perspectives of boys from an urban and boys from a rural environment. The discharge of city boys was considered risky, because if they did not find a job ‘the whirlpool of city life with all its moral dangers usually sucks them down.’ It was supposedly much easier for the pupils who returned to a rural life. ‘These pupils, carried and supported by their family and desa relations and habits usually have no problem to connect to this again and generally lead a quiet and peaceful life, similar to their whole environment.’⁸¹⁹ So apparently not everybody found the return to a former life and the old environment a bad idea; as long as it was a peaceful village this could be quite all right.

After the newspaper reports about the discharged pupils who returned to the gate of the reformatory to beg for food and shelter, the government intensified its discussions with Pro Juventute and other associations to develop better guidance and supervision for ex-pupils.⁸²⁰ In 1929, Pro Juventute and the mass Islamic organization Muhammadiyah were mentioned as ‘very forthcoming’ in helping out with the aftercare of discharged pupils. and ‘[a]lso almost every request [for help] to governments, individuals and associations was honoured.’ The writer noted that this aspect of re-education would probably remain most problematic ‘because of the great area [size of the colony] and the impossibility to find co-operators in every location’.⁸²¹ Nevertheless, the government managed to extend its influence and oversight over ex-pupils by employing private associations and concerned citizens. In this way the reform system stretched out beyond the reformatories on Java, to many corners of the archipelago.

There was even more positive news from the Justice Department that year, about the behaviour and career perspectives of ex-pupils. How and when they conducted their research is unclear, and the results of this self-conducted and self-promoting research cannot be taken at face value. Nevertheless, the outcome of the state survey was something that civil servants, educators, and reformers believed in and cheered about. ‘We announce that the research into the fortunes of the ex-pupils [of the state reformatories] over the years 1918-1928 was

⁸¹⁹ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 24.

⁸²⁰ ‘Nazorg van verpleegden in opvoedingsgestichten. Pupillen uit de landsopvoedingsgestichten kunnen geen werk vinden. Overleg met Pro Juventute’. *Het Vaderland*, 2-8-1928

⁸²¹ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 38.

finished in 1929', stated the 1929 annual report. 'The result was very encouraging. 60 to 70% of the discharged were behaving well in society, 10% had taken the wrong path, while 20% were not found back. The result that re-education has here is better than in many other countries.'⁸²²

The writers of the annual report did not clarify what it meant 'to behave well in society', but we can assume that it meant they stayed out of trouble with the authorities and usually had a job or means of income. Boys who had 'taken the wrong path' were probably involved in criminal or undesirable activities or not living a regular life (for example by vagabonding). That 20% of the ex-pupils was not found probably had to do with the fact that they moved away from places with oversight from Pro Juventute and the colonial authorities; they might have returned to small villages in the outer regions or they might have made an effort to escape after-care and oversight regardless of their location.

In a letter from the director of the Justice Department to the Governor General, the favourable results were used to urge the establishment of more reformatories, since re-education was so effective. Director of Justice Rutgers mentioned that according to research in the Netherlands, only fifty percent of the Dutch juvenile delinquents stayed away from crime after their discharge.⁸²³ Rutgers' conclusions might have been a bit exaggerated, but he was not far off. The ex-pupils of a state reformatory in the Dutch city of Leiden were reportedly doing just as well as boys in the Indies: 65% succeeded after discharge between 1910 and 1912, and between 1910 and 1924 60% succeeded. Dutch girls had a harder time to reintegrate or were simply scrutinized more carefully by the authorities; about 50% reportedly succeeded after their release.⁸²⁴

Educators and Justice Department officials in the colony also liked to show, and believe, that pupils were grateful to be in the reformatories, and that they themselves understood that it was in their best interest and would offer them a better future. Throughout the yearly reports, letters from pupils to their parents with positive comments were used to prove this point. 'Several times the letters written home showed contentment, both about life

⁸²² *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 13.

⁸²³ *Weltevreden, 14 Februari 1928, Directeur Rutgers van het Departement van Justitie aan de Gouverneur-Generaal*, in Ag 21714/1930, ANRI, AS, Jakarta. The Dutch research was published in an article by Mr. G.L.Suermondt: 'De resultaten voor het Rijksopvoedingswezen', in *Tijdschrift voor Strafrecht*, 1925, deel 35.

⁸²⁴ Jan-Wilm Delicat, *Van ijzeren vuist naar zachte hand? Idee en praktijk in de rijksopvoedingsgestichten 1901-1961*. Proefschrift in de Sociale Wetenschappen, KU Nijmegen (Ipskamp, Enschede, 2001) 149.

in the institution and about the chance, which they [pupils] understand themselves, that was given to them to go forward in society', commented the 1929 report.⁸²⁵ Reformers believed, despite some children who disappointed them during or after their time in the reformatory, that the results of re-education were better than they could have expected.⁸²⁶

Educational officers in the state reformatories saw victories and progress in small events, like pupils who asked for a piece of soap when they were transferred to another institution. According to director De Haas, these pupils had heard rumours that the other reformatory did not use soap for bathing and they expressed that they were eager to keep washing themselves with soap. 'Anyone, who is informed about hygienic principles which exist in Indigenous society, would consider this great progress', he stated proudly.⁸²⁷ But the pupils might just as well have asked for soap to have something to trade or barter with once they arrived in the new facility. This does not seem unlikely, considering the observations from supervisors about the lively trade in 'consumption goods, like soap' between pupils and indigenous *mandoers* and *koelies*.⁸²⁸ Pupils sought and created their own space within the disciplinary system of the reformatories, even if it was not recognized or acknowledged by their caretakers.

⁸²⁵ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 38.

⁸²⁶ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 38.

⁸²⁷ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 19.

⁸²⁸ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 38.

Chapter VII. Escaping and creating life in state and private institutions, 1905-1942

In January 1925, during a Friday morning prayer at the Witte Kruis Kolonie, a Javanese teenager ran into the church and fell on his knees next to Moe van Emmerik. He started to pray and cry, asking forgiveness for his sins. Moe and her daughter recognised him as 'Slamet petje' (Slamet one-eye), a government pupil who had been staying with them first, but was later sent to the LOG. Slamet told that he had escaped from the LOG on Wednesday and had come straight back to the colony because he longed for them so much.⁸²⁹ The fact that pupils came back to their old reformatories, instead of going back to families or a life on the streets, was an indication that these pupils were no longer resisting re-education, but had their own preferences for how and where they wanted to be housed. They were accepted back at their old reformatory and had thus wielded some of their power to bend the system to their own needs and preferences.

The re-education system in the Netherlands Indies was not a homogenous system but consisted of a variety of institutions, before and after the opening of the state reformatories. This situation was a reflection of the rich make-up of colonial civil society, and Indies' society in general, which consisted of many different population groups and associations. Different institutions each had their own objectives, sometimes related and sometimes conflicting, and this influenced the way children were categorized, raised and treated. The treatment of orphaned and neglected children and convicted juveniles was influenced by their social and economic background, religion and ethnicity. Practical living arrangements in the reformatory also influenced the lives of the pupils. State reformatories held only government pupils, while in the private institutions government pupils were a minority that lived and went to school together with children who did not have a court sentence. This influenced the children's relationships with each other, and how their supervisors treated them. It probably also influenced the extent to which they felt stigmatized or singled out from the rest of society.⁸³⁰

⁸²⁹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, januari 1925, p. 4.

⁸³⁰ At Witte Kruis, for example, there was always an abundance of children, only a small fraction of them were government pupils. In 1922 there were 524 adults and 325 children, of which 69 boys and 90 girls did not live with their parents. These 159 children lived together in a girls' and boys' barrack under supervision of both European and indigenous caretakers, and 49 of them were government pupils. The Van Emmerik's did not keep government pupils separated from the other kids without parents. They did not find this necessary because for them there was not much difference between the two groups. According to Moe most of the children in the colony were 'little passer thieves', with the only difference that some had been

This chapter seeks to show the effects of a fractured reform system on the lives of incarcerated youngsters. It juxtaposes the re-education experiences of pupils in the state reformatories with those who lived in Christian private institutions and Islamic orphanages. By delving into the life experiences of children in a variety of institutions and by showing how different re-education practices influenced their daily lives, we gain a glimpse of the micro-realities of colonial re-education. It shows us how children responded to their incarceration and how they shaped their own experiences. What were their survival strategies, what ways to resist did they find and how did they shape their own space? How did parents and children appropriate the reformatories for their own best interest? And how did parents, family and community members respond to children who had been re-educated? What were the relations of children with the reformatories and re-educators after they had been released? This approach shows some surprising sides of the reform system, and goes beyond the simple thought that the colonial reform project was always ‘bad’ for the children involved.

Due to the limited availability and incomplete nature of colonial sources (both written and oral) about re-education it is challenging to reveal anything at all about the life experiences of children in the reformatories. Therefore this chapter cannot treat all the different institutions, but shows as many different sides of the re-education system as possible with the available material. Still, this chapter suffers from a lack of personal accounts from pupils and ex-pupils and relies mostly on observations from caretakers. Due to the prolific writing of Mrs. Alice ‘Moe’ Van Emmerik-Cleverly there is quite some information available about the lives of Javanese juvenile offenders in the Witte Kruis Kolonie. But at the same time their experiences are only visible through her eyes; the observations of government pupils living on Witte Kruis Kolonie are distorted by her opinions and experiences.

The experiences of children in the Soekaboemische Opvoedings Gestichten (SOG, Soekaboemi Education Institutes), operated by a private Christian charity and partly state subsidized, will be discussed as an example of life in a private childcare institution for Indo-European offenders, orphans, semi-orphans and neglected or ‘endangered’ children. The reports of different Pro Juventute associations in the Indies offer insight in the experiences of children from all backgrounds in Pro Juventute’s temporary shelters, re-education homes and

caught and others not. *Witte Kruis Blad*, No. 1 Januari 1922, 20e jaargang, p.3 Also Jaarverslag *Witte Kruis Kolonie*, Mei 1922, p. 4. For a description of the barracks see *Witte Kruis Blad*, No. 10 Mei 1919, p. 7.

the agricultural colony in Klakah. The adaptation and survival strategies of the mostly indigenous children – from a wide variety of regions and cultures – in the different state reformatories will also be discussed. There remains space for research into pupils' life experiences in Islamic institutions, like the Muhammadiyah orphanages. Hopefully someone will be able to devote a specific research project to tracking and interviewing ex-Muhammadiyah pupils and ex-pupils of other indigenous reformatories.

The first section of this chapter (7.1) discusses how children dealt with life in the reformatories and how they tried to shape their own lives. It discusses the importance of friendships and personal relations with caretakers as part of their adaptation process and looks at how pupils used subtle, and not so subtle, forms of resistance and manipulation of parents, caretakers and other personnel. Section two (7.2) goes into escape strategies, reasons for escapes, and the solidarity that developed between pupils and indigenous personnel, like the *mandoers* in the state reformatories. In the last section (7.3) relations between pupils and their families and home environment are the central theme. This section discusses the difference between state and private reformatories when it comes to pupils' affiliations to the reformatory and their families, and shows the important role of religion in this process.

7.1. Accommodation and resistance in state and private reformatories

Many of the children who were sent to a reformatory were still very young, around 10 years of age, and they had to leave everything they knew behind. They might have been happy or unhappy living with parents or relatives, or could have been out on the streets for a while, but they nevertheless knew their environment. Arriving alone in an institution with unfamiliar caretakers and hundreds of pupils was not easy. Building friendships and social relations with peers was crucial; these relations offered the support, protection, love, physical intimacy and sometimes sexual relations that most children and teenagers longed for. Caretakers stimulated the development of friendships, even though they were wary of possible sexual relations.

When pupils first arrived they were usually scared and insecure, and they might be malnourished and neglected as well.⁸³¹ In the Soekaboemi institution (SOG) for Indo-European children, which also took in some juvenile offenders, new pupils frequently cried at night from homesickness and fear. Other pupils and caretakers tried to comfort them and

⁸³¹ See the entries on the physical state of pupils in the state reformatories in the annual reports. For example, *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 3. In the same report boys who had just arrived were also described as 'quiet, furtive, scared' (p. 16).

after a few days they would usually adjust.⁸³² At Pa van der Steur's Oranje-Nassau institute many recently arrived pupils would start wetting their bed at night, until they adjusted to life in the reformatory.⁸³³ Moe van Emmerik in Salatiga had similar experiences with pupils who were sent to her by Pro Juventute Semarang and had just arrived at the Witte Kruis Colony. She also felt, however, that they adjusted well and seemed to start liking life at the colony, especially the few cents they received each morning at breakfast to buy extra food if they were hungry.⁸³⁴ Director De Haas of LOG Semarang observed that it took most boys about two months to adjust to life in the reformatory, even though there were always boys who refused to bow to the regimen.⁸³⁵

Even if children (outwardly) adjusted, many also continued to suffer from homesickness and depression and some of them reported about this in letters to their parents. The letters of fifteen-year-old Johan Petelle, incarcerated in LOG Semarang in the early 1920s, reveal how he tried to appeal to his father to bring him back home. He described that he cried at night because he thought his father had forgotten him, and that other children prayed to God to send them home again. But he also wrote that they were happy to go to school (did he say this to appease the caretaker who would read his letter before sending it?) and that he wanted his father to be proud of him. Johan worried that his mother would forget him because he did not receive any letters from her. He assured his father that he loved his parents and asked for their forgiveness. In between his sad stories Johan did not forget to bargain for what he wanted; most of all he wanted to go home, but he also asked for a notebook, two pieces of soap, three hand brooms and two toothache medicines.⁸³⁶ What he planned to do with three hand brooms remains vague, but they might have been popular items to trade for other goods with fellow pupils or *mandoers*.

One of the things Johan complained about in his letters was that he had no friends in the reformatory. A lack of friends or the transfer or release of friends seems to have had a big

⁸³² F.C. Bakker and F. Schaller, *Tussen Djampang en Gedé. Geschiedenis der opvoedingsgestichten te Soekaboemi (SOG), 1900-1946* (privately printed, 1999) 20. The book was written by two former pupils who wrote down their memories in combination with historical research and some oral histories and memoirs of other pupils.

⁸³³ Joke van der Meer, "Dag Pa, ik wil er in, bij Van der Steur". *De opvoeding door Johannes van der Steur van verweesde, verlaten en verwaarloosde Indo-Europese kinderen in het Oranje-Nassau Gesticht te Magelang, Java (1893-1945)*. (Unpublished masters thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2008) 95. Copy available in KITLV library, Leiden, the Netherlands

⁸³⁴ Witte Kruis Blad, februari 1925, p. 1.

⁸³⁵ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 16.

⁸³⁶ *Johan Petelle to his father J.C.Petelle, LOG Semarang, 17/07/1923 and 20/08/1923*. In Ag 39013/1923, AS, ANRI. With thanks to Chiara Formichi for assistance with translating.

influence on how pupils felt about their stay in the reformatory. Pupils who were released did not easily forget their friends and many ex-pupils kept writing letters to them.⁸³⁷ The lack of friends was also mentioned as one of the reasons for the failed suicide attempt of Endoen in the Salvation Army agricultural colony in March 1916. According to his overseers Endoen's extreme homesickness started when his friends moved to Kalawara, a new agricultural colony on Celebes, and he had to work together with the younger boys. Endoen tried to be sent home and when this did not work he attempted suicide, was removed from the agricultural colony and eventually could go back home to his parents.⁸³⁸ Endoen exercised his own power by putting his life at risk, but he did get what he longed for and was reunited with his family.

The loss of friendships might be one of the reasons why pupils resisted or had a hard time adjusting to their transfer to a different reformatory. They not only left their friends behind but also had to re-adjust to new caretakers and a new environment. In 1919 several former LOG pupils who had been sent to a private institute escaped from there, walked for ten days and came right back to Semarang to ask for re-admittance in the LOG.⁸³⁹ Pupils made it clear that they did not want to be transferred to other institutions. Boys in the state reformatory, who were sent to a private institution, begged their supervisors to allow them to stay in LOG Semarang. Some of them cried and all of them claimed that they were attached to the educational officers.⁸⁴⁰ This obviously might have been a way to manipulate their caretakers to let them stay, but the director of the reformatory cited this example as proof that his pupils were bonding with the educational officers and that some of the pupils really understood that they received good education and care and were 'better off' in the state reformatory. Similar stories can be found in accounts from the Witte Kruis Colony. In 1927, for example, they were ordered to send ten of their female government pupils to the newly opened girls' state reformatory in Tangerang. The girls who had to leave were all crying and lamenting their fate, and it took almost an hour to comfort them.⁸⁴¹ That pupils did not want to be transferred might have had little to do with the quality of life in the institutions, but

⁸³⁷ Fragments of these letters were sometimes published in the annual reports of the LOG. For example see *Verslag Semarang* 1918, pp. 19-20. *Verslag LOG Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926-1927*, p. 42-43.

⁸³⁸ *Case report Endoen*, Bt 28-06-1916 no. 16. AS, ANRI.

⁸³⁹ *Verslag Semarang* 1919, p. 21.

⁸⁴⁰ *Verslag Semarang* 1918, p. 17.

⁸⁴¹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juli 1927, p. 3.

could also be related to a basic human preference for the familiar and for the people they knew.

That the ties between children were strong also shows from the reports about escape attempts, which usually happened in larger groups. In January 1921 a group of 21 boys escaped from LOG Semarang, but 17 were caught quite soon. Surprisingly, the four boys who remained outside the walls of the reformatory kept in touch with their friends and caretakers by sending the occasional postcard or letter. In these messages they even gave some vague indications of their place of residence and their future plans. When the educational officers tried to track their ex-pupils by following up on this information it appeared to be completely fictional.⁸⁴² Nevertheless, escaped pupils apparently wanted to stay in touch with the reformatory, even if they did not want to be re-educated there.

Frits Bakker – who lost his European father, was not allowed to stay with his Chinese mother and spent his youth in the Soekaboemi institutes – gave a detailed description of the ways pupils interacted with each other in a book that is part memoir, part history of the SOG. It is unfortunate that there are no (known) memoirs like his from ex-pupils of the state reformatories or agricultural colonies, because it reveals a lot about the ways pupils created their own world and escaped supervision. While the SOG did not take in many juvenile delinquents – Pro Juventute, churches and private persons usually referred the Indo-European children to them – I have chosen to include his account because it gives a first-hand impression of how large groups of children lived together in a colonial childcare/re-education institution.

Bakker described how there was a strong feeling of internal unity and bonding, which led to long lasting friendships and continuing relations with children and supervisors in the reformatory. Because of their Indo-European heritage a majority of pupils and supervisors ended up in the Netherlands after decolonization and gathered regularly for reunions.⁸⁴³ The same is true for the youngsters who grew up with Pa van der Steur in Oranje Nassau.⁸⁴⁴ Bonding in the private reformatories was probably stronger than in the state reformatories because the population of the SOG and Oranje Nassau was quite homogenous (Indo-European) and because the pupils were not forcibly sent there by the court system, but by parents, family members, local authorities or Pro Juventute. The children could often keep in

⁸⁴² *Verslag Semarang 1921/1922*, pp. 33-34.

⁸⁴³ Bakker and Schaller, *Tussen Djampang en Gedé*, 79.

⁸⁴⁴ Van der Meer, “*Dag Pa, ik wil er in, bij Van der Steur*”, 119-120.

touch with their families and would visit them during the holidays. After decolonization reunions were not only a way to reconnect to their childhood friends, but also a way to remember a lost colonial world.

According to Bakker, the pupils in SOG created their own language – a mix of Dutch, Malay, Javanese, Sundanese and other indigenous languages⁸⁴⁵ – and their own rules. The development of a specific institutional language often happened in closed communities and is also mentioned by ex-pupils of Pa van der Steur. The dialect created a common language and also made it easier to communicate without being understood by supervisors. Especially Dutch supervisors who had just arrived in the Indies had a hard time to understand *petjòh* and the general rule of the SOG was that the pupils had to address their supervisors in proper Dutch.⁸⁴⁶ In the state reformatories, Malay was the official language.

From the accounts of institutionalized Indo-European children it becomes clear that much happened without knowledge of their caretakers and supervisors, including pupils who disciplined each other when someone broke their own behavioural norms. This went all the way from fighting matches between equals, to older pupils hitting a younger child on the head to correct him or her. But if an older pupil would go too far and unfairly abuse younger children the latter would band together to discipline their older peer in turn.⁸⁴⁷ Fighting was also a way for newcomers to be accepted in the group or to defend their honour. The educational officers of the state reformatories also noted these implicit behavioural rules, which sometimes led to dangerous situations and disruption of reformatory discipline. Fighting was obviously outlawed in all the reformatories but the boys still managed to escape the eyes of their supervisors and fight their own battles.⁸⁴⁸

According to an ex-pupil of Pa van der Steur his peers educated him more than Pa. This former pupil believed that the boys raised themselves according to the law of the strongest, and a weak boy had to make sure to earn the friendship of a stronger boy. This could be done by doing his dishes, mending his clothes, sharing food or providing other services.⁸⁴⁹ This description is eerily similar to descriptions of life in regular penitentiary institutions, where friendships and reputations are created in similar ways. Bakker and the

⁸⁴⁵ This flexible and always changing colonial dialect was called *petjòh* in the colony. Richard Cress wrote a lexicon about the language: *Petjoh. Woorden en wetenswaardigheden uit het Indische verleden* (Amsterdam, Prometheus, 1998)

⁸⁴⁶ Bakker and Schaller, *Tussen Djampang en Gedé*, 20.

