

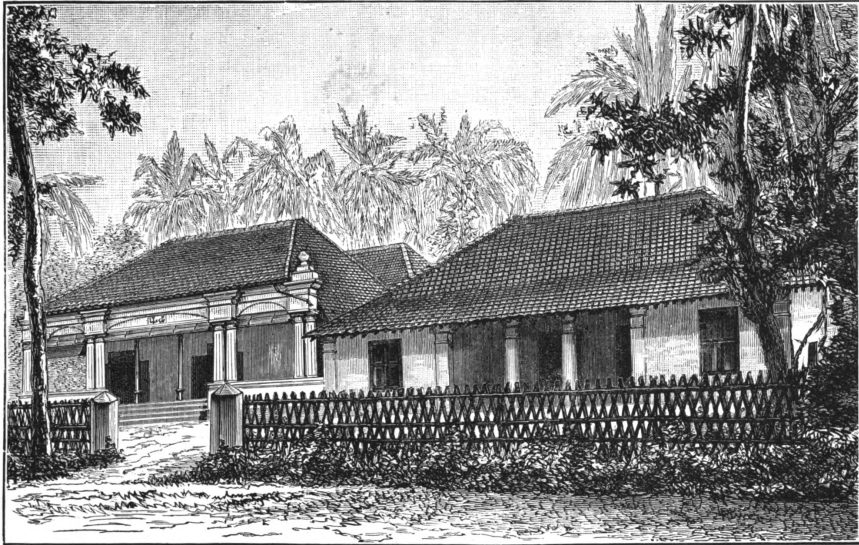
The Issue of the Javanese Church Songs

Bernard Arps

A key component of Protestant worship is congregational singing.¹ Imagine a church service in mid-nineteenth-century Amsterdam. Solemn-looking citizens, dressed in sober black, intone a psalm at the top of their voices to organ accompaniment, slowly paced and deliberate, from memory or a hymnal, in a vast stone building that resounds majestically.² Despite the difference in climate, the Willemskerk in Weltevreden or the Protestant Church in Surabaya looked and sounded much the same. Decades after the event, Javanese villagers who had discovered Christianity in the remote countryside but received baptism in the latter church in 1843–46 still cherished a lively recollection of their experience that night:

For one person, as he entered that glorious building with its lighting, it was as if he entered the portal of heaven, filling him with holy reverence and timidity; for another those solemn organ tones, later coupled with the singing of the gathered multitude, were like hearing songs of praise from the saints in heaven, collectively lauding God's greatness and love.³

A service in the village church of rural Swaru, Karangjasa, or Waru Jayeng was a different matter. The walls and ceiling of bamboo matting were hardly conducive to stately resonance. An organ was lacking, as were hymnbooks. The women wore ankle-length wraparound skirts and blouses with a sash over the shoulder, the men the same kind of lower garment and high-collared jackets, often without headcloth and never with a kris—preferably no covered heads and certainly no weaponry in the house of God. If the turnout was good, some of the congregation sat on mats on the floor. Even so, the liturgical procedure differed little from the Dutch one. This is how Reformed (*Gereformeerde*) preacher F. Lion Cachet describes the first



ZENDINGHUIS EN KERKGEBOUW IN KAMPONG—PLAOSAN, POERWOREDO.

FIGURE 4-1. Protestant mission house and church in Plaosan, Purwareja. Cachet, *Een jaar op reis in dienst der Zending*, 255.

Javanese service he attended during his “year on the road in Mission service” on Sunday, May 31, 1891, in the ward of Plaosan (figure 4-1) in the town of Purwareja, southern Central Java:

Dressed simply in a black coat, Brother Wilhelm takes his place behind a lectern, raised somewhat above the ground, . . . and the religious service commences with “*Doeh Rāmā kawoelā hingkang wontèn hing swargā*” (“Our Father, Who art in Heaven. . .”). After the prayer, a psalm verse was sung, rendered into Javanese from our rhymed version, retaining the ordinary melody. Every line was prompted rather loudly by a native assistant, which was indeed necessary because, apparently, only a few adults could read, and both Bibles and Psalters were almost completely absent. After the reading of the Law and Articles of Faith, there was again prayer and song, after which a sermon followed, to be concluded with thanksgiving and a final hymn, and a benediction. All of this approximately as is usual during the service in our Churches in the Netherlands, although lasting not much longer than an hour.⁴

Although they did sing, Javanese Christians were not easily persuaded to burst into jubilant melody. In fact their singing became a controversial point of contention among the missionaries who felt responsible for the Christian–Javanese rite. These people were well aware that Javanese—of whatever denomination—sang, and that some even liked to. But how and what should they have them sing during Christian worship?

That the texts had to be in Javanese was beyond dispute. It was only in this language that Javanese could experience the texts in the way they should. But regarding the musical side, opinions varied. In the 1830s and 1840s, the early days

of Christianization in rural East Java, European observers had been quite accepting of native singing styles. This may be illustrated by the impression of Brumund, pastor in Surabaya, of a service around 1850 in a remote community that stood under the tutelage of “the apostle of Java,” Protestant missionary J. E. Jellesma (in Java 1848–58):

I could note a few innocent, perhaps even good remnants of their earlier faith among the new converts. The speaker’s amen repeated every time by the entire congregation, and the hands folded together and held at mouth’s height during prayer. The hymns were raised to a Javanese mode of singing; this was certainly not as pleasant sounding as ours, but, I believe, nonetheless more pleasant sounding than ours—entirely different from theirs—would have sounded if raised by them. Moreover it was national, and they must be allowed to keep everything among them that is a national good and unharmed.⁵

Key features of communal ritual and its esthetics were persistent: the audience punctuating an Arabic prayer with *āmīn*, the cupping together of one’s raised hands with the palms facing upward during prayer, and Javanese voicing and melody. Jellesma was tolerant of this, at least initially. It was different, however, with most of the other trained and accredited Protestant missionaries sent by European missionary societies who began to operate on Java from mid-century. Some found it difficult to imagine anything other than the melodies of Dutch psalms and hymns in the house of God. Yet as predicted by Brumund, it was painfully easy to hear that these melodies were quite un-Javanese. The Reverend Lion Cachet reports about a Sunday service led by a Javanese officiant in the village of Benca, not far from Purwareja:

Such “singing”! As if all had a cold, and in addition each individual *must* produce something entirely distinctive in the field of song, in a different tonality, with a tune thus far unknown. It would have been cause for screams of laughter, had it not cut through the heart in such a pathetically painful way. Poor people; they truly cannot help it; of the music that is chorale, so totally different from theirs, they have no understanding.⁶

Lion Cachet voiced a widespread sentiment among the missionaries. According to some, therefore, more Javanese-sounding tunes were to be preferred. But where should these come from? Could existing Javanese types of song, particularly the common traditional sung stanzaic verse forms known as *tembang*, be allowed in church?⁷ Another possibility might be to have new Javanese-style melodies composed specially for Christian worship. But this option brought practical problems: Who should create them?

A DEBATE IN 1901–1902

The issue of the Javanese church singing was discussed in writing repeatedly. By far the most detailed treatment, and because of its lively character also the most gripping, is found in a series of polemical articles by two anonymous authors in the

missionary periodicals *De Getuige* (The witness) and *De Opwekker* (The arouser) of 1901 and 1902. This polemic was clearly considered important, for two years later, the articles from *De Opwekker* were reprinted in book form under the title of *Iets over gënding en tēmbang en over Javaansch kerkgezing* (A little about *gendhing* and *tēmbang* and about Javanese church singing). Taking, in good philological fashion, this discussion as the starting point, in this chapter I examine the question why the Protestant missionaries, and possibly Javanese Christians themselves as well, found the Javanese church singing so problematic.⁸

First, a brief characterization of the polemic. Someone writing under the pen name of “een Indo” (a Eurasian) had expressed himself disparagingly in *De Getuige* about an attempt to have a Christian Javanese text sung to the accompaniment of a gamelan piece (in Javanese, a *gendhing*). This experiment, he wrote, could only fail, “for never ever has a Javanese sung to *gendhing*.” In this connection “a Eurasian” had claimed that “the Javanese’s sense of hearing and his *adat* [customs] have been violated and mutilated” and “his property destroyed and rendered unrecognizable.”⁹

“Een leek” (a layperson) responds to this. The response is devastating. The experiment was not odd at all, because choral singing to gamelan accompaniment does exist, although perhaps not in the place where “a Eurasian” is stationed. Musically it works perfectly well. The accusation of mutilation and violation is therefore groundless. However, this kind of music does not appeal to the congregation of “a layperson.” He sketches what in his view is the best form of church singing: “melodies composed specially for the Native or modified after the nature of Javanese music.”¹⁰ This is not urgent, however, because the way the European melodies—which are widespread—are sung is actually not bad.

