Colonial Tours

The Leisure and Anxiety of Empire in Travel Writing from Java, Ceylon and the Straits Settlements, 1840-1875

Mikko Samuli Toivanen

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization
of the European University Institute

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European University Institute
Department of History and Civilization

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Examining Board

Prof Jorge Flores, EUI (Supervisor)
Prof Lucy Riall, EUI
Prof Marieke Bloembergen, Leiden University
Dr Mark Frost, University of Essex

Researcher declaration to accompany the submission of written work
Department of History and Civilization - Doctoral Programme

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Abstract

This thesis examines the development and transformation of mid-nineteenth-century colonialism on Dutch Java and the British colonies of Ceylon and the Straits Settlements through a carefully contextualized, critical analysis of the corpus of popular colonial travel writing published on these areas in Dutch and English in the period. The analysis is undertaken on two levels: on the one hand, through a close reading of a body of about twenty travel books and the representation of colonial societies therein; and on the other, through a consideration of the concrete changes that were taking place on the ground and the corresponding debates within communities and on the pages of the colonial press. What emerges from the exercise is a significant double movement in nineteenth-century imperialism, whereby an influx of European newcomers – settlers, officials, soldiers etc. that moved into the region in order to take advantage of the opportunities offered by rapid administrative and territorial expansion – disrupted the pre-existing norms and habits of established colonial elites; and, while doing so, employed the genre of popular travel writing as a tool to firmly establish and legitimise the new conception of empire they represented on a cultural level. The genre, seemingly frivolous but in fact intensely political, deliberately employed the characteristics of the tourist culture then fashionable in Europe in order to transpose metropolitan cultural and social norms on colonial life, doing away with the tropes of imperial adventure and tropical exoticism prevalent in the travel writing of the preceding decades. The analysis focuses specifically on how this new mode of colonial leisure related to and modified understandings of three themes: the so-called social and cultural anxieties of empire; the emerging and increasingly professionalised colonial sciences; and the contemporary notions of race and racial boundaries.

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Acknowledgments

This thesis represents the culmination of four years of work or, seen from another angle, about a decade's worth of academic endeavour. Right now it feels like a lot, though it is perhaps only the beginning; in any case it is a good place to pause and give thanks to all those who have helped me get this far.

The European University Institute, where the majority of this work was written, is a curious place, and the Department of History and Civilization is perhaps its most curious part. I mean that in a good way: its academic community and open intellectual environment have undeniably shaped both this thesis and myself as a researcher. It would be impossible to list all the people in Florence with whom I have discussed my work over the years, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank Regina Grafe, Ann Thomson and Pieter Judson for the feedback they provided at various stages; and in particular Lucy Riall, the second reader of this thesis, who in all our meetings has never failed to find just the right provoking comment to push me to challenge myself a little further. Sections of the work have benefited greatly from opportunities to present and discuss my ideas arranged by the researcher-led working groups for intellectual history, history of science, and cities. I would also like to thank my colleagues and friends John-Erik and Matilda for bearing with me, as I bore with them, through the educational experience of planning and organising our conference 'The Author – Wanted, Dead or Alive' in 2017, and the special issue we consequently edited. (It was actually great.)

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This is a work about many terrible things but also about travel, about people trying to make sense of landscapes and cities and other people. I am thankful for the admittedly privileged opportunities it has given me to do just that, to travel, and for all the many and varied landscapes and cities and people it has led me to. I am deeply grateful to Florence, a place I never thought I would have any reason to find myself in, yet a place that has come to be home, in all senses of the word. And I am grateful to the legendary Italian *fumetto* Dylan Dog – much more entertaining to read than this thesis – for providing much-needed respite from academia; and to all incarnations of the Singapore band The Observatory, a procrastination-prompted discovery who soundtracked much of my stay in Southeast Asia and indeed much of my life since.

Finally, none of this would have been possible, or had much sense, without the support of my friends in Florence and beyond. I want to especially mention Martin, for always being a creative spark; Ieva, for an escape from history; Juha, for helping with my ever-deteriorating Finnish; Chris, Maarten, Girija and Thomas for their intellectual/emotional support but primarily for providing beds to crash on in the Netherlands; and Ismay, for the same but in Edinburgh.

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Touring a changing empire: a brief introduction

When Augustus De Butts, then a lieutenant in the British colonial army, published a rather entertaining account of his travels on Ceylon in 1841, he took occasion in the preface of that book to lament the lack of attention paid to the island by the travel writers of his time: "[f]rom Delhi to Cape Comorin, from the banks of the Indus to those of the Brahmaputra, every part of our vast Indian territories has furnished an unfailing theme for descriptive writers; yet, strange to say, the beautiful and Romantic island of Ceylon … has remained in comparative obscurity."[12] Of course, that oversight, seen from a different angle, was also an opening for De Butts, a chance to stake a claim to his niche in the highly competitive mid-nineteenth-century market for travel literature; he took his chance, and just about in time, as that niche was rapidly being filled up from all sides: a mere few decades later, in 1875, his fellow Briton John Thomson impatiently skipped over the island in recounting his experiences in the East: "… I need not pause to detail my experiences over one of the beaten tracks of modern tourists; nor can I even venture to describe Galle … as this part of Ceylon is on the highway to India, and therefore already well known."[3] Much had changed in the intervening decades, and not just on the pages of travel books. On Java, for example, travel restrictions were significantly relaxed in 1861, prompting one official to report that "the jealous fear that foreigners might come to know

[1] Augustus De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon* (London, 1841), v.

[2] Regarding terminology, it should be noted that this thesis will consistently refer to the island by its colonial name "Ceylon" rather than the alternative "Lanka" used by many historians, which has its roots in the Hindu epic *Ramayana*. ("Sri Lanka," being specifically the name of the modern state, would be anachronistic.) This choice is justified by the fact that this thesis deals specifically with the role of the island in colonial culture and imperial discourse, and by the fact that the works analysed throughout the thesis use "Ceylon" consistently. The same applies to other places like Bogor on Java: the colonial Buitenzorg is used instead, unless specifically referring to the pre-colonial or the post-independence era. For places where the name has not changed but the spelling has, modern variants are preferred: for example, Bandung over Bandoeng or Bandong (partly because colonial-era spellings were not consistent across time or different authors anyway). The exception are places with conventional English spellings: thus, the English Malacca is used over the Malay Melaka.

[3] John Thomson, *The Straits of Malacca, Indo-China, and China or, Ten Years' Travels, Adventures, and Residence Abroad* (London, 1875), 1.

too much about Java has made way for new ideas."[4] The boom for colonial travel and travel writing coincided with, and in very important ways was entwined with, larger developments on the ground in the colonies: administrative consolidation, geographical expansion, technological advancements. Empire was changing, as were the ways in which people thought and wrote about it. In the process, areas that had so far remained relatively unknown to large European audiences suddenly showed up not only in political tracts and scholarly tomes but also, increasingly, in touristic booklets and light entertainment. The middle decades of the century firmly established empire in the popular consciousness and witnessed a blossoming of imperial popular culture.

This research in thesis looks into the intersection between these two well-documented phenomena of the nineteenth century: on the one hand, the emergence of popular, middle-class tourism and its associated literary forms in European culture; and on the other, the wave of intensified Western imperialism and colonisation that occurred in the Indian Ocean region from around the middle of the century onward. Specifically, the focus will be on an examination of how European travellers in the middle of the century employed a new, touristic discourse in describing colonial spaces in travel writing and introduced touristic practices into colonial culture. Moreover, the analysis will show how these new cultural elements worked to normalise and legitimise the colonisation process, and to reinforce the lines between European and non-European, white and non-white in colonial society. Popular culture also helped disseminate the knowledge produced by colonial science, filtering its findings into a streamlined, easily digestible frame of reference for experiencing colonial realities. To examine these processes, I will be analysing a range of contemporary published travel works, contextualising them in the wider print culture of the time as well as in their historical imperial setting.

The geographical range of the analysis here deviates somewhat from the categories and framings conventionally used by historians, and therefore requires some elaboration. For one, it straddles the modern definitions of South and Southeast Asia, labels that in any case had no exact equivalent in the nineteenth-century imperial imagination. Broadly speaking, the scope of this thesis coincides with what might be called maritime Southeast Asia, albeit with the inclusion of the island of Ceylon, from where we began this introduction. In specific terms, it covers Ceylon; the British Straits Settlements, that is, the cities of Singapore, Malacca and Penang on and just off the Malay

[4] 'Overzicht van de Staatkundige toestand van Nederlandsch-Indië op het tijdstip der aftreding van den Gouverneur Generaal Sloet van de Beelë. Met advies van de Raad van Indië' (1866/7), Nationaal Archief, Den Haag (from now on NA Den Haag), Ministerie van Koloniën: Supplement (2.10.03), inv. nr. 24, 585.

peninsula; and the island of Java in the Dutch East Indies. This may seem at first like a collection of very disparate locales from South and Southeast Asia, under different flags and with different colonial trajectories; yet in fact they formed a closely connected littoral whole, doubly bound together by transport links and history. The long history and high level of mobility across the region has been noted by several scholars.[5] The maritime dimension of the selected spaces is underlined by the fact that all bar Malacca are islands, and therefore fundamentally dependent on and defined by overseas connections. And indeed, all were connected by busy shipping routes, and that was especially the case with the major ports of these colonies: Batavia, Singapore and Point de Galle on Ceylon. Especially with the advent of steam-shipping, Ceylon became a way station for travellers not also to India but also further east: a major artery connected Galle with Singapore and from there to Hong Kong and the Far East. As for the Dutch possessions, visitors to Java were, for most of the period under consideration here, dependent on British steamers all the way up to Singapore, from where passage could be secured to Batavia and further to Australia. These connections provided for easy and quick travel across and around the Bay of Bengal, an opportunity taken by many aspiring travel writers, as will be seen, and ultimately leading into a kind of regional, trans-colonial proto-tourism. On a related note, it is important to note that this selection of places has not been determined by any nation-centred historiographies or selected for the purposes of telling a simple British/Dutch comparative imperial history: rather, the aim here is to provide an analysis of a wider, European culture of empire and of colonial travel that connected these places and brought the region together in the imperial imagination.

