



Cogent Arts & Humanities

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/oaah20

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To cite this article: Heri Priyatmoko, Singgih Tri Sulistiyono & Dhanang Respati Puguh (2024) Carrying dreams to the colonizer's country: the historical experiences of the Algemeene Middelbare School A-1 Eastern literature intellectual network in crossing oceans in the colonial era, Cogent Arts & Humanities, 11:1, 2365041, DOI: 10.1080/23311983.2024.2365041

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2024.2365041

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Published online: 01 Jul 2024.



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Carrying dreams to the colonizer's country: the historical experiences of the Algemeene Middelbare School A-1 Eastern literature intellectual network in crossing oceans in the colonial era

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to examine the historical experience of the intellectual network of the major of Eastern Literature at the Algemeene Middelbare School (AMS) A-1 sailing across the oceans to study in the Netherlands from the perspective of maritime and technological history. Using the historical method, it is known that alumni from the AMS A-1 have realized this dream of becoming an intellectual by continuing their studies in law and philology in the colonizer's country. The young natives put their lives on the line and held back their longing, determined to board a ship from the Dutch East Indies to the Netherlands for a month. It is proven that the historical movement of AMS A-1 intellectuals is supported by technological and international shipping networks. This is shown in both eqodocuments and newspaper sources in this study. The AMS A-1 network obtained information from mass media to determine the type of ship they should travel with. While crossing the ocean, undergraduates and teachers from the AMS A-1 experienced social stratification on the ship's deck. Class I, II, and III sorting applied based on social and economic groups. Thus, ships became not only a medium for spreading and achieving new knowledge but also a place to reinforce colonial European culture, which was also a reference on the ship. In historiography, this study fills the void in maritime history, which highlights how intellectual passengers changed their destiny by studying abroad. Research on school networks here is limited by focusing on the ocean and a single network, yet it opens up the field for further research on the dynamics of transnational educational networks and their impact on colonial and postcolonial society.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 6 January 2024 Revised 7 May 2024 Accepted 3 June 2024

KEYWORDS

AMS A-1: school networks; Eastern literature: maritime history; Dutch East Indies

REVIEWING EDITOR

Samuel Adu-Gyamfi, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology College of Arts and Social Science, Kumasi, Ghana

SUBJECTS

History of Education; Asian History; Modern History 1750-1945

1. Introduction

This research on school networks can be said to be unique, as well as having an element of novelty. The teachers and former students who were involved in the Algemeene Middelbare School (AMS) A-1 environment had extraordinary experiences at the beginning of the 20th century. They boarded ships and sailed the oceans for the sake of developing knowledge and achieving their dreams. So far, scientific studies about cross-country travel have been mostly filled by travelers and officials with recreational missions or bureaucratic interests (Ewertowski, 2022). Then, in relation to the data sources used, many studies do not highlight a person's experiences recorded in personal notes combined with contemporary newspapers of the 20th century. Usually, researchers tend to use manuscripts produced in the 19th century without relying too much on personal experiences recorded in literary sources (Meij, 2021; Molen, 2006).

However, such personal experiences in chasing education are still very relevant in Indonesia today, for example, reflected in literature. The world of Indonesian literacy was shocked by the presence of the Laskar Pelangi tetralogy written by Andrea Hirata (2005; 2006; 2007). The newspaper Republika, 30 December 2007 edition, reported that Laskar Pelangi had sold 200,000 copies. Then, the publication of the novel Laskar

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Pelangi was followed by two of Andrea's novels titled *Sang Pemimpi*, which sold 120,000 copies on the market, and *Edensor*, which sold 25,000 copies. These works form a memoir that Andrea dedicated to Muslimah Hafsari Hamid, her teacher when she attended a *Muhammadiyah* Elementary School from 1977 to 1983. Readers are presented with stories about children who are entangled in poverty but fight hard to obtain an education. The school environment bewitches the students to rise and be motivated to achieve their dreams, so they feel fortunate because they go to school in that place (Mintarti & Santoso, 2011, pp. 84–85).

From the results of reading those three novels, filled with historical facts, several interesting aspects are presented, namely the lives of poor students, the educational process, the ethos of learning, and efforts to achieve the dream of studying abroad. In this novel, Belitong is also described as pursuing hope. Surrendering to fate is not the nature of the poor children who are members of *Laskar Pelangi*.

Similarities are found in the descriptions in these literary works and those in the autobiography written by Mr. Soewidji titled *Kisah Nyata di Pinggir Jalan Slamet Riyadi* (1973). Unlike the *Laskar Pelangi* trilogy, which became a best-seller and is phenomenal, Mr. Soewidji had a limited print run. As far as the researcher has observed, this small amount of literature is only used as a reference when explaining the conditions of Surakarta in the past and the history of the war of independence at the local level. It seems that not many people are interested (if not forgetting) the historical facts of the author's struggles under the pseudonym Panut. The Surakarta born named Panut was a prototype of a poor teenager who was persistent in achieving his educational goals until he earned a bachelor's degree during the colonial era.

Each path to education from the lower level is very clear. He attended school and expanded the landscape at *Hollandsch Inlandsche Kweekschool* (HIK), *Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs* (MULO), AMS A-1 Surakarta, and studied law at a Dutch state university. His path in life was not smooth, and this made him feel conflicted when reflecting upon the children of nobles who wallowed in wealth and received affordable educational facilities because they belonged to the upper social strata. Privileges for the 'little people' (*wong cilik*) like Panut were difficult to achieve in the social pyramid constructed by the colonial government and the kingdom. The poor people are depicted as the losers in the colonial era who could only dream of continuing their studies. Studying both at domestic and foreign educational institutions was considered a privilege that was highly regarded.

The memoir of Mr. Soewidji is the main inspiration for this article. The main idea raised is the collective experience of AMS A-1 alumni majoring in Eastern Literature in achieving their dreams in colonial countries to continue their undergraduate education, so it does not highlight Soewidji's individual experience alone. This article also does not forget the AMS A-1 teachers who formed this intellectual network when they sailed the ocean from the Netherlands to the colonies, and vice versa when they took leave to visit their homeland. The emphasis in this article is the story of their journey over the ocean. From a maritime historical perspective, it is necessary to pay attention to the types of ships and other information on the theme of sea travel.

