

BETWEEN PUBLIC SAFETY AND POLITICAL CONTROL. MODERN COLONIAL POLICING IN SURABAYA (1911-1919)

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1. INTRODUCTION.

A. COLONIAL SAFETY AND POLICING IN SURABAYA: A EUROPEAN PROBLEM

In February 1912, during the Chinese New Year festivities, both Batavia and Surabaya formed the scenes of riots between Chinese inhabitants and the police. In Batavia fights occurred after the police ordered the Chinese to take down the flag of the (recently announced) Chinese Republic. By the end of the day the police managed to re-enforce *rust en orde* (law and order), however not without the help of the army. In Surabaya events got much further out of hand. There, police interferences against fireworks display turned some Chinese, disturbed in their festive mood, against the police. Several fights occurred between Chinese and police at different locations in the Chinese quarters. According to firework regulations Chinese were allowed to set off fireworks in their own yards but not on the public road. This was hard to avoid in the tightly packed Chinese quarters in northern Surabaya. At Kembang Djepoen, chief superintendent C.J. Boon, who had personally interfered in a fireworks-party, found himself encircled by a Chinese mob. His constables managed to break this siege with force. Boon, a few police constables and some military fusiliers that had come to the aid of the police, chased a group of Chinese partygoers-turned-rebellious who fled into a Chinese shop. The moment the police entered the shop the Chinese shop-owner turned off the light and, after allowing the fugitives to escape through the backdoor, locked all the doors. He kept chief superintendent Boon in detention for more than an hour. The same day, a group of angry Chinese assaulted and looted the house of the apparently unpopular Chinese Captain.¹ The police were too late at the scene and unable to end this act of thorough destruction. After these first humiliating failures of law enforcement, the police, with the help of the army (cavalry), combed the Chinese and Arab quarters and arrested hundreds of Chinese inhabitants without distinction. Javanese policemen forced their detainees to squat – which the Chinese felt as a huge insult, and which - according to the official interpretation - created a bond between the initially more openly rebellious Macao or Sinkeh Chinese (recently arrived from China) and the *peranakan* Chinese (old residents of the Netherlands-Indies), who all together now turned against the police. In the following days a boycott of Chinese shops spread out over the city, paralysing the Surabayan trade-market for almost a week.

The Chinese riots in Surabaya show us in a nutshell some aspects of the problem of safety and policing in the colonial city of Surabaya, the main topic of this paper. Safety is, by definition, both a precondition of effective government and a social need in society.² In a colonial state, from the perspective of colonial rule as well as the European inhabitants in the colony - a considerable minority in regard to the indigenous population - every form of indigenous crime or

¹ Since the times of the V.O.C. (The Dutch East-India Company) the Dutch in the Netherlands-Indies invested leading Chinese with military titles (*majoor*, *kapitein* or *luitenant*, respectively Major, Captain or Luitenant) to make them responsible for the supervision of their compatriots.

² Alison Dray-Novoy, "Spatial Order and Police in Imperial Beijing," *Journal of Asian Studies* 52 (1993). 885

social unrest could be perceived as a menace to the colonial status quo.³ Safety was in this respect a specifically European problem. Against this background we can understand the safety-measures of the colonial government, one of which only recently had been put into practice in Surabaya. The riots happened only a couple of months after the colonial government implemented an important police reform in the three main cities of Java, Batavia, Semarang and Surabaya. A worse start for Surabaya's new city-police force was hard to imagine. The detention of the chief superintendent of police – in itself a new function – clearly damaged not only the reputation of the former army-officer Boon, but also, and more dangerously, of the authority of the colonial government. The inability of the police to prevent further escalation of Chinese hostilities worsened the image of the holy Hermandad. The question here to be answered is, how could or did the new police force function within colonial society?

The police, as a tool of colonial power, brought colonial government the deepest into society and the closest to its subjects. Thus, it can help us to understand the functioning of the colonial state, its attitude to the different population-groups in society, and the internal relationships of these population-groups. In this light, this paper will analyse the role of the new city police force in Surabaya in the period 1912-1919, the period of its reform into a modern police force. The focus will be on the relation between the police and the public. While the police of Surabaya were transforming by trial and error and through governmental reforms in the period 1912-1920, also, the landscape of Surabaya changed immensely, on the material, political and social level. How did this effect the functioning of the police? How did the public react to the new police, its ethnic composition, its outlook, tasks and attitude? What can the experience of police tell us about social relationships in the city?

The police operations against the Chinese riots highlight a couple of the problems inherent to the functioning of a new police-organisation in the complex ethnically mixed and changing city of Surabaya, and which we will study in more detail below. The rule seems to be that the more modern colonial society became, the more problematic colonial policing.⁴ The problems I refer to regard 1. the relationship between the (mostly Javanese) police and the public (the different ethnic population-groups in the city, the press, the new indigenous social political movements/ the Sarekat Islam). 2. the relationship between the police and local colonial authorities; 3. the clash between old and new methods of policing under the guidance of the completely new mandate of a chief superintendent (a former army-officer) and a superior police that was – on top of that- imported from the Netherlands; and 4. the relationship between the police and other forms of safety control in the city (the army, the Chinese and Indigenous guards in their respective city-quarters, and later on the Sarekat Islam) – which is in a way also part of the police-public relationship, as we will see below.

B. THE CITY-POLICE REFORM (1911-1914)

By the end of 1911, Surabaya got its own, newly created city-police that contained some of the characteristics of what has been defined as a modern police force. The meaning and function of modern policing are a matter of discussion in studies on the history of the police in the context

³ W. Boekhoudt, *Rapport reorganisatie van het politiewezen op Java en Madoera (Uitgezonderd de vorstenlanden, de particuliere landerijen en de hoofdplaatsen Batavia, Semarang en Soerabaia) 1906-07* (Batavia, 1908).3; Compare: David Arnold, *Police Power and Colonial Rule. Madras 1859-1947* (Oxford, 1986).

⁴ This argument can be related to the study on the relationship between the development of policing and state formation. Most of these studies, however, concentrate on police organisation and structure. I am referring here to the daily practice of policing. See for a discussion, among others: David H. Bailey, "The police and Political Development in Europe," in *The formation of national States in Europw*, ed. Charles M. Tilly (Princeton, 1975), Clive Emsley, *Policing and its context, 1750-1870* (Londen, 1983), Cyrille Fijnaut, *Opdat de macht een toevlucht zij. Een historische studie van het politieapparaat als een politieke instelling* (Antwerpen/ Arnhem, 1979), P. van Reenen, "Het ijzeren politiebestel," in *Het politiebestel. Opstellen over het Nederlandse politiebestel*, ed. P. van Reenen (Arnhem, 1987).

of political state formation in Europe and the United States.⁵ There is however a general consensus about some characteristics, namely: 1. a hierarchical framework; 2. uniformity in prescriptions, rank, salary and uniform; 3. a system of organised surveillance through security-guards and shifts of patrol; 4. monopoly of surveillance and 5. finally, a specialised and subdivided criminal investigation service.⁶ In 1911/1912 the most obvious new feature of the city-police in Surabaya was its strict and refined hierarchy. Furthermore the new chief superintendent (recruited from the army) replaced the former function of bailiff. This new city police force was part of the centralised *Algemene politie* (general police), that resided under the department of *Binnenlands Bestuur* (the Interior Administration) as far as management was concerned, and under the Attorney General for general control. On the local level the city-police fell under the direction of the local governor (the *resident* of Surabaya, and through him the *assistant-resident*). The new city-police force really meant (or was supposed to be) a clear break with the past system of policing in the city, which at the time was fiercely denounced as the 'bailiff-era' (*schoutentijdperk*). A clear indication of the serious intentions of the colonial authorities were the governments climbing expenses on the general police, from Fl. 3.002.548,- in 1910 to Fl. 3.782.878,- in 1912, progressing yearly to Fl. 4.597.683,- in 1914.⁷

The main characteristic of the past system of policing was its dualistic principle of organisation that characterised the whole colonial administration. Briefly, safety and safety-care on behalf of the indigenous population were assumed to be the responsibility of the indigenous administrative employees, the *pangreh praja*, from the regent at the top until the lurah, or the desa-head at the bottom of the indigenous hierarchy. The desa-police, a forced service for all male inhabitants of the desa, was seen as the core of the colonial safety-system.⁸ Although the safety-care in the three main cities of Java, with their relatively large European-community, was arranged a bit differently, this dualistic principle prevailed there as well.

Before the reorganisation the safety-care in the three main cities of Java consisted of four different forms of policing:

1. The official governmental or *Algemene politie* (general police) that came under the department of *Binnenlands Bestuur* and was paid by the colonial administration. It had a simple hierarchy: the superior and intermediate ranks (European) consisted of bailiffs, water-bailiffs, adjunct-bailiffs, *politieopzieners* (comparable to the function of police-inspector) and *hoofdoppassers* (head-constables). The subordinate personnel (Indonesian) consisted of *oppassers* (the title used for the function of policeman or constable at the time) and specialised *oppassers* for guard duty and transport guidance. In addition, the so-called *ronda prijaji*- only existing in Semarang and Surabaya - can be seen as part of the general police. These were patrols performed by the superior and subordinate members of the *pangreh praja* and head of the kampongs, to control at night the *gardoes* (watchman) in the kampongs.

Besides this official police service there existed three different forms of policing that were organized according to a system of segregated neighbourhoods. This system of night watches in itself was the basic form of safety-care out of which almost everywhere on earth the more modern forms of policing developed.

