



Submitted:
1 April 2026
Revised:
17 May 2026
Published:
30 Mei 2026

BEYOND DOGMA: SOCIAL SERVICE, ECONOMIC SELF-RELIANCE, AND THE WITTE KRUIS KOLONIE SALATIGA, 1902-1942

AKILATUL AZIZAH

Department of History, Faculty of Cultural Science, Universitas Gadjah Mada

CONTACT

Correspondence Email:
akilatulazizah@mail.ugm.ac.id

Address: Jalan Sosio Humaniora No. 1, Bulaksumur, Sleman, Yogyakarta - 55281

KEYWORDS

Alternatif evangelization practices; Christian mission and Social service; Colonial Society; Economic Self-Reliance

ABSTRACT

This article examines the historical context and development of the Witte Kruis Kolonie in Salatiga, founded by the Van Emmerik family in the Dutch East Indies as a response to poverty and social marginalization in the early twentieth century. Rather than relying primarily on doctrinal evangelism, the organization adopted an approach that combined social service, philanthropy, and evangelistic engagement with strategies of economic self-reliance. Through the provision of welfare services alongside productive labor and small-scale economic activities, Witte Kruis Kolonie sought to sustain its operations while fostering discipline, dignity, and communal responsibility among its residents. Using historical methods and colonial archival sources, this article situates Witte Kruis Kolonie within broader debates on Christian mission, colonial governance, and social reform. It argues that limited and inconsistent government support did not merely constrain the organization but encouraged the development of an alternative mission model grounded in social service and economic autonomy. Ultimately, this case study challenges traditional eurocentric narratives of mission history by demonstrating how local economic survival reshaped missionary strategies, while revealing the complex, often ambivalent negotiations between private humanitarian initiatives and the colonial state.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the early twentieth century in Salatiga, there was a family that took in beggars (De Locomotief, April 12, 1902). They were the married couple A. Van Emmerik and Alice Cleverly, officers of the Salvation Army (Brouwer, 1994). The Salvation Army is a religious organization engaged in evangelical ministry under the Universal Christian denomination founded by General William Booth in England. In a book narrative about the Salvation Army, it is mentioned that A. Van Emmerik was one of the Salvation Army officers from the Netherlands who joined William

Booth's group and started his missionary work in Java in 1894 (Collier, 1965). Van Emmerik travelled first to the Dutch East Indies together with Jacob Brouwer to start his first missionary activity, and then Alice followed to join the group of Salvation Army officers one year later. Alice Cleverly, a British citizen, later served in the Salvation Army in Semarang (Brouwer, 1994). Van Emmerik and his wife continued to conduct Protestant missions in the Salatiga area. They started their charity work in a house in Blaoeran before moving to Regentslaan (De Locomotief, February 27, 1926). Their initial idea was to invite beggars to come several times a week for a plate of rice, some money, and to listen to a sermon given by Van Emmerik (De Locomotief, April 12, 1902).

In 1901, when the Kelud volcano erupted in East Java, approximately 300 refugees reached Salatiga and were cared for by the van Emmerik family (Museum Witte Kruis Salatiga, 2022). The couple opened their doors, took in the starving people, and provided them with food. Because many of the refugees were in poor health and required medical attention and ongoing care, these growing demands prompted Van Emmerik and his wife to leave the Salvation Army and pursue independent mission work. On June 4, 1902, Van Emmerik and Alice Cleverly officially resigned from the Salvation Army to focus on their independent service to refugees and beggars (Brouwer, 1994). However, due to the overwhelming number of refugees and limited local capacity, a wave of secondary migration ensued. Some refugees were sent to Kalawara Na Puti in Palu in cooperation with the Salvation Army (Acciaoli, 2020), while others migrated to receive treatment at Kaleksanan in Tasikmalaya, West Java (Ingelson, 2015). This aligns with Aritonang and Steenbrink's (2008) observation that the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Java were marked by severe transition and natural disasters, specifically the eruption of Mount Merapi (Central Java) and Kelud (East Java) (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008). This triggered widespread displacement across the region.

The efforts made by the Van Emmerik family continued to expand until their shelter for beggars and the impoverished became widely recognized throughout the surrounding community (De Locomotief, April 12, 1902). The activities led by Van Emmerik and his team represented a form of evangelism carried out through charitable work, positioning Witte Kruis Kolonie as a prominent Christian philanthropic institution in the Dutch East Indies (Handboek voor philanthropisch en maatschappelijk werk in Nederl.-Oost- en West-Indië, 1932). The Witte Kruis Kolonie continued to grow, managing the land and natural resources and selling agricultural produce to raise funds for institutional development. The economic activities undertaken by the residents included raising livestock, weaving clothing, gardening, which produced commodities such as coffee, vanilla, and processing coconut fibers into floor mats (25 Jaren Witte Kruis Kolonie, May 14, 1902 - May 14, 1927). Additionally, families with children were provided with access to an elementary school established in the organization. The colony also operated a hospital that offered medical care to residents, notably playing a key role in treating leprosy during local outbreaks in the municipality of Salatiga (25 Jaren Witte Kruis Kolonie, May 14, 1902 - May 14, 1927).

Over time, more people joined the Witte Kruis Kolonie. According to news reports from the colony's 25th anniversary, around 700 people solemnly attended the commemoration (De Locomotief, March 9, 1927). This significant presence underscores the need for further research into the Witte Kruis Kolonie. Writing that can be done includes looking further into the social, economic, and religious activities that took place in the organization.

