

A Wind of Change on Java's Ruined Temples

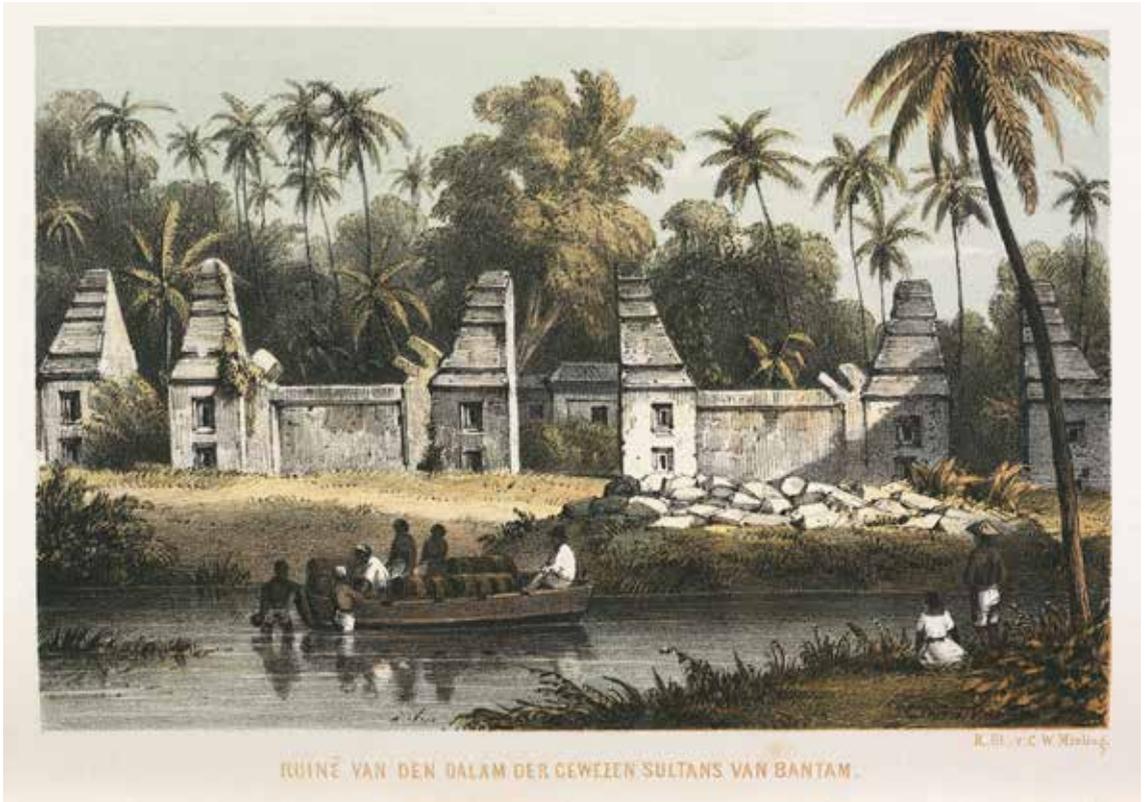
Archaeological Activities, Imperial Circuits and Heritage Awareness
in Java and the Netherlands (1800-1850)¹

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This article focuses on early archaeological activities on Java between 1800 and 1850 in the context of the multiple regime changes of that period. It engages with the New Imperial History's network-centred approach by looking at circuits of archaeological knowledge gathering in which not empire, but Java's ruined Hindu and Buddhist temple sites provide 'the nodal points'. By tracing how people, objects and ideas travelled via these sites, and between the Netherlands and the colony, the article aims to understand the origins and nature of heritage awareness of the modern colonial state. It argues that this archaeological site-centred approach helps us understand how both European concepts and indigenous appropriations of archaeological sites contributed to the development of heritage awareness. There were complex multilayered power-hierarchies at work at these sites and forms of indigenous agency that we might miss if we follow only empire-centred networks.

The travel diary *Neêrlands-Oost-Indië – Reizen*, published in 1859 by the Dutch Minister S.A. Buddingh, contains many pictures that illustrate the highlights of his journey through the Dutch East Indies. One of them shows a rather peaceful place with ruined walls and piles of rubble overgrown by vegetation. These are the remnants of the kraton (palace) of the former Sultanate of Banten (West-Java) that was destroyed only half a century earlier, in 1808, on the orders of Governor-General Daendels. Buddingh mentions that the only thing left of this kraton was a wall. The last sultan, so he continues, was exiled as he was guilty of piracy.²



▲
Drawing of the remnants of the kraton of the former Sultanate of Banten (West-Java) destroyed in 1808. S.A. Buddingh, *Neêrlands-Oost-Indië – Reizen*. Vol. I (Rotterdam 1859). Special Collections, University Library, Amsterdam University, IWO 1227 B15.

This description and depiction of the kraton of Banten contains a classic topos of the orientalist perception of ruined sites in Asia: the connection was made between a ruined temple or palace and the despotism of its former inhabitants. During the heydays of colonialism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it spread throughout Europe via different media. That the connection between ruins and despotism was far from innocent with regard to the colonial state of the Dutch East Indies is best shown when looking at the imperialist phase of military and administrative expansion in the decades around 1900. During this period the Dutch colonial army attacked the so-called rebellious, despotic principalities in Lombok and Bali and ruined their palaces. Paradoxically, at the same time the colonial state made itself known to the world as a civilised regime that took care of what were called archaeological sites with ruined palaces or temples, that were scattered over the colony. In this context archaeology gained a special political importance.

In his ground-breaking publication *Imagined Communities* (1991), Benedict Anderson has pointed to the connection between an 'archaeological push' around 1900 in Southeast Asia and (post-)colonial nationalism. Anderson argued that the newly founded archaeological services of that time, while transforming ruins into monuments, created regalia for the colonial state. Through endless display and reproduction these monuments were transformed into recognisable signs, connecting subjects of the (post-)colonial state to visions of great national pasts.³ Describing and collecting archaeological objects, putting them on display in museums or making them into monuments at their original location became meaningful activities. Likewise it made sense to engage the interest of local people, elites and rulers while performing archaeological activities. This practice could lead to complex constellations as colonial archaeologists often depicted local people as indifferent to archaeological sites. In 1891 the Dutch engineer and archaeologist Jan Willem IJzerman even described the people living near the eighth century kraton Ratu Boku as 'degenerate heirs'.⁴

- 1 The authors thank the editorial board of *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review*, the external referees and Pauline P. Lusingh Scheurleer for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper.
- 2 S.A. Buddingh, *Neêrlands-Oost-Indië. Reizen over Java, Madura, Makasser, [...] : gedaan gedurende het tijdvak van 1852-1857* (3 volumes; Rotterdam 1859-1861) 76-79.
- 3 B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Revised

- edition; London, New York 1991) 155-185. See also: M. Bloembergen and M. Eickhoff, 'Conserving the Past, Mobilising the Indonesian Future: Archaeological Sites, Regime Change and Heritage Politics in Indonesia in the 1950s', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 167:4 (2011) 405-436.
- 4 J.W. IJzerman, *Beschrijving der oudheden nabij de grens der residenties Soerakarta en Djogdjakarta* (Batavia 1891) 5.

