

Between tourist and traveller

The Reverend Marius Buys in the Preanger (1887-1890)

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a post-colonial analysis of the travel account and guidebook of Marius Buys (1837-1906). As a minister of religion, Buys travelled in several parts of the Netherlands East Indies, including Java, Sumatra, and Sulawesi, in the years 1878-1885. His health forced him to return Netherlands in 1885, but he went back to the Indies in 1886. He was posted to Kalimantan, Sumatra, and Java. In May 1887 was he posted in Bandung, West Java (the Preanger regencies), where he remained until his definitive return to the Netherlands in 1890. As a result of his service in the Preanger regencies (1878-1890), Buys published *Batavia, Buitenzorg en de Preanger; Gids voor bezoekers en toeristen* (1891, Batavia, Buitenzorg and the Preanger; Guide for visitors and travellers). His experiences in the Preanger were also recorded in his travel account *In het hart der Preanger* (1900, In the Heart of the Preanger). As a tourist and traveller, his clerical perspective on the indigenous peoples and colony are analysed by referring to the concepts of Esme Cleall (2012) about European missionaries' thinking in the British empire in Asia and Africa in the nineteenth century.

KEYWORDS

Clergyman, Netherlands East Indies, Marius Buys, travel writing, tourism.

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INTRODUCTION¹

For those who cannot travel, descriptions and pictures have a great interest; while to those, who have travelled they will afford delight in reviving the memories of beautiful scenes and interesting expeditions (Sir John Lubbock 1887: 68).

The sentence quoted above was written by Sir John Lubbock (1834-1913) in his book *The pleasure of life* (1887). Lubbock was an English banker, Liberal politician, philanthropist, and scientist who was also fascinated by entomology, botany, biology, archaeology, and ethnology. The quotation is found on the title page of *In het hart der Preanger* (1900, In the heart of the Preanger), a travel text written by the Dutch clergyman Marius Buys. His travel account is of the Preanger regencies in West Java, his last assigned posting in the Netherlands East Indies, from 1887 to 1890. Although it is not known who chose Lubbock's quotation, the author or the publisher, it does reflect the spirit and content of Buys' travel text.

Tourism involves travelling from one place to another. It is undeniable that among of the pioneers of tourism in its early years in the Netherlands East Indies were missionaries. They travelled from one region to another to fulfil their calling of spreading Christian doctrine, preaching, and baptizing. As a preacher they had ready access to travel, especially to areas which were difficult for ordinary people to penetrate. Some areas were physically difficult to reach, but some also had limited access, especially for foreign visitors.² In the course of carrying out their duties, like government officials, naturalists, and the military, the men of the cloth made reports. However, besides writing official reports for the church authorities and the government, ministers often also kept diaries and composed travelogues. These are valuable sources of information, not only about a region and of tourism-related activities available in them, but also for literary-historical research. One of the preachers who wrote a travelogue about a region of the Indies was Marius Buys (1837-1906).

In 1877 Buys was appointed *predikant* (minister) to the Protestant congregations in the Netherlands East Indies, where he served from 1878 to 1885. During this period he was assigned to the Padang Highlands, Riouw (Riau) in Sumatra, Makassar in South Sulawesi, and Cheribon (Cirebon) in West Java. His health forced him to return to the Netherlands in 1885. The following year, he returned to the Indies and served in Borneo (Kalimantan), Billiton (Belitung, an island off the east coast of Sumatra), Palembang (South Sumatra), Bengkoelen (Bengkulu, southwestern of Sumatra). In May 1887, he

¹ I would like to thank Professor Christopher Joby for reading an earlier version of this article and the reviewers for their suggestions and critical comments. Also to Ibu Rosemary Robson for polishing my English.

² Since the the time of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), the Dutch authorities had restricted access of foreign visitors to the colony. Under the new, liberalized regulations introduced in 1872, foreign visitors still had to obtain the formal permission of the Governor-General (*toelatingskaart*) to travel beyond the main cities in Java (Robert Cribb 1995: 194).

was posted to Bandung (Preanger Regencies) in West Java. He served there for three years until he returned to his homeland for good in 1890.

This article focuses on *In het hart der Preanger*, the travel account Buys wrote about the Preanger Regencies. It also focuses on *Batavia, Buitenzorg en de Preanger; Gids voor bezoekers en toeristen* (1891, Batavia, Buitenzorg and the Preanger; A guide for visitors and travellers). The work was first published in Leiden in 1900, ten years after Buys had left the Indies. It consists of eleven chapters, their titles describing the various sights and attractions in the Preanger Regencies. These things are seen through Buys' eyes, as a clergyman both also as a traveller and a tourist. It was published in Batavia in 1891.

This article examines Marius Buys' guidebook to the Preanger Regencies from a post-colonial perspective, using especially the concepts of the "seeing-man" and the "contact zone" introduced by Mary Louise Pratt (1992). How did Buys, the clergyman, represent nature, culture, and the indigenous people in the Preanger Regencies, his final posting when he was in his fifties and in ill health. What elements are characteristic of a clergyman's perspective as a tourist and traveller in the late-nineteenth century?

The concept of the "seeing-man" is used to examine the way the European male rules the landscape discourse with his eyes (Pratt 1992: 7). The nature, culture, and indigenous people are important elements which were widely discussed in nineteenth-century travel writing about the East Indies. The authors described nature in the Indies as wild and majestic. A good example is Franz Wilhelm Junghuhn's depiction of the volcanoes, flora, and fauna of Java (Jacqueline Bel 2015: 77-81). Pratt's concept of the "seeing-man" is used to look at how Buys represents nature in the Preanger Regencies. It also examines how Buys represents the culture and indigenous people by employing the concept of "the contact zone". This concept, according to Pratt, consists of "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical metrical relations of domination and subordination" (Pratt 1992: 4).

There are not many studies of Marius Buys and his works. Articles about him and his work have been written by Egbert Broer Kielstra (1844-1920), a Dutch KNIL officer, politician, and writer. However, this work on the figure of Marius Buys is more of an obituary (1906), which provides an insight into Buys' life, career, and works in general.³ Gerard Termorshuizen (1988: 305; 2001: 577) mentions Marius Buys as "the most important employee in the Netherlands" of Batavia-based daily newspaper the *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* in the early years of its publication. Termorshuizen characterizes Buys as an "Indies specialist" and a "permanent employee" of *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*. However, Termorshuizen does not explain how Buys earned these epithets.

In *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* (1935: 22), Hans van den Wall (1869-1948), known by his pseudonym Victor Ido, wrote briefly about Buys' contribution to the *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* from the Netherlands from where he regularly

³ The other Kielstra article is a review of Buys' travel text *Twee jaren op Sumatra Westkust* published in *De Gids* (Kielstra 1886).

delivered a series of articles, *Litterarische Sprokkelingen* (Literary Collections).⁴ This is the reason Termorshuizen refers to Buys as : “the most important employee in the Netherlands”. At the end of his articles for the *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, Buys usually signed just his initials: “M.B”.

Elsewhere, I have argued that the figure of Marius Buys was one of the pioneers of modern tourism in the Netherlands East Indies. His guidebook, *Batavia, Buitenzorg en de Preanger; Gids voor bezoekers en toeristen*, shares similarities with the guidebooks of John Murray and Karl Baedeker, both published in the mid-nineteenth century (Sunjayadi 2019). Now, these studies need to be enriched by a post-colonial perspective, specifically the concept of Esme Cleall (2012) which discusses the thinking of European missionaries in the British empire in Asia and Africa in the nineteenth century.

MARIUS BUYS AND HIS WORKS

Marius Buys was born in Leiden on 1 September, 1837. He was also brought up there. He studied theology in Leiden from 1855 to 1860 and, having passed the required exams, was admitted to the pastorate by the Provincial Church Council of North Holland in August 1860. In 1861 he was called to Callantsoog, a village in North Holland. He married Bartha Jacoba Anthonia van Ewijck (1834-1906) and with her moved into his manse on 15 September, 1861. They stayed there for more than seven years before Buys was called to Noord-Scharwoude, a village in the municipality of Dijk en Ward, North Holland, in 1868. Several of his sermons were published in *De Liefde Sticht* (1872) by the Vereeniging tot Verspreiding van Geestelijke Lectuur (Society for the Propagation of Spiritual Literature). In his leisure time, Buys devoted himself to literary work. He was most active in the translation of German and English works (*Dagblad van Zuidholland en's Gravenhage*, 18 October 1868; Kielstra 1906: 180-181).