Several studies related to the Witte Kruis Kolonie have been conducted by previous researchers. Mulyati (2020) analyzed the long-term management dynamics leading to its transformation into Yayasan Sosial Salib Putih, while Anthony (2023) examined its historical visual narrative through the lens of a humanitarian institution. From a thematic angle, Dirks (2011) contextualized the colony within colonial state policies regarding juvenile delinquency in the Dutch East Indies. However, existing literature remains heavily descriptive, treating the Witte Kruis Kolonie as an isolated local charity rather than integrating it into the broader, systemic dynamics of colonial social history. Specifically, a critical research gap remains regarding how transnational missionary networks—such as the Salvation Army—interacted with institutional financial constraints to fundamentally reshape early twentieth-century missionary strategies.

Addressing this gap is urgent because it directly challenges the monolithic view of colonial missions as either purely doctrinal or entirely state dependent. Investigating the Witte Kruis Kolonie offers a systematic look at how private, non- doctrinal Christian organizations maneuvered through structural poverty when state funding was absent. This article offers a novel contribution by tracking the organization's evolution from an evangelical charity inspired by the Salvation Army into a self-sustaining, autonomous Christian social institution. It demonstrates how economic self-reliance became an ideological and practical necessity in response to the colonial state's social neglect.

To substantiate this analysis, this study utilizes a rigorous historical method, drawing from a diverse array of primary sources, including colonial state archives, contemporary newspapers, and missionary magazines, alongside relevant secondary literature. By examining an organization established by European families for marginalized indigenous populations in Salatiga—which has remarkably survived into the modern era—this article addresses a central, overarching question: how did the Witte Kruis Kolonie undergo a structural transformation from a traditional Salvation Army evangelical service into an economically autonomous Christian social organization, and what does this reveal about the wider socio-religious landscape of the Dutch East Indies?

II. METHODS

Research on the history of Witte Kruis Kolonie certainly uses historical methods in the writing process. These methods include heuristics, verification, interpretation, and historiography (Kuntowijoyo, 2003). According to Kuntowijoyo, a religious institution is simultaneously a social institution that can be analyzed through either an evolutionary model or a historical forces model

(Kuntowijoyo, 2003). In the evolutionary model examines structural shifts such as bureaucratic changes, changes in the demographics of adherents or residents, location changes, and and developments in educational access. Meanwhile, the historical forces model explores themes including religion and modernization, religious competition, the role of creative individuals, and religion and post-industrial society. Research on the Witte Kruis Kolonie can be done using historical power model. The sources obtained for this writing include archives obtained from ANRI, specifically the Algemeene Secretarie Serie Grote Bundel Tzg Ag 1891-1942 Volume 1, include two bundles detailing the administration and resident population of Witte Kruis Kolonie. Then, from the National Library of Indonesia, periodicals from Witte Kruis Kolonie were obtained, namely Witte Kruis Blad from the period 1918 to 1942, Lajang Kaboengahan for the period 1941-1942, and Witte Kruis Jaarverslag 1913-1941. There are also publications from the Salvation Army, namely the magazines De Strijdkreet and Berita Keslametan. Finally, institutional artifacts and records, including museum posters at the Witte Kruis Museum and booklets from Yayasan Sosial Kristen Salib Putih Salatiga, were synthesized alongside relevant journal articles and book references from various academic libraries.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The early 20th century in the Dutch East Indies was a momentous period marked by the convergence and contestation of various colonial forces. These powers also encompassed cultural and religious aspects. Zending and missionary activities became important actors in the dynamics that unfolded. Various religious institutions from Europe, particularly the Netherlands and Germany, became vehicles for spreading Christianity. Their role was significant in various fields, such as education, health, and the social transformation of the native population. Their missionary activities were often aligned with the political interests of the government, but many were also autonomous.

Missionary activities in the Dutch East Indies certainly had a variety of approaches and impacts. This was in line with the geographical and cultural aspects of the region. Some used a dogmatic approach, while others used other approaches such as social aspects. Witte Kruis Kolonie was one of the missionary works in the Dutch East Indies that was formed in the hill station of Salatiga. The approach used in the process of forming this organization was different from other missionary works in general. To find out more, this study will discuss the process of establishing the Witte Kruis Kolonie, from the approach used, how the organization was developed, and even how funding was obtained.

The Beginning of Salvation Army Service in the Dutch East Indies

The initiation of Salvation Army starting its ministry in the Dutch East Indies cannot be separated from the role of two officers sent by Commissioner Frederick de L. Booth-Tucker to the Dutch East Indies. These two figures were Staff Captain Jacob Brouwer and Ensign Adolf Theodor

Jacobus Van Emmerik or A. Van Emmerik. Commissioner Frederick officially commissioned them to begin Salvation Army service in the Dutch East Indies during the jubilee congress at London's Crystal Palace in 1894 (Merritt, 2006). Among these pioneers, A. van Emmerik played a pivotal role. Born in Batavia on September 2, 1857, he was the son of an army lieutenant colonel in Batavia (Brouwer, 1994). According to his daughter, Tresna Sarah, although Van Emmerik was born in Batavia, he grew up and completed his education in the Netherlands before returning to the Dutch East Indies as an adult, where he married a Miss Ziedel in Semarang (Brouwer, 1994). Tragically, his wife died during childbirth. Deeply distressed by this loss, Van Emmerik returned to the Netherlands. During his vacation and stopover in Paris, he witnessed an open-air sermon delivered by Evangeline Booth, the daughter of Salvation Army founder William Booth (Merritt, 2006). This was the first time Van Emmerik encountered the Salvation Army, which made him interested in joining the group.

Van Emmerik joined the Salvation Army because he believed it provided what he had sought, namely the inclusion of Jesus and salvation in the Salvation Army (Brouwer, 1994). He underwent officer training in the Netherlands and was subsequently appointed editor-in-chief of *Oorlogskreet*, the Salvation Army's Dutch publication. He met Jacob Gerrit Brouwer, who was then serving as the commander of the Southern Netherlands Division (Brouwer, 1994). The friendship between Van Emmerik and Jacob Brouwer began during this assignment. Jacob Gerrit Brouwer was a man born in Dieren, October 24, 1866, originally possessed a keen interest in agriculture and studied agricultural science in Utrecht (Brouwer, 1994). His encounter with the Salvation Army occurred when he took voluntary work in between his studies. His family, who were already Protestants, recommended that he continue his studies at university and become a pastor. However, he was determined to serve God by becoming a Salvation Army officer. Brouwer studied as an officer candidate in Rotterdam and was then assigned to several corps in the Netherlands, until finally he became the leader of the Salvation Army of the Southern Netherlands Division (Merritt, 2006).

