

Guide & Concordance

to

**THE VERNACULAR PRESS IN THE NETHERLANDS INDIES,
c. 1855-1925**

UNIT 1

on microfiche

Moran Micropublications, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

in cooperation with

The Library of the KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute
of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies

Specifications

Title: The Vernacular Press in the Netherlands Indies, c. 1855-1925, Unit 1

Location: the Library of the KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies, Leiden, the Netherlands

Size: 6 titles on 94 positive silver microfiches

Order no. MMP134/1-6

Price: please inquire

Languages: mostly Indonesian, some Dutch

Finding aids: Printed publisher's guide and concordance

Availability: available

Orders & inquiries

Moran Micropublications

Singel 357

1012 WK Amsterdam

The Netherlands

Tel + 31 20 528 6139

Fax + 31 20 623 9358

E-mail: info@moranmicropublications.nl

Website: www.moranmicropublications.nl

Guide & Concordance

to

**THE VERNACULAR PRESS IN THE NETHERLANDS INDIES,
c. 1855-1925**

UNIT 1

on microfiche

Moran Micropublications, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

in cooperation with

The Library of the KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute
of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies

CONTENTS/INHOUD

Publisher's Preface	5
Note on the microfiches	5
Contents of Unit 1.....	7
MMP134/1: <i>Bintang Oetara</i>	7
MMP134/2: <i>Bientang Timoor</i>	9
MMP134/3: <i>Tjahaja India</i>	13
MMP134/4: <i>Penghentar</i>	15
MMP134/5: <i>Soerat chabar soldadoe</i>	17
MMP134/6: <i>Bandera Wolanda</i>	19

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

Background

After the successful micropublication in 2004 of the very rare Indonesian-language periodical *Tjahaja Sijang*: [The Light of Day], 1869-1925 (MMP118) in cooperation with the Library of the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) in Leiden, Moran and KITLV are now launching a new series to make more such rare periodicals in Malay and other Indonesian languages available on microfiche. The first six titles selected form Unit 1, which is now available.

The present guide

This guide has been compiled by Moran Micropublications using material from two sources. The cataloguing descriptions for each title have been taken from the online catalogue of KITLV (www.kitlv.nl). They have been adapted where necessary for use here and some phrases originally in Dutch have been translated into English. Below the original titles are given in bold italics and the modern Indonesian spelling in Roman type. An English translation of the title is in square brackets []. The historical background information for each title has been excerpted from the important work by Ahmat B. Adam: *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855-1913)* (Studies on Southeast Asia, Southeast Asia Program Cornell University, Ithaca, 1995, all rights reserved.)

Note on the microfiches

The microfiches in this collection were made for Moran Micropublications by a specialized micrographics laboratory in the Netherlands by reformatting 35 mm microfilms held by KITLV. The input microfilms were generally of reasonable to good quality and where possible during the reformatting image enhancement has been applied. Some minor imperfections or particularities are mentioned in the technical note for each title. The microfiche headers give the general title information for each title and specific information on the contents of each fiche. A concordance has been included below. The microfiches are numbered consecutively by title.

CONTENTS OF UNIT 1

MMP134/1

Bintang Oetara : soerat chabar bhâroe derri tânah sabrang Bârat

[Northern star]

Bintang Utara: surat kabar baru dari tanah seberang Barat

Year: 1856-...

Publisher: [Rotterdam]: [s.n.] [Roorda van Eysinga père et fils + H. Nygh, Rotterdam]

KITLV request number: M BU

Available: No. 1 (1856, 5 Feb.) – No. 2 (1857, 8 Nov.)

Technical note: 1857 before 1856.

Contents of the microfiches

Fiche 1.....	Nos. 1(1857) – 5(1857)
Fiche 2.....	Nos. 5(1857) – 9(1857)
Fiche 3.....	Nos. 9(1857) – 2(1856)
Fiche 4.....	Nos. 2(1856) – 7(1856)
Fiche 5.....	Nos. 7(1856) – 11(1856)

Historical Background

by Ahmat B. Adam

from *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855-1913)*, pp. 20-21.

The year 1856 saw not only the emergence of the first Malay-language newspaper in the Indies but also the birth of the first Malay periodical²² circulated there. This monthly journal, called the *Bintang Oetara* [Northern Star], first appeared on February 5, 1856. It was published by H. Nygh in Rotterdam and edited first by Dr. P. P. Roorda van Eysinga, professor of Philology at Delft, who was reported to be a lover of the High Malay used for example in Padang and Palembang. The journal was first printed at the press of Stefanus Mostart & Sons in Rotterdam, and later at H. L. Smith & Sons Press in The Hague. After the death of Dr. P.P. Roorda van Eysinga, his son, W.A.P. Roorda van Eysinga became editor of the *Bintang Oetara*, explaining that, since the periodical had a good market in Java, he would try to use a more simple form of the Malay language which he called *Melayu luar* or outsiders' Malay.²³ The periodical's distributor was Lange & Company, a bookshop in Batavia.