In order to avoid an analysis of colonial archaeological texts only as manifestations of orientalism that, as such, hardly offered an escape for those involved, in this paper we follow another road by questioning what happened at sites with ruined buildings. Extending Anderson's time frame we focus on the first half of the nineteenth century. At the end of the *Ancien Régime* both Java and the Netherlands witnessed immense changes on a political level, while at the same time the first archaeological activities took place at the Javanese temple sites; the temple ruins involved became known to a wider European audience through publications and the export of statues. Inspired by the 'networked conception of empire' developed in the context of the New Imperial History, we analyse how Javanese archaeological sites at that time were part of larger circuits of empire along which people, objects and ideas moved.⁵ In order to get beyond the 'first in Europe and then elsewhere in the world' perspective our analysis deliberately starts at – and time and again returns to – the sites themselves.⁶ What kind of encounters and interventions took place there and under what constraints? What was the role of authority, force and violence in this? In addition we follow the dissemination of site-related objects, documentation and images to other places in the world and question what happens to them there. This enables us to trace how imperial circuits created hierarchies in both colonial society and the metropolis and between these different regions of the world. At the same time we try to trace circuits that escaped the direct control of the colonial state. After all, empires not only reinforced, imposed and reproduced difference but, as Frederick Cooper has stressed, also had to deal with structures within the colonial state that 'complicate the relationship of ruler and ruled, of insider and outsider'.⁷

On the basis of this approach we aim to question the extent to which we can localise origins of the heritage awareness of the modern colonial state in the early nineteenth century. When, how and why did it become a self-evident principle that the archaeological sites of Java, after their 'discovery', had to be safeguarded by the state?⁸ When, how and by what or by whom were the archaeological initiatives of the colonial state triggered? Were 'European' concepts of heritage simply introduced to the Dutch East Indies? How did local political, social and cultural circumstances, including the indigenous appropriations of the archaeological sites, influence the formation of heritage awareness? This last question requires a careful reading of the colonial sources

5 A. Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain* (London, New York 2001); A. Lester, 'Imperial Circuits and Networks: Geographies of the British Empire', *History Compass* 4:1 (2006) 124-141.

6 D. Chakrabarty, 'Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History', in: *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Difference* (Revised edition; Princeton 2008) 3-23, there 7.

7 F. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley 2005) 48-53.

8 L. Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (New York 2006) 29-34.

we use in this paper. A Dutch colonial official for example, reported in 1814 that the now world famous eighth century Buddhist shrine Borobudur, which according to traditional histories of archaeology was 'discovered' that same year by Thomas S. Raffles, at that time was already known by local people as a place called 'Borro-Boedoer'.⁹

With this methodological and theoretical framework there are many sites and circuits on which to focus. In this paper we chose to follow the archaeological activities of four actors who can be regarded as leaders in the field. Moreover because they are connected in many different ways, they help us to understand how and why 'archaeology' during the first half of the nineteenth century already had become such a meaningful activity for many people in the colony, the metropolis and elsewhere in the world. The chronological order of our analysis enables us to study how the end of the *Ancien Régime* and the following wars and regime changes stimulated a new focus on the past. The first person we selected is Nicolaus Engelhard (1761-1831), who in 1802 after the end of the *Ancien Régime*, as the Governor of Java's north-eastern coast, visited the courts of Solo and Yogyakarta and a number of nearby archaeological sites. Subsequently we will analyse how during the British interregnum from 1811 until 1816 archaeology became part of the bureaucratic and political reform programme of Raffles (1781-1826), the British Lieutenant-Governor of the Island Java. Then we will move to the Netherlands and study the way Caspar J.C. Reuvens (1793-1835), the director of the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden in the 1820s and 1830s – the years during which the Dutch continued to develop colonial bureaucracy – engaged from a distance with Javanese archaeological sites and objects. Finally we will follow the Dutch painter Hubertus N. Sieburgh (1799-1842) who in 1836 travelled from the Netherlands to Java in order to make paintings of Java's ruined temples. During his travels he encountered people who felt attached in different ways to the sites he was depicting, thus opening up for us new perspectives on the appropriations of Java's ruined temples of the time.

Engelhard: statues and status

After the installation of the Batavian Republic in the Netherlands in 1795, the liquidation of the VOC in 1798 and the failed British invasion of Java of 1800 the political situation on the island was far from stable. In 1802 Engelhard, who was the Governor of Java's north-eastern coast between 1801 and 1808, visited Solo and Yogyakarta in order to discuss problems –

9 N.J. Krom, *Inleiding tot de Hindoe-Javaansche Kunst* I (The Hague 1923) 335-336; Soekmono, 'Serat Centhini and the Rejected Buddha from the Main

Stupa of Borobudur', in: M.J. Klokke and K.R. van Kooij (eds.), *Fruits of Inspiration: Studies in Honour of Prof. J.G. de Casparis* (Groningen 2001) 474-485.



▲
H.C. Cornelius, View of the ruins of a Brahmin Temple
at Brambanan, 1807.

Image AN590585001.

