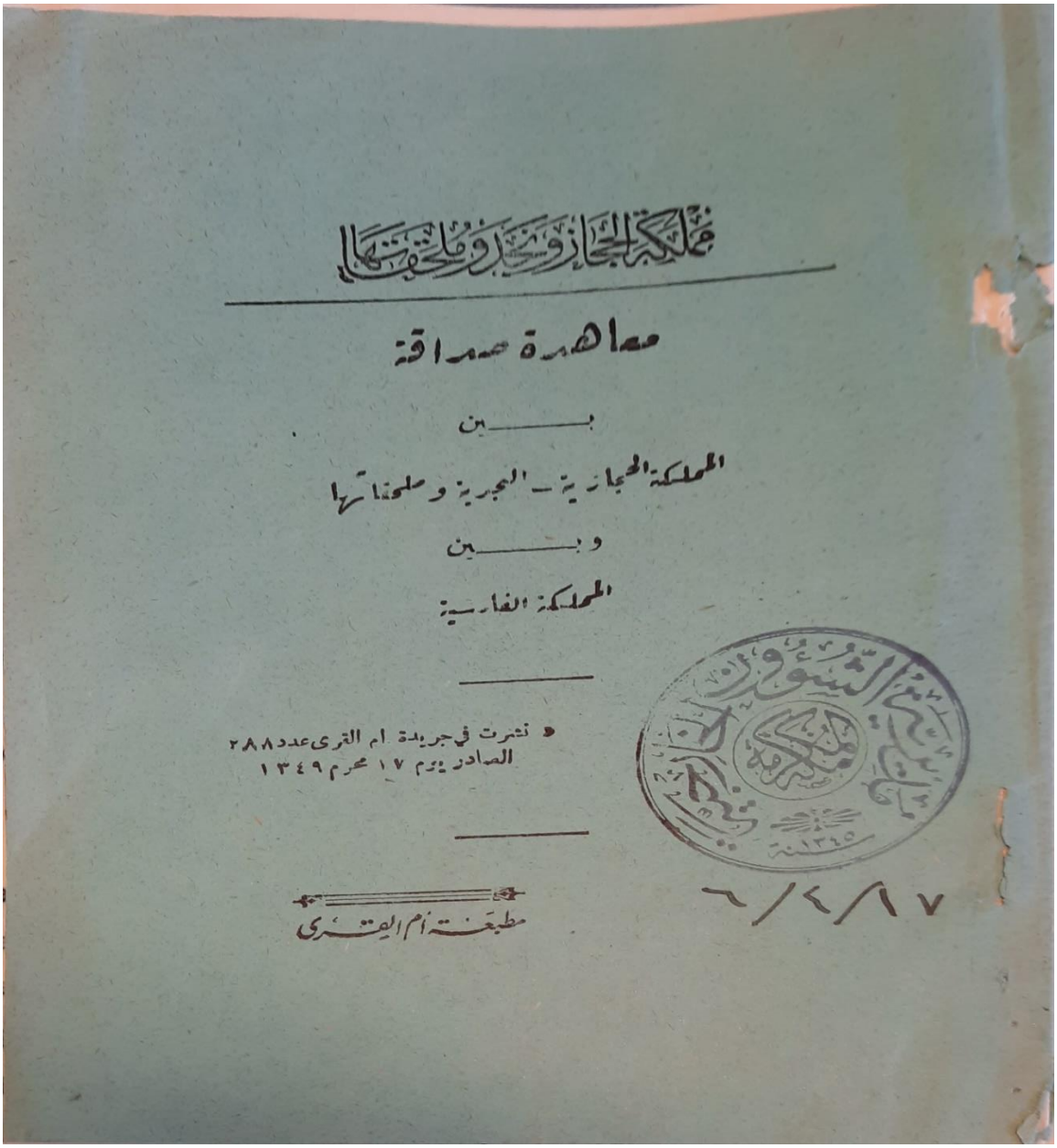
‘Besides a display of power there is the application of strict measures, a system under Ibn Sa’oud’s government, to ensure peace and order in the country’

The Dutch perception of the political situation in Arabia during the period 1918–1930


مملكة الحجاز ونجد وملحقاتها

معاهدة صداقة

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المملكة الحجازية النجدية وملحقاتها

وبين

المملكة الفارسية

نشرت في جريدة ام القرى عدد ٢٨٨
الصادر يوم ١٧ محرم ١٣٤٩

مطبعة أم القرى

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Front: the Saudi ‘greenbook’ that was used as a source by consul Charles van der Plas to describe the negotiations between the Hashemites and the Saudis under British auspices in Kuwait during the years 1923-24.

‘Imagine there's no countries/ It isn't hard to do’

~John Lennon, 1971.

Contents

Introduction

'As of late [18 May 1927] the position of the Dutch consulate in the Hijaz is excellent. My predecessors and our vice consul worked on this for years. Moreover the great political changes of the last two years have treated us very well. We are the only power that has a representative stationed at Mecca'. [1]

These jubilant words were written by Daniel van der Meulen the Dutch consul at Jeddah in a message to his superior, the minister of foreign affairs Beelaerts van Blokland in Den Haag. 'The great political changes' mentioned in this message referred to the consequences of the takeover of the Hijaz by forces from Najd, situated in the east of the Arabian peninsula. This occurred in 1925, two years prior to the sending of this message. These Najdi forces were headed by sultan Abd al Aziz al Saud and were motivated mainly by an interpretation of Islam known as Wahhabism. The changes compounded fundamental adjustments in religious policy by the rapidly growing influence of state sponsored Wahhabism on education and justice and administrative changes by the slow but gradual process of bureaucratization.[2] The Najdi conquest of the Hijaz was part of a broader regional reordering following the end of the First World War and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in 1918-1919. The Hashemite family of Mecca and the Najdis led by the al Saud family, previously only minor regional powers on the Arabian peninsula, attempted to use this power vacuum to increase their territorial possessions and this resulted in armed conflicts between them and other groups.

The government of the Netherlands had an immediate interest in the political developments on the Arabian peninsula as well. Large numbers of its Dutch East Indies Muslim colonial subjects made the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina every year. The Indies colonial authorities were bent on controlling and regulating this journey in an effort to control the pilgrims themselves.[3] Especially because Mecca was suspected of being the centre of an anti-colonial conspiracy in the eyes of some officials like the Delft professor and journalist[4]

[1] Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Nederlands Consulaat (1873-1930) en Gezantschap (1930-1950) te Djeddah (Turkije / Saoedi-Arabië), code 2.05.53, inventory number 00223. Letter of the consul Daniel van der Meulen in Djeddah to the minister of foreign affairs in Den Haag, 18 May 1927.
[2] Joseph Kostiner, *The Making of Saudi Arabia 1916-1936: From Chieftaincy to Monarchical State* (New York 1993) 103-106.
[3] Eric Tagliacozzo, *The Longest Journey: Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (New York 2013) 186. The author explicitly stated on the Dutch East Indies regulations concerning the pilgrimage: 'it is evident that acquiring knowledge about the pilgrims themselves was deemed important by Batavia'.
[4] C. Fasseur, *De Indologen: Ambtenaren voor de Oost 1825-1950* (Amsterdam 1994) 151.

Salomon Keyzer[5] and the Dutch consul at Jeddah J.A. Kruijt[6]. A good working relationship with the authorities of Mecca and Medina and by extent the whole of the Hijaz would certainly help to achieve this. By 1927 this relationship was apparently very good. How did this come to be? The main question of this master thesis will be: how did the different Dutch consuls and Dutch East Indies civil servants perceive the political developments on the Arabian peninsula in the period 1918-1930? I will argue that the observations and conclusions of these two groups, the Jeddah consuls and the Dutch East Indies civil servants, were to a very large extent determined by two different and contrary streams in Dutch colonial philosophy: the 'ethical school' and a conservative reaction to this 'school'.

The Dutch consulate at Jeddah

In 1872 the Netherlands had opened a consulate in the Hijazi port city of Jeddah.[7] For many overseas pilgrims like Indonesians this was the first place of arrival, the gate to Mecca. Mecca itself was not to be entered by non-Muslims like the Dutch consul. To mitigate this problem, a vice-consulate was founded in the city and staffed by Indonesian (Muslim) civil servants.[8] The Dutch consul thus depended on information coming out of Mecca. As early as 1885 did Aboe Bakar Djajadiningrat the Indonesian translator (dragoman) of the Dutch consulate travel regularly to Mecca.[9] I consider the Dutch consulate to be a 'knowing institution' as defined by C.A. Bayly. This type of colonial organisation was founded mainly during the second half of the nineteenth century in an effort to bridge the increasing gap between the European rulers and the native subjects. A gap created by European feelings of racial superiority towards the non-European subject population.[10] These institutions were supposed to be a substitute for the earlier way of collecting information in a more straightforward way by interacting directly with the local population. These 'knowing institutions' never succeeded in producing the same quality of information as had been gathered in the first half of the nineteenth century

[5] Wim van den Doel, *Zo ver de wereld strekt: De geschiedenis van Nederland overzee vanaf 1800* (Amsterdam 2011) 211.
[6] Michael Francis Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The umma below the winds* (Bodmin 2003) 41-43.
[7] G.P. de Vries & A.W.E. Daniëls, *Inventaris van het archief van het Nederlandse Consulaat te Djeddah (Turkije / Saoedi-Arabië), 1873-1930, later Nederlandse Gezantschap in Saoedi-Arabië (Djeddah), 1930-1950* (Den Haag 1992) 7.
[8] Ibidem, 8. When this vice consulate was precisely founded is not clear, an Indonesian doctor was stationed permanently in Mecca from 1927 onwards. According to a letter from the consul Van der Plas to the minister of foreign affairs, it seemed that the vice consulate was founded sometime in 1922.
[9] Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood,* 61.
[10] C.A. Bayly, 'Knowing the Country: Empire and Information in India', *Modern Asian Studies* 27 (1993) 30, 35-36, 39.

and earlier, they did however generate a much larger quantity of information.[11]

During the second half of the nineteenth century the anxiety of Dutch colonial officials and diplomats was focused upon the threat of a 'pan-Islamic movement'.[12] This fear was shared by the bureaucrats and diplomats of the British and French empires; having vast colonial possessions inhabited by Muslim subjects just like the Netherlands.[13] In official Dutch dossiers the Ottoman sultan Abdulhamit II was believed to be somehow implicated in the different anti-colonial conspiracies being supposedly forged at Mecca.[14] Although the sultan used to play on Islamic sentiments to gain legitimacy amongst his subjects he was not able or willing to provide any substantial support to anti-colonial movements outside his domains.[15]

Between 1902 and 1932 over nine pieces of regulation concerning the conduct of the pilgrimage were passed by the Dutch East Indies colonial government. The Dutch consulate at Jeddah played a crucial role in the enforcement and maintenance of some these regulations, effectively functioning as a forward post of the Dutch East Indies colonial government and bureaucracy. The regulations consisted among others of a pass system with the additional requirement of checking in with the Dutch consulate, there the pass would be exchanged for a residency permit. Upon leaving the Hijaz the Indonesian pilgrim had to exchange his residency permit for a pass once more. The pass mentioned the pilgrim's name, place of residence and the local governmental authority in the Dutch East Indies that had issued it.[16] It furthermore included the pilgrim's unique fingerprint.[17] Other requirements were more basic and had a financial background, a prospective pilgrim had to prove that he or she had enough money to undertake the entire trip. Pilgrims often came to the consulate to ask for financial support if their money had run out or if they were robbed and were not able to afford a return ticket.[18]

Ulrike Freitag has written on the isolation and vulnerability of European consuls living in Jeddah. This sense of isolation was being caused by Jeddah's geographical position *vis a*

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[11] C.A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence gathering and social communication in India 1780-1870* (Cambridge 1996) 373-376.
[12] Anthony Reid, 'Nineteenth Century Pan-Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia', *The Journal of Asian Studies* 26 (1967) 270-271, 274, 277.
[13] Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (New York 2001) 212, 215, 263.
[14] Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood*, 41
[15] Karpat, *The Politicization,* 136-137.
[16] Tagliacozzo, *The Longest Journey,* 182.
[17] Ibidem, 160.
[18] Ibidem, 186-87.

vis Europa and the imperial Ottoman centre of Istanbul. Isolation also had a more local meaning as being isolated from the Ottoman governor who usually resided in Mecca, a city that was not accessible for non-Muslims. Furthermore as Freitag wrote, unlike some other parts of the Ottoman Empire, there was no indigenous Christian community in Mecca. For example in Ottoman Syria the European, mainly French and British, consuls interacted with these communities and could become a factor of importance on a regional level serving as arbiters between different interest groups and the authorities.[19] Although Freitag's research was limited to 1914 I presume that this situation of isolation and vulnerability did not disappear in that year. Quite to the contrary I believe that the First World War and the final dissolution of Ottoman power in the Hijaz during 1918-19 created a temporary power vacuum in the region that led to a more dangerous and disorganized situation than before. This will perhaps make the Najdi forces on the Arabian peninsula appear as a force of order, restoring stability and safety for both pilgrims and foreign diplomats alike.

