Floating cuisine: food on board of Dutch ocean liners heading to the Indies, 1871-1964

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GEKE BURGER

> And above all, one eats! One eats in the morning, one eats in the afternoon, one eats in the evening. In fact, one eats the entire day, the appetite sharpened by the sea air.[1]

In the 1870s, following the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and with the help of some significant technical developments (both maritime and shore-based), a scheduled steamer service between the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies was established. Although the travel time was reduced from thirteen weeks by sailing vessel to six weeks by the Dutch mail ships, the journey remained long and arduous.[2] The shipping companies, aware of the inconvenience, did everything they could to ease the inevitable boredom faced by passengers. Activities, such as sports matches, games, and dancing were organised to help kill time, with food also playing a significant role. This article deals with the food culture on board Dutch ocean liners heading to the archipelago.

The mail ships were famous for their abundant and luxurious food services, with all meals and drinks included in the ticket price. Of all the crew members on board, the majority were involved in the preparation and serving of food. The ships can be seen as floating hotel-restaurants, and indeed, many passengers gained some extra weight after six weeks at sea. In *Captain's Dinner* (2011), Sandra Van Berkum and Tal Maes study food preparation on board the ships of the Holland-Amerika Lijn whilst in *The Captain's Table* (2011), Sarah Eddington examines the cuisine on board English ocean liners.[3]

Although much has been written about famous Dutch shipping companies and their ships, little research exists on the food culture on board ships sailing from the Netherlands to 'the East'. An exception is the compendious article 'Zeelust schept den eetlust' by Remmelt Daalder in which, using data from menu cards, he presents an overview of the luxury and nature of food served on board Dutch ocean liners.[4] Many questions, however, remain unanswered: How were food supplies stored on board? How and when were meals served? Passengers preferred European food for the whole journey, but can we also perceive influences from other cuisines on the route? Finally, how were the passengers prepared for the culture shock of going to a part of the world where everything was different, not least the food?

In order to find answers to these and other questions, several types of historical sources can be used. The first group consists of travel journals, diaries, and other ego documents generated by travellers sailing from the Netherlands to the Dutch East Indies. Another useful source are the menu cards of the meals served on board, showing the variety and nature of the 'floating cuisine' available to passengers. A third category are the travel guides and other instructive documents generated by the shipping companies themselves. These guides provide a unique insight into the way travellers were prepared for the journey – not only in the context of the advice they were given, but also by offering a commentary on the food on board, often pointing out the availability of certain food items.

This article starts with a brief historical account of the service from the Netherlands to the Dutch East Indies by mail ship, starting from the moment when the first liner passed through the Suez Canal shortly after 1869, until the liner service was abolished in 1958. The second section examines the food provided on board – its nature, how often it was served, the level of luxury, and how it developed over time. The third section offers a 'behind the scenes' examination of food preparation on board: How was the food prepared? Who was responsible for the different stages in the process, and what spaces and facilities for the food preparation existed on board? Together, this approach will offer insights into the functioning of the liners as floating hotel-restaurants, intermediating between two entirely different worlds: Europe and Asia.

Steaming to 'the East'

After the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, travellers from Amsterdam to the Dutch East Indies could make the entire journey by ship. Previously, Dutch passengers relied on English companies for sea transport as a part of the overland route. The slow alternative was boarding a sailing vessel – a voyage that took ninety days. The opening of the Suez Canal, but also technical developments such as the invention of the more economical and faster compound steam machine, made a scheduled steamer service possible.[5] This new service was eagerly embraced, not least as there was an increasing demand for faster and more regular transport of both mail and passengers between the Dutch East Indies and the Netherlands. The underlying cause for this increasing demand was the abolition of the cultivation system in 1871.[6] With the restriction on free entrepreneurship now gone, it became very attractive to start up a venture in the Indies. A great number of planters, businessmen, and engineers travelled to the archipelago in search of their fortunes. In less than thirty years, the number of Europeans in the colony grew from 49,000 in 1870 to 90,000 in 1900.[7]

In 1871, the first mail ship passed through the Suez Canal, heralding an era of large-scale Dutch steam shipping.[8] The shipping companies Stoom-

SS Prins Alexander (Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland'), 1900. Photograph by W.H. Holtzapffel (Amsterdam). Dutch National Maritime Museum Amsterdam, photo collection of the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland', S.3565(36).

vaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' (established in 1871) and Rotterdamsche Lloyd (established in 1883) worked the route in close collaboration.[9] One week, a ship of the Rotterdamsche Lloyd left Rotterdam for the Indies, whilst from Batavia a ship came the other way.[10] The next week, it was the turn of the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland', thus resulting in a weekly shipping service. The average ticket price was approximately 600 guilders for a single second-class journey. More affluent passengers travelled in first class, whilst third class was reserved for working-class people. Fourth class was reserved solely for crew: lower servants and *baboes* – the female servants who took care of the children on board. During the first five years of the steamer service, the outbound travellers could make the first part of the journey (to Genoa or Marseille) by the so-called 'boat train' – a service facilitated by the shipping companies.[11] Buying a ticket to 'the East' included both the boarding pass for the ship and the train passage. Depending on the route chosen, the journey to the unknown began either in Genoa or Marseille.

Around 1900, a journey to the Indies had the following itinerary: The first stop after leaving Europe was Port Said – a bustling port city on the Egyptian coast. This stop took longer than some of the others, as allowance

had to be made for the loading of coal.[12] One of the first sights encountered when arriving in the city were the numerous small barges with local merchants, selling fruit and souvenirs.[13] Climbing narrow ship ladders, the vendors offered their merchandise to the passengers whilst they were still on board. Apart from the indigenous members of the ship's crew, those vendors were often the first introduction to the 'Other' (seen from the European perspective). For travellers, the longer stopover offered the opportunity to disembark for some sightseeing. The majority of those who decided to explore the city would visit 'Simon Arzt', a famous modern department store. The store, named after its German founder, provided most of the desired European products and was known for its cigarettes.[14] When purchasing local products, leather handbags and woven carpets were the travellers' favourites.[15]

Once the ship was fully supplied, the journey continued through the Suez Canal. From this point onwards, the ships of the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' and the Rotterdamsche Lloyd followed different routes.[16] The ships of the Rotterdamsche Lloyd sailed from Suez to the harbour of Padang directly, before arriving at their destination in Batavia's harbour Tandjong Priok. From there, travellers with other destinations within the archipelago could transfer to a ship of the inter-island shipping line – the Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij (Royal Packet Navigation Company). For the passengers of the ships of the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland', after another week at sea, the harbour of Colombo in Ceylon came into view. In Ceylon travellers had the opportunity to take several excursions, amongst others to Buddhist temples and the ancient city of Kandy. Sabang, the coal bunkering port situated on a small island north of Sumatra, was the first landfall in the Dutch East Indies encountered by the passengers of the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland'. Some passengers disembarked in Belawan, others in Singapore, before the liner finally arrived in Batavia.