With this background, the research questions posed in this article are about which persons in the AMS A-1 Eastern Literature intellectual network went on a sea voyage abroad? What was the fleet of ships they sailed across the ocean like? What was their experience like on the ship? These experiences are relevant to better comprehending how opportunities were provided and how the colonial system was still imposed outside geographical boundaries. As this study shows, firm social hierarchies remained a reality on ships, which influenced the young intellectuals who would eventually play important roles in the decolonization process. These experiences are also useful for further studies into maritime history and educational history to add more depth to the important role of ships and how education pushed young intellectuals to take risks for achieving their dreams.

2. Literature review

There are several studies that intersect with this theme. Harry Poeze's work titled *In het land van der* overheerser *I: Indonesiërs in Nederland 1600–1950* (1986) focuses on the historical experience of Indonesian people while living on the Dutch mainland, after getting off the ship and away from the sea. Even though the time span taken by the author is very long, there is not much information about Indonesian people's inner feelings and social interactions on the ocean. Of course, the indigenous people carried

many dreams and hopes before setting foot on Dutch soil, there were many stories sailing on a ship for about a month. Azyumardi Azra's work on Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern 'Ulama' in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (1994) explains that the connectedness of *ulama* is imbued with the spirit of religious knowledge and spiritual spirit so that they are able to build the meaning of the network at the international level. This work inspired the reconstruction of the intellectual network that started from the Eastern Literature high school until it spread to various regions and attended schools in the Netherlands.

Nasution's book titled *Sejarah Pendidikan Indonesia* (2008) informs that AMS schools were divided into a section A, which emphasized literature and history, and a section B, which majored in mathematics and physics. Part A was also divided into part A-1 for Eastern classical studies and part A-2 focusing on Western classical studies. Nasution's study was helpful when the researcher wanted to portray AMS A-1 graduates who were planning to continue their studies in the Netherlands. Priyatmoko (2018) discusses the history of AMS A-1 education in Surakarta for the period 1926–1932. He stated that the school attracted multi-ethnic students from many regions in Indonesia to pursue education in the royal city. This study only focuses on the process of students attending school at these educational institutions and does not focus on post-graduation.

The approach used is technology. Mrazek (2002) said that nationalism spread and grew rapidly in Indonesia because of technological factors. Likewise, Anderson (1983) emphasized that printing machine technology contributed to the spread of the seeds of nationalism in society. Borrowing the point of view of the two Indonesianists, this article is based on the idea that ships—part of technology—helped spread knowledge and bring AMS A-1 intellectuals to pursue their dreams overseas.

The concept of technology, according to Gumbira Said (2004), includes four components. Adapted to the topic raised here, the author develops technoware which is part of the physical facilities, means, and infrastructure for operating a ship, such as machines and equipment that make it easier for the captain to run the ship at sea. Humanware includes human abilities, such as skills, expertise, local wisdom, and creativity, that show the value of available human resources. Infoware is recorded facts and information, such as news on cruise schedules and passenger lists. Orgaware is a method, collaborative network, and various practices that function to coordinate activities to achieve the desired things. This concept and these aspects are reflected in historical newspapers and personal reflections on sea voyages.

3. Research method

The method used is the historical method, which includes (1) heuristics or source collection. Contemporaneous data used by the newspapers *De Indische Courant, Kajawen, De Sumatra Post, De Locomotief, Deli Courant,* and *De Koerier* which mostly reported on students who passed exams, as well as passengers on departing ships, and the types of ships used. This data was obtained from the Jakarta National Library, the Lestari Literature Foundation, and the National Press Monument in Surakarta. This research also utilizes the autobiography written by Suryo Suparto (later Gusti Mangkunegara VII and supporter of the AMS A-1 school), which was obtained at the Reksapustaka Mangkunegaran Library, and the biography of Mr. Soewidji, stored in the Radyapustaka Surakarta Library. The following steps are (2) Source criticism or verification to examine the source's authenticity and see the source's credibility, and (3) Interpretation, namely analyzing historical facts (Herlina, 2020).

This analysis used an intellectual history perspective, which differs from the history of philosophy or ideas without revealing the author's historical experience (Hutton, 2014). On a personal note, it is very possible that the author's thoughts or ideas may be implied, reflecting a unique and unusual view of a phenomenon he or she has experienced (Collini, 1988). Intellectual history is also part of historical specialization, which contributes ideas from a methodological aspect (Jacoby, 1992). The final step is (4) historiography, namely an effort to write down research results regarding the AMS A-1 network which has experience in sailing the seas by paying attention to chronological aspects and historical logic (Kuntowijoyo, 1995, p. 99).

The research method and approach used thus combines the intellectual history perspectives with a technological approach, to dissect the different processes and experiences of the network members aboard ships. Shipping facilitated and enabled the possibility to achieve further education for example,

but also upheld colonial social stratifications and economic relations (Mahan, 2020). Intellectual education networks at times facilitated this as shown by Bunnel et al. (2020). However as this study shows, that was not always the case.

By focusing on the journey across the ocean this study has its limitations. Further studies on education networks should delve deeper into linking and connecting transnational experiences. Networks and technology played an important role in this aspect, which would be fruitful for further studies to pursue analyzing. By creating a bigger picture based on different research on education network further differences and similarities might become visible in how colonial transnational education networks operated. This will further enhance understandings of how technology and ideas spread and developed, both in a colonial and postcolonial context. After all, members of these networks often played important roles in the late colonial and early decolonization period. Because of this, it is crucial to further delve into how these historical actors were shaped and in turn impacted the world around them.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. AMS A-1 alumni

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Dutch colonial government implemented the Ethical Policy program. Apart from irrigation and transmigration aspects, the Dutch also established schools to educate the community on how to repay their debt of honour. In addition, graduates were projected to fill seats in the colonial bureaucracy which required diplomas and skills. Of the many educational institutions built on colonial land, there was the AMS to accommodate MULO graduates who intended to continue their studies. However, at that time, universities majoring in Eastern Literature had not yet been established in the Dutch East Indies. Thus, to continue their studies, AMS A-1 graduates had to go to the Netherlands, where a philology major was available. Graduates who were interested in legal studies could also dream of visiting the mother country of the Netherlands, because of how well-known and respected the legal majors were.