2. The *gardoe* in the European neighbourhoods, which used to be a form of forced labour but had been turned into a salaried job in Semarang and Surabaya in 1904 by the local governors (*residents*)
3. Chinese and Arab inhabitants (or the so-called *Vreemde Oosterlingen*) took care of the guarding of the Chinese and Arab neighbourhoods. With the mediation of the local Chinese heads this was mostly done by substitutes in turn for money.

⁵ See footnote 4. A recent project on the history of the police is 'A history of the Dutch police in the twentieth century', proceeded at Tilburg University/ Police Academy Apeldoorn, The Netherlands, under direction of C. Fijnaut (2000-2005).

⁶ Fijnaut

⁷ Nota Algemene secretarie nopens de gewapende en de algemeene politie, 1915, in National Archives, The Hague (after this NA), Ministry of Colonies (after this MvK): V 23-11-1915, 33.

⁸ W. Boekhoudt, "Centralisatie van de politie," *Indische Gids* (1914). 1476.

4. Finally there was the kampong police in the indigenous kampongs, to be performed by the male inhabitants and, both as organisation and as a forced service, comparable to the desa-police in the rural areas of Java.

With the new city-police, which replaced the general police, the colonial authorities enlarged the European input in the superior ranks. Still, however, European superiors remained a small minority above the mainly Javanese subordinates. Javanese constables did the bulk of policing in the city. At the top of the new police-hierarchy stood the chief superintendent, followed by five superintendents first class (that replaced the function of bailiff) – all European – and five European police inspectors. New, in addition, were the 16 European head constables, following in rank. The title for the subordinate police was changed from *oppasser* into *agent*⁹ (constable) and hierarchically divided into first and second-class constables. To stimulate motivation, and therefore the quality of the recruits, the salary was raised (slightly) and the possibility was offered to climb in rank. Finally, the police force in the three cities was slightly enlarged, from 943 into 1275 police-functionaries. This measure was supposed to shorten the hours of duty (that before the reorganisation could amount up to 36 hours).¹⁰

With regard to the actual practice of policing changes were fundamental. Generally speaking, the task of policing consists of two components: 1. prevention of crime and 2. criminal investigation. These two were more clearly organised and divided, a sign of police-modernization. Prevention was no longer done in the rather static framework of fixed *gardoos* but – following the example of the police in The Netherlands – according to a dynamic system of neighbourhoods (*wijkenstelsel*). Here we see one of the characteristics of a modern police force: organised surveillance through security guards and shifts of patrol. This was the task of the street police, consisting of indigenous constables and European head constables. These would patrol a specific neighbourhood, starting their tour from the posting-houses according to a fixed route that, if in accordance with the neatly measured prescription of the time (demanding a marching tempo of 3 km/ hour)¹¹, would bring them back to the posting house after an hour, to report to their superiors, the police-inspectors of second and first class. The idea behind this measure was to increase the visibility of the police-presence in the cities, and therefore the control on public life.¹² Head of the police was the European chief superintendent, who held his office at the police headquarter, and was responsible for the daily routine. The department of general control at the head office was responsible for the control of the street surveillance. The local colonial administrators in the city (the resident, the assistant-resident and the *controleur*), though officially the superiors of the chief superintendent, intervened only if necessary and were restricted to supervision. This new ambivalent relationship between the chief superintendent of police and the resident/ assistant-resident was a source for conflict.

The hierarchy of the police was also spatially organised. In Surabaya the first police headquarter was situated on the Grisseesche weg in the North, but soon moved to the upper town (the southern part of the city where the mostly European quarters were located) to Simpang (corner Kaliasan). Then in 1918/1919 it moved again, more to the centre of Surabaya in Baliwerti. For police surveillance the city was divided into two departments. Each department came under the responsibility of a European police superintendent first class. The first department operated in the *Bovenstad*, or upper town in the south, with a main police quarter at Genteng 14, and the second department in the *Benedenstad* (downtown) in the north with its main police quarter at Griseesche weg (or Herenstraat). These departments, again, were subdivided in

⁹ Although the word *oppasser* is still used by the local newspapers in the years of police reform.

¹⁰ C. de Groot, "De politie in de grote handelssteden op Java in het algemeen en die te Soerabaja in het bijzonder," *Koloniaal Tijdschrift* 2 (1913). 266; See on the city-police reform also: R.J.M. van Hooff, "De Politie in Nederlands-Indië. Ongepubliceerde doctoraalscriptie, Universiteit van Amsterdam," (Amsterdam, 1985).22-27;

¹¹ See the yearly reports of Surabaya's city-police in *Verslag der gemeente Soerabaja over 1917*, (Soerabaja, 1918), *Verslag der gemeente Soerabaja over 1920*, (Soerabaja, 1922).

¹² Cyrille Fijnaut, "Politiemodellen beïnvloeden elkaar wederzijds; Het beleid aangaande het politiewezen in Nederlandsch-Indië," *Het Tijdschrift voor de Politie* (1998).17

sections (*secties*). The head of the department fulfilled a mediating role between the top (the chief superintendent) and the sections-chefs (all newly trained European superintendents second class).¹³ In the beginning there were 6 sections, the first two in the upper town (Kaliasan and Kawattan), and number three, four and five down town (Frederik Hendrikstraat - or Kampement, which was located in the Chinese and Arab neighbourhood -, Griseesche weg, and Oedjoeng (located in the harbour), and finally a sixth section, being the river-police. This last section was dissolved in 1914 and divided among the others whereas the 5th section (Oedjoeng) was responsible for the roadstead. In 1920 Surabaya again counted six sections, as, with the expansion of the city towards the south, the first section was split into two sections. Finally, every section had a number of posting houses, led by a European police-inspector from which the constables started their patrol. For the time being temporary buildings were used or constructed for this purpose. In the years 1913-1918 the construction of permanent posting houses was finished.¹⁴

Next to this system of prevention a special department of investigation was formed in the cities, a final characteristic of a modern police service, subdivided into departments of criminal investigation, street-detectives, vice squad, immigration-police, the photographic and dactylographic department and the opium-police. Here we can see that the authorities went on building on the dualistic principle, by which the colonial administration in The Netherlands-Indies was organised. Members of the *pangreh praja*, in hierarchy below a superintendent of police and three European police-inspectors, were responsible for the indigenous police at the department of investigation (in Surabaya performed by a wedono of police, and three assistant-wedono's of police). This department of investigation, especially, was enlarged and strengthened in the years after 1914.¹⁵

Although introduced as a general safety-reform, the new city police was clearly meant to sustain the European perspective of order and safety – that is European interests, European power and the colonial status quo. Consequently, the city-police-reform (and the preceding discussion on police-reform since 1904) coincided with the growth of the European community on Java, in the three main cities and their hinterland. Serious as the gesture might be, in the first years of reorganisation, with a peak after the Chinese riots in Batavia and Surabaya in February 1912, European comments on the new police force were however rather cynical. Some of the local newspapers concluded that the reorganisation only meant a change in titles, not in quality.¹⁶ The criticism was mostly passed on the street police, obviously the most visible part of the police, and did not only regard the indigenous constables, but the European head-constables as well. Since the salary of a constable was still not appealing, it was not the refined or well educated that applied for the job. In addition, the 12 hours of duty a police constable had to serve were still too long to remain alert or, worse, awake. A big problem of the city-police service was, therefore, the large turnover of labour both among constables and European head constables, which did not contribute to the quality of the police. In Surabaya especially, in this early phase of reform,

¹³ In 1912 (before the second reformation) superintendent Lambert was in charge of the upper town. Superintendent Van Haarlem displaced superintendent Seijdel in the Chinese and Arab quarters at the end of april 1912. Seijdel (who led the fights between police and Chinese rebels) moved to Oedjoeng. Superintendent of police Spotke was posted at Pasar Besar. *Javabode*, 21-2-1912; SH, 6-4-1912 & 20-4-1912.

¹⁴ A. van Lieshout, "Het politiewezen in Indië," *Weekblad voor Indië* (27-8-1916; 3-9-1916, 1916), *Verslag der gemeente Soerabaja over 1917*, *Verslag der gemeente Soerabaja over 1920*. In 1920 the first three section counted each four posting houses, the fourth section three and the fifth only one. Respectively: first section (Kaliasan): Wonokromo, Kepoetran, Kedonanjar, Sawaän Koepang; 2 section (Kawattan): Patjarkling, Simpang-Doekoeh, Penéléh and Kalianjar; 3 section (Frederik Hendrikstraat): Kapassan, Kalimas-Oost, Pegirian and Passar Bong; 4th section (Griseesche weg): Willemsplein, Babaän, Missigitplein; 5th section Tandjong-Perak. *Verslag der gemeente Soerabaja over 1920*. 129. At first sight one might conclude from the number of posting houses in each sections, and the way they were spread that more importance was attached to the first three sections (were most of the Europeans lived (first and second section) and the Chinese and Arab-quarters (third section).

¹⁵ Nota Hoorweg, 1-12-1917, 30/AP, in NA, Mr 1919/ 475; Lieshout, "Het politiewezen in Indië." 493.