⁸⁴⁷ Bakker and Schaller, *Tussen Djampang en Gedé*, 78, 82.

⁸⁴⁸ For example *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 24.

⁸⁴⁹ Van der Meer, “*Dag Pa, ik wil er in, bij Van der Steur*”, 97-98.

majority of accounts from Oranje Nassau pupils stress the good relations among pupils and this is also the case in the LOG accounts and the writings from Moe van Emmerik at the Witte Kruis Colony. Bakker tells how children would share everything they had with their friends, like cigarettes, candy, fruit and toys. There was a certain amount of pressure to do so, however, because if you did not you were considered a miser and had a hard time making friends.⁸⁵⁰

In the private reformatories the relations between pupils and caretakers were likely more intimate than in the state reformatories. The boys and girls in the institutions bonded with their caretakers, even if they were from a different ethnic group or skin color. The private institutions – for both boys and girls – were often run by women and men who saw their work as a (religious) calling. The state reformatories for boys were mostly run and operated by men who worked there as part of their government career and later moved on to different functions, for example at the Justice Department. De Haas, for example, was promoted from director of LOG Semarang to inspector of the re-education system. This is not to say that pupils did not bond with the supervisors in the state reformatories, but the more informal lifestyle in the private institutions might have been more conducive to this.

Moe van Emmerik reveals how she tried to select the ten delinquent girls who had to be transferred to an LOG and shows some of her feelings about that. ‘It was very difficult for us’, she wrote, ‘because we love all of them, even the ones who often give us trouble. Eventually we decided that we would choose the non-Javanese girls because they will profit most from the Malay education they will receive there [in Tangerang].’ Moe visited the girls in Tangerang as soon as she could, and director Tuiten and the female director of the girls’ facility showed them around. Moe felt that everything looked really nice, even though the facility was not completely finished. But when the girls saw her, they became very emotional again and all started to cry.⁸⁵¹

Outsiders observed the influence that a good caretaker could have on his charges. In May 1917 police officer Ruempol in Semarang wrote to the Justice department that a change of leadership in the institution for Indigenous boys of the Salvation Army in Kedoeng Pani caused a new wave of escapes from the agricultural colony: ‘director Scheffers was transferred to the institution at Boegangan, and the boys escaped just after that. Scheffers

⁸⁵⁰ Bakker and Schaller, *Tussen Djampang en Gedé*, 78-79.

⁸⁵¹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juli 1927, p. 3.

seemed to be in good standing [...] and had a tactful way of dealing with them, considering the fact that the boys who escaped last week returned to him voluntarily'.⁸⁵²

7.2. Daily resistance and escape strategies

Adapting to reformatory life was often easier for the younger pupils; boys in their teenage years had a much harder time to accept their incarceration. 'The youngsters are usually a lot more accessible and uninhibited than the older ones. [...] The smallest (under 14 or 15 years) are well humoured, get attached to their educators, and generally adjust well to the way things are done in the reformatory. As a rule they do not pout and are flourishing', summarized a re-educator in the Semarang state reformatory.⁸⁵³ As soon as puberty started most pupils changed their attitude and behaviour.

Director Tuiten of LOG Semarang concluded in 1920 that 'especially puberty is of great influence on the mood and inclination of the lads'. He observed that puberty showed itself in different ways. For one it was marked by devout religious behaviour, for the other by anger and aggression or increased sexual desires.⁸⁵⁴ Tuiten felt that older pupils had 'a true life, only known to themselves and maybe their comrades, countrymen, and an untrue, more artificial existence, that is shown to their educators and non-countrymen.'⁸⁵⁵ This dynamic might be found in colonial society in general. The idea of a 'double face' or 'wearing a mask' can be found in many societies and social environments where people with less power are shaping a space for themselves that cannot be seen or supervised by the dominant elites.⁸⁵⁶ Educators understood the challenges of puberty, but it did not make it less taxing for them or their pupils. Especially the unpredictability of pupils' moods, behaviour, likes and dislikes seemed to bother their supervisors.⁸⁵⁷

The disruptive behaviour of older boys in the reformatories was a source of worry and problems for educators throughout the years. They influenced the mood and behaviour of younger and more docile pupils, and frequently staged (successful) escape attempts, especially during the first years of the Semarang reformatory. According to director Binnendijk in 1925, the older pupils suffered from a 'desire for freedom' that was very hard

⁸⁵² *Ruempol to Nienhuis, 11-05-1917, in Bt 24-8-1917, AS, ANRI.*

⁸⁵³ *Verslag Semarang 1920, p. 6.*

⁸⁵⁴ *Verslag Semarang 1920, p. 16*

⁸⁵⁵ *Verslag Semarang 1920, p. 6.*

⁸⁵⁶ Franz Fanon, *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs* (Editions du Seuil, 1952).

⁸⁵⁷ *Verslag Semarang 1920, p. 6-7.*

to curb. It was not only because of puberty but also because some of them had been kept in private and state reformatories for eight years already. A sentence that was too long to benefit the pupil, according to Binnendijk. He felt that these pupils were becoming too far removed from society and would have a hard time to adjust once they were discharged. Pupils covertly uttered their desire to go home in letters to their family, but more often showed it by trying to escape from the reformatory. Escapes happened almost every year and educators in all institutions tried to find out and understand why. Educators were eager to get rid of these troublemakers and pressed the Justice Department to lower the maximum age of re-education from 21 to 18 years old. This was approved by the Governor General in 1925 and went into effect in 1926.⁸⁵⁸

Besides outright escaping the institution, there were less risky ways to (temporarily) get away from watchful eyes. Some of these strategies show obvious similarities to survival strategies employed by other groups of people who were forced into a certain life, like prisoners or enslaved people.⁸⁵⁹ Bakker describes that pupils in the SOG enjoyed something called *slenteren* [a Dutch term that can be translated as strolling]. This was an innocent term for the risky practice of temporary escaping from the reformatory grounds and rambling around in the countryside and indigenous kampongs. Boys would usually take their catapult and try to find and steal some ripe fruits and crops.⁸⁶⁰ Temporary disappearances were probably common in the agricultural colonies as well, with their large grounds and greater measure of freedom. In the state reformatories where security was tight, *slenteren* might have been impossible or too risky; it is not mentioned in any of the yearly reports.

In any of the institutions, faking illness was a widely used strategy to escape work, the drag of the daily schedule, or conflicts with other pupils or caretakers. All reformatories had a more or less professional infirmary with attending staff where pupils with mild diseases or small injuries could be treated and keep supervised bed rest. More serious cases were transported to a nearby hospital, another way to escape life in the reformatory for shorter or longer periods. In the Semarang reformatory two pupils showed serious signs of insanity and

⁸⁵⁸ *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 8-9. On the lowering of the maximum age see *Verslag Semarang, 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 15-16. The new rule was approved on 1 September 1925 and can be found in *Staatsblad 1925*, no. 1.

⁸⁵⁹ Genovese discusses the strategies of accommodation and resistance of Southern slaves in North America, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 597-598.

⁸⁶⁰ Bakker and Schaller, *Tussen Djampang en Gedé*, 80. See also Van der Meer, “*Dag Pa, ik wil er in, bij Van der Steur*”, 96-98 for extensive descriptions of the mischief and stealing expeditions of the Van der Steur boys.

were sent to the Indigenous Mental Hospital in Solo to be observed by the psychiatrist who also served in the reformatory. 'It soon became clear that simulation was the cause of disease and the boys were soon re-admitted to the *Landsopvoedingsgesticht*', stated the yearly report in 1922.⁸⁶¹ Pupils also resisted to their daily discipline in the reformatories by their attitude; some pupils were described as 'unwilling and passively resisting'. Others were reportedly 'lazy' and tried to dodge work and school. They purposely ruined their masonry or ironwork projects and sat in class without participating.⁸⁶² These are, again, common resistance strategies of suppressed groups and can be found among prisoners, slaves, and factory workers.

When children could no longer stand life in the institution or longed to go home, their ultimate act of resistance was to escape the reformatory and to try to get back into regular life with their family, or survive alone as independent labourers, vagabonds or thieves.⁸⁶³ There were many reasons for boys and girls to stage escape attempts. Director Tuiten of LOG Semarang observed that pupils often tried to escape during their first days in the reformatory. It was then that the shock of their new life was greatest. Tuiten felt that 'they apparently really dislike the reformatory atmosphere and are rather roaming the roads dirty, hungry, shunned and sick, than that they have a filled stomach, clean skin, and fitting clothes while regularly working, sleeping, bathing, learning, and.... being disciplined.'⁸⁶⁴

Another group of escapees were older boys who were homesick or could not get used to a life of discipline and order. They would usually act like they had accepted life in the reformatory, and would even write positive letters about it to their family. Reformers were no longer suspicious of their behaviour, and the pupils had more chance to stage a successful escape attempt. If their attempts to set themselves free failed, they were usually in a dark mood for weeks or months, probably depressed with their 'fate', as Tuiten saw it. But he asserted that in the end they would get used to the rhythm of life in the reformatory and start to enjoy their daily tasks. This was the time, wrote Tuiten, that educators tried to get in closer contact and started with character building: the most difficult part of re-educating the children.⁸⁶⁵

⁸⁶¹ *Verslag Semarang 1921/1922*, p. 16.

⁸⁶² *Veslag Semarang 1918*, p. 16, 33.

⁸⁶³ Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 648-657, on the motivations and strategies of runaways.

⁸⁶⁴ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 20-21.

⁸⁶⁵ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 20-21.

In 1920 Tuiten wrote a longer analysis of escape reasons after he questioned some escaped boys who were brought back to the reformatory.⁸⁶⁶ He found the following reasons. Firstly, educational officers easily offended the older boys when they gave disciplinary comments about their behaviour or when they punished pupils. Teenagers were also easily insulted by derivative comments from their fellow pupils. To avoid the shame of being affronted, wrote Tuiten, pupils either tried to escape or attempted to revenge themselves on their insulter, even trying to kill a fellow pupil to do so. Escape plots were usually staged by an offended pupil who then convinced some of his friends to come with him, sometimes waiting for days and weeks for a suitable moment. Acts of revenge usually happened in the spur of the moment, in the form of sudden physical attacks with a stone, piece of wood or iron scraps. Tuiten felt that it was important to keep a strict eye on the workplaces, where the boys could get their hands on this kind of material. But even more important, he added, was a better understanding of the so-called *beleedigingsperkara*'s, the 'cases of insult'. If possible, educators tried to mediate between different parties, to avoid conflict and personal attacks, but this was not always effective and there were attacks on pupils and successful escape attempts every year.⁸⁶⁷

Secondly, Tuiten found out that some older boys also tried to escape after receiving a letter from their family about, for example, the marriage of a younger sibling or friend. These reminders of life in the free world were often too much for them. Bakker describes the same reasons for the few escape attempts staged by SOG pupils. Especially bad news from home could lead to escapes. Boys who arrived at the LOG from private institutions 'where they had the opportunity to gamble and have relations with women', according to Tuiten, also stimulated others' desire for freedom. Stories about their adventures to their new friends usually inspired their new friends to breakouts.⁸⁶⁸

Between 1918 and 1920 the number of escapes in LOG Semarang was steadily rising, probably because the average age of pupils in the state reformatory had been increasing since 1918. Younger pupils were more easily taken care of in the private institutions than the older ones, and after observation the young and well-behaved pupils were transferred as much as possible to places like Witte Kruis to make space for newly sentenced and more problematic

⁸⁶⁶ *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 36.

⁸⁶⁷ *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 7-8. Also see *Verslag Landsopvoedingsgestichten 1926 en 1927*, p. 14, which gives similar reasons for escapes.

⁸⁶⁸ Bakker and Schaller, *Tussen Djampang en Gedé*, 81, and *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 8-9.

pupils. This policy was the only way to create enough re-education places but led to a concentration of older boys and ‘problem-cases’ in the state reformatory. Escape attempts and the unruly behaviour of the older boys were actually the main reason that the maximum age of re-education was lowered from 21 to 18 years old in 1925.⁸⁶⁹

Escape attempts were risky and often failed. In 1919, for example, a pupil in Semarang who tried to break open the ceiling of the reformatory, which was made of woven bamboo, was caught in the act.⁸⁷⁰ Pupils who were caught obviously received a punishment, usually a combination of the cane, the removal of privileges, a diet of rice and water and temporary incarceration in one of the separation cells. But there were other risks as well; in 1918 a boy broke his leg when he jumped off the roof of the reformatory during an escape attempt and was caught right away.⁸⁷¹ In 1918 only one pupil out of four who escaped from LOG Semarang managed to stay free, in 1919 three remained on the loose, while 1920 saw 32 pupils who tried to escape and fifteen pupils who managed to do so and to stay out of the hands of the police. The number of escape attempts was probably much greater, something that can be derived from the lists of punishments given for ‘damaging the buildings’: 8 in 1919 and 11 in 1920. On average the number of punishments meted out was on the decline though, a sign that pupils were behaving more to the taste of their educators (or that educators had changed their standards and were less eager to punish) after the reformatory had been operating for three years.⁸⁷²

In the first few years of LOG Semarang escaping was relatively easy, because the walls of the hundred-year old building were crumbling so much that pupils managed to make man-sized holes in them with just an iron nail and their hands. Escapes were usually carried out in pairs or by groups of pupils. In 1920, there were four groups who tried to break out: in July two pupils made a hole in the kitchen roof during the early morning work they were supposed to do, and a month later five others copied the same trick. In the last months of the year, one group of fifteen and one of ten pupils broke through the bedroom walls and got away. In 1922 the walls of the bedrooms and other popular escape locations were strengthened with a layer of concrete. The doors of the bedrooms were changed too, to make it possible to easily look around in the whole room from the outside. After that the number of

⁸⁶⁹ M. Tuiten, *Over leeftijd en leeftijdsvaststelling van Regeeringspupillen*, ‘Indisch Tijdschrift van het Regt’ 121, 1924, 278-285.

⁸⁷⁰ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 41.

⁸⁷¹ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 3.

⁸⁷² *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 3-4, 29.

escapes lowered drastically, from 1922 until 1924 there were no reported escapes, which did not mean there were no attempts to do so.⁸⁷³

Educators saw escapes as a frustrating disruption of all the efforts spent on reforming the boys and as an embarrassment for the ‘good name’ of the reformatory. Escapes made the states’ reform efforts locally visible in a manner that the colonial government found highly undesirable. While the Sunday hikes were claimed by re-educators as a way to showcase good behaviour, and thus succesful reform efforts, escapes were seen as quite the opposite. Successful breakouts were not only blamed on the bad state of the walls, but also on the indigenous guards who were accused of being too drowsy, afraid or incompetent to prevent escapes. Considering other reports about *mandoers* and indigenous workers who traded goods like cigarettes and soaps with pupils, there might be a different explanation for the high number of escapes under the eyes of indigenous guards.⁸⁷⁴ The relation between pupils and *mandoers* was an aspect of the reformatories that was specifically colonial: the development of solidarity on the basis of ethnicity, ‘race’, and societal position vis-à-vis European colonizers.

Peter Zinoman describes in *The Colonial Bastille* (2001), his insightful book about the political role of the prison system in colonial Vietnam, how Vietnamese guards and Vietnamese prisoners in French-run institutions often gambled, drank and smoked opium together. French officials concluded in 1916 that it was ridiculous to have guards with the same ethnicity as the prisoners, because they would naturally sympathize with prisoners of their own ‘race’. In 1932 a colonial inspector mentioned ‘a latent nationalism’ as the reason for ‘the complacency and compassion that *matas* [guards] display toward the condemned’. Zinoman also mentions regional and class solidarity as reasons for fraternization between guards and prisoners, especially in Indo-China’s provincial prisons, where *matas* sometimes had to guard their own family, friends, or village members.⁸⁷⁵

Similar affiliations played out in the state reformatories and *mandoers* helped pupils actively or passively with their escape attempts. After the large breakout in LOG Semarang in 1921 the director found out that ‘lower indigenous personnel’ had smuggled vinegar extract into the reformatory and pupils had used it to weaken the walls.⁸⁷⁶ Maybe the

⁸⁷³ *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 35. Also *Verslag Semarang 1923/1925*, pp. 1-2.

⁸⁷⁴ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 38, 41, also *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 35.

⁸⁷⁵ Zinoman, *The Colonial Bastille*, 77-80.

⁸⁷⁶ *Verslag Semarang 1921/1922*, pp. 33.

indigenous employees were bribed by pupils with money or goods, or felt a sense of revenge on the white educational officials who also ordered them around and complained about their work. Since *mandoers* often worked at the reformatory for a very short time they probably felt little loyalty towards their employers. But helping pupils to escape was not without risk; the vinegar smugglers were brought to court and ended up with a one-month prison sentence themselves. Ambonese and Menadonese ex-soldiers, who were generally considered to be more reliable and loyal to the colonial authorities than the Javanese on account of their 'race' and ethnicity, replaced them.⁸⁷⁷

European reformers usually did not interpret problems with Indigenous personnel in this light; they saw it as an issue of incompetence. De Haas wrote in 1918 that *mandoers* were 'usually ex-soldiers from Javanese national character' who were trained by the educational officers for their service. They tried to convince them that they were an important link in the system of education, but supervisors felt they failed in instilling these values in *mandoers*: 'They were constantly exposed for lying, unreliability, and messing around with the inmates. During the reported year 30 had to be laid off for the earlier mentioned characteristics.'⁸⁷⁸

In 1919 and 1920, Tuiten wrote that while the *mandoers* understood 'discipline and duty' most of them did not do satisfactory work. According to him the problem was that they had no insight in pedagogical matters and did not know how to stay free from associating with the pupils. Tuiten observed that they did not manage to have any authority over the pupils because they were not strict enough.⁸⁷⁹ 'They are weaker than the older pupils in almost everything. In physical power, courage, speed, reading, writing and calculating, knowledge of a trade. So there is no leadership, nor firm measures, when necessary.'⁸⁸⁰ Re-educated pupils were apparently outgrowing their countrymen and this reversed the roles in a way that the European officers disliked. The directors had hoped that because the *mandoers* were indigenous too, they could have a beneficial influence on the pupils and serve as positive role models. Their 'weak' attitude, however, was feared to have a negative effect on the behaviour of the boys. During 1919 over twenty *mandoers* were laid off, and only two kept their job for more than a year.⁸⁸¹

⁸⁷⁷ *Verslag Semarang 1921/1922*, pp. 33.

⁸⁷⁸ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 38.

⁸⁷⁹ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 45.

⁸⁸⁰ *Verslag Semarang 1920*, p. 37.

⁸⁸¹ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 39 and *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 45.

But the behaviour of the *mandoers* was not only caused by underdevelopment or a lack of understanding of the rules of re-education. The fact that Tuiten complained that the *mandoers* tried to have friendly and peaceful relations with the pupils might have been a conscious choice on the side of the *mandoers*, instead of just ‘neglect of their duty’ as Tuiten saw it. He observed several times that *mandoers* took instructions from the pupils and were sent away by them, once even during an escape attempt.⁸⁸² It is not hard to imagine that *mandoers* felt sympathy or pity for the children they had to guard. They often spoke the same language, might have had similar life experiences and could probably identify with the pupils more easily than with the educational officers. Moreover, both pupils and *mandoers* had to take commands from Europeans, something that became more and more contested during the twentieth century.

Successful escapes from the LOGS*, 1918-1929

Year	location*	total residents	escapes
1918	S	78	4
1919	S	101	3
1920	S	95	15
1921	S	98	11
1922	S	100	0
1923	S	103	0
1924	S	145	0
	M	212	?
1925	S	155	6
	M	234	4
1926	S, M, N	644	9
1927	S, M, N, T	844	21
1928	S, M, N, T, Bl	999	19
1929	S, M, N, T, Bl	1111	16

* Only pupils who managed to stay free until the end of the calendar year were registered as escapes and taken off the roll. The number of escape attempts was much higher. In 1921 for example 21 boys escaped in one breakout, but 17 were caught and brought back.⁸⁸³

*Locations of the LOGS: S=Semarang, M=Malang, N=Ngawi, T=Tangerang (boys and girls), Bl=Blitar

⁸⁸² Verslag Semarang 1920, p. 37.

⁸⁸³ Verslag Semarang 1921/1922, pp. 33-34.