The colonial education system at the AMS senior high school level was implemented for three years, in contrast to *Hoogere Burgerschool* (HBS) which took five years but did not require a MULO diploma, instead sufficing having passed European primary schools. As for the division within the AMS schools, there was AMS B-1 which prioritized mathematics and physics which was opened in Jakarta (1919) and Yogyakarta (1920), while AMS A-2 majored in Western classics in Bandung (1920) and AMS A-1 majored in Eastern classics in Surakarta (1926). *'Ing taoen 1925 wonten news ramé bilih ing Soerakarta badé wonten AMS. Badé wontenipoen AMS ing Soerakarta, jektosan. Directeuripoen inggih poenika toewan Dr. W.F. Stutterheim, sampoen dateng'*, said the teacher and author of Javanese literature, Yasawidagda in *Serat Pengetan Gesangipun Jasawidhagda* (1950). As translated by the author, this means that 'in 1925 there was news that was widely discussed that in Surakarta AMS would be established. The director of the AMS was Dr. W.F. Stutterheim'.

The choice of Surakarta as the location for the Eastern classic AMS A-1 was very appropriate considering that the Surakarta area is rich with ancestral remains. From ancient *serat*, temples, artifacts, palaces, and libraries are available in this city, heir to the oldest Islamic Mataram dynasty. This means that the teacher-student is close to the object being studied in class at any time. Archaeologist Stutterheim attached the nickname 'archaeological site paradise' to Surakarta. Then, intellectual passion in the city of the Bengawan river was very fertile, marked by the number of poets, various newspapers, and political discussions.

Stutterheim sailed to the Dutch East Indies initially as an archaeological assistant (1924). In 1926 he left Batavia and became head of AMS A-1 in Surakarta. He felt that Batavia was too stuffy. Many of his fellow Leiden alumni and civil servants envied him. Stutterheim's progressive attitude triggered disputes because the more conservative alumni did not agree with his views and methods (Djajadiningrat, 2009, p. 164). Stutterheim would for example incorporate critical readings of Dutch colonialism in his curriculum and allowed a relative freedom of speech on more sensitive matters too. The newspaper *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië* (29 August 1926) published a short news item titled 'Dr. Sutterheim'.

Journalists reported that the government appointed Stutterheim as the Board of Directors for the *Afdeeling* (Section) *Oostersch Letterkundige* (Eastern Literature) AMS Surakarta in mid-1926. The doctorate in the field of *Oostersch Letteren* (Eastern Literature) originally served at the *Oudheidkundigen Dienst* (Archeological Service).

A year after it opened in July 1926, the new school's teaching and learning process went relatively well. This argument is supported by the statement of a *De Indische Courant* journalist (29 April 1927) who reported dozens of names of AMS A-1 students who had succeeded in advancing to the next class, including R. Prijono, Soeparman, J.E. Sondakh, Abdoellah, Soemarto, Muhammad Nasroen, Soemadi, Soehardjo, Rastian Rassad, Prajitno, Hindromartono, Dj. Abidin, Hatyanto, Wijono, A. Hamzah, B.R.M. Jartobitoe, Soedradjat, Abdoelrachman, Raspijo, Masdoelkak, Gatot, Soeleiman, R.B. Massaid, Kaja, Dj. Sasono, Soedarmo, Sarsadi, Seroto, Moenadjat, Soetjahjo, Soewignjo, Sjamsoebahroem, Soelindro, Jap Sin Fong, R.G. Indrajono, Moersito, Sadisoto, Soepingi, Soenario, Soepomo, Soeparman, Soemadji, Soenargo, H.B. Sinambela, and Soedargo. Of the total 45 students, some later continued their education in Leiden.

The tradition of publishing a list of graduates at a school in newspapers has been commonplace since the colonial era. This fact implied a sense of pride for the management of educational institutions to inform the public. The school used this piece of news as a marketing strategy to attract public interest in sending their children to this institution. From the perspective of students and parents, this news created invaluable happiness. Readers knew which students' names passed the exams on the pages of the newspaper. At that time, being able to enter high school was considered rare, so it was no surprise that the news of a student's graduation was considered an extraordinary achievement. Meanwhile, media managers reaped profits from sales of newspapers which were generally best-selling during this momentum.

Three years later, the public came across news in the 6 May 1930 edition of *De Locomotief* regarding AMS A-1 students who passed the exam and promoted to the next class. They are Hamzah, Hertog, Hartols, nona Hik Soendari, Louwerens, Poerwoto, Moeldi Rasdiman, Rasono, Sajoeti, Sastrawiria, Soedijarso, Soehardjo, Soedjojo, Soemarno, Soemeroe, Soetiksimoe, nona Soetjiati, Soewidji,¹ nona Tjia, and Achdiat. Meanwhile, those who were promoted to class 5–6 were Afandi, Amzin, Boentarman, nona Brenthel, Daliloedin, Darjono, Djarkasi, nona Ehrentreich, Koesman, nona Malikin, Moeljatno, Oemar, Pané, Poerwito, Ratmoko, Samadikoen, Samidan, Santosa, nona Sarwosari, Soerdarmadi, Roejoed, nona Soemiati, Soemito, Soepar, Soetedjo, Soewandi, Sardiono, Soediono, Soegeng, Soekardi, Soemardjo, Soemarsono, Soepangat, Timboel, Tindi, Tojosastere, and Made.

A day later, *De Locomotief* (7 May 1930) informed the results of the AMS A-1 final exam which consisted of 12 candidates, with two others failing their exam. Those who were declared to have passed were Rastian Rassad, B.R.M. Jartobitoe, Soetjahjo, Siddharto Poerspowardojo, Sasono, Gatot, Sadwoto, Abdurachman, Tjan Tjoe Siem, and Raspijo. In this way, the new school, which was much sought after by indigenous people, had succeeded in producing graduates. While they were at AMS A-1, they were prepared to move up to a higher level at university or college level (*pamulangan luhur*). For most of them, that meant preparing themselves to attempt to achieve a spot at a Dutch university.

4.2. Carrying dreams to the colonizer's country

Of all the male and female students mentioned above, some continued studying for undergraduate degrees in the Netherlands, braving the dangers of the ocean. Ships could sink and dangerous diseases could break out. Colonial social stratifications were upheld strongly at sea, despite the students physically leaving the colonized country. Being confined on a ship with the same people for almost a month thus gave plenty of time to contemplate and write, resulting in rich narratives about shipboard life. Not to mention holding back the heart-wrenching pain of missing their hometown and family was prominent in these writings. The ships themselves also take a prominent role, either implicitly or explicitly.