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so called 'differentien' – with the native rulers that had arisen during that time.¹⁰ He visited the sunan of Surakarta, Paku Buwana IV and the sultan of Yogyakarta, Hamengku Buwana II. During his stay in Yogyakarta he made a trip to three sites with ruined buildings – the Prambanan temples (built around 850 AD), Kota Gede (a kraton and royal graveyard dating from around 1700) and the royal pasanggrahan (place of retreat) Gimbirowati.¹¹ It is not known precisely when and how Engelhard's interest in archaeological sites was triggered. In spite of that, it is noticeable that the years following his visit saw a continuation of his archaeological initiatives. In 1804 he started collecting statues from Javanese antiquity for his residency's garden 'De Vrijheid' (Freedom) in Semarang. Some of them came from the Singasari temple, a thirteenth century Buddhist temple near Malang that surveying Dutch officials had rediscovered a year earlier.¹² In 1805 Engelhard ordered lieutenant-engineer H. C. Cornelius, who at that time was in charge of the construction of a fortress in Klaten, to clean the temples of Prambanan, measure them and draw their ground plan. Cornelius also pictured the ruins in their current state and made reconstructions on paper.¹³ During this project, which lasted until 1807, Cornelius was assisted by a group of Dutch ensigns and Javanese workmen.¹⁴

In his travel diary of 1802 Engelhard not only gave descriptions of the ceremonies at the Javanese courts but also discussed the way Dutch high officials and local Javanese people perceived archaeological sites. His visit to these places was not part of the official programme. The visit to Prambanan took place on Friday – which Engelhard referred to as 'the Sabbath of the Mohammedans'.¹⁵ Triggered by a local story that a giant had built the temples, Engelhard visited a grave of such a giant at the graveyard near the

10 Dagregister van den reis van de Gouverneur Nicolaus Engelhard naar Sourakarta en Djogjakarta, 1802 - Arsip Keresidenan Yogyakarta 1724-1891 nr. 348, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Jakarta (hereafter ANRI). For Engelhard, see: F. de Haan, 'De Historie van een Oudgast', *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 18 (1901) 195-225; H.M. Kommers, *Besturen in een onbekende wereld. Het Europese binnenlandse bestuur in Nederlands-Indië: 1800-1830. Een antropologische studie I* (Meppel 1979) 70-74.

11 The authors thank Sri Margana for identifying these locations.

12 N. Chutiwongs, 'Çandi Singasari – A Recent Study', in: E.A. Bacus, I.C. Glover and P.D.

Sharrock (eds.), *Interpreting Southeast Asia's Past: Monument, Image and Text* (Singapore 2008) 100-121, there 101.

13 A.J. Bernet Kempers, *Herstel in Eigen Waarde. Monumentenzorg in Indonesië* (Zutphen 1978) 29.

14 J. Bastin and P. Rohatgi, *Prints of Southeast Asia in the India Office Library: The East India Compagny in Malaysia and Indonesia 1786-1824* (London 1979) 168; Krom, *Inleiding* 1, 5.

15 'Vrijdag den 20e Augustus', page 129, Dagregister van den reis van de Gouverneur Nicolaus Engelhard naar Sourakarta en Djogjakarta, 1802 – Arsip Keresidenan Yogyakarta 1724-1891 nr. 348, ANRI, Jakarta (hereafter: Dagregister Engelhard ANRI).

kraton of Pleret.¹⁶ He was thus introduced to the historical landscape of the local story of Lara Jonggrang that gave an explanation for the existence of ruinous buildings. In later times this story would be superseded by modern archaeology. As a 'myth' or 'local lore', according to western academic standards it was unsatisfactory as an explanation of the history and function of temple sites that could be connected to Hinduism; however the name Lara Jonggrang was to remain in use. The story starts with a man called Bandung Bandawasa who asked the princess Lara Jonggrang to marry him. Rather than refusing him outright she asked him, by way of a wedding present, for a complex of thousand temples and statues to be built overnight. When, with the help of giants and dark spirits, he appeared to be succeeding, she made the cocks crow earlier to suggest that dawn had already begun. The princess was cursed and the temples stayed unfinished.¹⁷ Engelhard also refers to a Dutch conviction that giants built the temple, which seems reminiscent of the early modern European explanation for megalithic graves, for which the Bible, in particular the pre-Flood Old-Testament world in which giants figure, is the main reference.¹⁸ Being an enlightened man Engelhard himself did not believe in this explanation. Seeing the grandeur of the temples he became convinced that foreign people who lived on the island before the contemporary Javanese, must have built them.¹⁹

At another occasion, Engelhard and his company made a trip to the coastal area south of Yogyakarta where they again visited archaeological and historical sites. He describes a small chapel near the coast that commemorated that Sultan Amangkurat I had signed a treaty with the VOC in the second half of the seventeenth century at that location. After this Engelhard and his company visited the pasangrahan Gimbirowati, a place of retreat and meditation for the Sultan, made of wood and situated next to a small waterfall and bath. At the gate there were twin statues of giants that Engelhard compared with those found at Prambanan. At the end of the visit Engelhard chiselled his name in the building, thus marking his presence at the site with graffiti.²⁰

16 'Woensdag den 18e Augustus', 122, Dagregister Engelhard ANRI.

17 P. Lunsingh Scheurleer, 'Collecting Javanese Antiquities: The Appropriation of a Newly discovered Hindu-Buddhist Civilisation', in: P. ter Keurs (ed.), *Colonial Collections Revisited* (Leiden 2007) 71-114, there 79. Compare with: C.F. Winter, 'Oudheidkunde. Oorsprong van Oudheden te Brambanan', *Tijdschrift voor Neêrlandsch Indië* 2:1 (1839) 469-471.

18 J.A. Bakker, *Megalithic Research in the Netherlands, 1547-1911: From 'Giant's Beds' and 'Pillars of Hercules' to accurate Investigations* (Leiden 2010) 33.

19 'Vrijdag den 20e Augustus', 138, Dagregister Engelhard ANRI.

20 'Zondag den 29e Augustus', 268, *Ibid.*

In general, Engelhard considered the antiquities to be of no importance for the Javanese people. He held the opinion that the people who inhabited the nearby areas 'do not honour [the temple ruins] although they bring offers to some of these idols, without being able to explain why'. In addition Engelhard stated that the Javanese did not have any memory regarding the people (which he presumed to be foreign) who once built the temples and later disappeared.²¹ With regard to the attitudes of local people to antiquities, Engelhard was prejudiced. In 1814 one of the British officers whom Raffles ordered to collect archaeological information about the island of Java, reported that the local people near the Singasari temple – after the removal of the six statues – had transferred other, similar objects into the jungle to prevent further removals.²²

What can we make of these early European interventions and perceptions of Java's ruined temples? With regard to the temple ruins in Asia – or the Dutch East Indies in particular – little research has yet been done, certainly not with a focus on the early nineteenth century.²³ With regard to Europe, the cultural historian Göran Blix, focusing on the period around 1800, has discerned three dominant trends in European ways of seeing ruined sites, a moralising, a melancholic and a picturesque way. According to Blix, the period around 1800 was special because during that period a new 'reconstructive gaze' developed, in the trend to reconstruct ruins on paper. Through this gaze, so Blix reasons, vanished pasts could be recalled, and thereby also appropriated.²⁴ An important question here is if and how European perceptions changed in an Asian context where the past of which Europeans became aware was not self-evidently their own. In the case of Engelhard we see that his archaeological activities consisted of 'reconstructing' (cleaning, measuring and drawing the building in its current or original state), 'collecting' (taking statues from their original place and putting them in his garden) and 'marking' his presence on the buildings that he visited. Thus practising archaeology – he himself spoke of 'being a lover of antiquities' ('een liefhebber zijnde van oudheden')²⁵ – he disconnected these buildings and statues from their surroundings and he might even, following Blix, have made a connection between himself and the great (foreign) people that once erected the monuments. On top of that, by conducting archaeological activities he raised his own status in colonial society

21 N.J. Krom, 'Engelhard over de Javaansche oudheden', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië* 76 (1929) 435-448, there 440.