The arrival of Jacob Brouwer and Van Emmerik marked the beginning of the Salvation Army's ministry in the Dutch East Indies in 1894. Upon arriving in Batavia, they promptly sought an audience with the Governor-General to convey the objectives of their intended ministry. After receiving the Governor General's approval, they traveled to Purworejo, Central Java (Bala Keselamatan, 1959). However, their pioneering efforts encountered substantial obstacles and setbacks (*De Strijdkreet*, December 1934). These early difficulties stemmed primarily from language barriers and initial hesitation among the local population. Once these initial hurdles were addressed, they successfully conducted evangelistic services for local Christian families, as well as in public marketplaces and surrounding villages (Bala Keselamatan, 1959).

Like the service patterns of the Salvation Army organizations in England and the Netherlands, the Salvation Army in the Dutch East Indies operated at the intersection of

philanthropy and evangelism. The organization's initiatives can be understood as philanthropic because they were driven by humanitarian compassion and social concern (De Strijdkreet, November 1919). Philanthropic activities are more complex than what is simply referred to as 'charity', because this activity is realized by 'giving' in the long term to helpless communities and trying to resolve the roots of poverty and social problems (Fauzia, 2016). The services they provide become a kind of 'helper' for poor people with social problems, so that they are saved by God. Although their main goal is still to be a Christian organization that introduces the Gospel of Jesus Christ to be known and known by more people (De Strijdkreet, November 1919). This dual approach was clear in the early efforts of pioneers A. van Emmerik and Jacob Brouwer as they established their ministry in the colony.

Van Emmerik and Jacob Brouwer came for the first time to the Purworejo area and had met the figure of Kyai Sadrach before then starting a ministry in the village of Sapuran (Brouwer, 1994). Kyai Sadrach was an evangelist with the teachings of the Javanese Christian ngelmu, a student of the famous native evangelist Ibrahim Tunggul Wulung, who had already carried out ministerial activities in the Purworejo area by continuing the work of evangelist Mrs. Phillips (Soekotjo, 2009). Some of their congregations were in Sapuran village and without a shepherd. So then the arrival of Van Emmerik and Jacob Brouwer was directed towards Sapuran to begin services to Christian families there. They provided assistance in reading the scriptures, singing spiritual songs, praying, and worshipping in church (Brouwer, 1994). After the ministry in Sapuran and its surroundings was well established, the Salvation Army ministry in Semarang began in 1896 (Merritt, 2006). At the time of the Salvation Army service in Semarang, they were not only alone, but several officers were also sent to help with their work, one of whom was Alice Cleverly, who became the first female officer in the Dutch East Indies (De Locomotief, September 26, 1935).

Alice Cleverly, a British female officer, received her calling to join the Salvation Army during her teenage years and officially became an officer at sixteen years old (De Locomotief, February 27, 1926). She was inspired to pursue officership after listening to a sermon delivered by a Salvation Army officer. Like all cadets, she underwent officer training upon joining, being sent to the Netherlands in 1890 (De Locomotief, February 27, 1926). Following her training, she served as an officer in the Netherlands for nearly five years, with successive assignments in Haarlem, Rotterdam, and Amsterdam (De Locomotief, February 27, 1926). Upon arriving in Semarang on September 26, 1895, with another group of Salvation Army officers, she began her duties as the first female officer in the Dutch East Indies (De Locomotief, September 25, 1935). During this assignment, she met A. van Emmerik, and their collaborative ministry soon blossomed into a personal relationship. Shortly thereafter, the couple got married in Semarang (De Locomotief, September 25, 1935).

The Salvation Army's ministry in Semarang began in 1896 with outreach conducted inside the Semarang prison (Brouwer, 1994). These services aimed to offer hope and spiritual comfort through the Gospel message to incarcerated individuals (De Strijdkreet, December 1934). In addition to these religious services, aid from the European government had also arrived in Semarang so that it could be used for the Salvation Army's social services to Europeans, Indo-Europeans, Javanese, Chinese, and Easterners. One of the recipients of the Salvation Army's social services was Saridjem (or often called Nenek), an elderly woman who was a maid in an ethnic Chinese family, who was accused of stealing her employer's son's jewelry and was then helped by Mrs. Emmerik (Lajang Kaboengahan, November 1941). Nenek then devoted herself to being a loyal follower of the Emmerik family, then over time was called to be baptized, and joined in serving the people who were helped by the Salvation Army.

The number of Salvation Army officers also increased as the number of people helped by the Semarang Salvation Army increased. They received assistance from the British Salvation Army center and the Australian division so that by 1899, there were 15 officers in total (Bala Keselamatan, 1959). When there was a flash flood in Semarang in 1902 many people flocked to Bugangan (De Strijdkreet, December 1934). In this place, In response, the Salvation Army established a shelter in Bugangan to provide aid, medical treatment, and refuge to indigenous flood victims, destitute individuals, and the sick.

Salvation Army in Salatiga

The ministry of Van Emmerik and Alice Cleverly continues. As officers of the Salvation Army, they continued to provide social services and evangelization to several places around Semarang. In 1901 they began their ministry in Salatiga, a district south of Semarang, first by renting a house in Blauran and then moving to Regentslaan (near Alun-alun) by renting the property of a prominent man from Kedungjati for f 20 per month (De Locomotief, April 12, 1902). The house they rented was later used as a rest house for the officers of the Salvation Army in Salatiga.