In undertaking the long, perilous journey, there were various options and shipping lines from which to choose. Dutch companies however had a good name in safety and quality, which was reflected in a pricier ticket. During this time ships were steadily improved and became more luxurious and quicker. One of those newest ships was the *Sibajak*, that first sailed in 1928. The size of the ship *Sibajak* was

166.95 M in length, with a width of 19.06 M, from top to bottom 11.35 M. It had an official speed of 17 miles, but on the way to the Dutch East Indies, the speed increased to 17.5 miles. There was space for 212 class I passengers, 174 class II, 68 class III, and a crew of 300 people (*Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 18 February 1928). The ship was described as strong and easy to control.

At the start of the first voyage, it was tested by a storm a few hours after departing from Southampton. The storm was so severe and frightening that in the halls of the ship, many people were praying in their pajamas while wearing safety belts. The administrator tried to calm those who were foreigners. An old English man who had joined the voyage said that it was impossible for a Dutch ship to sink. However, the interior of the ship was badly damaged, resulting in the owner spending thousands of guilders to replace furniture, glass, plates, and bowls from the luxurious interior. Luckily in Marseille most of the damage could be replaced and repaired, so this beautiful ship was still beautiful when it arrived in the Dutch East Indies (*Sumatra-bode*, 19 March 1928).

It is hard to deny that public confidence in the quality of ships was influenced by media reports, which for example made the old English man explain that Dutch ships never sank. *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* (9 March 1928) tells the story of *Sibajak* arriving in Batavia which was impressive and amazing. The older ship *P.C. Hooft* was bigger, more impressive, and more imposing, but the Sibajak was faster and more elegant. *Sibajak's* first long journey was very smooth and broke all records between Batavia and Rotterdam. In good conditions, it could travel as fast as 18 miles. In this way, Sibajak was able to cut the trip by more than a day. *De Locomotief* (14 March 1928) added that *Sibajak* moved quickly. Usually, the ship reached Priok on Mondays. There were some who arrived on Sunday, but *Sibajak* arrived on Friday morning, even though it had not reached top speed yet. Not long after, *Sibajak* departed from Semarang for parts of Europe. Previously, the ship stopped in Batavia because there were still passengers on board (*De Locomotief*, 26 March 1928).

It was important for potential passengers to know about ships. They needed information as clearly as possible to convince themselves to use the transportation facilities provided by a certain company. This information could be found in mass media news which also broadcasts the actual condition of the naval fleet. For the AMS A-1 network, literature in the form of newspapers was easily found in the *internaat* (dormitory) and school libraries. Moreover, in Surakarta at that time the literacy level was quite high and supported by consumers from the gentry, nobility, European communities, Chinese, and other social groups. They needed up-to-date information about law, trade, Dutch East Indies politics, and foreign news (Kuntowijoyo, 2006).

In the newspaper Soerabaijasch Handelsblad (12 June 1930) information was obtained that in the long-term Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt would be used as a standard for mail and passenger shipping vessels. Meanwhile, shipping between the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies would be maintained with 4 motor ships in the future, namely Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt, Marnix, Huygens, and P.C. Hooft, along with 2 steamships Johan de Witt and J.P. Coen. Journalists stated that the size of the Oldenbarnevelt ship was 19,000 tons and had a maximum capacity of 750 passengers. On this ship, it was recorded that Queen Wilhelmina opened a new dam at IJmuiden. However, on its first trial, the ship collided with the steamer Reggestroom near Velsen. As a result, the fleet's departure was postponed several days to 9 May 1930.

Another older ship, the *Prins der Nederlanden* was continued to be improved in its service to the passengers and the quality of the ship. The proof is that the old ship was originally sold to be destroyed in 1902. It had been used as a ship for the *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij* for too long. The ship weighed 2287 gross tons and 1439 net tons (De Indische Courant, 15 February 1928). Even though it was considered luxurious and used by the nobility, the *Prins der Nederlanden* ship was without problems. In 1927, it was broadcasted that the Prins der Nederlanden ship experienced a fire. The fire came from a coal storage warehouse, and officers had difficulty taming the red rooster. The damage suffered was not serious, so the ship still departed on time on 26 April 1927 (Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad, 24 May 1927). Demand for ships was still high, and both newer and older models did have their occasional problems.

The audience was also explained that the distance from Amsterdam to Java would take 28 days. This meant that there had been a significant saving of two days. Then, the distance from Genua to Java is enough to cover in 19 days and 18 h. The *Oldenbarnevelt* ship was not much different from the *Baloeran* ship which only arrived a few weeks ago. The shape of this ship was like a tall hotel because the ship was tall with rectangular windows. The modernization of ship technology could be seen in the

architecture of the *Oldenbarnevelt* ship which was made like a compromise between ship and hotel. The shape was slimmer, even though the size was very large. Without hesitation, the company provided more than 750 rooms on board the ship.

The series of facts above confirm that the transportation fleet business at that time emphasized service to passengers. Adapting to new technology and making ships as attractive as possible to attract potential passengers was a breakthrough carried out by shipping company owners, that again influenced public opinion reflected in newspaper, again influencing the young students in choosing their ships. It shows how by developing the technoware and infoware aspects were very important in praising these different kinds of ships with detailed information that was spread widely through colonial media. The humanware aspect of the high quality of Dutch captains, sailors, and shipbuilders was reinforced at the same time.

As mentioned before, undertaking these long journeys meant leaving behind everyone they know for an uncertain future in an unknown country (Soewidji, 1973). Everyone experienced this inner turmoil without exception, like Prince Suryo Suparto. He confesses in the following: 'My heart feels like it's being stirred up. Not only because I had to leave my homeland, but also because they left behind relatives and friends. Fortunately, there is a prospect that in a few years, I will return and bring a lot of new knowledge. Really, I'm sad, but I won't explore this feeling at length' (Mangkoenegoro VII, 2017, p. 52).

In 1912 Prince Suryo Suparto left Surakarta for the Netherlands aboard the *Wilis* ship. He would experience first-hand what kind of disasters loomed at sea. The Mangkunegaran palace aristocrat explained that a group of doctors came to check the health of everyone on the ship. They also researched whether the ship was carrying infectious diseases. After declaring everyone healthy, the doctors returned to the port aboard a motorboat. The fleet was piloted by 4 Europeans. They were dressed like sailors, with a fez (a typical Turkish hat) perched on their heads. The four people were apparently Egyptian port employees who were assigned to help the Suez doctors. The doctor's ship flying the Turkish flag on a mast at its stern had not yet disappeared from sight when the *Wilis* ship began to be surrounded by small boats belonging to Arab traders (Mangkoenegoro VII, 2017, p. 119).