For the agricultural colonies escapes were an even bigger part of daily life. The writings of Moe van Emmerik in the monthly magazine of the Witte Kruis Kolonie mention escapes or the fear of escapes almost every month. The colonies did not have the same kind of enclosed compounds as the state reformatories and usually also had less intense supervision. This is why they received pupils who were younger and the ones who had behaved well in the state reformatories. These children were considered to be ‘easier’ to reform, but this did not necessarily mean that the children wanted to stay at the colony. Being transferred to an agricultural colony also meant new people, working on the land, more basic living circumstances and diet, Christian religious instruction and a change of regime. Not every pupil agreed with this kind of life and some returned to the state reformatories on their own account, as we saw before.

The Van Emmeriks were aware of possible transition problems. In 1919 the colony received eight young government pupils and Moe felt that it was very noticeable that they had been disciplined in LOG Semarang. They seemed happy in the reformatory and enjoyed the free life, but she feared they would long for more freedom and run away.⁸⁸⁴ With another group of fifteen pupils from LOG Semarang, who arrived in the spring of 1920, Moe feared that they were so well fed that they would not easily adjust to the simple diet of the Witte Kruis Kolonie.⁸⁸⁵ Other juvenile offenders came straight from their desa and Moe commented that they looked and behaved a lot worse than the ones who had been in a state reformatory first. Two of a group of fifteen vagabonding boys escaped right away.⁸⁸⁶ On the morning of New Year 1920, two government pupils escaped, a week later another two disappeared and on the 18th of January a fifth pupil left as well.⁸⁸⁷

At Witte Kruis children also ran away for reasons like homesickness and maladjustment, but the Van Emmeriks also noted other reasons to escape. The yearly period of Islamic fasting was an infamous time, especially at the end of this period, when there were celebrations, families came together and children wanted to be home. Another incentive to escape from the colony was getting new clothes. Apparently pupils felt more confident or safe to leave – and possibly return to their families – when they were dressed properly. The summer holidays, when children did not have to go to school, also led to looser discipline and

⁸⁸⁴ *Witte Kruis Blad*, No 8, Maart 1919, 17e jaargang, p. 8.

⁸⁸⁵ *Witte Kruis Blad*, No 10, April and May 1920, 18e jaargang, p. 13.

⁸⁸⁶ *Witte Kruis Blad*, No 12, juli 1919, 17e jaargang, p. 7.

⁸⁸⁷ *Witte Kruis Blad*, No 7, February 1920, 18e jaargang, p. 6.

more escapes. Both boys and girls escaped from the colony for these reasons, although they were treated differently when they did so. This was another aspect of the gendered nature of reform efforts.⁸⁸⁸

Why girls escaped was never specifically discussed in either the state reformatory or Witte Kruis sources, but they did certainly run away as well. In 1922, a 'difficult' girl, indicated as S., had ran away from Witte Kruis but came back fourteen days later. She told Moe van Emmerik that she and two other runaway girls were staying with a Chinese woman in Parakan. After the two girls had been found and sent back to the reformatory, S. ran away with a new girl who had just arrived. One of the other runaways from the first group of three also escaped again and took a girl with her. All four of them remained on the loose.⁸⁸⁹ Moe described another female government pupil as 'extremely neglected with diminished responsibility'. She had run off four times and she was caught each time, but she kept trying.⁸⁹⁰

Unlike the 'difficult' boys, girls who frequently stole or ran off were usually not sent away to the state reformatory or the police. But when Moe van Emmerik considered them a 'bad moral influence' on other girls, she did not want to keep them at the colony and sent them to another reformatory. She was especially concerned about their sexual morals, something that was a common worry among Pro Juventute workers too. One government pupil who had already ran off three times, returned to visit the colony with a man 'who dares to call himself a European', as Moe sneered. She probably meant that the man was Indo-European or European in his looks and/or legal status but behaved below his 'racial' status. Was this for harbouring a runaway girl, for living together out of wedlock or because the girl was indigenous? The government pupil and her beau were brought to the police because he had sheltered a government pupil. The man was released while the girl was sent back to Witte Kruis for her further re-education. But Moe did not want to keep the girl at the colony anymore, 'for the benefit of the other girls'. 'She has sunk very low, and she is shameless', judged Moe, and she put her in an isolation cell. But before the pupil could be sent to another institution she escaped again – during her daily bathing hour – and remained on the loose.

⁸⁸⁸ For the different times of year and how it influenced escapes see *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juni 1922, no 6, 20^e jaargang, p. 2; April 1930, p. 4; Februari 1926, p.1; Juli 1926, p. 2. For just a few of the many examples of run-away girls see *Witte Kruis Blad*, Augustus 1922, no 8, p. 10, November 1923, p. 4, Februari 1926, p. 1.

⁸⁸⁹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Augustus 1922, no 8, p. 10.

⁸⁹⁰ Februari 1926, p. 1. See also November 1923, p. 4 for another story of a runaway girl.

Whether she went back to the same man is unknown; he had told her not to come back because he did not want to get in trouble with the police.⁸⁹¹

At Witte Kruis many of the runaways – boys and girls – also returned, some of them involuntary and others by their own choice. Life on the road was hard and many of them apparently did not have family they could return to or did not want to go home. In February 1925 a Witte Kruis escapee returned after a few days. He was crying a lot upon his return and was not punished because he came back voluntarily.⁸⁹² In January 1920 the colony's teacher brought back a little boy that had run off a month before, to the nearby city of Salatiga. 'He was too dirty to touch and just wearing old trousers', described Moe. The boy had apparently stolen a scarf to cover his upper body and was extremely underfed. Nevertheless, he did another escape attempt a few days later. This time another government pupil went after him and brought him back. After bringing back his fellow the government pupil ran off himself, with his best Sunday clothes on.⁸⁹³

In the late summer of 1920 two escaped government pupils returned safely. One had reached his parental home but was brought back by his own father, who apparently felt he should stay in the reformatory. The other one was caught and brought back by the police. A third escaped boy was spotted and caught by the colony's oxcart driver. The driver handed him over to the police because he was no longer welcome in the colony.⁸⁹⁴ This was a measure that was usually taken with pupils who proved to be 'impossible to improve' because they ran off, stole, or misbehaved too often. Those children were usually sent (back) to the state reformatory.⁸⁹⁵ This also happened with a boy indicated as K., who kept running away to beg and steal on the *passer* (market). At some point he destroyed a katjang crop on one of the fields and Moe sent him to the Assistant-Wedone with a request to charge him for his crimes and get him admitted to LOG Semarang as a government pupil. She considered this the best solution for the boy and for the public good.⁸⁹⁶ Why many children at Witte Kruis kept stealing either on the colony itself or in the surrounding area does not become clear. It could have something to do with their old survival habits and conditioning, but it might have been just normal for them to take fruit or other foods from the fields. Or it could

⁸⁹¹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juli 1923, no 7, p. 4.

⁸⁹² *Witte Kruis Blad*, Februari 1925, p. 4.

⁸⁹³ *Witte Kruis Blad*, No 7, February 1920, 18e jaargang, p. 6.

⁸⁹⁴ *Witte Kruis Blad*, No 1-3, Aug-Oct 1920, 19e jaargang, p. 36.

⁸⁹⁵ *Witte Kruis Blad*, No. 4, November 1918, 16e jaargang, p. 8. Also October 1924, p. 2.

⁸⁹⁶ *Witte Kruis Blad*, October 1924, p. 2.

have been one of the ways children challenged the rules of re-education and asserted their own power and independence, similar to the Indo-European children from SOG and Oranje Nassau who illegally roamed the fields and stole fruit.

Frits Bakker remembered that children who seriously misbehaved at the SOG were also sent to the state reformatory.⁸⁹⁷ Most Pro Juventute shelters had the same policy; since these were ‘open facilities’ only government pupils, neglected children and orphans who did not run away or showed serious misbehaviour could stay there.⁸⁹⁸ Problem cases and escapees who were caught were sent to the government reformatories. Naturally this policy led to a concentration of problem cases in the state reformatories and tighter discipline. The reformatory would try to convince newly arrived troublemakers of the stricter discipline right away. Bakker remembered the story of a fellow pupil who was sent from the SOG to the LOG for stealing. Upon his arrival at the state reformatory he was taken aside by the director. The director asked him to point out one of the sticks on the wall behind his desk. He then told the boy to bend over and whacked his behind with the stick, as a ‘preventive’ punishment, while he told him that stealing would not be tolerated in the reformatory.⁸⁹⁹

The police usually caught children who escaped from the state reformatories, but at Witte Kruis other children and personnel also went after runaways. It is easily imaginable why other children went after their fellows to bring them back; the Van Emmeriks offered a one-guilder reward for each returned runaway.⁹⁰⁰ This was a considerable amount of money for children who could save a few cents per week by saving their breakfast money. The indigenous schoolteacher also visited nearby Salatiga to look for runaways. Many of them apparently stayed in the area. Not all escapees seemed to mind being caught; two older boys returned a government pupil who had run off 1,5 years earlier. According to Moe he seemed very happy to be back.⁹⁰¹ Others kept running away, even after they had escaped and returned several times.

7.3. Relationships with parents and family

⁸⁹⁷ Interview with Frits Bakker, Zwiggelte, December 2007.

⁸⁹⁸ *Verslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1920*, p. 6, 9, 10. Also *Verslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1921*, p. 9.

⁸⁹⁹ Interview with Frits Bakker, Zwiggelte, December 2007.

⁹⁰⁰ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Augustus 1926, p. 4.

⁹⁰¹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Februari 1925, p. 4.

In both the state reformatories and other institutions parents and children tried to stay in touch by writing letters and sometimes through visits as well. Visits from parents were obviously not common for pupils who came from the other islands or other parts of Java. In the state reformatories parents could pay a visit once per month, usually on the first Sunday of the month, between 2.00 and 3.00 pm.⁹⁰² In the private institutions visiting hours depended on the flexibility of the institution.

‘Love for parents’ was one of the topics that was regularly discussed in the annual reports of the state reformatories. Most reformers considered indigenous and Indo-European parents ‘unfit’ to properly raise their children; otherwise the child would not have ended up in the reformatory. At the same time re-educators believed in the importance of family relationships; they hoped that a return to their family – especially in rural areas – would help ex-pupils to re-integrate into society.⁹⁰³ A well-behaving pupil who returned home was also a way to display the positive effects of re-education to parents and indigenous society; indirectly showcasing the positive effects of colonial rule and increased government intervention. Pupils were encouraged to write letters to their family, and these letters were carefully scrutinized before the staff sent them out. Children could express that they had a hard time – like Johan Pettelle did – but they were not allowed to ask for goods that were forbidden in the reformatory, like cigarettes or money. Letters with ‘illegal requests’ were not sent out and children had to write a new one.⁹⁰⁴

Publishing pupils’ letters was also a way to promote the good work the reformatories were doing. Moe van Emmerik often published fragments with positive descriptions of the food, school and work on the colony. She also liked it when children professed their (new) Christian belief in letters. A little boy wrote to his father that he was learning great things and loved going to school. He told his father that he should not forget God Almighty: ‘If you don’t know who this is I can tell you it is not the Ratoe of Solo who is omnipotent, but the King of Heavens who has all power on heaven and earth.’⁹⁰⁵

The state reformatories also published fragments of letters in the yearly reports to show that pupils were satisfied and adopting ‘higher’ morals, like feelings of shame, regret, or sadness. Supervisors were pleased when children wrote that they were *senang* or *krassan*

⁹⁰² *Verslag Semarang 1918*, Bijlage VIII.

⁹⁰³ See the comments about this in *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 24.

⁹⁰⁴ *Witte Kruis Blad*, 20^e jaargang, 1922, no 2 februari, p. 3.

⁹⁰⁵ *Witte Kruis Blad*, 20^e jaargang, 1922, no 2 februari, p. 4.

(happy) in the reformatory, and expressed to parents that they went to school, learned a trade and were learning to become ‘a good person’. These messages obviously fitted the image of the reform system that reformers wanted to present to the outside world. The letters were also used to judge whether children loved their parents or not. In 1918 De Haas of LOG Semarang noted, for example, that children who still had both their parents would ask about the health of their father, but would not mention their mother.⁹⁰⁶ He said that he noticed very little love for parents among his pupils. The letters they wrote were usually filled with descriptions of their daily life, the things they learned and reassurances that they were doing well. Most pupils asked parents to send them cookies or other foods or goods, but the letters did not have ‘an intimate character’, as De Haas saw it. At that time there was only one boy who wrote about his feelings and expressed that he missed his parents.⁹⁰⁷

Obviously, the observations from supervisors about the kind of relations pupils had with their parents were unreliable. Pupils knew that supervisors were reading their letters so this naturally changed what they wrote. Supervisors also judged the letters from a Dutch standpoint and did not seem to know much about indigenous family relationships and the way people expressed their feelings to each other. Director Tuiten noted in 1919 that pupils might not write well enough to really express their feelings, but still judged that love for parents was ‘sporadic’ and ‘not very strong’. While pupils wrote to home often, it was usually to ask for something, in Tuitens opinion. Tuiten was pleasantly surprised about pupils who cried when their parents suddenly came to visit them in the reformatory. This was considered a visible sign of love and affection.⁹⁰⁸

We know more about family relations – and the surprising ways in which parents and family members were part of the reform system – of pupils who lived on Witte Kruis. At the agricultural colony it was possible for parents to join their children in the colony, as free inhabitants and labourers. It was rare that parents decided to join their children, but it did happen. In the spring of 1920 a father walked all the way from Kediri to visit two of his children who were government pupils at the Witte Kruis Colony. According to Moe the man was impressed with the colony and hesitant to return to Kediri: ‘He asked if he could come back here with his wife and other young children after he had earned the money from his

⁹⁰⁶ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, pp. 19-20. For more fragments of letters also see *Verslag LOG Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926-1927*, p. 42-43.

⁹⁰⁷ *Verslag Semarang 1918*, p. 8.

⁹⁰⁸ *Verslag Semarang 1919*, p. 9.

harvest. He would give his house and land to his eldest son, because for one family the land almost provides enough while for two families it just means poverty.’⁹⁰⁹

The father apparently did not just join his children for emotional reasons, but also saw a solution for the economic challenges his family was facing. By moving away he could give land to his eldest son, his own family would be safe and well fed at the Witte Kruis Colony, and he would be close to his two children who were being re-educated at the colony. He followed up on his idea and arrived a few months later with his whole family. Some of them had just come along as a goodbye and moving-party, and returned to Kediri later on. Moe told that the father, mother, eldest daughter and her 4 brothers and sisters stayed. ‘They seem very happy here, but are not very industrious’, she remarked. She explained this as a consequence of their long-time malnourishment.⁹¹⁰

Parents and families moving in with their institutionalized children was obviously not an option in the state reformatory, even though in the early nineteenth century some government officials like Boekhoudt had played with the idea of establishing agricultural colonies in the outer regions for neglected children and their parents. This would take care of misbehaving children and of familial poverty all at once.⁹¹¹ Nothing ever came of the plan but it seems it might have been an alternative solution to the more tightly run reformatories on Java.

Pupils themselves also undertook efforts to bring family members to the colony. One pupil discovered that his parents had died and that his sisters were now living in great poverty with the neighbours. He asked the Van Emmeriks if his sisters could come to the colony and was very happy when this was allowed. As a government pupil he needed special dispensation from the assistant-resident to travel and go to his village to get them. His oldest sister was married already, but the youngest was happy to join him. Moe felt that she felt at home right away and she was surprised about the behaviour of the boy, who did not look very friendly or loving in her eyes, but who – as an apprentice tailor – bought a nice piece of pink cloth to sew a new *kabaja* for his little sister.⁹¹²

⁹⁰⁹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, No 10 April and May 1920 18e jaargang, p.11.

⁹¹⁰ *Witte Kruis Blad*, No 11 en 12 Juni en Juli 1920, p. 15.

⁹¹¹ 12 May 1908, No 94, Boekhoudt to Internal Affairs, cited in *Batavia*, 20 July 1908, No. 2185, *Director of Department of Internal Affairs De Graaff to Governor General Van Heutsz*, pp 1-3, 6-7, in BT 19-06-09, No. 7, AS, ANRI. Nothing ever came of this plan, partly because the colonial government did not want to create the suspicion that it ‘deported’ its juvenile delinquents to less favourable parts of the archipelago. For political prisoners this was not considered a problem.

⁹¹² *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juni 1923, no 6, p. 10.

In the late thirties a former government pupil – who had left a few years earlier and regularly wrote letters to Moe – asked if he could send his misbehaving ten-year-old son to the colony for his education. He was willing to pay for this, even though Moe believed he did not earn much and also had to feed other children.⁹¹³ While we don't know if this man had become a Christian or not, he apparently felt that he had gotten a good education and upbringing at the colony and did not mind sending his son there too. This can be interpreted – carefully – as a sign that he had a quite positive recollection of his time in the colony and did not feel stigmatized.

Ex-government pupils saw the colony as a place they could turn to in times of trouble. There are numerous descriptions of ex-pupils who decided to return to the colony after they had been discharged. A young man who had escaped from the colony when he was a government pupil returned years later. He had been working as a contract coolie on the plantations of the outer regions, like Sumatra. At first, Moe was happy that he returned, especially because he behaved well, something he had not done as a government pupil. But soon after his arrival he stole the watch of an older boy and ran off again.⁹¹⁴ One girl was released and sent to live with her mother again; she soon found a job with a European family. She suddenly returned, however, because her family had tried to force a marriage upon her. The girl refused and fled to Witte Kruis to escape this fate.⁹¹⁵

The Van Emmeriks sometimes expressed disappointment about the behaviour of their pupils and ex-pupils – especially when they stole, ran away or refused the Gospel – but also saw many pupils adopt manners and lifestyles they approved of.⁹¹⁶ There were pupils who no longer accepted the life their families wanted them to live and they sought creative solutions to solve these loyalty conflicts. Two male government pupils – who were released when they turned eighteen – went back home but did not want to stay there. One of them decided to return to Witte Kruis and bring his mother, who was apparently widowed or divorced, with him. The other had no parents and did not want to live with his uncle. He requested to marry a girl from the colony and started his own family in the colony where he was once re-educated.⁹¹⁷

⁹¹³ *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1939, p. 1.

⁹¹⁴ *Witte Kruis Blad*, October 1930, p.2.

⁹¹⁵ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Augustus 1931, p.2

⁹¹⁶ For a few examples of their disappointment see *Witte Kruis Blad*, Februari 1926, p. 4, October 1924, p. 2, Mei 1925, p. 3. Februari 1926, p.1, September 1929, p.1. November 1930, p. 3.

⁹¹⁷ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Augustus 1928, p. 2.

A few ex-pupils had joined the military and one girl had even become a baboe in Holland.⁹¹⁸ This ex-government pupil had first worked in the clinic of the Salvation Army in Semarang and had later found a job with a European family. They were so pleased with her that she was allowed to go on leave to Holland with them, wrote Moe. The girl wrote faithfully to Moe and she visited the colony after her return. 'It was touching to see how happy she is', felt Moe, who received two vases from her as a birthday present.⁹¹⁹

Other young men and women worked at the colony as free farmers and craftsmen and established families. Children who did well in school were allowed to go to missionary posts and hospitals to train as teachers or nurses and came back later to work on the colony. Some became Salvation Army disciples and worked to spread the gospel.⁹²⁰ These stories were considered success stories by the Van Emmeriks; apparently life as a government pupil and the strong Western and Christian ideas on the Witte Kruis Kolonie did change pupils' beliefs and behaviour. Just like Christian marriages between colony inhabitants, baptisms, confessions and all night prayer meetings, it gave the Van Emmeriks a feeling of progress and hope that 'God's work' was being done and had results. The image that speaks from the monthly writings of the Van Emmeriks is that they felt that their mission and civilizing efforts had positive results. Without a hopeful attitude they probably would not have been able to do the work they did. 'Despite the lack of thankfulness and the disappointing aspects found in the child, love keeps hope alive', expressed Moe her attitude.⁹²¹

7.4. What is home? Affiliations and the role of religion

Moe van Emmerik's notes about life in the Witte Kruis Kolonie reveal a side of the re-education system that is hard to discover in the sources about the state reformatories. The more informal re-education practices at the Witte Kruis Colony seem to have left more space for government pupils and their parents to integrate their re-education experience into their

⁹¹⁸ *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1929, p. 2.

⁹¹⁹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, November 1929, p. 2 en 3.

⁹²⁰ See voor example the story of K. who was an ex-government pupil. He returned to his mother after his discharge and became a blacksmith. He joined the Christian community in his place of residence, went back to the colony for a little while, and then went on to Semarang with two other older boys from the colony. He married 'a good Christian girl' from the colony. The three men became soldiers of the Salvation Army, and behaved 'according to their promises', to the great pride of the Van Emmerik's. *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1931, p.2. See also the stories about girls and boys who learned to be nurses in Blora and the girls in Soerabaja who asked to become missionaries. *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1929, p. 1, en Oktober 1929, p. 3-4.