22 S. Tiffin, 'Raffles and the Barometer of Civilisation: Images and Descriptions of Ruined Candis in The History of Java', *JRAS Series* 3 18:3 (2008) 241-360, there 357.

23 For an exception, see: S. Tiffin, 'Java's Ruined Candis and the British Picturesque Ideal', *Bulletin of SOAS* 72:3 (2009) 525-558. Compare with: Lunsingh Scheurleer, 'Collecting'.

24 G. Blix, *From Paris to Pompeii: French Romanticism and the Cultural Politics of Archaeology* (Philadelphia 2009) 159-160.

25 'Donderdag den 26e Augustus', 235. Dagregister Engelhard ANRI.

as this enabled him to present himself as a learned, enlightened official with influence in and knowledge of the Javanese world. Against that background it is remarkable that Engelhard hardly developed an interest in the local appropriations of archaeological sites and objects. His observation that local people were not able to explain why they brought offers to old statues does not imply that these rituals were meaningless to them.

Raffles: ruined temples and new loyalties

After the revolutionary Batavian period in the Netherlands had ended in 1806, when Louis Bonaparte was appointed King and what is known as the French period had started, the situation in the Dutch East Indies again changed profoundly. In 1807 Louis Bonaparte appointed Herman W. Daendels Governor-General: he created a more centralised regime and started infrastructural and construction activities. When the Kingdom of Holland was incorporated into France in 1810, Daendels returned to Holland. At that time, for the Javanese rulers the signs of the decline of Dutch power seemed clear, and perhaps even promising, but not for long. In 1811, after Lord Minto had defeated the Franco-Dutch troops, Java was conquered by the British who appointed Raffles as Lieutenant-Governor of the island that now had become part of the British Empire. Raffles continued to build up and reorganise colonial bureaucracy and also used force to establish his power: in 1812 British troops conquered the Kraton of Yogyakarta. The situation changed again in 1813 when the Netherlands became a Kingdom with the family of Stadtholders (who had governed until 1795) as the royal family; Java was returned to the control of the Netherlands under the terms of the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1814 and Raffles left for England.²⁶

It was against the background of these parallel regime changes in Java and the Netherlands that the first printed drawings of Javanese temple ruins reached a wider European audience. This happened in 1817 when Raffles' *History of Java* was published.²⁷ It contained thirteen drawings of ruined temples and three reconstructions. In the book Raffles wrote that until then the antiquities of Java had not drawn much attention. He spoke of numerous remains that either lay buried under rubbish in the ruined temples or that were only partially examined. As an explanation, he referred to the Dutch devotion to commerce that was too exclusive to allow any interest in this subject. At the same time, according to Raffles, there was a narrow-minded

26 P. Carey, *The Power of Prophecy: Prince Dipanagara and the End of an Old Order in Java, 1785-1855* (Leiden 2007) xiii.

27 T.S. Raffles, *The History of Java I-II* (London 1817).

Dutch policy that denied antiquarians from other nations the opportunity to conduct research in Java.²⁸ The Javanese people did not care either, so he reasoned: 'The indifference of the natives has been as great as that of their conquerors'.²⁹

At the time Raffles arrived on Java there were no institutions that could offer any kind of context or continuity with regard to the archaeology of the island. The year 1813 was a turning point as it witnessed the 'reanimation' (as one of Raffles' biographers would later write) of the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences, the learned society that had been founded in Batavia in 1778.³⁰ Lieutenant colonel Colin Mackenzie (1754-1821), who had joined the British expedition to seize Java from the Dutch, took an important step in 1814 by publishing an archaeological travel diary in the *Transactions of the Batavian Society*. In it he described the remains of the city and temples near Prambanan as part of the landscape of Java.³¹ In 1811 Raffles had assigned him the compilation of statistics about Java on which Raffles could base his governmental reforms.³² While fulfilling this task, Mackenzie also began collecting archaeological information on the island, as he had done earlier during his stay in India. In the years following Mackenzie travelled through Java accompanied by a group of Dutch engineers, among whom Cornelius, who had previously been the assistant of Engelhard, and a team of Asian draughtsmen. Some of the latter had been trained in India. While Mackenzie made detailed notes, his team was responsible for the measuring and drawing of the temples. He also made use of an archaeological questionnaire (in English, French and Dutch), which he sent to potential informants on the island.³³

In 1813 Raffles – who, after his departure from Java in 1815, would criticise the Dutch narrow-minded policy towards Javanese antiquities in his *History of Java* – was polite, or even optimistic, in an address to the members of the Batavian Society. As President of this Society, he praised the history of the society and explained its recent decline as a result of the war that 'has desolated the finest countries in Europe'. He foresaw a 'revival of the institution' under his own government. In his speech he also praised the work on the archaeology of the island conducted by Mackenzie and also mentioned his archaeological

28 *Ibid.* II, 5-6.

29 *Ibid.*, 6.

30 D.C. Boulger, *The Life of Sir Stamford Raffles* (London 1897) 177; H. Groot, *Van Batavia naar Weltevreden. Het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen, 1778-1867* (Leiden 2009) 157-184.

31 C. Mackenzie, 'Narrative of a Journey to examine the Remains of an Ancient City and Temples at Brambana in Java', *Verhandelingen*

van het Bataviaasch Genootschap der Kunsten en Wetenschappen 7 (1814) IX and 1-53.

32 J. Bastin, *The Native Policies of Sir Stamford Raffles in Java and Sumatra: An Economic Interpretation* (Oxford 1957).