Beyond the very concrete links provided by shipping and communications, all of these colonies were marked by entangled Anglo-Dutch imperial histories that had left prominent marks on their respective imaginaries and identities. Many of them had changed hands between the two competing powers fairly recently, some more than once: Ceylon had been a Dutch colony since 1640 and until 1796 when it was taken over by the British amid the turbulences caused by the French

[5] The centrality of Lanka/Ceylon to the networks of the Indian Ocean is discussed in Zoltán Biedermann and Alan Strathern (eds.), *Sri Lanka at the Crossroads of History* (London, 2017); for Southeast Asia, see Eric Tagliacozzo, *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, Movement, and the Longue Durée* (Stanford, 2009); Jennifer L. Gaynor, 'Ages of Sail, Ocean Basins, and Southeast Asia', *Journal of World History*, 24 (2013), 309–33; Sunil S. Amrith, 'Indians Overseas? Governing Tamil Migration to Malaya, 1870–1941', *Past & Present*, 208 (2010), 231–61; Anne M. Blackburn, 'Buddhist Connections in the Indian Ocean: Changes in Monastic Mobility, 1000-1500', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 58 (2015), 237–66; Sunil S. Amrith, *Crossing the Bay of Bengal* (Cambridge, MA, 2013); for involuntary mobility in the region, see Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge, 2012).

invasion of the Netherlands. That period also saw the British assume power in the Dutch possessions of Java and Malacca, though these were returned after the Napoleonic Wars. In the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824, the Dutch once more relinquished Malacca and gave up their claims on Singapore in exchange for securing their position in the archipelago. As for Penang, its rise as a commercial centre from the late eighteenth century onward was a direct consequence of British attempts to position it as a local rival to the then-Dutch port of Malacca.[6] Yet, for our concerns, what is more important than these dates and the complicated imperial power politics behind them, are the very real concrete trans-imperial presences and entanglements they inscribed into the colonies in question. These took many forms: cultural, such as the writings of Stamford Raffles that straddled the region from Java to the Straits and remained authoritative throughout the century; architectural, especially in the form of the churches and city halls built by the Dutch in Malacca and Colombo, which remained in use under British rule; and demographic, as both of those colonies retained significant populations that identified as Dutch, although their European status was frequently questioned, as will be seen. Overall, then, the historical legacies of empire meant that the Dutch and British travellers that are under consideration in this thesis could journey across the region, not as Dutchmen in a British colony or vice versa, but as Europeans in a shared Anglo-Dutch trans-imperial space.

Having established the parameters of inclusion, it is also necessary to say a word or two about what is excluded. Importantly, inland Malay peninsula and the so-called outer possessions of the Dutch East Indies, though geographically contiguous and historically closely connected, are excluded from consideration, as the process of European colonisation in those spaces took a very different trajectory over a very different time scale; as such they cannot be thought of as comparable areas for the purposes of this thesis. Moreover, British India will also be largely excluded from the analysis in favour of the diverse maritime and littoral zone outlined above. Obviously, British India represents by some distance the best-documented and most researched case study of European imperialism in the region; and as will be clear from the historiographical discussion below, a vast portion of the existing literature on the general themes of colonisation and the cultures of empire remains firmly centred on India to such an extent that its influence cannot be ignored. Yet that dominance also has a downside, as it can be easy to lose sight of the specificities of the smaller colonies in the surrounding region and the connections between them when set alongside an entire

[6] C. M. Turnbull, 'Penang's Changing Role in the Straits Settlements, 1826-1946', in Seng Guan Yeoh et al. (eds.), *Penang and Its Region : The Story of an Asian Entrepôt* (Singapore, 2009), 30–38.

sub-continent; that is especially true when considering the fundamental differences between a massive land-based colony like India and the more sea-oriented islands and ports of the region. For that reason, the decision has been made here to decentre India in the analysis and instead foreground a trans-colonial cultural space set apart from the subcontinent. Of course, that does not mean that India will not have a role to play in the argument: as the most populous colonial society in the region, it was naturally India where many of the travellers and authors considered here were based; moreover, Calcutta was not only the capital of British India but also the centre of British colonial publishing, and as such its cultural influence will be acknowledged and considered below where appropriate.

The timeframe of the analysis is set at 1840-1875; these dates do not represent any singular, individual events, but have rather been chosen as rough markers for a range of developments both cultural, on the level of print culture, and concrete, referring to specific changes in the forms and practices of colonisation. On a general level, the latter date closely corresponds to where Peter Boomgaard places the end of the "early modern" period in Southeast Asia, on technological and socio-political grounds.[7] Along similar lines, the framing here is designed to broadly capture a moment of change in Anglo-Dutch imperialism in the region, a decisive shift toward a new kind of colonisation with expanding bureaucracies and increasing focus on territorial domination. Although conventional periodisation often places the starting point of this aggressive "new" or "high imperialism" later in the nineteenth century, with reference to events such as the Berlin Conference (1884-5) and the so-called scramble for Africa, it has long been suggested by historians working on the Indian Ocean region that its commencement should more appropriately be dated back to the middle of the century.[8] Without getting too involved in this debate about (mostly British) imperialism on a global level, it is enough here to align with C.A. Bayly in noting that, specifically for South and Southeast Asia, the crucial moment in colonial expansion came earlier, reaching a peak around 1830.[9] The establishment of Singapore in 1819 and its rapid expansion to become a major commercial hub is one big part of that story, while the period was also marked by a series of wars that significantly bolstered the European position in the region. Most infamously, in the First Opium War of 1839-1842 the British struck a decisive blow against the traditional hegemon China, while more importantly for the argument here, the Kandyan Wars brought all of Ceylon under British rule by 1818, and the

[7] Peter Boomgaard, *Southeast Asia: An Environmental History*, ed. Mark R. Stoll (Santa Barbara, 2006), 111.
[8] For an early and influential statement of that position, see John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, 'The Imperialism of Free Trade', *The Economic History Review*, 6 (1953), 1–15.
[9] C.A. Bayly, 'The First Age of Global Imperialism, c. 1760–1830', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 26 (1998), 28–29.

agreements concluding the Java War of 1825-1830 established Dutch dominion over that island, reducing the courts of Surakarta and Yogyakarta to vassalage.[10]

Military victories were accompanied by significant structural and economic changes: 1830 saw the introduction by the Dutch of the so-called cultivation system (*cultuurstelsel*) on Java, a system of export agriculture driven by forced labour that has been referred to as the beginning of "the truly colonial period of Javanese history"; while from the 1830s onward, Ceylon made significant steps towards establishing a plantation economy driven by freshly arrived settlers from Europe.[11] Another set of changes were administrative, with power increasingly centralised and bureaucratised: by the 1840s, power in the British possessions of the region was progressively centralised in the hands of the Governor-General of India, and the Government of India Act of 1858 finally side-lined the East India Company completely in favour of a new centralised administration.[12] As for the Straits Settlements, they passed in 1867 from the remit of the governor-general of India and under direct rule by the Colonial Office in Britain, a move justified at the time by the rapid advances in telegraph communications, which were thought to make an additional, regional administrative layer unnecessary.[13] In the Dutch East Indies, a professionalised, European civil service took over after the establishment in 1842 of the Royal Academy in Delft, set up to educate a specialised corps of colonial administrators.[14]

This general Europeanisation of administrative control also had a legislative aspect: for example, an act in 1852 established English law Ceylon in various fields including maritime matters, while essentially replacing the laws of the recently annexed Kandyan Kingdom in favour of those of the British-controlled maritime provinces.[15] There was also a concerted effort to consolidate territorial possessions: the colonial powers were increasingly focused on drawing and policing their borders, especially in maritime Southeast Asia between the British and the Dutch; and in 1873 the Dutch

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[10] V. J. H. Houben, *Kraton and Kumpeni: Surakarta and Yogyakarta, 1830-1870* (Leiden, 1994), 69–71.
[11] Merle Calvin Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia Since C. 1300* (Stanford, 1993), 144.
[12] Ranbir Vohra, *The Making of India: A Political History* (Armonk, NY, 2013), 65–75; Anthony Webster, *The Twilight of the East India Company: The Evolution of Anglo-Asian Commerce and Politics, 1790-1860* (Woodbridge, 2013), 146–7.
[13] 'Correspondence relative to the contemplated transfer of the Straits Settlements from the Government of India to the Colonial Office' in The National Archives, London (from now on NA London), Colonial Office Records, Confidential Print Eastern, CO 882/2/1.
[14] Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison, 1983), 118.
[15] Ceylon Act nr. 5 1852, NA London, Colonial Office Records, CO 56/6.

invaded the sultanate of Aceh, the last significant independent political entity in their sphere.[16] The cumulative effect of all these developments was to significantly increase the European presence in the region, in terms of numbers of people, area covered and influence wielded, while also creating increasingly direct cultural and political links between the European metropoles and their respective colonies. Those links naturally worked both ways and the colonisers, especially those enriched by the plantation economy, sought with renewed vigour to engage with and participate in metropolitan culture.[17] This thesis will examine in depth both how these changes were reflected in colonial travel writing, and how that genre worked to reinforce the values and aspirations of the new imperialism of the time.

While there is no clear marker for the back end of this period, for pragmatic reasons the limit is here set at roughly 1875 so as to allow an in-depth analysis of this crucial moment of colonial proto-tourism, based on a close reading of the sources which would not be possible for a significantly longer period. These few decades are of special interest as the opening of a new era of colonial travel in the region, as reflected in published accounts: beginning in the 1840s with a slew of British publications on Ceylon, and expanding over the years to cover more and more of Southeast Asia, with also more and more Dutch works appearing from the 1860s on. Moreover, stretching the period into the early 1870s allows us to capture one notable change toward the end of the period, that being the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, an event that significantly cut travel times and greatly facilitated movement between Europe and Asia, removing the burdensome overland leg of the journey across Egypt. In fact, it is precisely with a reference to the Suez Canal that John Thomson begins his travel book, quoted in the beginning of this chapter, admitting that its opening had opened up not only Ceylon but all of Asia to the scope of casual leisurely travel, and drawing a conclusion diametrically opposite to that made by De Butts some decades earlier: "I must therefore invite my reader to accompany me still further eastward, to the Malayan Islands and the mainland of Indo-China … before I can hope to introduce him to people or places with which he may still be unfamiliar."[18] From there on, global tourism was already transforming into an increasingly institutionalised and

[16] Thongchai Winichakul and Eric Tagliacozzo, 'Gradations of Colonialism in Southeast Asia's "In-Between" Places', in Norman G. Owen (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian History* (London, 2014), 41; see also Eric Tagliacozzo, 'The Lit Archipelago: Coast Lighting and the Imperial Optic in Insular Southeast Asia, 1860-1910', *Technology and Culture*, 46 (2005), 306–28.
[17] Robert Van Niel, *Java under the Cultivation System: Collected Writings* (Leiden, 1992), 146.
[18] Thomson, *Straits of Malacca*, 2.

professionalised phenomenon, a process that accelerated in the latter decades of the century with travel agents and colonial tourist bureaus set up to respond to the demands of the market.