⁹²¹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, November 1930, p. 3.

personal lives and develop lasting relationships with other government pupils, free children and adults on the colony, and the Van Emmeriks. Some government pupils, for example, brought family members to the colony with them, who stayed there voluntarily. The relationship that children maintained with their family seems to have been significantly influenced by religious practices in the reformatories. Children who kept the same religion as their parents, like in the state reformatories and the Klakah agricultural colony, usually returned to their families after their release. Ex-pupils who converted to Christianity, which was the intention of the Van Emmeriks at Witte Kruis, often chose a different life path; they married other people from the colony, built their adult lives there or returned back after a spell at home. Some ex-pupils even became Salvation Army workers and worked to convert more Javanese to Christianity.

The more informal lifestyle of government pupils at Witte Kruis, in comparison to life in the state reformatories, led to different behaviour and development of the pupils. This was noticed during the visits from the inspectors of the Justice Department, like De Haas in 1922. According to Moe his visit was very pleasant and they talked about the behaviour and progress of each pupil. De Haas seemed pleasantly surprised by the fact 'that the children are behaving so free and natural here and are being themselves'.⁹²² During these visits the officials also inspected the sleeping quarters, the school and the work places of the juveniles. During one of these visits in 1925 the Van Emmeriks were happy to hear that the age of discharge had been lowered from 21 to 18 years old. Similar to the supervisors in the state reformatory the older children were causing them trouble and according to Moe an eighteen-year-old 'native' who had not grown up and improved his ways would never grow up.⁹²³

Moe usually wrote with appreciation about visits from representatives of the colonial government and felt pleased with the interest these men showed in her work.⁹²⁴ She never reported any criticism from the state, not even about the great number of escapes, but they might have discussed these issues nonetheless. Pa van Emmerik was less pleased with the visits from state officials; he was still disappointed that they were not interested in 'the fruits of the gospel, which display themselves in the lives of some of these children'.⁹²⁵ Van Emmerik believed that they rather saw the children as Muslims, something he was probably

⁹²² *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juni 1922, no 6, 20^e jaargang, p. 4.

⁹²³ *Witte Kruis Blad*, October 1923, no 10, p.5

⁹²⁴ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juni 1925, p. 2

⁹²⁵ *Witte Kruis Jaarverslag 1923*, and *Witte Kruis Blad*, Maart 1924, p. 10.

right about, considering the government's reasons for establishing the religiously neutral state reformatories. In both their religious outlook and the relative freedom pupils enjoyed, Witte Kruis and the Salvation Army colonies were exceptions to the rules of re-education in the Indies.

Moe believed that pupils were bonding with her and the facility because they kept in touch with her, came to visit or even moved back to the colony. In the late twenties she noticed there was more and more correspondence between her and released government pupils, even with the ones who had been troublesome or tried to escape. According to her, many government pupils saw the colony as their home.⁹²⁶ This was especially the case for the ones who were orphans or had a troubled relationship with their family. It seems that Moe encouraged these feelings. In July 1927 two boys, who had arrived years earlier in neglected state, were allowed to visit their families in Pekalongan. They returned quickly and Moe was afraid something had happened. The eldest explained to her that he was no longer *krasan* (happy, satisfied) at home and that the family of the youngest boy did not want to know and accept him anymore. The young S. was crying loudly and both Moe and his older friend tried to console him by saying that he had brothers and sisters on Witte Kruis and that Moe was his mother.⁹²⁷ Similar to other stories about pupils who no longer wanted to live with their families, this indicates that re-education and the long separation between parents and children could cause the loosening of family ties.

The other side of the coin was that many pupils did maintain ties with their families. The director of the Pro Juventute agricultural colony in Klakah mentioned that most ex-pupils wanted to live close to their families after years of separation.⁹²⁸ Similar remarks were made in the annual reports of the state reformatories. Supervisors felt that ex-pupils usually found it more important to go back to their place of origin than find a job that matched their skill level. Some educational officers and directors regretted this, because even some of the ex-pupils who had a good position left their job to go back home to a 'lesser' quality of life, according to the annual reports.⁹²⁹ Pupils apparently did not agree, they chose

⁹²⁶ *Witte Kruis Blad*, September 1929, p. 2.

⁹²⁷ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juli 1927, p. 2.

⁹²⁸ *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1931*, pp. 55-56. See also *Indisch Verslag 1933, over 1932, deel I*, p. 309. *Jaarverslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja 1932*, p. 5.

⁹²⁹ *Verslag Semarang, 1923-1925*, p. 25. *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 38.

for a quality of life that appealed more to them and showed the strength of their ties with family and village.

The loyalty of pupils to their home environment influenced the reform system; in the late twenties the state reformatories differentiated between the practical education of pupils with a rural and of those with an urban background. Pupils with an urban background would usually return to the city and could practice a trade there; rural pupils who returned home needed different skills to become self-sufficient. In the older reformatories agriculture was looked down on and seen as something for pupils who were not able or willing to learn a proper trade and it was not taught professionally. After the opening of LOG Tangerang in 1927 agriculture was taught especially to those pupils who came from a rural background, and the state hired an agricultural specialist who had been trained in Holland to teach them 'modern' farming skills. Pupils learned technical skills, like irrigation and fertilization, and were growing vegetables, fruits, cassava, corn and other foods.⁹³⁰ This would be a better investment to their future than learning a trade, so educators thought, because if they went back home anyway their agricultural knowledge and experience would be much more useful in their village environment. They might even bring new agricultural knowledge and practice to their village this way, spreading 'modernity' and setting new examples.

It seems that the religious affiliations of pupils played a large role in their ability to still feel comfortable with their families and home environment. Children who had converted to Christianity – and an unknown number did so – embraced different viewpoints and they sometimes did not fit in with their home environment anymore. Which role religion really played in government pupils' lives is difficult to establish, but it is certain that religion played a different role in the various institutions. The state reformatories were 'neutral' when it came to religious matters and daily life was secular. If pupils wanted to pray or worship they had to do so in their own – limited – spare time. Once a week there was religious education for the pupils and students were expected to adhere to their own religion – the one of their parents. If it was possible they were allowed to participate in religious worship outside of the reformatory.⁹³¹ The great majority of pupils were Muslim. This was also the case in the Pro Juventute – state financed – agricultural colony in Klakah and in the secular Pro Juventute

⁹³⁰ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang, 1926 en 1927*, p. 11. *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 31-32.

⁹³¹ *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928-1929*, pp. 34-35. Also *Verslag Semarang 1923 t/m 1925*, pp. 20-21.

shelters.⁹³² In specifically Islamic or Christian institutions – like the Muhammadijah orphanages, the Indo-European SOG and Oranje Nassau insititutes, and the Witte Kruis and Salvation Army colonies – religion permeated pupils’ daily life.

In the state reformatories religion was seen as one of the means to ‘elevate’ students above their daily pursuits and relationships and teach them something about ‘moral-religious spheres’ and a ‘different category of obligations and beliefs’, according to the director of LOG Semarang in 1926. At the same time he was unsure if religious education actually influenced pupils’ behaviour and emotions at all since so many of them were – in his eyes – ‘usually hiding their feelings’.⁹³³ Since religious conversion was rare in the state reformatories, this was not in the way of ex-pupils’ relationships with their parents and families. For indigenous pupils raised in the Christian colonies this was very different. Witte Kruis’s mission was ‘to bring these people [Javanese] to Christ’, as Pa van Emmerik phrased it.⁹³⁴ The daily prayer meetings, Sunday school, frequent witnessing and proselytizing missions to other *desas*, Christmas celebrations and all-night prayer meetings during New Year’s Eve must have had effect.⁹³⁵

There is no detailed evidence about the number of conversions on Witte Kruis, except one comment of Moe van Emmerik, who noted that there were 666 people on the colony in 1927, of which 366 had converted to Christianity. The children who were living at the colony without their parents – government pupils among them – were counted as non-Christian unless they made their own choice and converted.⁹³⁶ If these numbers are representative it means that about half of the people living on Witte Kruis eventually converted. While we do not know if this also counts for the government pupil, there are numerous notes by Moe van Emmerik that reveal some of the religious behaviour of the pupils. In early 1925 she noted that there were twelve candidates for confirmation. One of them changed his mind and eleven were actually baptised. Two of them were government pupils and two of them were girls who had come from Lampong as former slave-girls. The latter were part of a group of girls who

⁹³² For example *Verslag Pro Juventute Soerabaja over 1921*, pp. 17-18.

⁹³³ *Verslag Semarang, 1923 t/m 1925*, p. 6.

⁹³⁴ *Witte Kruis*, Jaarverslag Mei 1922, p. 5.

⁹³⁵ Almost every monthly edition of the *Witte Kruis Blad* talks about the colony’s religious activities, see for example *Witte Kruis Blad*, November 1918, No. 4, September/Okttober 1922, No. 9 en 10, and Januari 1924, No. 1.

⁹³⁶ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Februari 1928, 26^e jaargang, no 2. p. 3.

had been discovered in Lampong – where they were kept as slave girls – and were sent to Witte Kruis by the state.⁹³⁷

One of a group of four boys, who were sent to Witte Kruis because they were stealing, came before the congregation one Sunday morning and asked for forgiveness from the community and from God. '[...] I have lied, stolen, and committed so many other sins, but now I also want to ask God to forgive me', he said.⁹³⁸ On New Year's Day 1922 a young couple, of which the woman was a former government pupil, got married in church.⁹³⁹ In 1923 a former government pupil – who still lived and worked on the colony as a lace maker – became a mother and she and her husband baptised their child.⁹⁴⁰ Another ex-pupil had become a 'good workman and, even better, a good Christian', according to Moe. He got married after he had been engaged for a long time with 'one of the sweetest girls of the colony, also a real believer'.⁹⁴¹ Another female pupil did not want to get married but wanted to 'serve God', which Moe found 'an example for her white sisters'.⁹⁴²

The colony's tailor, a certain Iskander from Kendangan (Borneo), had arrived at the colony as one of the first government pupils around 1910. After he served his sentence he did not want to return home because he had become a Christian. Later he was baptized, married a girl from the colony and became the father of a little boy.⁹⁴³ Moe van Emmerik often expressed her pride about pupils like Iskander, who had become the hard-working Christians the Van Emmeriks dreamed of bringing up. In 1920 Iskander visited his family in Kendangan and found out that his younger brother was 'addicted' to dice and gambling. He took his brother with him to the Witte Kruis 'in the hope that he would find the same Redeemer that he had found', as Moe phrased it.⁹⁴⁴ Since gambling and dice were a pretty normal part of life in many indigenous communities it seems that Iskander had embraced the Christian morals that were part of the life and re-education in the Witte Kruis Colony. He apparently felt that his brother would be better off with a similar upbringing and managed to convince him to come to the colony.

⁹³⁷ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juni 1925, p. 3

⁹³⁸ *Witte Kruis Blad*, October 1923, no 10, p.3.

⁹³⁹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Januari 1922, No. 1, p. 1.

⁹⁴⁰ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juli 1923, No. 7, p. 2.

⁹⁴¹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Mei 1926, p. 4.

⁹⁴² *Witte Kruis Blad*, Augustus 1922, No. 8, p. 10.

⁹⁴³ *Witte Kruis Blad*, No 10 April and May 1920 18e jaargang, p.12. Marriage between government pupils among each other and with 'free' pupils of the colony happened often, and never without a serious talk from Moe with both partners.

⁹⁴⁴ *Witte Kruis Blad*, No 10 April and May 1920 18e jaargang, p.12.

But not all the news about the faith of the colony's inhabitants was positive. Moe frequently talked about the people who strayed and went back to their old ways. Like the young man who had come to them as an orphan, grew up to become a good Christian and one day committed an unnamed sin that left the Van Emmeriks shocked and sad.⁹⁴⁵ In 1922 about fifty boys regularly joined a voluntary weekly prayer meeting. They admitted their sins and asked for forgiveness and the support to do the right thing, but Moe worried about them nonetheless. She felt that 'the evil one is longing to own them'. 'Those who can pray, please pray for them. They really mean it, but so far our Javanese Christians do not have a very strong spiritual backbone.'⁹⁴⁶

⁹⁴⁵ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Augustus 1918, No. 1, p. 7.

⁹⁴⁶ *Witte Kruis Blad*, September/Okttober 1922, No. 9 en 10.

Conclusion and Epilogue

In the Netherlands Indies, the emergence of the late colonial state went hand in hand with the advance of a colonial civil society between 1900 and 1942. In the field of juvenile care and re-education, both European and indigenous associations were of crucial importance for the development and implementation of the reform policy of the colonial government. After 1900, the late colonial state had growing ambitions for the re-education of delinquent juveniles, but limited financial means to actually do so, and it sought the support of individuals and organizations. Christian reformers like Pa van Emmerik and Pa van der Steur, European-dominated association Pro Juventute, the Islamic indigenous organization Muhammadiyah, and a variety of smaller associations, all supported the government's reform policy for their own reasons, and in their own way. The cooperation between the colonial state and civil associations led to a diverse juvenile care and reform system, which reflected the complexity of colonial society and the goals of social reformers.

The aim of this research project was to study the history of juvenile care and reform in the Netherlands Indies on three levels: the state, a budding civil society, and the juveniles, parents, and other individuals in the re-education system. Doing so shows the relationships between the colonial state, civil associations, and ordinary people, and brings forward the importance of more moderate and socially orientated organizations in the Netherlands Indies. This side of associational life has often been overshadowed by a historiography focused on Indonesian nationalism and independence.⁹⁴⁷

In the course of the twentieth century, more and more inhabitants of the Indies wanted to have a say in how their society developed. Since the political system, with its strong central authority and lack of democratic representation, only allowed the happy few to participate, people found other ways to make their voices heard. Indigenous participation in colonial civil society was shaped by alternative ideas about progress and reform that were not just employed by nationalists, but also by Islamic religious thinkers and organizations. Newspapers and magazines of every kind, political parties and philanthropic associations; all became avenues for the expression and development of many different ideas about the future of the colony. Henk Schulte Nordholt argued that a majority of the indigenous lower middle

⁹⁴⁷ William O'Malley and Hans van Miert have pointed this out before me. O'Malley, 'Second thoughts on Indonesian nationalism', 603-604, 610-611, in: J.A.C. Mackie (ed.), *Indonesia; Australian perspectives* (Canberra, ANU, 1980) 601-613. Van Miert, *Een koel hoofd en een warm hart*, 13-14.

class was not primarily interested in supporting a 'risky' nationalism, but in gaining access to the modern lifestyle that was part of colonial society.⁹⁴⁸ Associational life, the possibility to work for the 'improvement' of society, exchange ideas, and critique or support the colonial order was one of the characteristics of this 'modern' colonial lifestyle, for both the European and indigenous middle class and elite, especially after World War I.

Stages of cooperation and dependency

The development of associational life and the relationship between civil associations and the state, with regards to juvenile care and reform, went through several distinct stages. In the first stage, which lasted from the opening of the first Christian orphanage in Batavia, in 1629, until the late nineteenth century, juvenile care was carried out by Christian associations and individuals and focused on (Indo-)European orphans. Christian orphanages in cities like Batavia and Semarang were markers of a European elite that was concerned about the loyalties of the Indo-European population and community, and keeping up the prestige of the European community versus the indigenous community. The colonial state did not want to be directly involved in juvenile care, but it did sponsor Christian associations.

The French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, changed European perspectives of social problems and how to solve them. New ideas about childrearing and the treatment of delinquent or 'abnormal' children inspired the development of childcare and prison facilities that focused on the improvement of juvenile behaviour. European social reform movements, which developed in the nineteenth century, started to influence life in the colony in the 1870s. This went hand in hand with the opening of the Suez canal in 1869 and other communications and transportation revolutions that made the exchange of people, goods, and information much easier and faster than before.

In the course of the nineteenth century, a strong increase in the number of European soldiers, who usually had interracial relationships, increased the number of impoverished Eurasian children - left behind when their white fathers returned home. Victorian morals and a new civilizing spirit greatly influenced opinions about Indo-European children who lived on the margins of European society. They were seen more and more as a threat to the colonial order. Marginalized European and Indo-European adults and children, who were 'too native' or fraternized with 'natives', were seen as a liability for European prestige and thus the

⁹⁴⁸ Schulte Nordholt, 'Onafhankelijkheid of moderniteit', 107.

validity of colonial rule. Commissions to study poverty among Europeans in the Indies were set up in 1872, 1882 and 1900. The reports of these research committees about the problem of 'pauperism' expressed negative opinions about white men who left their offspring and indigenous mothers who raised their Eurasian children alone. Early observers of indigenous society also commented negatively on the way ordinary parents raised their children. While the pauperism committees suggested that the state should actively try to reduce poverty and (re-)educate children on the brink of 'pauperism', the colonial state was only interested in funding private associations who did social work.

The second stage of the development of juvenile care and reform in the Netherlands Indies was connected to the ethical policy, the Dutch version of the European *mission civilisatrice* in the colonies. With the introduction of moral reform ideas in the late nineteenth century, and its official application with the ethical policy of 1901, the colonial state shifted its attention beyond the European population. 'Ethical' thinkers proclaimed that the merits and criteria of Western civilization had to benefit the indigenous inhabitants of the colony as well. To further the economic and social well being of the indigenous population, the Dutch government and the colonial state were now willing to extend their social policies. The civilizing mission promoted state intervention in economic, administrative and social affairs, and optimistic reformers imagined a quick transition from a supposedly static Asian society to a dynamic and more Western pattern.

Christian philanthropists Pa van der Steur and Pa van Emmerik actively applied 'modern' ideas about pauperism, childcare and juvenile reform to colonial society. They each founded an institution that sought to raise and re-educate orphaned and neglected juveniles in a modern fashion and based on Christian principles. Pa van der Steur devoted his life to teaching Indo-European youngsters to become good tradesmen and housewives, while Pa van Emmerik focused on training indigenous youngsters and adults as farmers, craftsmen and missionaries.

The possibility to send juvenile delinquents to a re-education or 'improvement' home, instead of a prison, was introduced in the Indies in 1866, but was not widely used. Because improvement homes did not exist judges were hesitant to give children a re-education sentence. The Governor General had permission to send children on a case-by-case basis to a private person for re-education and this happened occasionally. Influenced by the Dutch child laws (1901), Socialist member of the Dutch parliament Van Kol - a designer and supporter of the ethical policy - argued that juvenile crime was a bigger problem in the

colony than it seemed, and that it deserved modern solutions. Colonial judge Boekhoudt published a report about crime and policing in the Indies in 1906, with special attention for juvenile crime and reform. Civil servants started to debate the issue of juvenile delinquency and the merits of institutional reform versus placing youngsters in private families. The colonial government eventually decided that institutional reform of juvenile delinquents was preferable over private care, because institutionalization would be more conducive to 'improving' the delinquent. To avoid establishing a state facility, which would be a costly departure from the state's usual approach to juvenile care and reform, the colonial government contracted Christian reformers Van der Steur, Van Emmerik and the Salvation Army to take care of juvenile delinquents in their institutions in 1905/1906.

At this point a typical colonial aspect of juvenile reform came to the surface. Most juvenile delinquents were indigenous, and most indigenous children were Muslims. Juvenile childcare institutions, however, were all Christian, and this posed a dilemma for a colonial state that had declared a neutral approach to religious matters. Although colonial officials seriously debated this problematic construction, the state believed that being frugal and relying on civil associations was more important than religious neutrality. The colonial government chose to conduct its re-education efforts through the work of Christian associations, paying only lip service to religious neutrality.

The third period in the development of the juvenile care and reform policy, and the changing relationship between the state and civil associations, started with the birth of the *pergerakan* around 1908 and intensified with World War I. Modern means of communication, books, newspapers and magazines, and Western education all contributed to the indigenous elite's growing awareness of their lack of political possibilities and rights. From Europe, the nineteenth-century ideologies of Marxism and Socialism started trickling down into colonial society and inspired political associations. The Middle East and Turkey provided new ideas on Islamic modernism and revival, which influenced the founding of the reformist Muhammadijah movement (1912). Combined with Asian examples of modernization and progress, like China and Japan, this became the fuel of the *pergerakan*.

The relationship between colonial civil society and the state became increasingly complex in the first decades of the twentieth century. Inhabitants of the colony were becoming more active in expressing their views on how society should 'progress' and 'modernize'. Both developments within the *pergerakan* and within white bourgeois philanthropy are visible when looking at the changes in the juvenile re-education system. In

the 1910s groups of people founded improvement associations in the Indies, aimed at battling vices like drinking, gambling, prostitution, and criminality and spreading bourgeois and 'modern' morals instead. These philanthropic organizations consisted of 'concerned citizens', usually with a majority from one ethnic or cultural group, who rallied around a single issue. During World War I, associational life in the Indies intensified and the number of indigenous organizations grew rapidly. In 1913, the colonial government legally approved six indigenous associations; in 1914 there were 70; in 1915 a total of 69. Between 1914 and 1916 more indigenous associations than European associations were established.