With the introduction of steam engines running on oil instead of coal (and later with the advent of motor vessels with diesel engines), the journey to 'the East' was shortened from six weeks in 1900 to four weeks in 1950. Nonetheless, the period spent at sea was long and there was much time to kill. During the first years following World War II, the passengers still had to entertain themselves by playing cards, doing exercises on the deck, reading, or using the game facilities. It was not until the 1950s that crews started to organise events on board in a more structural manner in order to keep their passengers occupied. This new trend, however, was short-lived: in 1958 Sukarno abolished the regular service to Batavia, which by then had been renamed Jakarta.[17] All ties between the Netherlands and the young Republic of Indonesia were broken due to the conflict over New Guinea. The former ocean liners were used as cruise ships for another ten years, until air travel grew to dominate the tourist trade. When the famous liner MS *Oranje* made her last journey in 1964, it marked the end of the era.[18] As to the number of

passengers, the luxury on board and the travel time, the trips on the first steamers differed significantly from the post-war journeys. However, one thing never changed: the consumption of good food on board had always been one way to keep passengers from getting bored. Food, and the art of presenting it, was the shipping companies' most effective way to keep their customers satisfied.

From Decent Meals to Hotel Quality Dining

In the 1870s and 1880s, the steamers measured an average of 115 meters long and 12 meters wide, with a capacity of 140 passengers.[19] Due to the absence of stabilisers, the first liners could be quite uncomfortable, and many passengers suffered sea sickness. Those who could handle a meal – included in the ticket price – had to sit in narrow dining salons.[20] All classes travelled in separate compartments. The first- and second-class passengers consumed comparable meals, albeit with a big difference in choice and variety. Third- and fourth-class provision was, however, very basic. Notwithstanding this obvious disparity, most travel journals dating from the time mention that both food and service were good. Luxury items, however, were not available on board. In 1874, a retired navy commander, E.H. Boom – who probably travelled first class – wrote in a guide for travellers to 'the East': 'one takes an *anker*[21] of red wine, half a basket of carbonated water, cigars, tobacco, soap, wax candles and some treats'.[22]

It was during this same period that two more retired naval commanders, A. Werumeus Buning and J.A. Kruyt, wrote their travel guide after having made a trip to the Indies on an unknown liner.[23] They reported that the food was excellent and abundant, whilst also praising its variety. Early in the morning, a light breakfast was served. The second breakfast at 10:30, besides bread, also included meat and vegetable dishes.[24] Around 14:00, a drink was served on deck. Wine and other beverages were not yet included in the ticket price, but were available for a reasonable price.[25] According to the two gentlemen, this was because it would have been rather unfair to let the passengers – beer drinking young men and barely consuming ladies alike – pay the same price on the drinks. The main meal of the day was served at 16:30. This meal resembled the second breakfast with the addition of pies, pastries, fresh and dried fruits, sugary snacks, and compotes.[26] The final serving of the day was at 20:00, when tea, toast, and bread were made available. Thus, as Werumeus Buning and Kruyt state, no one had to worry about being deprived of anything on the journey to 'the East'. The only problem with the food on board was the total chaos that ensued whenever the ship encountered rough seas. Despite the fiddles attached to tables to keep the crockery, glassware, and cutlery in place, the dining salon became a dangerous place with hot liquids and objects flying everywhere. Once, the men witnessed

Menu card for the meal of 29 December 1897 on board the SS *Prins Alexander*. The dishes offered on the menu are typically Dutch, like mashed potatoes with carrots, herring salad, and purslane. Dutch National Maritime Museum, S.0029 (0098).

how a passenger's hot soup plate ended up in the lap of his neighbour on the other side of the table. A few seconds later, the *maître de hotel* (head waiter) slipped over the spilt soup, falling against a passenger with hot coffee in his hand. Luckily, the other chairs at the table were already deserted, the passengers either desperately trying to reach their cabins, dodging all kind of flying objects on their way out, or hanging over the ship's rail emptying their stomachs into the ocean.[27] Apologising for that rather long passage on food in their travel guide, the men summarised in a single statement what would remain true for the whole period of the passenger shipping service: 'the condition of the stomach had a great influence on the mood of the human being, especially for those who travelled on the seas'.[28]

The ships of both the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' and Rotterdamsche Lloyd grew in size rapidly from the 1900s on. In 1900, the average capacity of the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' ships was around 150 passengers. In 1910, the SS *Prinses Juliana* could transport 349 passengers, increasing to 454 on the SS *Jan Pieterszoon Coen* in 1915.[29] A similar shift is visible when looking at the size and capacity of the ships of the Rotterdamsche Lloyd. Along with the changes in scale and comfort, the cuisine was also upgraded. Beverages were included in the ticket price and the meals became more abundant, elaborate, and offered greater variety. When Creusesol (pseudonym of Isaäc Pierre Constant Graafland) wrote his travel journal *To the East* in 1908, he mentioned that the dishes were served as sophisticated and delicious as in a first-class hotel.[30] A menu card dating from 1906 shows that a firs-class dinner on board the SS *Goentoer* consisted of Colbert soup as a starter, followed by coquilles and oysters, ham with red cabbage, leg of mutton in pepper sauce or asparagus. The main dish was served with rosé wine and compote, and concluded with a dessert consisting of bavaroise, praline ice cream, fruits, and coffee.[31]

Compared to the nineteenth-century steamers, the schedule for serving meals had also changed. A travel journal kept by Dr I. Groneman, travelling from Amsterdam to Batavia around 1906, provides the following description: Between 5:00 and 6:00, coffee and hot chocolate were served in the salon or on deck, followed by breakfast consisting of bread, rusk and 'abundant treats'. At 7:00, hot barley porridge was served, or – on the warm passages on the journey – ice cold buttermilk, again, with coffee and tea. Breakfast ended at 9:00, however, at 10:00, refreshments, such as lemonade, berry juice, or egg liquor were made available. At 12:15, an extensive lunch was served, followed by pies, pudding, fruit, ice cream, and coffee. In the afternoon, sweet treats were offered until it was time for dinner at 19:00.[32] Creusesol concluded that the passengers were eating throughout the morning, afternoon, and evening – in fact, the whole day.[33]

Menu card for the first-class dinner on board the *SS Goentoer* (Rotterdamsche Lloyd), 10 March 1906. Leiden University Libraries, Or. 27.640-6.

Glory Days

The glory days of the ocean liners lay in the period between the two World Wars. Four great liners – the *Dempo* and *Baloeran*, owned by the Rotterdamsche Lloyd, and the *Marnix van Sint Aldegonde* and *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt*, owned by the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' – came into service in 1930-1931. A similar building programme followed from 1937 to 1940. From the 1930s on, due to the upscaling of passenger shipping and the fact that the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' and Rotterdamsche Lloyd had their own printing office on board, a huge number of menu cards were produced. For every breakfast, lunch, and dinner, richly decorated and well-designed cards were printed. The only meals without an elaborate menu card were buffets as they did not follow a predetermined menu order. Passengers were allowed to keep their menus as souvenir, and over time they became collector's items.