This discussion is followed by a reply in six parts by “a namesake of ‘a layperson’” (*een naamgenoot van ‘een leek’*), followed in turn by an extensive six-part rejoinder from “a layperson.”¹¹ In the course of the exchange, it transpires that “a Eurasian” is the reformed missionary L. Adriaanse (on Java 1895–1902). As successor to J. Wilhelm, whom we met in Lion Cachet’s first quotation, Adriaanse was based in Purwareja. In his controversial book *Sadrach’s kring* (Sadrach’s circle, 1899) Adriaanse had spoken with some approval about the person and practices of Sadrach Surapranata (ca. 1835–1924), spiritual leader of a large number of Christian congregations in western Central Java, who was in bad repute with most missionaries because of what they felt were his Javanese syncretistic ideas.¹² Adriaanse made overtures to Sadrach but without much success.¹³ “A layperson” considers “a Eurasian,” “a namesake of ‘a layperson,’” and Adriaanse as a “trinity” (Dutch: *drieëenheid*).¹⁴

“A layperson” manages to hide his identity more effectively, but circumstantial evidence suggests that he was P. Anth. Jansz (1853–1943), the Mennonite missionary teacher who is best known as founder of the mission colony of Margareja in the residency of Japara (north coast of Central Java).¹⁵ Jansz founded this village

in 1883 in accordance with the idea propounded by his father, P. Jansz (1820–1904), known among other things as a translator of the Bible into Javanese, that evangelization was best accomplished in combination with the clearing and settling of land. The Javanese in Margareja were not obliged to be Christians, but they did have to promise to obey a number of rules, including “to abandon all idolatrous and superstitious customs” and “to attend loyally the religious gatherings.”¹⁶ With his brother-in-law and several Javanese teachers, P. Anth. Jansz gave mandatory Christian school lessons to the local youth. This included instrumental and vocal music. Jansz Jr., who spoke Javanese fluently, also led Sunday service, and as noted by Lion Cachet, “the singing was very good.”¹⁷

Let me return to the discussion and henceforth (at the risk of being proven wrong) refer to “a layperson” as Jansz Jr. and “a namesake of ‘a layperson’” (and “a Eurasian”) as Adriaanse. Apparently somewhat intimidated by Jansz’s passionate argument, Adriaanse states in the conclusion of his reply that he, too, awaits new songs in Javanese style. In his rejoinder, Jansz Jr. declares that his opponent has not convinced him of the desirability of using familiar Javanese forms of song for church services. The most important reason is that—according to Jansz—the Javanese themselves reject them: “The serious-minded part of the congregation is . . . *against* existing *tembang* and *gënding* and *gamëllan* in church.”¹⁸ Their opinion is not prompted by the author (Jansz) or other missionaries. As long as no suitable melodies have been created by or for Javanese Christians, one can safely continue to use Dutch ones. The congregation likes to sing them and does so well.

JAVANESE CHRISTIANS AND THEIR SONGS

Although in the second half of the nineteenth century there were never more than twenty Protestant missionaries at work in Java at any one time, circumstances in Javanese Christendom were complicated, not to say chaotic.¹⁹ Besides the congregations led by envoys of the various Dutch and foreign missionary corporations, hundreds of Javanese Christians lived outside the direct supervision of missionaries. These people, sometimes referred to as *Kristen Jawa* in contrast to the *Kristen Landa* (Dutch Christians) of the missionaries, followed Javanese spiritual guides like Sadrach, mentioned above.

Little is known about the liturgical viewpoints of Javanese Christians outside the missionaries’ sphere of influence, but there do exist a few brief descriptions of their worship. The founder of what may be identified as the first community of Javanese Christians was a man with a Russian father, a Javanese mother, a Dutch wife, and a Javanese wife. He was Coenraad Laurens Coolen (ca. 1785–1873), a former civil servant and military man who settled in Ngara, south of Jombang in East Java, probably in 1828.²⁰ Coolen cleared land for rice fields and established an estate of which he was granted the leasehold by the regional colonial authorities. Among the Javanese who settled and worked on his estate, Coolen propagated Christianity.

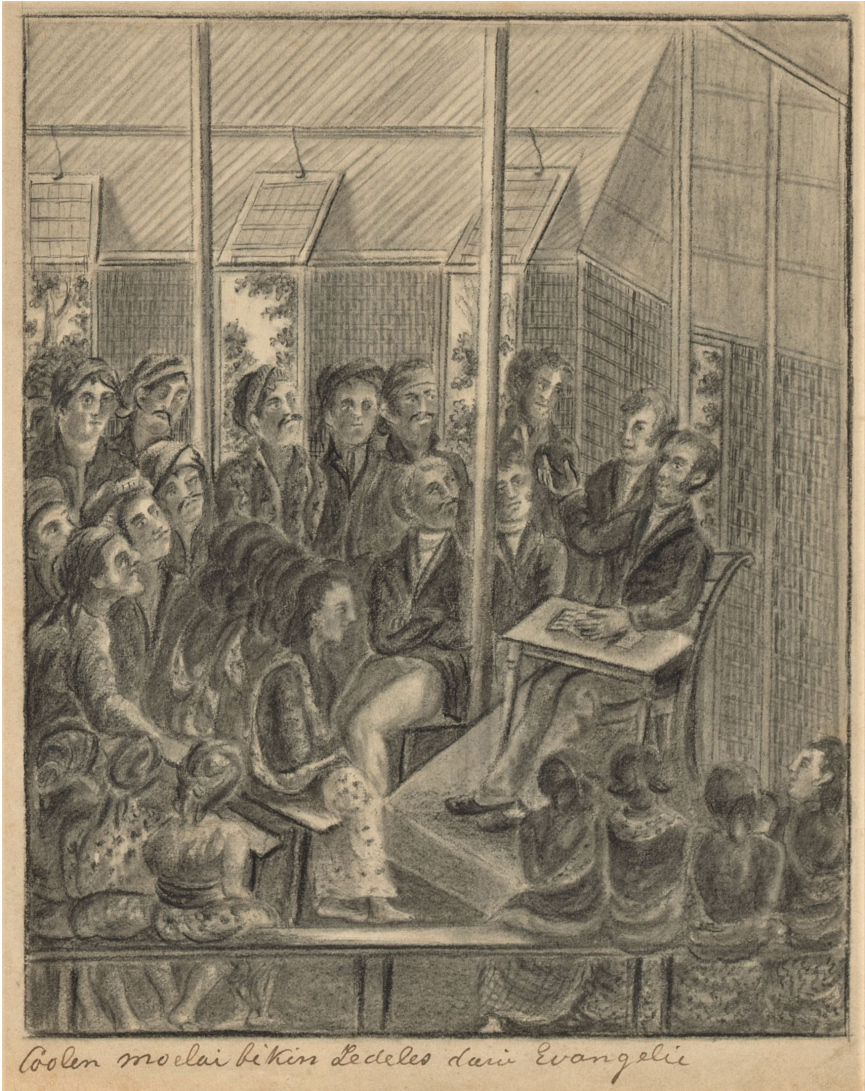


FIGURE 4-2. "Coolen begins to give moral instruction from the Gospel." Rijksmuseum RP-T-00-3930-12.

Sunday service in Ngara involved the communal melodic reciting of formulas and prayers at several junctures.²¹ After Coolen read from the Bible and gave a short explication (figure 4-2), the congregation sang hymns that, according to Van Akkeren had been translated by Coolen from a Dutch hymnbook. Their melodies were Javanese.²²

Rituals clearly modeled on Muslim devotional practices were prominent in the religiosity established in Ngara, also outside the church. Every weekday evening, for instance, the (male) inhabitants gathered in (or outside) a community member's home, selected by rotation. The officiant—usually the host—sang Coolen's Javanese rendition of the Creed line by line, alternating with the participants' joint chanting of "There is no Deity but God / Jesus Christ is the Spirit of God" (*La ilaha illalloh / Yesus Kristus ya Rohullah*). This call-and-response recitation of the articles of faith ended with a phase where the participants continuously chanted "Indeed Jesus, indeed the Christ, indeed Jesus, indeed the Christ" (*Lha Yesus, lha Kristus, lha Yesus, lha Kristus* etc.), while rhythmically nodding the head in turn to the left and the right. This ritual was still remembered decades later under the name of *dhikiran*.²³ Not only did the procedure emulate devotional sessions in Muslim environments, which, moreover, went by the same name (derived from Arabic *dhikr*, "remembrance" of God), the refrain was a Christian variation on the Islamic profession of faith, and the movements were like those made during Muslim *dhikr* gatherings. After an interval, the participants sang hymns, ending the session by chanting the Lord's Prayer. Afterward, they sometimes continued to chat deep into the night.²⁴