The historical context

To better understand the political developments on the Arabian peninsula in the period 1918-1930 it is necessary to study the region's longer historical development. Broadly speaking one could say that from the eighteenth century onwards this development was marked by two specific and for a long time autonomous processes that collided during the momentous events of the First World War. One of these processes was internal: the rise of three Saudi 'states' from 1744 onwards. These principalities were led by the al Saud family with the crucial support of Wahhabi ulama and operated from the eastern Najd region of the peninsula. They instrumentalized a particular interpretation of Islam known as Wahhabism to legitimise their conquests and to recruit and mobilize their supporters. The second process was external: the increasing British influence in the region in the form of different treaties with the emirates along the Gulf coast from the early nineteenth century. Gradually their number of clients in the region grew as did their economic and political influence. This does not mean that nothing else happened on the peninsula during these centuries but these two developments would prove to be the most consequential for the period 1918-1930.

The expansion of the three Saudi principalities was intrinsically linked with the spread of a new interpretation of Islam known as Wahhabism. Although the adherents of this interpretation of Islam did not apply this term, they called themselves 'monotheists' and later

[19] Ulrike Freitag, 'Helpless Representatives of the Great Powers? Western Consuls in Jeddah, 1830s to 1914', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40 (2012) 364, 373-74.

'Salafists'.[20] At the basis of this expansion was a pact made at Diriyah in 1744 between the oasis chief Muhammad bin Saud and the religious scholar Muhammad ibn Abd al Wahhab. Muhammad bin Abd al Wahhab promised to support Muhammad bin Saud by providing religious legitimacy for his efforts to conquer the Arabian peninsula if he in turn followed Ibn Abd al Wahhab's religious guidance. This pact facilitated the spread of Ibn Abd al Wahhab's interpretation of Islam over the peninsula, beginning with the region of Najd itself.[21] The first Saudi principality was very successful in its efforts, conquering Mecca in 1803 and Medina in 1805. However this Saudi-Wahhabi triumph caused a regional backlash forcing the Egyptian ruler Muhammad Ali to intervene. This intervention led to the eventual destruction of the first Saudi principality by an Egyptian army in 1818.[22]

The remnants of this state coalesced once more around another branch of the al Saud family led by Turki, a grandson of Muhammad ibn Saud. This branch succeeded in re-establishing her authority, albeit in a more limited way than the first principality. The new capital was established at Riyadh in 1823, next to the ruins of Diriyah which had been destroyed by the Egyptians. Because of conflicts between the different Saudi princes this second principality was fatally weakened by the middle of the 1870s and one of her vassals the al Rashid family of Ha'il overthrew the Saudi family and conquered Najd in 1891.[23] The last Saudi *imam* (leader) Abd al Rahman and his family eventually ended up in Kuwait where they were received as guests of the emir Mubarak al Sabah.[24] This was the moment when the internal process touched upon the external process. The emir of Kuwait had been under the protection of the British Empire since 1899. This had made him much more powerful and practically independent from his Ottoman suzerain. Great Britain gained trade privileges, practically controlled the foreign and defence policies of Kuwait and gained another outpost on the Persian Gulf.[25] The treaty itself however was kept as a secret until 1911.[26]

The gradual increase of British influence in the Gulf region was connected to its colonial possession of India. The Gulf region was a major destination for British Indian goods. Piracy forced the British navy to intervene and in an effort to end the threat posed by

[20] Nabil Mouline, *The Clerics of Islam: Religious Authority and Political Power in Saudi* Arabia (New Haven 2014) 8-9.
[21] David Commins, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia* (London 2009) 18-19,
[22] Ibidem, 32, 37.
[23] Ibidem, 61-67.
[24] Madawi al Rasheed, *A History of Saudi Arabia* (Cambridge 2010) 37-38.
[25] Chelsi Mueller, 'The Persian Gulf, 1919-39: Changes, Challenges, and Transitions', *Journal of Arabian Studies* 8 (2018) 261.
[26] Frederick F. Anscombe, 'The Ottoman Empire in Recent International Politics – I: The Case of Kuwait', *The International History Review* 28 (2006) 548.

pirates a truce was concluded for the first time with Arab Gulf shaykhs in 1820. These Arab leaders collectively became known as the 'Trucial shaykhs'. Besides not attacking any British or British Indian ships they had to be at peace with one another as well. During the 1880s and 1890s further reaching treaties were concluded with the 'Trucial shaykhs', these were now known as 'exclusive agreements'. These type of agreements were made with Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and the plethora of sheikhdoms that now make up the United Arab Emirates. In the 'exclusive agreement' an Arab ruler promised not to engage in foreign relations with any other power than Great Britain and not sell or lease any part of its territory without prior British approval. This effectively meant that Great Britain's European rivals were not able to gain a political, economic or military foothold in the larger Gulf region.[27]

In 1902 Abd al Aziz the son of the last Saudi *imam* conquered Riyad and killed the former Rashidi governor. His raid into Najd was organised from Kuwait with the assistance of his host the emir Mubarak al Sabah.[28] In 1915 this new Saudi principality was finally drawn into the British dominated system of treaties and 'exclusive agreements'. Previously the British Foreign Office (BFO) had avoided any official contacts with Abd al Aziz who was still an vassal of the Ottoman sultan on whose behalf he ruled Najd. The BFO did not want to antagonize the Ottoman Empire and compromise the position of its protectorates in the region like Kuwait which lay at the doorstep of Ottoman Iraq. The outbreak of the First World War and the Ottoman Empire's joining of Germany and Austro-Hungary against Great Britain, France and Russia on 31 October 1914 changed this. The British government employed an army from British India to occupy the strategic town of Basra in the south of Iraq. The new political resident in the Gulf region Percy Cox who accompanied the army sent Captain William Shakespear the former British political agent in Kuwait as his envoy to Najd in an effort to win its ruler over to the British side.[29]

This too was a welcome opening for Abd al Aziz, he could use British weapons and money to finance his campaigns against the Ottoman aligned al Rashid of Ha'il. Abd al Aziz had much more to gain from Great Britain than from the Ottoman Empire. Moreover his recently conquered coastal province of al Hasa was vulnerable, the British navy could bombard its ports if he chose to support the Ottoman Empire. Although Captain Shakespear died on 24 January 1915 during a battle between the forces of Abd al Aziz and his Rashidi adversaries the negotiations continued, now under the leadership of the political resident

[27] Mueller, 'The Persian Gulf', 261.
[28] al Rasheed, *A History*, 38.
[29] Daniel Silverfarb, 'The Anglo-Najd Treaty of December 1915', *Middle Eastern Studies* 16 (1980) 169.

Percy Cox. The negotiations were to go on intermediately for almost a year, the main points of disagreement concerned the succession to Abd al Aziz, British support in case of an attack by a foreign power and the delimitation of the sultan's domain. A personal meeting between Percy Cox and Abd al Aziz was required to hammer out the differences. The treaty was signed on 26 December 1915. Additionally Abd al Aziz received British money, ammunition and weapons from January 1917 onwards.[30]

Besides Abd al Aziz the British had another client on the Arabian peninsula: the Sharif of Mecca Hussein ibn Ali of the Hashemite family. Before the war the greater Hashemite family served as the hereditary rulers of Mecca and worked together with the Ottoman governor. The relationship between them was often fraud with tension. From the summer of 1916 onwards Sharif Hussein and his sons had led a quite successful campaign against Ottoman forces in Arabia, Jordan and Syria. They were stimulated in this endeavour by the British with advice, money and weapons. The Hashemites however had no treaty relationship with the British like Abd al Aziz had, only vague promises that were overruled by other treaty obligations to Britain's French allies and the influential Zionist lobby. Two of Sharif Hussein's sons, Abdullah and Faysal would be installed by the British as kings of the mandates of Transjordan and Iraq.[31] After the end of the First World War clashes occured between Hashemite and Saudi forces. Great Britain practiced a careful neutrality in this struggle between their Arabian clients. After a failed British sponsored reconciliation in Kuwait during 1923-1924 they cancelled their subsidies for both Hussein and Abd al Aziz in April 1924.[32]

When Abd al Aziz initiated an offensive in 1924 the Sharif's forces turned out to be much weaker and in the period 1924-25 the Hijaz was conquered by the men from Najd. After British pressure Hussein left for Aqaba and later Cyprus where he lived in exile. In January 1926 Abd al Aziz was named the new king of the Hijaz and began a process of centralization. The Wahhabi ulama from Najd were important for this process, the new king gave them control over the law courts and education. Arabs from outside Najd were recruited to form and lead different departments of government.[33] The remaining period till 1930 would be taken up by the consolidation of power and the breaking of resistance against Abd al Aziz's rule. A part of the *Ikhwan*, settled down Wahhabi Bedouin, revolted against his authority and

[30] Ibidem, 167, 170, 173-176.
[31] William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Boulder 2009) 157-163, 166-168.
[32] Kostiner, *The Making*, 64-70.
[33] Ibidem, 103-107.

they had to be dealt with. During the war with Hussein they had played an important role but now they were a burden resisting modernization and centralization efforts and attacking the British administered mandates of Transjordan and Iraq. Abd al Aziz defeated them in 1929, ending their rebellion definitively in 1930.[34]

Methodology and chapter division

I have done extensive research into the archive of the former Dutch consulate in Jeddah to understand how the Dutch diplomatic representatives and Dutch East Indies civil servants perceived the changes in the political situation on the Arabian peninsula in the period 1918-1930. Besides this I have used a very small amount of archival material from the former Dutch consulate in Cairo. The material found in the Jeddah archive was produced by roughly three different sources: 1) The Dutch consul in the port town of Jeddah, who reported to the minister of foreign affairs in Den Haag and most of the time to the governor general of the Dutch East Indies as well. 2) The vice-consul residing in the city of Mecca, this was a Muslim Indonesian stationed permanently in the city. He functioned as the eyes and ears of the Dutch consul and reported to him on a broad variety of subjects. 3) Different civil servants from the Dutch East Indies colonial government.

By studying this vast source of archival material one can determine the differences and continuities in the way the Dutch diplomats and Dutch East Indies civil servants wrote on the political situation in Arabia. I will focus on four specific sub questions to answer the main question. 1) How did the Dutch diplomats and Dutch East Indies civil servants analyse the conflicts between the Hashemites and the al Saud family? 2) How did they perceive the activities of foreign powers on the Arabian peninsula during this period? 3) How did they think the political changes on the Arabian peninsula impacted the Indonesians pilgrims visiting the cities of Mecca and Medina? 4) To what extent did the 'ethical school' and the conservative reaction to this school influence their response to the first three sub questions?

The primary source material used to answer these questions will be translated into English from Dutch, this necessarily means that it is an interpretation of the original texts; one on one translation being impossible or next to impossible because of the use of certain unique phrases and the different order of words.