DEJEUNER à la carte

HORS-d'OEUVRE

POTAGES

HORS-d'OEUVRE CHAUD

OEUFS

POISSONS

RELEVES ET ENTREES

PLAT SPECIAL

GRILLADE (10 min.)

LEGUMES

SUPPET FROID

SALADES

ENTREMETS

FROMAGES

FRUITS

Menu card for the first-class lunch on board the MS *Baloeran* (Rotterdamsche Lloyd), 23 July 1933. Leiden University Libraries, Or. 27.176-82.

Front of the menu card for the dinner of 25 August 1937 on board the SS *Jan Pieterszoon Coen* (Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland'). Leiden University Libraries, Or. 27.176-82.

During the heydays of the large ocean liners, the division of classes was maintained, however, third and fourth class became a non-passenger class reserved solely for indigenous workers and other lower crewmembers. The disparity between first and second class narrowed when second class was upgraded, although differences remained in the choices offered and overall level of luxury. In the context of the food itself, it was no longer the cook who determined what was served, nor was it the *maître de hotel* who composed the menus. Rather, it was the shipping company that decided what was served and to whom. On board the ships of the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland', at least from the 1920s onwards, every *administrateur* (manager), *maître de hotel*, and first cook had to own a copy of the booklet *Instructions concerning the nutrition on board the mail ships*.[34] Rule number one was to guarantee great variety and avoid repetition. First-class food had to be at least as good as in any first-class hotel, whereas second-class meals were allowed to be a little less extravagant, yet still had to be excellent. It was strictly forbidden to pass leftovers from second class – who dined earlier – to first-class diners. Complaints about insufficiency had to be avoided at all costs. Even the language and type of menu cards were regulated. First- and second-class passengers received their breakfast menus printed in Dutch and English, whereas lunch and dinner menu cards were always in French. Third-class passengers received a handwritten menu card in Dutch.[35]

The booklet further specifies the schedule and nature of the meals during the day for each class. First-class breakfast, for example, always had to include four types of porridge, six warm dishes, three egg dishes, and six cold dishes.[36] Around 11:30, a drink was served, which came – depending on the weather – in warm or cold variations. The booklet shows a choice of several lemonades, ice sorbets in twelve flavours, and punches in any favourable flavour.[37] The lunch always started with a soup, followed by an egg or fish dish, then meat and vegetables, a cold or warm dish platter, and for dessert it was pastry and fruit. On Sundays, a cheese platter was served as an extra dessert. Around 16:30, tea had to be served, with toast, biscuits, and cakes.[38] The dinner was almost the same as the lunch menu. General rules for the first-class evening meal were as follows: always serve ice cream in the warm climate zones, never serve beefsteak, and pork only once a week. Salad had to be fresh and served with oil, vinegar, soya, and boiled egg. Evening tea could only be ordered free of charge between 21:00 and 21:30.[39]

For those in second class there were similar prescriptions, albeit with some minor differences. The breakfast was less abundant and there was no fish for lunch. At dinner the *entremets* were missing, and for the second class, clotted cream was not available.[40] Overall, it can be stated that the variety and level of luxury was slightly less. Thus, as can be seen, the differences between first and second class were small, however, food in third class was obviously much plainer: the morning coffee had to be served before the first work shift, between 6:00 and 8:00. Pearl barley or oatmeal, bread with some

A hors-d'oeuvre or appetiser in the shape of a lobster is served on board the MS *Oranje* (Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland'), circa 1945-1964. Dutch National Maritime Museum, photo collection of the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland', 2015.4157.

sandwich fillings, and a beverage was all the workers got for breakfast, and there were no sorbets and punches in the morning break. In contrast to the other classes, no hot dishes were served for lunch. Rather, they were served a recurrence of the breakfast – bread with fillings and some simple beverages. Dinner typically offered plain Dutch food: soup, potatoes with meat and vegetables. The only luxury was a serving of the pastries, pudding, ice cream, and fruits for dessert. Tea was served at 20:00.[41]

Whilst the booklet refers to regulations for indigenous crew members on board the liners – those travelling in the fourth class – no documentation could be found in the archives. However, there is one rare source that gives insight into the food consumption of the lower personnel. In 1921, physician Alexander Karel Bosman finished his dissertation on the hygiene on board of the ships of the Rotterdamsche Lloyd, commissioned by the company's medical division.[42] The dissertation includes the schedule of nutrition of the Chinese crew. One Chinese worker received per day 0.68 kg of rice, 0.45 kg beef or pork, and 0.225 kg of fresh or conserved vegetables. Per week the company provided the Chinese worker 0.8 kg of wheat flower, 0.9 kg of crunchy bread, 0.225 kg of fat or margarine, 0.225 kg of fruit jam, 60 grams of tea, 60 grams of coffee, 0.45 kg of sugar, and a third of a can of evaporated milk. Exceptions were made for the boatswain and fireman: they received a full can of evaporated milk.[43] In addition, vinegar, salt, and pepper were unlimited.

On request, the crunchy bread could be replaced by fresh bread up to a total of 1.8 kg of wheat flower per week.[44]

Special Occasions

On Sundays there were some extra treats. Hermann Hülsmann, who travelled with a group of young adults to the Indies in 1928, wrote in his diary: 'Today is Sunday. The cup of hot chocolate this morning at 11 and the duck served at dinner makes that clear.'[45] With special occasions came special food, for instance, with the departure of a prominent passenger or an officer, or the celebration of a (national) holiday. It seems there was always reason to extend or elaborate upon the meals in some way. For example, for the Dutch *Sinterklaas* celebration, the baker would make the traditional pastry *letterbanket*, which was served with mandarins.[46] In addition, shortly after leaving the Netherlands, there was also a welcome or 'Bon voyage dinner', usually on the second night on board.