Coolen's fame and his practices and teachings attracted spiritual seekers, some of whom converted to Christianity. This is how the texts and tunes of his liturgy reached other parts of Java. One of these seekers was Pak Dasimah (d. 1848), who established a small Christian community in Wiyung near Surabaya, East Java. Dasimah was initiated into the main doctrines and liturgical formulas by Coolen around 1838 and stayed in contact with his teacher afterward.²⁵ Having come into contact with a group of European promoters of Christianity in Surabaya, in 1843 Dasimah was baptized in the city's Protestant Church (described in the beginning of this chapter). Christian worship in Dasimah's community became something of a curiosity.²⁶ Even decades later, members recalled that "sometimes on Sundays European ladies young and old [*nyonyah-nyonyah lan nonah-nonah*] from Surabaya would attend the congregation in Wiyung."²⁷ A brief account of a service "in a bamboo shed" by an observer from the Netherlands in 1846 described the scene:

An old man positioned himself before a table, on which Bible and hymnbook were laid out; the others arranged themselves on benches, men and women and a few children, 27 in number. In a kindhearted, confident tone the aged officiant uttered a short prayer; thereupon he raised a song, in which all those present joined, that is to say those who understood it, for it was a Javanese Christian song with a Javanese melody, monotonous to our ears.²⁸

We learn from other sources that what Van Rhijn called a hymnbook was in fact a proselytizing tract.²⁹ Dasimah had learned his church songs from Coolen but must have switched to texts from such pamphlets later.³⁰ They probably came from the

Surabaya-based Christian Society, founded ca. 1815, that circulated handwritten and printed tracts in Malay and Javanese.³¹

Coolen's worship made an impression, but not a favorable one, also on the accredited missionaries. Among other things, the fact that his songs were sung in Javanese style incurred their disapproval. Sources about Coolen invariably report that his religious formulas and hymns were cast in *tembang*. The term *tembang* denotes a category of melodic-metrical verse forms. Stanzas in *tembang* are versified according to complex metrical principles and read (usually aloud) with tunes that are intrinsically connected to the meters.³² In this period, a great many Javanese genres, including lyrical, mystical, and magical texts, were versified in *tembang*. Of course, this made *tembang* suspect in missionaries' eyes. On a Christian estate where some of Coolen's followers settled after their baptism (not endorsed by Coolen), ten Christian commandments were in force, including "7. Thou shalt not read Javanese verse."³³ But it is doubtful that Coolen's songs indeed used *tembang* verse forms. The verb *nembang*, derived from the base *tembang*, could be used for all singing in Javanese scales, including if the texts did not have the metrical form of *tembang* in the strict sense. At any rate, the texts sung by Coolen's followers that I have seen are not in *tembang* but in free verse forms not known from elsewhere.³⁴

Objections against Javanese song and related performing arts became widespread among Protestant missionaries. Only a few had a positive opinion of church singing in Javanese style and actively employed it. S. E. Harthoorn, who was active in the environs of Malang from 1854 to 1863 and whom we also meet elsewhere in this volume, was such an exception. According to his pupil Smeding, Harthoorn was the only one (read: the only missionary?) who used *tembang* for church songs. This was *tembang* proper, learned by Harthoorn's Javanese officiant Johannes in the royal city of Surakarta, Central Java. Still, Harthoorn used *tembang* only for the sake of variety; most of his church songs had Western melodies.³⁵

In the same period, P. Jansz the elder, who would later deliver a passionate plea against *tembang* tunes, also toyed with the idea of basing the Javanese versions of psalms and hymns on the established literary tradition. As revealed in his diary, in 1858 and 1859 he rendered several dozen psalms "in Jav. Poetic meter" (*in Jav. Dichtmaat*). He wanted to have them printed in a small run "in order initially to be only in the hands of the missionaries etc." He also entertained the idea of selecting "ten to fifteen of the most easily intelligible psalms" and "having them printed with some of the most common church hymns along with the music in a special volume, to serve for general use in church and home."³⁶ The former collection was published in 1865 in Amsterdam; a greatly expanded version of the latter followed in Leiden twenty years later.³⁷ It turns out that with "Jav. Poetic meter," Jansz did not mean the existing *tembang* forms. The meters he used were his own creations. He seems to have thought he had designed them according to *tembang* principles, but he had misunderstood the structure of *tembang*.³⁸ Jansz limited his experiment

to texts. Inasmuch as they are indicated in these volumes, the melodies are those of Dutch psalms and evangelical hymns.

Not all Javanese Christians outside missionary control sang like the followers of Coolen and Dasimah. The congregation of Tunggul Wulung (early 1800s–85) shows a rapprochement between Dutch and Javanese styles. Tunggul Wulung was an evangelist and spiritual leader who traveled around a lot but eventually settled with his followers in 1875 not far from where the Jansz family was stationed. Various accounts exist of Tunggul Wulung's conversion in the 1850s. He visited Coolen, but it seems that Jellesma played the most important role.³⁹ Tunggul Wulung's followers sang Javanese melodies, though not in church.⁴⁰ There they used spiritual texts versified by Jellesma:

And doing this they sang, in their own manner, imitated chorale tunes with Javanese intervals, above all very drawn-out and very drawled (that is how it is supposed to be, they probably thought) and with the requisite Javanese twists or turns in between. And everyone followed their own musical feeling and had their own variation (*cengkok*), which they belted out as loudly as possible.⁴¹

Jansz describes a remarkable conjunction of old-fashioned churchly Dutch and traditional literary Javanese singing styles. In various places on Java and neighboring islands there were (and are) ways of singing texts where the solo reciter is joined at the end of a verse line by other participants, intoning approximately the same melodic contour, slowly, each with individual vocal embellishments, in neither textual nor melodic unison but heterophonically and very loudly.⁴² Judging by Jansz's description, this is what Tunggul Wulung's congregation did. Meanwhile, Jansz was undoubtedly correct in believing that they self-consciously sang chorales. In this period in the Netherlands, the old-fashioned way of Protestant Church singing was isometric and slow.⁴³ Dutch ministers and early missionaries had promoted this style in the East as well. Congregational singing in Dutch- and Malay-language churches in north Sulawesi, the Moluccas, and Sri Lanka had an "utterly slow, drawling tone," as Van Rhijn observed in 1847, "so that on every note a few others, waving up and down, were sung in between."⁴⁴ Of course, Christianity was associated with the colonial oppressors. Once missionaries made their entrance, many Javanese Christians followed their new mentors also where the design of the liturgy was concerned. But they did not go all the way, and they may have been unwilling to. Certain facets of Javanese musical aesthetics continued to prevail with them. In all likelihood, the congregational singing in Benca, a community that followed Sadrach, was performed according to the same Javanese aesthetic standards. The vocal timbre that Lion Cachet heard there was not caused by a virus but by the manner of voice production that belongs to Javanese singing, which may appear nasal to unaccustomed ears.

Jansz adds to his description of divine service among Tunggul Wulung's followers that their singing truly sounded to European and Javanese musical ears

alike as “the howling of dogs.”⁴⁵ It is unlikely that the singers themselves would have described it in this way. But it was of key importance for the further development of the musical dimension of the Protestant Javanese religious service that the missionaries considered their performance as an undesirable abomination of Dutch choral singing. Luckily, the mission schools provided them with the means to teach Javanese children to sing well in European style.

THE PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES’ DISCUSSIONS ABOUT JAVANESE CHURCH SONGS

In a word, the Javanese Christian liturgy in the nineteenth century showed musical diversity. At one extreme, there were independent groups that to different degrees gave a Javanese form to their church songs; at the other, there were communities under the tutelage of missionaries that, with varying success, sang in Dutch style. As the end of the century approached, an awareness of this plurality grew in Protestant missionary circles. Initially, there had been relatively little communication among the envoys of the different missionary corporations. To a certain extent, all the missionaries, who often operated in regions that were distant from each other, went their own way, including where the design of the liturgy was concerned.⁴⁶ However, in the last two decades of the century, circumstances changed. An important factor was the founding, in 1881, of the Netherlands–Indies Protestant Missionary Association (Nederlandsch–Indische Zendingbond), a platform for collaboration between the envoys of, in principle, all Protestant missionary societies.⁴⁷ It was this association that published *Gěnding en tēmbang* in 1904. *De Opwekker*, the periodical in which the polemic of Jansz Jr. and Adriaanse first appeared, served as this organization’s organ from 1881, and it informed the missionaries about each other’s practices and ideas.⁴⁸ The association’s mission conferences (*zendingsconferenties*) convened every two to four years and provided a forum for seeking consensus. Papers were read about issues of consequence, and discussion, motion, and decision followed. Javanese church singing was on the agenda at the fourth (1885) and tenth (1900) conferences, the former with a paper read by P. Jansz Sr., the latter with one by schoolmaster J. Kats.

As noted, my central point of interest for analytical purposes is the debate reproduced in *Gěnding en tēmbang* 1904. This had been preceded, however, by several decades of discussion, incipient in Brumund’s remark about an unharmed “national” mode of singing, but truly started from Smeding’s principled treatment, written in 1860, of the pros and cons of Javanese and European song forms.⁴⁹ Jansz Jr. and Adriaanse’s exchange of thoughts is best understood against this background; indeed, they make frequent reference to earlier sources.