The following body of the thesis will be divided into two parts. The first part will start with a brief historiographical overview of the state of the art on travel and empire, including a working definition of the colonial proto-tourism discussed here, and then develop the main research themes of the thesis based on a critical reading of the existing literature. Chapter two will define the parameters of the genre of popular colonial travel writing that is at the centre of the analysis here, and contextualise it culturally both through providing information on the character of the writers that constituted it, as well as on its place in the wider print culture of the mid-nineteenth century. This is followed, in chapter three, by a discussion of several key stylistic aspects of the genre as well as of the conventions it followed, in terms of how the books conceptualised time and space through travel, how they made use of illustrations, and how they related to pre-existing colonial literature and made use of it as a source. Building on that foundation, the three chapters of part two of this thesis will then delve into a detailed, close reading of the actual content of these books. To that end, chapters four, five and six are defined thematically, and will discuss: representations of the tropical landscape and the natural environment of the colonies (four); colonial and indigenous architecture and its role in inscribing meanings into the milieus of empire (five); and finally, the ways in which people, both as individuals and as larger – national, ethnic, gendered – groups were incorporated into and described in these books, and how encounters were depicted to suggest a specific ideal of colonial sociability. Throughout these chapters, a close reading of the sources will be compared and contrasted with a more contextualised look, based on secondary literature, at how the colonial realities of the region were developing over the time period under consideration: from that double exposure, a better understanding will emerge of the parallel double movement of colonisation on the ground and representation in imperial popular culture that was such a unique characteristic of mid-nineteenth-century imperialism.

Part I. Colonial travel books as objects in time and space

Chapter 1

Travel and empire in history and historiography

1.1. A historiographical overview

Following the premise introduced above, one of the main contributions of this thesis to the existing literature is to be found in its foregrounding of leisurely, popular imperial travel writing, which has so far been under-researched by historians. To that end, the thesis will examine and probe the intersection of two largely separate bodies of work: on the one hand, the cultural history of European travel and travel writing in general and tourism specifically; and on the other, the colonial history of South and Southeast Asia. Colonial travel writing in itself is a well-researched topic, yet the focus so far has been overwhelmingly on scientific travel writing and issues of knowledge production, neglecting the kind of leisurely travel that is examined here. As Eric G.E. Zuelow points out in his recent state-of-the-field *History of Modern Tourism*: "[i]t is somewhat surprising that, despite separate and growing literatures on tourism and empire, historians have yet to systematically explore connections between the two" while similar concerns have also lately been voiced by other experts of the field.[19] Thus one of the great advantages of using the phenomenon of tourism as a lens into colonial travel is its ability to bring colonial and metropolitan culture into a single framework,

[19] Eric G.E. Zuelow, *A History of Modern Tourism* (London, 2016), 95–96; Colette Zytnicki and Habib Kazdaghli (eds.), *Le Tourisme Dans l'empire Français: Politiques, Pratiques et Imaginaires (XIXe-XXe Siècles): Un Outil de La Domination Coloniale?* (Saint-Denis, 2009); Shelley Baranowski et al., 'Tourism and Empire', *Journal of Tourism History*, 7 (2015), 100–30.

eliminating artificial divisions between home and overseas. As such the project at hand fits in closely with the so-called "new imperial history" with its focus on the cultural aspects of empire and the various influences flowing in both directions between empire and metropole.[20]

A further contribution of this thesis is to be found in its transnational and trans-imperial framing of Dutch and British colonial societies and imperial cultures. Such a framing is relatively novel: unfortunately, even with the successes of global history in recent times, imperial historiographies remain closely tied up with national frameworks, including in Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean.[21] As Simon J. Potter and Jonathan Saha have recently suggested about the British historiography: "Imperial historians have paid much less attention to the connections that traversed the geographical frontiers and borders of the British Empire. They have not explored links *between* empires as thoroughly as those *within* empires" – a blind spot in the historiography that this thesis is designed to address.[22] The region selected for study here is perfectly suited for such an approach, being comprised of smaller colonies ruled by competing powers rather than of a monolithic entity like British India. Moreover, the thesis will also address the relative lack of available literature on empire and travel in Southeast Asia, which has long been overshadowed as an object of study by its more prominent neighbours, China and – especially – India.[23]

The history of tourism itself, in the European and Anglo-American spheres, has been relatively well studied. The 1990s saw an emergence of scholarship on the topic, notably in the

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[20] Tony Ballantyne, 'The Changing Shape of the Modern British Empire and Its Historiography', *The Historical Journal*, 53 (2010), 451; a prominent example of the trend is Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Colony and Metropole in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago, 2002).

[21] For a thorough discussion on recent trends in global and transnational history, see C. A. Bayly et al., '*AHR* Conversation: On Transnational History', *The American Historical Review*, 111 (2006), 1441–64; and Gareth Curless et al., 'Editors' Introduction: Networks in Imperial History', *Journal of World History*, 26 (2015), 705–32; a notable example of a global history approach to Southeast Asia is Victor Lieberman, 'Local Integration and Eurasian Analogies: Structuring Southeast Asian History, c. 1350-c. 1830', *Modern Asian Studies*, 27 (1993), 475–572; also Andrew J. Abalahin, '"Sino-Pacifica": Conceptualizing Greater Southeast Asia as a Sub-Arena of World History', *Journal of World History*, 22 (2011), 659–91; Chee-Kien Lai, 'Beyond Colonial and National Frameworks', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 63 (2010), 74–5.

[22] Simon J. Potter and Jonathan Saha, 'Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories of Empire', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, 16 (2015).

[23] For example, Sachidananda Mohanty (ed.), *Travel Writing and the Empire* (New Delhi, 2003); Pramod K. Nayar, 'Marvelous Excesses: English Travel Writing and India, 1608–1727', *Journal of British Studies*, 44 (2005); Nigel Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770-1840: 'From an Antique Land'* (Oxford, 2002); Nicholas J. Clifford, Nicholas Rowland Clifford, and Nick Clifford, *'A Truthful Impression of the Country': British and American Travel Writing in China, 1880-1949* (Ann Arbor, 2001); Douglas Kerr and Julia Kuehn, *A Century of Travels in China: Critical Essays on Travel Writing from the 1840s to the 1940s* (Hong Kong, 2007); even volumes that include Southeast Asia tend to focus on South or East Asia, as for example Steve Clark and Paul Smethurst, *Asian Crossings: Travel Writing on China, Japan and Southeast Asia* (Hong Kong, 2008).

influential sociological works by John Urry and Dean MacCannel.[24] Yet these works and others in their wake betray their origin in the social sciences through an excessive focus on the concerns of today and a thin understanding of the historical roots and various changing shapes of the phenomenon, and is therefore of limited use for a historian. The existing historical literature has also exhibited a notable nation-centred and Anglo-centric bias, as noted by Eric Zuelow, to which the global and trans-imperial focus here seeks to add a corrective.[25] The best available historical overviews of early tourism, John Buzard's *The Beaten Track* and Orvar Löfgren's *On Holiday,* by contrast, carefully situate its emergence in wider societal and cultural developments, though outside of an imperial context.[26] The consensus in the literature is that tourism emerged in Europe and Northern America at some point in the early nineteenth century, with a notable upturn from about 1815 onward as the political situation on the continent stabilised after the turmoil of the Napoleonic wars; the word itself, in English, dates from the late eighteenth century.[27]

Early tourism is generally seen as having developed out of the Grand Tour of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while being distinguished from the latter by several characteristics.[28] For a simplified account, these may be divided into three categories: technological, cultural and demographic. Firstly, the emergence of steam technology saw an attendant increase in the comfort and regularity of travel. Steamboats provided the conduits to some of the most important early tourist destinations. The first lines from Britain and up the Seine were opened in 1816, and 1824 saw an introduction of a regular service up the Rhine and to the popular German spa resorts.[29] These were soon followed by the introduction, in 1825 in Britain, of the railways, which were soon to become symbolic of nineteenth-century tourism as they were harnessed by the famous travel agency

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[24] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* (London, 2002); Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (Berkeley, 1999).

[25] Eric G. E. Zuelow, 'The Necessity of Touring Beyond the Nation: An Introduction', in Eric G.E. Zuelow (ed.), *Touring Beyond the Nation: A Transnational Approach to European Tourism History* (Farnham, 2011), 1–7.

[26] James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918* (Oxford, 1993); Orvar Löfgren, *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing* (Berkeley, 1999); see also John Towner, *An Historical Geography of Recreation and Tourism in the Western World, 1540-1940* (Chichester, 1996); John K. Walton (ed.), *Histories of Tourism: Representation, Identity, and Conflict* (Clevedon, 2005); Hartmut Berghoff (ed.), *The Making of Modern Tourism: The Cultural History of the British Experience, 1600-2000* (Basingstoke, 2002).

[27] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 1, 19.

[28] The Grand Tour is often discussed as a primarily British phenomenon, but for a studies on Dutch travel in the period, see Gerrit Verhoeven, *Europe within Reach: Netherlandish Travellers on the Grand Tour and Beyond (1585-1750)* (Leiden, 2015); Gerrit Verhoeven, '"Een Divertissant Somertogje": Transport Innovations and the Rise of Short-Term Pleasure Trips in the Low Countries, 1600-1750', *Journal of Transport History*, 30 (2009).

[29] L. Girard, 'Transport' in H.J. Habakkuk and M. Postan (eds), *Cambridge Economic History of Europe, Vol VI: The Industrial Revolution and After, Part I* (Cambridge, 1965), 225.