[34] Daniel Silverfarb, 'Great Britain, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia: The Revolt of the Ikhwan, 1927-1930', *The International History Review* 4 (1982) 226-228, 243-246.

This thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter will examine the development of the ‘ethical school’ and the conservative reaction to this school to create a framework which will be used to examine the correspondence found in the archive. The second chapter will analyse the correspondence found in the archive of the Dutch consulate in Jeddah, this will happen for the period 1918-1925. During this timeframe the sultanate of Najd expanded its territory and decisively defeated its Hashemite opponent taking over the Hijaz. This period begins during the last year of the First World War in 1918 and is limited to December 1925, the year the city of Jeddah was occupied by Saudi forces. The third chapter does the same as the second only than for the period 1926-1930, a period of centralization, increasing internal unrest and eventual consolidation ending with the final defeat of the rebellious *Ikhwan* in 1930.

Chapter I: the 'Ethical school' and the conservative reaction

'the great majority of natives is content, at least not dissatisfied, under Dutch rule; doesn't know any better than this. But – *les idees marchent*, even in the Dutch East Indies and among the native population!'[35]

'[The Dutch colonial government] should have a better ideal than to leave'[36]

These above quotations represent two different visions on Dutch colonial policy in two different times, both being representative for the general spirit of an era. The first quote comes from a 1899 article published in *de Gids* by Conrad Theodor van Deventer, a former lawyer in the Dutch East Indies civil service and publicist. Van Deventer's article was influenced heavily by the economic problems in the Dutch East Indies during the 1880s and 1890s when he was employed there. These problems resulted in local cases of disease and famine on the island of Java. Back in the Netherlands he published an article with the name '*de ereschuld*', the debt of honour. In it he argued that the Dutch government had a debt of honour to the Indonesian population.[37]

The second quote represented a reversal in this progressive trend. It came from the oration of Carel Gerretson in 1925. Gerretson had been the secretary for the board of directors of the Batavian Petroleum Company (BPM) operating the Dutch East Indies. He was one of the driving forces behind the founding of a new faculty of Indology. This faculty was based in Utrecht and connected to the city's university. It was meant to offer an alternative for the then dominant Indology faculty of Leiden University responsible for the education of Dutch East Indies civil servants. Gerretson believed that the Leiden faculty was dominated by 'study room extremists' that doused their students in 'hyper ethical suds'. The money raised to finance the new Utrecht faculty was provided by a group of 25 Dutch corporations with vast economic interests in the Dutch East Indies.[38]

In this chapter the backgrounds and dominant ideas behind these two competing visions on Dutch colonialism will be sketched. This will be done in an effort to identify their influence upon the Dutch consuls stationed at Jeddah and the Dutch East Indies civil servants that analysed the political situation in Arabia during the period 1918-1930. The ethical school itself will receive more attention because of the closer link between it and the three Dutch

[35] Conrad Theodoor van Deventer in 1899 quoted in: Van den Doel, *Zo ver de* wereld, 150-151.
[36] Carel Gerretson in 1925 quoted in: C. Fasseur, *De Indologen*, 420.
[37] Van den Doel, *Zo ver de* wereld, 150-153.
[38] Fasseur, *De Indologen*, 413-416.

consuls. For the period under consideration the position of consul at Jeddah was occupied by Emile Gobee[39] (1917-1921), Charles van der Plas[40] (1921-1926) and Daniel van der Meulen[41] (1926-1931). Gobee would serve the Dutch East Indies colonial government as the advisor for native and Arab affairs after his stint at Jeddah had ended. I will argue that these men were influenced by these schools of colonial policy. Concerning the ethical school there are two reasons for this, the first was a shared educational background as alumni of the Indology faculty of Leiden University. Leiden University was considered to be the spiritual home of the 'ethical school'.[42] The second reason was a shared occupational background in the junior ranks of the Dutch East Indies civil service during the high water mark of the ethical era till 1918.

Concerning the conservative reaction following 1918 I believe this influenced the three consuls as well albeit to a much lesser extent falling outside their formative periods as students. However being civil servants they were forced to follow the instructions of the dominant conservative political forces that came to prevail in Dutch colonial policy during the 1920s

1.1 The Ethical school

Van Deventer's article was immediately influential, even across political lines. In 1901 the new Christian government started a reform program focused upon the alleviating of the economic problems on Java. This program was continued by different governments and focused upon the decentralization of the governmental departments[43] and investments in agriculture and education.[44] Especially the investments in elite education would prove fruitful for the development of an Indonesian nationalism.[45] Almost all of the new civil servants who had to realize these governmental plans were educated at Leiden University, this was the only university that offered a course in Indology. After completing this two, three and later five year program one could become a Dutch East Indies civil servant. Leiden University acquired a monopoly on the education of prospective Dutch East Indies civil servants in 1902. To illustrate this monopoly, of the 30 prospective candidates to become Dutch East Indies civil

[39] Sumatra Post (7-12-1937) *Afscheid van Inlandsche Zaken: De adviseur met pensioen*. 3.
[40] NRC Handelsblad (24-06-1977) *Ch. van der Plas, oud gouverneur, overleden* 2.
[41] Marion de Boo, 'Koloniaal Bestuurder', *NRC Handelsblad* (10-10-1991) 4.
[42] Van den Doel, *Zo ver de* wereld, 172.
[43] Harry J. Benda, 'The Pattern of Administrative Reforms in the Closing Years of Dutch Rule in Indonesia', *The Journal of Asian Studies* 25 (1966) 591-595, 603-604.
[44] Van den Doel, *Zo ver de* wereld, 153-154.
[45] Ibidem, 271.

servants in 1903 27 were studying at Leiden.[46]

When the course began in 1902 it was planned to be a vocational course and it only lasted two years. Consequently on completion the graduates did not receive an academic title. The participant studied six subjects: history, ethnology, state institutions and religious laws of the Dutch East Indies, Javanese and Malay. Except for the Malay and Javanese courses all the exams were taken orally. Five years later the Indology course gained a more permanent character and was lengthened to three years. During the first year the participant was educated in Malay, the history of the Dutch East Indies till 1800, geography of the Indonesian archipelago and the basics of law. In the second and third year the curriculum was expanded, it now included Javanese for the civil servants that were to be employed on Java and more Malay for those that would serve on the 'outer islands'. Besides this the program included ethnology of the Indonesian archipelago, Islam and its meaning for the Dutch East Indies, state institutions, Dutch-Indonesian criminal law and Dutch Indonesian criminal procedure.[47] In 1922 the program received its final form, being upgraded into a formal academic study now lasting five years.

However the three consuls were educated in the earlier set ups of the Indology program. Emile Gobee[48] started in 1906 and completed the two year course in just over a year in 1907. Charles van der Plas[49] and Daniel van der Meulen[50] completed the three year course respectively in 1911 and 1915. Of the Leiden professors that taught these three men Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje and Cornelis van Vollenhoven stood out as the most important, not only because of their scientific exploits but also because of their role in the setup of the study program. Both were committed ethicists and lectured on a variety of subjects connected to the colony. Van Vollenhoven lectured on Dutch East Indies state institutions and knowledge of Islam. In 1902 he had been the driving force behind the decision to transfer the Indology course to Leiden. Snouck Hurgronje was almost twenty years older than Van Vollenhoven and was one of the first Islamicists in the Netherlands with a long career in the Dutch East Indies civil service. After he became a professor of Arabic at Leiden University in 1906 he lectured the prospective Dutch East Indies civil servants on Islam.[51]

[46] Fasseur, *De Indologen,* 365-367.
[47] Ibidem, 363-371.
[48] *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde te Leiden, 1954-1955 (*Leiden 1955) 59-60.
[49] Fasseur, *De Indologen*, 444.
[50] Ibidem, 410.
[51] Ibidem, 362-365, 388-389.

This 'shining sun of the Leiden galaxy'[52], as Snouck Hurgronje was called by Cees Fasseur, was one of the most important twentieth century Dutch authors on the study of Indonesian Islam and Islam in general. He had visited Mecca in 1884 and wrote a book about his stay. Subsequently he was employed by the colonial government of the Dutch East Indies as the first governmental 'advisor for Native and Arab affairs', a new function. For the colony this meant that 'in matters Islamic', Snouck Hurgronje 'was the recognized and virtually unchallenged expert of the ethical era'[53]. After his return to academia in 1906 he continued to be connected to the Dutch ministry of colonies as an important advisor.[54] His voice was very influential in the naming of the Dutch consul at Jeddah. He personally selected Gobee[55], Van der Plas[56] and Van der Meulen[57] for this task. This is why his practical ideas of the crossroads where Islam and politics interceded will be used as a point of reference, a blueprint, for the examination of the three consuls correspondence.

In the pieces of advice given during his time as the advisor for Native and Arab Affairs and after he returned to the Netherlands, Snouck Hurgronje 'countered Dutch fears concerning Islam'[58]. He emphasized that Islam did not have a structure comparable with Catholicism, which was believed prior to his period as advisor. Consequently, there was no international Islamic conspiracy against the Dutch East Indies. Secondly, he did not consider all Muslims as sworn enemies of the colonial establishment.[59] This did not mean that he respected the Islamic religion, Snouck Hurgronje saw Islam as backward and believed that the highest goal for the Indonesian population was to 'associate' themselves with Dutch culture.[60] This association should occur mainly through education. The 'sons of the chieftains' should receive proper education, in the Netherlands in some cases, and be awarded with positions of responsibility.[61] At the same time he saw danger coming from 'a small minority-especially of fanatical ulama-dedicated to the notions of pan Islam'[62].

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[52] Ibidem, 389.
[53] Harry J. Benda, 'Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje and the Foundations of Dutch Islamic Policy in Indonesia', *The Journal of Modern History* 30 (1958) 346.
[54] Ibidem, 340.
[55] *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij,* 60-61.
[56] Audrey Kahin, *Historical Dictionary of Indonesia* (Lanham 2015) 376.
[57] Jan Brokken, 'Kruispunt Jeddah' in Emile Brugman (red) *Het beste van Atlas* (Amsterdam 2015) 69-70.
[58] Benda, 'Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje', 340.
[59] Ibidem, 341.
[60] Ibidem, 344-45.
[61] Arnoud Vrolijk & Richard van Leeuwen, *Arabic Studies in the Netherlands: A Short History in Portraits 1580-1950* (Leiden 2014) 135.
[62] Benda, 'Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje', 342.

Snouck Hurgronje saw Islam as being made of two distinct 'parts': 'one religious, the other political'. Towards the former, Snouck Hurgronje counselled in favour of toleration: 'a policy of neutrality toward religious life'[63]. He for example did not believe that the yearly *hajj* (pilgrimage) to Mecca was a danger to public order in the colony.[64] The earlier attempts of the colonial government to limit the amount of pilgrims to Mecca had only worked counter productively.[65] However, towards the other, 'political part' Snouck Hurgronje advised the colonial government that: 'any sign of incitement must, therefore, be resolutely met by force, and all interference in matters Islamic from abroad must be nipped in the bud'.[66] His ideas were put into practice for the first time with reasonable success during the last stages of the Aceh war (1873-c. 1904).[67] Whatever its positive aspects, the ethical policy was very paternalistic and elitist, threating the Indonesians as 'wards'[68]. An important goal besides the elimination of poverty was to help prepare the Indonesian elite in ruling themselves.[69] But at what moment this process would be completed was never clear, in the meantime Dutch control over the colony was left essentially unchanged.

Besides the more general principles described above Snouck Hurgronje wrote a number of articles in the newspaper *de Telegraaf* on the situation in the Hijaz. It will be of use to mention some of the conclusions he drew in these articles which reflected the application of his general ideas on a specific situation. I have selected three articles from 1924, 1927 and 1931 to ascertain his views on the political situation in Arabia. Focusing not on the actual turn of events which has been described already but on his judgements concerning the main actors: the al Saud and the Hashemites and their ways of operating. By approaching his writings in this way we can unearth the underlying 'common sense' to use a Gramscian term. This can be defined as: 'the internalisation and normalisation of a particular worldview, which takes subjective positions and makes them innocuous and therefore unquestioned'[70]. I argue that Snouck Hurgronje served as the main point of reference for the three consuls, his views being accepted as 'common sense' by them because of his exalted position not only as their teacher but also the one who selected them for their occupation as consul.