33 For this questionnaire, see: Krom, 'Engelhard'. Compare with: H. Hoock, *Empires of the Imagination: Politics, War and the Arts in the British World, 1750-1850* (London 2010) 324-325; Groot, *Van Batavia*, 168.

work in West-India.³⁴ Apart from Mackenzie, Raffles had recruited several other British and Dutch experts who collected archaeological information all around the island.³⁵ At the same time John Crawford, who in 1811 was appointed *resident* (highest European rank in the colonial civil administration, responsible for the largest regional and administrative unity, a *residentie*) in Yogyakarta, started studying archaeological sites and objects of this area. Here Javanese people were involved as well. In his later publication *History of the Indian Archipelago* from 1820, Crawford would mention that he had employed a Javanese draughtsman, 'a Native of Java', called Adi Warna. As far as we know now, it is the first time a local 'assistant' is mentioned by name in a colonial source in this context; the surname 'Warna', which means 'colour', notably also refers to Adi's function as an artist in the context of archaeological activities.³⁶ In contrast, Mackenzie in his travel diary only spoke in ethnic terms of a 'China-man' who helped him organise his visits to the Prambanan-site.³⁷

Archaeology thus became part of political reform programme: conducting archaeological investigations became a means to support Raffles' governmental reorganisations and could be explained as a way of opposing the former Dutch misrule. The distribution of an archaeological questionnaire by Mackenzie therefore should not be regarded solely as a scholarly activity but also as an act of legitimation of the British government on the island. Answering it, as did Engelhard for example, meant showing loyalty to the new government and as such the questionnaire helped building up a supportive network for this same government. Javanese sites with temple ruins in this context were understood as places that marked an obligation; their decay was not only connected to the 'degeneration' of Javanese society, but also to the misrule of the VOC period.³⁸ Against this background the conservation of temples – removing the vegetation was the first step – symbolised a new government that recognised it had more duties than just commercial ones. At the same time British nationalist-imperial objectives were never far away. In 1813 Mackenzie pleaded in a letter to Raffles for the 'preservation' of archaeological sites:

[...] it might at some future day call to remembrance an event that will be always deemed interesting to the Nation at large, the incorporation of Java in the British empire.³⁹

34 T.S. Raffles, 'A Discourse delivered at a Meeting of the Society of Arts and Sciences in Batavia, on the Twenty-Fourth Day of April 1813, being the Anniversary of the Institute', *Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap der Kunsten en Wetenschappen* 7 (1814) 1-34, there 3, 14 and 34. See also: Groot, *Van Batavia*, 173-174.

35 Krom, *Inleiding*, 6.

36 J. Crawford, *History of the Indian Archipelago, containing an Account of the Manners, Arts, Languages, Religions, Institutions and Commerce of its Inhabitants* II (Edinburgh 1820) vi.

37 Mackenzie, 'Narrative', 1, 7, 16, 28 and 43.

38 Raffles, *The History* II, 6.

39 MacKenzie to Raffles, 14 April 1813, British Library, London, Colonial Office, Mss Eur F 148/47, 1.

The fact that during Raffles' period of government archaeological activities gained a moral dimension and were connected with the British Empire, from the perspective of the British, should obviously better not be disturbed by earlier Dutch initiatives in the field. The difference between the drawing 'View of the Ruins of a Bramin Temple at Brambanan' made by Cornelius in 1807 and the plate 'The large temple at Brambanan' made by William Daniell, based on Cornelius drawing and printed in *History of Java* of 1817, can serve as a good example. In the original drawings Cornelius depicted how three Dutch ensigns measured the temple – in fact the Sewu temple, located nearby the Prambanan temple site – with the help of Javanese workers who were removing vegetation. The engraving in Raffles book does not show these activities. It depicts the ruined temple full of vegetation with – as staffage – a few Javanese people standing and sitting next to it.⁴⁰ As such it represents, as Sarah Tiffin recently rightly concluded, primarily a romantic-exotic place full of passivity and decay.⁴¹ The same can be said about Engelhard's archaeological activities. Raffles mentioned his Semarang collection and spoke of 'several very beautiful subjects in stone', but stressed that his collecting practices ruined the Singasari-temple, a thirteenth century temple in Eastern Java.⁴²

In later Dutch overviews of the archaeology in the Dutch East Indies it is often stressed that Raffles had 'embezzled' the 'Dutch' archaeological activities of Engelhard; he used insights provided by Engelhard and Cornelius in his *History of Java* without giving credits to them.⁴³ F.G. Valck, the *resident* of Yogyakarta and collector of old Javanese statutes for example, wrote in 1840 that 'the English' followed the footsteps of Engelhard and that Raffles used his work to add lustre to his own publication⁴⁴: and indeed Raffles seemed inspired by Engelhard. For him, as to Engelhard, practising archaeology primarily meant 'collecting' and 'reconstructing' (on paper), but the effects were different. Archaeology for Raffles was more than just a way to obtain status; he used it as an entrance to Dutch and Javanese circles and a way to establish loyalty to the new British regime. In a certain way, he did this by disconnecting the buildings and statues from the Dutch and Javanese

40 J. Bastin and P. Rohatgi, *Prints of Southeast Asia in the India Office Library: The East India Compagny in Malaysia and Indonesia 1786-1824* (London 1979) 168.

41 Tiffin, 'Java's Ruined Candis', 553 and 558.

42 Raffles, *The History II*, 41 and 55.

43 N.J. Krom, *De Sumatraansche periode der Javaansche geschiedenis. Rede uitgesproken bij zijn ambtsaanvaarding als buitengewoon hoogleraar aan de Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden, op 3 december 1919*

(Leiden 1919) 4-5; G.P. Rouffaer, 'Monumentale kunst op Java', *De Gids* 4:9 (1901) part II, 225-252, there 234; Groot, *Van Batavia*, 175-177.

44 F.G. Valck, 'Oudheidkunde. Gedachten over de Ruïnen van de Hindoesche godsdienst, welke op Java voorkomen', *Tijdschrift voor Neerland's Indië* 3:1 (1840) 177-203, there 189.



William Daniell, The large temple at Brambanan.

T.S. Raffles, *The History of Java* (London 1817).

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and Caribbean Studies, Leiden.

people who, in his eyes, for a long time had neglected them. Furthermore the British appropriation of the Javanese antiquity happened on the level of interpretation as well. Raffles' suggestion that Java was 'colonised from different parts of the continent of Asia' pointed at a connection between Java and the Asian continent.⁴⁵ It offered a space to value this past, which to a large extent was part of the British Empire. The fact that after 1815 Raffles would bring the Javanese antiquities that he gathered in his network along to the Indian Museum in Calcutta (founded in 1814) and London (where some are still on display in the British Museum) only re-enforced this perspective; British India for a long time would be seen as the context par excellence to interpret the Javanese past.