Thomas Cook to the service of their package tours.[30] Culturally, tourism was driven by the contemporary ideas and ideals of Romanticism. The poet Lord Byron came to be seen as a kind of an ideal archetype of a modern traveller, both in the intense personal feeling of his writings and through his dramatic depictions of natural wilderness and atmospheric ruins as sights. Finally, demographically, nineteenth-century tourism was characterised by a decidedly middle-class profile of travellers, as opposed to the earlier Grand Tour which had mostly been undertaken by upper, landed classes and the university-educated, as has been statistically shown in work by John Towner and Michael Heafford.[31] As will be seen, similar changes – technological, cultural and demographic – were also taking place in the colonies of the Indian Ocean.

The very brief and simplified sketch of the characteristics of early tourism serves to provide some guidance toward identifying touristic travel discourses in the colonial context. For a study of this kind there are relatively few precedents. The history of early touristic travel in colonial contexts is woefully under-researched, yet certain exceptions exist. For the early period, one generally has to do with superficial overviews or passing mentions rather than in-depth studies. The journal *Indische Letteren*, focused on colonial literature, has published various items on Dutch writing from the Indian Ocean, but these short pieces are generally literary in scope and lacking in rigorous historical contextualisation.[32] For British India, Nigel Leask has briefly noted how travel writers sought to emulate tourist literature in Europe, and in particular the emergence of what he terms "military tourism" in the 1830s, referring to accounts of leisure tours undertaken by military men on leave – a genre that, as will be seen, was equally prominent on Ceylon and in Southeast Asia.[33] Elsewhere, David Arnold has similarly sketched the contours of a "routine" early Indian tourism from around 1850, facilitated by steam travel, a network of travellers' bungalows and the increased

[30] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 50–55.
[31] John Towner, 'The Grand Tour: A Key Phase in the History of Tourism', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 12 (1985), 311; Michael Heafford, 'Between Grand Tour and Tourism: British Travellers to Switzerland in a Period of Transition, 1814--1860', *Journal of Transport History*, 27 (2006), 44.
[32] See for example Alexander Bakker, 'Van Paradijs Tot Plantage: Beeldvorming van Nederlands-Indië in Reisverslagen, 1816-1900', *Indische Letteren*, 13 (1998), 75–85; Olf Paalmstra, 'Indische Letteren En Het KITLV, 1851', *Indische Letteren*, 16 (2001), 106–14; Peter van Zonneveld, 'Een Indisch Paradijs, Een Java in Bescheidener Vorm: Ceylon in Reisverhalen Uit de Periode 1850-1900', *Indische Letteren*, 19 (2004), 35–45; Peter van Zonneveld, 'Romantiek in Sarong En Kabaja? Javanen in de Indische Almanakliteratuur', *Indische Letteren*, 24 (2009), 75–86; Gerard Termorshuizen, '"Daar Heb Je Waarachtig Wéér Een Indische Roman!" Indische Literatuur En Literaire Kritiek Tussen 1885 En 1898', *Indische Letteren*, 13 (1998), 139–47.
[33] Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770-1840*, 217–8.

accessibility of the inland regions brought about by administrative consolidation.[34] Relatedly, John MacKenzie has written on British guidebooks and the empire in the latter half of the century, notably including the first Murray handbook to India in 1858.[35] The further forward one goes in time the more literature one finds. Maurizio Peleggi has drawn attention to the spread of travel infrastructure and outlined the emergence of increasingly luxurious hotels in major colonial cities including Singapore beginning in the 1840s, although his primary focus is on the period after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.[36] Mark Carey has described the commodification of climate in Caribbean health tourism beginning in the 1850s, a process that had a close contemporary parallel in the spread of health resorts across maritime Southeast Asia, as will be seen.[37] Several works have also been written on early European tourism in Egypt and the Middle East where, as noted by F. Robert Hunter, tourism followed in the footsteps of European military and political control in the latter half of the century.[38] It is the purpose of this thesis to move beyond this variety of scattered observations and towards a deeper understanding of the spread of European tourist culture into colonial spheres, and in particular to investigate what the earliest forms of colonial tourism were in the specific context of the area formed by Java, Ceylon and the Straits Settlements. Following Hunter, the analysis here focuses on the period of administrative and spatial consolidation around the middle of the century as a prerequisite for modern, touristic travel.

A final gap in the literature that this thesis addresses is to be found in its attempt to encompass, in so far as possible, an entire genre of travel writing, as determined by geographical, chronological and cultural parameters. The existing literature on imperial travel writing, in most cases inspired by the seminal works of Edward Said and Mary-Louise Pratt, is certainly extensive and the popularity of the topic shows no signs of slowing down, this thesis included.[39] Yet, much of the

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[34] David Arnold, *The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze: India, Landscape, and Science, 1800-1856* (Seattle, 2006), 18–20, 34.

[35] John M. MacKenzie, 'Empire Travel Guides and the Imperial Mind-set from the Mid-Nineteenth to the Mid-Twentieth Centuries', in Martin Farr and Xavier Guégan (eds.), *The British Abroad since the Eighteenth Century. Volume 2, Experiencing Imperialism* (Basingstoke, 2013).

[36] M. Peleggi, 'The Social and Material Life of Colonial Hotels: Comfort Zones as Contact Zones in British Colombo and Singapore, ca. 1870-1930', *Journal of Social History*, 46 (2012), 124–53.

[37] Mark Carey, 'Inventing Caribbean Climates: How Science, Medicine, and Tourism Changed Tropical Weather from Deadly to Healthy', *Osiris*, 26 (2011), 129–41.

[38] F. Robert Hunter, 'Tourism and Empire: The Thomas Cook & Son Enterprise on the Nile, 1868-1914', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 40 (2004), 28; see also Ali Behdad, *Belated Travelers: Orientalism in the Age of Colonial Dissolution* (Durham N.C., 1994); Martin Anderson, 'The Development of British Tourism in Egypt, 1815 to 1850', *Journal of Tourism History*, 4 (2012), 259–79.

[39] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 2003); Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London ; New York, 1992); see also Mohanty, *Travel Writing and the Empire*; Julia Kuehn and Paul Smethurst (eds.),

scholarship has tended to exhibit – unlike the foundational works by Said and Pratt, it should be noted – a distinct preference for highly specific studies on individual authors or even just singular books.[40] Such an approach, though certainly allowing a more detailed analysis of the sources, has the unfortunate side effect of foregrounding the specificities of a single author's biography and circumstances at the cost of a nuanced understanding of the wider genre, and risks ignoring salient features of imperial culture and its conventions due to an excessive interest in a single work considered out of context. Another semi-scholarly genre whose popularity has exacerbated this problem are edited and annotated reprints of historical travel books, which are often put out to profit off people's interest in travel writing as a genre without however having enough space for a deeper, detailed discussion of the sources within their genre.[41] By contrast, the approach here specifically highlights the similarities across the genre, its shared vocabularies and imageries and the meanings suggested by the tropes of imperial popular culture.

1.2. Colonial proto-tourism in Java, Ceylon and the Straits Settlements

Building on the findings and insights of the works outlined above, this thesis makes an argument for the existence of a kind of colonial proto-tourism in Java, Ceylon and the Straits Settlements during the period under question. This, to be sure, did not represent a fully mature tourist industry in the modern sense, neither as measured by profits made nor by the headcount of travellers: for that kind of fully-fledged mass tourism one needs to look forward to events like the establishment of Thomas Cook's first India branch in Bombay in 1881, or even later to the setting up of an official tourist bureau in Batavia in 1908.[42] Instead, the proto-tourism investigated here is a socio-cultural phenomenon defined by the presence of various aspects and practices of contemporary European touristic travel, as identified by the literature outlined above, within the looser framework of colonial

Travel Writing, Form, and Empire: The Poetics and Politics of Mobility (New York, 2009); Robert Bickers, 'British Travel Writing From China in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 54 (2011), 781–9; Nayar, 'Marvelous Excesses', 213–38.

[40] For a recent example, see the contributions in Rick Honings and Peter van Zonneveld (eds.), *Een tint van het Indische Oosten: reizen in Insulinde 1800-1950* (Hilversum, 2015).

[41] Recent examples in Dutch include Jacob Haafner, *Exotische liefde*, ed. Thomas Rosenboom (Amsterdam, 2011); Anne Leusink and Wyke Sybesma (eds.), *Op reis met pen en penseel: Frans en Jan Hendrik Lebret als toerist naar Java, 1863* (Zutphen, 2017).

[42] Piers Brendon, *Thomas Cook 150 Years of Popular Tourism* (London, 1991), 203; Robert Cribb, 'International Tourism in Java, 1900-1930', *South East Asia Research*, 3 (1995), 195–8.

travel. These characteristic aspects can broadly be divided into three categories: intent, infrastructure, and practices, and will be briefly sketched here with reference to the later chapters where their significance will be discussed in greater detail.

To start with intent, perhaps the most important of these aspects has to do with the motivation of travel as embodied in the notion of tourism as travel for pleasure, or, in Rudy Koshar's terms, as "any practice arising from an individual's voluntary movement between relatively permanent 'settledness' and an extended moment of leisured displacement."[43] As such, colonial proto-tourism is here defined as a cultural corollary and integral feature of colonial settlement, a phenomenon made possible by the consolidation of colonial control that took place in the middle of the century. Accordingly, particular attention is given in this thesis to the ways in which travel within the region was conceptualised as a pleasurable activity separate from working life. Relatedly, this kind of travel as leisure, requiring as it did some moderate means and stable employment, had a notably middle-class character, as the overview of author backgrounds in chapter two will show: this is in line with the demographics of contemporary European tourism discussed above. Particular forms of colonial leisure that are prominent in the travel books analysed here include so-called "invalid travel," that is, travel on leave for convalescence; and hunting excursions, a popular pastime especially in Ceylon.