Salatiga was then a district under the Semarang Resident Government, geographically located in the highlands south of Semarang. The district was known for its cool and fertile climate, and the Salatiga area received considerable attention for its development, especially in agriculture and plantations. By 1900, there were around 32 private plantations in Salatiga (Supangkat, 2014). Economic growth in the Salatiga region was also very good, one of the factors being that in 1901, Salatiga was designated as the capital of the afdeeling (Pratiwi, 2018).

In fact, prior to the Emmerik couple's ministry, there was already a zendeling group in Salatiga that carried out evangelistic preaching. This was because Salatiga was surrounded by plantations with a majority of indigenous workers. They were poor people who worked every day just to survive. So, the zendeling came to provide guidance on a more religious way of life in addition to their work on the plantations. The group, under the care of a zendeling named R. de Boer since 1869, was located around the Nyemoh plantation to the north, including the villages of

Tempuran, Kaliceret, and Gundih (Soekotjo, 2009). The existence of this group shows that the focus of the ministry was in the plantation area, with followers who were none other than the plantation workers themselves. Zending activities in northern Salatiga developed so well that they extended their ministry to parts of Purwodadi. This is a different location from the ministry provided by the Emmerik couple from the Salvation Army.

The arrival of the Emmerik couple in Salatiga started the Salvation Army ministry around the strategic city center. This is because the city center was designed to be the center of service, trade, and government (Kartodirdjo, 2014). The first location they went to in Blauran was directly adjacent to the Salatiga traditional market. An urban neighborhood that is very close to a traditional market is certainly different from a suburban neighborhood. Urban sanitation conditions are certainly not as good, with dirty drains and irregular garbage disposal (Kartodirdjo, 2014). So it is not surprising that many poor people and beggars live in these residential areas.

Van Emmerik and Alice Cleverly started their ministry in Salatiga because, apart from its strategic location, the area was very favorable for social service and evangelization. Their initial idea was to call beggars to come to their house several times a week to receive a plate of rice, a few pennies, and to listen to a Christian speech delivered by Van Emmerik (De Locomotief, April 12, 1902). But it turned out that because of this idea, Van Emmerik and his wife became overwhelmed because more and more beggars came. Van Emmerik and his wife were exhausted because, of course, their activities were not only services, but also they had to take care of their three children, including Tresna Sarah Van Emmerik, Harap Van Emmerik, and Pitados Van Emmerik. With various considerations, they then took action to limit the service days for beggars to four meetings a week, namely Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday (De Locomotief, April 12, 1902). Especially on Sundays, the beggars would receive Christian services and be taught about God's love and comfort and the spirit to fight against all suffering.

The early 20th century was a difficult time for residents in Central Java. During this period, there were many natural disasters, such as floods and volcanic eruptions, that caused many victims to be displaced and even affected by disease outbreaks. One of the natural disasters that affected the people in Java was the eruption of the Kelud volcano in Kediri, East Java (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008). In 1901, when the event occurred, many people were affected by the eruption and the volcanic ash that caused them to flee to safe areas, including Salatiga (De Locomotief, February 27, 1926). Mrs. Van Emmerik, who was still serving as an officer of the Salvation Army, visited the evacuees to see their condition and provide training assistance (De Locomotief, April 12, 1902). He trained the women to cook, distributing rice in wicker baskets they had made themselves, as well as some vegetables. She gave milk to babies whose mothers did not have enough food and provided regular care for those who needed it.

Every day, beggars and refugees alike would come to the Emmerik family home to ask for help. This situation, of course, forced Van Emmerik to take decisive action. He did not hesitate

to evict people who were still able to go to work (begging) but continued to come to him for help (De Locomotief, April 12, 1902). If they wanted food and a few pennies, then they had to go to work (begging) first; they had to try, and only then would they get help. From this situation, Van Emmerik made the slogan "Wie ni et werkt, zal ook niet eten (Those who do not work, will not eat)" (De Locomotief, April 16, 1903). Indirectly, it also illustrates how Van Emmerik really is, he is known as a generous figure but also firm and disciplined. His wife, Alice, was a generous and loving figure.

Not long after this service activity, Van Emmerik and Alice felt that they wanted to continue their service work in Salatiga. Finally, on April 18, 1902, Van Emmerik decided to go to Mr. Van Kol to talk about his ministry to the beggar organization (De Locomotief, April 24, 1902). Mr. Van Kol or Henri Van Kol was a member of the Dutch parliament from the Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij (SDAP) who a social activist and a figure was also who opposed colonialism (Bremen, 2024). Therefore, Van Emmerik asked for his advice because Van Kol understood social work very well. During the meeting, Van Emmerik said that he wanted to continue providing services to beggars, the poor, and people in need. At the same time as Van Emmerik's departure, Alice was assisted by their colleague Mr. Zuppinger and some staff (who came from the organization), to provide social services by feeding around 400 people, mostly mothers, treating 40 wounded people, and giving them a few pennies (De Locomotief, April 24, 1902). Along with the social services they continued to provide, Van Emmerik received a donation of land near Warak Salatiga covering about 130 acres for the establishment of an organization with the help of the Semarang Resident, and the area could accommodate up to 500 people (De Locomotief, April 24, 1902). Indeed, their service was so extraordinary not only as officers who spread the news about the gospel. They continued to carry out services in the social field with their concern for people who were really in need. This, of course, shows that their role as officers is armed with strong faith. This is because zendeling (zending activists) reflects their faith and piety through preaching, worship services, social services, and other services (Aritonang, 2007).