Prince Suryo Suparto was not the only one who experienced the reality of health as a main factor in shipping, however. A *De Sumatra Post* reporter (14 August 1931) wrote a news story entitled '*Tengkoe Naar De Universiteit*'. In the article, it was explained that tomorrow on the *Sibajak* ship Tengkoe Mohamad Daliloedin would sail to the Netherlands to study law. This Tengkoe was the son of Tengkoe Moefti (head of the Islamic religion) in the Deli Sultanate. In this newspaper, the journalist explained that he was a graduate of AMS A-1 Surakarta and the first *tengkoe* from the Deli Sultanate to attend university. From the Sultanate of Langkat, there were already three *tengkoe* in the Netherlands who were studying at universities, two of them studying for medicine and one studying law, two of these *tengkoe* were the sons of the former prince of Bindjei. Armed with in-depth knowledge, Daliloedin later became a respected political activist.

Several facts make it thus clear that Daliloedin, who boarded the *Sibajak* ship, belonged to the local Deli elite. Journalists described Medanese people crowding the Belawan port. They raced towards the ship because one of the passengers was so very special. *De Sumatra Post* (18 August 1931) without hesitation mentioned the name Tengkoe Daliloedin, son of Tengkoe Hadji Zainoedin from Medan, who left for Europe to continue his education after completing his studies at AMS A-1 in Surakarta. Many *tengkoe* and high-ranking officials from the native community waved goodbye to Tengkoe Daliloedin who was already on the ship embracing his dream. Exactly at 5 pm, the *Sibajak* ship departed from Belawan carrying hundreds of passengers with various interests.

The ship traveled at a measured speed and stopped at several predetermined points. On the same day, it was reported that a daughter of a class II passenger on the *Sibajak* ship had symptoms of diphteritis. It is an infectious disease that is dangerous for children under 5 years old. Diphtheria infection is triggered by a strain of bacteria called *Corynebacterium diphtheriae*. These bacteria produce toxins that cause a thick layer (or membrane) in the nose, throat, or airways. The child was treated at a clinic in Sabang, and his family chose to disembark. The accommodation and the surrounding area were then cleaned by officers to prevent anything bad for the health of other passengers. As a result of this incident, the ship was delayed by 1 h in leaving Sabang (*De Indische Courant*, 18 August 1931). The identities of the rooms that were suspected to have bacteria on them were traced, namely rooms 264, 262, and

260. The three rooms on the ship were closed and cleaned to the maximum when they stopped in Sabang, including the opposite bathroom (*Deli Courant*, 19 August 1931).

These views make us aware that the health aspects on board the ship were really taken into account by the ship's officers. This statement is reinforced by the news of an incident in 1929 when the *Prins der Nederlanden* ship arrived in Belawan and found a child from a family suspected of suffering from *Roodvonk* (smallpox). To confirm this suspicion, the ship's doctor intervened. After the doctor determined that the child had not had contact with other people or goods, the ship was not isolated (*De Sumatra post*, 2 January 1929). A day passed. The ship was declared not to be isolated independently because the patient was still in the incubation stage of the disease, and no other cases were found on the ship (*De Locomotief*, 10 January 1929).

Apart from Daliloedin, another person who felt the sensation of boarding the *Sibajak* ship was Abdulchamid. According to Soewidji (1973), Abdulchamid was a teenager from Laweyan and neighbors with Ali Afandi who both graduated from AMS A-1 Surakarta. Both of them grew up in an environment of batik bosses and earned law degrees in the Netherlands. Together with Sibajak, Abdulchamid departed from Batavia in early August 1931 and set foot in Marseille for Rotterdam on 2 September 1931 (*Algemeen Handelsblad*, 6 September 1931). Six years passed, Abdulchamid returned to his homeland aboard the *Dempo* ship. He and 430 passengers departed from Rotterdam for Batavia on 28 July 1937. The *Dempo* ship stopped at Port Said and other intermediate ports (*Soerabaijasch Handelsblad*, 10 August 1937).

The *Sibajak* ship was carrying Abdulchamid's close friend, Ali Afandi, from Batavia to the Netherlands. On 2 September 1931, the ship carried the young man full of dreams from Marseille to Rotterdam (*Algemeen Handelsblad*, 6 September 1931). His dream of studying in the Netherlands was realized, and he even received a master's degree. He was declared to have passed the master's candidate exam in Dutch East Indies law three years after leaving his homeland (*De Tijd: godsdienstig-staatkundig Dagblad*, 29 September 1934). This was immortalized by a journalist of the newspaper *De Koerier* (23 September 1939) with the title 'Mister Ali Afandi'. The reporter wrote that Raden Mas Ali Afandi Wirjoatmodjo arrived in Surakarta on Wednesday afternoon after 5 years in the Netherlands, where he obtained his master's degree. Relatives and acquaintances were present at Balapan Station that afternoon to welcome the young lawyer. Of course, the experience of crossing the ocean safely and completing studies in the Netherlands is a source of pride for Ali Afandi's extended family. In the period after independence, this man's career was brilliant as a law professor and assisting at the Ministry of Manpower.

Then, a young Chinese man from Surakarta, an AMS A-1 alumnus who went to school in the Netherlands, namely Tjan Tjoe Siem. He was an intelligent student and even received an award from the French ambassador for learning French and studying it fluently (*Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 16 August 1929). Apart from Dutch as the language of instruction, at AMS A-1 German and French were also taught on a facultative basis. His name appeared along with hundreds of passengers lined up on the pages of the 25 August 1930 edition of *De Koerier*. Instead of boarding on *Sibajak* like his friends, on 27 August 1930 Tjan Tjoe Siem was carried by the *Insulinde* ship which departed from Batavia to Rotterdam am. This mode of transportation passed through Marseille and Southampton. Looking closely at the passenger list, almost the majority were Europeans, both individuals and families. For example, fam. D. Wiemans, fam. A.T.H, Gebbink, fam. J. W. A. Koch, fam, Jhr. L. van der Goes, fam. Chr. Slagmoolen, fam. F.C.M, Leesberg, fam. van der Meyde, and fam. A. Meyers.