Reuvens: a state regulated civil responsibility

After the island of Java was returned to the control of the Netherlands in 1816 the Dutch continued to develop the bureaucracy of their colonial state; in 1822 Governor-General G. van der Capellen for example, assigned an archaeological commission in Java to search for antiquities.⁴⁶ The renewed Dutch presence was supported by parts of the population of Java but also caused opposition. This finally resulted in the Java War (1825-1830), a social-religious rebellion that involved a large part of Java. During the war about 200,000 Javanese died, one quarter of the cultivated area was damaged and many properties were destroyed. The end of the Java War coincided with the Belgian Revolution of 1830. Since then the Dutch Kingdom might have lost Belgium, but was internationally in undisputed control of Java. The Javanese Kingdoms, which had been almost sovereign principalities, from then onwards were intermediated into a subordinate position.⁴⁷ A new phase of colonial rule started of which the 'cultivation system' was the cornerstone. It was during these years that on Java and in the Netherlands the first effective state initiatives were developed to safeguard archaeological sites and objects in Java.

In the early nineteenth century in the Netherlands, as elsewhere in Europe, a number of new institutional structures had come into being that created some continuity with regard to archaeological research. The Royal Dutch Institute of Sciences, Literature and Fine Arts founded by Louis Bonaparte in 1808 would later, when the Netherlands had become a Kingdom, play a small initiating role in this field. More important, in 1818 the newly established King Willem I appointed Reuvens as Professor of Archaeology

45 Raffles, *The History* II, 63.

46 For the decision of 1822, see: Arsip Koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap (hereafter KBC)

DIR 0022, ANRI, Jakarta.

47 J.A. Somers, *Nederlandsch-Indië. Staatkundige ontwikkelingen binnen een koloniale relatie* (Zutphen 2005) 81-106; Carey, *The Power*, 261-343.

at Leiden University; the same year Reuvens also became the director of the newly founded Museum of Antiquities in that city. Combining both functions and with the financial support of the new state, Reuvens began collecting antiquities on a scale the Netherlands had not witnessed before. This included the acquisition of statues from the classical world, Egypt and the Dutch East Indies.⁴⁸ Although impressed by the Napoleonic archaeological initiatives, Reuvens was in the first place inspired by the German archaeological tradition of his time. He managed to combine the Dutch antiquarian and humanistic tradition with the universalism of the Enlightenment.⁴⁹ In his research on Javanese antiquities Reuvens focused primarily on the relation between mythology and objects and on ‘classical’ influences on Java that thus could be traced. As a member of the Royal Institute, in 1824 he wrote an essay – *Verhandeling over drie groote steenen beelden* [Exposition on three large stone statues] – on the Singasari-statues representing the goddesses Bhairava, Ganesha and Shiva that had arrived in Amsterdam in 1819.⁵⁰ These statues had been part of the Engelhard collection in Semarang (drawings of two of them were printed in Raffles *History of Java*) and subsequently found a place in the garden of the Royal Institute.⁵¹ Reuvens also took a position in the Dutch-English archaeological rivalry with regard to the Javanese past and reproached the British for depreciating the Dutch initiatives in this field. He argued for example, that Raffles apparently had a very low opinion of Engelhard since he left his archaeological work unmentioned.⁵² At the same time Reuvens acknowledged that Raffles himself had contributed to the knowledge of Javanese antiquity as well. He concluded: ‘[...] being members of a commonwealth of science, we must not judge according to national lines and show these writers our gratitude’.⁵³

A few years later, in 1827, Reuvens received a personal letter from Engelhard who at that time lived in Buitenzorg (Bogor, Java), in which Engelhard thanked him for sending his study on the three Singasari statues.

48 For Reuvens, see: R.B. Halberstma, *Scholars, Travellers and Trade: The Pioneer Years of the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, 1818-1840* (London 2003); M. Hoijsink, *Caspar Reuvens and the Museums of Antiquities in Europe, 1800-1840* (Turnhout 2012).

49 M. Eickhoff, ‘C.J.C. Reuvens als erfater. Twee eeuwen “genealogieën” van de Nederlandse archeologie’, in: E.H.P. Cordfunke et al. (eds.), ‘Loffelijke verdiensten van de archeologie’. *C.J.C. Reuvens als grondlegger van de moderne Nederlandse archeologie* (Hilversum 2007) 135-147, there 139-141.

50 C.J.C. Reuvens, *Verhandeling over drie groote steenen beelden in den jare 1819 uit Java naar den Nederlanden overgezonden* (1824). Gedenkschriften in de hedendaagsche talen van der derde klasse van het Koninklijk Nederlandsch Instituut van Wetenschappen, Letterkunde en Schone Kunsten. Deel III (1826) I-VII and 1-223.

51 R. Effert, *Volkenkundig verzamelen. Het Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden en Het Rijks Ethnografisch Museum 1816-1883* (Leiden 2003) 185; Groot, *Van Batavia naar Weltevreden*, 192-193.

52 Reuvens, *Verhandeling*, 11.

53 *Ibid.*, 13.

He remembered that these statues had been his personal gift to King Willem I of the Netherlands. In 1819 he had actually arranged to send six statues but three of them remained in Buitenzorg (Bogor). He planned to send them to the Netherlands in the near future.⁵⁴ On top of that he considered offering the King the drawings of the Prambanan temple made by Cornelius. In his letter Engelhard confirmed that the explorers of the British interregnum on Java, among others Raffles and Mackenzie, had used the information he had collected earlier, while acting as if it was their own work.⁵⁵ The question is to what extent Engelhard at that time was aware that his answer to Mackenzie's questionnaire had not only been a scholarly activity but all the same an act of loyalty to the new British government from which he might have hoped reciprocal support. A few years earlier, during Daendels' government, his position as a member of the former VOC establishment had been quite awkward; in 1808 he was even fired by Daendels.⁵⁶ In fact, in his letter to Reuvs Engelhard performed a similar act of loyalty, again with the help of archaeology, but now directed toward Willem I, the new King of the Netherlands.

In 1832, two years after the end of the Java War when the Dutch position on the island seemed to be secured, Reuvs again showed his commitment to Javanese antiquities. In that year he sent a memorandum to J.C. Baud, who was about to become Governor-General, in which he pleaded for measures to protect archaeological sites and objects. He wrote: 'There seems to be a feeling on Java that these monuments are communal property and that everyone, especially the higher civil servants, can take away what they like'.⁵⁷ It is not known on which sources Reuvs based this view. He must have heard about the case of a Dutch gentleman in Salatiga who destroyed a Ganesha-statue nearby his home after his bankruptcy.⁵⁸ As far as we know it is the first act of iconoclasm reported of by colonial sources. Reuvs concluded: 'To stop this conduct completely by declaring the monument property of the government, from which nothing can be taken, is probably impossible and could have bad side effects'.⁵⁹ He suggested therefore that private owners

54 For the provenance of these statues, see: J.L.A. Brandes, H.L. Leydie Melville and J. Knebel (eds.), *Beschrijving van Tjandi Singasari; en De Wolkentoneelen van Panataram* (Archeologisch Onderzoek op Java en Madura II; The Hague, Batavia 1909) 26-34.