Some indigenous associations and political parties, like Boedi Oetomo (1908) and Sarekat Islam (1912), criticized the government and its ethical stance, while others - like the anti-prostitution association Madjoe Kamoeljan - intended to work together with the state towards societal

progress. The state could count on the European-dominated association Pro Juventute for support of juvenile re-education, but it proved a critical partner as well. Pro Juventute would criticize the government for not creating enough space in the reformatories and kept pressing for the reform of juvenile laws in the course of the twentieth century.

During the 1910s, the Dutch colonial state became increasingly preoccupied with the issue of juvenile delinquency and the need for a religiously neutral re-education facility. This was not just a result of the humanistic 'ethical' ideals of progress and modernity, but was a strong example of colonial *realpolitik* as well. The founding of indigenous associations caused growing fear of anti-colonial resistance and (Pan-)Islamic sentiments. These anxieties were fed by the international crisis of World War I and its repercussions in the colony. The appearance of indigenous associations that furthered the spread of (modernist) Islam throughout the colony made the colonial government reconsider the importance of religious neutrality in juvenile reformatories. The state worried that sending Muslim youngsters to Christian private institutes, such as the agricultural colonies of Salvation Army and Witte Kruis Kolonie, would lead to protest from the indigenous community. These private reformatories also had problems with their delinquent pupils: boys kept escaping and there was no expertise or facility to take care of 'abnormal' boys.

Fear of Islamic protests, and the perceived necessity of a separation between 'normal' and 'abnormal' juvenile delinquents, influenced the justice department and it advocated a modern institution that would be religiously neutral and separate the two groups of delinquents. The new penal code of 1918, with its broader provisions for juvenile offenders,

led to an increase in the number of juveniles in the re-education system and also pressed the government to reconsider its re-education system. Eventually, Governor General Van Limburg Stirum decided that the reformatory in Semarang, which would originally be managed by the Salvation Army, had to become a religiously neutral state facility. After its establishment a total number of seven state re-education institutes (one for girls, six for boys) would be opened in Semarang, Malang, Tangerang, Ngawi, Blitar and Bandung between 1918 and 1930.

The greater involvement of both indigenous and European individuals and associations in the state's re-education project, starting in the late 1920s, marks the fourth and last stage of the relationship between the colonial state and civil associations and would last until 1942. In the late 1910s, the colonial government had tried to involve Sarekat Islam and Boedi Oetomo in the re-education project, and suggested they would open a reformatory for indigenous youngsters themselves. Both organizations had different priorities, however, and when it came to the future of indigenous youth they apparently felt that good (nationalist) education and initiatives like boy and girl scouts were much more important. The relatively small number of juvenile delinquents versus the large number of 'normal' indigenous youth that desired a regular education seems the most obvious explanation for their lack of interest in juvenile reform. While government debates in the late 1920s still mentioned the supposed responsibility of the indigenous community to operate their own reformatories, this idea was no longer taken seriously. The justice department, and even indigenous Volksraad members, explained the lack of indigenous interest by stating that indigenous society was 'not yet ready' to take on these responsibilities.

The European dominated civil association Pro Juventute was established in 1917, and proved an active, reliable and influential partner for the colonial state. Government officials encouraged the founding and work of Pro Juventute associations to support the colonial government with its juvenile reform efforts, and many of these officials were active members of the association. The governing boards and social workers of the different branches set up temporary shelters for juveniles and founded the agricultural re-education colony in Klakah. Specially appointed and government sponsored Pro Juventute workers did background research and advised the courts about juvenile cases and went into neighbourhoods and homes to find delinquent, neglected or abused children. Pro Juventute members also criticised the government for its lack of judicial reform and pressed for improvements in the treatment of juvenile delinquents.

Just like the colonial state, local Pro Juventute associations solicited support from the indigenous and Chinese community for their efforts to ‘save’ juveniles of all social and ethnic groups from criminality, neglect, abuse, and prostitution. They initially did not get a lot of response, but in the mid-1920s and 1930s this changed, and the number of non-European members who worked towards eradicating juvenile neglect and delinquency increased significantly. Simultaneously, indigenous people also established their own civil society organizations and charities and, for example, established their own orphanages. The *pergerakan* and the influence of ethical ideas seemingly created a general attitude that a ‘good’ indigenous person would strive to contribute towards the progress of his/her people. The number of indigenous organizations and associations involved with youth work increased; ‘wild’ schools, a variety of scouting clubs, women’s organizations that worked to eradicate social ills, and Islamic and Chinese orphanages all expanded.

Indigenous involvement in the colonial re-education project developed later and in other ways than the colonial government and European associations had originally planned and hoped for. Associations like the Islamic modernist Muhammadiyah were shaped and motivated by their own ideas about progress and (re-)education, influenced by Islamic reform, nationalist ideas, and the perceived benefits of a Western education. The state’s coveted Islamic reformatories for juvenile delinquents never materialized, but indigenous civil society was involved in juvenile care and re-education on its own terms.

The reform system in crisis

Several characteristics of the late colonial state in the Netherlands Indies become visible when studying the juvenile care and reform system. Marieke Bloembergen showed, in her book about the history of the colonial police since 1897, that a mix of fear and care characterized the late colonial state. Europeans feared local religious revolts in the late nineteenth century, Chinese nationalism and the *pergerakan* after 1900, revolution in 1918 and communist revolts in 1926-1927.⁹⁴⁹ This mixture of fear and care was visible in the treatment of juvenile delinquents and vagabonds as well. Especially after 1914, misbehaving, mostly indigenous, juveniles were seen as a threat to the colonial social order, but were at the same time perceived as deserving care and protection, because they were the victims of impoverished, neglectful or criminal parents.

⁹⁴⁹ Bloembergen, *Uit zorg en angst*, 355.

The late colonial state also emerges as a state that had high ambitions, but lacked financial and personnel means - and political willingness - to live up to them. The juvenile care and re-education system was designed by a state that wanted to look civilized and modern, and keep its population obedient and under control, but did not honestly want to take care of all its neglected, endangered, or delinquent children, because it would be too expensive and demanding. The development of the juvenile reform system shows a series of crises that reveal a state that was highly dependent on civil associations as allies in the childcare and re-education system. Between 1918 and 1942, the importance of European and indigenous associations increased, and without their work the colonial state would not have been able to face the consequences of the economic crisis of the 1930s.

In 1919, a year after the colonial state opened its first reformatory in Semarang, the re-education system entered its first period of crisis. The government had enthusiastically pointed out to judges that they could now send children to a real reform institution, but when hundreds of juveniles were sentenced to re-education, there were not enough places in the state reformatory and the private institutions. Approximately 400 youngsters ended up waiting in prisons and police stations, in the company of adult criminals. It would take until 1923 before they were all transferred to other institutions; private reformatories were responsible for housing at least half of them.

The overpopulation of the reform system was caused by several factors. Attorney General Uhlenbeck had instructed local judges in 1919 to be strict about juvenile theft, because there were a lot of complaints about juvenile gangs who were stealing crops, especially in the areas around Djokjakarta, Soerakarta and Kediri on Mid Java. Uhlenbeck concluded later that these rumours were false and had been spread through the newspapers by the Sugar Syndicate, the powerful business association of the sugar industry, and the local agricultural associations. It had been easy for the general population, the government and judges to believe stories of rampant juvenile crime, because the years 1918-1919 were a fearful and violent time in the colony. The agricultural business associations had their own interest in the juvenile reform system; they wanted to stop sugarcane burnings and crop theft and asked the government and its judges to support them with strict prosecution of juvenile offences. But after 1920 the colonial government did not honour their requests, and to redress the overpopulation of the reform system judges were instructed to be prudent and conservative in their prosecution of juvenile crime, which remained the policy.

The economic crisis of the 1930s had significant effects on the reform system. Economic hardship, and an increase in the number of neglected and vagabonding children, created more work for civil childcare and rescue associations, which were suffering from a decrease in income at the same time because members and other supporters of the associations in the Indies and the Netherlands had less money to donate to charities. The colonial government had to cut its budget and closed two older state reformatories. It then gave the large reformatory for boys and girls in Tangerang to Pro Juventute. The government still partly sponsored the facility, but saved a lot of money nevertheless. Private associations also did preventative work among juveniles, to avoid them being sent to a reformatory. The government estimated that Pro Juventute's work in the cities kept around fifty percent of the juvenile cases out of the prisons and reformatories. Pro Juventute did so by giving out warnings, advising parents, and keeping an eye on children who needed supervision. In the late 1930s, the state reform system entered another period of overpopulation and crisis, when juvenile reform sentences rose sharply again. The colonial state had no financial means to increase the number of beds, and once again asked the judges to be prudent with their verdicts.

Everyday life and the complexities of the reform system

The cooperation between the colonial state and civil associations created a juvenile care and reform system that reflected the complexity of colonial society and the different goals of social reformers. Juveniles in the reformatories experienced different forms of re-education efforts, depending on their ethnicity, gender, religion and social status.

The typically colonial aspects of juvenile re-education started with the courtroom. Dutch officials already noted in the early twentieth century that the colonial justice system suffered from a general lack of understanding between colonizers and colonized. Different languages, cultures, social classes, norms and values met in the courtroom in such a way that judges frequently doubted their own ability to do justice. These problems were also inflicted on juveniles, because there was no special judge or court for juvenile offenders, so they went through the same system as adults.

Judges often suffered from a lack of information about juveniles and their background. There was not enough time and manpower for proper background research and parents were usually not present at the court proceedings. Children often told the police and judge that they had no parents, probably to avoid punishment, so that parents remained

uninformed and could not attend. Dutch judges also found it hard to establish the correct age of juveniles, who - in their eyes - looked and behaved so different than the youth in the Netherlands. The growing involvement of Pro Juventute, whose social workers did background research into juvenile cases and tried to advise the judges on the proper sentence, alleviated these problems somewhat. The organization preferred to give children who were not homeless or living in a 'criminal milieu' a warning, and kept a close eye on them in their home environment, instead of sending them to a reformatory.

A fraction of the parents protested the re-education sentence of their children; there are 65 known cases of parents who wrote clemency letters for their children between 1918 and the late 1930s. Considering that approximately 4,550 children were re-educated between 1918 and 1938, this was just a tiny fraction. In response to these clemency requests, some judges reconsidered their sentences, because they believed that the absence of parents and a lack of information had led to faulty verdicts. They proposed to return the children to their caretakers, instead of keeping them in the reformatory. Unfortunately for judges, parents, and children, the Attorney General and Governor General in Batavia always rejected the clemency requests. The law stated that re-education was an administrative sentence, and not a penal measure for which one could ask clemency. Even when judges claimed they had made a mistake, these formalities prevented an adjustment of the verdict. The practical administration of justice in the colony - with its inherent difficulties - did not correspond with the formalistic attitude of higher-level court officials in Batavia.

Once children received a re-education sentence, they were placed in a reformatory. Different reformers had different goals, and how pupils lived and worked varied greatly between institutions. In the early 1900s, Oranje-Nassau was already famous for its reform of Indo-European youngsters, both boys and girls. The institute had an elementary school, a cobblers' shop, carpenters' workplace, blacksmith, tailors' shop, painters' workplace and a vegetable garden to provide the boys with practical trade education. Girls learned everything about household skills. If possible, the more academically inclined boys and girls received higher education. The children lived on a very strict schedule from dusk till dawn, with the ringing of a bell as their signal for their next activity. The official language was Dutch, since mastery of Dutch was an important marker of their social and legal position.

Van der Steur wanted to raise his pupils as blue-collar workers, and most of them served in the army before leading a civilian life. This went against the common idea among colonial inhabitants that Indo-Europeans only wanted to do white-collar work to upkeep their

European status. Van der Steur envisioned a colonial future in which Indo-European workmen found a place for themselves and did not have to compete for government and office jobs with the increasing number of freshly arriving Dutchmen. The colonial state supported his approach, since it believed that both Indo-European and indigenous children-at-risk should not get aspirations and desires for a future life that was beyond their social and racial status. They had to be able to make a living and should behave like good citizens and subjects, but they were seen as subservient to the higher goals of the state and their social class.

The reform goals of the Witte Kruis Kolonie were significantly different. Pa van der Steur was a Christian reformer among pupils who were usually brought up as Christians, and religion formed a natural part of life in Oranje-Nassau. In contrast, Pa and Moe van Emmerik tried to convert indigenous pupils without a Christian background. The Van Emmeriks believed that Christianity would save indigenous people from their 'fatalism and inertia' and wanted to counter the popularity of Islam among the Javanese population. In their view, young pupils stood at the basis of this spiritual and social transformation; they were the future. Religion, and missionary activities in the surrounding villages, formed an important part of life for Van Emmerik and his pupils.

The relationship that children maintained with their family was also influenced by religious practices in the reformatories. Children who kept the same religion as their parents, like in the state reformatories and the Klakah agricultural colony, usually returned to their families after their release. Ex-pupils who converted to Christianity, which was the intention of the Van Emmeriks at Witte Kruis, often chose a different life path; they married other people from the colony, built their adult lives there, or returned to the colony after a short spell away. Some ex-pupils even became missionaries themselves and worked to convert more Javanese to Christianity.

Another important difference with Oranje-Nassau was the focus on agricultural labour and farming skills, instead of the urban-oriented education of Indo-European children. Indigenous juveniles were expected to become farmers, although there was an elementary school on the colony as well. Sometimes the most talented students were allowed to continue their education to become teachers, preachers, or nurses. In both reformatories, pupils developed ties to their caretakers and to each other. Many pupils married someone from the reformatory and some couples continued to live on the Witte Kruis Kolonie. Oranje-Nassau

pupils usually left to start their own lives in the colonial cities, but many kept in touch with Van der Steur and the associations for ex-pupils.

Moe van Emmerik's notes about life in the Witte Kruis Kolonie reveal a side of the re-education system that is hard to discover in the sources about the state reformatories. The more informal re-education practices at Witte Kruis seem to have left more space for government pupils and their parents to integrate their re-education experiences into their personal lives. Some government pupils, for example, brought siblings or parents to the colony with them, who stayed there voluntarily.

Language was an important sign of what was expected of the children in the different reformatories and served to shape their loyalties and expectations. The Indo-European children in Oranje-Nassau, for example, were taught and addressed in Dutch, the language of privilege. Among each other they created their own sub-culture by speaking *petjoh*, a mixture of the different languages in the colony. In the Witte Kruis Kolonie, the day-to-day language was Javanese, which the Van Emmeriks spoke fluently. It was not the intention of Pa and Moe to remove children from Javanese culture, but to 'improve' Javanese culture by adding Dutch elements and Christianity. This was the attitude typical of the early ethics, who believed in association between East and West. Children were expected to become 'improved' Javanese, not semi-Europeans. In the later established state reformatories, Malay would be the general language, signifying the desire of the Dutch to spread a common language among the diverse indigenous population. Significantly, they did not use the language spoken by the ruling elite to do so, contrary to the French who used their own language as part of the civilizing mission in their colonies.

After the opening of LOG Semarang in 1918, the *Landsopvoedingsgestichten* (state reformatories) were seen as the flagships of the reform system. The majority of pupils with a re-education sentence spent their time there and the reformatories were presented to the public as exemplary and modern institutions. Re-education practices in the state reformatories reveal more about the Dutch colonial vision on Netherlands Indies' society and its future, and the daily realities and challenges they faced. Supervisors first of all tried to change the behaviour and character of their pupils by focussing on the physical body. Pupils had to participate in a strict regime of physical exercises and care, received a healthy diet, did physical work and household chores, and had a regimented day filled with useful activities.

The ultimate aim of the re-educators was to change the 'character' of the pupils, but this was fraught with complications. Educational officers were firmly rooted in a cultural

arrogance that propagated Dutch-European values as a way to moral improvement. The annual reports of the state reformatories show that educators desired a display of regret, honesty and frankness, firm bodies and straight backs, close and manly friendships, loyalty towards friends and educators, diligence, hard work, and visible love for parents and family. Trying to convey these values to pupils from many different backgrounds, languages, cultures, levels of education and religious convictions met with limited success. Even when pupils seemed to behave according to the norms, re-educators were often disappointed by sudden outbursts or escapes. They feared that pupils were putting up a front and would slip back into their old ways as soon as they were released. This fear was present in colonial society at large: the indigenous population might seem content and peaceful on the surface, but what happened out of sight?

The ethnic and religious diversity of the reformatory population was also a specifically colonial aspect, which posed challenges for both educators and pupils. European supervisors often had problems understanding the nature of the youngsters they had to educate. European educators felt that they could hardly understand the children they were entrusted with. They perceived this as the result of a supposed East-West dichotomy, comparing the character and behaviour of indigenous youngsters with Dutch or Western children. The annual reports convey images of Eastern youth as more closed off than their Western peers; too mature for their age; naturally lazy; and almost always dishonest and cowardly. Early adulthood was not seen as something natural or healthy to local culture, but as a possibly dangerous trait or attitude that stemmed from the failing pedagogical skills of Indonesian parents, which had to be corrected. Descriptions about the unhealthy maturity of indigenous youngsters were very similar to what educators in British India wrote about their pupils. Colonial discourse had a tendency to stress that something was inherently wrong with indigenous children (and adults), which provided an easy argument for the necessity of re-education and colonial rule at large.

Pupils had a hard time to relate to their caretakers and supervisors too. They were forced into a living situation they most of them did not freely choose, as a subordinated category, under the dominance of white people from a different culture. Often they did not speak the same language, especially in the beginning when some detainees still had to learn Malay, which was the *lingua franca* of the colony and the reformatory. Developing understanding and trust between detained juveniles and their supervisors would be hard in a

more homogenous environment, but the difference in language and ethnicity, and possible resentment against colonial rule, made the situation in the Indies more complex.

The relationship between pupils and *mandoers* (indigenous overseers) was another aspect of the reformatories that was specifically colonial: the development of solidarity on the basis of ethnicity, 'race', and societal position vis-à-vis European colonizers. Dutch personnel often blamed successful breakouts, for example, on the incompetence of indigenous guards. The guards, however, seemed to have had friendly and mutually beneficial relationships with pupils and they looked away and even supported escape attempts. *Mandoers* and indigenous workers also traded forbidden goods like cigarettes with pupils, to the great dismay of educational officers. It is not hard to imagine that *mandoers* felt sympathy or pity for the children they had to guard. They often spoke the same language, might have had similar life experiences, and could probably identify with the pupils more easily than with the educational officers. Moreover, both pupils and *mandoers* had to take commands from Europeans, something that became more and more unpopular during the twentieth century.

In 1916, French officials in Indo-China discussed similar problems in their colonial prisons for adults. They concluded that it was ridiculous to have guards with the same ethnicity as the prisoners, because they would naturally sympathize with prisoners of their own 'race'. Naturally, regional and class solidarity could be reasons for fraternization between guards and prisoners too.⁹⁵⁰

The ethnic diversity of the pupils also influenced their relations with each other. Not everybody in colonial society spoke Malay at the time, especially boys from the countryside who spoke just their own local and regional language. Besides language differences, pupils had to overcome age and cultural differences. In response to the diversity of the reformatory population, European re-educators aimed to treat everybody as equals, because they felt this was beneficial for the re-education of the youngsters. There was a significant exception to equal treatment within the state reformatories. (Indo-)European pupils were separated from indigenous children as much as possible, on the basis of their language and religion, to avoid 'degeneration'. Total segregation of Indo-European pupils in a separate state institution never happened, there were simply not enough of them to warrant this, but they were all sent to the reformatory in Semarang and received separate school instruction.

⁹⁵⁰ Zinoman, *The Colonial Bastille*, 77-80.

(Indo-)European pupils were offered more training and job opportunities than indigenous pupils. They could work in the offices of the reformatory, for example, to acquire secretarial and administrative skills. These options were closed to indigenous boys, who were trained to become craftsmen, farmers, or personnel for the European elite. The Pro Juventute agricultural colony in Klakah made a similar distinction: Indo-European pupils were taught separately, in Dutch, and were encouraged to partake in the exams for government officials. Clearly, the colonial state and the Dutch elite had different futures in mind for these groups of children, and the reformatories offered an education that befitted pupils' social and racial status.

In 1918, the dominant idea was that colonial society needed skilled tradesmen, like carpenters, blacksmiths, and tailors. This would remain the prevailing notion throughout the 1920s and 1930s, but after educators realized that boys from the countryside were better off with an agricultural than a trade education, 'modern' agricultural education was added to the curriculum of the state reformatories in 1927. Indigenous girls in the state reformatories had completely different opportunities; they were prepared for a life as housewives, and learned domestic skills and needlework. Girls were considered less of a risk than boys and received a different treatment. They were allowed to keep their hair and were dressed in white shirts and batik skirts, while the boys were shaved and wore military-style uniforms. Instead of becoming 'regular' indigenous housewives, the girls received an education that stressed European skills and hygiene, so they could 'uplift' their future husbands and children.