Secondly, the proto-tourism examined here made extensive use of the regularity and affordability of new travel infrastructure. Many of the travellers discussed below stayed at hotels, which – as noted by Peleggi – began to appear in the region's major cities around the middle of the century, and frequently described their experiences at length. These early hotels and their role in colonial travel will be discussed in chapter five. Likewise, steam shipping, in the form of regular mail steamers between major ports, greatly facilitated travel between the colonies of the region. The first P&O steamer arrived in Singapore in August 1845, and a regular service connected the city to Hong Kong on the one hand and Penang and Ceylon on the other.[44] This was immediately followed by the setting up of a monthly connection between Singapore and Batavia, run by the Dutch navy and carrying passengers as well as mail and cargo, providing a regular connection between the British and the Dutch possessions.[45] Without wishing to fall into the trap of technological determinism, it is

[43] Rudy Koshar, *German Travel Cultures* (New York, 2000), 8.
[44] David Armine Howarth, Stephen Howarth, and Stephen Rabson, *The Story of P & O: The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company* (London, 1995), 78.
[45] Joseph Norbert Frans Marie à Campo, *Engines of Empire: Steamshipping and State Formation in Colonial Indonesia* (Hilversum, 2002), 39–40.

apparent that the comfort and speed of steam travel favoured a touristic travel mindset, as also noted by Carey for the Caribbean, and changed the experience of moving through space as portrayed in accounts. Moreover, though most of the accounts examined here describe travel before extensive railway connections, many of the authors drew attention to the benefits of the various, recently introduced scheduled post-coach systems in the region, which in many ways presaged the comfort and regularity of train travel, as Robin Jarvis has argued for turn-of-the-century Britain.[46] This transformation in travellers' relationship with space will be discussed in chapter three.

Finally, the colonial proto-tourism of analysed here also shared several of the practices associated with contemporary European tourism. One notable example is the practice of sightseeing, as defining a feature of tourism in the nineteenth century as it is today and one that occupies a prominent place in a lot of the academic work on modern tourism.[47] Many of the texts analysed in this thesis describe sightseeing routines and suggested routes from one site to another. The effect such routines had on colonial culture and the representation of colonial societies will be analysed in chapters four and five. Some of the authors considered here self-consciously use the language of the tourist literature of the time, such as Charles Walter Kinloch in listing "the lions of Penang", "lion" being contemporary slang for a notable sight or attraction and a term frequently used in guidebooks like *Kidd's New Guide to the "Lions" of London* (1832).[48] Indeed, the rise of sightseeing as an organised activity is intimately connected to the emergence of the guidebook genre, championed by the publishers John Murray and Baedeker in the first half of the century, as authoritative lists of things worth seeing and doing.[49] The earliest guidebooks for South and Southeast Asia date from the 1850s, and will be briefly discussed in chapter two. Further practices characteristic of nineteenth-century tourism took the traveller away from cityscapes and into nature: these include vigorous and sportive activities such as hikes and mountaineering and visits to Alpine health resorts, as noted by Jill Steward.[50] Such pastimes, and especially the "medicalisation of leisure" discussed by Dane Kennedy,

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[46] Robin Jarvis, 'The Glory of Motion: De Quincey, Travel, and Romanticism', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 34 (2004), 76–7; a similar argument is made for Indian palanquins in Arnold, *The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze*, 20–1.
[47] Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 3; Zuelow, *A History of Modern Tourism*, 9.
[48] Charles Walter Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger: Or, Rambles in Java and the Straits. In 1852. By a Bengal Civilian* (London, 1853), 132; William Kidd, *Kidd's New Guide to the 'Lions' of London* (London, 1832).
[49] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 76.
[50] Jill Steward, '"On the Continong": Britons Abroad and the "Business of Travel", 1820–1914', in Martin Farr and Xavier Guégan (eds.), *The British Abroad Since the Eighteenth Century, Volume 1* (London, 2013), 84–5.

were quickly transposed into a colonial context and helped transform colonisers' relationship with the tropical environment, as will be discussed in chapter four.[51]

Importantly, the notion of colonial proto-tourism developed here is not an imposition of anachronistic terminology into the past; it is rather the case that the use of the qualifying "proto" is necessitated by the development of modern tourism into a monolithic industry in the time since. In fact, many nineteenth-century commentators routinely referred to travellers in the colonies of South and Southeast Asia as tourists. For example, James Campbell in his *Adventures, Excursions and Field-Sports in Ceylon* (1843), is happy to compare himself to other "modern travellers and tourists," while also warning a few pages later of the danger of having his favoured Ceylon overrun by "soulless tourists" in language not too far removed from the many recent think pieces on "overtourism".[52] Another contemporary author writing on Ceylon, Augustus de Butts, similarly commented in 1841 on locales on that island "most worthy of the notice of the tourist" or the routes taken by "most tourists."[53] And we have already noted in the introduction John Thomson's comment on Ceylon being already, by 1875, fully explored by "modern tourists."[54] This boom in colonial travel in the period was also noticed in administrative circles, as attested to by a semi-official letter from the governor-general of the Dutch East Indies to the minister of colonies in 1860, pointing out "the recently more and more observed desire to travel of foreigners of both Western and Eastern origin" and positing this as a reason to urgently reconsider existing travel regulations.[55] It was this request that apparently led to the relaxation of rules in 1861, mentioned in the introduction. That decision was justified in largely pragmatic terms at the time, the Council of State noting that earlier, stricter rules often went unobserved and that in any case Europeans travellers would inevitably demand the same rights that Dutch citizens had.[56] Travel across colonial boundaries was therefore increasingly seen as a normal and uncontroversial aspect of colonial policy.

Touristic travel in the colonies was also, from the very beginning, inextricably linked to its literary representation in the form of touristic travel writing, a genre whose popularity informed

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[51] Dane Keith Kennedy, *The Magic Mountains: Hill Stations and the British Raj* (Berkeley, 1996), 31.
[52] James Campbell, *Excursions, Adventures, and Field Sports in Ceylon; Its Commercial and Military Importance, and Numerous Advantages to the British Emigrant. Vol 1.* (London, 1843), 227, 245–6.
[53] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 161, 234.
[54] Thomson, *Straits of Malacca*, 1.
[55] Letter nr. 258 (13 October 1860) in 'Brieven van de gouverneur-generaal aan de minister van Koloniën' (1859-1861), NA Den Haag, Ministerie van Koloniën 1850-1900 (2.10.02), inv. nr. 6531.
[56] Correspondence relating to decision nr. 40 (27 October 1861) in 'Verbaal: wetten, Koninklijke besluiten, kabinetsbrieven, 26-31 October 1861, Kabinet des Konings (2.02.04), inv. nr. 1280.

authors' stylistic choices. Thus, for example, when the Dutch writer W.T. Gevers Deynoot described his 1864 travel book on the Dutch East Indies as "the impressions of a tourist written from memory," he was not merely excusing himself for any inaccuracies but also positioning his work within a prominent segment of the contemporary book market.[57] A few years earlier, in 1861, the Dutch journal *De Nederlandsche Spectator* had already discussed the phenomenon of "tourist-novelists" taking root on Java, referring to the kinds of works discussed here.[58] The normalisation of colonial travel, connected with the well-studied boom of print culture in the nineteenth century provided ample opportunities for aspiring litterateurs in the colonies. The point is explicitly made in an 1877 letter from the Ceylon author John Capper to the prominent Scottish publisher John Murray: Capper observes that as Ceylon was becoming "the resort of invalids and sportsmen," there was therefore an urgent need to publish "handbooks adapted to tourists, antiquarians and sportsmen" – such as, obviously, the volume he himself had compiled.[59] And while Murray seems to have passed on the offer, Capper did indeed find a London publisher for his *Old Ceylon*.[60] Unfortunately, such explicit evidence of the negotiations between author and publisher are in most cases impossible to find for the mostly forgotten authors dealt with here, but it is readily apparent that many made the same calculation with varying strategies and various degrees of success.[61]

1.3. Anxieties, science and race: research themes

Having briefly introduced, in the preceding pages, the literature on tourism and empire as well as the gaps that this thesis will address, while also providing an outline of the kind of colonial proto-tourism that will be examined in the following chapters. Travel and tourism, however, could never exist in a bubble, and as the discussion above has made clear, the emergence of touristic travel was intimately connected with a range of developments taking place in the colonial space around the same time.

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[57] W.T. Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen eener reis naar Nederlandsch Indië in 1862* ('s Gravenhage, 1864), frontmatter.
[58] 'Reisindrukken uit Java', *De Nederlandsche Spectator*, 4 January 1862, 4-5.
[59] Letter from John Capper to John Murray III, The National Library of Scotland, Archive of John Murray, publishers, MS.40194, folios 7-9.
[60] John Capper, *Old Ceylon: Sketches of Ceylon Life in the Olden Time* (London, 1878).
[61] For a case study of editor-author relations and the role of the publisher John Murray, see Charles W J Withers and Innes M Keighren, 'Travels into Print: Authoring, Editing and Narratives of Travel and Exploration, c.1815—c.1857', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 36 (2011), 560–73.

Travel or travel writing are not, then, the sole or even primary focus of the research undertaken here, but rather are employed as a lense through which a range of interconnected changes – in infrastructure, politics and culture – can be in interrogated. In this section, we turn our focus towards the specific issues and questions that will form the backbone of the analysis and the argumentation in the following chapters. To summarise, these can be briefly enumerated under the following three rubrics: anxieties of empire; the colonial sciences; and ideas about race. These concepts and themes, each of them well-discussed in recent decades by historians, will here be examined from the specific perspective afforded by travel writing, and will serve as starting points for the wider interrogation of imperial culture that follows. The discussion below will take up each of these phenomena in turn and, with reference to some of the most influential literature written on each, discuss the respective advantages that popular travel writing has as a primary source that can help us better understand these themes.

The anxieties of empire have been a recurring theme in much of the recent literature on empire, beginning with influential publications in the 1990s. Arguably the two foundational texts on the topic both came out in 1997: Ann-Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper's *Tensions of Empire*, which examined the unspoken fears of sexual contagion and the moral panics caused by the possibility of racial mixing in colonial societies; and Ranajit Guha's article 'Not at Home in Empire,' which delves into the white coloniser's "pervasive sense of being lost" in the colonies of the East.[62] Back then, Guha had occasion to criticise the tendency of the historiography to exclude and occlude anxiety in its telling of the story of empire, but that situation has been decisively reversed in the years since. From those beginnings, tightly focused on the social setting of the colonisers and the relations between coloniser and colonised that underpinned those societies, the concept has since been picked up and repurposed into a tool that helps to explain imperial attitudes towards a wide variety of topics, from the natural environment to colonial architecture, city planning, medical sciences and beyond.[63]

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[62] Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley, 1997); Ranajit Guha, 'Not at Home in Empire', *Critical Inquiry*, 23 (1997), 482–93.