Van Emmerik and Alice Cleverly were still officially commissioned officers of the Salvation Army when they began engaging in social service in Salatiga (Bliek, 1949). They were very happy and excited about their work in the Salvation Army. However, the plan to establish an organization was beyond their control as officers and would not have been conducive to the highly centralized administration of the Salvation Army (De Locomotief, 24 April 1902). Both Van Emmerik and Alice felt compelled to establish a dedicated institution when more people in need of help came to them every day, amidst the outbreak of cholera after the catastrophic eruption of Mount Kelud and Merapi. Moreover, they already had the support of the Semarang Resident. So, they took decisive steps to pioneer an independent organization capable of addressing these widespread socio-economic demands.

Establishment of the Witte Kruis Kolonie

Following an extensive period of evangelism within the Salvation Army and a shared commitment to sustaining local social relief, on May 14, 1902, Witte Kruis Kolonie was inaugurated as a native organization managed by the Emmerik family (Soerabaiasch-Handelsblad, June 20, 1902). The name Witte Kruis was coined spontaneously by Van Emmerik (De Locomotief, 25 September 1935). The process of establishing the organization was carried out in stages, starting with clearing land near Warak, then erecting several buildings, and moving residents from their previous homes in Regentslaan (near the square). The organization also began to receive assistance from several individuals, which by June 1, 1902, amounted to f 240 (Soerabaiasch-Handelsblad, June 20, 1902). The organization's finances were reported regularly by Van Emmerik in the newspapers.

The services they provided to the people in the organization needed special attention. So it was with great deliberation that the two decided to resign from their duties as Salvation Army officers and focus on establishing an organization together with the people they helped. They officially resigned as officers of the Salvation Army on June 4, 1902 (Brouwer, 1994). They then focused on the organization that had been established, named "Witte Kruis Kolonie" with Van Emmerik serving as its administrator (De Locomotief, April 24, 1902). In addition to the poor and refugees, the organization also accommodated people with special needs, such as the paralyzed, blind, and those with certain diseases. The total population living in the organization until October 1, 1902, was calculated to be 300 people, consisting of those who were still able to work (productive age), 45 men and 53 women, and those who were physically weak (sick) or had special needs, along with 202 children (De Preanger-bode, October 7, 1902). With this number, it is not surprising that Van Emmerik and his wife needed special focus to take care of the organization. So, their decision to quit the Salvation Army operation was the best choice.

The population of the organization also increased day by day. Both the male, female, and child populations experienced significant growth in the first few months. This known from Van Emmerik's reports submitted to the newspapers. He periodically submitted reports on the condition of the organization, the number of inhabitants, the amount of donations received, and expenditures for the benefit of the organization. Van Emmerik submitted these reports to just one newspaper, but to several. One of his reports concerned the increase in population, which is summarized in the following table.

Period	Total Population
April 1902	400 residents
February 1903	358 residents
1915	241 residents
1924	569 residents

1932	903 residents
1940	1333 residents

Table 1. Population growth of the Witte Kruis Kolonie

Sources: "Witte Kruis Kolonie" in *De Locomotief* April 24, 1902 p. 2, *De Locomotief* March 4, 1903, *Witte Kruis Kolonie Jaarverslag* 1915, 1924, 1932, and 1940 (organized by author).

The population grew over time as more poor people from surrounding villages were attracted to join the Witte Kruis Kolonie. The development of the population was influenced by several factors, including the need for treatment, the role of the Van Emmerik family's colleagues who helped in preaching and social services, and plantation work (*De Locomotief*, March 4, 1903). Some people came from neighboring villages who needed help for cholera treatment at the Witte Kruis clinic. The arrival of Miss Louis Cleverly (Alice Cleverly's younger sister) on March 22, 1903, from London was a great joy for the villagers because they then had a nurse to provide health care, assisting Dr. Van der Ley (*Algemeen Handelsblad voor Nederlandsch Indi*, May 19, 1937). Some of the healthy villagers returned to their villages and helped their families, while others enthusiastically joined the organization's plantations.

On the other hand, the role of Van Emmerik's colleagues also influenced the development of the population. One of those who played a strategic role was Nenek Saridjem, who had joined the Emmerik family from Semarang. After the arrival of Miss Louis Cleverly at the organization, Nenek was asked to stay in the village of Bumiayu, located a few kilometers from the organization, to provide evangelistic services there (*Lajang Kaboengahan*, November 1941). Nenek's ministry had a significant impact, as after a short time in Bumiayu, many people were called to join her. These efforts helped to increase the number of followers and people who joined the Witte Kruis Kolonie.

The administration of Witte Kruis Kolonie was divided into two leadership periods. The first was from 1902 to 1924, led by Van Emmerik. After Van Emmerik died in 1924, leadership was continued by his wife, Alice Cleverly (*Witte Kruis Kolonie Jaarverslag* 1924, 1925). In addition to the figures mentioned above, there were several figures from European staff and Indigenous staff who became administrators of the Witte Kruis Kolonie. The following is the organizational structure of Witte Kruis Kolonie during the period from 1902 to 1924.

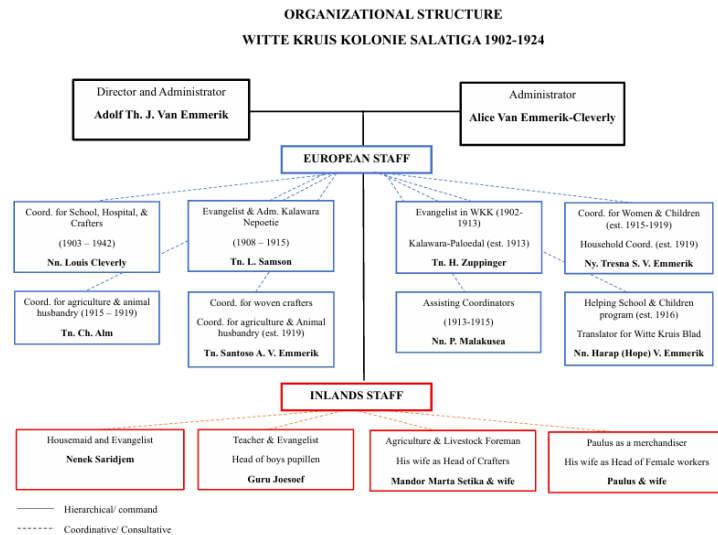


Figure 1. Organizational Structure of Witte Kruis Kolonie 1902-1924

Source: *Witte Kruis Kolonie Jaarverslag 1913-1924* (this structure is independently organized by author).