In 1877 Buys was appointed *predikant* (minister) to the Protestant congregation in the Netherlands East Indies. A Batavia-based newspaper, the *Java Bode*, reported on his appointment by Royal Decree (*Java Bode*, 5 September 1877). He was not assigned to Java but posted to the Padang Highlands, in the hinterland of the west coast of Sumatra in 1878. He was posted to Riouw (Riau) on the central-eastern coast of Sumatra in 1879. In the years 1878-1879, Buys made extensive pastoral visits criss-crossing Sumatra's West Coast. What he observed on those trips was initially chronicled as the series “Brieven van Sumatra's Westkust” (Letters from Sumatra's West Coast) in the *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, between 7 May 1878, and 3 March 1882.⁵

Buys' sketches of Sumatra's West Coast in the series attracted the attention of the former Minister of Colonial Affairs, Engelbertus de Waal (1821-1902). In

⁴ The other contributor from the Netherlands was Dr Jan ten Brink who also wrote a series of articles, *Moderne Fransche Auteurs* (Modern France Authors), 1885.

⁵ The article which was published on 7 May, 1878, might be his first article about Sumatra's West Coast. Several paragraphs from this article appeared in earlier chapters of the book *Twee jaren op Sumatra's Westkust* (1886).

Onze Indische Financiën VI (1883, *Our Indies Finances*), De Waal made flattering remarks about Buys' work, saying it was "a collection which will substantially enrich our Indies literature". In 1886 the original series was published in a book entitled *Twee jaren op Sumatra's Westkust*. In 1887, after the publication of the series, Buys became a member of the *Maatschappij van Nederlandsche Letterkunde* (Society for Dutch Literature) in Leiden (*Algemeen Handelsblad*, 5 June 1906; Kielstra 1906: 183).

In 1880 Buys was posted to Makassar, South Sulawesi, and, from Makassar, he was called to Cheribon (Cirebon) in West Java in 1882.⁶ Debilitated by a serious illness in early 1885, he left the Indies and returned to the Netherlands. In late 1886, Buys then nearly fifty returned to the Indies and was assigned a tour of duty in the Western Division of Borneo (Kalimantan), followed by Billiton (Belitung, an island off the east coast of Sumatra), Palembang (South Sumatra), and Bengkoelen (Bengkulu, southwestern of Sumatra). His experiences in Borneo were published in *Twee maanden op Borneo's Westkust* (1892, *Two months on the West Coast of Borneo*). In May 1887, he was posted to Bandung (Preanger Regencies) in West Java. He served there for three years before he returned to his homeland for good in 1890 (*Algemeen Handelsblad*, 5 June 1906; Kielstra 1906: 182).

Buys served in the Preanger Regencies for only three years. In that relatively short period, he travelled extensively and wrote travel accounts for newspapers. Kielstra (1906: 182) wrote: "Buys had the opportunity to see a great deal during his relatively short time in the Indies; and it is quite obvious that being the man he was, with an eye for natural beauty, took full advantage of that opportunity." When visiting areas in the Preanger, he used various means of transport depending on the difficulty of access to the area visited, resorting to horses, sedan chairs, horse-drawn carriages, trains, and even on foot (Buys 1900: 18, 43, 64, 65, 73, 90-91, 94, 99, 139, 141, 166, 183-184, 188).

Unfortunately, not much information has been found about Buys' activities as a pastor in Bandung. Even information about when exactly he arrived in Bandung in 1887 and his departure from Bandung in 1890 is still missing. What has been found so far is the news of his appointment as pastor to a Protestant congregation in the Preanger Regencies (*De Locomotief*, 20 May 1887; *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 30 June 1887). In February 1890, there is an announcement 'of his imminent retirement (*Het nieuws van den dag*, 24 February 1890). In *In het hart der Preanger* (1900), he mentions only one activity as a pastor: when he took a simple service in Bandjar (Buys 1900: 185). Buys mentions he settled in Bandung with his young family (Buys 1900: 1) but his description of Bandung in his travel account is also very scant, just mentioning the wide roads, the neat house of the Europeans, the indigenous kampongs, and the square (Buys 1900: 18, 21). There is much more information about Bandung in his guidebook, in which he describes not only the city but also the environs of Bandung (Buys 1891: 119-137).

⁶ In the section *Kerk*, "Hervormde kerk", *De Amsterdammer* (18-1-1883) mentions that M. Buys was appointed pastor to the Protestant congregation in Makassar (See also: *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 17-1-1883; *Sumatra Courant*, 17-5-1884).

One of Buys' duties as a pastor was to take a service in Sindanglaya several times a year (Buys 1891: 102). Another was fundraising efforts for the construction of a Protestant church in 1888. Buys placed an advertisement in *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant* (5 and 6 September 1888) announcing the opening of donations for the construction of the church.

After his return to the Netherlands, Buys again briefly served as a clergyman, in 1891-1892 in Kwadijk, a village and former municipality in the northwest Netherlands, and in 1897 in Vlijmen, North Brabant. However, the Indies climate had taken its toll on his health. His physical condition had already forced him to rest from 1892 to 1897, but after 1897 he had to give up his preaching duties. He first settled briefly in his hometown, Leiden, then in The Hague. He remained active until he passed away on 2 June 1906, at the age of sixty-eight (Kielstra 1906: 183).

Before serving in the Netherlands East Indies, Buys had already written many articles and published several books and he continued his writing activities after he was assigned to the Indies. Besides his series "Brieven van Sumatra's Westkust", he also wrote for the *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* in the period 1886-1890 (Termorshuizen 2001: 575).⁷ When Buys returned to the Netherlands in 1890, he continued to contribute to the *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, including a couple of articles "Een spoorweg in aanleg" (A railway under construction), which was published in the *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* on 19 November 1887, and 21 November 1887. These articles were later included in *In het hart der Preanger* (1900). While he was in Bandung, Buys also wrote series of articles for the *Soerabaijasch handelsblad*, a Surabaya-based newspaper, and also contributed to the *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*.

The 214 pages of *In de Hart der Preanger* consists of eleven chapters. In each chapter, Buys describes his activities in the regions, Bandung, Garut, Cipanas, and Sukabumi. However, he does not always provide complete information about of the region through which he travelled. Therefore, his text must read carefully and then correlated with other sources. Information about the time which can be used as clues are based on the events he mentions: the horse-racing in Bandung held on a Saturday and Sunday in July (Buys 1900: 4), the *Bantamsche grueling* (the Bantam horror), an event referring to the peasant uprising in Banten in 1888 (Buys 1900: 76),⁸ railway construction in the Preanger Regencies, especially the route Cicalengka-Garut (Buys 1900: 41-63) commenced in 1887, and the *Lebaran* (Eid al-Fitr) celebration in Garut.

The guidebook *Batavia, Buitenzorg en de Preanger; Gids voor bezoekers en toeristen* (1891) is divided into two sections. The first is devoted to Batavia, Depok, and Buitenzorg. The second is about the Preanger Regencies and consists of fifteen chapters (Buys 1891: 81-158). The regions in the Preanger Regencies discussed are Sukabumi, Cianjur, Sindanglaya, Bandung, Cicalengka, and Garut. However, Buys did not visit all these regions

⁷ In 1897, Buys wrote an article for the monthly magazine *Woord en Beeld*. Its title was "Een feest bij den regent in Bandung", for which G.B. Hooyer did the illustrations.