Tjan Tjoe Siem's efforts to cross the sea with the *Insulinde* ship and endure longing for his family in Surakarta were not in vain. His brilliant achievements since attending AMS A-1 Surakarta continued when he studied philology in the Netherlands. The dream he had on board the ship of becoming an intellectual eventually came true. European scholars praised Tjan Tjoe Siem's dissertation as a perfect Dutch translation of a 200-page long text. The full-blooded Dutchman himself acknowledged the difficulties with what Tjan Tjoe Siem was doing. It was clearly stated that a 20-year-old Chinese born in Surakarta, who did not enter the Dutch environment, had achieved extraordinary and surprising success. The hundreds of footnotes in his work also testified to the author's wide knowledge and in-depth literacy. No one would regret flipping through the pages of this fascinating dissertation for an hour. People should read it carefully, especially those who are not used to enjoying shadow puppet shows. Those who understood Javanese texts would realize the difficulties that Dr. Tjan Tjoe Siem solved as best he could (*De*

Locomotief, 8 March 1938). After independence, Tjan Tjoe Siem became a professor of philology at the University of Indonesia.

Meanwhile, there was also a Yogyakarta noble family member who graduated from AMS A-1 to continue their education in the Netherlands, namely Hertog, who later became a teacher at the State Islamic College and a thinker at the Sultanate Palace. He was the son of the late crown prince at the Yogyakarta Sultanate palace. In 1934 he was declared to have passed the master's candidate examination at the law faculty in Leiden. Meanwhile, his brother, Raden Mas Raisoel, majored in Indology (*De Locomotief*, 14 August 1934). While in his native country, he was actively involved in the Student Association for the Promotion of Indonesian Arts (S.V.I.K.) which was headquartered at Schelpenkade 9 in Leiden. Hertog was the deputy chairman of the organization, while the chairman was Masdoelhak Hamoenangan Nasoetin who was also an alumnus of AMS A-1 Surakarta (*Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, 5 December 1935). The closeness built during school in Surakarta and the AMS A-1 intellectual network became their main capital in growing the organization. They also had pride in studying and introducing their ancestral heritage which was the focus of the AMS A-1 curriculum.

Five years after settling in the Netherlands, Hertog and several aristocratic sons of the Yogyakarta Sultanate returned across the ocean to conduct research in Indonesia. On 30 September 1939 Hertog, R.M. Tenggato, R.M. Baisoel, R.M. Ngaskari, R.M. Kerami, and R.M. Soekadane simultaneously studied law in the Netherlands and agreed to board a ship to return to Indonesia (*De Locomotief*, 28 November 1939). Previously, the descendant of a noble Yogyakarta family who studied in the Netherlands after graduating from AMS A-1 was Prijono. He was declared to have graduated with a doctorate in literature with a dissertation on the ancient Javanese story Sri Tanjung (*Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, 25 June 1938). Later, Prijono held an important position as Minister of Education and Culture, as well as a professor of philology at Gadjah Mada University. Meanwhile, in 1943 Masdoelhak, who came from Sibolga, earned a doctorate in law at Utrecht University with a dissertation on the position of women in Batak customary law (*Utrechtsche Courant: Nieuws en Advertentieblad*, 25 March 1943).

The AMS A-1 intellectual network appears to be strengthened thanks to the many graduates continuing to the Netherlands. A year before Hertog returned to his hometown, R.M. Rasdiman boarded a ship to fight for his dream of studying law in Leiden. Rasdiman, who is the younger brother of R.M. Raspio, instead of following in his older brother's footsteps, received his education at the *Rechtshoogeschool* (Law College) or R.H.S. in Batavia. This nobleman's son from Surakarta graduated from AMS A-1. The following is the original text written in *Kajawen* magazine (26 October 1938): '*Nglajêngakên dhatêng nagari Walandi. R.M. Rasdiman, Inkang Rayi Mr. R.M. Raspio graduated doctoraalexamen ing Pamulangan luhur Pangadilan ing Bêtawi, badhe nglajêngakên sinau dhatêng nagari Walandi. Bidhalipun benjing on November 7 ngajêng punika*'. As translated by the author: continues to the Netherlands. R.M. Rasdiman, Mr. R.M. Raspio passed the exam at a law school in Betawi (Batavia) and will continue studying in the Netherlands. He leaves on November 7.

The series of names mentioned above are all of blue blood. The social status of the nobility was certainly different from that of ordinary people. The financial aspect also influenced them in achieving their dreams. As in comparison, the most obvious example is the story of Soewidji under the pseudonym Panut. Even though he was part of the AMS A-1 intellectual network and also the native group, the way to achieve his goals required harder efforts, even determination. Later in life, he became a lawyer, a very prolific book author, a church activist, and one of the founders of Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta.

Soewidji was born into a poor family. To gain knowledge in AMS A-1, he was willing to sell the land his parents had given him which was supposed to be used as capital for his marriage. Instead of using it for extravagance, he used the proceeds from the land sale for school fees. After graduating from high school, his dream of going to the Netherlands did not diminish even though he lived in poverty. He calculated all the costs needed to go to Leiden to study. Tuition fees for a year amounting to f 300, clothes f 200, and books f 150, he already had collected. Every month he would receive a shipment of f 80. His mind was racing because he needed transportation costs for a class III ship ticket of f 500.

Suddenly he remembered his teacher when he studied at MULO. Soewidji wrote that the European teacher with the initials Kk had chosen to retire in his homeland. In a month, the teacher would return home to the Netherlands with his family consisting of his wife and 2 minor children. Without waiting

long, from Surakarta Soewidji rushed to Sarangan to meet his teacher who was on holiday. Starting with small talk, Soewidji then expressed his plan that he wanted to come to the Netherlands as a servant so he would not have to spend any money. The reason was, he understood that families like Kk. had the right to include servants on board the ship without charge. Next, Soewidji explained that he intended to study in the Netherlands, and also promised not to bother Kk's family. He honestly admitted that the problem he faced was finding savings on shipping costs (Soewidji, 1973, p. 27).

It turned out that R. Katamsi experienced a similar case. He was Soewidji's drawing teacher at AMS A-1 with a diploma from the *Akademie Voor de Beeldende Kunsten Middlebaar Onderwijs* in The Hague. It is said that in 1915 Mr. Yan Pieter Dom (R. J. Katamsi's mother's older brother), who served as an assistant resident of Cilacap, received leave. His family planned to visit the Netherlands. According to application regulations, if you go with a family of five people, you are permitted to bring a helper. Incidentally, Dom's family consisted of five people (wife and three children), so he was allowed to be accompanied by a servant. Dom invites Katamsi, who is believed to be part of the family. Katamsi iwa beyond happy, because having the opportunity to continue his studies abroad was like a dream he had held onto for a long time. After getting approval from his parents, in 1915 Katamsi and Dom's family left for the Netherlands by ship. Katamsi was not charged a ticket fee because he was considered a servant of Yan Pieter Dom's family (Tashadi dan Bambang Sularto, 1981, p. 18).