The *Bintang Oetara* was another enlightenment-oriented periodical which devoted its pages to Malay and Indo-Persian *hikayat*, *pantun*, articles of general knowledge, and reports of events overseas from such distant lands as America and Holland. The *hikayat* were extracted from Malay and Javanese texts such as *Tajul 'Salatin* and the story of Raden Mantri and Ken Tambuhan and from translations from the Arabian Nights and Indo-Persian stories such as "Hikayat Hatim Taya" [*sic*]. Other features in *Bintang Oetara* were: chess-playing, quiz and riddles, illustrated allegorical stories, animal fables, and articles about such places as Amsterdam, Istanbul, France, Russia, and China. As an attraction for native readers, the editor also published stories with moral teachings, such as tales from the life history of Prophet Muhammad, his companions, and members of his family. The fact that it was a literary magazine of sound quality did not help boost its sales. The literary form of Malay it used in fact became an impediment to its continued circulation, for the Javanese and Sundanese found it difficult to comprehend. Moreover, its subscription rate of fl.14,- per annum was too high for potential subscribers. Again a lack of readership forced a vernacular periodical to cease publication, and by the middle of 1857 the name of *Bintang Oetara* was no longer heard, even

The Vernacular Press in the Netherlands Indies, Unit 1

though its contents had been enlightening and entertaining, and would have been appealing to Malay-speaking readers.

22 The caption beneath its masthead, however, read: "*Soerat Chabar baroe*," meaning New Newspaper. But it was not at a newspaper as it contained no local news, but only articles of a literary nature.

23 Even this type of Malay was still in the style of Abdullah Munsyi, and not the "Low" Malay used by the *Soerat Kabar Bahasa Melajoe*.

MMP134/2

Bintang Timoor : soerat kabar di Soerabaja

[Eastern star]

Bintang Timur

Year: 1865-...

Publisher: Soerabaja : Gebr. Gimberg en Co.

Note: Indonesian weekly

Appeared 1× per week [then 2x] 4 pp. per issue

[Bat. Genootschap], name changes 1866-67 to “Bintang Timor”

KITLV request number: M BTR

Available: No.1 (4 Jan. 1865) – No. 105 (30 Dec. 1868)

Technical notes: the input films were generally of reasonable quality; but note some (occasionally dark) stains here and there; the bottom or lower corners of some pages are a bit dark, and some tearing in the original documents.

Contents of the microfiches

Fiche 1.....	Nos. 1(1865) – 8(1865)
Fiche 2.....	Nos. 8(1865) – 16(1865)
Fiche 3.....	Nos. 16(1865) – 24(1865)
Fiche 4.....	Nos. 24(1865) – 32(1865)
Fiche 5.....	Nos. 32(1865) – 41(1865)
Fiche 6.....	Nos. 41(1865) – 49(1865)
Fiche 7.....	Nos. 49(1865) – 56(1865)
Fiche 8.....	Nos. 57(1865) – 65(1865)
Fiche 9.....	Nos. 66(1865) – 73(1865)
Fiche 10.....	Nos. 74(1865) – 81(1865)
Fiche 11.....	Nos. 82(1865) – 89(1865)
Fiche 12.....	Nos. 90(1865) – 97(1865)
Fiche 13.....	Nos. 98(1865) – 2(1866)
Fiche 14.....	Nos. 2(1866) – 10(1866)
Fiche 15.....	Nos. 12(1866) – 19(1866)
Fiche 16.....	Nos. 20(1866) – 29(1866)
Fiche 17.....	Nos. 29(1866) – 37(1866)
Fiche 18.....	Nos. 37(1866) – 45(1866)
Fiche 19.....	Nos. 45(1866) – 53(1866)
Fiche 20.....	Nos. 53(1866) – 62(1866)
Fiche 21.....	Nos. 62(1866) – 71(1866)
Fiche 22.....	Nos. 71(1866) – 78(1866)
Fiche 23.....	Nos. 79(1866) – 86(1866)
Fiche 24.....	Nos. 88(1866) – 96(1866)
Fiche 25.....	Nos. 97(1866) – 2(1867)
Fiche 26.....	Nos. 2(1867) – 10(1867)
Fiche 27.....	Nos. 10(1867) – 18(1867)
Fiche 28.....	Nos. 18(1867) – 26(1867)
Fiche 29.....	Nos. 26(1867) – 34(1867)
Fiche 30.....	Nos. 34(1867) – 5(1868)
Fiche 31.....	Nos. 5(1868) – 13(1868)
Fiche 32.....	Nos. 13(1868) – 21(1868)
Fiche 33.....	Nos. 21(1868) – 29(1868)
Fiche 34.....	Nos. 29(1868) – 37(1868)