On the evening before arriving in Sabang or Padang, the 'Captain's dinner' was a regular event. The tradition originated from the era of the British East India Company and was organised on almost every voyage on board Dutch ocean liners on the last evening on board. Although from Sabang or Padang it still took a week before the ship entered the harbour of Tandjong Priok in Batavia, due to the pressure of disembarking passengers and unloading cargo, the Captain's dinner was brought forward.[47] Besides the obvious fact that the food was even more luxurious at the Captain's dinner, an essential element was the speech by the ship's commander – traditionally answered by a speech from the eldest passenger.[48]

These occasional dinners provided an opportunity for the cooks to really show off, in particular when creating the most spectacular desserts. Intricate pie and ice sculptures were shaped by the *patissier*. There are photographs showing a pie-cathedral for a Christmas dinner on board of the *Baloeran* in the 1930s, whereas, on another occasion, celebrated on the *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt* in 1939, spectacular ice sculptures of boats and flowers were presented. On request, meals could be adapted for people who were on a prescribed diet.[49] Similarly, there were separate menus for children. In 1952, children on board the *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt* could enjoy beef stew for dinner, but also white or brown bread with liver paté or the typical Dutch chocolate- and anise sprinkles. In 1928, the Rotterdamsche Lloyd stated that it was no problem at all to offer children on board whatever products they were accustomed to.[50] During lunch, the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' also provided food for babies on request: sieved oatmeal porridge, sieved vegetables, mashed beans and potatoes, or ground meat and applesauce. A more 'exotic' option was *nasi tim*: steamed red rice with chicken liver, the soft texture of which made the dish suitable even for the youngest passengers.[51]

Menu card for the children's lunch on 4 April 1952 on board the MS *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt* (Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland'), one of dishes offered is the Eurasian dish *nasi tim*. Leiden University Libraries, Or. 27.176-82.

Passengers' Reviews

The abundance and exceptional quality of the food was not taken for granted. Travellers wrote in amazement of the cuisine on board – as seen in the compliments paid by Werumeus Buning and Kruyt, discussed above. Around 1900, retired Lieutenant-Colonel A.S.H. Booms (not to be confused with the E.S. Boom mentioned earlier) wrote in the *Illustrated Guide for Dutch Travellers to and from the Indies via Genoa and Marseille*:

> More than anything else, the food on board, in terms of quantity, frequency of serving, preparation, and display, leaves nothing to be desired – not even for the finest gourmet – and competes successfully with the greatest and most famous hotels on land.[52]

Mrs. Catenius-Van der Meijden, also author of a famous *Indisch*[53] recipe book, wrote in her guide for travellers to the Indies (1903): 'One can call it [the sailing to 'the East'] a pleasure trip. It is a constant change of dining, drinking, sleeping, wandering on the deck, dining etc. And what is served is *always the*

best quality.'[54] It does not come as a surprise that during the late 1940s, it was the good food on board that stood out for all the passengers; Europe was recovering from the war, and scarcity was noticeable everywhere on the continent.

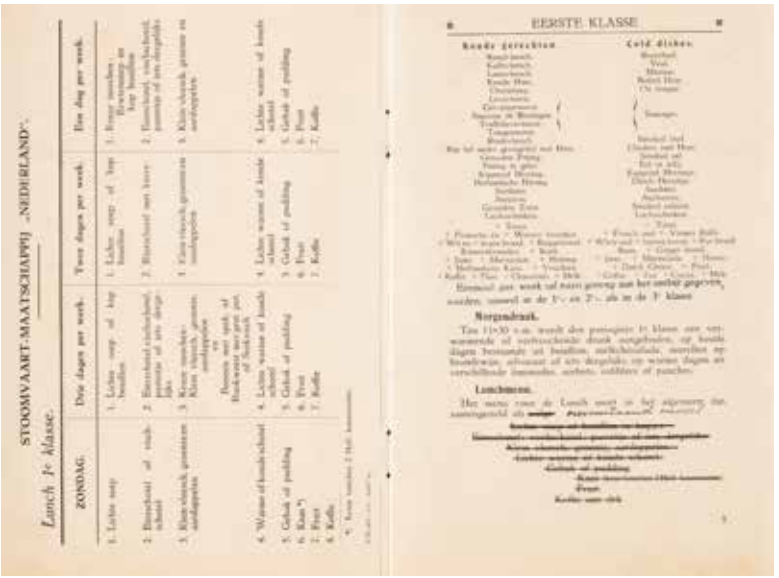
Amongst the glittering tributes to the catering of the two shipping companies, some critical voices were raised. The dissertation of Alexander Karel Bosman (discussed earlier) offers a critical note on the nutrition on board, if not in the way one might expect. Whilst he concluded that there was no shortage of vitamins, it was the level of overfeeding that worried Bosman. He suggested the introduction of sporting facilities and competitions to encourage passengers to use them. Indeed, many passengers could not help but notice that they gained some weight during the journey. Although, by 1930, there was plenty of space on board to exercise and play games on the sports deck, it remains doubtful if this was sufficient to balance out the overeating on the voyage. It is thus rather ironic that weight competitions were sometimes organised at the end of the journey.[55] The overfeeding of the crew was also considered undesirable by Bosman. It actually led to a decrease in the speed of the steamer: 'Beef with baked potatoes as a breakfast is not preferable food for people who have to work as stokers in the engine room.'[56] The solution was simple: the shipping companies started to replace overfed European stokers with Chinese workers who were not hindered by an overfull stomach – as we have seen, their food was very plain and supplied in substantially reduced quantities.

Pea Soup and *Nasi Goreng*

A look at the menu cards reveals that the majority of the food served was (very) European: passengers preferred their potatoes, soups, and bread. With the presence of Dutch cooks in the galley and the facilities to store the necessary ingredients in the cold and freezer rooms, all the means were there to adhere to regular European cuisine. Writing in 1908, Creusesol stated that typically Dutch vegetables, meats, and fruits were served on board – food that the passengers were used to, albeit prepared and presented in an elaborate restaurant style.[57] Mr. L. Franken, who travelled to the archipelago in 1931 on board the MS *Pulau Roebiah*, witnessed that, despite the increasing heat after crossing the equator, Dutch winter food continued to be consumed. With Semarang in sight, the passengers were eating brown beans, marrowfat peas, and pea soup.[58] Not even in the Red Sea, known as the hottest part of the voyage, was the menu adapted. Journalist Henri Borel saw people overeating on heavy Dutch winter food in temperatures of 100 degrees Fahrenheit (almost 38 degrees Celsius). Although Borel was very positive about the food on his journeys, he clearly expressed a desire for lighter, more easily digestible dishes to be served in the warmer climes.[59]

Up until the 1950s, the cuisine on board was – alongside the Dutch dishes – predominantly French-based, as was also the case in chic restaurants in Europe.[60] Typically French terms such as *hors d'oeuvre*, *luncheon,* and *compote* frequently appear on the menus. Even when the dish itself was not French, a chic French name was often put on the menu. According to the *Instructions concerning the nutrition on board the mail ships* booklet (discussed earlier), plain rice with braised beef and union was to be referred to as '*Goulash de boeuf au riz*'.[61]