[63] Ibidem.
[64] Ibidem, 341.
[65] Ibidem, 339.
[66] Ibidem. 342.
[67] Ibidem, 340, 346.
[68] Ibidem, 345.
[69] Van den Doel, *Zo ver de* wereld, 158.
[70] Matthew Donoghue, 'Beyond Hegemony: Elaborating on the Use of Gramscian Concepts in Critical Discourse Analysis for Political Studies', *Political Studies* 66 (2018) 395.

In an article published on 20 December 1924 Snouck Hurgronje described the history of the al Saud family and its relationship with Wahhabism. On the character of Najdi ruler Abd al Aziz Snouck Hurgronje mentioned that he had a 'restless energy' and the professor takes a 'grand view of his [Abd al Aziz's] strategic and political insights and ceaseless labour'. At the same time he is seen by Snouck as someone who was pragmatic: 'one does not always know if the political or religious goal enjoys Bin Saoud's preference, for in his mind the two form a whole'. While comparing the civilization in Arabia with the one in Europe he wrote: 'Yet in Arabia people are still not as anxious to shed human blood as some of the countries that claim the monopoly on civilization'.[71] The second article was written in 1927, in this article Snouck Hurgronje surveyed the events of the past three years King Abd al Aziz was called a: 'political genius of the first rank' his foremost opponent the former king Hussein on the other hand was an 'Offenbach operetta caliph'. The Hashemite army that was not able to mount an organized and effective resistance against the Najdi forces was described as: 'mercenaries.. without a common ideal'. The opposing force of the Najdis were 'braves'.[72]

The last article I want to examine in connection with Snouck Hurgronje's views on the political situation in Arabia was written in the year 1931. This year falls outside the period under the consideration in this thesis but is nevertheless relevant because it was an obituary of king Hussein written by Snouck Hurgronje. His judgement of the deceased former king was stern, characterizing Hussein as a tragic figure caught in an international power game he could never win. Hussein's inabilities were seen as hereditary, a vice common among all sharifs of Mecca: 'narrow mindedness and greed were their [all 30 sharifs] hereditary traits'. The subsequent sharifs 'spent all their energy on the never ending battles with many family members on the issue of the control of monetary resources'. Hussein himself at first made a rather 'pious' and conservative impression on Snouck Hurgronje, who wrote that he had seen him during his 1884-85 stay in Mecca. In the international arena the former king was portrayed as the inflexible subject of broken British promises: 'the European power that seduced him in her own interest to make this for his lineage fatal decision, tried for eight years to induce him to accept the gradual abrogation of made promises'.[73]

[71] C. Snouck Hurgronje, 'De wereld van den Islam: Bin Sa'oed, de Vorst der Wahhabieten', *de Telegraaf* (20-12-1924) 5.
[72] C. Snouck Hurgronje, 'De wereld van den Islam: Bin Sa'oed, Koning van den Hidjaaz Snelle ontwikkeling der evenementen', *de Telegraaf* (15-11-1927) 1.
[73] C. Snouck Hurgronje, 'Uit de wereld van den Islam: Hoesein, ex-koning van den Hidjaaz Mekka's laatste Emier', *de Telegraaf* (09-06-1931) 1.

1.2 The conservative reaction

From 1918 onward the ethical policy gradually gave way for a more conservative repressive approach combined with a policy of tightening financial austerity, eventually turning the colony into a 'police state'[74] in the 1930s. The most important goal of this 'police state' was to guard Dutch rule, property and continued economic dominance. The Dutch colonial elite believed that the biggest threat during the 1920s was communism not political Islam.[75] The important politician, former colonial army officer and BPM director Hendrik Colijn, one of Snouck Hurgronje's main detractors, argued in 1928 that too much education was bad for the preservation of Dutch colonial rule and would only incite communist beliefs and methods.[76] In Snouck Hurgronje's combined works the word 'communism' appeared only twice[77], in a way showing how much out of step he was with the changing spirit of the times. The conservative policy did enjoy the support of a majority of the Dutch population in the colony as well as in the motherland.[78]

The conservative approach to colonial policy rested on two pillars identified by Colijn: the first one entailed that the Dutch East Indies did not form a cohesive whole which necessarily meant that there was no Indonesian people. Concretely Colijn proposed abolishing the *Volksraad*, a semi representative institution founded in 1918. The second principle was the idea that the Indonesian nationalist leaders only represented themselves, forming only a very small part of the total population. This was why Colijn concluded that they should not be given the privilege as interlocutors with the colonial government.[79] Instead the government should emphasize as much as possible the older feudal relations between the Indonesian nobility and the ordinary people. Generally speaking, the Indonesian nobility had been a willing collaborator for most of the colonial period, serving as an arm of the Dutch rulers. In 1927 a professor of the new Utrecht faculty J.H.F Kohlbrugge even pleaded to refrain from the ban on the Hindu practice of widow self-immolation on the island of Bali.[80]

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[74] Herman Burgers, 'De Garoeda en de Ooievaar: Indonesië van kolonie tot nationale staat', *Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 266 (2011) 228.
[75] Ibidem, 177-80.
[76] Arnoud Vrolijk & Richard van Leeuwen, *Arabic Studies*, 141.
[77] Ibidem, 142.
[78] Burgers, 'De Garoeda', 177.
[79] Herman Langeveld, *Dit leven van krachtig handelen Hendrikus Colijn 1869-1944 Deel een 1869-1944* (Meppel 1998) 372-373.
[80] Van den Doel, *Zo ver de* wereld, 299, 302.

Two events that accelerated the policy of repression in the Dutch East Indies were the failed uprisings led by the PKI on Java in November 1926 and on Sumatra in January of 1927. The colonial police force and army neutralized the threat with relative ease, the authorities were alerted before the event actually occurred by the arrest of a person connected to the PKI. As a reaction the PKI's leadership was apprehended and locked up in an internment camp build in the extremely isolated jungle of New Guinea, the PKI itself was outlawed just like the labour unions and associations connected to it. In the years leading up to this event reports of strikes and bombings had unnerved the colonial government and a big part of the colony's small European population. Repressive measures were seen as the only solution to stop these events from escalating any further, the feeling was that by making political concessions these problems would only increase. In the colonial press the link between the failed rebellions and 'international communism' was made on multiple occasions, enflaming sentiments among the proponents of the conservative repressive line.[81]

The philosophy of the ethical policy as defined by Snouck Hurgronje was an elitist and paternalistic ideology. Its most important tenet was the strict separation between the Islam as a religion and Islam in a 'political' sense. Force was to be applied in an effort to root out this 'political' understanding of the religion. Cooperation with the Indonesian elite by way of education was necessary to develop the colony. Concerning the conservative turn, the repressive element from 1918 onwards was especially focused on the supposed threat of 'international communism' and ways in which to neutralize this by strengthening feudal relations. In a way this cooperation with the traditional elite was something the 'ethical' Snouck Hurgronje and the conservative Colijn had in common. Concerning the situation in Arabia Snouck Hurgronje's three articles in *de Telegraaf* showed a great respect for king Abd al Aziz, a 'genius' who was pragmatic and patient at same time. His Hashemite opponent Hussein was depicted as a tragic figure, initially seen a pious and conservative but unable to escape from his hereditary character weaknesses.

[81] Herman Smit, *Landvoogd tussen twee vuren: Jonkheer Mr. A.C.D. de Graeff, gouverneur-generaal van Nederlands-Indië 1926-1931* (Hilversum 2011) 51-60.

Chapter II: 'The blinded ruler', the period 1918-1925

'As I revealed on multiple occasions, one can almost certainly say, that the kingdom of the Hijaz will not be able to survive without very substantial material support from England, because it does not have any resources, material or moral, which would allow it to continue the struggle for its existence'[82]

The quotation above was written by professor Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje in March of 1918 per a request by the secretary general of the Dutch department of foreign affairs. His analysis of the situation on the Arabian Peninsula would turn out to be quite accurate in the long run. Only seven years after this message was sent, the Hashemite family would be definitively expelled from the Hijaz. Snouck Hurgronje's attitude towards the Hashemite kingdom of the Hijaz was quite negative, portraying it as a totally dependent client of Great Britain and nothing more. In this chapter the perception of the political developments on the Arabian peninsula seen from the point of view of the Dutch diplomats resident in the Hijaz and the Dutch East Indies civil servants with whom they corresponded will be studied.

The conflict between the Hashemites and the al Sauds was the most important development during this period and could reveal the underlying motivations for the positioning of the Dutch diplomats for favouring one party or the other. During this chapter's timeframe of 1918-1925 Emile Gobee (1917-1921) and Charles van der Plas (1921-1926) fulfilled the position of Dutch consul in Jeddah. Gobee's period as consul has left almost no archival mark and the only archival material comes from his period as the advisor for native and Arab affairs. Still a very important and relevant position for commenting upon the political developments in Arabia and very much of interest. However it falls under the time period of the next chapter. Material from B.J.O. (Bep) Schrieke another Dutch East Indies civil servant who analysed the situation in Arabia will be used as well.

[82] Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken: Consulaat Caïro (Egypte), 1850- 1949; Consulaat-Generaal en Diplomatiek Agentschap Caïro (Egypte), (1862) 1884-1908; Viceconsulaat Ismaila (Egypte), 1879-1989, nummer toegang 2.05.133, inventarisnummer 426. Analysis of the situation in Arabia written by Professor Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje after a request by the secretary general of the department of foreign affairs, dated on 10 March 1918.

2.1 'The situation in Arabia'

During the last year of the First World War Bep Schrieke a former student of Snouck Hurgronje then serving as a junior civil servant in the Dutch East Indies, wrote a detailed analysis of the past conflict on the peninsula and the possible scenarios for the future. Although this was obviously not a document authored by one of the Dutch consuls, it did represent the opinion of a Dutch expert on Islam, educated at Leiden University and endorsed by professor Snouck Hurgronje. In an earlier message from 1917, falling somewhat outside the studied timeframe, Schrieke himself wrote of his relationship with Snouck Hurgronje: 'Perhaps that the education by Professor Snouck Hurgronje, that I had the privilege of enjoying for so many years, and the contact with different eminent Islamicists (among others Prof. Becker), were not a fully inadequate preparation for this task'[83]. Furthermore this analysis of the situation was sent to the Dutch consulate in Jeddah, to be studied by the Dutch diplomats resident, which in itself was a sign of its relevance.

That this analysis was written by someone employed in the Dutch East Indies civil service was a sign of the continued attention of the Dutch colonial elite for the political developments on the Arabian Peninsula, stemming from the yearly[84] pilgrimage to Mecca. Schrieke's analysis covered the whole regional situation seen from a broad historical perspective. Interesting for this thesis was how he described the Hashemites and the al Saud, their respective histories and relationship. He began by describing the relationship between the Hashemite family and the local Ottoman governor, the *wali*. According to Schrieke the relationship between these two actors was always characterized by a state of competition for power: 'an energetic Sharif was constantly vying to push back the authority of the governor to its smallest possible size'[85]. According to the author this tense relationship was detrimental for the public order in the Hijaz: 'cooperation between both authorities in effort to preserve, or rather to constitute, public order was never the case'[86].