55 Engelhard to C.J.L. Reuvs, Buitenzorg, 28-2-1827, BPL 885, Bijzondere collecties, Universiteit Leiden.

56 Krom, 'Engelhard' 436. See also: Kommers, *Besturen*, 112-115.

57 *Memorie ter bevordering der Javaansche Oudheid-Kunde*, 29-8-1832, KBG DIR 0093, ANRI, Jakarta.

58 This anecdote is mentioned in a letter from L.J.F. Jansen, dating from 2-4-1842, to the Minister of the Interior. See: *Besluit 17-8-1842*, no. II, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta.

59 *Memorie ter bevordering der Javaansche Oudheid-Kunde*, 29-8-1832, KBG DIR 0093, ANRI, Jakarta.

should make drawings of objects and measure the shape of temples in detail. A society, according to Reuvens, would be the best way to support this project. To promote his plan Reuvens spoke of an interest of the fatherland that was at stake and posed the rhetorical question: 'Why should Dutch' purses and Dutch' love of one's country not be able to put this idea into practice?':⁶⁰ Reuvens was apparently not aware that for a short time an archaeological commission on Java had already existed in 1822. When comparing the justification of the assignment of that commission with Reuvens' explanation, it is remarkable that this referred exclusively to the plundering of archaeological sites by Chinese and native people that should be stopped, and did not refer to civil servants, as Reuvens did.⁶¹ Reuvens' suggestion of 1832 that taking care of archaeological sites and objects should and could be primarily a state regulated civil obligation nonetheless did not have any effect either. His appeal might not have been successful but was strongly in line with the social criticism he had formulated earlier in the Netherlands. There he spoke repeatedly of the decline of cultural life and the dominance of a mercantile spirit, which could only be stopped by a good classical education and state investments in archaeology.⁶² This expansion of his criticism to the Dutch East Indies actually made him repeat Raffles' critical view of the Dutch policy towards Javanese antiquities.

The year 1840 saw a radical change of policy, with Governor-General C.S.W. van Hogendorp commissioning a new archaeological regulation. It was the result of an intervention of Baud, who now had become Minister for the Colonies in The Hague. Baud knew of the visit to Java of the French archaeologist Ernest De Sancigny and therefore advised taking measures. Thanks to the regulation of 1840 it was officially forbidden to export antiquities from Java without the permission of the Governor-General, while local authorities were obliged to make lists of the antiquities in their region.⁶³ Following this regulation, in 1842 the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences was authorised to ask the regional authorities in Java to send archaeological objects to the society, on the basis of the lists compiled in 1840. There was one restriction – the transportation of the objects should not interfere with indigenous appropriations of these objects. Once in Batavia the objects would become part of the museum of the Batavian Society and as such they became 'national property'.⁶⁴

60 *Ibid.* See also: Groot, *Van Batavia*, 261-263. Compare with: B. Deen Schildgen, *Heritage or Heresy: Preservation and Destruction of Religious Art and Architecture in Europe* (New York 2008) 121-132.

61 Besluit 24 July 1823, no. 7, Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta. See also: Groot, *Van Batavia*, 192, 261-262 and 444.

62 M. Eickhoff, 'Archeologisch erfgoed. Een onbeheersbaar concept', in: F. Grijzenhout (ed.), *Erfgoed. De geschiedenis van een begrip* (Amsterdam 2007) 231-236, there 237-238.

63 Groot, *Van Batavia*, 308.

64 Besluit 3 December 1842, no. 18, kept in: KBG DIR 1509, ANRI, Jakarta. See also: Groot, *Van Batavia*, 310.

This use of the category ‘national property’ implies that the care for archaeological sites at that moment was officially transformed from a state regulated civil responsibility to an obligation of the – internally expanding – colonial state itself that aimed to prevent interference from other colonial powers. By defining archaeological objects in Java as ‘national property’ the spatial geography of the newly founded Kingdom of the Netherlands was enlarged and archaeological activities gained a moral component. The Dutch colonial authorities certainly observed that there were also local Javanese appropriations and they were prepared to respect these, but not as the heart of the matter. It is in this notion of the Dutch colonial state as the caretaker of the remnants of a magnificent Javanese past that we recognise an early expression of modern state-related heritage awareness. Thus, in the 1840s the Javanese antiquities transformed into a national obligation of the Dutch colonial state.

Sieburgh: ruined temples and the sublime

In 1836, when the Dutch position on the island of Java seemed to be secured and the images of the ruined temples on the island had spread around the world, for the first time an artist from the Netherlands went to Java, on his own initiative, just to visit archaeological sites.⁶⁵ In December that year the painter Sieburgh took ship from the Netherlands to Java where he arrived three-and-a-half months later. His aim was to make what he called ‘pittoresque’ travels. During the years that he stayed on Java, until his early death in 1842 at the age of 43, he painted the main corpus of temples and other ruined buildings that at that time were known to exist. These were paintings in picturesque style without intention to give a precise documentation of the site itself. One temple – the Candi Lumbung near the Prambanan complex – was even painted as a moonlight scene. In some exceptional cases he included people in his work, for example the painting of Candi Papak near the Singosari complex showed a fire with people standing next to it; and in 1839 Sieburgh made a drawing on the occasion of the visit of the regent of Magelang, Ario Danuningrat, to Borobudur, the place where Sieburgh was staying for three months.⁶⁶

It took Sieburgh a lot of effort to organise his trips on the island as he needed official approbation to travel through Java.⁶⁷ Local people helped him finding his way through the jungle while the Javanese village heads supplied

65 M.O. Scalliet, ‘Natuurtonelen en taferelen van Oost-Indië. Europese schilders in Oost-Indië in de negentiende eeuw, in: K. van Brakel et al., *Indië omlijst. Vier eeuwen schilderkunst in Nederlands-Indië* (Amsterdam 1998) 39-89.

66 J.V. de Bruijn, H.N. Sieburgh en zijn beteekenis voor *de Javaansche Oudheidkunde* (Leiden 1937) 12-35.

67 For this approbation, see: Gouvernementsbesluit 26 June 1837, no. 13. Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta.