A number of the missionaries’ ideas and feelings about Javanese church songs have already been mentioned in passing. Basically, they saw three possibilities for the musical side of things: using Javanese song types, using European psalm and

hymn melodies, or composing new melodies in Javanese style. The arguments raised in the debates after 1860 revolve around six themes. I will review them briefly in the following order: the formal aspects of the various types of singing, musical esthetics, musical and religious experience, ideological connotations of the different types of singing, the future of Javanese music, and the fact that a tradition of Javanese church singing had already been established.

In *Gěnding en tēmbang* 1904, Jansz Jr. argues vehemently against Adriaanse's use of an archaic category of *tembang* for church songs. He was against this, he claims, because Javanese are never heard singing in unison; in fact, this is impossible, because no two people realize a *tembang* melody in exactly the same way.⁵⁰ Jansz's argument was not new; Smeding had noted this forty years earlier. According to Smeding, the problem was technical. *Tembang* lacked a steady musical rhythm and because each singer applied his or her own melodic ornamentation, the melodies simply could not be sung in unison. This was why the Javanese official Johannes—the one who had studied *tembang* in Surakarta in order to bring it into practice under Harthoorn—disapproved of *tembang* for religious service, preferring Dutch church songs.⁵¹

The missionaries' discussions about Javanese church songs tell us about arrogance and misconceptions but also about Javanese musical practices, forms, and aesthetics of the time, including information and insights unrecorded in other sources. In his lecture at the mission conference two decades later, Jansz Sr. had even stated that in his experience, all Javanese singing was solo.⁵² Possibly this was so in the north coast region where he was stationed, at least for singing in the Javanese language and by adults. In Sadrach's *kring*, Adriaanse had provided a range of counterexamples: the choral singing that goes with *bedhaya* and *srimpi* female group dances at the Central Javanese courts; the courtly praise songs sung to gamelan accompaniment by a chorus (the so-called *panembrama*); the genre of *slawatan*, which consists of Arabic songs of praise for the Prophet Muhammad, accompanied by frame drums and often using Javanese melodies; and the songs sung a cappella in children's games. Moreover, the situation in Sadrach's circle proved that Javanese choral singing in religious services was not only possible but unproblematic for those involved.⁵³ Ultimately, Jansz Jr. is obliged to admit that Javanese do sing in groups, but his notion of choral singing, like that of Smeding, requires melodic and rhythmic uniformity. Moreover, choral singing to gamelan accompaniment is rejected by Jansz's congregation, while unaccompanied *tembang* singing will result in the use of different melodies in different communities and even within the same community, and know-it-alls will either not sing along or will try to drown out the others.⁵⁴ In his response, Adriaanse considers this lack of geographical uniformity unimportant. It is not an issue in the Netherlands, where local differences also occur. Moreover, the use of notation will produce more sameness in the long run.⁵⁵ Jansz Jr. continues to insist that the variants in a *tembang* melody are so different that *tembang* cannot be used for choral singing.

Of course, a congregation can be taught a single version, but if they must be taught anyhow, why not European tunes? He claims that his pupils find it more difficult to learn *tembang* melodies than some European melodies.⁵⁶

Not all arguments advanced in the discussions about Javanese church singing were in favor of Western melodies. At the ninth mission conference, Tiemersma had complained at length about the deficits of the Malay psalters. He thought that word stress in the Malay texts and the rhythm of the Dutch melodies to which they were sung often did not agree.⁵⁷ Kats, speaking at the tenth conference, felt that composing new melodies with matching texts was the best solution.⁵⁸ But overall, this issue was considered unimportant. In fact it had been efficiently disposed of by Jansz Sr., for whom the wrong rhythm did not matter because “the Natives do not feel or understand anything about it anyhow: owing to their own *pantuns* [sung quatrains in Malay and other languages] and *tembangs*; those who can sing keep to the cadence, but they do not bother about the stress of the words.”⁵⁹ The phrasing was derogatory, but Jansz was right. Word stress is irrelevant to Javanese (and Malay) song.⁶⁰

Other points made in the discussion between Jansz Jr. and Adriaanse concerned musical aesthetics. At the 1885 conference, Albers had argued that in mission schools, much attention should be paid to “the Christian song,” because the native religious vocal genres sounded so terrible: “In a land where the *tukang adan* shouts; where *dikir* equals roaring; *nembang* equals screaming; prayer equals buzzing, in such a land all care must necessarily be devoted to song, if possible to singing in parts. The influence of Christian, melodious singing is simply beyond measure. It arouses the best possible sensations in the human being.”⁶¹ Fifteen years later, Jansz Jr. and Adriaanse no longer speak about Javanese singing in this manner. Even Jansz is remarkably relativistic about the aesthetic value of Javanese song—though not without rhetorical ulterior purpose, as it allows him to declare that Javanese have the same attitude to Western music: “Just as *we* may consider *well*-performed *native* choral singing or gamelan playing lovely and melodious but still rank our own music higher, thus a *native* who has a feeling for music in general may consider many a *European* melody, if *well* executed, beautiful, yet still put his own music above it.”⁶² And, Jansz continued, even if the alternatives are musically on a par, from a moral viewpoint Western church music must be preferred.

A related issue lay in tonality. It was noted frequently that many congregations sang out of tune. Undoubtedly correctly, Smeding attributed this to the influence of Javanese scales.⁶³ But Jansz Jr. disagrees. In his experience, the singing in Javanese congregations and mission schools is often better than in the Netherlands, especially if singing is part of these schools’ curriculum.⁶⁴

The verbal duel between Jansz and Adriaanse, this succession of idea and attenuation, of argument and rebuttal, concerned not only externalities like whether or not certain ways of singing existed, their exact form, and their musical worth. More important still was what happened in the Javanese mind. The discussants

also devoted attention to the musical experience of singing and, linked to this, its moral and religious experience, as well as a still less tangible issue, namely that of its ideologies, thought to be apparent from the immorality and godlessness of kindred artistic forms.

Years earlier, Jansz the elder had already attempted to bring *tembang* into dispute. In his lecture against the use of *tembang*, he alluded to the characters (*watak*) of the verse forms, which, according to him, were about “battle and war,” “love stories,” “sadness, primarily . . . frustrated love,” and “lust and pleasure.”⁶⁵ Jansz was selective in his choice of examples and biased in how he represented them. He conveniently forgot to note that not all *watak* identified in Javanese poetics have the kind of sensual nature that would immediately appear reprehensible to Calvinists. Two of the most common *tembang*, for instance, are felt to be “charming, captivating” and “friendly, sociable.” And “lust and pleasure” is unknown as a verse form character; the term that Jansz translated in this way was probably *nepsu*, but in poetics, this means “angry.”⁶⁶

The missionaries drew psychological conclusions from the way the Javanese congregations sang the Dutch melodies. The idea that the Javanese did not understand Dutch music, that they were incapable of identifying with it, was widespread (see, for instance, the end of the second quotation from Lion Cachet). Adriaanse and initially also Jansz Jr. held the same opinion.⁶⁷ Most missionaries considered it self-evident that Javanese did identify with their own music, but it was doubtful that it had the correct ethos. According to Smeding, for instance, *tembang* lacked “that expression of mental elevation to the grand and exalted which is needed by the religious mind.” Also, Smeding wrote, *tembang* had a passive character in accordance with the Javanese national character.⁶⁸ Additionally, Jansz Jr. saw signs that the Javanese do not feel more at home in their own music: “I have never noticed the children in school here having a better understanding of *tembang* melodies with lyrics by Javanese poets, or singing them with more feeling, in a livelier manner, with greater enthusiasm than the European melodies of their school and Sunday school songs.”⁶⁹ The way the psalm was sung in Benca—probably without much ardor—made Lion Cachet wonder whether the singers actually understood the text.⁷⁰ Jansz and Lion Cachet passed over the fact that a *con brio* singing style is extremely rare in Java. Textual comprehension cannot be measured by how fiery the delivery is.

Both Jansz and Adriaanse present themselves as advocates of their Javanese congregations. According to Adriaanse, they want church songs in *tembang*; according to Jansz, absolutely not. It gradually becomes clear that the reason for rejection by Jansz’s congregation is ideological. *Tembang* is associated with heathen and sensual art forms like wayang shadow play and *tayuban*, a dance event in which a professional singer-dancer, usually female, known inter alia as *tledhek* or *ronggeng*, dances with male guests (figure 4-3).⁷¹ This association had been posited by Jansz Sr. in his conference lecture:



FIGURE 4-3. Two *ronggeng* and a gamelan ensemble (c. 1910). Leiden University Libraries, KITLV 27411, <http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:801808>.