⁸ See Sartono Kartodirdjo (1966).

personally. In the preface, he admits that he had not visited Pelabuhan Ratu, Selabintana, and the area around Sukabumi. He obtained information about the areas from the works of P.J. Veth,⁹ Van Rees, and M.T.H. Perelaer (Buys 1891: V). The content structure of the guidebook is similar to that of the works by Murray and Baedeker (1855), which contain information about places, means of transport, accommodation, and cuisine for the use of tourists and visitors. Murray's guidebook contains descriptions of "what ought to be seen at the place", not "all that may be seen" (Rudy Koshar 1998: 323).

THE CLERGYMAN AS A TOURIST AND TRAVELLER

There is a difference between tourists and travellers. Daniel J. Boorstin, an American historian, who wrote the article "From traveler to tourist; The lost art of travel", explains that the new word "tourist" entered the English language in the early-nineteenth century.¹⁰ This word gives a clue to the changed character of world travel: "It was the decline of the traveler and the rise of tourist" (Boorstin 1992: 85).¹¹ Boorstin explains that a traveller was working towards something, was active, and went strenuously in search of people, of adventure, and experience. The tourist was a pleasure-seeker and expected to have interesting things to happen to him. The tourist went "sightseeing" and expected everything to be done to him and for him (Boorstin 1992: 84).

Mikko Toivanen (2019) says that the nineteenth century, the era Buys spent in the Netherlands East Indies, marked the early period of colonial tourism (colonial proto-tourism). Colonial proto-tourism is viewed as a socio-cultural phenomenon within a looser framework of colonial travel displaying characteristic elements: "intent", "infrastructure", and "practices" (Toivanen 2019: 17). Buys' activities embrace these three elements. Toivanen specifies that "intent" relates to motivation to travel encapsulated in the notion of tourism as travel for pleasure. Buys' travels in the Preanger can be categorized as a pleasurable activity, separate from his working life. This was a period in which colonial proto-tourism made extensive use of the new travel infrastructure. Buys witnessed the construction of the first railway and made a train trip through the Preanger. The third element, of colonial proto-tourism "practices", shared various activities associated with contemporary European tourism, for example, sightseeing. Buys certainly indulged in sightseeing as well as observing the society and culture of the Preanger.

In the conceptual distinction between travel and tourism in the literature, the tourist is presented as unadventurous, unimaginative, and lacking initiative.

⁹ Pieter Johannes Veth (1814-1895) was a typical armchair traveller. He never visited the Netherlands Indies.

¹⁰ In the Netherlands, the word "tourist" was first found in W. van Boekeren's article in (1839. "Oude Geschiedenis", *De Gids* 8(8): 71-78). The article does not discuss tourism directly, at its core are the ancient history lessons associated with the Grand Tour. In the first edition of *Verklarend handwoordenboek der Nederlandsche taal* (Koenen 1897, Groningen: Wolters), the word "tourist" was taken to mean *plezierreiziger* (pleasure-traveller).

¹¹ The English word "travel" (in the sense of a journey) was originally the same as *travail* (meaning 'trouble', 'work', or 'torment'), see Paul Fussler (1980: 39).

In contrast, the traveller is associated with the refined values of discernment, respect, and taste. One piece of evidence adduced to claim tourists were unadventurous, and unimaginative was the use of itineraries or guidebooks (Chris Rojek 1993: 175). Which came first: the traveller or the tourist? As stated by Fussel (1980: 38), travel did not always precede tourism, and before travel there was exploration. In their modern sense, each is roughly assignable to an age in modern history. Explorers, travellers, and tourists all make a journey, but the explorer seeks the undiscovered, the traveller what has been discovered by the mind, and the tourist what has been discovered by entrepreneurship and prepared for him by the art of mass publicity. In this context, when he was active in the period of colonial proto-tourism Buys was both a traveller and a tourist. In the wake of his journeys, he wrote travel accounts and compiled guidebooks, two forms of travel writing, about the Preanger.

An approach is needed to analyse representations in travel texts and guidebooks in the colonial period (from the nineteenth century). To achieve this goal, approaches and concepts excerpted from travel-writing studies are very useful. Tim Youngs states that travel writing is ideological because it is influenced by its authors' gender, class, age, nationality, cultural background, and education (Youngs 2006: 2, 2017: 209). One of the most important references in travel-writing studies is the work by Mary Louise Pratt: *Imperial eyes; Travel writing and transculturation* (1992). She analyses how European travel literature created the "domestic subject" of European imperialism. Her concept of "contact zone" is an important model for analysing relations between Europeans and non-Europeans who met in a social space. Pratt focuses on the travel accounts of naturalist, female travellers, and "Creole" traveller. She does not deal with the perspective of a clergyman.

So far, there have not been many studies on travel literature in the Netherlands East Indies, especially not from a minister's perspective. Rick Honings (2022: 43) states that little attention has been paid to the perspective of the travelling preacher in the Netherlands East Indies. In his article about Sytze Roorda van Eysinga (1773-1828), Honings discusses the representation of the tropical landscapes and the ideas about indigenous people found in Eysinga's travel texts. Roorda van Eysinga's texts were published posthumously by his son, Philippus Pieter Roorda van Eysinga (1796-1856), in four volumes entitled *Verschillende reizen en lotgevallen van S. Roorda van Eysinga - Various journeys and adventures of S. Roorda van Eysinga* (1830-1832). His father's travel accounts are found in the first volume and the first half of the second volume. Honings uses theoretical framework of Esme Cleall in her book *Missionary discourse of difference; Negotiating Otherness in the British Empire, 1840-1900* (2012).

Honings' study gives a new insight into the post-colonial perspective which has been used to analyse a clergyman's perspective on the Netherlands East Indies in the nineteenth century. Now this will be used to analyse Buys' travel account and guidebook. My object is to explore in what sense Buys' perspective differs from that of Roorda van Eysinga, who had travelled through the East Indies much earlier.

NATURAL LANDSCAPE BY THE “ETERNAL ARTIST”

The widely praised natural beauty of the Indies was one of the attractions for visitors. In the discussion of Roorda van Eysinga's texts on the Indies, it is certainly one of the most important elements (Honings 2022: 46-49). It also features strongly in Buys. As Toivanen says (2019: 127), nature often provides a vivid first impression for travellers on their arrival in a new country.

Like the other visitors to the Netherlands East Indies, Buys admired the natural beauty of the Preanger. Even though he had already visited other parts of the Indies, such as Sumatra and Borneo, Buys acknowledged that his assignment to the Preanger Regencies was the best experience of his time in the Indies. He commented: “I was privileged to have a taste of the beautifully cool capital of the Priangan Regencies, West Java's delightful mountain country” (Buys 1900: 1).

The designation Preanger for the highlands of West Java dates back to early-colonial times. It is a corruption (bastardization) of *Priangan* or *Parahyangan*, to which various meanings have been assigned. Almost certainly, the name *Parahyangan* has its origins in a Sundanese word which means ‘the abode of *hyangs* (gods)’. The Preanger Regencies was an administrative Residency of the Netherlands East Indies from 1817 to 1925. The region consists of west Preanger (Sukabumi, Cianjur), central Preanger (Bandung, southern part of Subang, north of Garut, Purwakarta, Sumedang), east Preanger (southern of Garut, Ciamis, Tasikmalaya, southern of Kuningan, southern of Majalengka, Pangandaran).¹²

Garut was one of the cities in the Preanger Buys visited after he was assigned to Bandung. It is located in the centre of the Preanger. The natural beauty of the Garut area amazed all who visited it. Buys notes in his travel account:

Not surprisingly, before the railway line was built, only a few people from the Indies or abroad visited Garut for a holiday. Today the number has swelled to hundreds, so that the “heart of the Preanger, as Bandung is officially known, is really beginning to resemble the “Switzerland of the Indies” and become a real tourist spot. (Buys 1900: 94-95).¹³

Compliments for and descriptions of the natural beauty in the Preanger - volcanoes, waterfalls, lakes, rivers, and primaevial forests - embellish Buys' travel account and travel guide. Among them are his praises of Garut:

Garut is a friendly place, with a fresh and healthy climate; delightfully situated in the middle of a circle of proud volcanoes and rolling hills; it is the focal point for many natural beauty-spots, about which there is a unanimous opinion from all who visit them, and is quite easy to reach; but the road to this promised land is also fraught with difficulties. However, it will not be long before these difficulties are a thing of the past. (Buys 1900: 71).