This organizational structure shows that Van Emmerik and his wife did not establish Witte Kruis Kolonie on their own. Several figures who were friends and family members also played a role as trusted staff members who managed various aspects of the organization. This was necessary because the population continued to grow over time, requiring the help of staff members to manage and develop the organization. Changes in management also occurred during the second leadership period. Some figures were no longer part of the core management and continued their own work. However, most of the others remained and held strategic roles. The following are the changes in the Witte Kruis Kolonie from 1924 to 1942.

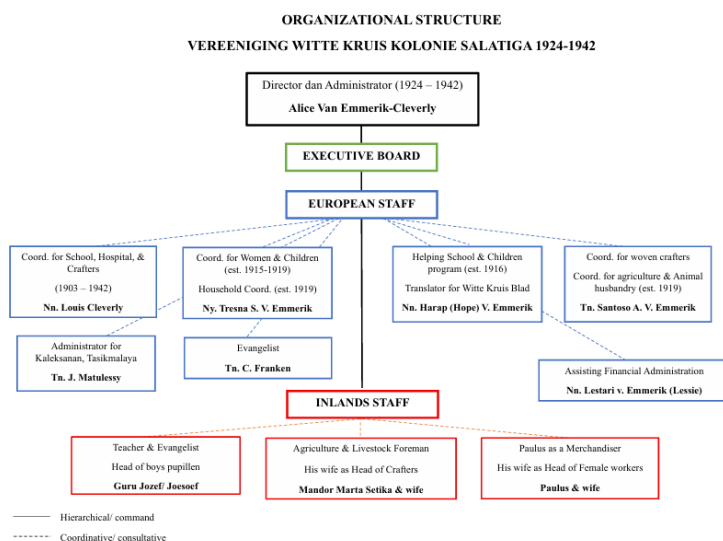


Figure 2. Organizational Structure of Vereeniging Witte Kruis Kolonie 1924-1942

Source: *Witte Kruis Kolonie Jaarverslag 1924-1940* (this structure is independently organized by author).

In 1924, there were not only changes to the organizational structure of Witte Kruis Kolonie. There was also a slight change to the name of the organization, which was previously Witte Kruis Kolonie to Vereeniging Witte Kruis Kolonie. This change was not merely a change in structure and name, but had a more important purpose. The director and administrators wanted to make the Witte Kruis Kolonie an officially recognized legal entity (Witte Kruis Kolonie Jaarverslag 1924, 1925). One of the ways to achieve this was to establish a clear name and purpose for the organization. With this change, it was hoped that Witte Kruis Kolonie would develop more significantly and receive more attention from the wider society.

Economic Self-Reliance of Witte Kruis Kolonie

In the process of establishing the Witte Kruis Kolonie, the Van Emmerik family and their colleagues relied not only on their own resources but also on government assistance, especially for land acquisition, construction, and the institution's treasury. To obtain this assistance, Van Emmerik regularly sent messages and applied for assistance to the Dutch East Indies government, which were submitted to the government through the Assistant Resident of Salatiga and the Resident of Semarang. In a letter written by the Directeur van Onderwijs, Eeredienst en Nijverheid (Director of Education, Religious Affairs and industry) on January 9, 1904, the Assistant Resident of Salatiga considered a reply to a request for a subsidy of f 1,000 for the Witte Kruis Kolonie (ANRI, 1891-1942, Alsec GB-TZG-AG No. 6333). Van Emmerik applied for financial assistance because the organization's needs could not be met if it relied solely on charitable gifts. Sometimes the organization received quite a lot of charitable gifts, but there were times when it received only a few. The government had previously supported the organization by providing free medicines and treatment (ANRI, 1891-1942, Alsec GB-TZG-AG No. 6333). However, the organization's needs were not just limited to medical treatment; the Witte Kruis Kolonie also aimed to improve the welfare of and provide material support for the Bumiputera population

The government's decision to grant approval and funding to the Witte Kruis Kolonie was, of course, made with great consideration. The government considered Van Emmerik's efforts to rehabilitate native delinquent youth, who were sent to the organization for education and to help maintain the social stability of society, especially for European population. Most of the teenagers who came to the organization had a history of behavioral problems and criminal acts from their previous life habits. This was a constant reminder to Van Emmerik to handle these youths with extra care, ensuring they did not form a criminal group that could endanger the organization itself (De Locomotief, April 16, 1902). Nevertheless, Van Emmerik continued to provide equal care, and his wife and children provided education for delinquent youth in the organization in the same manner as they provided care and education for other children (Dirks, 2011). The adolescents were not all Christians, so Van Emmerik was not allowed by the government to force them to attend Koempoelan Kristen (prayer meetings), even though he wished to do so.

It was not easy to get government funding for the Witte Kruis Kolonie. The biggest consideration was that the population accommodated by the organization was bumiputera, not European or Indo-European. The government feared that if they helped the bumiputera population in Witte Kruis Kolonie, the residents would leave the organization and show resistance to the Dutch East Indies government (ANRI, 1891-1942, Alsec GB-TZG-AG No. 6333). Requests for financial assistance for the Witte Kruis Kolonie were always made through the Assistant Resident of Salatiga and the Resident of Semarang to the Dutch East Indies government, even though they were met several times with a lack of a good response, or even rejection. In February 1904, the organization had to swallow a bitter pill when its request was rejected by the Directeur van Onderwijs, Eeredienst en Nijverheid (ANRI, 1891-1942, Alsec GB-TZG-AG No. 6333). However, requests for financial assistance and efforts to secure income sources continued to be made to develop the Witte Kruis Kolonie and improve the welfare of the population. This can be seen from the financial growth of the organization, which was consistently reported by Van Emmerik in both the newspaper and Witte Kruis Blad. The initial period of the organization's establishment was indeed an extraordinary period of survival for both managers and residents. However, this only increased their enthusiasm to develop the organization into an advanced organization that was able to improve the welfare of the poor bumiputera population in Salatiga.