[63] A full overview of the literature is impossible to give in the space available here but, for some examples, see James Beattie, *Empire and Environmental Anxiety : Health, Science, Art and Conservation in South Asia and Australasia, 1800-1920* (New York, 2011); Harald Fischer-Tiné (ed.), *Anxieties, Fear and Panic in Colonial Settings: Empires on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (Cham, 2016); Nigel Leask, *British Romantic Writers and the East: Anxieties of Empire* (Cambridge, 2004); Anne K. Mellor, 'Romanticism, Gender and the Anxieties of Empire: An Introduction', *European Romantic Review*, 8 (1997), 148–54; Yumna Siddiqi, *Anxieties of Empire and the Fiction of Intrigue* (New York, 2007); Robert Peckham, *Empires of Panic: Epidemics and Colonial Anxieties* (Hong Kong, 2015); Norman Vance, 'Anxieties of Empire and the Moral Tradition: Rome and Britain', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 18 (2011), 246–61.

Anthony Pagden, in a recent comment, summarises this bewildering variety under two closely related master categories of sorts: "first … caused by uncertainty over sovereignty, the second by the fear that whatever occurred, in no matter how distant a corner of the globe, would inevitably have consequences for what took place in the metropolis."[64] One is a fear of the tenuousness of imperial power and control, always faced with a numerical disadvantage and far away from the comforts of home; the other, a worry that the very notion of home might become corrupted by the influences of imperial coexistence.

Another, contrasting angle for discussing the anxieties of empire can be found in Jeffrey A. Auerbach's recent *Imperial Boredom*, which argues that the experience of empire in the nineteenth century was primarily defined by a sense of boredom and disappointment, derived from more advanced and safer modes of transportation, increases in bureaucracy and a lack of adventure.[65] Though seemingly an interpretation diametrically opposed to those that emphasises anxieties, the two are in fact closely aligned: it is precisely the lack of excitement in a modern empire that made colonisers susceptible to both boredom and anxiety; the time saved by the increasing routinisation of colonial life turned into opportunities for fretting and frustration. The crucial question, then, is what did those colonisers seek to distract themselves with, to chase away the boredom, to alleviate the anxieties? There is a range of answers – cultural events, sports, social practices – some of which Auerbach discusses in his book and many of which will be examined in the following chapters: but one obvious method, a master strategy that brought all of these separate entertainments together in a single practice was travel, in its specifically nineteenth-century guise as tourism. Indeed, what other activity so fully captures both the boredom of modern life and the constant desire to escape that boredom, than tourism?

Popular travel writing therefore makes for an obvious and ideal opening to examine the notion of imperial anxieties and boredoms. As a genre, its focus is specifically on accounts of leisure, and on enjoyment and relaxation: in its imperial guise, it seeks to tell a story specifically of how one can be at ease in the colonies, and moreover to narrate that story in such a way that excludes potentially worrying or discomforting elements and emphasises pleasures and comfort. The approach here builds on Chloe Chard's definition of tourism as "a system for managing pleasure and keeping

[64] Anthony Pagden, 'Comment: Empire and Its Anxieties', *The American Historical Review*, 117 (2012), 141.
[65] Jeffrey A. Auerbach, *Imperial Boredom Monotony and the British Empire* (Oxford, 2018).

danger and destabilisation at bay," transposing it onto a colonial context.[66] In understanding this regulating dynamic, the concept of leisure is of crucial importance. It is a topic that has long been studied by historians, beginning with the ground-breaking work of E.P. Thompson and his contemporaries in the 1960s.[67] Perhaps because of those roots, much of that literature has tended to focus on the Industrial Revolution and on the British working class. A fundamental premise of this line of work has often been that industrialisation brought about a regimentation of time where work and leisure alternated according to a set schedule, replacing, though not without contestation, the less defined life-rhythms of pre-industrial society.[68] Such Marxist-informed and class-centred premises have tended to lead scholars to focus on leisure as a relatively novel feature of modernisation in the nineteenth century, even if one that was an object of continuous negotiation between different class interests. That view has more recently been countered by cultural historians like Peter Burke, suggesting instead a more gradual "invention of leisure" over the early modern period that takes into account long-standing upper-class cultures and pastimes.[69]

It is only very recently that scholars have started to seriously examine the history of leisure in non-European or colonial contexts, and the existing literature on empire and leisure so far consists primarily of individual – especially African – case studies rather than grand theoretical arguments.[70] Yet the very rootedness of the Eurocentric historiography in the nineteenth century makes an extension in to the empires of the period only logical. Many of the central themes of the literature, when viewed from a new, global perspective, take on heightened significance and suggest intriguing parallels between categories of class and race, and between metropolitan and colonial societies. For example, Cunningham in his more recent work discusses how the idea of "rational recreation" was developed in Victorian Britain as a social control mechanism over the working

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[66] Chloe Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour: Travel Writing and Imaginative Geography, 1600-1830* (Manchester, 1999), 215.

[67] E. P. Thompson, 'Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism', *Past & Present*, (1967), 56–97; Sebastian De Grazia, *Of Time, Work, and Leisure* (Millwood, NY, 1973).

[68] Hugh Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, c.1780-c.1880* (London, 1980); see also John K. Walton and James Walvin, *Leisure in Britain, 1780-1939* (Manchester, 1983); Peter Bailey, *Popular Culture and Performance in the Victorian City* (Cambridge, 2003); a good overview of the literature until around 2000 is Peter Bailey, 'The Politics and Poetics of Modern British Leisure: A Late Twentieth-century Review', *Rethinking History*, 3 (1999), 131–75.

[69] Peter Burke, 'Viewpoint: The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe', *Past & Present*, 146 (1995), 136–50.

[70] Notable examples include: Tiyambe Zeleza and Cassandra Rachel Veney, *Leisure in Urban Africa* (Trenton, 2003); Phyllis Martin, *Leisure and Society in Colonial Brazzaville* (Cambridge, 2002); for sport specifically, see Younghan Cho and Charles Leary, *Modern Sports in Asia* (London, 2016); Bruce Murray and Goolam Vahed (eds.), *Empire & Cricket: The South African Experience 1884-1914* (Pretoria, 2009); Gerald R. Gems, *Sport and the American Occupation of the Philippines: Bats, Balls, and Bayonets* (Lanham, 2016).

classes, to direct their energies and free time into pastimes under middle-class control and more in line with middle-class values.[71] This element of control has also been discussed by James Bailey, who notes the increasing encroachment of state into leisure over the nineteenth century, from licensing and regulating pubs and music halls to legislating against gambling and encouraging the development of sea-side resorts.[72] In light of these contributions, leisure appears paradoxically not as freedom but the very opposite, a tightly controlled space of social interaction following the logic and rules of a class society, designed to eradicate or at least obscure the unsavoury or undesired aspects of working class culture, such as drinking.

It is readily apparent based on the analysis in the following chapters that leisure was designed to fulfil much the same role in nineteenth-century colonial societies: to fill in the empty time, the not-work of colonial officials, settlers and other newcomers with a programme of middle-class coded pastimes such as theatre plays and concerts, races and cricket, balls, social calls and evening promenades, each of which required a specific set of institutional, architectural and cultural supporting frameworks. And of course travel, the kind of colonial proto-tourism that is inscribed on the pages of the texts analysed here. The following chapters will show that popular imperial travel writing was, to a significant degree, designed to counteract the very anxieties raised by Stoler, Cooper and Guha and the scholars who have built on their work; but also, that those anxieties – of moral degeneration and social contagion – were not all that different from the ones felt in metropolitan societies in the face of the growing working classes of industrial Europe. In this view, the travel aspect of the books is crucial: being as they are accounts of movement, their authors had a ready-made excuse not to dwell on any unpleasant setting or circumstance, having instead always the opportunity to simply move forward with the story, move on to the next stage of the journey, and to pick out the next exciting or satisfying detail to wash away any lingering bad taste. This effect was also reinforced by the writers' dependence on local sources for information on the places they travelled through. In practice this usually meant either colonial officials or compatriots who had settled there, seeing as travellers would not have the time to make extensive contacts and would rarely have the necessary language skills to communicate widely with the local indigenous populations. As such, they were unlikely to absorb views that were overly critical of the locally specific colonial situation or that strayed too far from the officially accepted version of events. It can be seen, then that the genre was

[71] Hugh Cunningham, *Time, Work and Leisure: Life Changes in England Since 1700* (Manchester, 2014), 86.
[72] Bailey, 'The Politics and Poetics of Modern British Leisure', 143–5.

an ideal vessel for content to counteract and dispel concerns that were widespread in other fields of imperial culture, a discursive role that will be interrogated especially in the second part of this thesis.

The theme of anxieties is closely linked with that of knowledge production in the colonial sciences, which, as already noted in the previous section, has been heavily emphasised in the existing literature on empire and travel writing. After all, the construction of scientific discourses was one way to dispel concerns about what was unknown or foreign; claims to scholarly credentials helped to allay fears of loss of authority. This thesis, though focused on a fundamentally un-scientific corpus of sources, will build on the literature that has looked at those questions and seek to link its findings to the phenomenon of leisurely travel in the colonies and its relation with science. In particular, we will examine how the scientifically framed colonial discourse, and the canon of colonial science, fed into the colonial tourists' worldview and was incorporated as part of their travel experience. It should be noted that this implied dualism of science and leisure is by no means absolute, as many practitioners of colonial science, especially in the earlier parts of the nineteenth century, were amateurs rather than professionals: focusing on travel writing it is, however, possible to make a broad division between accounts that focus primarily on travel as a form of leisure and enjoyment on the one hand, and those that take a more scientific-minded approach and explicitly address contemporary scientific debates. Of specific interest, then, is how colonial science is implicitly present in the former type of writings, as an example of how ideas about non-European spaces and peoples moved from abstract scholarly discourse and into the everyday mind-set of white colonial society.