¹⁶ Groot, "De politie in de grote handelssteden op Java in het algemeen en die te Soerabaja in het bijzonder." 274-277; 22 *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* (hereafter SH), 7-6-1913; Resident of Surabaya, 18-4-1912 in NA, MvK, V 28-9-1912, 5.

complaints poured in about the cruel or insolent attitude of the police towards the public – both from the side of the European press, and from Chinese inhabitants. By the end of 1912 governor –general A.W.F. Idenburg decided therefore that Surabaya was to dispense with the European head-constables, and to extend the amount of indigenous constables. He also made a proposal to raise their salaries.¹⁷

Because of continuing criticism of the police in all three cities, a third reform followed in 1914/ 1915, designed by the former military-captain A. Hoorweg, since 1912 sous-chef of the armed-police and recently made responsible for the city-police-reorganisation in progress and for the future improvement of the police in rural Java as well. The second city-police reform consisted of further extension of the force. (Superior ranks were enlarged from circa 100 to 250 men, the subordinates from 1300 to 4500). This meant that it was then possible to work with three shifts of patrol, a morning-, afternoon-, and nightshift, each with the duration of eight hours. Second, for the sake of discipline and to decrease the turnover, a first effort was made to provide barracks for the constables in the city of Semarang, and posting-houses in all three cities. Thirdly, and for the same reasons, a police-school was installed in Batavia. This was a rather progressive measure, since no such thing existed yet in the Netherlands (and would not until 1924).¹⁸ Finally, the kampong-police was officially abolished, giving the general police the monopoly of security surveillance – an important characteristic of what has been defined as a modern police-service. This was, however only ideally the case. It seems that the kampong police or the system of *gardoes* did not disappear until the end of colonial times (and later), and kept on working alongside the general police.¹⁹

With the second reform of the city police, in August 1912, the police force in Surabaya enlarged from 297 members in 1905 (9 European superiors and 288 indigenous *oppassers*), with a population-number of 159.639, to 380 members of police in 1911 (11 European superiors and 16 European in the intermediate ranks; 353 indigenous constables), with a population-number of 148.710 (counted in 1915). The police to population rate increased therefore from about 1:533 in 1905 to 1: 350 in 1912. Three years later the force was enriched with an adjunct – chief superintendent (recruited from the police-inspectors-ranks in The Netherlands). With the extension of the force in 1914 and later on, again in 1917, the police personnel in Surabaya counted in total 1358 members, bringing the police to public rate to approximately 1: 114. Over the years this police percentage remained relatively small when we compare these figures with the police in cities in Europe and the United States at the time.²⁰

Notwithstanding the investments of the colonial authorities in the police in the years of reorganisation (1911-1918, and, again, later on in 1920, and after the communist revolts in 1926-1927), we should bear in mind that the police in the Netherlands-Indies was only one of several means (besides the *desa-* and *kampong-police*, which remained, the army, the so called *cultuurpolitie* (police at the European enterprises, paid by the enterprises, but appointed by colonial government), private (European) guards (also paid by the enterprises)²¹ or European rifle clubs)

¹⁷ Idenburg, 23-7-1912, 872/45 in NA, MvK, V 28-9-1912, 5; See however SH, 27-5-1913, about the intention to reintroduce European head constables, because of the lack of time of police superintendents and inspectors to control the Javanese constables.

¹⁸ Initially the school offered courses for adjunct superintendents and police-inspectors, later on also for head constables. The superior police officers on their turned trained the subordinate constables on location. Nota Hoorweg, in: Mr 1918/ 475; *Lieshout*, "Het politiewezen in Indië." 1494.

¹⁹ NA, MvK, Openbaar: V 27-7-1919,30 & V 7-6-1919, 55 (Nota's Hoorweg) mention gradual displacement of kampong-police with street police in the three main cities of Java. Arsip Nasional Indonesia (hereafter Anri), Archief Binnenlands Bestuur (hereafter BB), inv.nr. 3661 assistant-resident of Semarang, 31-1-1916, 466/27, on police taking over the task of *wijkmeesters* in Semarang.

²⁰ All figures show a very low rate when we compare them with the situation in Europe and the United States around 1900: the city of London in the middle of the nineteenth century provided 1 policeman for every 350 inhabitants, New York in the same period: 1: 800, Amsterdam around 1900: 1100 (amount of police-personnel in 1900) for 317.000 (number of population in 1880 (equals 1:288). On the other hand: the figures of the police in Surabaya do not include the guarding in the Chinese and Arab neighbourhoods and the kampong-police that continued to exist officially until 1915. Dray-Novoy, "Spatial Order and Police in Imperial Beijing."

²¹ As practiced by big companies in the cities, like the *KPM* and the *Javasche Bank*, SH, 6-4-1912.

to keep the balance of power in the colony.²² From 1911 onwards, however, the colonial police changed from a position of minor importance in the colonial budget, to one that deserved and was paid serious attention. This had much to do with the social and political developments that took place in these years in the Netherlands-Indies at large, and, in this case, in Surabaya in particular. The fact that the police were mainly (and necessarily) Indonesian (both the governmental general police, as well as the indigenous desa- and kampongpolice), which already complicated the relationship of the police with the public, became more and more a matter of concern. How did the new city-police fit in the modernizing landscape of Surabaya?

C. A CHANGING COLONIAL CITY AND THE PROBLEM OF SAFETY

In 1911, when the new city police started its tasks in the streets of Surabaya, Surabaya was visibly changing, both on the physical and on the social level, and with a pace hard to imagine nowadays. Already the biggest town and most important economic centre in the Netherlands-Indies, Surabaya now was on its way to become modern. With its booming industrial activity, warehouses, banks, clubhouses, pastryshops, drydocks, the prospect of a modern harbour and a growing number of modern automobiles (from 77, counted in 1906, 3761 in 1917 to 12.000 in 1930) filling up the sandy, soon to be asphalted roads, Surabaya got dressed in a fashionable European way. Signs of physical growth were, besides the expansion south, a rapidly expanding network of asphalted roads, a growing number of streetlights, a water treatment system, an electricity supply, and an electric tram system. Furthermore, the completion of the modern harbour facility in 1916, bringing an influx of labourers that settled in new, densely populated kampong areas nearby, quickened the city-growth in all directions. With the typical optimistic tone of progress of the time all these acquisitions were neatly counted, measured and described in the city-counsels' yearly reports.²³

An important characteristic of Surabaya was its ethnically mixed population. Its number was growing in an impressive way since the end of the nineteenth century, mounting from 124.000 in 1893 to 148.000 in 1915 to more than 200.000 in 1920.²⁴ The different population groups lived more or less separated in town, according to a principle of ethnic division. There were the so-called *arek* Surabaya, the native population of the town, located and formed in the city-kampongs, mostly down town. Together with the more recently arrived Javanese and Madurese residents, attracted to Surabaya because of its growing wage-labour market and higher salaries, they formed the indigenous population, the largest group in town, almost 90 % of the total number of inhabitants (117.585 in 1915). The other 10 % consisted partly of a fairly large amount of Chinese inhabitants (18.957 in 1915) that had their own quarters in the northeastern part of town, around Kembang Djepoen and between the river Sawa Poelo and Kali Mas. These were restricted in their movements due to the so-called *passen- en wijkenstelsel*. In 1911 the *passenstelsel* was abolished, but it was only in 1919, with the ending of the *wijkenstelsel* that Chinese were permitted to settle in other parts of town. Then there was a relatively small, and very slowly growing group of Arabs (around 2600 in the period 1900-1920). They also lived in their own quarters along both sides of the Kampementsstraat, in the northeastern part of town, above the Chinese quarters. (It was more or less at Songojoedan where the Chinese Quarters ended and the

²² This endorses the thesis of J.A. van Doorn and W.J. Hendrix of the subordinate function of the police in the Netherlands-Indies in maintaining the balance of power. J.A.A. van Doorn, Hendrix, W.J., *Ontsporing van geweld. Over het Nederlands-Indisch-Indonesisch conflict*, (Rotterdam, 1970). 16.

²³ William Frederick, *Indonesian urban society in transition: Surabaya, 1926-1946. Ph.D., University of Hawaii* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1978). Chapter 1, p. 13; H Buitenweg, *De laatste tempo doeloe* (Den Haag, 1964).162-165; G.H. Faber, Von, *Nieuw Soerabaja. De geschiedenis van Indië's voornaamste koopstad in de eerste kwarteeuw sedert hare instelling* (Soerabaja/ Bussum, s.d.), *Verslag der gemeente Soerabaja over 1917, Verslag der gemeente Soerabaja over 1920*.

²⁴ Faber, *Nieuw Soerabaja. De geschiedenis van Indië's voornaamste koopstad in de eerste kwarteeuw sedert hare instelling*, Frederick, *Indonesian urban society in transition: Surabaya, 1926-1946. Ph.D., University of Hawaii, Verslag der gemeente Soerabaja over 1917*. 25, nt. 27.; *Verslag der gemeente Soerabaja over 1917*. 9,10; *Verslag der gemeente Soerabaja over 1920*.15.

Arab Quarters began). Finally there were the Europeans, consisting of descendants of the old residents that had lived in Surabaya since the eighteenth century, and the recently arrived *totoks* that came in growing numbers (including a growing number of women) at the end of the nineteenth century. These settled mostly in new European quarters that took form in the south, one between Simpang, Karjoon and Kaliasan (for the well to do), another around Scheepmakerspark - the so-called Embong quarter - and, lastly, the neighbourhood around the central Palmenlaan.²⁵

By 1906, when the city (or the European community) got its own local administration, the ethnically mixed population of Surabaya lived in ethnic separation - however only roughly speaking. In fact, Europeans also lived in between the *arek* kampongs down town, and some of the well-to-do indigenous elite found a place in the chic upper town in the South. This made European citizens aware - in a more acute sense than before - of the presence of 'the other' indigenous world, or even of being encircled by it. The sense of European insecurity in Surabaya was stressed after 1904, when a popular religious uprising took place in Sidoardjo, a sub-district only an hour's train-ride away from Surabaya.²⁶ Moreover, this 'other' indigenous world was since the turn of the century involved in a far more serious emancipation movement, the so-called *pergerakan*. This *pergerakan* (movement) involved not only a growing flow of books, newspapers and theatre-plays (all in indigenous language), but also the setting up of schools and youth clubs, societies or parties promoting social and economical progress for the indigenous population.²⁷ The awareness of the *pergerakan* (that spread through the improved means of communication and infrastructure) bread the feeling of insecurity among the European community and caused for further tensions - but not necessarily only between the European inhabitants and the indigenous population. The rising social and political consciousness among the Chinese and Javanese population-groups stressed ethnic and racial competition between these two groups as well as between Chinese and Arabs that lived so close to each other in northern Surabaya. For all those ethnically different inhabitants the question of location and ethnic identity, and of who encircled whom - or who controlled whom - did matter.