Fiche 35.....	Nos. 37(1868) – 45(1868)
Fiche 36.....	Nos. 45(1868) – 52(1868)
Fiche 37.....	Nos. 53(1868) – 60(1868)
Fiche 38.....	Nos. 61(1868) – 68(1868)
Fiche 39.....	Nos. 69(1868) – 76(1868)
Fiche 40.....	Nos. 77(1868) – 84(1868)
Fiche 41.....	Nos. 85(1868) – 92(1868)
Fiche 42.....	Nos. 93(1868) – 100(1868)
Fiche 43.....	Nos. 101(1868) – 105(1868)

Historical Background

by Ahmat B. Adam

from *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855-1913)*, pp. 24-25.

Just over a year after the emergence of *Selomporet Melajoe* in Semarang, the city of Surabaya saw the birth of its second Malay paper. Gimberg Brothers & Co., who had been acting as distribution agents for *Selomporet Melajoe* in East Java, launched the proof copies of the weekly *Bintang Timoor* [Eastern Star] on May 10, 1862; regular issues commenced on July 1, 1862 under the editorship of J. Z. van den Berg. Like *Selomporet Melajoe*, *Bintang Timoor* was also aimed at serving the business community of the city and the regions of East Java, but its circulation soon spread not only to other parts of Java but to places as distant as Sumatra and Makassar.⁴⁰ It also used the simple form of the Malay language but, unlike *Selomporet Melajoe*, used only Malay. About a year after the appearance of *Bintang Timoor*, however, Surabaya was to witness the rise of another rival paper called *Pertela Soedagaran* [Mercantile Report] around late July 1863. Published by the firm of Le Roy & Co., this commercially oriented newspaper, which was most probably a daily⁴¹ used a kind of Low Malay, much influenced by Javanese. Its editor's inadequate mastery of the Malay language, however, and the presence of the relatively more established *Bintang Timoor*, appear to have brought about its abrupt demise.⁴² Its extinction helped to allay for quite some time the common fear of competition shared by *Bintang Timoor* and *Selomporet Melajoe*. For *Bintang Timoor* a rival paper emerged only in 1881, and it was not until 1882 that Semarang saw the emergence of another vernacular newspaper. Free of rivals, both *Selomporet Melajoe* and *Bintang Timoor*⁴³ managed to prosper, both papers remaining very popular until the early 1880s when other papers began to emerge elsewhere in *Java and Sumatra*.

Bintang Timor, under the editorship of L. Magniez and O. Th. Schutz, who succeeded him in 1868, appeared to be more interested in highlighting issues affecting the *orang kecil* [common people]. It often printed reports about poverty, the exploitation of villagers by the *lurah* [village heads], and the soaring price of rice. However, owing to an increase in the cost of printing, *Bintang Timor* was forced in 1868 to raise its subscription rate to fl.15,- per year for subscribers in Surabaya and fl.17.- for readers outside of Java.⁴⁴ Appearing every Wednesday and Saturday, the paper had four pages⁴⁵ containing news of events in and around Surabaya, the Indies, and Singapore.⁴⁶ Its overseas news (from Europe, China, and other lands) was categorized under the feature column headed "News from the Mail" [*kabaran dari mail*]⁴⁷ It also reprinted extracts from the Dutch paper *Javasch Courant* and news obtained from the government concerning civil servants, such as the appointment and promotion of new officials. Other feature columns included letters to the editor, a timetable for the closing of the post office, and news relating to trade and commerce.

By 1869, having achieved some stability and consolidation of its position, *Bintang Timor* advertised the post of correspondent in its pages. Readers from the various parts of Java were invited to send news and articles; in return they were promised free subscriptions to the newspaper so long as they continued to submit news regularly.⁴⁸ They were allowed to use pseudonyms but their signatures and full names had to be attached.

The Vernacular Press in the Netherlands Indies, Unit 1

40 The paper first appeared as a weekly but became a twice-weekly paper beginning in January 1877. Its distribution agents were Morel in Semarang and Lange & Co. in Batavia. Around 1868, van Zadelhoff & Fabritius acted as agent in Padang, and Sutherland in Makassar.

41 By the third week of August the paper had already reached its 22nd number. Considering the fact that *Bientang Timoor* on July 18, 1863 announced the paper's would-be regular appearance, and that the editor of *Bientang Timoor* on August 1, 1863 commented on its first issue, it would seem safe to assume that it was a daily newspaper.

42 It must have ceased publication in September or soon after since its existence was no longer mentioned by the *Bientang Timoor* of that period.