¹² For the history of Preanger Regencies, see F. de Haan (1910).

¹³ This Buys' text was originally in Dutch and subsequent citation texts were translated into English by me with suggestions from the reviewers.

At that time not all infrastructural facilities, especially roads, had been constructed in the Preanger, so visitors did have difficulty and spent a lot of time reaching the area. However, after surmounting the difficulties along the way, the traveller could finally enjoy the natural beauty at the destination.

Buys' description of the natural beauty of the Preanger is in line with Pratt's idea that "the landscape is estheticized" (Pratt 1992: 204). One characteristic of colonial discourse in nineteenth-century Dutch travel literature is the aestheticization of nature, which is described as if in a painting (Honings 2015: 113). Buys uses many adjectives to describe it, creating a painting in language. A good example is his description of the scenery around Telaga Bodas from the guardhouse. The whole forest is overgrown with large tree-ferns along a slope and on the other side stand a taller trees: "with unusually slender trunks and graceful crowns, whose branches and serrated leaves resemble fine green lace, letting through delightfully subdued sunlight, making an impression at once grand and graceful" (Buys 1900: 169).

Similar descriptions are scattered throughout Buys' guidebook: when he describes the waterfalls at Sindanglaya and the ravine at the foot of Mount Cikurai in Garut: "[...] the view over the ravine overgrown with thousands of tree-ferns, through which the mountain stream winds foaming and effervescent, stands out" (Buys 1891: 122; 156). It seems that Buys was conscious he was depicting the natural beauty of the Preanger as in a painting. He even repeatedly mentions the term *natuurtoneel* (natural theatre) in his text, in combination with adjectives like "beautiful", "interesting", and "graceful" (Buys 1900: 93, 103, 122, 184). However, unlike the perspective of the Reverend Roorda analysed by Honings (2022: 47), Buys seldom associates the beauty of nature as evidence of God's grandeur. The only evidence of praise of God's grandeur is found in his description the charming valley of Garut:

A glimpse of the beauty and fertility of its surroundings, especially the enchanting valley of Garut, stretches out before us. It shows us that the Eternal Artist can create wonders of harmony and blessings, just like a painter manages to conjure up from an orderly mess of paint on his palette. A palette to conjure up works of art which delight us and make us respect Him as a Benefactor. (Buys 1900: 148).

Instead of using the words "God" or "Creator" in his description, Buys uses the phrase *eeuwige Kunstenaar* (Eternal Artist). He used the word *Kunstenaar* (Artist) with a capital "K" to refer to the Supreme Creator, God, Who created the beauty of nature. The use of the phrase "Eternal Artist" was most likely influenced by the Romantic movement, referring to earlier authors like Franz Wilhelm Junghuhn. A comparison with Buys' other texts on Sumatra and Borneo shows he never used the word "God" or "Creator" when he connected natural beauty to evidence of God's grandeur. It is possible that Buys' style was influenced by naturalists, like Caspar Georg Carl Reinwardt, who used very few words like "God" or "Creator" (Honings 2022: 47).

APE-LIKE APPEARANCE

Cleall's concept of the "discourses of difference" which asks how difference was constituted in colonial thinking is very useful in analysing how Buys as a clergyman portrayed the indigenous people of the Preanger. In missionary writing, this can be identified with the role "race" and "gender" played as markers of difference. The missionary concept of "different" was a way of positioning people, and things, and it is frequently evoked in missionary travel writing as the "embodiment of difference". The missionaries stressed "difference" in their descriptions of the bodies and dress of the other. Cleall argues that the relationship between the categories "colonizer" and "colonized" in missionary discourse had to be negotiated on account of the "ambivalences" which complicated and disturbed this categorization (Cleall 2012: 2-3, 75).

Buys' impression of the appearance of the indigenous peoples, even though he had lived in several areas in the Indies, still stressed the "differences". He comments, for instance, on the costume of the *Wedloop-societeit* (Competition Club) worn by the native officials at the horse-races in Bandung: "consisting of a kind of hussar's jacket with silver or white trimmings. A few considered it more in keeping with their dignity and made this gold. In combination with the headdress and sarong made a strange sight" (Buys 1900: 8). The clothing worn by the barefoot indigenous jockeys at the races also drew comments from Buys. He thought them no less skilled than their European counterparts, but the colourful caps above their dark faces made them look a little silly (Buys 1900: 6, 9-10).

Another "different" perspective was adopted by Buys when he described a number of native dignitaries attending a celebration at the house of the Regent of Bandung. Buys comments on the way they were dressed, which he considered weird and showed they failed to understand how to dress properly for such a solemn occasion. He compared them to horse jockeys. They were clad "in blue hussar's jackets with white braid, the costume of the members of the Bandung racing club, but with a sarong and bare feet in the stirrups makes a strange display" (Buys 1900: 26). Buys' choice of adjectives about the dress and appearance of indigenous people, like "strange appearance", "silly", and "strange display", shows there was no change in his thinking, although he had seen the diversity of the Indies. He went on to make a racist comment on the "different" appearance of a horse-drawn carriage driver at the celebration in the house of the Regent of Bandung:

On this occasion, it was harnessed to four horses which are driven from the box by a brown coachman, who, with his tall, yellow-trimmed hat and long red robe, from under which the almost black feet peep out, as do those of all Javanese coachmen, creates a particularly ape-like appearance (Buys 1900: 25).

In a nutshell, Buys racializes "others" through the body and appearance of native people (Cleall 2012: 124), a racist perspective common at the time. From the seventeenth to the twentieth century, European explorers who encountered aboriginal people often said that the latter were not humans but animals,

resembling apes or monkeys. This vision of indigenous people was as physically and intellectually less mature creatures compared to Europeans, poised at the apex of the evolutionary chain. Frances Gouda (1995: 138) suggests that this racist thinking revealed in the occasional references to the indigenous people as monkeys dressed in western attire might have reminded Indies residents of the Dutch saying *al draagt een aap een gouden ring, het is en blijft een lelijk ding* (even were a monkey to wear a golden ring, it is and remains an ugly thing).

Another discourse of different in Buys' text obtrudes when he differentiates between the categories "colonizer" and "colonized". Buys differentiates between the responses to the new railway-line Garut-Cicalengka of the European Residents of Bandung and Garut, of European visitors, and of the indigenous people. The European residents and visitors to Bandung and Garut eagerly seized the opportunity to see the new railway-line, and many indigenous people took advantage of the chance to taste *pro deo* (free of charge) the emotions of a trip in the *vuurwagen* (fire wagon).¹⁴ Buys comments that only a few conservative Preanger inhabitants opposed the construction of the railway-line but, when it was completed few of them did take advantage of it. The reason was not that these people were reluctant to use it, but they were poor and could not afford the train-tickets (Buys 1900: 72).

On the other hand, Buys' ambivalent perspective on the Indo and the indigenous people can be seen when he visited Cicalengka train station. By then the construction of the railway-line had been completed. On 14 August, 1889, Buys, who seemed to have been present at the inauguration of the new line, thanked the engineers and all those who worked hard to complete the line. "Dutch, Indo's, and indigenous people, by whom they have been faithfully and skilfully assisted" (Buys 1900: 92). Even after he had heard a story from a railway contractor in Garut who complained about the inaccuracy of the native coolies when counting and measuring cubic metres of soil, Buys asked his "white" readers not to condescend to their *bruine broeders* (brown brothers) about such inaccuracies because it probably happened in the Netherlands too. Therefore, Buys claimed, "*onze Indische volken* (our Indies peoples) will not make significant strides in any field until they have learned to count and measure" (Buys 1900: 51). However, the phrase "our Indies peoples" shows the Buys' perspective on the differences between owner and owned, between "the colonizer" and "the colonized".