Unsafety and figures of crime in Surabaya

Before we turn to the functioning and effect of the modern city-police in Surabaya: how unsafe was Surabaya and for whom? As stated previously, safety is both a precondition of effective government and a social need in society. It is this rule of thumb that made the colonial authorities decide to modernize the police-organization in the three main cities, in the first place. Besides this guiding principle, definitions and images of criminality and safety determine the tasks and practice of policing.²⁸ These definitions reflect the changing social and political relations in society. It is therefore hard to give any objective figures of Surabaya's state of crime/ unsafety if we have to base them on the colonial sources. If we look at the official figures of crime and unrest, at best these merely indicate the crime and law infringements that actually had been recorded; they also reflect the positivistic attitude of the colonial administration and the improvement of statistics, counting and controlling. City-council reports only appeared from 1918 onwards, and the counting of criminal cases and cases of law infringement started in 1920. The official colonial reports (*Koloniale Verslagen*) or the criminal statistics (*Crimineele Statistiek*)²⁹ do

²⁵ J.R. Broeshart, Diessen, J.R. van, e.a., *Soerabaja. Beeld van een stad* (1994), Faber, *Nieuw Soerabaja. De geschiedenis van Indië's voornaamste koopstad in de eerste kwarteeuw sedert hare instelling*.

²⁶ Frederick, *Indonesian urban society in transition: Surabaya, 1926-1946. Ph.D., University of Hawaii*, 33, 34. On this uprising see also R. Fernando, "The trumpet shall sound for rich peasants: Kasan Mukim's uprising in Gedangan, East-Java, 1904," *Journal of South East Asian Studies* 26 (1995), Frederick, *Indonesian urban society in transition: Surabaya, 1926-1946. Ph.D., University of Hawaii*, Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Protest movements in rural Java: a study of agrarian unrest in the 19th and 20th century* (Singapore, 1973).

²⁷ Takashi Shiraishi, *An age in motion: popular radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (New York, Ithaca & Londen, 1990).

²⁸ Vicente L. Rafael, ed., *Figures of criminality in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Colonial Vietnam* (Ithaca, 1999), 9-13.

²⁹ See *Crimineele statistiek van Nederlandsch-Indië over het jaar 1913. Samengesteld door het hoofd van het gevangeniswezen.*, ed., ^eds., (1913). and later years.

not give separate figures of crime for the cities, only for districts or provinces. Their categories do point to what the colonial authorities saw as the most important signs of un-safety:

Table 1. Crime in the district Surabaya (between brackets: total figures on Java and Madura), according to the colonial reports. n.f. = no figures given.³⁰

Year	Murder/homicide	Rampok (armed raid)	Robbery	Cattle-thievery	Cane-fires	Piracy and beachcombing
1909	54	n.f. (207)	n.f. (61)	n.f.	391	n.f.
1910	65	n.f. (154)	n.f. (75)	n.f.	423	n.f.
1911	67	n.f. (141 in 9 districts)	n.f. (74)	n.f.	371	2
1912	66	n.f. (117 in 13 districts)	n.f. (69)	n.f.	236	7
1913	84	n.f. (146 in 12 districts)	n.f. (75)	n.f.	222	None
1914	75	n.f. (152 in 11 districts)	n.f. (75)	n.f.	112	3
1915	137	n.f. (179 in 12 districts)	n.f. (45)	n.f.	701	n.f.
1916	57	n.f. (158 in 10 districts)	n.f. (34)	n.f.	113	1
1917	57	n.f. (216 in 16 districts)			87	1
1918	Lessened (No precise figures given)	n.f. (353 in 13 districts)			'huge amount' (No precise figures given)	

To get an idea of the kind of crime/ law violations that took place in the city, or of cases that brought about police actions in Surabaya we can also turn to the local newspapers. These will, however, mainly reflect the nuisances felt by the population-group the newspaper represents, or, in a more general sense the fears and reactions to a changing society involving so many insecurities. They also give a (similarly subjective) view on the question as to the way in which the police were visualized or to what extent the new police were more visibly present as it was supposed to be. To this topic – the visibility of the police - we will turn in the paragraphs below.

If we look at the local European conservative *Soerabajasch Handelsblad*, a steady critic of Surabaya's new police, the small sections entitled '*Allerhande*' (various), later on (since 1914) entitled 'from the police-report', featured mostly burglary, thievery on the public road or sometimes the finding of a dead body (by the police). It was mainly burglary in houses from European residents (or shops) that was reported and in second instance of Chinese – with the police on the track of the thieves.³¹ Elsewhere (apart from the section '*Allerhande*') in the same newspaper we might see a bent for (or provision of a bent for) sensation in short notices about riots or knifing – always between indigenous habitants, very often Madurese - murder (the *crimes passionels* thickly described), *ketjoe* or *rampok-gangs*, or gambling – the last example regularly provoking cynical remarks about police participating or tolerating. Gambling apparently also was

³⁰ Figures and categories taken from: *Koloniaal Verslag* (1912-1919).

³¹ Although value is always a very personal thing the nature of the stolen objects reported does surprise: besides money, watches, a violin, a gramophone-player, quite often clothes, towels and furniture (taken from the veranda) are reported as stolen.

associated with insecurity, or the other way around: ‘Speaking about an unsafe kampong, one shouldn’t ask if there’s gambling taking place, because insecurity and gambling go together in the kampong. There’s heavy gambling in Sregaan, or, bets are extremely high for the natives. Also here the police should be controlled better.’³² Reporters informed the reader with complaints about (Indigenous and European) vagrancy.³³ Traffic accidents and the outbreak of fire are other more ‘sensational’ incidents involving the police, that feature the *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* and its glossy weekly, *Weekblad voor Indië*. Unsafe places or happenings are also mentioned with emphasis. Neighbourhoods known as unsafe (or illustrated as such by the *Soerabajasch Handelsblad*) besides Sregaan were Samboengan and Ketapan.

A particular category involving police surveillance were public meetings around specific events attracting crowds of visitors, like the *Pasar Malam*, or meetings in relation to the new indigenous social and political movements. There is no mentioning of police at the yearly Pasar Malam (though there is of pick-pocketing), or the yearly arrival of hadjies from Mekka, which also attracted crowds of ‘natives’. Though from other sources it is possible to deduce that special police measures were taken by co-operating police-sections.³⁴ The police were reportedly present at the first indigenous mass meetings (first congress of the Sarekat Islam in Surabaya in January 1913) and the smaller ones that followed – be it under protest from participants.³⁵ These examples all endorse the thesis of the British historian Arnold who, in his study on the colonial police in Madras, states that in a colonial state social and political unrest and crime were approached from the same safety-system.³⁶

With regard to the perspective of indigenous newspapers³⁷, lacking the European fears, these seemed to focus mostly on the examples of crime that took place on the public road: thievery, car-accidents (coined as murder by *Neratja*³⁸), rampok-gangs, or, as a form of social-political criticism, on ‘crimes’ that, according to the reporter, are socially justifiable (thievery out of hunger, strikes).³⁹ To summarize, we cannot give any concrete objective figures of crime on the base of these examples, but we can deduce from these that Surabaya had the problems of unsafety that characterize a multiple ethnic city in changing social and political conditions – with police considered responsible for combating petty crime, burglary, robbery and raids, murder, traffic problems and, also, for controlling different forms of indigenous social unrest and public meetings.

D. THE POLICE, THE CHINESE, AND THE EUROPEAN PRESS.

The Chinese New Year festivities in February 1912 that, as we have seen in the introduction, ended in the violent confrontation between Surabaya’s police and Chinese inhabitants, reflected the growing national consciousness of Chinese in the Netherlands-Indies and their political engagement with the recently installed Chinese Republic. They also exposed the division that existed within the Chinese community of Surabaya (and elsewhere), namely

³² SH, 7-5-1914; Compare SH 17-5-1912, “At Samboengan [...] there is clandestine gambling all evenings. The *geelvinken* [nickname for the old oppassers, still in use for the constables, MB] on guard are sometimes watching with interest. This is something!” Or, on a more successful police-operation: SH 19-6-1913 reporting that the police arrested 30 gambling indigenous citizens at the house of a hadji in kampong Ketapan..

³³ *Javabode*, 20-3-1912

³⁴ Rapport ‘Omtrent de gewestelijke recherche’, by head-inspector Scheepmaker, in NA, MvK, V 9-3-1925, 3 (Concerns Batavia).

³⁵ See for example, *Warna Warta*, 28-3-1918 (quoted in *Koloniaal weekblad*)

³⁶ Arnold, *Police Power and Colonial Rule. Madras 1859-1947*.

³⁷ Random checks are taken from *Oetoesan Hindia*, *Pewarta Soerabaja*, the sections from the Indigenous press in *Koloniaal Weekblad* and, IPO 1918/1919. The focus has been on crime and police in general, not only in Surabaya. This is merely to get an indication of the kind of interest shown in crime, or the nature of crime featuring in the indigenous newspapers.

³⁸ *Neratja*, 31-12-1918, quoted in IPO 1, 1919. *Neratja* even brought the car-accidents on the account of the police.