Christianization practices in the Dutch East Indies were mostly carried out independently. Although many people still believe that the process of conversion to Christianity in the Dutch East Indies was inseparable from the political and economic penetration of government, in practice missionary institutions worked independently and there was no government funding for Christianization activities (Van Ufford, PH. Quarles, 1980). Therefore, Witte Kruis Kolonie strives to be an independent Christian organization. It is not easy to obtain funding from the government, and there was no special budget for missionary institutions. Therefore, various independent economic ventures were carried out since establishment of the Witte Kruis Kolonie. The following is a report on the income from some of Witte Kruis Kolonie's economic self-reliance over several years.

Table 2. Incomes over several years from Economic Self-Reliance of Witte Kruis Kolonie

Tahun	Kloskant	Macrame	Vee & Melkerij	Landbouw	Weverij	Cocos-matten	Smederij-Timmerij
1913	519.49		502	157.5			
1919	1562.39		6025.85	1879.72			
1924	2885.15	871	10030.81	6209.5	7715.49	202.1	903.75
1930	1930.34		7634.6	4969.14	9721.83		
1936			3683.6	4142.92	6873.97	570.18	
1940			5624.06	8499.32	11670.29	429.44	

*The above nominal amount in gulden (f)

Source: *Witte Kruis Kolonie Jaarverslag* 1913, 1919, 1924, 1930, 1936, 1940 (organized by author).

The above data represents part of the income generated by economic self-reliance undertaken by the administrators and members of Witte Kruis Kolonie. The data shows that each venture generated a high income and contributed to the organization's cash flow. This demonstrates that all the elements of the organization were continuously developing ventures generated substantial income in addition to receiving subsidies from the government.

IV. CONCLUSION

This article discusses the emergence and development of the Witte Kruis Kolonie in Salatiga as part of a broader constellation of Christian social engagement in the Dutch East Indies during the early twentieth century. By situating the organization within the historical presence of the Salvation Army in the Indies and its activities in Salatiga, the article has demonstrated how global evangelical movements were locally adapted to address specific colonial social conditions. The Salvation Army's emphasis on practical assistance, moral reform, and engagement with marginalized populations laid the foundation for the Witte Kruis Kolonie, even as the organization developed its own distinctive trajectory.

The formation of the Witte Kruis Kolonie reflected a conscious response to poverty, social dislocation, and the limitations of existing missionary approaches. Rather than prioritizing doctrinal instruction as the primary vehicle of conversion, the organization emphasized social service and communal life as the basis for religious engagement. This approach positioned the Witte Kruis Kolonie within a broader shift in Christian Mission practices, in which care for bodily welfare and social discipline were understood as integral to spiritual transformation. In this sense, the organization represented an alternative model of Christian mission that blurred the boundaries between philanthropy, evangelism, and social reform.

A central finding of this study concerns the role of economic self-reliance in the sustainability and expansion of the Witte Kruis Kolonie. Although the organization pursued financial assistance through government subsidies and philanthropic channels, these efforts were constrained by colonial policies that offered no specific budget for Christianization. Missionary organizations were therefore largely required to secure their own funding. In response, Witte Kruis Kolonie developed diverse self-sustaining economic activities that generated income and supported institutional growth. Economic self-reliance thus emerged as an adaptive strategy shaped by colonial funding restrictions, enabling the organization to expand its services while reinforcing ideals of discipline, responsibility, and collective effort.

From a critical perspective, the structural reliance of the Witte Kruis Kolonie on economic autonomy exposes the fragmented and outsourced nature of social welfare within the Dutch East Indies. Rather than operating as a monolithic arm of the colonial state, this private humanitarian initiative inadvertently filled the vacuum left by a state apparatus unwilling to finance local social safety nets. This survival-driven shift forces a re-examination of traditional Eurocentric mission history; it demonstrates that missionary methods were not merely the top-down implementation of Western theology, but were radically reshaped by local economic constraints and ambivalent colonial governance. Consequently, the kolonie became a complex zone of negotiation where religious devotion, capitalist labor, and colonial neglect converged.

This article contributes to broader debates on the Christian mission, colonial governance, and social reform in the Dutch East Indies. It challenges interpretations that portray colonial missions as either predominantly dogmatic or wholly dependent on state support, highlighting instead the capacity of local initiatives to negotiate financial and political constraints. The experience of Witte Kruis Kolonie demonstrates how social service and economic autonomy could function together as a non-dogmatic form of Christian practice, offering a nuanced understanding of the intersections among faith, labor, and institutional development in colonial Indonesian society.