Another ambivalent perspective displayed by Buys occurred when he visited Mount Cikurai. He climbed this mountain with Professor Schomper, accompanied by his native assistant. When they reached a certain height, the essential water was left behind. According to the natives, there was no water on the mountain. Professor Schomper's native assistant immediately went down into the steep ravine to fetch the forgotten water. Buys praised him as "an excellent chap" (Buys 1900: 98). In fact, Buys had had a similar experience. He recognized the help of his native servants and the indigenous population on his journey. He wrote: "On my many journeys in the Indies, I have enjoyed

¹⁴ A literal translation from the word *kereta api* in Malay which refers to a 'steam train'.

plenty of good help from my servants and other natives, on whom I still think with great gratitude" (Buys 1900: 102).

Buys' gratitude to the Indo and the indigenous people seems to show his recognition and appreciation of their services. However, Buys still praised and was proud of the Dutch for the well-kept clean roads, railway stations, and guardhouses they built. He also praised the care and precision shown by the Dutch in their building of viaducts, bridges, and roads. Especially when the Dutch had to build roads and railways in the mountains, the engineers and supervisors had to work with simple, ignorant native workers, and with contractors, Chinese, and Europeans, who generally knew as little as the workers they supplied. Buys emphasizes: "We, the Dutch, are late with these and similar works, but when we do undertake them we do them well. We do not produce shoddy work, but work which we can show off, which we can display to a foreigner with pride and from which he can learn a lot" (Buys 1900: 43-44, 88).

Buys' visit to *Bellevue* or *Waspada*, the tea plantation in Garut (Figure 1), allowed him to meet indigenous people who felt at home and were satisfied, and happy at work. The relationship between them and Karel Frederik Holle (1829-1896), the plantation owner, was also congenial.



Figure 1. *The onderneming Waspada bij Garoet*, 'Waspada tea plantation Garut', before 1874 (Batavia: Woodbury & Page). Leiden University Libraries, Digital Collections KITLV 3325.

They greeted Holle with *djoeragan* (master) or *bapa* (father). According to Buys, Holle's secret was: "He knew how to use Sundanese phrases and expressions in his speeches, he respected their firm convictions, he abstained from forbidden food, he did not eschew their priests and Hajjes, the latter being particularly

mistrusted and indiscriminately avoided by the Europeans, but interacted with them and also with influential Arabs" (Buys 1900: 202, 207-208).¹⁵ Buys now encountered a form of relationship between "colonizer" and "colonized" which was different to what he had experienced in Java. He thought the relationship between owner and workers on plantations in other parts of Java, both Central and East Java, was not like that on the *Bellevue* plantation. However, this needs to be examined further, to discover whether Buys was really properly informed about conditions on other plantations in Java.

ORANG KÓTOR AND INDIES DISEASES

In Cleall's study, the second missionary discourse centres on "sickness". The missionaries used this discourse to make other peoples in the colony appear vulnerable, helpless, and dependent on the West. More pragmatically, sick indigenous people could also represent a potential threat to the bodies of the missionaries' themselves and also seemed insensitive to pain (Cleall 2012: 82, 97).

Just as Honings' (2022: 56) analysis of Roorda's account focuses on the diseases of the indigenous people, Buys turns his attention to their ailments, particularly skin diseases. Buys' focus on skin diseases is interesting because of the many dermatological conditions suffered by the indigenous population in the Netherlands East Indies, including leprosy and smallpox. In fact, in his writings on the Preanger, Buys generally restricts himself to skin diseases. This choice can be linked to the hot springs in the mountainous Priangan region which would later feature heavily as tourism destinations. Mineral hot springs are a well-known remedy for treating skin diseases.

When Buys visited the hot springs in Cipanas, he found the bathing areas divided by race: allotted to Europeans, Chinese, and indigenous people. The prices differed: Europeans paid 10 cents, and Chinese and natives 5 cents. There was also a rather large bamboo building specifically assigned to the *orang kótor* (dirty people), who had to pay 2.5 cents. Buys commented the *orang kótor* were "the sufferers of all kinds of skin diseases, which I need not describe in more detail" (Buys 1891: 147, Buys 1900: 154-155). Buys notes the number of these sufferers among the indigenous people in the beautiful Preanger was very large. This statement objectifies the "bodies" of these people. The diseased bodies of the *orang kótor* were contrasted to the "cleanliness" of white people. The *orang kótor* took advantage of the hot springs to cure their disease, using the hot baths quite frequently with satisfactory results. Their healing power was dependent on the diseases from which they suffer. However, experts whom Buys encountered claimed this was because of the high temperature of the water, since the amount of mineral salts these contained was too small to be very effective. The doctors who spoke to Buys believed that the warm baths could also be especially beneficial to sufferers non-dermatological conditions like gout and rheumatism who, curiously enough, were at least as numerous in the Indies, a warm country (Buys 1891: 147, Buys 1900: 156-157).

¹⁵ To find out more about Holle and his activities, see Tom van den Berge (1998).

In his guidebook, Buys also supplies information about a health establishment, a private sanatorium in Sukabumi, which had been under the direction of a skilled physician since 1884. It was frequently visited by various patients. Initially intended for native soldiers, it was later opened to European soldiers of all ranks and other patients (Buys 1891: 86). Another health establishment had been founded in Sindanglaya by Dr Ploem in 1864. He was very skilled in the treatment of Indies diseases. Hans Pols (2018: 6) mentions that the colony was rife with diseases scarcely known in Europe: malaria, dysentery, dengue fever, typhoid, cholera, influenza, tuberculosis, and beriberi (thiamine deficiency). The diseases also troubled Europeans. As Cleall says, the Westerners were also inescapably vulnerable to pain and suffering (Cleall 2012: 82). This included Buys who was forced to return to the Netherlands because of a serious illness (Kielstra 1906: 182).

Buys describes the large main building of the health establishment in Sindanglaya. It was intended for first-class patients and offered health lodges. North of the main building, in the lower part of the grounds, were the simple but efficient buildings intended for the nursing of non-commissioned officers and lower-ranking military personnel from the navy and army. These patients were excellently fed and cared for. The government, which footed the bill, had also entrusted three non-commissioned officers with policing the patients. The doctor, who also treated the first-class lodges, was paid by the owner of the institution. In addition to Dr Ploem, there was also a Dr L. Weiss who treated patients outside the establishment (Buys 1891: 101-102).¹⁶ In his guidebook, Buys states that the health situation in Bandung was generally good. As evidence, he points to the low number of serious illnesses and deaths occurring there. Cholera was almost unheard of. Other epidemics, such as smallpox and measles, sometimes occurred among the indigenous people, but were usually not virulent (Buys 1891: 120).

Although Buys did not explicitly create a direct dichotomy between Europeans and the indigenous people, in his travel account and guidebook he shows that diseases in the Indies were preponderantly suffered by the indigenous people. He implies that the indigenous population could not treat themselves but needed to receive care and treatment from the government (Europeans) in medical institutions. Those who cared for, treated, and cured these diseases were European doctors. He insisted that the indigenous people really needed European (Dutch) superior assistance, despite the fact that he himself was not free of illness. The information about the situation and health facilities in the guidebook was important, especially to tourists making them feel confident to travel safely through the region. In this case, Buys applied the perspective of both a missionary traveller and a tourist.

¹⁶ See an acknowledgment to Dr Weiss from the husband of a patient (*Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, 1-6-1887).

HADJI AND CRUEL CULTURE

"Violence" is another theme used by Cleall to examine the missionaries' gaze, which labelled anything which was "different" as "the Other". Violence structured colonial societies and pervaded colonial discourses. In the minds of the missionaries, Islam was identified with "violence" and "fanaticism" (Cleall 2012: 119, 138). Hence, it follows that the indigenous Muslim people and their culture were described as "cruel" and "savage" (Cleall 2012: 8, 83). The representations in Buys' text also feature elements of this missionary thinking. As a pastor, Buys was interested in other religions, especially Islam, which he saw as a "competitor", even as an "enemy" (*Opregte Haarlemsche Courant* 5 September 1888, 6 September 1888). His years of experience in Sumatra, Borneo (Kalimantan), and Celebes (Sulawesi) would have shaped Buys' views on Islam and it seemed to him that nothing had changed. His perspective was disturbed when he saw things which were beyond his comprehension.