43 Both *Selomporet Melajoe* and *Bientang Timoor* underwent a change in the orthography of their mastheads in the 1860s. Henceforth, the names of both papers will be spelled *Bintang Timor* and *Selomporet Melajoe*.

44 Compare the price of *Selomporet Melajoe*, which was fl.10,- per year but was produced weekly.

45 In 1868 the folio size of *Bintang Timor* was 29.5 cm x 44.5 cm.

46 The prices of market commodities in Singapore such as gambir, opium, spices, cotton, and thread were published for the benefit of traders.

47 News and articles concerning these countries were sensational, such as the article taken from the *Detroit Free Press* (most probably extracted via one of the Dutch papers) concerning the incestuous marriage between a brother and a sister. *Bintang Timor*, No. 25 (March 1869).

48 *Bintang Timor*, No. 68 (August 25, 1869). The vernacular press in this period did not employ full-time correspondents. *Bintang Timor* also offered free copies of the paper to readers who would find out the prices of market commodities and foodstuffs in Surabaya to be published in the paper. See *Selomporet Melajoe*, No. 29 (July 23, 1870).

MMP134/3

Tjahaja India

[Light of the Indies]

Cahaya India

Year: 1885-...

Publisher: Semarang : A. Bisschop

Note: Indonesian text, some Javanese

Appeared twice weekly

KITLV request number: M TIA

Available: Vol. 4 (1885) (nrs. 5-37, 39-60)

Technical note: the issues were filmed out of sequence as below 5-22, 37-31, 23-30, 39-60. Good illustrations, some double exposures (illustrations probably filmed at two different exposures to capture text)

Contents of the microfiches

Fiche 1.....	Nos. [4?]5(1885) – 8(1885)
Fiche 2.....	Nos. 8(1885) – 13(1885)
Fiche 3.....	Nos. 13(1885) – 18(1885)
Fiche 4.....	Nos. 18(1885) – 22(1885)
Fiche 5.....	Nos. [22]37(1885) – 32(1885)
Fiche 6.....	Nos. 32-31(1885) – 23-25(1885)
Fiche 7.....	Nos. 25(1885) – 30(1885)
Fiche 8.....	Nos. [30] 39(1885) – 42(1885)
Fiche 9.....	Nos. 42(1885) – 46(1885)
Fiche 10.....	Nos. 46(1885) – 50(1885)
Fiche 11.....	Nos. 50(1885) – 54(1885)
Fiche 12.....	Nos. 54(1885) – 59(1885)
Fiche 13.....	Nos. 59(1885) – 60(1885)

Historical Background

by Ahmat B. Adam

from *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855-1913)*, p. 46.

The first five years of the 1880s saw the emergence of the *Pembrita-Bahroe* [New Reporter] in Surabaya (1881),⁴¹ *Tjahaja India* [Light of the Indies] in Semarang (1882),⁴² *Matahari* [Sun] in Makassar (1882),⁴³ *Tjahaja Moelia* [Sublime Light] in Surabaya (1883),⁴⁴ and *Dini Hari* [Dawn] in Batavia (1884).⁴⁵

41 The *Pembrita-Bahroe* was published by J. A. Uilkens, editor and director of the *Soerabaiasch Handelsblad*, and printed at Thieme & Co. press. It first appeared on April 2, 1881 and was a twice-weekly paper, until it became a daily in 1882. Its subscription rate was fl.10.- for a period of six months. The editor was P. C. Halkema who was later to assume ownership of the paper. See advertisement in *Bintang Timor*, March 19, 1881. See also *Bintang Timor*, No. 27 (April 6, 1881), *Pembrita-Bahroe*, No. 139 (October 14, 1882), and *Bintang Timor*, October 10, 1885.

42 The *Tjahaja India*, a twice-weekly paper, first appeared on January 5, 1882. It had eight pages, one of which was in the Javanese script and language. It was published by A. Bisschop and edited by F. C. E. Bousquet and had illustrations in its Thursday editions. The subscription rate was fl.4.50 for three months.

The Vernacular Press in the Netherlands Indies, Unit 1

43 Published by W. Eekhout, the paper first appeared on October 28, 1882. It was a weekly but due to lack of subscribers was forced to cease publication in May 1883 after less than a year's circulation. *Bintang Timor*, No. 121 (May 28, 1883).

44 The *Tjahaja Moelia* first appeared on July 2, 1883 from the press of Gebroeders Donker & Co. in Surabaya. It was edited by A. Bois d'Enghien. In spite of being a daily, with a subscription rate of fl. 10,- for six months, the paper was squeezed out of circulation in 1884. See *Tjahaja Moelia*, No. 2 (July 3, 1883) and *Bintang Timor*, May 18, 1885.