When Bep Schrieke turned to the Saudi ruler his tone was markedly more neutral. It portrayed 'Abd al Aziz', as Schrieke called him, as someone very closely aligned with the British protectorate of Kuwait. It gave the emir of Kuwait Mubarak a crucial role in the establishment of the third Saudi principality in 1902 after an earlier attempt during the

[83] Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Nederlands Consulaat (1873-1930) en Gezantschap (1930-1950) te Djeddah (Turkije / Saoedi-Arabië), nummer toegang 2.05.53, inventarisnummer 171.
[84] J. Vredenbregt, 'The Haddj', 149. Although the Pilgrimage from the Dutch East Indies was cancelled for the years 1914,1915 and 1916 because of the war. It only picked up again with substantial numbers in 1919.
[85] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 171. Analysis sent to the Dutch consulate in Jeddah by B.J.O. Schrieke, dated on March 1918. 5.
[86] Ibidem.

previous year failed: 'after the pull back of Turkish troops Mubarak undertook a second attempt, this was eventually a success. The anti-Turkish Abd al Aziz was hailed once more as the emir of the Wahhabi tribes of Najd'[87]. Schrieke saw emir Mubarak as the prime mover behind these events. He operated with the blessing of the European imperial power Great Britain against the Ottoman Empire. At this time Abd al Aziz was seen as a mere extension of the Kuwaiti ruler. Although the Netherlands was neutral during the First World War when Schrieke wrote this piece, those past events were seen through an anti-Ottoman lens.

This anti-Ottoman paradigm had a long history among members of the Dutch colonial establishment. The stance was caused mainly by the perceived Ottoman attempts to influence the Muslim population of the Dutch East Indies during the nineteenth century. Although this never amounted to any substantial help, the colonial government was very worried about it.[88] This inherent unease, this anxiety, was called being 'not at home in empire' by historian Ranajit Guha. He theorized that the sheer geographical immensity of the colony and the necessary separation between the tiny European elite and much larger native population caused this feeling of permanent unease.[89] Although Guha focused his research on British India, I believe this same dynamic is applicable on most of the Europeans in the Dutch East Indies. The fear for Ottoman power turned out to be very unrealistic if one had taken into account the actual financial and military state of the empire. For example, even the territory of Libya, much closer to the empire's core was lost to Italy in 1911, as were the vitally important Balkan provinces two years later.[90]

This anti-Ottoman disposition meant that anyone who opposed the Ottoman Empire was generally seen in a positive light by the Dutch East Indies civil servants. This stance was projected by Schrieke on the population of the city of Mecca as well, combining it with the quintessential European idea of different 'races': 'with sad eyes ['*met lede ogen*'] the people [of Mecca] saw how the since centuries hated and because of racial factors despised Turkish governments left the straight path more and more'[91]. According to Schrieke the city population of Mecca always preferred the sharif above any other ruler because: 'The Sharif

[87] Ibidem, 9.
[88] Anthony Reid, *A History of Southeast Asia: Critical Crossroads* (Chichester 2015) 231-232
[89] Ranajit Guha, 'Not at Home in Empire', *Critical Inquiry* 23 (1997) 484-486.
[90] Carter Vaugh Findley, 'The Ottoman lands to the post-First World War settlement' in Francis Robinson, *The New Cambridge History of Islam: Volume 5 The Islamic World in the Age of Western Dominance* (Cambridge 2010), 68-69.
[91] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 171. Analysis sent to the Dutch consulate in Jeddah by B.J.O. Schrieke, dated on March 1918. 7.

shares the conservatism of the Meccans'[92]. According to Snouck Hurgronje, who is quoted regularly by Schrieke: 'in the end the Meccans chose the beatings of their lords instead of the pampering by those who came from outside [the Ottomans]'[93]. How Schrieke was able to know all these facts without ever having visited the city of Mecca was not quite clear. It did show the authority emanating from Professor Snouck Hurgronje's 1888 work, already over 30 years old in 1918.[94]

Sultan Abd al Aziz was portrayed as a successful warrior and strategist who by 1913 had acquired his own channel to the British. In that year he and his warriors had 'expelled one Turkish garrison after the other' and ' since June 1913 the Turkish province of Najd does not exist anymore'[95]. In reality, the conquest of the eastern al Ahsa province by the Najdi forces of Abd al Aziz occurred without any real fighting, the Ottoman garrisons evacuated without offering resistance. Abd al Aziz even signed a treaty with the Ottomans, acknowledging the authority of the Ottoman sultan. In exchange he was named as governor (*wali*) of Najd. Around this time the British themselves saw Abd al Aziz as a vassal of the Ottoman sultan.[96] Only in 1915 after the outbreak of the First World War would the first official treaty between the British and Abd al Aziz be signed, providing money and weapons for further anti-Ottoman actions, mainly against the Rashidi emirate of Ha'il, which was an Ottoman vassal state.[97]

That other former Ottoman vassal, the sharif of Mecca Hussein bin Ali did his best to woe the colonial powers on the crucial subject of the pilgrimage. Though without succeeding. Already in 1918 he was seen by Bep Schrieke as someone who was inherently untrustworthy and unreliable. Schrieke even mentioned the broken promises made in 1908 when Hussein bin Ali acquired the position of sharif and 'the traditional extortions concerning "the guests of Allah" [the pilgrims] and the tyranny imposed upon his subjects'[98]. Furthermore when explaining who the sharif's closest collaborators were in governing the Hijaz, Schrieke emphasized that these men were not only incompetent but also very much linked to the period of the discredited Ottomans: 'that the new government does not take the reforms of many different areas serious, as was to be expected, is clear from some appointments'[99].

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[92] Ibidem, 6.
[93] Ibidem, 7.
[94] Arnoud Vrolijk & Richard van Leeuwen, *Arabic Studies,* 123.
[95] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 171. Analysis sent to the Dutch consulate in Jeddah by B.J.O. Schrieke, dated on March 1918, 10.
[96] al Rasheed, *A History,* 38-39.
[97] Ibidem, 40.
[98] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 171. Analysis sent to the Dutch consulate in Jeddah by B.J.O. Schrieke, dated on March 1918. 49.
[99] Ibidem, 50.

Although the sharif had revolted with British support against the Ottoman Empire in 1916 he was seen by Bep Schrieke as someone who was tainted by his former association with the Ottoman state and the power games that were required of him in that capacity. Abd al Aziz was seen as someone associated with the British, an opponent of the Ottomans and as a successful military leader with a history of conflicts with that empire. In his analysis of the situation in Arabia Schrieke clearly did not expect the conquest of the Hijaz by forces loyal to Abd al Aziz. He believed that in the future perhaps a 'confederacy' (literally: '*statenbond*') of Arab states led by king Hussein bin Ali could come about. Concerning the pilgrimage Schrieke expected the security of the pilgrims to improve because 'one [meaning sharif Hussein] cannot hide, as happened in the past, between the never clearly defined responsibilities of the two headed [the sharif and the Ottoman *wali*] government of the past'[100].

2.2 On foreign relations

Taking as a starting point the 1918 analysis of Bep Schrieke, many things had changed by 1922. The demise of the Ottoman Empire was the most important development in the Middle East. In its place different mandates were set up; Syria, Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq. All of these states were ruled by either France or Britain with the support of armies, bureaucracies and certain parts of the local elite. The confederation of Arab states led by king Hussein ibn Ali, as imagined by Bep Schrieke in 1918, had not come about. Instead his Hijazi kingdom was facing multiple problems, that seemed to be increasing every year. The king's sons Faysal and Abdullah had been installed at the head of two newly formed states: Iraq and Transjordan. Both of them being essentially strangers in their kingdoms without any substantial prior base of local support were totally reliant on British support and thus had not much space to manoeuvre politically.[101]

The same was true for their father, his armed forces had twice been decisively beaten by Najdi aligned forces in 1919 at Khurma and Turaba. This was not part of an orchestrated Najdi push into the Hijaz, rather local Wahhabi forces led by the emir of the town of Khurma Khalid bin Mansur bin Luway, a sharif himself, had resisted an attempt of the Hijazi army led by Hussain's son Abdullah to establish Hijazi rule and accompanying taxation in the area.[102] Abd al Aziz didn't follow through with a push into the Hijaz after these victories but instead

[100] Ibidem.
[101] Efraim Karsh, 'Reactive imperialism: Britain, the Hashemites, and the creation of modern Iraq', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 30 (2002) 66.
[102] Kostiner, *The Making*, 17-18, 37-39.

waited, urged on by his British contacts he made a four years peace with Hussein. In the meantime the Najdi ruler focused on other theatres of conflict, especially Idrissi ruled Asir in the southwest and Rashidi emirate of Ha'il in the north, subduing the former in 1919 and definitively ending the rule of the latter in 1921. The al Rashidis had become victims of increasing internal conflicts between the different princes[103], quite comparable with the end of the second Saudi led principality 1891.

King Hussein had in the meantime tried to construct a modern state out of his Hijazi domain. This meant establishing diplomatic relations with other states. One of these states was the Soviet Union. During the post First World War period a 'Red Scare'[104], to lend an useful term, could be identified. This was especially true for the European colonial powers. Behind every colonial disturbance, the hand of the Soviet Union was thought to be seen.[105] This was not only true for the Asian colonies of the European powers, but also for the Middle East itself.[106] This anxiety concerning communism replaced the earlier fear for 'pan Islam' because the colonial system needed an enigmatic enemy, operating and controlling from abroad and stirring up trouble from within. This tied in with a comparable trend in Dutch colonial thinking, which saw the native population of the Dutch East Indies as simple and gullible but easily manipulated by outside forces.[107] When king Hussein entered into direct diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in August 1924 this must have seriously displeased his British patrons.[108] Coincidentally the subsidies for both Hussein and Abd al Aziz were ended earlier that year in April.[109] Perhaps this gave Hussein the necessary political space to initiate official contacts with the Soviet Union.

Writing on 4 August 1924 the Dutch consul Van der Plas was worried by this move of the Hijazi king. On that day a ship carrying the Soviet consul and two of his employees arrived at Jeddah harbour. They were received by: 'all high civil servants, a guard of honour

[103] al Rasheed, *A History,* 41-42.
[104] Robert Justin Goldstein (editor), *Little 'Red Scares' : Anti-Communism and Political Repression in the United States, 1921-1946* (Farnham 2014) xiii.
[105] Heather Streets-Salter, 'The Noulens Affair in East and Southeast Asia: International Communism in the Interwar Period', *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 21 (2014) 395.
[106] A.L. Macfie, 'British intelligence and the causes of unrest in Mesopotamia, 1919–21', *Middle Eastern Studies* 35 (1999) 168.
[107] Ann Laura Stoler, Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense (Princeton 2009) 186.
[108] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 134. Hajj report by the consul Van der Plas, dated on 1 September 1925. This is in fact confirmed in the Dutch hajj report of 1924/1925.
[109] Kostiner, *The Making*, 60.

and garrison music'[110]. Van der Plas seemed quite alarmed by this grand reception for the Soviet diplomats, which he could have witnessed with his own eyes. He asked the rhetorical question what both parties had to gain from their new relationship: 'may it in first instance cause amazement what a theist government has in common with an atheist one, besides a certain similarity in methods of ruling, both of them are united in a mutual hatred against Western Europe, the Western European civilization'[111] Quite clearly by 1924 king Hussein had become an enemy of the 'Western European civilization' according to the Dutch consul. His methods of ruling were seen as comparable with the methods of the Soviet Union, the archetypical outsider in the world state system. Was engaging in diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union enough to be seen as an enemy of 'Western Europe'?