The reason for including servants for a family of five people only became known to Soewidji after witnessing the incident on the ship. The first night on the ship, after lunch, there was a commotion in class II. Apparently, there was an accident that happened to a 3- or 4-year-old child. It started with a husband and wife telling their children to sleep near a round window (*patrijs*). Then, the parents dined with the ship's captain and other passengers. Unexpectedly, the child came out of the patrijs and fell into the sea. The captain of the ship had actually instructed through all the funnels that all *patrijs* were tp be closed when leaving the hut (room). The husband and wife fainted, also screaming after waking up. It was easy to guess that his son had died in the Javanese sea (Soewidji, 1973, p. 31).

The captain hurriedly ordered his subordinates to turn the ship's bow. The ship went back and forth looking for the boy in the sea using big lights, but to no avail. The ship finally continued its journey to Singapore, and the child's parents were about to disembark at Belawan port. From this tragic incident, it is understood why it was important for families who have two children and the youngest is still 10 years old to have the right to include a helper when sailing at sea without charge. The aim was to help maintain the safety of the children on the ship so that such incidents would not occur.

Even though they were free to board ships, Soewidji and Katamsi were not allowed to occupy class I and II rooms. For passengers, there were three classes, namely class I above and class II below. Kk. and Dom's families occupied class II, near the dining room in the middle of the ship. Each hut has multi-layered beds and *patrijs* with views of the sea and sky. The name of the ship Soewidji was on was *Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt*. This ship was one of the largest naval fleets of the Nederland maatschappij. When Soewidji left for the Netherlands in 1930, this ship was still rather new and luxurious. Three years later, after struggling with academic matters and struggling to survive in his foreign country, the university in Leiden issued an announcement that Soewidji had been declared a master's candidate in Dutch East Indies law. *De Tijd: Godsdienstig-staatkundig Dagblad* edition of 23 December 1933 wrote the names of Soewidji together with Remy Haaksma from Siak who defended their doctoral exams in literature and philosophy with a scientific essay titled '*Inleiding tot de studie der vervoeg vormen in de Indonesische talen*'.

Soewidji's teacher and principal of AMS A-1, namely Dr. W.F. Stutterheim, also experienced boarding the Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt. This archaeologist and compiler of the book 'Leerboek der Indische Cultuurgeschiedenis voor Middelbare Scholen' at AMS A-1 took advantage of leave for several months to the Netherlands. Indeed, there were regulations addressing Dutch colonial employees who had served for 6 years as having the right to apply for long leave. Usually, Indologists would use their leave time to return to their homeland. In 1931 Stutterheim was allowed 8 months leave to go to Europe. The Director of AMS A-1 went on leave on 2 June 1931 (De Indische Courant, 18 February 1931).

A year later after returning to the Dutch East Indies, Stutterheim carried out similar activities again when he held the position of head of the archaeological service. *De Indische Courant* (20 March 1939) reported that Stutterheim would again take leave to return to the Netherlands. He planned that at the end of June, he would return to Batavia using the Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt ship which departed from

Genua on 23 March 1939. Three months later, *De Sumatra Post* (20 June 1939) reported that the *Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt* departed from Amsterdam on 14 June 1939 and was expected to arrive in Belawan on 10 July 1939. One of the passengers transported from Amsterdam was W.F. Stutterheim, but he did not come down in Belawan. The character of W.F. Stutterheim was considered special in the eyes of journalists in the Dutch East Indies because his expertise and expertise in the field of culture were recognized by the public. He was also considered successful in producing prospective scholars or cultural thinkers through the AMS A-1 institution.

The travels of W.F. Stutterheim show that both teachers and students used the same technology in traversing the distance between the colonizer's and colonized countries. Shipping technology played an important role in this. Tickets however were very expensive, and the network as shown with Soewidji's and Katamsi's stories helped at times to overcome such financial problems in crossing the ocean. Especially from their position as 'servants' they experienced the hard boundaries existing on ships, namely the many things that were not allowed for them. Thus the technology allowed for different experiences, despite both teacher and student using the same ship. Their treatments were different aboard ships, as shown in the next part on social stratification.

4.3. Social stratification on the sea

Thus it turns out that social stratification does not only apply on land, but also at sea. The simple definition of social stratification is the differentiation of the population into classes in a hierarchical manner. In social reality, it is found that there is no balance in the distribution of rights and obligations, and responsibilities for social values and their direction among members of society (Soekanto, 1995, p. 220).

Colonial politics implementing social differentiation was real in various places, without exception in sea transportation modes. Even though he was a fellow native and had brown skin, Soewidji's treatment compared to nobles and people with money is clearly different. This historical reality is reflected in the story of King Paku Buwana who went to see the ship *Prins der Nederlanden* of the 'Nederland' company. Journalists described many people watching the king enter the ship. The king of the Kasunanan Surakarta palace explored the body of the ship. There were several luxurious rooms that the Patih's family wanted to use on their way to Batavia. At 12.30 lunch was scheduled in the dining room. The ship's waiter served a partly Dutch and Indies menu. The ship's captain rewarded him with a stick with a gold button and decorated with diamonds. The Sunan also responded by providing a portrait of himself with the Ratu Emas. At around 14.00 the king said goodbye to the captain and governor and his family, who would soon be sailing on this ship to Batavia. The *Prins der Nederlanden* ship departed from Semarang (*De Locomotief*, 28 May 1925).

Compared to *Sibajak*, the *Prins der Nederlanden* ship seems to be a regular for the residents of the Javanese palace. This fact was recorded in 1923 when the princes from Surakarta returned from the Netherlands on the *Prins der Nederlanden* ship (De Sumatra Post, 17 December 1923). When leaving Surakarta, the nobles boarded the *Prins der Nederlanden* steamship from Batavia to Amsterdam via Singapore, Belawan-Deli, Sabang, Colombo, Suez, Port Said, Genua, Algiers, and Southampton (*De Indische Courant*, 4 April 1928).