When he took up his duties in Bandung, Buys was initially curious about why the military was not stationed in a region in which the Muslims were so fervent and fanatical. He felt that security in the region should be strengthened. He refers to the Banten Uprising of 1888 as the result of Islamic fanaticism which he feared would spread to the Priangan region. He said when this uprising occurred in 1888, the Europeans in Bandung feared that the events in Banten would disrupt the horse-racing. They were worried the natives would attack the European spectators. Buys commented that this fear had not been realized because, during the races, "I stood and walked with the greatest confidence among the thousands of people, who were fully enjoying the popular party with their usual calm gaiety" (Buys 1900: 8).

Buys accepted an invitation to attend the "tooth-filing" ceremony of the Regent of Bandung's daughter.¹⁷ He uses the occasion to give his views on the Regent. In his text, he does not mention the name of the Regent who was R.A. Koesoemadilaga who served as the Regent of Bandung from 1874 to 1893 (Figure 2). He portrays the Regent as a kind, excellent, simple, not particularly high-minded man. The only religious education he had received in his youth was Islam. It had not been profound as it consisted mainly of *mengadji* (Qur'an recitations). However, Buys feared what would happen to the Regent if he were to fall under the influence of *dweppers* (fanatics) who could turn him into a fanatical Muslim. He recalled the outbursts of the adherents of Islam in Bantam to be fearful of the infidel whites (Buys 1900: 29). Buys' concern was cogent because the Regent was the leader of and an important figure among the indigenous people. It was possible that he could influence people which could also disturb the law and order imposed by the Dutch government.

¹⁷ The tooth-filing ceremony was and still is a tradition in Bali and Java. It is a rite of passage, an initiation into adulthood. In West Java it is called *gusaran*, in Central and East Java *pangur*, and *mesangih* or *metatah* in Bali. The six front teeth, the incisors and the canines, are filed to symbolize the conquest of the six wicked desires of maturing individuals (D. Myrtati Artaria 2017).



Figure 2. Kangdjeng Dalem Toemenggoeng Koesoemadilaga, Regent of Bandung, with his entourage circa 1875. Leiden University Libraries, Digital Collections KITLV 2698.

Islam in the Indies is often associated with *Hadji* (Hajj), someone who has made a pilgrimage to Mecca. The figure of the Hajj still enjoys high social prestige in Indonesian society. They were also considered influential figures in the nineteenth century and condemned as the behind-the-scenes perpetrators of the peasant rebellion in Banten in 1888. The real roots of the uprising were social and religious discontent: an accumulation of land conflicts, labour extortion, disease outbreaks, and disasters. However, various hadjis were certainly involved in it (Kartodirdjo 1966).

Buy's perspective on the *hadji* begins with their outward appearance.

[...]exaggeratedly colourful Arab costume, with long, yellow, white, green, red, and purple, over-gowns left hanging open, and even more colourful turbans of astonishing size. Some were bright green to give the message that their wearers were descendants of the Prophet. (Buys 1900: 19).

This Arab style of dress was worn by Hajjes to show that they had made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Buys explained that a *hadji* was not a priest as Europeans often called him (Buys 1891: 27). Dutch colonial government regulations stipulated that before Hajjes could assume this title and dress Hajj, they had to be able to show proof that they had set foot in Mecca (*Staatsblad van Nederlandsch Indië*, 6 July 1859, No. 42).¹⁸

¹⁸ See also Kees van Dijk (1997).

Buys' concern with the figure of the *hadji* is revealed when he met Arsadipoera, the *loerah* (the village head) of Rantja Bangoe, a village in To[a]rogong, Garut. In Buys' eyes, Arsadipoera, who wore a turban, was ordinary "fine" Muslim. From Arsadipoera's appearance, Buys knew he was a *hadji* and he hoped that "he is among the 'pious' of the good kind, who, fortunately, are not absent even among the *hadjis*" (Buys 1900: 157-158). Buys expressed the hope that Arsadipoera was a Hajj who was not fanatical about Islam and would not endanger the government.

More censoriously, Buys criticized the Arabic comprehension skills of the Hajjes. Among them were those who had travelled to Mecca, become *hadji*, and wore Arab clothing but had a poor comprehension of Arabic (Buys 1900: 29). Arabic, the language of the Qur'an, could only be read as it has been learned by heart. Only a few Javanese could really understand it. During the tooth-filing ceremony in Bandung, a verse from the Qur'an was read. Buys, who attended the event, asked the chief *penghoeloe* (the most senior religious official) what part of the Qur'an was being read on this occasion. He answered that was the eighth *surah*, *Al-Anfal*. When Buys asked the chief *penghoeloe* the connection between the Qur'anic verse recited and the event, the latter could not answer. Buys knew that, as it was an ancient Javanese custom, there was no connection between the tooth-filing ceremony and Islam. He commented that even the brightest among his readers would not understand what was the connection this Qur'anic verse and the tooth-filing ceremony (Buys 1900: 30).¹⁹

The lack of knowledge of the contents of the Arabic Qur'an among the *hadjis* can also be gleaned from the explanations of Professor Izaak Johannes Brugmans (1896-1992), one of the founders of the Faculty of Letters at the Universitas Indonesia. In his *Geschiedenis van het onderwijs in Nederlandsch-Indië* 'History of education in the Netherlands Indies' (1938), Brugmans mentions there were two types of Islamic education in Java. The first was given at a *langgar* or *surau*, a small mosque. The second was the education offered in *pesantren*, Islamic boarding-schools. The education in the *langgar* or *surau* was a basic teaching of the Qur'an. The children were taught to recite the Qur'an, an activity often called *mengaji* (recitation). Brugmans points out how education given in a *langgar* was completely different to that in a modern school. The course followed was by no means systematic. Sometimes they did begin by teaching the Arabic alphabet, but often even this was omitted and the spelling of the first verses of the Qur'an embarked on immediately. The student had to repeat after the *guru ngaji* (teacher), imitating him. The idea was finally be able to recite the entire Qur'an by heart (Brugman 1938: 3). As Ricklefs states, in the *pesantren* in Java in 1850s, they taught the Qur'an and Arabic prayers by rote but not the Arabic language itself (Merle Calvin Ricklefs 2007: 50-52).

Information about the figure of Hajj in the guidebook is limited to the appearance of their costume and to a businessman *hadji* who provided transportation requirements, such as horses, sedan chairs, and coolies for

¹⁹ Buys wrote down the Dutch translation of the eighth *surah* of the Qur'an in his text (Buys 1900: 30).

tourists who wanted to visit Mount Papandayan, in Cisarupan, Garut (Buys 1891: 27, 148). Nowhere in his guidebook does Buys offer any information about concerns about the figure of Hajj or the uprising in Banten in 1888.

In their discussion of the missionaries' efforts in the Preanger Regencies in the nineteenth century, Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink (2008: 652) state that, if the missionaries had wanted to discuss matters of faith with the indigenous people, the latter would not have been accepted as discussion partners because they did not know Arabic. They had no more than an elementary knowledge of Islam, let alone of Islam as it functioned in Sundanese society.

After *puasa* (fasting) for one month during Ramadan, Muslims celebrate *Lebaran* (Eid al-Fitr). Besides using the term *Lebaran*, the indigenous people in Java also call this celebration *Grebeg Poeasa* or *Grebeg Sjawal*. The word *grebeg* comes from the Javanese word *gumrebeg* which has connotations of a boisterous, noisy, and crowded atmosphere. Buys joined in celebrating *Lebaran* in Garut and he says that the festivities consisted of eating and feasting, but there was no question of drinking parties. During *Lebaran* in Garut, Buys witnessed games laid on in the square as entertainment for the indigenous people. Along the two enclosed sides of the square and on the opposite side of the road, which ran alongside it, stood numerous *panggoeng* (platforms). The front of the sprawling square was enclosed by a *pagar* (fence) of *bilik* (plaited bamboo strips).