When taking a closer look at the menus, however, the influence of Eurasian cuisine becomes apparent.[62] In Werumeus Buning and Kruyt's travel guide, the Eurasian element on life on board the ship becomes more and more apparent as the voyage progresses.[63] When reaching the Suez Canal, the European suit was changed for the more airy white *tropenkleding*, tropical wear. It was, according to Werumeus Buning and Kruyt, also the moment that the first *rijsttafel*[64] was served, and the men stated: 'The day before yesterday we belonged to the West, today we belong to the East.'[65] However, Mrs. Catenius saw things rather differently. According to Catenius, the *rijsttafel* was only occasionally served after the ship had crossed the equator and it was nothing like the 'real *rijsttafel*' served in the archipelago.[66] Nonetheless, Catenius prepared her readers (if only indirectly) for the non-European food on board. In a list with useful sentences in Malay to be used when communicating with indigenous crewmembers, one finds expressions such



Caption from the booklet *Instructions concerning the nutrition of board the mail ships* issued by the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland', 1921. Dutch National Maritime Museum, 1994.5229.

as 'Pass the potatoes', however, one also finds sentences such as: 'Don't bring me strongly spiced food, I cannot handle it', 'Not more than two spoons of rice', and 'Don't give it [the child] *sajoer* or curry'.[67] These sentences would probably not be included in her travel guide if no Eurasian cuisine was served on board. The question arises if the serving of Eurasian food was demand-driven, or an initiative taken by the crew. On the ships, a substantial number of passengers were *Indischgasten*: Dutch citizens who had lived for years in the archipelago and who travelled to the Netherlands, either for a short stay, or to stay permanently. One can imagine that on an eastward bound journey, the *Indischgasten* would request the rice dishes to which they had become accustomed in the Indies, to build a bridge between the two worlds they knew. The *Indischgasten* were also often the first to change their European attire for the *sarong* or *kabaja,* and to give newcomers advice at the serving of the first *rijsttafel*.[68]

The question that arises here is precisely when the serving of Eurasian food was introduced on board of the Dutch ocean liners. Already in the 1880s, there were signs that non-European food was available on board. Werumeus Buning and Kruyt talked about the presence of rice dishes, but surprisingly only at the second breakfast. Needless to say, there were always more European dishes and, according to the duo, they were less spicy than when prepared in the Indies.[69] Still, it seems that it was easy to totally avoid non-European food until reaching one's final destination. By the 1920s, Eurasian food on board had become more common – a development that probably had something to do with the increasing flow of travellers between the Netherlands and the archipelago. In accordance with the new menu options, additions were made to the 1921 edition of the booklet *Instructions concerning the nutrition on board the mail ships*. Glued on one of the blank pages, a paper strip states: 'once a week *nasi goreng* shall be served at breakfast for all classes'.[70] Also added was the rule to serve rice dishes always with meat and a combination of sauces such as *sambal*, curry, red fish sauce, and chutney. Nonetheless, rice dishes were still given French names: rice and pheasant with curry sauce became *bordure de riz à la St. Hubert*, and the similar dish with veal became *blanquette d'agneau au riz*.[71] By the 1960s, the menu cards exhibit an increasing abundance of Eurasian food. Whereas previously the Eurasian dishes were in the minority, often presented in French, or labelled as a 'special plate', by the 1960s all this had changed. Dishes such as *bami* and *nasi goreng* were now available on every menu and special rice dishes even appeared on the children's menu. Moreover, these dishes even became available on ships of the Holland-Amerika Lijn, indicating that Eurasian food had become vastly more integrated into regular Dutch cuisine. A menu from 1960 offers the 'typical Dutch dish' *nasi goreng,* consisting of baked rice with prawns, pork, onion, leek, celery, and garlic, topped with baked chicken, banana, egg, and *kroepoek,* and served with a side of sambal and mango chutney.[72]

In 1958, the scheduled shipping service to what is now Indonesia, came to an end. As a consequence of the conflict between the Dutch government and the Indonesian Nationalists regarding New Guinea, the (then) Indonesian leader Sukarno broke all ties with the Netherlands, and hence the liner service was abolished. Subsequently, the Dutch ocean liner fleet entered the holiday cruise market – a venture that was to prove ultimately unsuccessful. In the 1960s, most people preferred short cruises within Europe, and long-distance tourism had yet to develop. In time of course, that was to change, however, air travel would become the most efficient way of transport. In 1964, the MS *Oranje* made her last voyage to Indonesia. The Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' organised an 'oriental lunch with a variety of dishes from China, Malaysia, Hawaii, Burma, Japan, Thailand, India, Korea, and the Philippines – an event that would never have taken place in Werumeus Buning and Kruyt's, nor in Catenius' time.[73]

Towards Another World

For a taste of non-European food, passengers did not have to rely solely on what was served on board. During the short stops on the way to the Indies, the passengers could also get a taste of non-Dutch cuisines – something for which Catenius took time to prepare her readers. In Marseille, she stated in 1903, passengers should not expect potatoes unless willing to pay extra for them.[74] When arriving in Aden, she recommended the fresh baked sea fish as a safe option, served with salad and potatoes. Later, Catenius emphasised that it was totally unnecessary to buy food on the way, for everything was available of the highest quality on board the ship. There were some exceptions, however. For example, when in Port Saïd and in the mood for some snacking, Catenius recommended the Turkish delight: 'Or buy even a full box, to share with the children and your acquaintances when arriving in the Indies.'[75] Werumeus Buning and Kruyt also wrote about consumption on excursions during their voyage in the 1880s, warning that the prices for drinks on the stops on the non-European passage of the journey were extremely high.[76] By 1928, Port Saïd was well-prepared to fulfil the wishes of Dutch travellers. Hermann Hülsmann wrote that various brands of Dutch beer were served in Simon Arzt's department store: Amstel, Heineken, and even a brand from Tilburg.[77]

During the entire journey, it was easy to stick to European food and avoid everything unfamiliar and exotic. Once arrived in the Dutch East Indies, however, there was no escape. Although there were a number of Grand Hotels in Batavia that did serve European food – Catenius mentions the Java Hotel, Hotel der Nederlanden, Hotel Wisse, and Hotel des Indes[78] – sooner or later Europeans had to get used to the *rijsttafel*, served every day at 13:00 after the first work shift. The obligatory siesta that followed the meal was anoth-

er novelty to which newcomers had to adapt.[79] Compared to Dutch habits, the dinner was served very late in the Indies: between 19:30 and 21:00.[80] After Werumeus Buning and Kruyt's first meal in the Indies, they had to admit that the rice dishes on board of the liner only afforded the traveller a glimpse of the food as it was served in Batavia. It was at the Hotel des Indes that the two men experienced their first dinner in the Indies:

> There was a surprisingly high number of dishes which you have never heard or dreamt of. Rice and curry, vegetables boiled in water and broth, minced beef and *frikandel*,[81] chicken roasted in tamarinde sauce, baked fish, dried fish, fragrant deer meat (*ding-ding*), salted egg, bulging eye, omelette, prawns, lobsters, fish roe, a number of small platters with sambal, Spanish pepper (*tjabei*), and several sours etc. [...]. You will be amazed by the huge amounts of food consumed by the thin indigenous ladies but be aware of the fact that the *rijsttafel* is the main meal of the day. At the second meal at 19:00, much less is consumed. Even before we finished the rice and all that came along, Sidin [the waiter] arrived with other dishes: steak with potatoes, lettuce with poultry, fruit etc.[82]