In the Pro Juventute agricultural colony in Klakah, life was very different from that in the state reformatories and more similar to life in the Witte Kruis Kolonie - minus the missionary approach of Van Emmerik. Pro Juventute aimed to teach pupils a broad variety of practical skills that they could bring back to their village and their family. The boys received a basic school education, but mostly learned construction work and agricultural skills and knowledge. Like the state reformatories, the agricultural colony was religiously 'neutral'. Although the majority of the pupils were Muslim, there was separate religious instruction for each denomination. Contrary to the state reformatories, only children with special talents were trained in a specific trade or skill; the others changed their activities every week and worked in the kitchens, on the land, in the workplace and with the cattle.

While there was discipline, there was no disciplinary regime like in the state reformatories, with many rules and regulations. Klakah operated on a much more informal and personal basis, with the director as the centre of the reformatory. Pupils had more

freedom and performed independent labour. They received their own plots of lands and specific responsibilities as soon as possible. Director Heijbroek claimed in 1925 that this method was working well; he was able to release pupils before their official time of discharge at age twenty-one. In the state reformatories it was very unusual that pupils were released before they served their time. Another difference with the state reformatories was that older pupils who behaved well were not made monitors, but were hired as *mandoers*. This ensured 'trusted' indigenous personnel, who were loyal to the reformatory and the director. Pro Juventute's freer treatment and re-education of juvenile delinquents was possible because the most difficult ones remained in the state reformatories, while the more docile were transferred to institutions that offered more freedom - and chances to escape.

Muhammadiyah orphanages did not accept government pupils, but they did take in a category of orphans and neglected children that could easily have turned into government pupils if they were not taken off the streets. Muhammadiyah's aims partly corresponded and partly departed from the re-education goals and practices of the colonial government and European institutions. The rhythm of the day was ordered and strict, like in the European-run reformatories, but was decided by the times of the Islamic prayers. Pupils received a school education that was mixture between a Western curriculum and Islamic classes. Indigenous traditions, like making batik, were valued and taught as well. The associations wanted pupils to behave correctly in society and trained them to be able to make a living, but their expectations for the future of these youth were much more ambitious than the expectations and wishes of the colonial government. Higher education and intellectual achievement was valued for any pupil who showed talent and ability, regardless of social or ethnic background. Muhammadiyah aimed to raise and educate modern Muslims who could combine knowledge of western sciences with a strong faith. Their schools and orphanages sought a balance between western subjects and Islamic teachings, believing that this would cause the social progress of indigenous Muslims.

Juvenile reform: a success or a failure?

Satadru Sen argued that officials and juvenile re-educators in British India stressed their doubts and a sense of failure. Reformatories were proving that native children were beyond reform and denied the possibility of authority and adulthood to the indigenous population.⁹⁵¹

⁹⁵¹ Sen, *Colonial Childhoods*, 212-213.

Reformers, officials, and newspapers in the Indies, however, essentially stressed their faith in the reform of indigenous juveniles and the success of re-education efforts. In the Netherlands Indies, like in British India, indigenous children were described as overly mature, and sometimes their ability to be truly reformed was doubted, but the ethical ideals of the early twentieth century seem to have imbibed the reform system with a positivistic and upbeat spirit. Even when the results of re-education were disappointing sometimes, a stay in the reformatory was supposedly always good for pupils. The physical changes that they went through were displayed to prove the beneficial effects of the re-education regime: at least they became strong and healthy youngsters and ate better food than they did outside of the institution.

The justice department claimed in 1929 that sixty to seventy percent of the discharged pupils, since 1918, was behaving according to the norms of society.⁹⁵² These results and the optimistic message of re-educators both served a colonial government that was trying to establish and prove its 'modernity', and was a way to protect their own jobs and the future of the reform project itself. Ex-pupils were hoped to become exemplary indigenous subjects who would 'uplift' the larger population, and thus contribute to the civilizing mission of the colonizers. European elites wanted to believe stubbornly in the malleability of Indies' society and juvenile delinquents became part of this belief in improvement and progress.

The central premises of re-education efforts in the Netherlands Indies were to raise, correct, and change the behaviour of a broad variety of children into the behaviour and attitude that was considered proper for their gender and social and ethnic group. To do so, the different re-education institutes sought to entertain maximum control and influence over their charges. In reality, the degree of discipline and control varied greatly between the different reformatories and childcare institutions. In the closed compounds of the state reformatories, supervision was much more intense than in the agricultural colonies. Moreover, pupils developed strategies to change, resist and escape the discipline and education they were supposed to receive. The state reformatory in Semarang was established partly because so many government pupils were escaping from private institutions like the agricultural colonies of the Salvation Army and the Witte Kruis Kolonie. But regardless of higher walls and more personnel, pupils managed to escape from the *Landsopvoedingsgestichten* as well.

⁹⁵² *Verslag Semarang, Malang, Ngawi, Tangerang en Blitar, 1928 en 1929*, p. 13.

Juveniles also developed more subtle forms of daily resistance and behaviour: faking illness, working at an impossibly slow pace and trading forbidden goods with indigenous guards were just some of their strategies. That some escapees came back to their old reformatories, instead of going back to their families or a life on the street, shows that these pupils were not just resisting re-education, but had their own preferences for how and where they wanted to be housed. They were usually accepted back at their old reformatory and had thus wielded some of their power to bend the system to their own needs and preferences.

During this project, many of the people I met expected that life in a (colonial) reformatory must have been inherently bad for the children involved. Hopefully, this dissertation shows that this was not necessarily so. Obviously bad things happened to children in reformatories, but juveniles also made choices that show that they not only resisted, but also came to rely on the re-education system. Even though the reform policy was meant to discipline children to become well-behaved adults who would accept and possibly support colonial rule, many policy makers and re-educators tried to do good work and aimed to help and rescue juveniles out of situations that they saw as undesirable or dangerous. We might look critically at their assumptions and inherent racism now, but at the time they were seen as progressive reformers who ‘did good’.

Some people I talked to associate colonial reformatories with the Native-American boarding schools in Canada and the United States of America. I started thinking about this comparison in the summer of 2005, when I learned more about Native American boarding schools through my colleague Sande Garner at The Ohio State University and my participation in a Native American oral history project. Various people have pointed out this same topic to me over the past few years. One of the persons who recently asked if life in the different institutions was comparable, is the judge of a Canadian court that conducts hearings with Native Americans who have suffered in Canadian boarding schools. It would be very interesting to do comparative research about re-education practices in former Anglo-Saxon colonies, Australia and New Zealand and the Netherlands Indies and/or British India. This could be the focus of a new research project, but for now I suffice to state that the premises of Native-American boarding schools - an innocent name for what were in effect horrible institutions - were essentially different from reform facilities in the Indies. Native-American schools were designed to destroy the cultural affiliations of all indigenous children, while the colonial reformatories intended to ‘improve’ the behaviour of indigenous children to make them into ‘perfected natives’ without destroying their own language and culture.

Afterthoughts: World War II. A time of rupture and change

The Japanese invasion of the Netherlands Indies in February 1942 had far-reaching consequences for colonial society, civil society organizations, and the juvenile care and re-education system. The German occupation of the Netherlands in May 1940 was already a heavy hit for European inhabitants of the Indies, who were now cut off from family and friends. Communication with the Ministry of Colonies in The Hague became impossible, and the Indies government had to seek its own course. What happened to European civil associations and the juvenile re-education system throughout the Japanese occupation and its aftermath?

Even before Japan defeated the Dutch, the war in Europe brought tensions between colonial rulers and the indigenous population to the surface. In April 1940, the Volksraad discussed the response of the indigenous population to a possible Japanese invasion. Nationalist members stressed that the majority of the indigenous population would not be willing to cooperate with the Dutch to defend the colony. They argued that the Dutch had to win the trust of the population, by working on a colonial future that would involve greater participation of indigenous people in political and economic life. Nationalists were pressing for the installation of a real democratic parliament and envisioned a future of self-rule, either in cooperation with, or independent of, the Dutch. Governor General A.W.L. Tjarda van Starkenborgh Stachouwer and most of the Dutch people in the colony and the Netherlands were not ready to grant Indonesians true political participation and alienated even the most cooperative nationalists in the spring of 1940. Nationalists were still depicted as intellectuals who were not in touch with their own people, and the ‘common’ Indonesian was supposedly not ready for any form of self-governance.⁹⁵³

It soon became painfully clear that most Indonesians felt they could gain from the defeat of the Dutch, an idea the Japanese actively fostered among Indonesian political and religious leaders. During the Japanese invasion, very few Indonesians sided with the Dutch; everywhere crowds of local people cheered and celebrated when the Japanese army arrived. In Aceh, Northern Sumatra, Islamic leaders organized a revolt against the Dutch government and collaborating indigenous heads before the Japanese even arrived.⁹⁵⁴ The Dutch felt they

⁹⁵³ Herman Smit, *Gezag is gezag. Kanttekeningen bij de houding van de gereformeerden in de Indonesische kwestie* (Hilversum, Verloren, 2006) 112-114. Van den Doel, *Afscheid van Indië*, 57-62.

⁹⁵⁴ Van den Doel, *Afscheid van Indië*, 62.

were losing everything they had so carefully built, and ruthlessly defended, for ages of colonial rule. They were confronted with the failure of their ethical policy and ruling strategy, since indigenous people did not show loyalty towards the Dutch and were happy to see colonial rule crumble.

The Japanese removal of Europeans from positions of economic and political power, and their support for nationalist and Islamic parties and associations, caused an acceleration of Indonesian political life. This culminated in the proclamation of Indonesian independence after the Japanese surrender in August 1945. The Japanese had intended to establish their own colonial rule, but they tried to do so by reversing Dutch administrative practice, thus limiting the power of the traditional indigenous ruling elite (the *priyayi*) in favour of secular nationalists and Islamic leaders.⁹⁵⁵ During the Japanese occupation, European associations virtually ceased to exist, while indigenous associations like Muhammadiyah and other indigenous orphanages continued their work among the indigenous population under the Japanese occupation.⁹⁵⁶

Private (Christian) reformatories during and after World War II

Most Dutch colonial inhabitants felt disappointed by the lack of loyalty from the indigenous population, but Moe van Emmerik was happy with the behaviour of the Javanese children in her care. In the Witte Kruis Kolonie, some children requested to wear orange, to support the Dutch Queen after the German occupation, and many expressed their concern about the royal family. The strong love for 'God, Queen and Country' that the Van Emmeriks had tried to instil since 1902 - through yearly Queens Day celebrations and other displays of loyalty - apparently worked. Some of the older colony boys joined the Marines to work as servants for Dutch officers and marine men, another source of pride for Witte Kruis. But while some men left the colony to participate in the war, many more people flocked back there to find shelter in uncertain times.⁹⁵⁷

Since the occupation of the Netherlands, external financial gifts had become rare and there was no money for the usual treats, like Christmas presents.⁹⁵⁸ Nationalist and

⁹⁵⁵ Benda, *The crescent and the rising sun*, 198-199.

⁹⁵⁶ Benda, *The crescent and the rising sun*, 108-111.

⁹⁵⁷ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juli 1940, p. 2-6. *Jaarverslag Witte Kruis Kolonie 1940*, p. 2.

⁹⁵⁸ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juli 1940, p. 2-6. *Jaarverslag Witte Kruis Kolonie 1940*, p. 2. The yearly report from 1940 stated that since the start of the colony in 1902 a total of 13.524 people, including children, had lived for a longer or shorter time at Salib Putih.

indigenous associations and political parties had financial support that was more or less independent of the Dutch, even if some associations received subsidies from the colonial state. European organizations, however, depended on donations from private persons and religious and social organizations in the Netherlands. The Witte Kruis Kolonie and Oranje Nassau both suffered serious financial deficits in 1940, and the same was true for other European associations and institutions. Eventually the colonial state gave each institution an incidental subsidy of 5000 guilders to survive.⁹⁵⁹

In every juvenile care and re-education institution with strong Dutch influences, like SOG in Soekaboemi, Oranje Nassau, and Witte Kruis, the older pupils joined the army or the marines in 1940 and 1941. True to the status differences in colonial society, the (Indo-) European boys served as soldiers and higher personnel, while the indigenous boys from Witte Kruis worked as servants and supporting personnel. They officially had to be older than sixteen, but many younger boys also managed to join. The youngsters who stayed in the reformatories got caught up in the war as well. The Japanese eventually took most of the (Indo-)European boys in SOG away to do forced labour, and they also tried to take the teenage girls to work as canteen- and bargirls. These girls would most likely be forced to work as prostitutes for the Japanese military. The wartime director of the SOG, Aletta Berkholst, managed to prevent the girls from being taken, but could not protect the boys. About fifty-five Indo-European boys from SOG died during the war in prisoner-of-war camps or civilian internment camps. Some of the male caretakers also perished this way, for example A. van Altena, one of the leaders of the boys' home, who died in a labour camp on the infamous Burma-Thailand railway.⁹⁶⁰

Full-blooded Europeans and Indo-European men in the Indies were interned after the Japanese take-over in March 1942, meaning that many people in the field of re-education could no longer do their work. Most voluntary associations, like Pro Juventute, ceased to exist because its members and board members were interned and their assets disappeared into Japanese pockets.⁹⁶¹ Most European caretakers were interned, but Indo-European women who could prove they had indigenous blood were exempted and continued to work and care

⁹⁵⁹ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juni 1940. Also Poldi Carlos, *Johannes van der Steur*, 211.

⁹⁶⁰ About SOG during the war, see Bakker, *Tussen Djampang en Gede*, 97, 118, and for the full story 191-120. For the information about Witte Kruis, see *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juli 1940, p. 4 and further.

⁹⁶¹ See page 2 of the report from a conference for social care that was organized in 1948 by the Dutch government in Batavia. *Stukken over conferentie maatschappelijk zorg*, 4-11 February 1948. ANRI, AS (1942) 1944-1950. Inv. Nr. 990.

for the children, as happened in SOG. Suddenly a mixed background and darker complexion became valuable.⁹⁶²

The Japanese government in the Indies did not take over the financial responsibilities of the Dutch government: subsidies, salaries, and pensions were no longer paid. The occupiers also took over Dutch and European enterprises and businesses, but they allowed charitable institutions to keep operating and sometimes exempted its European leadership from internment, at least for a while. Director Bapa Jens from the SOG, Pa van der Steur of Oranje Nassau, and the Van Emmerik's in Salib Putih initially stayed out of the camps. This did not mean, however, that the Japanese left them alone. Bapa Jens died after 'interrogation' by the Japanese Secret Police (*Kempetai*) in Buitenzorg in June 1943.⁹⁶³ Pa van der Steur did not survive the war either.

The elderly Van der Steur, who was in his late seventies, was summoned to visit the Japanese police and military posts in Magelang several times, to explain how he got the money to feed more than 1000 children. Since the Japanese had frozen his bank accounts, he now relied on anonymous private gifts that came to him through his large network of ex-pupils and supporters. Pa continued to visit the kampongs and gave food and small change to the poorest people and ex-military men who had to survive without a pension. In December 1943, Pa and several of the older boys who helped him to run Oranje Nassau were arrested and incarcerated. The boys were physically tortured and Pa was interrogated for long hours. The Japanese did not touch him since he was already 78 years old and had problems with his hearing and sight. After a year in prison, Pa van der Steur was interned in European internment camps in Tjimahi and Semarang in February 1944. He barely survived until the end of the war, in August 1945, and was brought back to Oranje Nassau by one of his ex-pupils. He died from starvation in the company of his pupils and colleagues on 16 September 1945.⁹⁶⁴

Oranje Nassau continued to operate under the leadership of former pupils and became the Yayasan (Association) Pa van der Steur after Indonesian independence. Today it still exists as a large orphanage for Indonesian children in Tangerang, near Jakarta, with strong ties to former pupils and their descendants in the Netherlands.⁹⁶⁵ Tine Bernard kindly showed

⁹⁶² About SOG during the war see Bakker, *Tussen Djampang en Gede*, 97, 118, 191-120.

⁹⁶³ Bakker, *Tussen Djampang en Gede*, 118.

⁹⁶⁴ Poldi Carlos, *Johannes van der Steur*, 211-239.

⁹⁶⁵ I thank Rob van der Steur, a distant relative of Pa van der Steur, for his kind advice and information about the current orphanage. He also provided me with original pictures of the old Oranje

me around in the orphanage in February 2007. Mrs. Bernard is the widow of Bram Bernard, who became director of the Indonesian orphanage in 1957. Both Tine and Bram grew up with Pa van der Steur in Magelang and continued his work after his death. For Tine, with her white skin and blue eyes, life in Indonesia after Independence was very challenging, Bram - dark-skinned - could make an easier transition.⁹⁶⁶

The Witte Kruis Kolonie went through a similar conversion from a Dutch Christian association, to an Indonesian Christian association. The colony and its inhabitants also went through hard times during the war. Moe van Emmerik, at the time already in her early seventies, was still running the colony with the help of her sister (who was in her sixties) and some of Moe's children, but the lack of finances and the Japanese take-over caused a lot of stress. Moe fell ill in April 1940, but recovered in May and continued her work.⁹⁶⁷ In the same year, Santosa van Emmerik, one of Moe's sons who was in his late thirties and had five children at the time, was accused by the Dutch of being a German spy and was imprisoned for six months. Santosa once told his children that the Dutch mayor of Salatiga would have liked to see him executed instead, and all of this just because he had a German-made HAM Radio.⁹⁶⁸ This radio-type used a long wavelength to be able to contact people all over the world and talk to them. During wartime this was thought of as suspicious activity. According to Santosa's son Peter, his father just enjoyed talking to people on the other side of the world for fun, especially because life on the colony could be quite isolated.⁹⁶⁹

Santosa and his wife Greetje Graafstal were expected to become the next directors of the colony. He had received a good agricultural education and worked to develop the Witte Kruis Kaleksanan colony, near Tasikmalaya, since the mid-1930s. Greetje was a daughter of Pa van der Steur's sister. She had grown up with the re-education work of Oranje Nassau and worked in the weaving shop of Witte Kruis after her marriage to Santosa. When Santosa's mother and his aunt both died in 1942, he took over the responsibility for the colony. According to grandson Peter, Alice van Emmerik-Cleverly and her sister Nona Louise Cleverly both died in 1942 because they saw their life work being destroyed. 'After virtually

Nassau institution. For more information about the present time, see <http://www.pavandersteur.org/nl/> (last checked 17-07-2010).

⁹⁶⁶ Tine Bernard-Tapken, Jakarta, February 2007

⁹⁶⁷ *Witte Kruis Blad*, Juni 1940.

⁹⁶⁸ *Letter from P. van Emmerik to A. Dirks*, Tasmania, Australia, 15 July 2009. Peter is one of Santosas' eight children, born in 1932, and he was kind enough to share his memories and recollections with me through emails and letters in the summer and fall of 2009. Peter and his seven siblings all live in Australia, where they migrated after the war with their parents.

⁹⁶⁹ *Email from P. van Emmerik to A. Dirks*, Tasmania, Australia, 22 November 2009.

giving their whole life to them [the Javanese], many turned against them, particularly anyone who had acquired some authority'. The doctor who came to Moe's deathbed expressed that there was no medical reason for her imminent death, she just did not want to continue living.⁹⁷⁰

The Japanese authorities first moved Santosa and his family off the Witte Kruis Kolonie in 1942, but they soon told him to return there to start his work again. In 1943 the whole family was interned with the other Europeans in the area. Like many other internees, they barely made it through the war due to malnourishment, but everyone in the family survived. During the war years there was no management on the colony and people tried to survive as good and bad as they could. Santosa starting working on the Witte Kruis Kolonie immediately after the war ended, while Dutch military actions 'cleaned' the hinterland from revolutionary Indonesians. The remaining Witte Kruis inhabitants were severely malnourished and dressed in rags, according to pictures taken by the Dutch army and the memories of Peter van Emmerik. The family never lived on Witte Kruis again, because it was too dangerous at night. Instead they lived in a house in Salatiga that was right next to the post-office, so they benefited from the presence of military guards. After Indonesian independence in 1949, Santosa believed that his Dutch heritage was an impediment for the future of the colony. He handed over the property to the United Protestant Church and migrated with his whole family to Australia, where his descendants still live today.⁹⁷¹

Currently, Witte Kruis Kolonie is a Christian agricultural institution for orphans and the poor, named Agrowisata Salib Putih. It is possible to visit the premises, stay in a nice hotel with a beautiful view of Salatiga and the volcanoes, and visit the grounds. Many of the original buildings are still standing, including the prison that was used for misbehaving juveniles and adults. It is now used as a house, with solid concrete walls. The small windows, still barred, do not allow for much light, but it is probably one of the strongest structures on the colony. The old church, built by the Van Emmeriks and the inhabitants of the colony in the 1930s, is still in use. There are no inhabitants who have been there since colonial times, except for maybe one elderly lady, who said she remembered working for the Van Emmeriks. She was also very sick and confused, which made it nearly impossible to have a conversation with her.