But the biggest objection [against using *tembang* for church singing] for most among you is likely to be that the song tunes in question have everywhere been heard from olden times until the present particularly from the mouths of those who have chosen Venus's service as their profession, which situation will continue to obtain in the future until it has been fully defeated by Christianity.⁷²

Jansz Sr. was convinced that in the past, *tledhek* used to be priestesses in the service of "the Indian Venus or Sukra." The *tembang* tunes must originate from this idolatry as well, "So even their birth would have been in uncleanness." The conclusion is evident: "It appears to me that it would be unethical, indeed horrible, if in our Christian meetings the same tunes were sung that were heard yesterday and will be heard tomorrow from the mouths of public whores under the influence of opium."⁷³

Jansz got it seriously wrong. *Tembang* verse was seldom sung by *tledhek*. Albers pointed this out in a footnote to Jansz's claim: *tembang* is primarily used in literature. He even called Jansz's statement "a gross error." Jansz Sr., who had been working among Javanese for thirty-one years, had composed a Javanese grammar and dictionaries, had re-versified psalms and hymns in Javanese, and was busy translating the Bible—in short, who had developed into a Javanese *littérateur* himself—should have known better. Apparently, he did not *want* to know better. His

attempt to debar *tembang* goes back to fear of the unknown, not only the unknown in contemporary Javanese society (of course he did not mingle with dancing girls) but also the unknown in the past; his idea of the origins of *tembang* was pure speculation. Perhaps he was deceived by the ambiguity of the word *tembang*.

It is not only the alleged connection with *tledhek* that disqualifies *tembang* for Christian worship. For Jansz Jr., who is more knowledgeable than his father was a decade and a half earlier, *tembang* is tainted especially by the fact that it is sung by the puppeteer (*dhalang*) in wayang performances.⁷⁴ He presents this as the opinion of his flock; they feel an aversion to *tembang* tunes, he asserts, "which perhaps at the very moment when the congregation praises God in the house of prayer, a small distance away are being sung by a dhalang during a wayang."⁷⁵ Wayang, after all, depicts heathen stories.

Opposite the ideological unsuitability of Javanese song stood the proven suitability of the Dutch rite. Adriaanse tries to undermine this argument in favor of European church songs by claiming:

I have . . . repeatedly heard people working in the mission field express the opinion that the Western song tunes belong with Christianity and therefore *must be introduced to the Javanese along with Christianity*. . . .

If one bears in mind that the Javanese have *first* been given such an impression, it is unsurprising if *later* the Javanese Christians go a step further and claim that the Dutch chorale tunes were sung in this way already by Israel in the Temple and *therefore* must now also be used by the Javanese congregation.⁷⁶

Jansz parries the attack with an insinuation addressed to Adriaanse's *Gereformeerde* church. He has never come across this idea among missionaries, but he does "recall once having heard in the Netherlands that such an opinion is sometimes found there, for instance among rigidly *Gereformeerde* farmers on the Veluwe. Might the esteemed writer perhaps be confusing the one with the other, and now think by mistake that he has observed said assertion coming from a *Javanese* mouth?"⁷⁷

Along with the present and the past, the future of Javanese singing is of concern as well. Jansz's and Adriaanse's disputation took place in the beginning of the so-called ethical policy era. The basic political idea was that after a long period of economic exploitation, it was the moral obligation of the Dutch to elevate the Indigenous population of the Netherlands East Indies from its underdeveloped condition. We find this idea reflected in the discussion between Adriaanse and Jansz. Both agree that Christendom has the duty to raise Javanese music from its primitive level of development. In Adriaanse's words, "In my modest opinion the Protestant mission is called, inasmuch as this concerns its work, to contribute to the further development and ennoblement, indeed Christianization, of Javanese musical and poetic art."⁷⁸

At the 1885 conference, Jansz Sr. had asked his audience whether one should

try to obtain compositions for church song which, at any rate as much as possible, resemble their tonality more than ours do, taken either from the same school [i.e., that of Javanese tradition] or from the European school; albeit arranged in such a way that monotony is avoided and that they clearly prove to be tunes different from those performed by the popular songstresses, as well as, of course, more suited to the purpose.⁷⁹

Jansz Sr. thought that the monotonousness of Javanese song could be explained by its level of development. The “musical scale” of the Javanese, according to Jansz, is

that of childhood in music, which [in Europe] was brought to greater perfection as time progressed and civilization increased, so as to meet the requirements of euphony and harmony.

These peoples have not come along with civilization but have remained with the old, primitive scale, which is why naturally their melodies bear a characteristic trait of monotony—I would almost say, of naivety—to some passages of which our more practiced hearing, accustomed as it is to greater luxuriance, is attracted, but in the totality of which it finds little other than boredom in the longer run.⁸⁰

Consequently, Jansz queried if it was advisable to invite one or more European composers to create some pieces of music in Javanese style by way of experiment. It was suggested in the discussion following the lecture that the current situation should not be conserved. Javanese song had to develop. Nonetheless, Jansz’s proposal, while “not undesirable,” was deemed unrealistic. The motion was carried to stimulate the use of European melodies.⁸¹ It was very convenient, of course, that, as the chairman noted, Jansz had just published his collection of Javanese psalms and evangelical hymns, which represents such tunes with staff notations and often identifies a Dutch psalm or hymn as the source of the tune.⁸²

As we have seen, the results of the missionaries’ decision were disappointing. It is hardly surprising, then, that at the tenth conference fifteen years later, the issue was revisited. In an extremely long-winded exposition, J. Kats, teacher at a European school in Batavia who had a special interest in singing, sketched how contemporary European harmonic music was the perfect end of a unilinear musical evolution.⁸³ Javanese music was closest to that of the ancient Greeks, albeit inferior in several respects. This explains why European church song was not appreciated. The Javanese should not be given music “for which he is far from ripe, and which, following the ordinary course of development, he will only comprehend and understand in several centuries.”⁸⁴ The “productive artistic capacity of the Native” must be aroused and strengthened. The mission’s task is clear: “Not to preserve the current situation, as the conference of ’85 feared, but to build on and develop what exists by initiating it.”⁸⁵ Kats came with two alternative proposals: set up a test with songs suitable for choral singing, in Javanese verse forms and tunes, or, if this was impossible, a test “with a singing method designed specially for the Native

and with Native songs, for which melodies have been composed in the manner of our chorale tunes, which agree with the existing music as much as possible and satisfy Native ears.”⁸⁶ The former was rejected in the discussion. An earlier experiment along these lines had not gone down well with the Javanese congregation.⁸⁷ Ultimately, Kats was asked to carry out the latter proposal himself.⁸⁸ This was basically the same proposal as Jansz the elder’s fifteen years earlier. Attitudes toward it had changed under the influence of the ethical ideas that began to circulate in the colony. Jansz Jr. and Adriaanse both refer approvingly to Kats’s proposal. But it has not been realized, and each advocates his own provisional solution.⁸⁹

This brings us to the last topic of debate between Adriaanse and Jansz Jr.: the status quo. Adriaanse’s explanation of the fact that Jansz’s congregation rejects *tembang* is that Javanese Christians have been told for years that European chorale belongs to Christianity and *tembang* is sinful. Prior to that, several Javanese congregations in East Java knew church singing in *tembang*, but this was suppressed by the missionaries, beginning with Jellesma. In response, Jansz gives the impression that the Javanese form of church song faded away of its own accord under Jellesma.⁹⁰ In any case, during the latter half of the nineteenth century, the missionaries had already established a tradition of Javanese church singing. This is why the discussion following Jansz Sr.’s lecture in 1885 concerned the *introduction* of *tembang* for church singing, while in the discussion of Kats’s 1900 lecture, *tembang* merited no mention at all.⁹¹ European-style church song was the rule.

The exception were those Javanese Christian communities that had managed to stay outside the missionaries’ control. Adriaanse demonstrated in *Sadrach’s kring* (1899) that “for almost fifty years already, attempts have been made to obtain a *Javanese* style of church singing.”⁹² Jansz Jr., however, suggests that the texts produced in this context do not pass muster. He discusses a rather obscure text from Tunggal Wulung’s congregation and adds, “Now here we have sample of a *tembang* song that was ‘gripping.’ It enables one to figure out approximately what would be the nature of Javanese church singing if the Javanese Christians, left to their own devices, would have had to create a Javanese *tembang* church singing for themselves.”⁹³ Jansz Jr. captures the prevalent mood among the Protestant missionaries. Javanese cannot be trusted to give shape to a Christian liturgy. This yields defective choral singing, sung unevenly and out of tune, uncomprehended, immoral, idolatrous, and primitive.