The existing bias in the historiography on specifically scientific forms of colonial travel writing can, to a large extent, be traced to Michel Foucault's influential work on knowledge and power, and also in some degree to the work of Edward Said on Orientalist scholarship in nineteenth-century Europe. Although *Orientalism* (1978) focused specifically on European representations of the Middle East, its influence has been felt throughout colonial history and especially in the field of post-colonial studies.[73] Numerous scholars have built on Said's foundation in the decades since and also broadened the range of topics. On travel writing specifically, important works have been published by Steve Clark and, on the Dutch case, by Susan Legêne.[74] Overall, probably the most prominent contribution has been Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* (1992). In many ways, Pratt's

[73] Said, *Orientalism*.

[74] S. H. Clark (ed.), *Travel Writing and Empire: Postcolonial Theory in Transit* (London, 1999); Susan Legêne, *De bagage van Blomhoff en van Breugel: Japan, Java, Tripoli en Suriname in de negentiende-eeuwse Nederlandse cultuur van het imperialisme* (Amsterdam, 1998).

work provides a model for this project: her concept of the "contact zone" is especially important, foregrounding the spatiality of the relations between European and non-European and understanding them "not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power."[75] It is exactly this spatiality that this thesis seeks to evoke by focusing on specific locations of travel and the emergence of new travel practices within those spaces that shift relations between coloniser and colonised. Unfortunately, Pratt's analysis remains at a very general level, charting broad expanses in both time and space – from the Americas to Africa, from 1750 to 1850 and beyond. Likewise her questions – "[h]ow has travel and exploration writing produced 'the rest of the world' for European readerships at particular points in Europe's expansionist history?" remain at the level of general imperial discourse.[76] A similar lack of specificity is apparent in Victor Savage's exhaustive and otherwise useful study of Western representations of Southeast Asia across the centuries.[77] By contrast, this project will attempt to situate a similar analysis of travel writing in a carefully delineated time and space, so as to provide a deeper understanding of how travel writing connected to changes in colonial society.

The legacy of Said and post-colonial studies more generally has been far from uncontroversial, yet the issues raised have stuck in the historiography, and thus there exists also a large body of literature on travel writing and colonial science from Enlightenment to the mid-nineteenth century that takes a rather different approach. Many of these works take a more historically contextualised and grounded approach in opposition to the literary analysis favoured by the post-colonial group. Explorers and scientists have remained at the foreground in notable works such as *Exploring the Pacific* or *L'invention scientifique de la Méditerranée*.[78] The classic work on the intertwined relationship between British colonialism and science is Bernard S. Cohn's *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, which examines the ways seemingly neutral, scientific endeavours helped to legitimise and reinforce the structures colonial rule.[79] More recently, Felix Driver has focused on nineteenth-century explorers and geographers and their complicity in imperial projects, while Tim Fulford et al. have looked at how British exploration and colonial science fed into a

[75] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 7.
[76] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 5.
[77] Victor R. Savage, *Western Impressions of Nature and Landscape in Southeast Asia* (Singapore, 1984).
[78] Martha Vail, John Stewart Bowman, and Maurice Isserman, *Exploring the Pacific* (New York, 2005); Marie-Noëlle Bourguet (ed.), *L'invention Scientifique de La Méditerranée: Egypte, Morée, Algérie* (Paris, 1998).
[79] Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton, N.J, 1996).

metropolitan culture of Romanticism.[80] In the Dutch case, recent works by Andreas Weber and Peter Boomgaard have focused either on notable individual scientists or particular sub-fields of colonial science.[81] Yet while all these works and others take a variety of approaches to scientific travel writing, they rarely connect it back to changing forms of colonial travel writing in the middle of the nineteenth century. One notable exception is David Arnold's *The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze*, which analyses the influence of colonial science on changing attitudes of European travellers toward the natural environment of India in the first half of the nineteenth century. There seems to exist something of a historiographical blind spot, as if historians are not quite sure what they should do with the kind of colonial tourism that emerged at that time. To an extent, this mirrors the anxieties of contemporary colonial scientists themselves: Felix Driver has noted how the Royal Geographical Society, in publishing their *Hints to Travellers*, a set of instructions to aspiring scientist-travellers, were gripped by a fear that work might be confused with the popular – and by implication frivolous – tourist guides and handbooks of the time.[82] Tourism and serious, purposeful travel are antithetical – so goes the cliché that was well established already early in the nineteenth century, as pointed out by James Buzard.

Harry Liebersohn, who has written an excellent work of European travellers in the Pacific, chose to bring his story to an end "sometime in the 1830s or 1840s", and his justification for that periodisation bears quoting at length:

> "By the mid-nineteenth century the naturalist's passion for collecting natural species, the gentleman's culture of robust hiking, and the ambition of journeying to ever farther 'unknown' tropical, mountain, and extreme zones of the global had percolated down to a broad middle class that enjoyed imitating the high-status activities once reserved for a tiny elite. 'Travel' became a hobby for members of upwardly mobile middle classes, just as did once-aristocratic activities such as hunting and fencing."[83]

This is precisely the shift to colonial tourism that is the focus of this thesis, and that historians so far have proven very reluctant to tackle. Existing literature rarely tries to bridge this moment of transformation – choosing to stop instead at some point between the 1820s and 40s – or does so by shifting focus to areas where exploration went on for longer, like Driver does in writing primarily

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[80] Felix Driver, *Geography Militant: Cultures of Exploration and Empire* (Oxford, 2001); Felix Driver, 'Distance and Disturbance: Travel, Exploration and Knowledge in the Nineteenth Century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 14 (2004), 73–92; Tim Fulford, Debbie Lee, and Peter J. Kitson, *Literature, Science and Exploration in the Romantic Era: Bodies of Knowledge / Tim Fulford, Debbie Lee and Peter J. Kitson* (Cambridge, 2004).

[81] Andreas Weber, *Hybrid Ambitions: Science, Governance, and Empire in the Career of Caspar G. C. Reinwardt* (Leiden, 2012); Peter Boomgaard, *Empire and Science in the Making: Dutch Colonial Scholarship in Comparative Global Perspective, 1760-1830* (New York, 2013).

[82] Driver, *Geography Militant*, 61.

[83] Harry Liebersohn, *The Travelers' World: Europe to the Pacific* (Cambridge, MA, 2006), 12–13.

about Africa in the latter half of the century. Another strategy has been to move away from analyses of travel writing and travellers and focus instead on the institutionalisation of colonial science later in the century, such as in Alice Conklin's *In the Museum of Man*, which charts the professionalisation of French anthropology.[84] What is also notable about all these works is that the vast majority of them are written in a specific national framework, be it British, Dutch or French. A notable exception is the volume edited by Peter Boomgaard, *Empire and Science in the Making*, which explicitly seeks to put Dutch colonial science in a comparative perspective, primarily relative to the British. The two main contributions of this thesis to the historiography on colonial travel and science are thus as follows: to trace the changing landscape of colonial travel writing through the crucial period in the mid-nineteenth century that saw both a new culture of travel and a new phase in European colonisation of South and Southeast Asia; and to see how the established canon of colonial science produced by earlier, scientifically minded travellers fed into that new culture and was in turn normalised by its incorporation in everyday, middle-class travel; and to carry out this analysis in an explicitly transnational framework, looking at an Anglo-Dutch colonial space that was furthermore open to (white) travellers from various European countries.

One practical example of how to study the connections between colonial science and colonial tourism is by focusing on the construction and presentation of non-European cultural artefacts as "sights" and objects of curiosity, both in museums and various kinds of exhibits, and *in situ*, as ruins and temples. Such spaces can usefully be seen as interfaces between science and leisure. Literature on the topic certainly exists, but – again – has tended to focus excessively on the production and representation of knowledge rather than its consumption. A strand of related literature that has proved rather popular in recent times has focused on the representation of various colonies in the great exhibitions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Two recent representative examples are the volume *Britain, the Empire, and the World at the Great Exhibition of 1851* edited by Jeffrey Auerbach and Peter Hoffenberg, and Marieke Bloembergen's *Colonial Spectacles*, focusing on the British and the Dutch empire, respectively.[85] Yet, as these works focus primarily on

[84] Alice L. Conklin, *In the Museum of Man: Race, Anthropology, and Empire in France, 1850-1950* (Ithaca, 2013); Ellinoor Bergvelt, 'The Colonies in Dutch National Museums for Art and History (1800-1885)', in Michael Wintle and Hugh Dunthorne (eds.), *The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Britain and the Low Countries* (Leiden, 2012), 87–112; Ting Chang, *Travel, Collecting, and Museums of Asian Art in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Burlington, 2013).
[85] Jeffrey A. Auerbach and Peter H. Hoffenberg, *Britain, the Empire, and the World at the Great Exhibition of 1851* (Aldershot, 2008); Marieke Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles : The Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies at the World Exhibitions, 1880-1931* (Singapore, 2006); see also Thomas Prasch, '"A Strange Incongruity": The Imaginary India of

the representation of the colonies in the metropole, rather than the influence of metropolitan culture in the colonies, they are of only partial interest here. In a similar vein, in *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, Bernard S. Cohn wrote a classic study of British nineteenth-century archaeologists and their attempts to classify and interpret Indian artefacts and sculptures, and how some of these eventually found their way to museums in the colonial metropole. More interestingly, John M. MacKenzie has recently written a study on the history of museums in the various British colonies themselves, and although this work focuses primarily on the Dominions and provides only a cursory glance at the other Asian colonies, it still provides an up-to-date, useful model for some of the ambitions of this thesis.[86] Even closer to the interests of this thesis is Arnauld Le Brusq's recent examination of the history of French museums in colonial Indochina and their role in the construction of the colonies, although his focus is on a slightly later period given the different timeline of French colonialism in the Indian Ocean.[87] Yet even recent works such as these have relatively little to say about museums and ruins in the colonies as destinations and sights. On the other hand, Nigel Leask's *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing* is a fascinating study of depictions of ruins and antiquities in European travel writing from Egypt, India and Mexico in the period 1770-1840. Yet Leask writes in a completely different tradition, that of history of literature, and his work thus remains far removed from the relevant colonial historiography. This demonstrates a gap in the historiography that this thesis seeks to fill through a close reading of travel writing carefully situated in the context of contemporary colonialism.