Addressing future passengers, Catenius formulates a number of warnings in her book relating to the Eurasian food in the Dutch East Indies. First, one should always ask if the meal being served is very spicy. Most importantly, keeping a keen eye on the addition of *sambal* and *lombok* is highly advisable, as, according to Catenius, that very intense red pepper 'makes your throat and mouth burn and takes away the pleasure'.[83] Red side dishes in general should evoke suspicion. Red pepper can easily disguise the bad quality of food, a trick that is often tried on 'full-blooded Dutchmen' who had just arrived in the Indies.[84] Werumeus Buning and Kruyt witnessed an incident of this nature when they saw an unexperienced traveller hit by the unexpected spiciness when consuming his first *rijsttafel*: 'With tears in his eyes, an unusual red coloured face and his mouth contracted, he took a sip of water – which was only fuel to the flames – and desperately ate all the bread on the table to quench his tongue.'[85]

Despite the dangers, Werumeus Buning and Kruyt strongly believed that the spicy food was beneficial for the body: it cleanses the abdomen and stabilises the body temperature.[86] According to Catenius, indigenous fruits also pose a danger. In particular during the rainy season, fruits often lead to serious stomach problems and diarrhoea. She identifies *Pisang* (banana) and papaya as the safest and suggests that when ripe, they are also considered suitable for kids. Pineapples were considered safe as well, on the condition that some salt was added to neutralise the acerbity. Catenius' last warning concerns ice water: 'Do not drink it with eagerness, not even when being parched!'[87] Catenius concluded her instructions by stating that 'moderation' should be the traveller's watchword when eating in the Indies.

Behind the Scenes: Preparing and Serving

Claiming that the food on board measured up to that of onshore first-class restaurants implied that a major part of the crew, in one way or another, was involved in the preparation and serving of the food.[88] In the galleys – in case of the first- and second-class kitchens of the post-1920 ships almost a misnomer – Dutch cooks were preparing the food.[89] The chef was in command and composed the menu. He was assisted by the sous-chef, who also replaced him when absent. In the glory days of the ocean liners, the team of cooks also consisted of *chef de parties*, each responsible for a different part of the kitchen. There was a *rôtisseur* (in charge of meat, game, and poultry), *entremétier* (side dishes such as soups, vegetables, and potatoes), *garde-manger* (cold dishes such as salads and starters), *patissier* (ice cream, pastries, and pudding), *potagier* (soups), *saucier* (sauces and warm starters), and a *légumier* (vegetable dishes). Often there were also several student-cooks, assisting one of the *chefs de parties*.[90] In case of the MS *Oranje*, the biggest passenger ship from the mail ship era, the total number of cooks was approximately forty.[91] Another crew maintained the supervision of the dining salons, consisting of the *maître de hotel*, his assistant, and the stewards. The stewards also took care of the table settings and completed any table-side processes: flambé, filleting, and jointing.[92] The headwaiter or *mandoer*[93] supervised the serv-

The European cooks and the Javanese servants in the combined first- and second-class galley of the MS *Oranje* (Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland'), ca. 1945-1964. Dutch National Maritime Museum, photo collection of the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland', 2015.4038.

ing, whilst the serving itself was done by the so-called *djongossen*, who were mostly recruited on the islands of Madura and Java.[94] The *djongossen* were divided into three groups: those who served dishes from the galley, those who served the food from the (cold) pantries, and those who only served snacks and drinks on deck. Prior to serving the meal – the food was always served on a set time – a *djongos* summoned the passengers throughout the ship by ringing a five-tuned gong. This sound alerted the passengers to prepare themselves and to head to the dining salons.[95] In order to avoid miscommunication due to the language barrier, the passengers would order the dish of their choice by quoting its number on the menu card. Drinks and snacks were offered all day, although, even in the heyday of the ocean-going liners no later than 23:00, as the servants were free from then until morning.[96] Dish and pot washing was undertaken by Chinese workers, who also processed the huge amount of used tablecloths, napkins, and other textiles on board.[97]

As with the composition of the menu, the serving of food also followed a strict set of regulations. Serving coffee during dinner or as a single drink meant also bringing a silver platter with a jug of warm milk and sugar, and when the passenger rose to leave the table, the plate had to be taken back to the pantry immediately. Coffee after a meal, however, meant serving in the presence of the passenger. Tea was announced by a short ring of the bell, and the tea leaves had to stay in the hot water exactly half an hour before serving. Biscuits and toast would stay on the table, however, in the children's room consumption was limited to two pieces each child.Any melting butter on the table was deemed a catastrophe, and hence the servants had to place a small ice cube in the butter cup when noticing the first signs of this.[98] As in shore-based restaurants, the table setting and the order of service followed a strict format. Servants always had to serve female passengers first and, quite obviously, serving was to be carried out in the fastest manner possible.[99]

Organising Space

The dining salons were, like the cabins, divided by class. As mentioned above, over time those spaces developed from sober narrow rooms to luxurious palatial halls.[100] Much has been written about the interior of the ocean steamers. The designs and decorations in the salons indeed contributed to a festive and luxurious atmosphere. The focus here, however, will be on the activities that took place *within* these dining salons. For both lunch and dinner, a predetermined seating plan was applied for all passengers. This plan was announced at the beginning of the journey and was fixed throughout the duration of the voyage. Passengers could, however, offer their preference for 'table companions' one month before departure.[101] At breakfast the passengers were free to pick a seat themselves, as this meal was served as a buffet.[102] Children under the age of twelve dined separately: those of first-class passengers ate in the

A *djongos* plays the xylophone to announce the start of the meal on board the MS *Christiaan Huygens* (Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland'), ca. 1928-1940. Maritime Museum Rotterdam, photo collection of the Koninklijke Nedloyd Groep, F12719.

children's room under the supervision of the *baboes*, whilst those of second- and third-class passengers took their meals in the salons of their own class, but always before the adult meals were served.[103]

With the majority of the crew being appointed for food preparation and serving, a major part of the ship was reserved for stockrooms, salons, bars, pantries, and galleys. A good overview of how these floating restaurants were organised and supplied can be obtained from the deck plans. The deck plan of the MS *Baloeran*, the layout and facilities of which are representative of the majority of the ocean liners from the interwar period, is discussed in detail below.