A BROADER VIEW

In conclusion, to clarify the situation of Javanese church song, let us take a little more distance and try to formulate the politics of religious singing in nineteenth-century rural Java in general terms. A religion was gaining some ground among a large ethnic group that formerly did not adhere to it, a religion that was historically cognate and morphologically similar to the dominant one among this group and that was considered akin by some and adverse by others. Two major sets of insider

perspectives obtained. Those who promoted the new complex of spiritual beliefs, mythic narratives, and ethical sensibilities knew it in intimate association with a category of practices, prominently including ritual. Their acts of worship showed certain formal similarities with ritual and artistic genres among the target group. These genres in their turn were connected with realms of spiritual, mythological, and ethical thought that corresponded only in part to those of the new religion. In theory, therefore, there was the possibility of facilitating adoption of the rites of worship that were key to the new religion by fashioning them according to familiar ritual and artistic practices. For most bringers of the new religion, however, the ideological baggage of these practices was an objection.

If this was the situation in contextless terms, in the concrete this meant that in missionaries' eyes, the ideal Javanese church songs were aligned closely with the motherland's Protestant liturgy, could be sung with feeling by Javanese, and were free from un-Christian stains. The most important factor governing the actual development of the Javanese Christian liturgy was the position of the missionaries among those who were receptive to evangelization. As authorities in Christendom and as Europeans in a Dutch colony, they enjoyed religious and social prestige and therefore power. As the recognized mentors of communities of Christians, they could afford to direct the behavior—including the ritual behavior—of those who joined their flocks in particular directions.

The missionaries considered it their task to give shape to a ritual genre. In principle, their position allowed them to be creative or let others be creative. In the rectangle formed by Dutch Protestant rites of worship, Javanese ritual-artistic genres, Javanese realms of ideas, and Christian realms of ideas, there was ample latitude. For people like Coolen, Dasimah, and other Javanese spiritual leaders and Adriaanse the ideological connections of Javanese forms of song were not an insurmountable objection. Coolen had foregrounded facets of Christianity with Javanese (and thus Islamic) counterparts. His congregational singing was modeled after *tembang* and Muslim devotional chant. Adriaanse assumed that Javanese connotations, if at odds with Christianity, would in due course become Christian.

But in Adriaanse's times, the creative space that existed in principle had already been restricted to a considerable degree. Mutual contacts among Protestant missionaries had increased and intensified. The majority felt, on the one hand, a close link between the Christian faith and Dutch liturgical practice, and on the other hand fear of the strange and unknown. When in 1900 a compromise was reached in the form of new compositions in Javanese style—an ideologically untarnished but still Javanese form of song—it was too late. The missionaries were unwilling to realize that the religious songs of people like Coolen, Dasimah, Tunggul Wulung, and Sadrach had in fact been new compositions in Javanese style, precisely what Kats had in mind. At this time, these forms of Javanese congregational singing were, however, looked upon as essentially suspect, as they had come into being outside the missionaries' sphere of influence. They were illegitimate because they

were deemed to be *tembang* and accordingly heathen, or a mockery of European sacred song.

Around the turn of the century, a different tradition of church singing was well underway, one endowed with greater prestige and authority. It had been called into being after ca. 1850 by individual missionaries like Jellesma and Jansz Sr. and consolidated through the decision at the 1885 conference to stimulate the introduction of European melodies. By 1900, in some places, Dutch psalm and hymn tunes had already been sung weekly by three generations of Javanese Christians. In a tradition-observing society like the Javanese of that time, it must have been difficult to transmute such liturgical habitus, especially if the missionaries who would have to force the breakthrough were actually reluctant to do so.

The discussions I have reviewed and the ultimate compromise were among missionaries.⁹⁴ Thus, the temptation is strong to attribute the historical course of Javanese church singing to sheer force, applied by narrowminded colonialist bigots. But not taking into consideration the other major set of insider perspectives—those of Javanese Christians—results in a distorted image. The few known Javanese opinions about church singing were documented by missionaries. Unfortunately, it is difficult to trace to what extent they projected their own feelings on the members of their congregations. The following, however, is clear.

Javanese perspectives changed over time. Before mid-century, in those Javanese places where it was known, Christianity could be sensed to be a new and interesting variety of Javanese-Islamic religiosity. Javanese Islam was an Islam of quest, and Christianity fitted this paradigm well. The cognateness of Christianity and Islam in basic doctrine and ritual genres facilitated the embracing of Christianity. After 1850, a more rigid, originally external, perspective—grounded in Calvinism, missionary, institutionalized, to a considerable extent concerted (still more strongly after 1881), inimical to Islam, and colonial—gained presence.

The Javanese who embraced Christianity in this context took a radical step. By breaking with a familiar complex of concepts and practices including Arabic prayers, listening to and reciting the Qur'an, the *slametan* (ritual communal meal, a recurrent feature of Muslim Javanese community life), and circumcision, they incurred the disapproval and opposition, sometimes even aggression, of family members, neighbors, and leaders.⁹⁵ Inevitably, they placed themselves outside their community. Guillot has demonstrated that the considerations that nevertheless led them to this step were not only of a religious and ethical but also an economic nature.⁹⁶ Hefner added to this the importance of political motivations, especially resistance against a rising Islamic orthodoxy, while Ricklefs emphasized that those varieties of Christianity that allowed space for Javanese identity were most successful.⁹⁷

There are compelling indications that an interest in ritual performance, including not only its social but also its aesthetic dimensions, played an important role as well.⁹⁸ Muslim rites had to be renounced. The same went for *tayuban* and often also

wayang and other forms of epic drama, performed at ceremonies for the entertainment and edification of guests and hosts. Javanese who took the leap to Christianity entered a new community. Abandoning these familiar group rituals meant cutting major holes in social life. These gaps had to be filled. Rituals expressing mutual solidarity were required.

For many early converts the vast terrain of Christian doctrinal detail, the intellectual intricacies, were less important than the novel religious practices that caught the eye at once. Holy Scripture, the doctrine's charter, was difficult to access owing to illiteracy, except of course when read out, thus especially during religious services. Congregational worship filled the ritual void that loomed upon acceptance of Christianity. Choral singing was the most concrete performative embodiment of the cohesion of a group of Christians.

The rite was new, and where accredited missionaries were in charge, it was un-Javanese to boot. This was not a deterrent; it aroused curiosity and attracted people.⁹⁹ If Christianity was unlike familiar religiosities—a point stressed by the missionaries to counter syncretism—thus too the concomitant ritual. If this religion was European—as indeed it was from the converts' point of view—so would be its performance.

NOTES

1. This chapter is an updated, refocused, and trimmed translation of Bernard Arps, "De kwestie van het Javaanse kerkgezag," in Willem van der Molen and Bernard Arps, eds., *Woord en Schrift in de Oost: de betekenis van zending en missie voor de studie van taal en literatuur in Zuidoost-Azië* (Leiden: Opleiding Talen en Culturen van Zuidoost-Azië en Oceanië, Universiteit Leiden. Semaian 19, 2000), 1–32.

2. As in the final scene of Rademakers's 1976 movie *Max Havelaar*.

3. All translations from Dutch and Javanese are mine. Carel Poensen, "Mattheus Aniep (Eene Bijdrage tot de kennis der geschiedenis van de zending op Oost-Java)," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap* 24 (1880): 333–91, at 364.

4. F. Lion Cachet, *Een jaar op reis in dienst der Zending* (Amsterdam: Wormser, 1896), 256–57.

5. J. F. G. Brumund, *Berigten omtrent de evangelisatie van Java* (Amsterdam: Van der Heij, 1854), 7.

6. Cachet, *Een jaar op reis in dienst der Zending*, 342.

7. Bernard Arps, *Tembang in Two Traditions: Performance and Interpretation of Javanese Literature* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1992).

8. That is, approaching the discussion as the focal artifact in a study of worldmaking, attending to the discussion's artifactuality, apprehensibility, compositionality, contextuality, and historicity. Bernard Arps, *Tall Tree, Nest of the Wind: The Javanese Shadow-Play Dewa Ruci Performed by Ki Anom Soeroto: A Study in Performance Philology* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2016), 41–62.

9. As quoted in *Gënding en tẽmbang. Iets over gënding en tẽmbang en over Javaansch kerkgezag*. Door een leek. Met re- en dupliek overgedrukt uit "De Opwekker" van 1901 en 1902, Uitgegeven door den Nederlandsch-Indischen Zendingbond (Batavia: Albrecht, 1904), 3. I have not seen the articles in *De Getuige*.

10. *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 15.

11. *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 24–57 and 57–161, respectively.

12. On Sadrach, see also C. Guillot, *L'Affaire Sadrach: Un essai de christianisation à Java au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme. Études insulindiennes—Archipel 4,

1981); Soediman Partonadi Sutarman, *Sadrach's Community and Its Contextual Roots: A Nineteenth Century Javanese Expression of Christianity* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1990); and numerous documents in H. Reenders, ed., *De gereformeerde zending in Midden Java, 1859-1931: een bronnenpublicatie* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2001).