The special service, status, and luxury available on the ship would certainly be a magnet for potential passengers. In fact, when the ship was about to go to the Netherlands, the rooms provided by the company for passengers were full, meaning there were none empty (*Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 29 December 1920). The ship was also used to hold dinner parties inviting distinguished guests. A galadinner was held to celebrate 100 years of the existence of the Dutch rescue company. The celebration on board the ship was considered a success (*De Sumatra Post*, 24 November 1924).

European culture remained the norm on board the ship. Even though it was no longer on land, Western civilization, and its supporting societies still occupied the top social class. Even though the indigenous elite boarded ships, such as R.M. Hertog, R.M. Tenggato, R.M. Baisoel, R.M. Ngaskari, R.M. Kerami, Tengkoe Mohamad Daliloedin, Masdoelhak Hamoenangan to Suryo Suparto, European norms remained stiff. This was also reflected in what food was available. Dutch-style eating etiquette was still applied at the dining table. Everyone paid attention to polite manners. For example, you would not click when chewing or bend over the plate—so you would not be seen as someone who does not know

customs. It was even worse if someone reported behavior they considered disrespectful to the chief administrator. This was apparently experienced by Suryo Suparto himself. Another passenger reported that the Mangkunegaran palace aristocrat was considered to be acting impolitely, even though at that time he was feeling nauseous at the dinner table due to seasickness (Mangkoenegoro VII, 2017, pp. 82–83).

The partiality towards the European community over the indigenous people was also reflected in the provision of prayer facilities on board the ship. The majority of European passengers on the ship were Christians, so the management provided a place of worship for them. For example, *Sibajak* in 1928 was declared the first ship on the Dutch route to the Dutch East Indies which provided a permanent place of prayer for Catholics (De Koerier, 6 March 1928). It was not without reason that a house of worship was built on this ship, it was to improve the service to the majority of passengers. For the provision of this sacred space, this newspaper without hesitation praised the *Sibajak* ship belonging to the *Rotterdamsche Lloyd* company because Catholics could worship there (De Koerier, 24 September 1928). This inequality in religious matters is obvious because passengers of other religions, for example, Muslims and Confucians, did not have their needs for worship met like Christians. Several names registered in the AMS A-1 intellectual network who went to the Netherlands were known as individuals who were devout in worship.

Another fact that breaks down social stratification on ships was the borrowing of books. Usually, passengers would kill time by chatting, joking, or reading literature they had brought themselves or borrowed from the ship's library. The ship company had equipped library facilities to cure the boredom that plagued passengers, as well as emphasizing that the culture of literacy did not die at sea. If someone wanted to borrow literature from the library, they looked for book titles from a catalog and ordered them from the librarian on duty. This was also done if people wanted to exchange or return literature because passengers were not allowed to enter the library room, regardless of social caste. This meant that passengers from any group were free to borrow books without worrying about the social caste differences that applied at dining tables, rooms, classes, and treatment on land. All readings on all topics were free to be accessed or read by any social level.

Thus as can be seen many inequalities remained on board of the ships in the treatment and experiences of the passengers, mainly for the indigenous ones. Those who served as servants like Katamsi and Soewidji had to follow strict rules, but also the indigenous nobility that was regarded well in the colony had to face absolute Dutch norms when it came down to cultural expressions. As shown, they were forced to follow the Dutch in ways of eating and could only visit Dutch places of worship. Still, there were a view exceptions, like the library, for example.

5. Conclusion

From the results of this study, a theoretical reflection emerged that history is driven by technology, not ideas and spirit alone. It was impossible to maintain the AMS A-1 intellectual network in the Netherlands and disseminate academic knowledge without discussing technological aspects, namely ships (technoware). Having a high learning ethos, tenacity and money were not enough to go to school in a far away country. Ships, such as *the Sibajak, Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt*, and *Insulinde* are undeniable facts that have helped move the intellectual history of Indonesian youth towards their dream of studying abroad. AMS A-1 graduates realized their dream of studying in the Netherlands and earning a bachelor's degree thanks to the provision of sea transportation by foreign companies.

This fact is also supported by the ability of the ship captain together with the ecosystem that is formed to make the voyage of the AMS A-1 characters successful to the destination point (humanware). Likewise, the skills of doctors who are entrusted with examining passengers on board ships are to prevent the spread of disease because it has the potential to cause disaster or epidemic. Apart from that, prospective passengers needed information regarding the cruise schedule through the mass media, before setting foot on the ship's deck. Information about a series of passengers' names documented in the newspaper was not limited to the validity of the passengers, but also as information from the families of passengers who parted with them to reach their dreams. With sailing experience, the AMS A-1 intellectual network had basic knowledge about ships and shipping lines (infoware).

The ship routes carrying the AMS A-1 youth and teachers from Batavia to the Netherlands were included in the international shipping network category. Ships passed through and stopped at several ports between countries. To ensure punctuality and guarantee passenger safety, port managers and ship captains coordinated together (orgaware). They experienced life on a ship and watched the open sea for about a month when sailing to the Netherlands, and vice versa when returning to their homeland. They felt the social stratification on board the ship. Social castes do not completely disappear on the ocean. Being a servant for a European family on a ship and occupying a class III room implies bitterness, but on the other hand shows the tenacity of the indigenous people to achieve their goals.

From a historiographical perspective, the phenomenon of the AMS A-1 intellectual network majoring in Eastern Literature is a new study to fill the gap in maritime history and the movement of educated people in the colonial era who gained knowledge as far away as the Netherlands. Voyaging across the sea was a crucial factor depending on technology enabling young students to achieve education and knowledge that did not exist in their area. The dangerous journey itself played an important role too in shaping these prospective intellectuals. After crossing the ocean and completing their university education in the Netherlands, these young people eventually became the 'golden generation' of the Indonesian people during the early period of independence. They played important roles and held high positions in determining the form of the young republic of Indonesia. Their dreams did not drown in the ocean.

Note

1. The name of the AMS A-1 alumni is deliberately emphasized in bold, because he is also the author of the autobiography titled 'Kisah Nyata di Pinggir Jalan Slamet Riyadi' Surakarta: Yayasan Sastra Jawa/Indonesia (1973).

Acknowledgments

This paper is a part of Heri Priyatmoko's dissertation research proposal at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Diponegoro.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by the Puslapdik Kemdikbud (Center for Education Financial Services, Ministry of Education and Culture Republic of Indonesia) and LPDP (Indonesian Endowment Fund for Education) [0241/J5.2.3./BPI.06/9/2022].

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