REFERENCES

- Acciaoli, G. (2020). From subjugation to local sovereignty: The dynamics of frontierisation and defrontierisation in Lindu, Central Sulawesi (Indonesia). *Paideuma: Mitteilungen zur Kulturkunde*, 66, 183–200.
- Albrecht. (1927). *Witte-Kruis-kolonie 14 Mei 1902–14 Mei 1927*.
- Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia. (n.d.). *Arsip Algemene Secretarie Serie Grote Bundel Tzg Ag. 1891–1942* (No. 6333).
- Aritonang, J. S. (2007). *Belajar memahami sejarah di tengah realitas*. Jurnal Info Media.
- Aritonang, J. S., & Steenbrink, K. (2008a). Christianity in Javanese culture and society. In J. S. Aritonang & K. A. Steenbrink (Eds.), *A history of Christianity in Indonesia* (pp. 639–730). Brill.
- Aritonang, J. S., & Steenbrink, K. (2008b). Old and new Christianity in the southeastern islands. In J. S. Aritonang & K. A. Steenbrink (Eds.), *A history of Christianity in Indonesia* (pp. 229–344). Brill.
- Bala Keselamatan. (1959). *Sedjarah Bala Keselamatan*. Bala Keselamatan.
- Bliek, A. J. (1949). *De Protestansche zending op Java*. J. M. Bredee.
- Brouwer, M. M. (1994). *Zamrud di khatulistiwa: Sejarah Gereja Bala Keselamatan di Indonesia* (Vol. 1; W. L., Trans.). Intergrafika.

- Collier, R. (1965). *The general next to God: The story of William Booth and the Salvation Army*. Fontana.
- De Witte Kruis Kolonie bij Salatiga (ingesonden). (1902, June 20). *Soerabaiasch Handelsblad*.
- De Witte Kruis Kolonie te Salatiga. (1902, April 16). *De Locomotief*.
- De Witte Kruis Kolonie te Salatiga. (1903, April 16). *De Locomotief*.
- Dirks, A. (2011). *For the youth: Juvenile delinquency, colonial civil society and the late colonial state in the Netherlands Indies, 1872–1942* [Doctoral dissertation, Leiden University].
- Handboek voor philanthropisch en maatschappelijk werk in Nederl.-Oost- en West-Indië. (1932). Bureau voor Sociale Lectuur.
- Het Leger des Heils in Indië. (1919, November). *De Strijdkreet*.
- Ingesonden stukken Witte Kruis Kolonie. (1902, October 7). *De Preanger-Bode*.
- Ingleson, J. (2015). Race, class and the deserving poor: Charities and the 1930s Depression in Jawa. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 46(2), 205–226.
- Jubileum Witte Kruis Kolonie. (1937, May 19). *Algemeen Handelsblad voor Nederlandsch-Indië*.
- Kartodirdjo, S. (2014). *Pengantar sejarah Indonesia baru: Sejarah pergerakan nasional* (Vol. 2). Ombak.
- Kuntowijoyo. (2003). *Metodologi sejarah*. Tiara Wacana.
- Merritt, J. G. (2006). *Historical dictionary of the Salvation Army*. Scarecrow Press.
- Mevrouw Van Emmerik 40 jaren in Indië. (1935, September 25). *De Locomotief*.
- Museum Witte Kruis Kolonie. (n.d.-a). *Bala Keselamatan*. Diakses 1 Maret 2024.
- Museum Witte Kruis Kolonie. (n.d.-b). *Sejarah Witte Kruis Kolonie*. Diakses 1 Maret 2024.
- Mulyati, M. (2020). Dinamika Yayasan Sosial Kristen Salib Putih (YSKSP) di Kota Salatiga tahun 1901–1977. *Pangadereng*, 6(2), 300–313.
- Pionier-bedelaarskolonie te Salatiga. (1902, April 12). *De Locomotief*.
- Pratiwi, Y. W. (2018). *Ekonomi Salatiga pada periode liberal 1870–1930* [Skripsi, Universitas Gadjah Mada].
- Salib Poetih. (1941, November). *Lajang Kaboengahan marang para botjah Djawa*.
- Salib Putih. (2022). *Sejarah Salib Putih*. Yayasan Sosial Kristen Salib Putih.
- Salatiga 25-jarig bestaan Witte Kruis Kolonie. (1927, March 9). *De Locomotief*.
- Soekotjo, S. H. (2009). *Sejarah gereja-gereja Kristen Jawa* (Vol. 1, Di bawah bayang-bayang zending 1858–1948). Taman Pustaka Kristen.

- Supangkat, E. (2014). *Salatiga: Sketsa kota lama*. Griya Media.
- Tumimomor, A. (2023). *Merawat ingatan sejarah Witte Kruis Kolonie Salatiga*. Benua Historia.
- Van de Wal, H. (2014). *Terbelah dalam kancan revolusi: Kaum Protestan Belanda dan pekabaran Injil Belanda menghadapi revolusi Indonesia* (T. P. Mualim, Trans.). Yayasan Cemara.
- Van Ufford, P. H. Quarles. (1980). Why don't you sit down?: Sadrach and the struggle for religious independence in the earliest phase of the Church of Central Java (1861–1899). In H. G. Schulte Nordholt (Ed.), *Man, meaning and history: Essays in honour of H. G. Schulte Nordholt* (Vol. 89). Brill.
- Bij het veertigjarig jubileum van het Leger des Heils in Nederlandsch-Indië. (1934, December). *De Strijdkreet*.
- Vrouwenwerk in Indië. (1926, February 27). *De Locomotief*.
- Witte Kruis Kolonie. (1914). *Witte Kruis Kolonie jaarverslag 1913*.
- Witte Kruis Kolonie. (1916). *Witte Kruis Kolonie jaarverslag 1915*.
- Witte Kruis Kolonie. (1920). *Witte Kruis Kolonie jaarverslag 1919*.
- Witte Kruis Kolonie. (1925). *Witte Kruis Kolonie jaarverslag 1924*.
- Witte Kruis Kolonie. (1931). *Witte Kruis Kolonie jaarverslag 1930*.
- Witte Kruis Kolonie. (1933). *Witte Kruis Kolonie jaarverslag 1932*.
- Witte Kruis Kolonie. (1937). *Witte Kruis Kolonie jaarverslag 1936*.
- Witte Kruis Kolonie. (1941). *Witte Kruis Kolonie jaarverslag 1940*.
- Witte Kruis Kolonie(n). (1902, April 24). *De Locomotief*.