13. S. Coolsma, *De zendingseeuw voor Nederlandsch Oost-Indië* (Utrecht: Breijer, 1901), 184-86; see also Guillot, *L'Affaire Sadrach*, 277. Adriaanse's work and ideas feature extensively in Reenders, *De gereformeerde zending in Midden Java*.

14. *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 155; see also 57-58, 86, 88, 138. I believe that "a layperson" is right, at least concerning "a namesake of 'a layperson.'" The latter is of the Reformed (*gereformeerde*) persuasion and continually refers to Purwareja and Yogyakarta, where Adriaanse worked. Moreover, there are striking similarities between the writing style of "a namesake of 'a layperson'" and Adriaanse in *Sadrach's kring*, and between the opinions about Javanese church singing of "a namesake of 'a layperson'" and those in L. Adriaanse, *De nieuwe koers in onze zending, of Toelichting op de zendingsorde* (Amsterdam: Kirchner, 1903), 55-56.

15. See Arps, "De kwestie van het Javaanse kerkgezag," 6, for the data in support of this identification.

16. Coolsma, *De zendingseeuw voor Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 215.

17. Cachet, *Een jaar op reis in dienst der Zending*, 715-16.

18. *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 144.

19. Guillot, *L'Affaire Sadrach*, 51.

20. Much has been written about Coolen; see especially Brumund, *Berigten omtrent de evangelisatie van Java*, 23-33; H. Smeding, "Bezoekreis naar de gemeenten in Kediri, Madioen en Modjokerto, gedaan van 9 tot 29 Julij 1859, door de zendelingen S. E. Harthoorn en H. Smeding," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap* 5 (1861):120-50, 245-86, 258-59, 275-80; S. E. Harthoorn, *De evangelische zending en Oost-Java: eene kritische bijdrage* (Haarlem: Kruseman, 1863), 27-28, 32-34, 149-71, 181-82; Poensen, "Mattheus Aniep," 340-54, 360-62, 366-70; C. W. Nortier, *Van zendingsarbeid tot zelfstandige kerk in Oost-Java* (n.p.: uitgegeven vanwege den Zendingsstudie-Raad door de Drukkerij van de Stichting Hoenderloo, 1939), 1-24; Nortier, *Een horlogemaker en een landheer: de eerste Christus-getuigen in Oost-Java* (Den Haag: Voorhoeve, 1954), 17-36; Philip van Akkeren, *Sri and Christ: A Study of the Indigenous Church in East Java* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1970), 54-87; and Guillot, *L'Affaire Sadrach*, 71-87. The most detailed account of Coolen's activities before 1848, based on research by Nortier into unspecified Dutch and Javanese sources clearly including oral history, was published in 1928 in a booklet in Javanese script titled *Serat Ngulati Toya Wening* (Book of the quest for the limpid water). It describes more cultural intricacies than the other writings and reproduces certain interactions among key figures. See *Serat Ngulati Toya Wening, Inggih Punika Wiwitanipun Agami Kristen Dipun Tampeni Dening Bangsa Jawi* (Bandoeng: Nix, 1928).

21. *Serat Ngulati*, 52-54; summarized in Sutarman, *Sadrach's Community*, 134.

22. The drawing (figure 4-2), one of a series of twelve held in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (RP-T-00-3930-1 to RP-T-00-3930-12), is attributed to Coolen himself (Nortier, *Van zendingsarbeid tot zelfstandige kerk in Oost-Java*, opposite p. 8). Van Akkeren, *Sri and Christ*, 65; Smeding, "Bezoekreis naar de gemeenten in Kediri," 281; Adriaanse, *Sadrach's kring*, 8-9, 22. According to *Serat Ngulati*, the singing of these hymns was known as *gaiban* (*Serat Ngulati Toya Wening, Inggih Punika Wiwitanipun Agami Kristen Dipun Tampeni Dening Bangsa Jawi*, 53, 54), meaning something like "doing profundity, mystery, esoterics."

23. *Serat Ngulati*, 54-55, briefly and partly summarized in English in Sutarman, *Sadrach's Community*, 136.

24. *Serat Ngulati*, 56.

25. *Serat Ngulati*, 5-19, 60-87; Nortier, *Van zendingsarbeid tot zelfstandige kerk in Oost-Java*, 3-5; van Akkeren, *Sri and Christ*, 69-70; Guillot, *L'Affaire Sadrach*, 59.

26. More generally, van Rhijn notes that "their walk and the purity of their mores" were being keenly watched by European Christian stakeholders and Javanese authorities, "sometimes with

suspicious eyes"; L. J. van Rhijn, *Reis door den Indischen Archipel, in het belang der evangelische zending* (Rotterdam: Wijt, 1851), 166.

27. *Serat Ngulati*, 80.

28. Van Rhijn, *Reis door den Indischen Archipel*, 161. Those who did not understand were van Rhijn and possibly other Dutch members of the visiting party. Adriaanse identifies the old man as Dasimah and the song as *tembang* (*Sadrach's kring*, 14–15).

29. Semarang-based missionary Gottlieb Brückner, who visited in 1842, mentions only that "when they met together for worship, they chanted one or two pages out of some tract" (van Akkeren, *Sri and Christ*, 94). The short description of a visit by van Hoëvell in 1847 confirms that they sang from a printed pamphlet. He also states that "the melody was soft, with much feeling, not unpleasing to the ear, but did not lack the character of all Indian music, that of monotony." Pak Dasimah clarified each verse line to his European guests; van Hoëvell, "Javaansche christenen te Soerabaija," *Tijdschrift ter Bevordering van Christelijken Zin in Neêrland's Indië* 1(4) (1847), 164–73, at 163, reproduced in van Hoëvell, *Reis over Java*, 193. Thus, he involved them in the communal performance event in a customary way; oral interlinear paraphrase is common in traditional literary recitation in several parts of Java, Madura, Bali, and Lombok (Arps, *Tembang in Two Traditions*, 24).

30. According to Nortier (*Van zendingsarbeid tot zelfstandige kerk in Oost-Java*, 5, 16), Dasimah followed Coolen's liturgy entirely.

31. Van Hoëvell, "Javaansche christenen te Soerabaija," 164; Van Rhijn, *Reis door den Indischen Archipel*, 166; Brumund, *Berigten omtrent de evangelisatie van Java*, xviii. In the 1830s, Bruckner also produced Christian tracts in Javanese, which were printed in India (van Akkeren, *Sri and Christ*, 55; van der Molen, *Woord en Schrift in de Oost*, 145, 147) and later Batavia (W. H. Medhurst, *China: Its State and Prospects, with Especial Reference to the Spread of the Gospel* [London: Snow, 1838], 580). As Bruckner refers to the text used by Dasimah as "some tract," it was probably not his own.

32. Arps, *Tembang in Two Traditions*.

33. Van Akkeren, 80; Guillot, *L'Affaire Sadrach*, 62.

34. These are the full Apostles' Creed (the twelve articles of faith) (*Serat Ngulati*, 10; Sutarman, *Sadrach's Community*, 134–35n90), a short version showing the communal refrain sung in *dhikiran* sessions (*Serat Ngulati*, 55), elsewhere provided with a cipher notation of the melody: Nortier, *Van zendingsarbeid tot zelfstandige kerk in Oost-Java*, 13; S. T. Handojomarno Sir, *Suatu Survey Mengenai Gereja Kristen Jawi Wetan* (Malang and Jakarta: Gereja Kristen Jawi Wetan and Lembaga Penelitian dan Studi Dewan Gereja-Gereja di Indonesia, Benih yang Tumbuh 7, 1976), 29; several textually inter-related prayers (*Serat Ngulati*, 34; van Akkeren, *Sri and Christ*, 92); and a hymn of the type called *gaiban* (*Serat Ngulati*, 54).

35. Henrik Smeding, "Enkele opmerkingen en vragen over het zendingswerk op Java," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap* 6 (1862): 235–264, here 248–50, 253, 56; see also Smeding, "Bezoekreis naar de gemeenten in Kediri," 122–23.

36. A. G. Hoekema, ed., "Tot heil van Java's arme bevolking": *Een keuze uit het dagboek (1851–1860) van Pieter Jansz, doopsgezind zendeling in Jepara, Midden-Java* (Hilversum: Verloren. Manuscripta Mennonitica 1, 1997), 151.

37. P. Jansz, *Kitab Isi Masmur Papethingan Sawatawis, Tinembangaken Jawi* (Amsterdam: Sepin, 1865; *Kitab Masmur Katembangaken Miwah Repen Greja* (Leden: Bril, 1885).).

38. That Jansz thought he was composing according to *tembang* principles can be inferred from the first volume's title—in translation, "Book Containing Several Choice Psalms, Set to Javanese Tembang"—and the expression "Jav. poetic meter" (*Jav. dichtmaat*) in his diary. As in *tembang*, each stanza has a fixed number of verse lines, each with a fixed number of syllables, but instead of a fixed vowel in each line-final syllable, Jansz employed vowel-rhyme with the same rhyme scheme for each stanza. Jansz was not the only Western observer who misunderstood the form of *tembang*. There were others too who thought that rhyme played a role in it (Arps, *Tembang in Two Traditions*, 19).