45 The *Dini Hari* was published twice weekly by G. Kolff & Co. Its first issue was dated September 2, 1884 and the editor was Arnold Snackey. Its subscription rate was fl. 5,- for three months. But it could not sell and was forced to stop circulating toward the end of November 1884. See *Bintang Timor*, No. 272, November 24, 1884.

MMP134/4

Penghentar : soerat chabar Moluko

[Messenger: Newspaper for the Moluccas]

Pengentar: surat kabar Maluku

Year: 1894-...

Publisher: Ambon Press

Note: appeared once every two weeks

KITLV request number: M PGT

Available: Vol. 1 no. 1 (1894) – Vol. 3 no. 56 (1897)

Technical note: reverse chronological order. The input film was dark to very dark improving as it went along; some scratches.

Contents of the microfiches

Fiche 1.....	Nos. 56(1897) – 52(1896)
Fiche 2.....	Nos. 52(1897) – 47(1896)
Fiche 3.....	Nos. 47(1896) – 42(1896)
Fiche 4.....	Nos. 42(1896) – 37(1896)
Fiche 5.....	Nos. 37(1896) – 32(1896)
Fiche 6.....	Nos. 32(1896) – 28(1895)
Fiche 7.....	Nos. 28(1895) – 24(1895)
Fiche 8.....	Nos. 24(1895) – 19(1895)
Fiche 9.....	Nos. 19(1895) – 14(1895)
Fiche 10.....	Nos. 14(1895) – 9(1895)
Fiche 11.....	Nos. 9(1895) – 4(1894)
Fiche 12.....	Nos. 4(1894) – 1(1894)

Historical Background

by Ahmat B. Adam

from *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855-1913)*, p. 154

Ambon also had a newspaper circulating at the turn of the century. Founded in 1894 at Ambon, *Penghentar* [Messenger] was published first by L. M. H. Thorig and printed at the Ambon Press. But in 1898 the ownership of the printing press fell into the hands of a Chinese, Ong Kie Hong, who published and edited the paper until it was taken over by the assistant clergymen in Ambon in 1900. However, *Penghentar* managed to survive only until October 15, 1902, its last edition being issue number 193.¹⁶⁸ After the demise of *Penghentar*, Ambon did not see the emergence of another vernacular newspaper until some time in the 1930s.

168 The date 1904 given by Raymond Nunn in *Indonesian Newspapers on the International Union List*, (Taiwan, 1971), is incorrect. A copy of the last issue which is kept in the National Library, Jakarta, was dated 1902.

MMP134/5

Soerat chabar soldadoe

[Soldiers' newspaper]

Surat kabar serdadu

Year: 1900-1901

Publisher: Betawi : Albrecht

Note: Starting 15 June 1900 subtitle: Goena orang-orang Militair dan Preiman dan djoega Sekola Anak-Anak

Appeared every two weeks

Continued as: *Bandera Wolanda*

Incorporated in *Pewartu Wolanda*

Size: 47 cm

4 pp. per issue x 24 per year

KITLV request number: M SKS

Available: Vol. 1 issue 1 (18 April 1900) – Vol. 1 issue 24 (April 1901)

Technical note: input film landscape format, 1 page per exposure.

Contents of the microfiches

Fiche 1..... Nos. 1(1900) – 10(1900)

Fiche 2..... Nos. 11(1900) – 19(1901)

Fiche 3..... Nos. 21(1901) – 24(1901)

Historical Background

by Ahmat B. Adam

(*see below under Bandera Wolanda*)

MMP134/6

Bandera Wolanda: dikaloewarkan saminggoe sekali

[The Netherlands' flag]

Bandera Wolanda: dikeluarkan seminggu sekali

Year: 1901-1903

Publisher: Betawi: Albrecht

Note: Starting no. 25 (1901) subtitle: Soerat Tjerita goena boemi poetera, bala tantara dan moerid sekola : dikaloewarkan empat belas hari sekali

Size: 36 cm

4 pp. per issue x 24 per year, later 8 pp. x 48

[continuation of *Soerat chabar soldadoe*]

KITLV request number: M BW

Available: Vol. 1 issue 25 (April 1901) – Vol. 4 issue 48 (30 Nov. 1903)

Technical note: input film first landscape, after no. 17 portrait

No. 25 = No. 1, 1-24 to April 1902; 1-24 from 15/4/1902, 1903, 8 pp. per issue x 48