▲
H.N. Sieburgh, The north-east corner of the basement
of the Borobudur, including a depiction of painter in
action on location, 1837.
National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, 37-643.

him with food.⁶⁸ During his travels Sieburgh started writing a manuscript.⁶⁹ It was to consist of 420 pages and contained descriptions of the sites as well as Sieburgh's experiences and observations on location. The reader gets to know Sieburgh as a romantic par excellence. He describes how he stayed during the night at the Borobudur and how he became afraid of the dark and even saw the Fates.⁷⁰ This terrifyingly sublime experience made him question the value of his own life and long for academic knowledge. It seems to have been a turning point. The same can be said of his meeting in 1840 with the local antiquarians J.W.B. Wardenaar (who had assisted Cornelius and Raffles) and C.J. van der Vlis (who prepared the inventory of the archaeological collection of *resident* Valck). Sieburgh started to make accurate drawings of archaeological sites, reconstruction drawings and drawings of details of the temples or site related objects (like statues, bronze objects and inscriptions). Planning to publish a book about Javanese antiquity, he started to study publications, contemporary ones like those of Raffles and Crawford, but also those of an earlier date like the travels of Marco Polo.⁷¹ Sieburgh's early death, at the age of 43, prevented this book to materialize.

Like Raffles and Reuvens, Sieburgh became a critic of the former Dutch attitude towards Javanese antiquity. For example he complained that it took two hundred years to discover Borobudur.⁷² His condemnation of the Dutch colonial state might have been strengthened after the decision of this same colonial state in August 1841 to give only very limited support to his travels.⁷³ Generally to Sieburgh, when he visited the archaeological sites of Java, the Dutch nation was far away; Borobudur, in his words, was a 'world monument'.⁷⁴ At the archaeological sites that he visited and painted, he observed visitors. He noticed that some of them just 'came, saw and went'. On the other hand he admired those who took notice of what they saw. He spoke for example of a Chinese butcher who visited Borobudur regularly for religious reasons. This man also studied the reliefs by comparing them, making notes and drawings. According to Sieburgh, he was the 'real lover of antiquity'.⁷⁵ When we regard Sieburgh's activities, experiences and observations as part of circuits of empire, they illustrate that there were many different peoples and groups that felt connected to the ruined temple sites

68 C. Leemans, 'H.N. Sieburgh en zijne oudheidkundige onderzoekingen in de binnenlanden van Java', *Algemeene Konst- en Letterbode* II (1846) 275-281, 290-295 and 306-310, there 306.

69 H.N. Sieburgh, *Beschrijving van Brahmansche Oudheden op het Eiland Java*. Manuscript, see: Library Museum Volkenkunde Leiden.

70 *Ibid.*, 112-113.

71 Sieburgh, *Beschrijving*, 14.

72 *Ibid.*

73 Besluit 19 Augustus 1841, no. 3., Algemene Secretarie, ANRI, Jakarta.

74 Sieburgh, *Beschrijving*, 60.

75 *Ibid.*

from Java for many different reasons.⁷⁶ Although in the 1840s the colonial state developed some initiatives leading to this direction, there was no 'archaeological' state monopoly yet.

A new state-related heritage awareness on Java and its limitations

By taking archaeological sites as nodal points of circuits along which people, objects and ideas moved, this paper aimed to shed light on the changing meanings of Java's ruined temples in the first half of the nineteenth century. This approach reveals that in the context of parallel regime changes, violent military expeditions, rivalries between the colonising powers and processes of state formation the archaeological sites on Java became a means for both formulating socio-cultural criticism and symbols for governmental reform. For the European people involved, archaeological sites were markers of a new era. They primarily symbolised a new, moral obligation of the colonial state that, when needed, had to respect indigenous appropriations of the sites and objects involved: and this would turn out to be an ideal that would stay.

Thus at the beginning of the nineteenth century in the interactions between Java, Great-Britain, France and the Netherlands, we see the start of a process in which archaeological sites and objects on Java became part of a state-related heritage awareness. Apart from Leiden, in this context it was Batavia that would become the archaeological centre of the Dutch East Indies. This only happened after the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences in 1843 succeeded in buying the important archaeological collection of Valck that was about to be auctioned. Valck had assembled this collection in Yogyakarta between 1831 and 1841 during the time he was *resident*.⁷⁷ According to the vice-president of the society, since the acquisition of this collection, the museum in Batavia could easily compete with 'Leiden' or 'London'.⁷⁸ We see here how the official collecting practices of Javanese antiquities in Batavia hosted not only a 'Dutch' national obligation but also a local, colony based pride, in which a combination of personal, civic and state-related emotions might have played a role.

76 See on the continuous 'foreign' engagements with Java's antiquities around 1900, Marieke Bloembergen and Martijn Eickhoff, 'Exchange and the Protection of Java's Antiquities: A Transnational Approach to the Problem of Heritage in Colonial Java', *Journal of Asian Studies* (2013), forthcoming.

77 Groot, *Van Batavia*, 311 and 314.

78 P. Mijer, 'Beknopt berigt van den staat des genootschaps', *Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* 19 (1843) iii-xcviii, there xlv-xxlv.

The careful study of colonial archival documents and publications that helped us to reconstruct early concepts of heritage that developed on the island of Java itself, taught us furthermore that the Javanese – local common people and royal families – did engage with ‘antiquities’ as well. For them they were first of all part of the religious-mythical landscape of Java. Local people moreover were willing to show the way to the temple sites that since the beginning of the nineteenth century attracted visitors from all over the world, and were involved in archaeological activities on location in diverse ways. Their conviction that it was better not to (re)move the site based objects, illustrates on the one hand how unequal relations were, as many objects were nonetheless taken away. For example it is known that the Dutch colonial officials who took care of the transport of Valck’s archaeological collection to Batavia expected the court in Yogyakarta to feel offended by it.⁷⁹ On the other hand the regulations of 1840 and 1842 show that this conviction contributed to the development of a state-related heritage awareness in Java as well. With these regulations the colonial state started to claim the indigenous past, thus reproducing colonial hierarchies and constituting a colonial regime of academic truth. However, this regulation of archaeology also had some roots in local society. Furthermore, there are some indications in the circuits of empire that we studied of the existence of trans-Asian engagements from actors within the state that did not necessarily overlap with imaginings of this same state. Sieburgh for example, noticed that the Chinese butcher often looked at one particular relief of Borobudur showing a vessel, a so-called ‘junk’, that the man considered to be Chinese.⁸⁰ Possibly the man thereby related, through this temple relief, to a Chinese world or maybe even origin, and as such he is a reminder par excellence of the limitations of the new state-related heritage awareness in Java of the early nineteenth century.

79 Groot, *Van Batavia*, 311 and 314.

80 Sieburgh, *Beschrijving*, 60.

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