⁹⁷⁰ Letter from P. van Emmerik to A. Dirks, Tasmania, Australia, 15 July 2009.

⁹⁷¹ Letter from P. van Emmerik to A. Dirks, Tasmania, Australia, 15 July 2009 and email from P. van Emmerik to A. Dirks, Tasmania, Australia, 22 November 2009.

The SOG in Soekaboemi is the only one of the three European private institutes discussed here that went out of existence in the late-1950s. During the violent Bersiap time after the war, when nationalist Indonesian youngsters attacked and killed Europeans and Indo-Europeans, Aletta Berkholst and the remaining personnel and children were relocated to Bandoeng for safety. The name SOG was changed into Protestant Orphanage and after 1949 it became an orphanage for Indonesian children, still sponsored by the Missionary Council (Raad voor Zendingswerk) of the Dutch reformed church (Ned. Hervormde Kerk). Aletta Berkholst died suddenly in 1953, while she was still directing the orphanage. The facility completely ceased to exist in 1958.⁹⁷²

Other childcare institutions and associations for Indo-Europeans eventually disappeared or started to shelter Indonesian children after Indonesia became independent. Most Indonesians did not accept Indo-Europeans as true inhabitants of the archipelago, and saw them as traitors or allies of the former colonial rulers. Indo-Europeans could get Indonesian nationality, but the majority felt more connected to the former colonizer and the Netherlands than the new Indonesian Republic. Most Indo-Europeans chose to migrate to the Netherlands, the United States, and Australia. The typical colonial Mestizo culture virtually ceased to exist, but with the relocation of Indo-European people fragments of it emerged in other countries, especially in the Netherlands. Connections between former pupils and caretakers of the different reformatories continue to this day, in the form of reunions and meetings, but the last generation of Indo-Europeans who grew up in the colony - and its childcare institutions - has almost disappeared and soon none of the ex-pupils of the colonial childcare institutions will be left.

From juvenile delinquents to soldiers for independence

The history of the state reformatories during World War II is more difficult to reconstruct because, as far as I am aware, there are no personal sources that mention the reformatories and the state sources have all been lost or destroyed. The following reconstruction is based on snippets of information and is far from complete.

When the Japanese replaced the Dutch regime, they soon took over the administration of the prisons and reformatories. Some kept operating as such during the war; others were evacuated and used for different purposes. I did not have access to any sources about the

⁹⁷² Bakker, *Tussen Djampang en Gede*, 119-120.

Japanese policies towards the state reformatories, but I did find out that LOG Bandoeng - the most modern reformatory - became an internment camp for European prisoners of war (POW). The drawings by Dutch soldier Joop F. Anemaet, now kept in the Museum in The Hague, show Dutch men living in the reformatory for indigenous boys during the war.⁹⁷³ The boys who used to be incarcerated there were probably transferred to another facility or released; it is unknown what became of them.

The few Pro Juventute sources, published in 1942, reveal how its agricultural colony in Klakah prepared for the war. In December 1941 there were still 278 pupils in the colony; at least 110 of them were government pupils. Because of the outbreak of the war, pupils had to dig trenches and shelters. Most European personnel was mobilized by the government to serve in the army, so that only three European caretakers – including the director – remained.⁹⁷⁴ The Opvoedingsgestichten Tangerang - the former LOG, which Pro Juventute took over from the government in 1934 - housed the great number of 523 pupils (409 boys and 114 girls) in late November 1941. Because of the expected outbreak of the war in the colony, 201 boys and 47 girls who were eligible for discharge were sent home at once in December 1941. Pro Juventute hoped this would make it easier to evacuate the reformatory, if necessary.⁹⁷⁵

The reformatory in Tangerang is listed as one of the Bersiap camps after the war. This means that it was at least no longer functioning as a reformatory for juvenile delinquents right after WWII. During the Bersiap time, from about October 1945 until June 1947, Indonesian liberation fighters interned Europeans in camps, just as the Japanese had done (and probably from their example). This was a way to protest the Dutch attempt to re-establish the colonial regime, and was also seen as a safety measure; Europeans who were interned could not fight or resist Indonesian liberation efforts. Some Bersiap camps or Republican camps (Indonesian Independence fighters were called Republicans) were former Japanese internment camps and others were newly established. The LOG in Malang is listed as one of those Bersiap camps, just like the Pro Juventute institutions in Tangerang, the LOG in Blitar, and the former LOG in Ngawi, of which the Dutch had already closed the latter as

⁹⁷³ http://www.wereldoorlog2.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=93&Itemid=116, last checked 23/01/2010.

⁹⁷⁴ *Maandblad gewijd aan Jeugdzorg*. Orgaan van het Verbond der Vereenigingen Pro Juventute in Nederlandsch-Indie. 9e Jaargang No. 1. Januari 1942. P. 10. PNRI, Jakarta.

⁹⁷⁵ *Maandblad gewijd aan Jeugdzorg*. Orgaan van het Verbond der Vereenigingen Pro Juventute in Nederlandsch-Indie. 9e Jaargang No. 1. Februari 1942. P. 1. PNRI, Jakarta.

an LOG in 1932. This means that they no longer functioned as reformatories just after the Japanese defeat, but were occupied instead by Dutch civilians or former colonial soldiers.⁹⁷⁶

The LOG in Blitar, in the desa Karang Tengah or Kareng Tenga, became a camp for (Indo-)European men and older boys on 25 October 1945, after the Indonesians in Blitar had rounded up the (Indo-)European men, women and children and imprisoned them in different locations in and around the city. From reports and personal stories about the Blitar camp, it appears that the first guards of the interned men were actually indigenous government pupils. Indonesian soldiers from the Indonesian Republican army (Tentara Republik Indonesia, T.R.I) replaced them later on. From this information we might conclude that the LOG in Blitar was still functioning as a reformatory until October 1945; otherwise there would not have been any government pupils available for guard duty. It is more than ironic that the government pupils, who were 're-educated' in LOG Blitar by the European colonial state, became the guards of their former rulers. The war and revolution literally turned things upside down; prisoners became guards, and Europeans - guardians of the colonial state - were imprisoned.⁹⁷⁷

The LOG would function as a Bersiap camp for one year, until 7 October 1946, when the approximately 246 men were evacuated to Batavia. In this time, eight people died from starvation and disease. A visit from the International Red Cross showed that there was very little food, and even less space. There was no furniture, no mattresses, and no mosquito nets. There was enough washing water from a well, but the toilets were in the open air and there were no doctors and hardly any medicines. The men were emaciated and suffered from lice.

Other sources also indicate that LOG Blitar was used as a reformatory during or after the Bersiap period. Dutch intelligence records show that the Indonesian Republican Army released government pupils from LOG Blitar, if they joined the army to fight against the Dutch in January 1947. The majority of these boys had been sentenced to re-education before 1942. The remaining records for eight of the boys reveal that 6 of them were between 7 and 9 years old at the time of their trial, and had committed small theft or were vagabonding. One of them, thirteen year old Soewarso had been sentenced to re-education by the Landraad of

⁹⁷⁶ Ook op papier verkrijgbaar : Henk Beekhuis, "Bersiap, POPDA en een lijst van Indonesische interneringskampen, gijzelingsplaatsen en andere plekken waar men door Indonesiërs voor kortere of langere tijd ondergebracht werd, oktober 1945 - juni 1947." http://www.buitenkampkinderen.nl/bkk.php?action=bkk_menu_item_action&bkk_menu_item_id=43.

⁹⁷⁷ Beekhuis, "Bersiap, POPDA en een lijst van Indonesische interneringskampen", http://www.buitenkampkinderen.nl/bkk.php?action=bkk_menu_item_action&bkk_menu_item_id=43. Access date 18-02-2009

Soerabaja in April 1944, indicating that courts kept sending youngsters to reformatories under the Japanese regime as well.⁹⁷⁸

The Dutch Military Intelligence Service (C.M.I, Centrale Militaire Inlichtingendienst) discovered in December 1948 that 39 government pupils under the age of eighteen had been released by the TNI, before they had fulfilled their official re-education time, to fight against the Dutch. The CMI was outraged and forwarded the information to the Attorney General in Batavia, who could obviously do very little about it.⁹⁷⁹ Seventeen pupils were under the age of sixteen, when the Indonesian Army drafted them, and 22 were between 17 and 18 years old. These 39 former government pupils, who were re-educated by the Dutch to become loyal colonial subjects, thus played a role in overturning the colonial society that had made them objects of reform.

⁹⁷⁸ *Staat van Inlichtingen betreffende gewezen Regeringspupillen die voor het bereiken van de leeftijd van 18 jaar bij de "Tentara Republik Indonsia" (de huidige TNI) werden ingelijfd, Solo, 26 December 1948*, NA, Archief van de Algemene Secretarie van de Nederlands-Indische regering en de daarbij gedeponeerde archieven, 1942-1950 (deel II), (Blz. 279-332), National Archives' access number (toegang): 2.10.14.02. Inventory nos. 2516-2986, "Politiek Konflikt met de republiek". Nota van de Procureur-Generaal over de indiensttreding bij de TNI van minderjarigen uit het Landsopvoedingsgesticht in Blitar. Mei 1949, 2667, Fiche 316.

⁹⁷⁹ *H.C.Bajetto van CMI aan DCMI, Solo, 26 December 1948*, NA, Archief van de Algemene Secretarie van de Nederlands-Indische regering en de daarbij gedeponeerde archieven, 1942-1950 (deel II), (Blz. 279-332), National Archives' access number (toegang): 2.10.14.02. Inventory nos. 2516-2986, "Politiek Konflikt met de republiek". Nota van de Procureur-Generaal over de indiensttreding bij de TNI van minderjarigen uit het Landsopvoedingsgesticht in Blitar. Mei 1949, 2667, Fiche 316. For more information about the Dutch intelligence office during the revolutionary period, see R.J.J. Stevens, 'Manipulatie van informatie? : de rol van de Nederlandse militaire inlichtingendienst in Indonesië ten tijde van het Nederlands-Indonesisch conflict 1945-1949', in *Politiek(e) opstellen : jaarlijkse uitgave van het Centrum voor Parlementaire Geschiedenis van de Juridische Faculteit*, (Nijmegen, Centrum voor Parlementaire Geschiedenis, 1992), issue 11-12, page 149-168.

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Samenvatting

‘Voor de Jeugd’: Jeugdcriminaliteit, particuliere organisaties en de laat-koloniale staat in Nederlands-Indië, 1872-1942.

Inleiding

Ze kwamen in het opvoedingsgesticht aan in lompen, met de lange haren wild in hun gezicht, hun lichaam bedekt door wonden, ondervoed en met schichtige ogen, aldus de directeur van het Landsopvoedingsgesticht Semarang, Nederlands-Indië, in 1918. De mensen waar hij over sprak waren merendeels Indonesische jongens tussen de zeven en zestien jaar oud die van de koloniale rechters een heropvoedingstraf hadden gekregen wegens crimineel gedrag. De meeste minderjarigen hadden voedsel of geld gestolen, omdat ze op straat zwierven en honger hadden, anderen woonden bij hun familie maar pleegden uit de hand gelopen kattenkwaad. Heel soms was er doodslag in het spel. Zoals in het geval van de jongen van het eiland Sumatra die per ongeluk een vriendje had doodgeslagen in hun ruzie om een zangvogeltje. Af en toe werd er ook een meisje tot heropvoeding veroordeeld. Dat ging dan meestal om diefstal – soms van Hollandse werkgevers - of om ‘onzedelijk gedrag’ zoals (vermeende) prostitutie.⁹⁸⁰ Vanaf 1918 werden er zes staatsopvoedingsgestichten opgericht en zeker tweemaal zoveel particuliere tehuizen en landbouwkolonies, om deze jongeren opnieuw op te voeden.

Zorg over het gedrag van kinderen en jonge volwassenen is van alle tijden en plaatsen, maar nam en neemt steeds andere vormen aan. Kinderen zijn de toekomst, wordt al eeuwen gezegd, en juist daarom trekt hun ontwikkeling de aandacht van volwassenen. Jongeren zijn in deze optiek niet alleen de ‘zorg’ van hun ouders, maar van de samenleving als geheel. De ontwikkeling van het kind bepaalt de ontwikkeling van de samenleving. Dit idee nam in de Westerse wereld een vlucht in de negentiende eeuw, toen kinderen en volwassenen die afweken van de burgerlijke beschavingssnormen daar niet alleen voor werden gestraft, maar in steeds grotere mate werden aangezet en gedwongen tot gedragsverandering. Rehabilitatie en heropvoeding werden geveleugelde

⁹⁸⁰ Al deze voorbeelden komen uit de jaarverslagen van de Landsopvoedingsgestichten 1919-1930, die in de Universiteitsbibliotheek in Leiden te vinden zijn.

woorden die begonnen door te dringen tot het gevangeniswezen en de weezorg in Nederland en - met de opkomst van de koloniale beschavingsmissie die bekend staat als de Ethische Politiek - ook in het Nederlands-Indië van rond 1900.

Bevindingen

De manier waarop jeugdcriminaliteit in de Nederlandse kolonie werd gezien en bestreden toont ons veel over de ontwikkeling van Nederlands-Indië in de laatste vijftig jaar van haar bestaan. In deze samenleving speelden verenigingen en organisaties van lokale inwoners een belangrijke rol in de vormgeving en uitvoering van overheidsbeleid en was er onder Nederlanders en Indonesiërs (avant-la-lettre) veel meer gaande dan slechts anti-koloniale of pro-koloniale politiek. Als we kijken naar de ontwikkeling en uitvoering van jeugdheropvoeding in de kolonie, zien we dat verschillende partijen betrokken waren bij de bestrijding van jeugdcriminaliteit en dat de regering niet in staat was om dit zonder de aanzienlijke hulp en medewerking van burgerlijke organisaties te doen. De laat-koloniale staat kenmerkte zich door grote ambities tot ‘verbetering’ van de samenleving en ‘verheffing’ van de bevolking en tegelijkertijd zeer beperkte middelen en mankracht om dit beleid ook over het enorme grondgebied te verspreiden. De bestrijding van jeugdcriminaliteit was een typisch voorbeeld van laat-koloniale symbool politiek: het was een populair onderwerp dat raakte aan allerlei – voornamelijk Europese - angsten en zorgen rond de veiligheid van de koloniale samenleving, vooral tijdens en na de Eerste Wereldoorlog. Uiteindelijk werd maar een zeer gering aantal jongeren – tussen 1918 en 1938 ongeveer 4.500 à 5.000 - veroordeeld en daadwerkelijk heropgevoed.

Rond de eeuwwisseling van 1900 waren het nog niet de koloniale machthebbers maar Nederlandse Christelijke idealisten die zich bezig hielden met zwervende en criminele kinderen in Indië. In de late negentiende eeuw kwamen Johannes (Pa) van der Steur en Adolf van Emmerik onafhankelijk van elkaar naar de kolonie om daar Christelijke ideeën en levenswaarden onder de Nederlandse en lokale bevolking te verspreiden. Pa van der Steur had in Nederland al een lange carrière als missiewerker onder alcoholisten en prostituees achter de rug en arriveerde in 1892 in de kolonie om Gods’ Woord aan militairen te verkondigen. Al snel had hij echter meer werk aan hun verwaarloosde of in de steek gelaten Indo-Europese nakomelingen en legde hij zich toe

op het oprichten en leiden van het grote kindertehuis Oranje-Nassau in de Javaanse garnizoensstad Magelang.

Van der Steur paste in een traditie van al langer bestaande koloniale particuliere zorg rondom de loyaliteit van Indo-Europese kinderen aan de Nederlandse cultuur en taal. Deze kinderen hadden door hun Europese vader namelijk een Europese wettelijke status, maar gedroegen zich door de invloed van hun Indonesische moeder en familie vaak niet zoals Europeanen geacht werden zich te gedragen. Ze hadden niet alleen een bruine huid, maar spraken ook een lokaal dialect en voelden zich thuis in de kampong. Hun (her-)opvoeding richtte zich dan ook op Europeanisering, maar dan wel in een specifieke vorm; ze moesten zich betamelijk gedragen maar niet denken dat ze gelijk waren aan of evenveel mogelijkheden hadden als blanke Europeanen. De koloniale staat wist al snel de weg naar Van der Steur te vinden en stuurde vanaf 1909 ook af en toe veroordeelde Indo-Europese kinderen naar het gesticht voor heropvoeding.

Adolf van Emmerik arriveerde in 1894 in Indië als één van de eerste twee afgezanten van het Leger des Heils om het geloof te gaan verspreiden onder Javanen. Hij verliet deze organisatie binnen een paar jaar omdat hij en zijn vrouw Alice geloofden dat ze op eigen wijze meer konden betekenen voor de arme en verpauperde Javanen waar ze mee in aanraking kwamen. De Witte Kruis Kolonie in Salatiga (opgericht door de Van Emmeriks in 1902) werd een landbouwkolonie waar zowel volwassenen als kinderen opgevangen en ‘heropgevoed’ werden. Inwoners werden verplicht om op het land of in de ambachten te werken en aangespoord om volgens Christelijke normen en waarden te leven en naar de kerkdiensten te komen. De meeste inwoners deden dit en lieten zich uiteindelijk dopen. Van Emmerik besteedde speciale aandacht aan de opvoeding en scholing van de (wees-)kinderen en de veroordeelde jeugdcrimineeltjes die de regering naar zijn landbouwkolonie stuurde. In Van Emmerik’s visie vormden deze kinderen de nieuwe generatie ‘verbeterde’ en Christelijke Javanen die tegenwicht konden bieden aan het oprukken van de Islam in Indië. De koloniale overheid was wel te spreken over de initiatieven van Van der Steur en Van Emmerik; ze boden een plek aan jongeren die veroordeeld werden of rondzwierven zonder dat de overheid hier veel voor hoefde te doen of betalen.

In 1906 werd een verandering ingezet door het uitkomen van een belangrijk koloniaal veiligheidsonderzoek van de voormalige rechter Boekhoudt, dat de aanwezigheid van jeugdcriminaliteit verder problematiseerde. Er klonken nieuwe stemmen die pleitten voor een grotere overheidsinvestering in de bestrijding van jeugdcriminaliteit, nieuwe wetten en de oprichting van door de staat geleide heropvoedingsgestichten. Koloniale bestuurders en blanke inwoners maakten zich namelijk in toenemende mate zorgen over de veiligheidssituatie in de kolonie, in samenhang met een overkoepelende angst voor anti-koloniale en nationalistische agitatie. Dit kwam door interne ontwikkelingen, zoals kleine protesten en de oprichting van steeds meer Indonesische organisaties en verenigingen die zich kritisch uitlieten over het koloniaal bestuur. Ook internationale gebeurtenissen speelden een rol: De anti-koloniale oorlog die de Filippijnen voerden tegen de Spanjaarden en Amerikanen (1896-1913), de nederlaag van de Russen tegen de Japanners in 1904-1905 en het uitbreken van de Eerste Wereldoorlog in 1914. In Nederlands-Indië zag men overal bewijzen voor ‘oproer’ onder de lokale bevolking: rietbranden, lokale onlusten en een bloeiend verenigingsleven werden merendeels over de kam van protest tegen de Nederlandse aanwezigheid geschoren. Dit terwijl veel van deze acties en initiatieven feitelijk veroorzaakt werden door lokaal wanbeleid, armoede en sociaal protest en gericht waren op verbetering van het bestaande koloniale bestuur.

De nieuwe heropvoedingwet en de oprichting van de moderne Landsopvoedingsgestichten moest voorkomen dat Indonesische zwerv- en probleemjongeren zich zouden voegen bij anti-Nederlandse en nationalistische elementen in de kolonie, en zou de samenleving ook op korte termijn veiliger maken. Bovendien werd een beleid ten aanzien van jeugdheropvoeding gezien als een teken van Westerse ‘moderniteit’, en de koloniale regering wilde graag modern en progressief overkomen om haar eigen bestaan te rechtvaardigen. Tot slot konden deze welopgevoede Indonesische jongeren dienen als een voorbeeld voor hun familieleden en dorpsgenoten: de ex-crimineeltjes zouden omgevormd worden tot ‘goede’ koloniale onderdanen en laten zien hoe men zijn kinderen eigenlijk diende op te voeden.