One aspect which was "cruel" and "savage" was the duels. The first was the pitting of *gladackers* (street dogs) against a wild boar. The second was two rams butting heads. In the first duel Buys describes how a wild boar was ganged up on by the dogs until it was driven to distraction, then "with how many sticks beaten and prodded by the spectators on the *panggoeng*, the beast could not be persuaded to abandon its position, and grunted angrily at the yapping dogs" (Buys 1900: 129). The second contest lasted three-quarters of an hour and Buys saw "two rams run head-to-head, and heard them banging against each other so violently that every one of us involuntarily stroked his forehead and felt a headache coming on, while the rams gave no other sign of agitation other than sticking out their tongues and licking their lips." Buys commented that he found the head-butting of the rams less interesting than the pitting of *gladackers* against the boar (Buys 1900: 133-134).

Buys tried to find out what the indigenous people thought about these two contests. When he asked the Raden Ajoe, the Garut Regent's wife, whether she had had a good time, shaking her head she replied with a slight Indies accent that it was no fun and she thought it was cruel. This led Buys to opine that she had a developed and civilized attitude. He complimented her as "a woman with a good heart and pure feelings".²⁰ When he returned to Bandung and told

²⁰ Her name was Raden Ayu Lasminingrat (1854-1948), daughter of Raden Haji Mohammad Musa (1822-1886), Chief *Penghoeloe* in Limbangan, Garut. He was the best friend of K.F. Holle. Lasminingrat spoke Dutch and translated Grimms' fairy-tales into Sundanese (Van den Berge 1998: 195). When Marius met Holle, he saw him checking Lasminingrat's translation. Buys learned about Lasminingrat's family background from Holle (Buys 1900: 195).

to the Regent of Bandung about his experiences, the Regent replied that these cruel duels had long been abolished in his area. Buys concluded that it was impossible to generalize all indigenous people in the Preanger as *ongevoelig en hardvochtig* (insensitive and callous). He comments: "Among them too, as among all races of people, there is diversity. This applies to sensitivities and to many other things." (Buys 1900: 136-137).

Fear and suspicion of fanatical Islam encapsulated as "different" in the figure of the *hadji* does occur in Buys' text. Alongside his presentation of entertainments pertaining to a cruel and savage culture Buys witnessed, through the lens of not unbiased missionary thinking, his suspicions of these figures strengthened the European perspective on the indigenous population and their "cruel" and "savage" culture. However, even though there were differences, Buys reminds his readers not to generalize all indigenous people.

AMBIVALENT FAITH

In Cleall's study of the London Missionary Society (LMS) missionaries in Africa, she mentions that missionaries in the "Dark Continent" believed they were encountering a credulous, superstitious multitude (Cleall 2012: 91). In addition to having to confront the superstitions of the natives in the colonies, they also had to deal with other religions beyond their ken. In missionary thinking, some forms of difference were intolerable and frightening, for instance, non-Christian beliefs were "wrong", and "degraded" (Cleall 2012: 168). The previous section has dealt with fears about fanatical Islam through important figures in the indigenous population such as Hajj and the Regent, now the superstitions and teachings of Islam in the Preanger Buys encountered are examined.

When Buys visited Telaga Bodas (the White Lake, Figure 3), he encountered indigenous people who believed that at night many spirits floated over the water made mysterious by the darkness. "They were afraid of it", writes Buys (1900: 176). Another indigenous' superstitious belief Buys encountered was what he heard from the directors of the railway company about the difficulties hindering the construction. The railway-line crossed the graves of the ancestors of the indigenous people which called a halt to the work.²¹ Therefore, to avoid the anger of the ancestral spirits and unrest among the indigenous people, it was imperative to organize some kind of sacrificial feast. The offerings served were not elaborate: "the aethereal essences of the rice, meat, and other condiments of which the sacrifice consisted". Afterwards, the offering was eaten by the villagers and any accidents which might have befallen the railway staff and passengers were hopefully avoided (Buys 1900: 59).

²¹ In the previous period, there had been a conflict between the Dutch colonial government and the native population caused by graves. For example, one of the touch-papers of the Java War in July 1825 occurred when the Dutch inserted stakes in the ground to build a road over the graves of the ancestors of Prince Dipanegara in Tegalreja, Yogyakarta (Peter Carey 2008: 48).



Figure 3. Telaga Bodas in Garut, before 1880. Leiden University Libraries, Digital Collections KITLV 3075.

Buys came across another superstition when he visited a village through which the railway line Cicalengka-Garut was to be built. On one of the projected tracks was a large “sacred” tree which had to be felled. The villagers refused to consent to it being cut down because it was believed to be the abode of spirits. The spirits would be angry if the tree were felled, they claimed. The problem was averted by an engineer who hurried to convince an influential *hadji* to see his point of view. He knew that villagers were Muslim but the ancient superstition was deeply rooted. He gave the *hadji* some money and asked him to talk to the villagers. The villagers were told that the company would organize a *flinke [s]edekah* (big sacrificial meal) and were also invited to pray at the “sacred” tree so that the spirits would not be angry were the tree be felled (Buys 1900: 60-61).²²

During the “tooth-filing” ceremony, the recitation of verses from the Qur’an took so long the European guests seemed engrossed in chatting to one another and the native officials looked bored. He also spied several old women whom he thought were *doekoen* (traditional healers) who participated in the ceremony with a *hadji-goeroe* (Hajj-teacher) and the chief *penghoeloe* (Buys 1900: 31-32).

Buys’ travel guide also contains information about superstitions about a place in Sumedang, “It was a very beautiful spot”, writes Buys. According to local superstition, this beautiful place was repeatedly plagued by a spirit

²²For more detailed information about the difficulties and problems encountered in the construction of the Cicalengka-Garut railway-line, see Agus Mulyana (2025).

called a *gandarua* who dwelt in the tallest tree and was invisible to the eye of man. It threw stones and spat *sirih* (betel quid). Buys adds, "The rain of stones is also not rare elsewhere in Java and is probably caused by native sleight of hand." Buys most likely picked up this story from the indigenous people. Information about the place ends with accommodation information for tourists who want to visit: small lodges (Buys 1891: 139).

Here we can see Buys' perspective on superstition, as a missionary (traveller) and as a tourist. On the one hand, he is purely and simply conveying information about the superstitious beliefs of the indigenous population; on the other hand, this information is used to attract tourists. The superstitious beliefs of the natives, even after they had embraced Islam, were considered part of the Other "differences". It was a pre-Islamic pagan belief but was still believed by some of the indigenous population.

Islamic doctrine contained in the Qur'an prohibits Muslims from consuming alcohol²³ and pork.²⁴ These are *haram* (forbidden) substances. However, in an emergency situation, an exception can be made. The Qur'an states that what is forbidden can be eaten if a person is starving and there is nothing to eat but pork. At a celebration held by the Regent of Bandung, Buys found that, even though the Regent and the Sundanese who were present were mostly Muslims, "streams of fine wine and effervescent champagne were served non-stop". Buys deplored the fact the Regent kept a wine cellar of the finest collection of vintages, but he never took a single sip of it (Buys 1900: 34). Jiří Jákł has said that among the Javanese gentry the drinking of liquor remained a common practice well into the nineteenth century. The preservation of good relations with Dutch officials was one of the reasons given to explain why the Javanese gentry continued drinking alcohol. Even if they did not drink it, they kept cellar to be served to honour their guests (Jákł 2021: 330-331).

Buys recalled when he and a group of men were served *Château d'Yquem*, one of the most expensive white wines from France, in the Regent's palace. White wine is usually served with a fish course, and the Regent enthusiastically offered it to his guests. The Regent repeatedly called out to his servants in Malay: "*Bawa[h] angor ikan lagi!*" (bring the fish wine again!), recalled Buys. The Regent used Malay when ordering his servants to fetch the wine. Buys commented that the delicious white grape juice but it was strange to hear its name changed to "fish wine" (Buys 1900: 35).