³⁹ On rampok-gangs in Surabaya see for example *Oetoesan Hindia*, 7-3-1919; on ‘social crimes’ *Sinar Hindia*, 4-1-1919 and *Kaoem Moeda*, 11-1-1919, on thievery out of hunger in Sermarang and Toeloeng Agoeng. *Kaoem Moeda*, 9-1-1919, on police checking the possibility of a strike among the service of pawnshops.; *Kaoem Moeda*, 6-1-1919, rectifying the murder on an European administrator..All quoted in IPO 1, 1919.

between the *peranakan*-Chinese, the old Chinese residents, living for generations in the Netherlands-Indies, that felt strong liaisons with the Netherlands-East-Indies society, and the *sinkeh*-Chinese, that had recently arrived from China, attracted by the labour-market in Surabaya. There was also a difference in social and economic status between these two groups. The *peranakan* despite the racial apartheid were more accepted and regarded as part of colonial society, some of them even conspicuously rich, whereas the *sinkeh*-Chinese, mostly workers, were regarded as *coolies* and outsiders.⁴⁰ The fights between Chinese and mainly Javanese policemen paralleled the ethnic and economic competition between Chinese and Javanese in colonial society that had become sharper in the course of the Chinese and Javanese *pergerakan*. The Chinese and Javanese competition in itself had contributed to the founding of the Sarekat Islam in Solo in the same year, the quickly growing movement that promoted Javanese social and economic emancipation.

Apparently, or so it was interpreted by the European newspapers, it was the attitude of the police towards the Chinese that created a bond between the *sinkeh*- and *peranakan*-Chinese, leading to the successful Chinese toko-boycott in the days that followed the riots. *Peranakan* Chinese expressed their worries about lack of police protection. A feeling of contempt for the police transformed itself into fierce hatred after the forceful police-operations during the prosecution and house searches in the Chinese quarters and against the closing down of shops the following days. They felt indignant about the “wholesale” detention of Chinese residents.⁴¹ These complaints seem to have set the tone for recurring Chinese complaints about the callous behaviour of the police in following years (also to be seen elsewhere on Java).⁴² In 1917 a request of several Chinese societies in Surabaya to review police-prescriptions regarding the police-attitude towards Chinese citizens was honoured by a governmental decree and a circular to the residents at the three main cities of Java, to be spread among the heads of the police-departments and all police-officials. This stated ‘that, without distracting from vigour, the police had to operate with modesty and calmness, not only to European and Eastern citizens (*Vreemde Oosterlingen*), but as much to the Chinese and indigenous populations.’⁴³

Another voice that expressed indignation about the police-operations against the Chinese festive rebels came from the European press. There were in fact three critical moments where the police failed, or proved to be ineffective, in the eyes of European reporters. First of all, when superintendent Boon got himself locked up by a Chinese toko-owner; secondly the police failure to stop angry Chinese from looting the houses of the Chinese Captain; and thirdly the following days in which a Chinese boycott-action managed to paralyse the city’s trade market.

Local newspapers reported that it was Boon’s diplomatic attitude, the fact that he tried to persuade the shop-owner with words instead of arms, to open his doors that kept him so long in such a humiliating position. This illustrated in a nutshell the attitude of commentators in newspapers like *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* and its weekly *Weekblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië* en *De Javabode*: according to them the police should have taken firm, armed action from the beginning.⁴⁴ In the *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* this meant a direct criticism of the police reform: ‘the question is, if the chief superintendent would have acted on the spur of the moment and would have allowed the police to give hard knocks to the dregs of the Macao-Chinese, this would not only have a healing effect and fade away the fear of the cooperative [*peranakan*] Chinese. Soft healers cause

⁴⁰ See on the position of Chinese in Netherlands-Indies society Lea E. Williams, *Overseas Chinese nationalism. The genesis of the Pan-Chinese movement in Indonesia, 1900-1916* (Glencoe, 1960).10-13.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 40-42; SH, 21-2-1912; 22-2-1912.

⁴² See Anri, BB, inv. nr. 3597,

⁴³ Governmental Decree, 13-9-1917, 1 T, Circular, 22-9-1917, 9705/A.P both in: Anri, BB, inv. nr. 3597. This file also contains complaints of Chinese mail carriers, on their being maltreated by a higher Javanese policeman (a *mantri-polisi*, a function that was especially meant for police-investigation, that went back to the time before the police-reorganisation and now was integrated in the modern city-police.)

⁴⁴ Illustrative for this perspective is a cartoon in *Weekblad voor Indië*, 3-3-1912, showing a man happily wiping away the ‘dirt’, i.e. the revolutionary *sinkeh*-Chinese, and a policeman watching, lost in amazement, too stupid to understand that this is the only effective measure, as the editor summarized the meaning of this drawing.

stinking wounds and sedateness gives to the brute the impression of weakness. If the chief superintendent was bounded by instructions, one should change those and give him free space to handle.⁴⁵ The chief-editor of *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* furthermore had a point in stressing the international implications of these events: 'the fact that the police was completely powerless was a shame, stressing the weakness of colonial authority, which is dangerous both from the perspective of colonial rule, and in international context'.⁴⁶ Probably the comments in *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* and likewise the *Javabode* reflected a general sentiment of fear among the European community in Surabaya, which was heated by these events, and partly fed by the idea of being encircled by a dangerous 'other' world, which was on the move. Reportedly after the riots more Europeans did not enter down town Surabaya unarmed. There was a raise in applications for gun licenses.⁴⁷ Finally, the European newspapers expressed worries about Surabaya's trade-market. 'European trade was the victim' as *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* concluded about the Chinese boycott.⁴⁸

Besides fear, the European call for harsh measures and the criticism passed on chief superintendent Boon uncover also another story. Here we can see a certain friction between old and supposedly modern methods of policing, or between recognized harsh measures (rude behaviour) of policing and the more sophisticated 'civilised' style of policing that was promoted by Boon (though at the order of Surabaya's resident and assistant-resident). It was Boon who apparently had instructed his men to operate 'decent' (*betamelijk*) when they started to act against Chinese firework infringements. This general instruction caused some amusement in *Soerabajasch Handelsblad*. According to this newspaper, Boon had asked for his own detention by promoting this decent policy.⁴⁹ Apparently, the former army-officer and teacher of the Royal Military Academy in Breda took his new function very seriously. He seems to have been a man of enterprise, independently taking charge of the reorganisation-in-progress of the city-police. However, he had to work with a force, that consisted partly of an old problem: badly paid, hardly trained subordinates, who were, as has been said before, not always the best elements of society. Despite improvements of salary and organised training at location of the head-constables this friction between old and new methods of policing remained visible, as we will see in other cases in this paper as well.

Not only was Boon an independent worker, he was also striving to bring the police to a more independent position in relation to the local authorities. This probably helped him to the nickname 'Napoleon Boon' (and 'Bonaparte') and would give him troubles later on, when he moved to Batavia (in 1914), with local authorities of Java's capital city.⁵⁰ The relationship between the new heads of police and the resident and assistant-resident of the three main cities, officially their superiors, is a theme in itself that we will only touch upon in this paper. This relationship turned out to be problematic in those years, and not only in the early phase of police reform, were both parties had to adjust to the new responsibility of the chief superintendent. In the winding up of the so-called Chinese riots we see, however, the resident of Surabaya taking sides with Boon and protecting him against public scandal. Apparently he reported to the governor-general that Boon was not locked-up by a Chinese toko-owner, but that he merely choose to instruct his men from this spot. This became the official position, causing great hilarity among European reporters.⁵¹ Although a lie, the resident's gesture was understandable: a greater damage of colonial authority than the detention of the chief superintendent by local rebels was hard to imagine, and therefore to be covered up by all means.

⁴⁵ SH, 21-2-1912. Compare *Javabode*, 27-2-1912, *Weekblad voor Indië*, 10-3-1912.

⁴⁶ SH, 26-2-1912.

⁴⁷ SH, 24-2-1912; See also the frequent ads for weapons in de *Locomotief* in 1912.

⁴⁸ SH, 23-2-1912; 24-2-1912; 26-2-1912.

⁴⁹ SH, 21-2-1912.

⁵⁰ On 'Napoleon Boon', see *De Locomotief*, 5-5-1914; 'Bonaparte', *Het Vaderland*, 18-9-1923; See also SH, 20-1-1912 on the difficult position of the new chief superintendents in general, wanting to mark their personality on the city's police-reorganisation, but being dependent on the local assistant-residents and central decisions taken at the department of *Binnenlands Bestuur*.

⁵¹ "De Chineez-en-opstootjes te Soerabaja," *Indische Gids* 34 (1912).