Dat de koloniale regering daadwerkelijk haar eigen heropvoedingsgestichten opende had alles te maken met de rol die religie speelde voor het koloniaal bestuur. De

Islam was het grootste geloof in de archipel en Nederlandse regeerders hadden altijd geprobeerd om de moslimbevolking niet te agiteren. De rond de Eerste Wereldoorlog oploeiende 'Inlandsche' sympathie voor het verliezende Islamitische Ottomaanse Rijk leidde tot toenemende zorgen over de mogelijkheid van Islamitisch verzet tegen de Westerse aanwezigheid. Door middel van nieuw opgerichte Islamitische verenigingen en partijen als Sarekat Islam (1912) en Muhammadiyah (1912) organiseerde de inheemse bevolking zich en werden Islamitische ideeën over de samenleving en het koloniale bestuur steeds duidelijker verwoord. Dit deed de overheid weer vrezen voor protesten en onrust. Met de nieuwe heropvoedingwet van 1918 konden kinderen makkelijker in een gesticht geplaatst worden en zou het aantal Islamitische kinderen in de Christelijke gestichten van Oranje-Nassau, Witte Kruis en het Leger des Heils snel stijgen. Om inheemse protesten tegen deze situatie te voorkomen opende de koloniale regering in 1918 het eerste religieus 'neutrale' en door de staat beheerde en betaalde heropvoedingsgesticht te Semarang.

Hoe belangrijk de rol van particuliere organisaties in Nederlands-Indië was blijkt uit de ontwikkeling van het heropvoedingsstelsel na 1918. Niet alleen waren particulieren als Van der Steur en Van Emmerik de eersten die heropvoeding van verwaarloosde, verweesde en criminele jongeren serieus ter hand namen, een nieuwe generatie Nederlandse en inheemse inwoners bleek cruciaal voor de uitvoering van het regeringsbeleid. Al in de vroege jaren twintig zorgde de nieuwe heropvoedingwet en het enthousiasme van lokale rechters voor een zodanige stijging van het aantal veroordeelde jongeren dat de regeringsgestichten niet genoeg plek boden en de kinderen in gevangenissen op overplaatsing moesten wachten. Dit was tegen alle intenties, afspraken en wettelijke maatregelen in. De Vereniging voor jeugdzorg Pro Juventute – opgericht door Nederlandse koloniale inwoners - protesteerde dan ook hevig tegen deze situatie en drong aan op de opening van meer Landsopvoedingsgestichten. De organisatie, waar ook veel overheidsdienaren lid van waren, hielp zelf met het oplossen van de problemen door jongeren te plaatsen in kleine lokale Pro Juventute tehuizen (o.a. in Batavia, Semarang, Malang, Soerabaja en Medan) en de opening van een grote heropvoedingskolonie voor Indonesische jongens nabij Soerabaja. De Klakah Landbouwkolonie bood plaats aan ongeveer 120 jongens en bleef tot het einde van de koloniale periode een belangrijke rol

spelen in het heropvoedingssysteem. Pro Juventute verenigingen in de grote Europese steden van Nederlands-Indië werden in de jaren twintig en dertig serieuze partners van de overheid door jeugdwerk in de wijken te doen en dossiers aan te leggen over de achtergrond van minderjarigen die in aanraking kwamen met de politie. In eerste instantie richtte de organisatie zich op Indo-Europese jongeren maar als snel bestond het grootste deel van haar 'klanten' uit inheemse kinderen. Pro Juventute werd door de koloniale regering zeer geprezen voor haar activiteiten en de preventieve werking die hiervan uitging.

De verenigingen die actief waren op het gebied van jeugdcriminaliteit hadden niet uitsluitend een Europees karakter. Pro Juventute deed haar best om ook leden en bestuurders uit de inheemse en Chinese bevolkingsgroepen te werven, en slaagde hier vooral in de jaren dertig steeds beter in. Blanke Pro Juventute leden zagen dit als een manier om inheemse kinderen zo goed mogelijk te kunnen begeleiden en contact te maken met de inheemse samenleving als geheel. Voor inheemse leden van Pro Juventute waren de activiteiten een mogelijkheid om te emanciperen; door mee te doen aan burgerlijke activiteiten toonden ze aan dat zij verantwoordelijke inwoners waren die net zo goed bij bestuur betrokken konden worden als blanke inwoners. Hun betrokkenheid bood ook de kans om invloed uit te oefenen op de vormgeving van de koloniale samenleving, een mogelijkheid die op politiek niveau vooralsnog ontbrak.

Organisaties die volledig bestonden uit Indonesiërs speelden ook een grote rol bij de opvang en heropvoeding van - crimineel handelende - zwerfjongeren. Grote landelijke organisaties als Muhammadiyah (met een progressief Islamitisch karakter) en kleinere lokale verenigingen voor jeugdzorg hielden zich zeer actief bezig met heropvoeding van – en onderwijs aan Indonesische kinderen en jongeren. Het Nederlandse en Europese beschavingsideaal ten aanzien van de lokale inwoners van Indië werd door deze organisaties omgevormd tot een eigen variant. Muhammadiyah wilde dat jonge Indonesiërs een sterk Islamitische identiteit zouden ontwikkelen, tegelijkertijd met een goede Westers georiënteerde opleiding. Deze mensen zouden in staat moeten zijn om een leidende rol te gaan spelen in de koloniale samenleving. Muhammadiyah richtte zich dus niet persé tegen het koloniale bewind, maar wilde een veel groter aandeel voor Indonesische moslims binnen dit systeem. Op deze manier zagen ook veel kleinere

Indonesische verenigingen een rol voor zichzelf weggelegd: niet zozeer op het vlak van anti-koloniale activiteiten, maar vooral als opvoeders van een nieuwe groep Indonesiërs die mee zouden kunnen doen in een veel breder gedefinieerd koloniaal bewind.

De Nederlandse visie op heropvoeding van afwijkende en criminele jeugd was behoudender en veel meer dan de Indonesische gericht op het bewaren van de grenzen tussen de verschillende ‘rassen’, rangen en standen binnen de kolonie. Net zoals in het koloniale onderwijssysteem, waarin een Westerse en Nederlandstalige opleiding zoveel mogelijk voorbehouden bleef aan de Indonesische elite, werd het gemiddelde straatkind of criminele kind ook geacht om zijn of haar plek in de samenleving te kennen en behouden. Sociale stijging was uit den boze, dit zou slechts onrust en een bedreiging voor de elite veroorzaken. De koloniale heropvoedingsgestichten waren dan ook gericht op het behouden van de raciale, culturele en religieuze identiteit van de jongeren die er terecht kwamen. Jongeren ontvingen eenvoudig algemeen onderwijs, ongeveer zoals op de dessa-scholen, en werden verder opgeleid om een vak uit te oefenen. Voor jongens ging dat om metaal- en houtbewerking, in sommige gevallen om land- en tuinbouwkennis, en de meisjes leerden huishoudelijke vaardigheden, handwerken en naaien.

Toch zorgde het heropvoedingssysteem ook wel degelijk voor nieuwe ontwikkelingen. De Maleise taal werd als algemene voertaal in de gestichten gebruikt en de Nederlandse heropvoeders stimuleerden een overkoepelend groepsgevoel voor jongeren afkomstig van verschillende plaatsen, met hun eigen lokale talen en culturele identiteiten. Uit de verslagen van de heropvoedingsgestichten blijkt dat de jongeren hun lokale identiteit meestal ontstegen en onderling vriendschappen en banden aangingen. Niettemin waren er ook conflicten tussen jongeren van verschillende eilanden en juist daarom deden de Nederlandse begeleiders nog harder hun best de pupillen bij elkaar te brengen. Op een ander vlak waren heropvoeders juist zeer gekant tegen een ‘Inlandsch’ gevoel van verbondenheid: Het inheemse lagere personeel - de zogenaamde mandoers - die als bewakers en begeleiders fungeerden, sloten allerlei verbonden met de pupillen. Er werd onderling gehandeld in zeep en sigaretten en de mandoers knepen vaak een oogje dicht bij ontsnappingspogingen. Dit werd door de Nederlanders niet herkend als een groeiend nationaal gevoel, dat zich mogelijkwerwijs tegen de Nederlanders richtte, maar gezien als nalatigheid en onbekwaamheid van de mandoers, die gewoon te laag opgeleid

en simpel waren om te begrijpen dat zij een voorbeeldrol moesten vervullen voor de jongeren.

De verhalen en ervaringen van de kinderen en jongeren die in aanraking kwamen met het koloniale heropvoedingsstelsel spelen een grote rol in de laatste drie hoofdstukken van mijn proefschrift. Er zijn nauwelijks ooggetuigenverslagen en egodocumenten van jongeren zelf te vinden, maar andere bronnen geven toch inzicht in aspecten van hun leven in de gestichten. Overheidsverslagen over het functioneren van de particuliere gestichten, documenten van rechtszittingen, de jaarverslagen van de Landsopvoedingsgestichten, Pro Juventute tijdschriften en jaarverslagen, de tijdschriften van de Witte Kruis Kolonie en de verslagen over Oranje-Nassau bieden een schat aan verhalen en impressies. Als kers op de taart zijn er een zestigtal prachtige en unieke protest- en klaagbrieven van ouders aan de regering, die ik vond in het Nationaal Archief in Jakarta. Door tussen de regels door te lezen en de woorden van blanke heropvoeders te analyseren, ontstond er langzaam een beeld van de praktijk van heropvoeding in Indië.

Als er één ding duidelijk is geworden over het dagelijks leven van tot heropvoeding veroordeelde kinderen is het de diversiteit van hun ervaringen. Hun levensomstandigheden hingen af van welk gesticht ze bewoonden en dit was gerelateerd aan hun wettelijke status (Europees of Inlands), of ze jongens of meisjes waren en wat voor gedrag ze vertoonden. Jongeren speelden hier zelf een belangrijke rol in, zo vond ik vele voorbeelden van kinderen die wegliepen van het ene gesticht om vervolgens terug te keren naar een gesticht waar ze het meer naar hun zin hadden. Anderen ontsnapten aan heropvoeding door terug te keren naar een leven op straat of bij hun families. Ook binnen het gestichtsleven creëerden pupillen hun eigen ruimte: door ziekte te veinzen, handel te drijven, hun eigen bondgenootschappen te sluiten en het personeel voor de gek te houden.

De Landsopvoedingsgestichten waren het visitekaartje van de koloniale regering en werden ontworpen en geleid als ‘moderne’ jeugdinstellingen. Ze waren de strengste tehuizen van Indië, waarin orde, rust, regelmaat, scholing en lichaamsbeweging het leefritme bepaalden. Deze gestichten stonden merendeels in steden, werden vaak gehuisvest in verbouwde gevangenissen of ziekenhuizen en boden de minste ontsnappingsmogelijkheden. Hier leefden de kinderen die gezien werden als moeilijke en abnormale ‘gevallen’: alle anderen werden zo snel mogelijk overgeplaatst naar

particuliere tehuizen en kolonies. In de Landsopvoedingsgestichten leerden inheemse jongens een vak en inheemse meisjes de kunst van het moderne huishouden. Er werden nauwelijks Indo-Europese kinderen geplaatst, die gingen zoveel mogelijk naar Indo-Europese instellingen om te zorgen dat ze niet zouden ‘verinlandsen’. De jongeren die vrijkwamen vestigden zich meestal in de steden om een poging te doen dat vak uit te oefenen.

In de particuliere tehuizen voor Indo-Europese jongeren was het leven gericht op het waarmaken van hun wettelijke status als Europeanen. Ze kregen Nederlandstalig onderwijs, leerden een vak, volgden een Christelijke godsdienst en werden geacht zich als betamelijke – doch bescheiden – Nederlanders te gedragen. Veel van de volwassen jongens gingen in de loop van de tijd bij het leger of de marine. Meisjes werkten vaak in de huishouding bij particulieren en soms in het onderwijs of de verpleging. In de Islamitische tehuizen van Muhammadijah en andere inheemse verenigingen werden de kinderen zo hoog mogelijk opgeleid, zodat ze een voortrekkersrol konden vervullen in de inheemse samenleving. De beoefening van de Islamitische godsdienst bepaalde het ritme van de dag en naast Westers onderwijs leerden ze ook traditionele inheemse vaardigheden als batik maken. In deze tehuizen stond sociale stijging veel centraler dan in de gestichten die door Nederlanders geleid werden.

De landbouwkolonies van Pro Juventute, het Leger des Heils en de Witte Kruis Kolonie boden relatief veel vrijheid aan hun merendeels Indonesische pupillen en scholing richtte zich op het aanleren van landbouwvaardigheden. Ontsnappen was makkelijk en daarom kwamen hier de jongeren terecht die zich redelijk gewillig opstelden. Veel van de pupillen bleven na hun ontslag uit de kolonie in de buurt. Ze kregen dan een stuk land ter bewerking waarop ze zelfstandig verder gingen met boeren, of ze werden onderwijzer of ondersteunend personeel op de kolonie. Op de Witte Kruis Kolonie, waar ook veel meisjes waren, ontstonden vaak romantische verbintenissen en werden kinderen geboren uit huwelijken tussen de volwassen ‘jeugdcriminelen’, wezen en vrije pupillen. In sommige gevallen haalden (ex-)pupillen zelfs hun broers, zussen en ouders naar de kolonie toe om daar samen een nieuw leven op te bouwen. De rol van hun Christelijke opvoeding, maar ook de aanwezigheid van nieuwe mogelijkheden om grond

te bewerken en de armoede thuis te ontsnappen, droeg in grote mate bij aan deze ontwikkelingen.

De koloniale staat was een ambitieuze maar gefragmenteerde staat die met beperkte middelen een enorm grondgebied bestuurd en tot ontwikkeling trachtte te brengen. Door partnerschappen met particuliere organisaties en verenigingen ontstond een zeer divers heropvoedingssysteem. Deze lappendeken van gestichten en tehuizen veranderde door de Tweede Wereldoorlog van kleur maar verdween niet. Oranje-Nassau is nu een weeshuis voor Indonesische kinderen dat ook nog steeds vanuit Nederland gesponsord en gesteund wordt door oud-pupillen. De Witte Kruis Kolonie is veranderd in een Indonesisch-Christelijke landbouwkolonie waarop een mooi hotel staat, maar ook een weeshuis en kleine huisjes voor bewoners die nog altijd op de koffieplantages werken. Muhammadiyah is uitgegroeid tot de grootste Islamitische organisatie van Indonesië en haar weeshuizen, scholen en universiteiten zijn beroemd om hun goede opleidingen en de mogelijkheden die ze bieden aan zowel kansarme als kansrijke jongeren.⁹⁸¹ De beperkte draagkracht van de koloniale staat bood ruimte aan particuliere organisaties en individuen en deze initiatieven werden na de Tweede Wereldoorlog opnieuw opgepakt en vormgegeven.

Tot Slot

Was heropvoeding succesvol? Werd de kolonie veiliger? Hoe 'erg' was het nou eigenlijk voor jongeren in de gestichten? Zo maar een aantal vragen die mij in de loop der jaren gesteld werden door belangstellenden. Als historicus moet ik het antwoord op al deze vragen – en vele anderen – schuldig blijven. De realiteit van historisch onderzoek naar de bestrijding van jeugdcriminaliteit in voormalig Nederlands-Indië is dat er veel onduidelijk blijft door gebrek aan bronnen, middelen en tijd. Meer dan zestig jaar na dato bleek het lastig na te gaan wat er werkelijk van voormalige pupillen geworden was. De Nederlandse koloniale vonden hun eigen heropvoedingsbeleid zeer succesvol, en

⁹⁸¹ Zowel Yayasan Pa van der Steur als de voormalige Witte Kruis Kolonie (nu Agrowisata Salib Putih) heb ik in 2007 en 2009 in Indonesië kunnen bezoeken. Het oude koloniale weeshuis van Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta was in 2009 ook nog in gebruik als weeshuis en kon bezocht worden. Zie voor meer informatie: <http://www.pavandersteur.org/nl/index.html>, <http://salibputih.blogspot.com/> en <http://www.muhammadiyah.or.id/>

schreven prachtige analyses over het merendeels goede gedrag van jongeren na hun vrijlating. Bevlogen heropvoeders en overheidsdienaren spraken echter niet persé de waarheid, ze hadden immers een belangrijke agenda: het legitimeren van de noodzaak van hun werk en de heropvoedingspolitiek in zijn geheel.

Aan het begin van mijn onderzoek was mijn grote wens het vinden van een Indonesische man of vrouw die ooit als veroordeelde minderjarige in een heropvoedingsgesticht had gezeten en mij daarover kon vertellen. Dan zou ik ‘echt’ te weten komen hoe het er nou aan toe was gegaan in een gesticht, hoe erg of hoe gewoon het was geweest, en wat er van hun leven geworden was. Dit bleek meer droom dan werkelijkheid: uiteindelijk kon ik niemand vinden die hierover uit eigen ervaring kon vertellen. De persoonsdossiers die bijgehouden werden in de gestichten en opgeslagen lagen bij het Departement van Justitie waren verdwenen of vernietigd, en zonder namen werd het zoeken naar een speld in een hele grote Indonesische hooiberg. Wel ontmoette ik via de Indische gemeenschap in Nederland twee bijzondere mensen die als Indo-Europese kinderen in gestichten hadden gezeten en me daarover vertelden. Zij waren geen veroordeelde jongeren maar konden door andere omstandigheden niet bij hun familie blijven wonen. Hun ervaringen zijn onderdeel geworden van dit proefschrift.

Curriculum vitae

Annelieke Dirks werd op 21 juni 1978 geboren te Aduard, Groningen. In juni 1997 behaalde zij haar eindexamen Gymnasium aan het Dr. Nassau College te Assen. Van 1997 tot 2002 studeerde zij Amerikaanse en Sociale Geschiedenis aan de Universiteit Leiden. In 2000 studeerde Annelieke ook een semester in de Verenigde Staten aan The College of William and Mary te Williamsburg, Virginia, waar zij vakken volgde op het gebied van Afrikaans-Amerikaanse geschiedenis. Daarna volgden twee stageperiodes in de journalistiek: bij de politieke redactie van het Algemeen Nederlands Persbureau (ANP) te Den Haag en bij correspondenten Charles Groenhuijsen en Tim Overdiek van het NOS Journaal in Washington D.C. Annelieke kreeg de Roosevelt Award van het Roosevelt Study Center toegekend voor de beste afstudeerscriptie in de Amerikaanse geschiedenis in het jaar 2002. Nadat zij tweeënhalf jaar werkzaam was geweest als politiek en departementaal journalist voor het ANP, vertrok Annelieke in 2004 opnieuw naar de Verenigde Staten. Aan The Ohio State University (OSU) te Columbus volgde zij vakken in het PhD-programma en begon zij met het ontwikkelen van haar proefschrift onderwerp. Bij OSU was Annelieke tevens werkzaam als assistent-docent en gaf zij colleges Moderne Amerikaanse Geschiedenis, Moderne Europese Geschiedenis en Wereldgeschiedenis. Daarnaast was zij een trimester verbonden als onderzoeker aan The Kirwan Institute for the study of Race and Ethnicity. In augustus 2006 keerde Annelieke terug naar Nederland om in dienst te treden als assistent in opleiding (aio) bij het Instituut voor Geschiedenis te Leiden. Onderzoek voor haar proefschrift gaf haar de mogelijkheid om twee keer een aantal maanden in Indonesië te verblijven. Verder gaf zij werkcolleges Algemene Geschiedenis en werkte een semester als universitair docent, waarbij zij mentor was van eerstejaarsstudenten, een werkcollege onderzoek en schrijven gaf, en bachelor studenten begeleidde bij het schrijven van hun scriptie. Tijdens het schrijven van haar proefschrift behaalde zij tevens haar internationale diploma als Kundalini Yoga docent en gaf yogales in de avonduren. Sinds september 2010 is zij met veel plezier werkzaam als yoga en meditatie docent voor particulieren en in het bedrijfsleven en als freelance historicus, onderzoeker en docent.

Annelieke Dirks was born on 21 Juni 1978 in Aduard, the Netherlands. She received her secondary school diploma from Dr. Nassau College in Assen in June 1997. Between 1997 and 2002 Annelieke studied American and Social History at Leiden University. She was an exchange student at The College of William and Mary in the U.S.A. where she focused on African American Studies. Annelieke concluded her studies with two journalism internships for the Dutch National Press Agency (ANP) and the NOS News broadcast. She received the Roosevelt Study Centre Award for her MA. Thesis in 2002 and continued her career as a political reporter for press agency ANP. In September 2004 Annelieke returned to the U.S.A. to join the Ph.D. program of The Ohio State University in Columbus. As a teaching assistant she also taught classes American, European and World History and worked one trimester as a researcher at The Kirwan Institute for the study of Race and Ethnicity. Annelieke returned to the Netherlands in the summer of 2006 and joined the History Department at Leiden University as a Ph.D. fellow and junior teacher. During her Ph.D. years Annelieke became a certified Kundalini Yoga teacher and taught classes in the evenings. Her research led to two extended research periods in Indonesia and she finished her dissertation in September 2010. Since that time she is happily working as a yoga and meditation teacher in private and professional environments and combines this with freelance historical research and teaching assignments.