Contents of the microfiches

Fiche 1.....	Nos. 25[= No. 1](1901) – 9(1901)
Fiche 2.....	Nos. 11(1901) – 17(1901)
Fiche 3.....	Nos. 17(1901) – 3(1902)
Fiche 4.....	Nos. 3(1902) – 11(1902)
Fiche 5.....	Nos. 11(1902) – 17(1902)
Fiche 6.....	Nos. 1(1903) – 5(1903)
Fiche 7.....	Nos. 5(1903) – 8(1903)
Fiche 8.....	Nos. 9(1903) – 12(1903)
Fiche 9.....	Nos. 12(1903) – 16(1903)
Fiche 10.....	Nos. 17(1903) – 20(1903)
Fiche 11.....	Nos. 20(1903) – 23(1903)
Fiche 12.....	Nos. 24(1903) – 27(1903)
Fiche 13.....	Nos. 27(1903) – 30(1903)
Fiche 14.....	Nos. 31(1903) – 35(1903)
Fiche 15.....	Nos. 35(1903) – 38(1903)
Fiche 16.....	Nos. 39(1903) – 43(1903)
Fiche 17.....	Nos. 43(1903) – 46(1903)
Fiche 18.....	Nos. 47(1903) – 48(1903)

Historical Background

by Ahmat B. Adam

from *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855-1913)*, pp. 93-97.

At the time when the *Pewartu Prijaji* was being launched, a *totok* Dutchman aroused by the Ethical spirit of the late 1890s had already founded a journal in the Malay language intended to cater for the needs of native soldiers in the Netherlands East Indies. On April 15, 1900, Henri Constant Claude Clockener Brousson, first lieutenant of the Dutch Infantry,⁷⁵ launched the first regular issue of the *Soerat Chabar Soldadoe* from the Albrecht & Co. printing press at Batavia.⁷⁶ Although its name appeared to suggest that the *Soerat Chabar Soldadoe* was a "newspaper" for soldiers, it did not contain any current news; it was more a periodical that aimed to get support from both native soldiers and also civilians.⁷⁷ To attract subscribers the

paper listed a host of well-known names who it implied were members of the editorial board. Pangeran Hario Sasraningrat, captain of the Paku Alaman Legion at Yogyakarta; F. Wiggers, editor of the *Pemberita Betawi*; J. E. Tehupeiorij, an Ambonese *dokter jawa* student in Batavia; Datoek Soetan Maharadja of Padang; and Brousson himself, as well as several teachers, were listed as *redacteurs*.⁷⁸ Since the periodical was printed at Batavia most of the real work was actually done by F. Wiggers and Tehupeiorij. The other names, with the exception of a few teachers who were correspondents, were probably included to impress prospective readers.⁷⁹

While Brousson was busy arranging the publication of the *Soerat Chabar Soldadoe* in Java, a Palembang-born Malay named Abdul Rivai⁸⁰ had also founded a fortnightly Malay periodical in the Netherlands. *Pewarta Wolanda* [the Netherlands Reporter] had appeared in Amsterdam and circulated in the Indies in 1900.⁸¹ The existence of these two periodicals in the Indies with more or less similar formats and orientation, and the fact that Brousson and Rivai were old acquaintances in Medan, gave Brousson the idea that it would be a more profitable and effective venture if the *Soerat Chabar Soldadoe* and the *Pewarta Wolanda* were combined to form a single periodical. Further, while Brousson's knowledge of the Malay language was not good enough to enable him to edit a periodical, Abdul Rivai was a born writer.⁸² In calculating the prospects, Brousson was possibly also thinking of his impending departure from the Indies in 1901, as his five-year term of service in the Indies army would expire in April of that year.⁸³ A further reason that may have induced him to propose the amalgamation of the two periodicals was the fact that by the turn of the century the government was becoming more favorable toward moves to bring enlightenment and educational awareness to the native population. Brousson must have come to know about the government's promise of a subsidy to the *Pewarta Prijaji* in early 1901. In January 1901 Clockener Brousson wrote to the Minister of Colonies requesting a financial subsidy for the new periodical which he proposed to call *Bandera Wolanda* [The Netherlands' Flag]. He asked for a sum of fl.5,500 and permission to have the periodical circulated in the barracks as well as in schools.⁸⁴ To convince the government that it was a good cause he stated that the aim of the *Bandera Wolanda* was to draw the military closer to Holland and to

strengthen the sentiments of loyalty and adoration for Her Majesty the Queen and the Netherlands flag⁸⁵

Before he left Java to return to the Netherlands, where he had applied to be attached to the Reconvaescent Afdeeling [Convalescent unit],⁸⁶ he made the necessary preparations with the press of Albrecht & Co. in Batavia. On April 15, 1901 the *Bandera Wolanda* began to appear with an editorial board consisting of Brousson, Rivai, Tehupeiorij, and Wiggers.⁸⁷

Although Brousson did not get the whole fl.5,500 he asked for,⁸⁸ the government nevertheless agreed to recommend the Commandant of the Army and Chief of the Department of War to spend a sum of fl.1,530 for 923 subscriptions to the *Bandera Wolanda*. The Government Secretary at Buitenzorg also sent a letter to the Director of Education, Public Worship, and Industry proposing a subscription for a sum of fl.4.50 for nine copies of the periodical for a duration of three months, to be distributed among officials of the native schools' inspectorate.⁸⁹ Judging from the number of agents the periodical had, its circulation must have been widespread. It had agents in several towns in Sumatra, Banjarmasin, Makassar, Penang, Singapore, and all the major towns in Java.