Further damage to the police reputation within the European community was caused by the conservative European newspapers, like *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* and the *Nieuwe Soerabaja Courant*, that turned against Surabaya's police in the following months, and started to criticize and ridicule the police as being either too weak (to Chinese rebels) or too rude (to individual citizens).⁵² The *Soerabajasch Handelsblad*, in addition, accused chief superintendent Boon of being reluctant to accept criticism and therefore childishly keeping the police away from the press. It remains a matter of dispute if this was the case – there seems to have been an order from the resident/ assistant-resident to the police not to communicate with the press.⁵³ Furthermore, we can ask whether this attitude was that unreasonable since police-operations in progress are not always helped with public coverage before a case is solved. That stated, it seems not an exaggeration to assume a conflict between the European press and the police in the early years of police reform. The criticism of the European press was not completely unfair. There were serious reasons to distrust the police. Notorious was the case of the German police-inspector G.K. Hochfeldt, who used the method of fumigation to cross-hear his detainees (a method that he had learned from his former colleague, presently adjunct-superintendent in Solo). This case, becoming public in April 1912, deeply embarrassed the colonial authorities. It brought to light other cases of police-violence and heralded, together with the criticism of the police coming from the Chinese, a more expensive reform of the police before the end of the year (which has been discussed in the first paragraph). Hochfeldt was fired.⁵⁴ An official request in March 1914 to put a check on the rude attitude of the police, tells us something about the social relations in the city. It was signed by European inhabitants of Surabaya - the chief-editor of the *Nieuwe Soerabaja Courant* on top. It points not only to the apparently bad behaviour of some of the city's street police, but perhaps even more to the feelings of superiority of a minority-group in the city. For these 'civilised' Europeans it was hard to accept that subordinate police employees (the indigenous constables and European head constables), who in their view were 'morally and intellectually incapable of decent policing without committing violent excesses', guarded their safety or checked their civilised compatriots.⁵⁵

With regard to the relation between the police and the public, until so far we have highlighted specific ethnic or racist and social-political tensions between Javanese police on the one hand and Chinese and European inhabitants on the other. Contributing to the tensions, or the criticism on the police's attitude, was the problem of the subordinate police (both the indigenous constables and the European head constables), who, due to lack of training, low wages and long working-hours did not generally conform to new 'modern' police ethics to act with decency. In addition, there was the fact that the personnel of the modern police force was - before the police reform - used to a working climate in which violence was a more commonly accepted means of policing. These factors made it difficult to reach quick improvement in police attitudes. On the other hand, the police reform in itself might have stressed already existing social and ethnic tensions between the Javanese police and the public: the new police-uniform and the concomitant status of the modern city-police might have given the police constable a feeling of distinction or superiority towards the public, and the idea it was therefore his right to act accordingly, if necessary in a violent manner. This might at least have played a role in the tensions between Javanese police and Chinese inhabitants.

E. THE POLICE AND THE SAREKAT ISLAM: WHO'S POLICING WHOM

Let us develop the topic of the relation between police and public further. How reachable, visible or effective were the so-called street-police, the patrolling indigenous constables

⁵² Besides, it can be stated that the police was before the reorganisation almost by principle the object of mockery in the European and Netherlands-Indies press (and perhaps tends to be in general).

⁵³ SH, 20-5-1912; *Het Vaderland* 14-9-1923 & 18-9-1923.

⁵⁴ NA, MvK, 28-9-1912, 5

⁵⁵ NA, MvK, 31-3-1914, 99

and (until 1913) European head constables – and for whom? This question depends, of course, on the occasion, and on the perspective taken. The old indigenous (*arek*) kampung residents of Surabaya, for example, identified the new police patrolling in their neighbourhoods – being mostly Javanese – as foreign. They held the belief that most police were Eurasians. They feared and disliked the new police. An informant in Bill Fredricks social history of Surabaya, interviewed in 1971, recalled how in Indonesian eyes ‘police, who rarely entered the kampung but carefully patrolled the asphalt roads that encircled them and stopped kampung dwellers if they walked on main thoroughfares near the European quarters after nine o’clock, served only alien interests and must therefore be alien themselves. It was commonly said that true arek Surabaya never worked for the government, and other Indonesians who did so were looked upon as outsiders.’⁵⁶ Here we see, again, an ethnic prejudice and at the same time a political judgment against the colonial police - be it projected back in time.⁵⁷

Another party that can be seen as part (and representative) of the indigenous public and that had to deal with the police (and the other way around) in a very direct way was the Sarekat Islam (S.I.). Being one of the social and economic emancipation-movements that took form in the first two decades of the twentieth century in the Netherlands-Indies, the Sarekat Islam was very soon after its founding (in 1912), because of its quick growth into a mass-movement, followed by the colonial authorities - with growing suspicion. The relationship between police and Sarekat Islam had, however, an interesting double tension, or ambivalence. On the one hand the police had to monitor Sarekat Islam meetings, or act against social protests in which the Sarekat Islam was involved. On the other hand, the Sarekat Islam was in competition with the police in providing safety-care for the indigenous population.

The first big public meeting of the Sarekat Islam, taking place in the city-garden of Surabaya on the 26th of January in 1913, attracted around 10.000 enthusiast followers, with several thousands gathering outside the park. A day before this meeting the arrival of the popular hadji Samahoedin, received as founder of the S.I., filled Kotta-station with another 5000 onlookers – all shouting with joy. The train bringing Samahoedin could hardly enter the station, and Samahoedin was carried over the heads of the crowd to the car that would ride him to the party-office.⁵⁸ Leaving aside the social and emancipative intentions behind these happenings, these two indigenous mass gatherings (and their liveliness) were unprecedented at the time - both from the perspective of the colonial authorities and from the European public in general - and therefore to be carefully watched. At both occasions the police was prominently present. At the massive reception at Kotta station - a spontaneous gathering - the European chief superintendent and his likewise European superintendents and a horde of Javanese constables made certain that law and order were maintained. The day after, S.I. party-leader Tjokroaminoto promised his ‘brothers’ not to fear the police, or listen to slander (apparently spread by the police in Malang) as if the S.I. was there to take the money from its members. In reaction to this, the *patih*, representing the *regent* of Surabaya, had the final word. He in principle agreed with the aims of the S.I, denying that the police was counteracting the party.⁵⁹ In these two speeches, interpreting the police attitude towards the S.I., we see the literal expression of the ambivalent relationship between police and S.I., between counter-revolutionary control and social safety-care.

As known, the police would be present at future gatherings of the S.I. and other social and political emancipative parties that took form and started to be active in this period, this surveillance to the annoyance, resignation or protest of the parties’ protagonists. Police measures were carefully prepared, for example at the occasion of a large S.I. demonstration, taking place after another massive S.I. gathering in Surabaya, on the 25th of June in 1916. Around 4000 S.I. members living in Surabaya, all dressed with a lontar-cap, marked with the capitals S.I. in red,

⁵⁶ Frederick, *Indonesian urban society in transition: Surabaya, 1926-1946. Ph.D., University of Hawaii*.49-50.

⁵⁷ Telling us therefore about the present worldview of the informant also, perhaps even more than about his past experience.

⁵⁸ SH, 27-1-1913; A.P.E. Korver, *Sarekat Islam 1912-1916. Opkomst, bloei en structuur van Indonesië's eerste massabeweging* (Amsterdam, 1982).23, 24.

⁵⁹ SH, 27-1-1913.

marched in a long row around the city-garden, singing and shouting with joy, and likewise enthusiastically addressed by onlookers. The police had been prepared since 6 o'clock in the morning, when the European superintendents and a group of Javanese constables gathered at the police-headquarters, all sufficiently armed. Ten groups of constables went to different posts in town - the bridges Wonokromo, Sonokembang, Goebeng-Simpang, Pegirian, Peneleh, Diagalan, Bibis and Willemskade - where they had to patrol and post, to separate indigenous groups, letting people pass only one by one. Meanwhile the houses of the resident, and those of two influential Chinese (Tjoan King in Nagel, and Han Tjan Goan in kampong Doro) were guarded. The indigenous police-personnel that came home from the nightshift were kept at work, receiving a reimbursement of 25 cents. The chief superintendent and his staff inspected the different posts by car. The S.I. meeting ended at 10h30 a.m. Again there were no incidents, as the *Weekblad voor Indië* reported in a conceited way, showing a picture of 'The police-measures'. This featured a few constables and European superintendents, proudly posing at the port of the Pasar Malam, where the demonstration had passed by.⁶⁰

One of the activities of the S.I. was to support local movements or strikes in favour of a higher salary, a free Friday-afternoon, or improvement of social or economic circumstances in general. In Surabaya strikes of S.I.-solidarity took place at the firms Naessens & Co and Young & Gille in 1913.⁶¹ A strike at the firm Stam & Weijns at Simpan Doekoe caused a riot when representatives of the strikers, assisted by a crowd of 200 men, came to claim their salary a few days later. The chief of the firm called the police-section-office, and within short time eight constables were at the scene of the riot. At the sight of them the crowd withdrew. Some of the strikers, however, went along with the police to the section-office to submit a complaint against their boss - another sign of the ambivalent social and political role that characterised the police, also in the eyes of the public.⁶² The caps worn by the participants of the before mentioned S.I. meeting in June 1916 - some caps even decorated with flags and green - were related to a protest-movement of the indigenous population living and working on the private lands (owned by private large landholders) situated in the middle of Surabaya, against the landholders' plan to expel them (to make space for city-development and building-constructions).⁶³ This protest, likewise supported by the S.I., ended in a lawsuit favouring the case of the indigenous inhabitants. Another protest-movement supported by the S.I., taking place at the private land Simo, was less successful. The residents of the land refused to give half of the rice-harvest to the landowner. Apparently the S.I. not only took charge of defending the rights of the inhabitants and workers of these private lands, but they also installed *gardoe*, or waiting-posts, to guarantee their safety. According to *Het Vrije woord*, the monthly newspaper of the more radical Indies' Social Democratic Society (ISDV), this measure worked against the position of the indigenous population, as it was illegal.⁶⁴ Here it is relevant because it shows so wonderfully the competition between S.I. and police in taking care of public safety.

On the task of safety-care taken over by the S.I. there are many examples to give.⁶⁵ I will end this section with one last problematic case involving both police and S.I. On the 5th of May 1913, a group of Javanese villagers from desa Tambakredjo (just a few kilometres outside

⁶⁰ *Weekblad voor Indië*, 2-7-1916.

⁶¹ SH, 23-4-1913; Faber, *Nieuw Soerabaja. De geschiedenis van Indië's voornaamste koopstad in de eerste kwarteeuw sedert hare instelling*.47.