In 1922 the Turkish government had abolished the sultanate and so thus removed the caliph's worldly powers. Two years later in March the position of caliph had been abolished by Turkish National Assembly. King Hussein of the Hijaz subsequently declared himself to be the new caliph at his son Abdullah's winter camp in Transjordan. Theologically he had a better claim to this position than the Turkish ruler, being a generally accepted descendent of the Prophet.[112] However diplomatically this was a very unwise move, the Ottoman caliphate had in the past attracted much European attention as an imagined focal point of resistance against colonial rule and domination.[113] Reviving it would thus revive this same fear and suspicion. Furthermore there were reports of contacts between agents of king Hussein and the Turkish nationalists led by Mustafa Kemal.[114] During the early years of the 1920s the British and the Turkish nationalists were opponents, the British supported the Greek invasion and the carving up of Anatolia.[115]

This development further deteriorated the consul's impression of king Hussein. Van der Plas reported that the king: 'dreamt of the liberation of all Muslim peoples and their unity (under the Caliphal sceptre of course) is it understandable that his highness is positively disposed towards a [communist] propaganda against European overlords of Muslim

[110] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 171. Message of the consul Van der Plas to the minister of foreign affairs in Den Haag, dated on 4 August 1924.
[111] Ibidem.
[112] Joshua Teitelbaum, '"Taking Back" the Caliphate: Sharīf Ḥusayn Ibn ʿAlī, Mustafa Kemal and the Ottoman Caliphate', *Die Welt des Islams* 40 (2000) 412-413, 423.
[113] Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood,* 126-127.
[114]Teitelbaum, '"Taking Back", 415-417.
[115] Resat Kasaba, 'Turkey from the rise of Ataturk' in Francis Robinson, *The New Cambridge History of Islam: Volume 5 The Islamic World in the Age of Western Dominance* (Cambridge 2010) 303-304.

peoples'[116]. This was essentially the same European suspicion that was earlier projected upon the Ottoman caliphate. How did the Dutch consul explain the Hijazi ruler's changed attitude, from ally against the Ottomans to an enemy of the 'Western European civilization'? The technique employed was to doubt his mental state. The first trace of this tendency among the archival material was found in 1922. Van der Plas described the king as: 'a not entirely accountable autocrat', everything the Hijaz was dependent upon his 'instant whims'. His regime was seen as 'despotic'[117] by the Dutch consul. Hussein's engaging in diplomatic contacts with the Soviet Union was seen in a similar light as it was compared to 'getting the [communist] wolf in the sheepfold, the blinded ruler did not understand that'[118].

From the outset in 1918 the Dutch civil servant Schrieke that focused on the political developments in the Hijaz had been sceptical about the rule of King Hussein. By 1924 consul Van der Plas saw the Hijazi king as an enemy of the European colonial powers. He was believed to be mentally disturbed and not able to see things clearly anymore. How else could he engage in contacts with the Soviet Union and the Turkish nationalists? That king Hussein had his own agenda from the middle of 1915 onwards and had been double crossed by the British in an effort to appease their French ally and the Zionist lobby never seemed to have entered consul Van der Plas's mind.

2.3 The pilgrimage to Mecca

During Ottoman times the pilgrimage performed by Indonesians had been the main reason for the opening of the Dutch consulate at Jeddah. The consul's task was to observe and control the movements of Indonesian pilgrims.[119] This observance was deemed to be necessary because of the idea that Mecca was at the centre of an international anti-colonial conspiracy, instigated by the Ottoman Empire.[120] That this claim was debunked by Snouck Hurgronje, among others, did not alter the task of the subsequent Dutch consuls.[121] The sharif of Mecca was the main person in charge of the handling of the pilgrimage and the guaranteeing of the safety of the pilgrims, this view was shared by both the colonial powers and the government

[116] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 171. Message of the consul Van der Plas to the minister of foreign affairs in Den Haag, dated on 4 August 1924.
[117] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 223. Message of the consul Van der Plas to the minister of foreign affairs in Den Haag, dated on 3 May 1922.
[118] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 171. Message of the consul Van der Plas to the minister of foreign affairs in Den Haag, dated on 4 August 1924.
[119] De Vries & A.W.E. Daniëls, *Inventaris* ,7.
[120] Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood,* 43. The second Dutch consul in Jeddah J.A. Kruijt connected both Constantinople and Mecca to an uprising in Algiers.
[121] Benda, 'Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje', 340-341.

of the Ottoman Empire.[122] Thus how king Hussein of the Hijaz managed the pilgrimage after the end of the First World War was of crucial importance for his relationship with the Netherlands. The Dutch consul produced a yearly '*bedevaart verslag*' (pilgrimage report) from 1924-25 onwards. Before this year there were only less extensive reports available. These can still be used to reconstruct the Dutch consulate's opinion on how king Hussein's government handled the pilgrimage.

In a message concerning the pilgrimage by the consul Van der Plas dated on 2 May 1923 a few things were made apparent. The lawlessness on the Hijazi roads was one of the main characteristics of the pilgrimage in that year. The consul was very much aware of the different violent incidents that had occurred, not only concerning subjects from the Dutch East Indies but from British India as well. Many of the Indonesian pilgrims asked the consulate for help after being robbed of their money and possessions. For the year 1922 this amounted to 408 Indonesian pilgrims coming to the consulate. The pilgrims were: 'attacked, plundered, killed or enslaved, in multiple places, even in the city of Medina itself'[123]. The consul laid the responsibility at the feet of the Hijazi government, although the perpetrators of these acts were 'Bedouin'[124]. King Hussein was responsible because the newspaper '*Qiblah*' operated by the Hijazi government declared in 'every issue' that the roads of the Hijaz were safe for travel, purposely spreading falsehoods.[125]

King Hussein needed to tax the pilgrims to keep his administration functioning. He imposed heavy taxes on them, according to the Dutch consul: 'A tenth of this sum [250000 guilders, only received from Dutch East Indies subjects] would have been adequate to provide a certain security on the Medina road, but H.M. [King Hussein] apparently did not want to spend anything on that'[126]. The area around the city of Medina was described as 'chaotic'[127], to remedy this troubled situation the consul asked the Dutch government to put pressure upon the Hijazi government. Van der Plas saw the threat of a ban on the pilgrimage to Mecca a: '*bedevaartsverbod*', from the Dutch East Indies as an appropriate tool to make king Hussein undertake some form of action to guarantee the pilgrims safety. However the government of the Dutch East Indies did not agree with the consul believing that this would cause other

[122] Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood,* 51-52.
[123] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 100. Message of the consul Van der Plas to the minister of foreign affairs in Den Haag, dated on 2 May 1923.
[124] Ibidem.
[125] Ibidem.
[126] Ibidem.
[127] Ibidem.

problems in the colony itself and a ban was not imposed.[128]

It is clear from the above that the pilgrimage to the Hijaz under the government of king Hussein was seen as chaotic and badly managed by the Dutch diplomatic representative Van der Plas. The consul furthermore assigned direct responsibility for this chaos and lawlessness to the king. This was especially true because of the exceptionally heavy taxation the Indonesian pilgrims endured by the Hijazi government and the lies spread by the government paper '*Qiblah*'. In exchange for these profits the king's responsibility was to guarantee safety by paying off the different Bedouin tribes roaming the roads of the Hijaz, he was not willing or able to do this in a successful way. One reads between the lines that this made him unfit to be the ruler of the Hijaz.

2.4 War's end

The last stages of the war in the Hijaz were covered in the pilgrimage report for the years 1924/25, this was the first available pilgrimage report found in the archive of the Dutch consulate at Jeddah. The report was written in September of 1925. At that time Najdi forces had already conquered the cities of Taif and Mecca. Medina and Jeddah were still in possession of king Hussein's forces. In this chaotic situation it was almost impossible to conduct a successful pilgrimage: 'Almost no pilgrims arrived in 1925'[129], although around 74 pilgrims from the Dutch East Indies tried it.[130] This fact made this pilgrimage report interesting not as a report focused on the conduct of the pilgrimage by subjects from the Dutch East Indies but as an insight in how the Dutch consul Van der Plas experienced the later stages of the war between the Hashemites and the al Saud.

A substantial part of the report was focused upon the different rounds of negotiations in Kuwait, under the auspices of Great Britain, between the belligerent parties. It portrayed Abd al Aziz, now known as 'Ibn Saud', as a victim of a Hashemite conspiracy against him, surrounding him both in the north (Iraq and Transjordan) and the west (Kingdom of the Hijaz). The consul wrote on the proposals of the Hashemite delegations: 'moreover they had the character of sabotage'. Specific demands of the Transjordanian delegation were described as 'nonsensical'. The demands of the Najdi delegation of the on the other hand concerning the northern territory of Wadi Sirhan, were described as coming forth out of a much longer

[128] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 100. Advice from the Council of the Dutch East Indies, dated on 26 June 1923.
[129] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 134. Hajj report by the consul Van der Plas, dated on 1 September 1925.
[130] J. Vredenbregt, 'The Haddj', 149.

standing tradition: '[Wadi Sirhan] belonged to the territory of Ibn Rashid, whose place he [Abd al Aziz] now occupies'. The source consul Van der Plas cited for the conduct of these Kuwait based negotiations was revealing: 'His [Abd al Aziz's] Greenbook, where this information primarily comes from'[131]. Van der Plas used this source without even mentioning the possibility of its Najdi bias.

Characteristically for Van der Plas, the remaining part of the report was dedicated to the examination of the failures of king Hussein. Besides the threat from 'his powerful eastern neighbour Ibn Sa'ud', two particular reasons were given: '1. The dissatisfaction of the Bedouin' and '2. The bad relationship with England'. The Dutch consul traced the 'deeper cause' for these two problems to the king's character: 'mainly the character of the king, his lack of a sense of reality and his stubbornness'[132]. His character was thus seen as the main reason and underlying cause for the defeats his forces had experienced. When the Najdi forces went on the offensive the Hijazi military was quickly and decisively beaten at Hadda. Both the people of the cities and the Bedouin deserted king Hussein, and he was replaced by his son Ali. The Najdi forces conquered Mecca without any resistance on 13 October 1924, being careful not to plunder the city. Van der Plas reported that the fear for the 'Wahhabis' was so great that the commander of the Hijazi navy rather than facing them fled the country.[133]

After going through the archival material regarding the period 1918-1925 a few conclusions can be drawn. Concerning the conflict between the Hashemite kingdom of the Hijaz and the Saudi sultanate of Najd; the first observation is that the perception of the Najdi principality was connected with the perception of its Hashemite opponent. From the outset in 1918 the very negative appreciation of king Hussein rooted in a deeper anti-Ottoman bias meant that Abd al Aziz was almost automatically seen in a much more positive light, because he was the foremost opponent of king Hussein. Furthermore he was not associated with the Ottoman Empire, as Hussein had been in the past. More concretely the negative image of king Hussein was based upon his supposed character faults, 'stubborn', 'not entirely accountable' and 'blinded', and the lawlessness, chaos and danger on the roads in the Hijaz being seen as a consequence of these defects.

[131] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 134. Hajj report by the consul Van der Plas, dated on 1 September 1925. Amongst the archival material, two copies of this mentioned 'Greenbook' were found.
[132] Ibidem.
[133] Ibidem.

This lawlessness effected the Indonesian pilgrims travelling to the Hijaz for the pilgrimage. As Dutch subjects they were entitled to consular assistance and support in cases of emergency and the maltreatment of the Indonesian pilgrims by Bedouin was the other concrete point of Dutch criticism on the Hijazi government. Regarding the role of foreign powers on the Arabian peninsula during this time span one can conclude that Great Britain continued to play a substantial role, trying to mediate in vain between their former clients and becoming increasingly dissatisfied with Hussein's attitude. Special attention was devoted by consul Van der Plas to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and the kingdom of the Hijaz in 1924. The consul even theorized that it was this event that made the British drop their attempts to reconciliate Hussein and Abd al Aziz, to the detriment of the former.

This increased sensibility to activities of communists was a sign of the conservative reaction in Dutch colonial policy influencing consul Van der Plas's judgement. Van der Plas reserved the greater part of his, critical, attention for king Hussein. His judgement and Bep Schrieke's followed the ideas of Snouck Hurgronje when one compared it to the articles in *de Telegraaf*. Those depicted Abd al Aziz a genius and Hussein as someone unable to escape from his past, all his predecessors supposedly being afflicted by 'narrowmindedness and greed'. From this judgment it is a small step to doubt the mental state of Hussein, especially if one wanted to explain his string of defeats against the Najdis. However Schrieke and Van der Plas did not share Snouck Hurgronje's critical attitude towards Great Britain.