But toward the end of 1901 *Bandera Wolanda* and Brousson ran afoul of the authorities. Its June 1901 issue carried an article under Brousson's name with the title "Protestantism and Islam," arguing that there were many similarities between Islam and the Protestant religion. This aroused opposition from the *De Tijd*, a pro-Catholic paper published in Amsterdam.⁹⁰ *De Tijd* sensationalized the issue, expressing fears that the article might incite friction "among uneducated Muslims against their Catholic colleagues in the army and would make them feel superior to the Catholics."⁹¹ This led the Minister of Colonies to demand an explanation from Brousson. At first Brousson denied that he was the author of the article; but later he apologized, explaining that "his acquaintance with Islamic fallacies [*warbegrijpen*] and prejudices had led him to write in such hasty manner."⁹² He nevertheless promised not to treat religious issues in the future.⁹³

Small though this incident was,⁹⁴ the government nonetheless treated any question concerning the Islamic religion as sensitive and was extremely careful not to allow any form of religious [i.e., Islamic] propaganda to creep into a periodical subsidized by government funds. Furthermore, it was later learned that Brousson had apparently become or at least expressed a desire to become a Muslim.⁹⁵ The prospect of seeing an Islamic-biased periodical — one edited by a supposedly Muslim Dutchman and circulated among the native soldiers whose position as marginal people in the Indies rendered their loyalty to the Dutch flag suspect — must have greatly disconcerted the Minister of War. Brousson's affiliation to the Indische Bond,⁹⁶ an organization perceived in some government quarters as socialist-leaning, also aroused the government's suspicion of any radicalism that might creep into the pages of the *Bandera Wolanda*.

However, in spite of the doubts raised about Clockener Brousson, he was nevertheless regarded by many in the army as a "sympathetic enthusiast and an idealistic man."⁹⁷ Since he had given an undertaking not to arouse the government's displeasure in the future, the government continued the army's subscription in early 1902. But the incident had soured Brousson's relationship with Albrecht & Co. Press. Brousson accused the firm of being unwilling to improve the quality of the paper⁹⁸ and withdrew from the enterprise, leaving Albrecht & Co. to continue the publication. The real reason, however, was probably that Brousson was finally thinking of retiring from the army.⁹⁹ He was also thinking of publishing another journal, one that would not depend solely on the Indies soldiers but would draw support from the younger generation of educated Indonesians who had shown signs of awakening to the call for *kemajuan*. He was also thinking of the young *peranakan* Chinese intellectuals who, through their founding of the Tjong Hoa Hwee Koan, had demonstrated their ability to organize in response to the call for modernization. Brousson, the romantic ethicist, was enthralled by the events that accompanied the dawning of the twentieth century. Impressed with the upsurge of Indies pan-Chinese nationalism, he also noticed the changes taking place among the Indonesians.

75 Born on April 12, 1871, Clockener Brousson was commissioned second lieutenant of the infantry in July 1892 after having served in the Netherlands since August 1888. In 1896 he left for the Indies and was promoted to the rank of first lieutenant to serve in the Reserve Division in the Garrison Battalion in Aceh. In 1900 he was posted to Padang but visited Batavia on a number of occasions to initiate the publication of the soldiers' periodical with the cooperation of the printing firm Albrecht & Co.

76 The pilot edition of the paper was released in late 1899. The *Soerat Chabar Soldadoe* had four pages and was published fortnightly.

77 See, for example, the contents of *Soerat Chabar Soldadoe*, No. 16 (November 15, 1900).

78 It appeared that Brousson's intention to publish a soldiers' periodical in the Malay language was inspired by the popularity of the Dutch-language *Nederlandsche Soldaten krant voor Indie* for which Brousson served as a correspondent prior to 1899. During his sojourn in Sumatra he also met and befriended several well-known native personalities who appeared to have encouraged him in his intention. He also managed to get the Sultan of Langkat and a certain Mr. Taylor of the *Koninklijk Paketvaartmaatschappij* to give him some monetary assistance of an undisclosed sum for the execution of his project. See letter dated 3 October 1901 in *Verbaal* [hereafter *Vb.*] 111 October 1901, p. 18/no. 80.

79 The primary aim of the periodical as declared by Brousson, was "to combat moral failing, gambling, opium smoking and prodigality among the natives." Brousson to Minister of Colonies, *Vb.* 14 January 1901 Lett. L1.