⁶² *Locomotief*, 9-5-1913.

⁶³ Frederick, *Indonesian urban society in transition: Surabaya, 1926-1946. Ph.D., University of Hawaii*.52,53; Faber, *Nieuw Soerabaja. De geschiedenis van Indië's voornaamste koopstad in de eerste kwarteeuw sedert hare instelling*.47; *Weekblad voor Indië*, 2-7-1916.

⁶⁴ *Het Vrije Woord*, 25-3-1917.

⁶⁵ One famous case at the time was provided by the riots in Tangerang where the police was assisted by a large group of S.I.-members in an operation against Chinese gamblers (SH: 26-5-1913; 28-5-1913; 12-6-1913); The shoir Report in NA, MvK, geheim, V-9-8-1913, B13 mentions seven cases taking place in Surabaya and hinterland in the period march-may-1913 (including the case Lammers); See also *Neratja*, 30-12-1918 (in IPO 1, 1919) or the complaints in the *Javabode*, 1-10-1913 about Sarekat Islam taking responsibility of safety-care instead of the police, quoted in "Het politiewezen in de binnenlanden van java," *Indische Gids* 36 (1914).

Surabaya), all armed with knives and agricultural tools, attacked the European Lammers Lisnet, director of the *Kawi Caera Cultuurmaatschappij*, and his Javanese driver, who were on their way from Surabaya to Grisee. The reason of the villagers' anger was the fact that Lammers' car had hit one of their boys that had crossed the road. Lammers offered to bring the boy to the hospital in Surabaya, however, to no avail. He and his driver were driven apart; the driver was hit until bleeding occurred. The next moment, the crowd went after the 'Londo' (Javanese mangle of *Hollander*, also used as a nickname), who in the meantime had found a *patjol* for self-defence, and screamed that he would kill those who planned to kill him. A head-constable and two constables, armed with *klewangs*, accidentally walking the road from Surabaya to Grisee, and a man from the desa-police run to the aid of Lammers. The head constable suggested getting the assistant-wedono to lead the investigation, adding that if the '*toewan*' would be found guilty he would be put into jail; furthermore, at the request of the desa-men, he summoned Lammers to get rid of his weapon. The inhabitants of Tambakredjo however maintained that they did not care for the police or the assistant-wedono, but that the president of the S.I. would decide for them who was right and who was wrong. A Chinese passing by in his car from Toeban changed the balance of power with his Browning-revolver. The ominous atmosphere was finally ended with the arrival of the assistant-wedono, and, from Surabaya, superintendent Van Haarlem with four constables. The boy was brought to hospital. The police investigation led to the arrest of 114 inhabitants of Tambakredjo, with eight of them accused guilty for stirring up the other desa-men. After two days of interrogations 105 of them were released. They were all said to be a member of the Sarekat Islam, that was including the desa-head, who had clearly lacked his responsibility for the desa-police or law and order in the desa.⁶⁶

The case of Lammers illustrates how the inhabitants of Tambakredjo, possibly by their S.I.-membership, felt strong enough to take the law in their own hands. From their perspective the S.I. was a party far better to be trusted in the matter of safety-care than traditional leadership would (the assistant-wedono), leaving aside the police. The conservative daily *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* bluntly took sides with the European Lammers. The liberal newspaper from Semarang, the *Locomotief*, however, showed some understanding for the village men. This daily reminded its readers that this case also illustrated the outrageous speed that was used by car-drivers at the time, crossing the city and the kampong, without any consideration of the slower pace of their surroundings. These differences in the use and awareness of speed bring me to the next section: on the traffic-constable and what he stood for.

F. POLICING THE NEW SPEED

Considering the quickly changing outlook and organisation of the city, the newly installed police in Surabaya not only had to get adjusted to its own new organisation, but also to its particular, sometimes new, problems of safety and security. This was, for one thing, most visible in the field of traffic. The growing traffic-activity in the streets of Surabaya and the continuing developments in road building, asphaltting of roads or the construction of the electric-tram network, contributed to the quick expansion of the police's traffic-department (*afdeling Voerwezen*), which came under the department general control. In this period the famous Javanese traffic-constable made its appearance, standing on the so-called "hatbox" (*hoedendoos*) in the middle of a busy traffic-square, trying to direct traffic – a showpiece of the modern colonial police force.⁶⁷ The traffic constable literally stood for the new awareness of speed that characterised this time and that involved so many insecurities, both for the public (Surabaya's inhabitants, the press as well as the new social movements) and the police. There was new speed in traffic,

⁶⁶ SH, 5-5-1913; 6-5-1913; 7-5-1913.

⁶⁷ Sometimes to no avail. See the short movie, "Het straatverkeer op Pasar Besar, 15 juli 1929," in *Fimmuseum, Amsterdam*, ed. Eerste Soerabaiasch Kinematografisch Atelier (Soerabaja, 1929). Hoorweg on traffic police in NA, MvK, V 9-3-1925, 3; see however how Furnivall praises the traffic police as proof of the modernity of the Netherlands-Indies' police: J.S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India: a study of plural economy* (Cambridge, 1939). 299.

communication, money-making, spread of ideas or decision-making. The traffic constable also symbolized the new visibility of the police, and its apparent neutrality. Of all the constables, doing their daily shifts of patrol, it was the traffic constable that was the most visible of all. He was seen or experienced by all different population-groups in the city. He was also the easiest to complain to or complain about - and the easiest to find. The traffic police seems therefore a good tool to analyse the new police at work in speedily changing Surabaya and the relation between the police and the public, in a broader sense than we did above. We should bear in mind that it was not only the police who had to get adjusted to its new tasks and changing surroundings but also its public, Surabaya's inhabitants, that had to get used to the new police and its new tasks.

While traffic regulations - these were not centralised! - were formulated by the different city-councils the police already had to deal with the new speed that was new to everyone – both to owners/users and to those who had to face it - on old roads or roads in construction. Thus, car accidents featured the daily newspapers and were counted alike in the city's yearly reports. Enforcement of a speed limit, not to mention speed in itself, was still a matter of discussion in Surabaya's city council. The new traffic was simply wild guessing, for all parties. In early 1912 the law-cases against three European car-drivers, who all three hit and killed a Javanese pedestrian, required experts on speed, the possible speed of the car and even on the meaning and functioning of the accelerator.⁶⁸ Car speed was a relative thing in a time when there was no speed-limit. And it remained so: despite the continuing problems and accidents taking place in Surabaya's ever growing traffic, Surabaya's city council in the end decided against a speed-limit, in favour of Surabaya's burgeoning commuter-traffic moving from the South to the North. "With a speed-limit, industrious Surabaya could not have coped with its pushing traffic", as a former European citizen of Surabaya remembered approvingly.⁶⁹

With regard to the awareness of the public of the new police or police-regulations the annoyed comment in the *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* on the start of a new police traffic regulation at Pasar Besar helps us to imagine this madding time which gave birth to the phrase traffic jam or 'en file': 'We receive complaints about the more and more annoying hindering of the traffic at the railway crossing Pasar Besar. This morning, when a train passed at a quarter to nine, cars had to line up in a long row, because of the unpractical police measure to split up the way for car-traffic in two parts. [...] One has to ask if this is tolerable. Time is money, also in Surabaya. It won't do to obstruct the traffic on the main road of Surabaya like that!'⁷⁰ This irritation is merely pointing to the impatient time-is-money mentality of the reporter and his enterprising compatriots. Another European complaint about the traffic police that reached the desks of the *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* is, however, more complicated. In February 1913 citizen H. submitted a complaint against the police alleging maltreatment. H. was watching the clearing of a tram that had derailed a few days before at Pasar Besar. A traffic constable, Javanese, sent him away, according to H. in a rude manner. Offended by this H refused to leave immediately. They got into a heated argument, rough words were used on each side, and finally the constable used his baton. As a proof H. showed the bloody scores on his upper-body.⁷¹ Leaving aside the actual use of violence, which is a topic for discussion in itself, one can ask here what went wrong. Why was H. offended in the first place? He does not discuss the actual interference of the constable in itself, but his

⁶⁸ One of those car-accidents - the case Wijnschenk - caused great indignation among the newspaper reading community in Surabaya, after the police-report was published in the local press. Apparently the car, that hit a Javanese water-carrier around the area of the Red Bridge (in the north), dragged the victim on its fender a couple of meters further until the victim fell and was run over and killed. After this the driver, the European businessman Wijnschenk, continued on his way, leaving the dead body where it was. The discussion at court went on at length about the actual speed he used and the question if the victim should have seen the car on time or not. On the case Wijnschenk see: SH, 2-4-1912; 3-4-1912; 11-4-1912. The other two accidents I am referring to were known as 'the case Etty' (*Javabode*, 30-1-1912) and 'The new car-accident in Surabaya' (*Javabode*, 29-1-1912)

⁶⁹ Faber, *Nieuw Soerabaja. De geschiedenis van Indië's voornaamste koopstad in de eerste kwarteeuw sedert hare instelling*. 113

⁷⁰ SH 30-1-1913: Compare SH 2-4-1912: 'The traffic at Pasar Besar'

⁷¹ SH 12-2-1913.

rough manners. But could it be the case that he, being a European, felt it a humiliation to be commanded by a Javanese out of principle? In that case he is ignoring, or not recognizing, whether consciously or unconsciously, whether out of racist motives or not, the status and responsibility of the traffic constable.