MS *Baloeran*

The MS *Baloeran* was built for Rotterdamsche Lloyd in 1929. An advertorial booklet distributed by Rotterdamsche Lloyd promoting this ship includes a detailed deck plan.[104] Spaces concerning food stocking, preparation, and consumption exist on almost all eight decks on the ship, except for the command and boat deck. From top to bottom, the deck plan reads as follows: On the promenade deck there were two children's eating rooms. Here the stomachs of the smallest passengers were filled with whatever their hearts desired. One level down, on the bridge deck, there was a press room. Here, the menu cards were printed. On the upper deck (B-deck), below the bridge deck, the third-class dining salon was situated at the stern, with a pantry attached. The third-class galley appears on the same deck, situated on the other side of the funnel, in the fore ship. On the upper tween deck, the preparation and consumption of food took up most of the space. The first- and second-class dining salons extended over the full width of the ship. The salons were surrounded by pantries, dish washing areas, and storage for the plates, glassware, and cutlery. Between the two salons – in fact slightly closer to the first than to the second class – lies the heart of the restaurant: the first- and second-class kitchen. Right next to it, to the starboard, we find the butchery, cold and warm bakery, and the mess for the higher-ranking catering crew. Most of the storage rooms and stocks were located in the fore ship of the lower tween deck, with separate rooms for vegetables, herbs, wine, beer, poultry, fish, and meat respectively. Here one also finds the large freezer and cold room with separate compartments for ice cream in the former, and butter in the latter. On the same deck, a small part of the stern was reserved for the indigenous crew, including a very small galley. Finally, on the lower deck there were the two freshwater tanks and the mess for the Javanese servants.[105]

The deck plan does not show the different electrical devices used in the abovementioned compartments. The booklet, however, does provide an overview of all such equipment. The first- and second-class galley, for instance, had an electric stove, nine gas burners, six ovens, three boilers, heated tables for the plates, and a grill. The bakery was equipped with two electric ovens, a dough mixer, two ice cream machines, and an egg mixer. The pantries had heated tables as well as fridges, a beer tap using CO_2, dishwashers for both the galley and the dining salons, egg boilers, toasters, and coffee and tea machines.[106] Not specifically mentioned, but undoubtably present, would have been machines for making ice cubes and sparkling water. The third-class galley was less well-equipped; there was only one small stove and one boiler. The galley reserved for the indigenous fourth class was practically the same, except for the addition of several rice cookers.[107]

Space over Time

The question arises how the use of all these sophisticated facilities evolved over time. In their 1878 travel guide Werumeus Buning and Kruyt described the moment of departure from Amsterdam. They mention the bustling sound of a herd of animals to be taken on board: oxen, milk cows, pigs, chickens, geese, and other birds. Obviously, most of the food at that time was taken on board alive and slaughtered during the journey. Most of the above-described compartments on board of the *Baloeran* are also mentioned by the two men.[108] When Dr J. Groneman travelled from Amsterdam to Batavia in 1906, on board the steamer *Koning Willem II* (built in 1900), there were already freezers and cold rooms. Cooled drinking water was also available.[109] Compared to the situation on the *Baloeran*, however, the technology available was completely different. Freezing and cooling on the *Koning Willem II* meant packing rooms with blocks of ice, made by steam-driven machines. Meat was preserved on brine, and most vegetables were only available canned, a technique that had been in use since the 1830s.[110]

During the 1930s, the ocean liners were scaled up in terms of capacity and luxury. The flagship MS *Oranje* of the Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland', which was built in 1938, could transport roughly 200 passengers more than the *Baloeran*. As a result, the restaurants also had become more spacious and sophisticated in order to serve the growing numbers of passengers.[111] In 1960, a one way journey of approximately one month demanded a huge amount of supplies: 22,000 kg of meat; 4000 pieces of game; 8,500 kg of fresh fish; 2,600 litres of milk; 45,000 kg of potatoes; 10,000 eggs; 130,000 pieces of fruits; 500 kg of butter; 15,000 cans with vegetables; 16,000 kg of fresh vegetables; 39,000 bottled drinks and beverages; and 18,000 litres of beer.[112] With the upscaling came further specialisation. The introduction of specific *chefs de parties* required separate working areas for each chef. Separate spaces were created for the preparation of coffee and tea, with another for the preparation of sandwiches.[113] The way the servants moved through the ship also changed over time. The staff of the *Indrapoera* (built in 1925) had only stairs to access the galleys and storage rooms, whereas the *Baloeran* (built in 1929) was equipped with lifts. Furthermore, on the *Willem Ruys* (built in 1939) there were even escalators that could take servants from the galley to the dining salons or storage rooms. A 'magic eye' attached to the doors leading to the salons opened them automatically. The escalators even had sound-absorbing panels, and the air-conditioning in the salons maintained a small positive pressure, so neither noise nor smell would ever reach the passengers.[114]

Conclusion

For the passengers on the first mail ships in the 1880s, the voyage was an inevitable trial, to be endured in order to reach the Dutch East Indies. Yet less than six decades later, the voyage had evolved into a pleasant stay on a floating hotel-restaurant. As the ocean liners grew in capacity, their level of comfort also increased. The meals had changed from plain food to fancy dishes, whilst small sober galleys had turned into spacious and sophisticated restaurant kitchens. Studying the process of food supply, preparation, serving, and consumption has shown how important food was on board. Wining and dining were both social activities, and a very efficient remedy against boredom. It outshone the unpleasant aspects of a long journey in a space with limited opportunity for moving around. In the nineteenth century, this was true mostly for the wealthier travellers. Over time, however, the difference between the middle-class passengers and the elite on board the ship became smaller. Over the course of the twentieth century, for both first- and second-class passengers travelling to the Dutch East Indies meant dining in restaurant style every day. Third- and fourth-class passengers, however, had to be content with greatly reduced options and variety. Whilst at first glance, meals seem to be comprised of European food in all classes, many examples extracted from menu cards, travel journals, and the ships' own instruction booklet, reveal traces of Eurasian cuisine.

As the frequency and scale of travelling between the Netherlands and the Indies increased, the demand for rice dishes, chutneys, and sambal grew. For those travelling to the Indies for the first time, the *rijsttafel* on board was a foretaste of what awaited them in the archipelago. In this regard, food functioned as a bridge between two worlds and cultures. Both the crew and the layout of the ship were expected to get the food as quickly and efficiently as possible to the passengers. That was achieved, amongst others, by means of the most advanced technology available at that time. After one month of living the luxury life, and with some extra kilos of body weight gained, passengers disembarked in the Dutch East Indies. The floating restaurant would soon head back to the land of pea soup and mash pot, ready to stuff the stomachs of hundreds of new passengers with anything they desired.

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Notes

1 Creusesol 1908, 82-83. All translations from Dutch into English are by the author.

2 The term 'mail ship' (Dutch: *mailboot*) reflects the initial purpose of the ships heading for the Dutch East Indies.

3 See Van Berkum & Maes 2011; Eddington 2011. The Dutch company Holland-Amerika Lijn was purchased by the American company Carnival Corp, and continued under the name Holland America Line.

4 Daalder 1997.

5 Daalder 1996, 74.

6 The Cultivation system or *Cultuurstelsel* was a tax system established by the Dutch in 1830 that meant the local people had to reserve 20% of their farmland/produce for the Dutch government.