Besides in the Qur'an, Islamic teachings are also sourced from the *Hadith* (Prophetic Tradition), matters originally dealt with by the Prophet Muhammad, be they his words, deeds, or orations (*taqrir*).²⁵ In the *Hadith*, besides the prohibition on consuming alcohol, it is also said that it is forbidden to pour, sell, buy, extort, or carry it. The Regent, as stated earlier by Buys,

²³ Soura's Al Baqarah 219, An-Nisaa 43, Al Maidah 90.

²⁴ Soura's Al Baqarah 2:173, Al Maidah 5:3, and Al Nahl 16:115.

²⁵ There are six important Hadith books: Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, Tirimidhī, Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah.

had not had a profound religious education in his youth. If the Regent had a thorough knowledge of or had learned much from the *Hadith*, although he himself did not drink the wine, he would probably have refused to keep or serve it to his European guests. We do not know whether the regent knew about the *Hadith*. Even if he did, it seems he preferred to continue the traditions of his predecessors.²⁶

Generally speaking, the inhabitants of West Java, especially the Sundanese, were loyal and devoted Muslims who were punctilious in observing the basic obligations of their religion. Their Islamic identity was very deeply rooted. Although outside observers like Buys saw that their knowledge and practice of Islam was not very profound, they would not easily have dissociated themselves from Islam as a religion and cultural identity. The Sundanese were steadfast in their involvement in and appreciation of their traditions which they considered to be their heritage from their ancestors, even though many elements of this cultural asset did not agree with the doctrines of Islam, or were even openly in conflict with them (Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink 2008: 652).²⁷

The Sundanese are Muslims, so conversion to another religion was unacceptable to them. Religious, and social leaders, even the indigenous civil servants, were keen to keep the identity of the Sundanese community as a Muslim community intact. Therefore it is not surprising that the nineteenth-century missionaries in the Preanger Regencies met with an invisible wall. They had difficulty proselytizing the Sundanese (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008: 653). If the strategy of Roorda van Eysinga to overcome the difficulties he encountered in converting Muslims set out in Honings' analysis (2022) was to choose to represent Islam as a "false belief", looking at the comments scattered throughout Buys' texts, in which he chose to demonstrate that the mission was far from hopeless, it seems Buys represented Islam as an "ambivalent belief". On the one hand, he portrays Islam as having been embraced by the natives of the Preanger; on the other hand, he encountered superstitions, and prohibitions which violated its tenets, like serving wine and indulging in cruel and savage entertainments.

CONCLUSION

This article analyses the travel text penned by Marius Buys and his guidebook, the fruits of his experiences in the Preanger Regencies between 1887 and 1890, the last place he served a Protestant congregation in the Indies as a clergyman before he returned to the Netherlands for good.

²⁶ Compare this with information from Knoerle (1835) about Prince Dipanegara who drank white wine for health reasons, even though he knew it was forbidden by the Prophet, and also information from Van Hogendorp (1913) about princes in Surakarta who liked to drink wine (Carey 2008: 122, 438).

²⁷ See the discussions in Ricklefs (2007) and Chaider S. Bamualim (2015) about the Islam of the Sundanese elite in the nineteenth century as they continued to maintain their *adat* blended in Islamic practices.

His experiences while serving in various places in the Indies would have been expected to have given Buys a broader perspective both as a travelling missionary and a (proto-)tourist. His status as a man of religion brought him close to both government and native officials. This made it easy for him to travel and affected his representations of the native population and the colony. The Preanger Regencies, located in West Java, were one of the mainstay areas of the Netherlands Indies government and they began to be promoted as tourism destinations in the late-nineteenth to early-twentieth century. In his travel text, Buys provides a tourist perspective, providing information about interesting or beautiful scenery and attractions which could be visited, and transport facilities, all of which could be enjoyed with a sense of security while travelling in this area.

Although Buys had visited other places in the Indies, the nature in the Preanger still made a deep impression on him. He portrayed its natural beauty: volcanoes, waterfalls, lakes, rivers, and primeval forests, and expressed his admiration of it. His description of the natural beauty of the Preanger is in line with Mary Louis Pratt's idea that "the landscape is estheticized" and, he thought, as he conveyed in his texts, that it would attract the attention of not only of Dutch people but also of foreign tourists. Interestingly for a man of the cloth, in his depiction of the beauty of nature, Buys rarely associates it with evidence of God's grandeur. The only praise of God he gives is when he visited Garut and used phrases like "Eternal Artist" instead of "God" or "Creator".

Buys' perspective as a minister of religion and a (proto) tourist on the indigenous people is analysed using Esme Cleall's concept of missionary thinking. In Buys' text is found the concept "discourses of difference", with the role of "race" as a marker of difference. Buys, on one hand, describes the appearances and dress of the indigenous populations as "different" using the phrases like "strange appearance", "a little silly", and "strange display". He also drops racist comments like the "ape-like appearance" of a horse-drawn carriage driver in Bandung. Buys differentiates between the categories "colonizer" (European residents in Bandung and Garut) and "colonized" (the indigenous people) when writing about to the new railway-line in Garut. On the other hand, he negotiates his perspective on the Indos and the indigenous people in the form of messages of appreciation and acknowledgments. This does not stop him from praising the Dutch for their excellence in managing and organizing the Indies as a colony. Nevertheless, his visit to the figure of Holle at the Bellevue Plantation and his encounters with different indigenous people gave him a new perspective on the relationship between "colonizers" and "colonized". There are ambivalences in 'his perspective as a travelling missionary and tourist. As a misionary, his perspective displays a "difference discourse", but as tourist he was obliged to provide interesting information about the inhabitants in the colony so that people would be interested in visiting.

In his texts, Buys also writes about "sickness", one of Esme Cleall's (2012) main themes. When Buys reports that the hot springs could cure skin diseases, he explains that many of the natives in the Preanger suffered from

dermatological ailments. They were known as *orang kótor* (dirty people) and they used hot springs to cure their maladies. For the treatment and healing of the sick in the Indies, health clinics were built in mountainous areas like Sukabumi and Sindanglaya. The doctors were Europeans who were ready to heal patients, including the indigenous population.

Another theme recurring in Esmee Cleall's study is "violence". For his part, Buys' perspective does betray his fear of and suspicions about fanatical Islam through the figures of the *hadjis*, the Regent, and the cruel culture of indigenous peoples. As might be expected, such stories strengthened the perspective of European missionary thinking. However, his encounters with indigenous characters with different views and thoughts to their fellow countrymen prompted Buys to remind his readers not to generalize about the indigenous population. The theme of violence is absent from his guidebook.

Buys perceived the superstitions and the teachings of Islam in the Preanger as "different". He found superstition alive and well among the indigenous people who had embraced and practised the teachings of Islam. He knew that the people of Priangan were Muslims but, when practising Islam, he saw that they combined Islamic teachings with traditions, for instance, the *sedekah* (sacrificial meal) before felling a "sacred" tree, the traditional "tooth-filing" ceremony held with recitations from the Qur'an in the presence of the chief *penghoeloe* (senior religious official), *doekoen* (traditional healers), the serving of wine in the ceremony in the house of the Bandung Regent. Although he never explicitly states the idea, he categorized it as an "ambivalent faith".

Marius Buys' travel account and guidebook both reveal the dynamic colonial ideology of the travelling missionary and (proto-) tourist at the end of the nineteenth century, the early period of the growth of modern in the Netherlands East Indies. These dynamics can also be linked to political changes in the Indies, like the introduction of the Liberal Policy in 1870, which marked the beginnings of Liberalism which influenced his perspective. Although the Netherlands East Indies had not yet been fully opened to tourists, especially foreigners, in his text Buys does mention meeting foreign tourists from America and England. He also tried to promote the Indies among young Dutch people with an interest in the politics and society of the Indies (Buys 1900: 95). Meanwhile, liberalism was almost entirely economic, not political. This study is a complement to Honings' study which analyses Sytze Roorda van Eysinga's perspective, that of a preacher before the advent of the Liberal Era in the Indies (Honings 2022).

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