39. Guillot, *L'Affaire Sadrach*, 89–90.

40. Jansz Jr. in *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 149–50. According to Adriaanse (*Sadrach's kring*, 366), Tunggul Wulung's people also sang a text with Javanese melody at baptism.

41. Jansz Jr. in *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 149.

42. For instance, the *celukan* (calling) style in sung reading of the Islamic story of Joseph in Banyuwangi, East Java (Arps, *Tembang in Two Traditions*, 163, 311–17). Similar verse reading styles on Madura and northern Central Java are heard on the CD *Jemblung and Related Narrative Traditions of Java* (Body and Yono Sukarno, 1997), tracks 7 and 8.

43. Smelik, "Orgelgebruik in de protestantse kerkdienst," 3–11.

44. Van Rhijn, *Reis door den Indischen Archipel*, 313–14.

45. *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 150. According to Adriaanse (*Sadrach's kring*, 363), "howling of dogs" was a Javanese way of characterizing, among other things, the singing of psalms by Dutch people. J. Kats, "Het godsdienstig lied in de zending, uit een muzikaal oogpunt beschouwd," in *Overzicht van de Tiende Zending-Conferentie, gehouden te Buitenzorg en te Depok van 25 Augustus tot 2 September 1900* [Batavia: Kolff, 1901], 103–42, at 126) returned to this in "Het godsdienstig lied in de zending," 126, as did Adriaanse in *Gënding en tẽmbang*, who related it to "the drawling, the slowness, the protractedness in the Dutch psalm-tunes" (28).

46. The same applied to western Java; Th. van den End, *De Nederlandse Zendingsvereniging in West-Java, 1858–1963: Een bronnenpublicatie* (Leiden: Brill: 1991), 28n2, 272–73.

47. Coolsma, *De zendingseeuw voor Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 184.

48. It began to be published in 1855, as one of the first periodicals in the Netherlands East Indies. Ahmat B. Adam, *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855–1913)*, Studies on Southeast Asia (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1995), 17, 183; see also 15n69.

49. Smeding, "Enkele opmerkingen en vragen over het zendingswerk op Java," 248–56.

50. *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 9–10.

51. Smeding, "Enkele opmerkingen en vragen over het zendingswerk op Java," 250–53.

52. Jansz Sr., "Kerkgezag in Javaansch tẽmbang ten dienste der Inlandsche gemeenten," 11.

53. Adriaanse, *Sadrach's kring*, 365.

54. *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 11.

55. *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 43–44.

56. *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 76–77, 123–27. Smeding had preceded him in this opinion (253).

57. L. Tiemersma, "Het kerkgezag en de Maleische psalmbundels," In *Overzicht van de Negende Zending-Conferentie, gehouden te Buitenzorg en te Depok van 20 tot 28 Augustus 1898* (Batavia: Kolff, 1898), 26–55.

58. Kats, "Het godsdienstig lied in de zending, uit een muzikaal oogpunt beschouwd," 131.

59. Tiemersma, "Het kerkgezag en de Maleische psalmbundels," 46, quoting a letter from P. Jansz Sr.

60. Arps, *Tembang in Two Traditions*, 20, 299–301.

61. Albers, "De Zendingschool en hare betekenis," 127. *Adan* (Ar. *adhan*) is the call to Islamic prayer; *tukang adan* means "muezzin." *Dikir* (Ar. *dhikr*) was mentioned above. As noted earlier, *nem-bang* means "sing (esp. *tembang* verse)."

62. *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 78.

63. Smeding, "Bezoekreis naar de gemeenten in Kediri," 131.

64. *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 22–23.

65. Jansz, "Kerkgezag in Javaansch tẽmbang," 13.

66. Arps, *Tembang in Two Traditions*, 422–24.

67. Adriaanse's entire polemic is based on this opinion. For Jansz's opinion, see, for instance, *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 72.

68. Smeding, "Enkele opmerkingen en vragen over het zendingswerk op Java," 250.

69. *Gënding en tẽmbang*, 20.

70. Cachet, *Een jaar op reis in dienst der Zending*, 342.
71. *Tayuban*, *tledhek*, and analogous genres and roles continued to have dubious moral connotations. See, for instance, Hughes-Freeland, "*Golék Ménak* and *Tayuban*," 102–17; and Spiller, *Erotic Triangles*.
72. Jansz, "Kerkgezing in Javaansch tēmbang ten dienste der Inlandsche gemeenten," 12.
73. Jansz, "Kerkgezing in Javaansch tēmbang ten dienste der Inlandsche gemeenten," 12. 13.
74. *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 144.
75. *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 71.
76. *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 50–51.
77. *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 142. The Veluwe region has a high concentration of orthodox Gereformeerd communities.
78. *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 47. For Jansz Jr.'s opinion, see especially *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 135–37.
79. Jansz, "Kerkgezing in Javaansch tēmbang," 14.
80. Jansz, "Kerkgezing in Javaansch tēmbang," 10–11.
81. Jansz, "Kerkgezing in Javaansch tēmbang," 16.
82. Kitab Masmur, *Kitab Masmur Katembangaken Miwah Repen Greja*.
83. Kats, "Het godsdienstig lied in de zending," 105–26. Kats died in 1945 and must have been quite frustrated at the "evolution" of European music in his later years. He would make an intervention in Javanese poetic theory as well; see Arps, "The Regulation of Beauty."
84. Kats, "Het godsdienstig lied in de zending," 130.
85. Kats, "Het godsdienstig lied in de zending," 129.
86. Kats, "Het godsdienstig lied in de zending," 140–41.
87. This test triggered the series of articles by "a Eurasian" (Adriaanse) in *De Getuige*.
88. Kunst, *De Inheemsche muziek en de zending*, 24n17, suspects with relief that Kats's proposal was never realized, but this was probably wishful thinking as Kats did provide a singing method (Poeze, "J. Kats 1875–1945," xiv–xv, xxvii). From 1903 to 1908 and 1910 to 1913, he was director of the teacher training school in Majawarna, the center of a large number of missionary-led Christian communities in East Java, where he may have tried this method on his trainees. I do not know to what extent the melodies were Javanese and whether they impacted church singing. The same applies to a collection of musical notations of religious songs that appeared in 1914 (Poeze, "J. Kats 1875–1945," xxviii).
89. Jansz Jr. in *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 15–16, 141; Adriaanse in *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 56.
90. Adriaanse in *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 52; Jansz Jr. in *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 145–47.
91. Jansz, "Kerkgezing in Javaansch tēmbang," 15; Kats, "Het godsdienstig lied in de zending," 141–42.
92. Adriaanse, *Sadrach's kring*, 366.
93. *Gēnding en tēmbang*, 150.
94. Among the sixty men and women listed as attendees of the 1900 conference (*Overzicht van de Tiende Zending-Conferentie*, 5–6) there was not a single Indonesian. The conference photo does show three Indonesians, identified as "two native servants and furthermore the Native schoolteacher Martinus" (1). Martinus taught in Depok near Batavia, a Malay-speaking area.
95. See, for instance, Guillot, *L'Affaire Sadrach*, 234–36.
96. Guillot, *L'Affaire Sadrach*, 296–308.
97. Robert W. Hefner, "Of Faith and Commitment: Christian Conversion in Muslim Java," in *Conversion to Christianity: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives on a Great Transformation*, ed. Robert W. Hefner, 99–125 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 118–22; M. C. Ricklefs, *Polarising Javanese Society: Islamic and Other Visions* (c. 1830–1930) (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007), 105–25.
98. Among these indications are Brumund's detailed response to the accusation from a Javanese quarter that unlike Islam, Christianity lacks external, ritual forms, which he counters by referring to

prayer and religious song (Brumund, *Berigten omtrent de evangelisatie van Java*, 137–38), how in a fictional discussion among Javanese Muslims the absence of performance at a Christian wedding is singled out with amazement (Harthoorn, *De evangelische zending en Oost-Java*, 74), and the prominence in *Serat Ngulati* of early Javanese-Christian ritual, including the observation that the Christians in Ngara “had no shortness of diversion in the corporeal as well as the spiritual realm” (*Serat Ngulati*, 56).

99. See, for instance, the impressions of baptism in Surabaya’s Protestant church reported by Poensen in “Mattheus Aniep,” two of which were quoted above. Compare an 1895 report by Tiemersma, stationed in Tangerang near Batavia, where the congregation consisted of Chinese and Malays: “Now what for is this singing? Partly . . . to draw people. It is nice to see how they flock together in response to our singing. It has happened repeatedly that initially I had only four or five listeners. But as soon as we started to sing, the room filled up” (van den End, *De Nederlandse Zendingsvereniging in West-Java*, 243).