7 Termorshuizen 1996, 91.

8 Daalder 1996, 73.

9 Doedens & Mulder 1990, 10.

10 In this article, certain nouns in Malay, as well as toponyms for geographical locations and names of persons, are adopted in their original spelling as found in the source text.

11 Daalder 1996, 80.

12 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 119.

13 Daalder 1996, 82.

14 Hülsmann 2018, 27.

15 Daalder 1996, 82.

16 Booms 1911, 153.

17 Daalder 1996, 90.

18 The abbreviations MS for motor ship and SS for steam ship are used throughout this article.

19 Termorshuizen 1996, 93.

20 Termorshuizen 1996, 94.

21 An '*anker*' is an old Dutch capacity measure, equivalent to 35 litres.

22 Boom 1874, 46.

23 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885 did not mention the exact year of their journey to the Indies. However, since the first edition of the guide was published in 1878, it is most likely that the trip took place shortly before that.

24 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 83.

25 Doedens & Mulder 1990, 98.

26 Doedens & Mulder 1990, 84.

27 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 78.

28 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 85.

29 Stichting Maritiem-Historische Databank, search: 'Koning Willem I' (1889), 'Koning Willem II (1900)', 'Koning Willem III (1900)', 'Prinses Juliana (1910)', 'Jan Pieterzoon Coen (1915)', last accessed on 14 October 2022.

30 Creusesol 1908, 83.

31 Leiden University Libraries, Or. 27.640-9. Menu cards of the steamship *Goentoer*, 1906.

32 Groneman 1906, 24.

33 Creusesol 1908, 82-83.

34 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 2.

35 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 3.

36 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 4.

37 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 7.

38 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 5.

39 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 7-8.

40 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 16.

41 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 11.

42 Bosman 1921. Bosman was a physician, but also inspector of the Medical Corps of the Rotterdamsche Lloyd.

43 A boatswain is responsible for supervising the sailors. Here it probably refers to the head of the Chinese staff.

44 Bosman 1921, 95.

45 Hülsmann 2018, 20.

46 Hülsmann 2018, 32-33.

47 Franken 1931, 37-38.

48 Franken 1931, 38.

49 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1938, 21.

50 Booklet by the Rotterdamsche Lloyd on D.S. *Mail Motorschip Sibajak* (Amsterdam, circa 1928).

51 Leiden University Libraries, Or. 27.176-82. Menu cards for children on board the *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt*, dinner on 1 and 3 April 1952.

52 Booms 1911, 17.

53 The adjective *Indisch* refers to the Eurasian culture deriving from the Dutch colonial rule in the archipelago. The *Indische* cuisine consists of indigenous dishes adapted to, and influenced by, European cuisine.

54 Catenius-Van der Meijden 1903, 38.

55 Hülsmann 2018, 36.

56 Bosman 1921, 93-94.

57 Creusesol 1908, 83.

58 Franken 1931, 62.

59 Borel 1905, 32.

60 Van Berkum & Maes 2011, 34.

61 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 5.

62 According to the menu cards, the non-European food on board does not appear to be indigenous Asian, but rather is *Indisch* or Eurasian – a westernised adaption of the Asian dishes.

63 Termorshuizen 1996, 102.

64 The *rijsttafel* was a combination of rice dishes, a European interpretation of the Chinese and indigenous cuisine.

65 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 134.

66 Catenius 1903, 121.

67 Catenius 1903, 231-232.

68 Termorshuizen 1996, 102.

69 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 134.

70 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 5.

71 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 5.

72 Van Berkum & Maes 2011, 99.

73 Leiden University Libraries, Or. 27.781-77. Menu cards of an 'Oriental lunch' on Monday 10 August 1964 on board the MS *Oranje*, 1964.

74 Catenius 1903, 43.

75 Catenius 1903, 52.

76 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 132.

77 Hülsmann 2018, 27.

78 Catenius 1903, 117.

79 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 191.

80 Booms 1911, 182.

81 *Frikandel* normally refers to a typical Dutch deep-fried snack consisting of different kinds of meat pressed in the shape of a stick. However, this snack was introduced in 1954, so most likely Werumeus Buning and Kruyt here refer to the *frickedil*. In seventeenth-century Germany, the *frickedil* was known as a meatball of veal with an egg yolk inside and spiced with mace, pepper, nutmeg, salt, and sometimes orange peel.

82 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 210.

83 Catenius 1903, 121.

84 Catenius 1903, 121.

85 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 135.

86 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 135.

87 Catenius 1903, 122.

88 Daalder 1996, 85.

89 Maritiem Museum 'Prins Hendrik' Rotterdam 1980, 55.

90 Van Berkum & Maes 2011, 13.

91 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland, *Schepenlijst 'MS Oranje'* 1960, 9.

92 Van Berkum & Maes 2011, 10.

93 In the Indies the term *mandoer* applied to the indigenous head of a group of plantation or factory labourers.

94 Contemporary sources often generalise and speak solely of *Javanen* (Javanese people), instead of Javanese and Madurese people.

95 Daalder 1996, 85.

96 Borel 1905, 36.

97 Maritiem Museum 'Prins Hendrik' Rotterdam 1980, 55.

98 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 15-17.

99 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1919, 18.

100 Daalder 1996, 78.

101 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1928, 27.

102 Martitiem Museum 'Prins Hendrik' Rotterdam 1980, 54.

103 Martitiem Museum 'Prins Hendrik' Rotterdam 1980, 54.
104 Leiden University, Or. 27.781-18. Reprint of the article 'Dubbelschroef-motorpassagiersschip *Baloeran*', in: *De Ingenieur* 17 (1930), 1-12: 2-3.
105 On the deck plan, a distinction is made between the *Javanen*, the Javanese staff, which stayed on the lower deck, and the other indigenous staff, sleeping on the lower tween deck. Many sources use those terms synonymously, without differentiating between the two groups of servants at all.
106 Leiden University Libraries, Or. 27.781-18.
107 Leiden University Libraries, Or. 27.781-18.
108 Werumeus Buning & Kruyt 1885, 21, 153.
109 Groneman 1906, 13-14.
110 Spalding 2015, 147.
111 The MS *Oranje* was originally built as a passenger ship with a capacity of 518 passengers in 1938. In World War II, the *Oranje* was converted into a hospital ship. Shortly after the war it was again used as a passenger ship. Several modifications resulted in a maximum capacity of 1230 passengers in 1966. The liner service to the archipelago, however, had already been abolished by then.
112 N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1960, 9.
113 Collection Dutch National Maritime Museum, 1994.0291, N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Nederland' 1960, 15.
114 Leiden University Libraries, Or. 27.176-130. Profile maps of ships of the Rotterdamsche Lloyd and the Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland, circa 1926-1960.