A final example illuminating the relation between police and public in Surabaya in which the traffic police played a specific, sour role, precisely because it was so easy to find, are the fights between military and police that took place in October 1919. In the evening of the 15th of October, around 6, the traffic constable Parto, posting at the crossing Gatottan and Tempelstraat (down town Surabaya, close to the military barracks at Comedieplein), was attacked by a group of 40 non-European soldiers from the 13th battalion that wanted to take revenge on a fight that took place between them and other policemen two days before. Two of them were armed with *klewangs* and 38 with guns (*bajonets*). Parto, having no chance at all against this superior strength, was clubbed to death with his own baton and a *klewang*. After the assault at Gatottan was reported (at 6h40 p.m.) at the nearby police section-post at Griseesche weg, the police available there – one head-inspector and four police-inspectors (all European) – came to the aid (by bicycle) of Parto. Arriving at Tempelstraat some soldiers coming from the barracks misled them to Paradedstraat, where they were pelted with stones by another group of soldiers. The police was lured into an ambush. As a warning, the head-inspector S. shot one bullet-salvo in the air and inspector K. three, reportedly to no avail. Then they opened fire against the soldiers, trying to retreat in the direction of another police-post at Willemskade. Meanwhile the group of soldiers had grown from 40 to about 150 men, all armed with guns (*bajonets*). They followed the five policemen who were now joined by the section-head of the police and another police-inspector. The soldiers were marching in tirailleur-line, *bajonets* ready, one of them giving command to attack. Another fight took place in Societeitsstraat. In this fight one police-inspector was cut in his ribs by a soldiers' *bajonet*; the section-head lost his revolver. When the police of the upper town arrived the soldiers retreated. After this, the police, except for the traffic –constables, were concentrated in the area Societeitsstraat, Gattotan and Bibis. Civilians accidentally passing by offered a car-ride, one for the transport of two wounded policemen, and one for the superintendent from the section Oedjoeng.⁷²

It must have been a frightful sight for accidental spectators, to see armed soldiers and shooting police scouring the centre of Surabaya. The reporter of *Soerabajasch Handelsblad* touched the sore spot: 'Soldiers, on whose assistance the police has to count in circumstances beyond control, to save us civilians, these same soldiers turned against the police'.⁷³ Clearly, this was a huge blow to the authority of colonial rule, and a razor-sharp example of the difficulty caused by social unrest for state authority in general. A worrisome fact was the immediate cause of this mini-war. Two days before, on Saturday night, in a smaller scale fights had occurred between about twenty non-European soldiers, leaving a big public party in a Chinese house, and the traffic police at Boengoenan, consisting of one European head constable and four Javanese constables. This traffic police was there not only to regulate the traffic but probably also for the monitoring of this public party (which was also referred to as *Pasar Malam*).⁷⁴ Although the precise cause of these fights seems unclear – the official police and military reports told conflicting stories⁷⁵ – it seems that provocation on both side had taken place. I suggest this might be seen as a partly ethnic, partly competitive conflict between the police and the public, or a very particular part of the public, namely soldiers who were by profession in charge of public safety (sometimes to the aid of the police) but as civilians going to a party. The fact that almost all, or at least a large part of these non-European soldiers were reported as being Ambonese, who in the army were valued

⁷²SH, 15-10-1919; NA, Mailrapport 1919/ 725x.

⁷³SH, 15-10-1919.

⁷⁴In SH, 15-10-1919. NA, mailrapport 1919/ 725x and SH, 13-10-1919 mention 'a party'.

⁷⁵SH, 13-10-1919.

above Javanese soldiers, might have put oil on the fire, since they were disciplined by Javanese policemen.

In the end, constable Parto had the bad luck to be a traffic-constable, for, which policeman would be easier to find and better to revenge the army than the modern police's pride? Parto was honoured with a stately funeral, his coffin followed by a procession that firmly stressed the colonial hierarchy: behind the police-inspectors, head-constables and Dutch-East-Indian constables followed a long line of carriages in which were seated the acting/temporary resident, the *controleur*, the adjunct-captain as a representative of the colonel- commander of the army-division, the chief superintendent of police, the superintendents, heads of the police-departements and – sections, the head-inspectors, the patih of Surabaya and finally, behind the carriages a large number of indigenous police-constables. Present at the graveyard in Tembok were the commander of the 13th battalion, his adjutant and a deputation of the lower ranked military men. All parties publicly expressed their regrets about what had happened. At night the resident and military commanders crossed the town by car, but there was no further agitation between police and soldiers. All was quiet again in Surabaya.⁷⁶ A week later, the Ambonese member of the *Volksraad* (People's Council), Sospelisa, was delegated to Surabaya to discuss the matter with the temporary resident and to have a serious talk with representatives of the Ambonese soldiers, 'his countrymen', that no such thing could happen any more.⁷⁷

The fights between military and police did not stand on their own. Comparable fights between soldiers and marine on the one hand and police on the other were also taking place in Semarang and Batavia.⁷⁸ In May 1916 a group of marine and policemen fought with each other, after the police took measures against a marine-demonstration nearby the marine hospital in Surabaya. This incident caused great indignation about the brutal attitude of the police among the public (bystanders/ those who heard about it). Not surprisingly *Soerabajasch Handelsblad*, however, took sides with the police, stating that the marine demonstration was, in the end, illegal and that if the marine did not want to listen they would have to feel. After these fights were reported, the police headquarters commanded all European policemen to the police-office at Kawatan. There, seven superintendents, two adjunct-superintendents, twenty inspectors and twenty head-constables were instructed to lead, with the help of indigenous constables, the pursuit of all marines in town below the rank of petty officer and send them back to their ships, and to patrol the neighbourhood. This happened in agreement with the local marine commander.⁷⁹

The relationship between police and public as illustrated here signal social and ethnic conflicts existing in colonial Surabaya, as well as the fact that both police and public had to cope with the new speed of the time - literally embodied by the new traffic, and socially/ ideologically by the indigenous emancipation-movement, the *pergerakan*. The conflict between police and soldiers/ marine also points to a competition between two tools of colonial safety-control, a competition that we have already seen in an illegal way in the previous paragraph, namely between Sarekat Islam and the police.

CONCLUSION

The modern city-police was a consequence both of the growth of the European community in the city and the city's modernisation that involved a growing sense of movement (*pergerakan*), speed and therefore insecurity. This modern police force was meant to replace the old system of security. A new Europeanised hierarchy, a system of organized shifts of patrol, and a special department of investigation should have put the safety-system more and more under European control, at least in the Europeanised city. In this way the city had to become a safe

⁷⁶ SH, 16-10-1919.

⁷⁷ SH, 23-10-1919.

⁷⁸ In Semarang: see *Javabode*, 18-4-1912. Batavia: SH, 15-10-1919.

⁷⁹ SH, 7-5-1916; 8-5-1916; 9-5-1916.

haven, a modern, as it were ‘civilised’ beacon amid the unsafe ‘wildness’ of the inner lands of Java. One thing that can be concluded here, and that was also concluded by the colonial authorities, was that this modern city-police could not guarantee colonial/ European safety; likewise, as the police assistance delivered at the car attacks taking place outside Surabaya already pointed out, the border between city and hinterland, between civilisation and wildness was blurring. In a double sense, therefore, the idea of the colonial city as a safe haven for Europeans was an illusion.

On the other hand, change, improvement and professionalism of the police in the city, as compared to the police in the unpopular baillif-*era*, were visible and observed. But there was some atavism within the modern police, or a friction between the modern sense of policing and the old system. Chief superintendent Boon and the resident/ assistant-resident of Surabaya might seriously have tried to raise the personnel to the modern police’s standard of behaviour, but they had to work with a corpse that consisted partly of the same men that used to police the city before the police-reform, and that did not generally fulfil the reformists expectations, due to (still) a bad salary, long working hours and lack of serious training. The distance between the European chiefs of the police and the Javanese/indigenous subordinates reflects what I have called before the mammoth alliance,⁸⁰ or the misunderstanding that characterised the system of colonial rule in general. The colonial safety-system could only work by the grace of the cooperation - or deployment - of indigenous subjects (forming the majority of the force). Despite reforms, unification in police-regulations and tasks, patrol-prescriptions and later on barracks and schooling, there remained an essential reciprocal misunderstanding between the European ruler, staff or European head constable on the one hand and his indigenous subordinates/colleagues on the other hand, due to language problems, different understanding of aims and means, and different liaisons with the public.

On that matter (the relation between the police and the public), both police and Surabaya’s inhabitants had to get used to the new style and methods of policing, and this in the context of the changing material, social and political circumstances of the city. Some of the complaints about the new police can be understood against this background. Criticisms and even conflicts involving the police, however, also uncover existing social and ethnic antagonism between Javanese policemen on the one hand, and Chinese and European citizens, and Ambonese soldiers on the other. We have also seen that the police were in ambivalent competition with different groups in society: at different occasions it shared and fought for the responsibility of safety-care with military-men and marine, whereas the Sarekat Islam, in another way, contested the police’s monopoly of survey, control, prosecution or investigation. Thus, by following the practice of policing in Surabaya, we have gained a picture of social and political relationships in the colonial society that does not show us a simple dichotomous hegemony between colonial rulers (controlling) and colonised (being controlled and monitored via the police), but a far more complex pattern: we have seen (the use and abuse of) police-power for aims that did not fit state’s interests, and the contestation of police-power by different groups. The practice of city policing sheds light on the multiple ethnic, social and political tensions existing in colonial society. The irony of this all is that the Javanese police constable, like Parto, could be both the long arm of colonial power and its victim. A sadder example of the colonial misunderstanding can hardly be given.

⁸⁰ M Bloembergen, *De koloniale vertoning. Nederland en Indië op de wereldtentoonstellingen* (Amsterdam, 2002). 18, 19

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