Chapter III: 'The mighty figure of Ibn Saud', the period 1926-1930

'various communists are amongst the Javanese pilgrims arriving at Jeddah'[134]

'King Bin Sa'oud's minister of foreign affairs has spoken repeatedly with me and the vice consul on measures to counter this action'[135]

At the end of 1925 the short lived Hashemite ruled kingdom of the Hijaz definitively disappeared from the state system with the surrender of Jeddah on December 26.[136] Without the support of Great Britain it had not been able to survive just as Snouck Hurgronje had predicted back in 1918. At the beginning of 1926 the sultan of Najd Abd al Aziz was declared to be the new king of the Hijaz.[137] In that same year Charles van der Plas was replaced as consul at Jeddah by Daniel van der Meulen. How did he see this change of power and its consequences? Would his observations be any different from Van der Plas's? Like his predecessor he had studied at Leiden University, served in the junior ranks of the Dutch East Indies civil service and, again like Van der Plas, he had been personally selected by Snouck Hurgronje for this sensitive diplomatic post. Before Van der Meulen left for Jeddah the professor had educated him at his Leiden home. Paying careful attention to both the study Islam and of the Arabic language.[138]

As we saw in the previous chapter more than any other factor Abd al Aziz's reputation had been dependent upon king Hussein negative reputation. Would Hussein's exile in Aqaba and later in Cyprus, effectively removing him from the Arabian peninsula, affect the Dutch perception of Abd al Aziz's rule? How would his relationship with Great Britain change after king Hussein's exile? The chaotic situation in the Hijaz and the resulting maltreatment of Indonesian pilgrims by the Bedouin were the main reasons together with his foreign policy for the bad reputation of king Hussein. How would the new king handle this delicate and most important journey? How would his foreign policy differ from his predecessor's? By answering the sub questions mentioned in the introduction we can evaluate the Dutch perception of the political developments on the Arabian peninsula for the period 1926-1930.

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[134] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 00223. Letter of the Dutch consul to the ministry of foreign affairs in Den Haag. Dated on 14 January 1927.
[135] Ibidem.
[136] Kostiner, *The Making*, 69.
[137] Ibidem, 104.
[138] Jan Brokken, 'Kruispunt Jeddah' in Emile Brugman (red) *Het beste van Atlas* (Amsterdam 2015) 69-70.

Although the conflict between the Hashemite kingdom of the Hijaz and Saudi ruled Najd was now over, the Hashemite fronted and British ruled mandates of Iraq and Transjordan were still in existence. How would the relationship between these states and the Saudi led territory develop in the eyes of the new Dutch consul? After the Najdi takeover of the Hijazi holy places the amount of pilgrims from the Dutch East Indies making the journey increased once more, growing from only 74 in 1925 to 33214 in 1930.[139] How did the Indonesian pilgrims react to the changes implemented after the Najdi takeover? As described by Ochsenwald[140], the newly implemented Wahhabi measures changed the character of the Hijaz. How did the Dutch consul Van der Meulen see these measures and did he believe they had an effect upon the religious experience of the Indonesian pilgrims? How did this affect the reputation of Mecca as the perceived centre of an 'international anti-colonial conspiracy'[141]?

3.1. The advent of Najdi rule

The first pilgrimage report produced after the complete Najdi takeover of the Hijaz was an important indication on how the Dutch consul perceived the new ruler and his policies. In it Abd al Aziz was described in glowing terms: 'a powerful personality, equipped with superb political skills, understanding, courage and durability and self-control'[142]. He was seen as possessing hefty political skills, as someone who had been able to use the *Ikhwan*, the 'fanatical religious reactionaries' in an paradoxical effort to introduce 'all kinds of modern views and tools of technology' into the Hijaz. His past battles against the al Rashid of Ha'il were described as 'epic'. When again recounting the previous Kuwait based negotiations of 1923-24, the negotiating style of the Hashemites was described as 'a demonstration of madness'[143]. Consul Van der Meulen was especially impressed by the Najdi subjection of the 'disobedient Bedouin tribes'. Calling their 'total disarmament' a 'historical first'. King Abd al Aziz furthermore 'rejected all attempts of the Bolshevists and Indians to use him against the English'[144].

Roughly six months after the takeover of power in the Hijaz consul Van der Meulen seemed to be elated by Abd al Aziz's rule and his previous successes. The Dutch consul also tried to capture some of the ruler's less attractive characteristics, these boiled down to just one

[139] J. Vredenbregt, 'The Haddj', 149.
[140] Ochsenwald, 'Islam and Loyalty', 21-25.
[141] Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood,* 43.
[142] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 223. Pilgrimage rapport written by consul Daniel van der Meulen. Dated on 24 July 1926. 1.
[143] Ibidem, 2.
[144] Ibidem. 3.

thing: 'arbitrariness'. As an example Van der Meulen wrote that the king was pliable with the giving of money: 'with money one can get a hold of functions, benefits'. Concerning foreign relations the new king was described as someone aligned with the British, without being totally dependent upon their support as Hussein was believed to be. He remained 'deaf' for 'promises and threats' of the Soviet diplomatic representatives. Abd al Aziz was careful to guard his neutrality in the international arena. This was again contrasted with what Van der Meulen called 'Hussein's Icarus politics'[145]. In practice this meant the exclusion of all subjects that were deemed to be 'political' from the government run '*Umm al Qora*' newspaper or the agenda of the 1926 pan Islamic congress organized by the new government.

The king's performance was still seen in comparison with that of his exiled predecessor king Hussein. This avoidance of subjects deemed 'political' at the 1926 pan Islamic congress was of extra interest for the Dutch consul because of the participation of a delegation from the Dutch East Indies. However this delegation: 'did not take part in the debates and kept themselves aloof'. They were the only ones that 'did not accept the king's hospitality'. The delegation's 'penniless' leader Tjokroaminoto made his position 'laughable with his claim to represent 50 million Muslims'[146]. Tjokroaminoto was a former Indonesian civil servant and an important leader of the Sarekat Islam political party. During the period till around circa 1924 the movement combined ideas that could be deemed to be inspired by both communism and ideas that were more classically Islamic.[147] These two streams of thought ripped the Sarekat Islam party in two, weakening it in the process.[148]

On the reception of Wahhabism by the believers from the Dutch East Indies Van der Meulen wrote: 'in the Dutch East Indies the great mass of people do not want to have anything to do with the Wahhabi novelties, not in the basic form as practiced by the *Ikhwan*, nor in the modernist form of Rashid Rida'[149]. An interesting argument, especially because the central idea behind the Wahhabi intepretation and Rashid Rida's Islamic modernism was a return to the original Islam of the first three Muslim generations. That's why the 'modernists' called themselves 'Salafists'.[150] The small amount of pilgrims from the Dutch East Indies that did arrive in the Hijaz during the first half of 1926 complained 'heavily' (literally: '*steen en*

[145] Ibidem, 10.
[146] Ibidem, 15.
[147] Harry J. Benda, 'The Communist Rebellions of 1926-1927 in Indonesia', *Pacific Historical Review* 24 (1955) 141.
[148] Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood,* 167-168, 188-189.
[149] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 223. Pilgrimage rapport written by consul Daniel van der Meulen. Dated on 24 July 1926. 9.
[150] Ana Belen Soage, 'Rashid Rida's Legacy', *The Muslim World* 98 (2008) 2-3.

been') about 'Wahhabi arrogance'[151]. The position of the Dutch consulate in the Hijaz was seen as 'privileged'. The comparison with the position of Great Britain was made on multiple occasions. For example Van der Meulen wrote that the Netherlands was the only country that had permission to open a diplomatic post, a vice consulate, inside the city of Mecca itself.

Snouck Hurgronje's quintessential idea on the two 'parts' of Islam returned in this analysis. Consul Van der Meulen approvingly emphasized Abd al Aziz's exclusion of the unwanted political 'part'. Moreover the subjection of the Bedouin tribes seemed to fit into the admired 'law and order' approach mirrored in the Dutch East Indies itself by the suppression of all elements considered hostile to the established order. Especially because in the correspondence from the period 1918-1925 the various Bedouin tribes were seen as the main culprits, attacking, robbing and killing the pilgrims from the Dutch East Indies among others. King Hussein's incapacity to deal with them was seen as evidence of his unsuitability to be the ruler of the Hijaz and guardian of the pilgrims, the 'guests of Allah'. Concerning Wahhabism and its imposition, Van der Meulen noted that there seemed to be resistance from the Dutch East Indies Muslims against this form of Islam, implicating that in his mind it could not be used as an outside ideology of subversion like communism was believed to be.

3.2 Communists in Mecca?

During the 1920s the fear for communism was at an all-time high amongst the Dutch colonial establishment of the Dutch East Indies. When a part of the PKI revolted unsuccessfully on Java and Sumatra respectively in November 1926 and January 1927 harsh measures were taken to strangle the party and prevent a recurrence of these events. The party was outlawed and its leaders were arrested and then deported to an extremely isolated internment camp in the jungle of New Guinea.[152] Because of this failed communist uprising consul Van der Meulen in Jeddah probably believed that there were Indonesian communists in Mecca as well. This fitted into the already existing idea of Mecca as the centre of an international conspiracy against Dutch colonialism. Although the focus had shifted in the post-First World War period, instead of an Ottoman inspired pan-Islamist conspiracy in the 1920s it was a Moscow led plot.[153] As we saw in the previous chapter, king Hussein was believed to share a 'hatred

[151] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 223. Pilgrimage rapport written by consul Daniel van der Meulen. Dated on 24 July 1926. 9.
[152] Burgers, 'De Garoeda', 199-203.
[153] Anne L. Foster, *Projections of Power: The United States and Europe in Colonial Southeast Asia, 1919-1941* (Durham 2010) 28-30. For example, after the communist inspired uprisings of 1926-27 the diplomatic representatives of the United Kingdom and France claimed that the these Indonesian communists were directly instructed and armed by Moscow.

towards Western civilization' with the Soviet communists. How would the new king's government respond to the Dutch consul's suspicions and questions?

In a message written on 14 January 1927 the Dutch consul reported to the minister of foreign affairs in Den Haag that this year: 'various communists are amongst the Javanese pilgrims arriving at Jeddah'. The goal that these communists were supposed to have had was the spreading of: 'communist propaganda'. Amongst the examined archival material this was the first time that the presence of communists from the Dutch East Indies was mentioned. In the earlier period of 1918-1925 the amount of pilgrims had been lower, mainly because of the conflicts between the Hashemites and the al Saud and the dangerous roads of the Hijaz. The new Najdi led government of the Hijaz was immediately willing to work with Van der Meulen in tracking down these supposed Indonesian communists: 'King Bin Sa'oud's minister of foreign affairs has spoken repeatedly with me and the vice consul on measures to counter this action'. In this message to Den Haag the consul noted contently that he: 'didn't expect any other point of view'[154] from the new government.

The reason Van der Meulen did not expect any other point of view from the new Hijazi government was that 'the Indian [Dutch East Indies] government would not allow its subjects to make the pilgrimage if it turned out that anti-Dutch propaganda was tolerated openly'[155]. This statement of the Dutch consul resembled something of a threat to the new Hijazi government. Just like its predecessor it depended to a very great extent upon the taxation of the pilgrimage to finance its plans, develop its administrative apparatus and pay its armed forces. The pilgrims from the Dutch East Indies made up a substantial amount of the total number of pilgrims; during the year 1927 around 42.6 percent.[156] At the same time it was very obviously bluff, not supported by the government of the Dutch East Indies itself. Only four years prior the Dutch East Indies government had rejected the proposal of the previous consul Van der Plas to prohibit the pilgrimage. This measure was never applied, not even during the hectic years of the First World War.