80 Abdul Rivai, born August 13, 1871, was a *dokter jawa* formerly working in Medan. Intelligent, ambitious, frugal, and very determined, Rivai had left for the Netherlands at the end of 1899 with the intention of continuing his medical studies, the first *dokter jawa* graduate to do so. However, after having got himself admitted to the University of Utrecht, he discovered that he would not later be allowed to sit for the final examinations because he had never been to the *Hoogere Burger School*. He was asked to sit first for the preliminary examinations before he could be considered a *bona fide* medical student. So he moved to Amsterdam to prepare himself for the said qualifications and to study other European languages. It was while staying in Amsterdam that he initiated the publication of the *Pewarta Wolanda* with the assistance of Y. Strikwerda, a retired Assistant Resident.

81 The *Pewarta Wolanda's* first regular issue was dated July 14, 1900. In this issue there were articles about the "Boxers" in China, the famous Princess Dowager, Tsu Hsi, and life in Holland as well as in other parts of Europe, mostly written by Rivai in Batavia while he was still a student at the Dokter-Jawa school. In 1900 he also contributed some articles to the *Soerat Chabar Soldadoe*.

The Vernacular Press in the Netherlands Indies, Unit 1

82 Rivai was born into a family of teachers (both his father and brother were teachers), and his first book was a work of translation entitled *Pengadjaran perihal melakoekan kewadajiban orang beristeri*, a manual for those who wanted to go into matrimony, which was published in 1892

83 See *Extract uit Stamboek van Clockener Brousson* [extract from genealogical register of Clockener Brousson], *Henri, Constant, Claude*. No. 12602. N. B. This extract was taken from the office of the Registrar of Genealogy in Amsterdam.

84 *Oost en West*, No. 17 (October 3, 1901).

85 See MR 11 January 1901, *Vb. 14 January 1901* Lett. L1.

86 Minister of War to Minister of Colonies, 28 March 1901, *Exh. 3/30-1901 No. 1*.

87 The other corresponding editors whose names had appeared in the *Soerat Chabar Soldadoe* were retained. New correspondents recruited were Lim Soen Hwat of Sibolga, Mas Abdullah (who was supposed to be the periodical's illustrator in Amsterdam), and Raden Mas Pandji Sasra Kartana, the elder brother of Raden Adjeng Kartini.

88 Brousson had requested that amount to be used for improving the quality of paper and the format of the periodical. He also gave the reason that he needed fl. 1,000 to provide a scholarship for training a member of a Javanese aristocratic family with HBS [*Hoogere Burger School*] qualifications as a journalist who would eventually be given the editor's post on the periodical. However, the government's reply to this request was that it would have to wait and see.

89 Mr. Abendanon, the Director, felt that the periodical was not suitable for schools. "its language was impure and contents unsuitable," he said. Directeur van Onderwijs to Governor General, *Exh. 3/10-1902 No. 102*.

90 See *Bandera Wolanda* No. 6 (June 1901).

91 *De Tijd*, October 16, 1901.

92 Brousson's letter dated October 3, 1901, *Vb. 11 October 1901 p. 18/ No. 80*. Cf. *Handelsblad*, October 18, 1901.

93 According to an investigation carried out by the army, Brousson was not the author of the article. It was written by Abdul Rivai. F. Wiggers, the editor in Batavia, also said that Rivai was the writer. See copy of letter from Bussink, the chief of Albrecht & Co. press dated December 19, 1901, *Vb. 1 February 1902, Litt. F.2*.

94 As was pointed out by the Commandant of the Army and Chief of the Department of War in the Netherlands Indies, the public in the Indies did not attach too much importance to Brousson's writings in the *Bandera Wolanda*. Commandant of the Army to Governor General dated December 24, 1901, *ibid*.

95 Whether Brousson really became a Muslim cannot be fully ascertained. While the government believed that he was, and the *Bintang Betawi*, No. 280 (December 8, 1901) also spoke of his being a Muslim, the *Taman Pengadjar*, No. 5 (November 15, 1902), quoting the *Bataviasche Nieuwsblad*, stated that Brousson was returning to Java in 1903 to become a Muslim. See Minister of War to Minister of Colonies, *Exhibitum* August 23, 1901, *Vb. 11 October 1901, p. 18*.

96 The Indische Bond, a union of Eurasians and Dutchmen in the Indies, was founded in 1898. It was given legal recognition by the government on December 2, 1898. See draft of letter, Minister of Colonies to Minister of War, *Vb. 11 October 1901, p. 18*.

97 Voorlopig Visie Co., *Vb. 16 January 1903 No. 18/182*.

98 *Bintang Betawi*, No. 96 (May 1, 1902).

99 *Bandera Wolanda* [published in the Netherlands], No. 26 n.d. [1901?], p. 2.