How did these Indonesian 'communists' in Mecca actually organize themselves? According to information received from the Indonesian vice-consul working in Mecca as the eyes and ears of consul Van der Meulen they had constructed an elaborate organizational scheme. According to the vice consul, the Indonesian communists had founded two

[154] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 00223. Letter of the Dutch consul to the ministry of foreign affairs in Den Haag. Dated on 14 January 1927.
[155] Ibidem.
[156] J. Vredenbregt, 'The Haddj', 149.

distinctive and separate organizations in Mecca: the '*SBI Sjeich Bond Indonesie*' (the Indonesian Sheikh association) and the '*PII Perserikatan Islam Indonesië*' (the Indonesian Islamic Union). According to the vice consul the first organization functioned as a 'selection centre' for the second one. Consequently only the PII was understood to be a true communist party. Both of these organizations were led by the 'communist Mahdar from Tjankoeang Garoet'[157]. According to the PII the rule of 'King ibn Saoud was worse than Hussein's'[158]. The reason given was that although Hussein applied heavy taxation he left the pilgrims free in their religious believes, king Abd al Aziz guaranteed security but pushed his religious values as well as heavy taxation upon the pilgrims.

The Hijazi government subsequently arrested the board members of the two above mentioned organizations. This happened in quite obvious cooperation with the Dutch East Indies government via the Dutch consul Van der Meulen, which caused a negative backlash in some Arab media such as the influential Egyptian daily *al Ahram*. An Indonesian student resident in Cairo wrote a letter to the newspaper complaining about the arrest of his countrymen by the Hijazi government. In a letter to the Dutch consul at Jeddah the advisor for native and Arab affairs Emile Gobee, a former consul at Jeddah himself, proposed different techniques to deny the Dutch complicity. His main recommendation was to flatly deny any Dutch intervention in this affair.[159] The apprehended Indonesians were eventually deported to the Dutch East Indies. This case forms a very clear example of cooperation between the Dutch East Indies and the Hijaz in an effort to control the activities of the Indonesian pilgrims participating in activities that could be deemed to be political. According to Van der Meulen these apprehended Indonesians resented Najdi rule because of its religious aspects. So much so that they preferred the former king Hussein, despised by the Dutch diplomats, over the new king Abd al Aziz.

3.3 On Education

In the Dutch East Indies education had been the main 'engine' of modern[160] resistance against the colonial system. Providing leadership for the new Indonesian nationalist movement. At the beginning of the twentieth century the Dutch colonial system was intimately tied up with

[157] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 00223. Message of the consul to the minister of foreign affairs in Den Haag. Dated on 17 June 1927.
[158] Ibid.
[159] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 00223. Message of the advisor for native and Arab affairs Emile Gobee to the Dutch consul in Jeddah. Dated on 13 August 1927.
[160] As distinct from earlier resistance against Dutch colonial expansion, which followed more feudal or religious modes of operating.

the expansion of education, an important pillar of the ethical policy.[161] The most well off Indonesians could afford it to travel to the Netherlands and were educated at the Dutch universities. Leiden being a particularly important destination for the formation of modern Indonesian nationalism.[162] Less well-off Indonesians could try to travel to Cairo or Mecca, were education was much cheaper than in Europe. The less repressive and more activist atmosphere in Cairo attracted many Indonesian students. Besides this, Egypt was more stable and not as dangerous as the Hijaz had been for a long time.[163] All the same, a group of Indonesian students still chose to study in Mecca. How did Van der Meulen evaluate the education they received under the new regime? By studying three pieces of correspondence from 1927, 1928 and 1929 on this subject we can formulate an answer to this question.

According to the first message written by the consul to the minister of foreign affairs the main Wahhabi school in Mecca was the '*ma'had al islami al Sa'oudi*'. The school's stated goal was to provide high school level education for 'advanced students'. The consul concluded that in reality it was wholly focused upon 'religious education'. The school's reading list had a 'wahhabi character' and included works by Ibn Taymiyya and Rashid Rida. However this school was not popular among the inhabitants of Mecca and its student numbers dwindled. Remarkably in 1927 the school had a majority of students from the Dutch East Indies. This effort was organized by the Indonesian politician Hajji Agus Salim with the approval of king Abd al Aziz.[164] Agus Salim was a former employee of the Dutch consulate at Jeddah were he had been employed as a translator *cum* secretary. From the 1910s onwards he had distanced himself from the colonial regime and became one of the leading figures in the Sarekat Islam party. Inside the party Salim chose for a more religiously oriented course of action, separating the party from the communist and leftist elements that had been influential in the early 1920s.[165]

[161] Burgers, 'De Garoeda', 116-117.
[162] Klaas Stutje, 'Indonesian Nationalism in the Netherlands, 1920s-1930s Long-Distance Internationalism of Elite Pilgrims in Homogeneous, Empty Time' in Gemma Blok, Vincent Kuitenbrouwer and Claire Weeda (eds): *Imagining Communities. Historical Reflections on the Process of Community Formation* (Amsterdam 2018) 131-133.
[163] William Roff, 'Indonesian and Malay Students in Cairo in the 1920's', *Indonesia* 9 (1970) 74.
[164] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 00223. Message of the consul to the minister in Den Haag. Dated on 19 December 1927.
[165] Chiari Formichi, *Islam and the Making of the Nation: Kartosuwiryo and Political Islam in 20th Century Indonesia* (Leiden 2012) 22-23.

Van der Meulen did not seem to be worried by the involvement of Agus Salim in the education of Indonesians at Mecca. Salim together with Djanan Tayib, a long time Indonesian resident of Mecca, succeeded in increasing the number of students from only 5 to 35. The school's program was changed to include modern courses such as geometry and geography. Even English and French were added to the program. However all these courses were given in Arabic, a language not many Indonesian students understood by heart. Quickly the number students dropped once again, this time to 11. At the end of this first message the consul concluded that: 'when studying the list of books used at the school not much can be said about the possible communist intention of the school's reformers'[166]. Perhaps this is the main reason for the consul's calm demeanour. In combination with Salim's background as someone who was opposed to the Dutch colonial government but also to the communist tendencies in his own party and the Dutch focus upon 'communism' as the main threat during these years.

During the following year the Hijazi government took a more active attitude concerning education. Salamoen, the Indonesian vice consul at Mecca, wrote that the Saudi government wanted: 'to use the education in the Hijaz as a propaganda tool for Wahhabism'[167]. The earlier mentioned school '*Ma'had Al Islami Assa'oedi*' played an important part in this new effort. Another measure implemented was the appointment of several Wahhabi teachers from Najd. Private education in houses was prohibited in an effort to better control what was being taught, all education had to take place at the *haram*; the city's main mosque. Previously many Indonesian students in Mecca had been educated by this form of home-schooling. Furthermore, all teachers of religion had to apply for a permit issued by the ministry of education. Because of these measures over '300 kajis [Indonesian religious teachers]' had to stop with their work. Subsequently only 15 Indonesian teachers taught at the main mosque. This created a lot of resentment amongst the Indonesian community, Agus Salim commented that an education in Mecca 'only produced narrow minded village ulama'[168].

Everywhere were Indonesians participated in activities communist influence was thought to be seen. During 1929 not much had changed, the '*Ma'had Al Islami Assa'oedi*' still struggled to attract enough students and teachers, but Van der Meulen noted on education in Mecca that: 'although it has not been heard that there is a connection between these

[166] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 00223. Message of the consul to the minister in Den Haag. Dated on 19 December 1927.
[167] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 00171. Message of the vice consul in Mecca to the Dutch consul at Jeddah. Dated on 22 July 1928.
[168] Ibidem.

[Indonesian] modernists and the Russian [Soviet] consulate, is it to be expected that the Bolshevist politics will support such a movement, whilst the [Indonesian modernist] association can accept money from the Bolshevists without conscientious objections'[169]. Remarkable about these three messages on the state of education of Indonesians at Mecca was the continuous search for any trace of communist influence, even if there was no prove of it at all. The Dutch consul Van der Meulen and the Indonesian vice consul Salamoen seemed to think that they did not possess all the available information on communist activities in Mecca. This probably stemmed from a deep felt sense of anxiety as described by Guha[170] and was a clear example of the conservative repressive turn in Dutch colonial policy during the 1920s.

The Saudi government's effort to impose a more uniform Wahhabi style education upon the Indonesian pilgrims and inhabitants of Mecca was not seen as threatening in any way. Probably because of the perceived unease felt by many Indonesians visiting or resident in Mecca. The Dutch consul Van der Meulen and vice consul Salamoen on multiple occasions emphasised the resistance felt by many Indonesians in both the Dutch East Indies and in Mecca itself to the Wahhabi creed. Only one time the danger of something which was called 'fanaticism' was mentioned in a message. Salamoen had spoken with an Indonesian student who studied 'secret sciences and astronomy with a negro teacher'. This particular student seemed to believe that he could return to the Dutch East Indies in a 'normal prahu [traditional Indonesian boat] driven by magic powers'[171]. The meaning of 'fanaticism' was linked to the believe in occult sciences and magic instead of a religious fundamentalist meaning.

Somewhat predictably Van der Meulen continued the pro Abd al Aziz line in the diplomatic correspondence, contrasting him with the 'Icarus' Hussein, now exiled to Cyprus. Unlike Hussein, the new king carefully avoided contacts with the Soviet Union and disarmed the Bedouin. The actual working relationship with the new Hijazi regime was excellent, apparently even exceeding the British relationship with the new government. The best example of this was the cooperation between the consulate and the new Hijazi regime in an effort to expel the supposed Indonesian communists from the county. That these Indonesian communists disliked the new regime was almost a recommendation in the eyes of the consul. Van der Meulen's appreciation of the careful avoidance of subjects deemed 'political' by the

[169] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 00199. Message of the vice consul to the minister of foreign affairs. Dated on 24 April 1929.
[170] Guha, 'Not at Home', 484-486.
[171] NL-HaNA, Consulaat Djeddah, 2.05.53, inv.nr 00199. Message of the vice consul to the minister of foreign affairs. Dated on 24 April 1929.

new administration clearly showed the influence of Snouck Hurgronje's basic philosophical dichotomy.

Conclusion

After studying the diplomatic correspondence for the 1918-1930 period a few conclusions can be drawn concerning the Dutch perception of the political developments on the Arabian peninsula. From the outset in 1918 a pro Abd al Aziz bias was dominant. Necessarily this meant that his main opponent king Hussein was seen in a negative light, being the opposite of the Najdi ruler in almost everything. This can be partly explained by the anti-Ottoman paradigm prevalent among members of the Dutch East Indies establishment and partly by the idea of Mecca as the centre of an international anti-colonial conspiracy. This basic dislike of king Hussein was fortified by two concrete complaints. The first one being his supposed unwillingness to guarantee the security of the Indonesian pilgrims in the Hijaz despite the heavy taxation. The second concrete complaint was the king's foreign policy, establishing relations with the Soviet Union and claiming the caliphate were seen as anti-Western actions.

However, the relations with the new regime of king Abd al Aziz were excellent, even better than those of Great Britain. The consul Van der Meulen proudly boasted that only the Netherlands was allowed to have a vice consulate in Mecca. Another concrete example of this good relationship was the cooperation with the new administration in an effort to track down supposed Indonesian communists in Mecca and consequently expel them from Arabia. Not many comments were made regarding the new regime's domestic agenda. Established was that the Indonesian pilgrims did not seem to like the new government's sponsored Wahhabi creed, consequently it was not seen as a threatening 'foreign' influence upon the pilgrims. Instead the search for any communist influence on education enjoyed a clear priority and had an almost paranoid character.

Between the three main sources Bep Schrieke and the consuls Van der Plas and Van der Meulen there was a remarkable coherence of opinion. This probably arose from a similar educational background at Leiden University and an occupational background in the Dutch East Indies civil service. The influence of their former professor Snouck Hurgronje became most clear in the correspondence of Van der Meulen on the avoidance of subjects deemed 'political' by the new Hijazi government of king Abd al Aziz. But generally speaking the three men shared Snouck Hurgronje's general view of the political situation in Arabia as well when one compared it with his articles in *de Telegraaf*. That he was not the only influence on Van der Plas and Van der Meulen became clear from their attention to the supposed influence of communism, being an essential characteristic of the conservative turn in the post 1918 period.

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