Another avenue of research in this section of the thesis focuses on the intertextuality between leisurely and scientific travel writing. This relates to what David Arnold has described as an "epistemological reorientation" in British India around the middle of the nineteenth century, a colonial strategy to "use direct European observation to supplement or even displace the written texts (mainly in Sanskrit and Persian) and the high-caste intermediaries (particularly Brahmin pandits) that had informed and characterised the early Orientalist project."[88] This meant that the body of colonial science came to replace local informants and guides as the primary interpretative framework for travellers: in the specific framework of leisurely travel the interesting question is how that scientific

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the International Exhibitions', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 34 (2012), 477–91; Timothy Mitchell, 'Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order', in Nicholas B. Dirks (ed.), *Colonialism and Culture* (Ann Arbor, 1992), 289–318.

[86] John M. MacKenzie, *Museums and Empire: Natural History, Human Cultures and Colonial Identities* (Manchester, 2009).

[87] Arnauld Le Brusq, 'Les musées de l'Indochine dans le processus colonial', *Outre-mers*, 94 (2007), 97–110.

[88] Arnold, *The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze*, 31.

canon came to be represented in the materials and writings of a colonial tourist. Such a line of questioning can be pursued in a few different ways: by tracing references to and quotes from scientific authorities in travel books and pieces; by comparing descriptions of notable sites or topics of scientific research – such as temples or particular local customs – in leisurely travel writing to those found in earlier scientific publications; and, finally, by examining the various recommendations for supplementary reading that can be found in contemporary handbooks and often also in personal monographs – for example, the 1859 Murray's Handbook for India contains a two-page list of recommended literature "which may be perused by the traveller before starting", covering history, biographies and various miscellanea such as *Tiger Shooting in India*.[89] The aim of this type of analysis is to uncover the process of filtration through which complex scientific works entered mainstream consciousness: what kinds of sites proved interesting to both leisurely and scientific travellers; what kinds of scientific detail were excised for ease of understanding; and more challengingly, whether the "touristic" versions of colonial science showed significant ideological differences to the original. Unfortunately, models for this type of research are far fewer than those mentioned above, since any kind of analysis of colonial leisurely travel remains in its infancy.

Finally, colonial travel, understood as a set of practices within and attitudes toward the spaces travelled through, also contributed to the discourse around race in the colonies. The first half of the nineteenth century saw a change in racial norms in both the British and Dutch colonies of South and Southeast Asia. Some of this change was based on economics: as C.A. Bayly has noted on the Asian colonies of the British Empire, "… after about 1840, the harsher extraction of revenue or cash crops encouraged a dramatic levelling down of indigenous society, and a further "peasantization", or even proletarianization, of its populations."[90] A similar transformation of course occurred in the Dutch East Indies with the implementation of the cultivation system in the 1830s.[91] At the same time, the white colonial society was also changing from within. Jean Gelman Taylor has shown that the when the Netherlands reclaimed the East Indies in 1816 after the British interregnum of the Napoleonic Wars, the new corps of colonial officials represented a new type of coloniser: "they were all men born and educated in Holland … in their promotion there was no supporting or confirming

[89] Edward Backhouse Eastwick, *A Handbook for India* (1859), xxi–xxiii.
[90] C.A. Bayly, 'The British and indigenous peoples, 1760-1860: Power, Perception and Identity' in M. J. Daunton and Rick Halpern (eds.), *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples, 1600-1850* (Philadelphia, 1999), 30.
[91] Ulbe Bosma and R. Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies: A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920* (Singapore, 2008), 105.

voice from Batavia's leading families" and "like their British predecessors, the chief authorities were accompanied by wives who were themselves titled ladies".[92] This metropolitan contingent, supported by new laws that restricted access to officialdom to European-educated men, and the establishment in 1842 of the Royal Academy in Delft for the specific purpose of training said officialdom, came to dominate public culture over the old mixed-race Indo-Dutch clans that had been building a powerbase on Java for a long time, partly based on their local expertise and language skills.[93] This observation is also supported by Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, although they also stress the problems of implementation and the long period of transition that went with the reforms.[94] Valerie Anderson has recently summed up similar developments in British India, where "European-ness" came to be seen as a value and Eurasians were – sometimes legally, but especially culturally – marginalised over the first half of the nineteenth century.[95] Quite apart from the practical details, an undeniable cultural shift was taking place in the public performance of race. Dhurba Ghosh has made the point eloquently, comparing British India and the Dutch East Indies:

> "thereafter [i.e. from 1816], Dutch colonial elites and their Asian and mixed-race companions were expected to behave like Europeans in public although they maintained Asian habits at home. – – Like British India, in Dutch Indonesia, the emergence of a public social order in which the European comportment dominated over native habits paralleled the consolidation of the colonial state's power over its growing colony."[96]

The phenomenon of colonial tourism provides valuable material for understanding how this change in racial norms took place in practice. The works discussed above have largely focused on structural and legislative changes; the observations of colonial travellers, moving through colonial spaces at this moment of their transformation, provide an interesting counterpoint.

The practices of tourism were constitutive of this public culture of European-ness. Aline Demay makes the point for a later period in her study of tourism in French Indochina in the early twentieth century: "[c]reating resorts, establishing facilities to practice recreational activities in large cities helped recreate an environment of and lifestyle similar to that of the Metropole"; moreover, tourism "evoked the colony in a fun and entertaining way", helping to hide potential sources of

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[92] Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, 115.
[93] Heather Sutherland, 'Treacherous Translators and Improvident Paupers: Perception and Practice in Dutch Makassar, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 53 (2010), 331–42.
[94] Bosma and Raben, *Being 'Dutch' in the Indies*, 190–194.
[95] Valerie Anderson, *Race and Power in British India: Anglo-Indians, Class and Identity in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 2015), 59–60.
[96] Durba Ghosh, *Sex and the Family in Colonial India: The Making of Empire* (Cambridge, 2006), 41; see also Damon Ieremia Salesa, *Racial Crossings: Race, Intermarriage, and the Victorian British Empire* (Oxford, 2011).

conflict.[97] And while mid-nineteenth-century tourism was less institutionalised, more ad hoc in nature – more an imitation of European tourism than an established industry in the colonies – the basic argument remains the same. Tourism provided a way to experience the colonies as extensions of European space, for example in the hill stations of India where "officials and civilians on leave sought after a picturesque bungalow style and a complementary illusion of Europe and 'home' in the landscape of the Hills" and the "architecture – – reflected contemporary cottage and villa styles in British spa or seaside resorts, to which so many Anglo-Indians retired."[98] From the perspective of literary studies, Éadaoin Agnew has examined the letters of Lady Dufferin, resident in India since the 1860s, and how her depictions of travel constitute a "domestication of the spaces of colonial Anglo-India", transporting "the idea of an ordered English society, with its embedded cultural values and codes, to the furthest corners of empire".[99] Tourist discourse did not merely reflect, but also actively reinforced this Europeanisation of colonial spaces.

A related development is the "epistemological reorientation" described in the previous section: as indigenous go-betweens and guides lost out to guidebooks and the canon of colonial science, and as the European-ness of the travel experienced came to be prized as a value, the role of the locals in travel narratives and in the practices of travel also had to change. By way of hypothesis it may be suggested that indigenous peoples in the tourist discourse increasingly took on the role of performers, representatives of the local cultures as spectacle, rather than active participants in the experience of travel. For this part of the project there is unfortunately relatively little existing literature from the specific perspective of colonial tourism to draw on, and as such the close reading of the available primary sources will be modelled to an extent on the more general analyses of Edward Said and especially Mary Louise Pratt. Such an analysis will of course pay special attention to representations of race and indigenous cultures, but also focus on the question of agency: what kinds of roles do indigenous actors occupy in touristic travel writing?; in what kinds of situations are they depicted as taking initiative and having agency?; and how do the locations of travel establish or reinforce racial and/or cultural differentiations? Another layer of the analysis consists of examining how tourism is different from other contemporary modes of travel, for example by focusing on the

[97] Aline Demay, *Tourism and Colonization in Indochina (1898-1939)* (Newcastle, 2015), 5.
[98] Martin Meade, 'The Anglo-Indian Bungalow' in Catherine Weinberger-Thomas and Centre d'études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud, *L'Inde et l'imaginaire* (Paris, 1988), 149.
[99] Éadaoin Agnew, 'Relocating Domesticity: Letters from India by Lady Hariot Duferin' in Kuehn and Smethurst, *Travel Writing, Form, and Empire*, 96.

new kinds of sights and destinations touristic travellers preferred and how they shaped the discourse around race.

In order to supplement the small amount of available literature on nineteenth-century colonial tourism specifically, some of the recent work on tourism history, although focusing on other places and later periods, provides interesting models and raises valuable questions. One such example is Demay's study on twentieth-century Indochina, already mentioned above. Elsewhere, many historians have notably examined the role of tourism in the creation of national imaginaries and narratives of nationhood. Two representative recent studies by Patrick Young and Eric G.E. Zuelow have focused on Brittany in France and Ireland, respectively.[100] While the nationalist framework of these works is far removed from the colonial realities of mid-nineteenth-century South and Southeast Asia, both works have an interest in examining how "local" culture comes to be constructed and packaged into a neatly defined product from the outside, in this case from the national capitals in Paris and Dublin. This concern is especially prevalent in Young's work which specifically focuses on the tensions between capital and province, on how "the guidebook defined the terms of authentic encounter with the region" and "traditional costume and religious celebrations" were made into "markers of a preserved past and cultural originality" for a tourist audience.[101] Similar discourses of course emerged in colonial settings. Edin Hajdarpasic has briefly examined how the Habsburg administration actively endorsed tourism in Bosnia as a means to legitimise on the international stage their rule over the previously Ottoman territory, distracting attention from potential conflict by playing up the aesthetic orientalism of the area.[102] Similarly, David Atkinson has very briefly remarked on how the fascist state in Italy used colonial tourism as a means to popularise and legitimise empire.[103] These studies, while in many ways far removed from the focus of this thesis on nineteenth-century colonialism in Asia, provide nonetheless interesting models and points of comparison for ways to think about how tourism has been used by those in power to differentiate, create narratives about and represent those they rule over, and furthermore also to legitimate the fact of that rule.

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[100] Patrick Young, *Enacting Brittany : Tourism and Culture in Provincial France, 1871-1939* (Farnham, 2012); Eric G.E. Zuelow, *Making Ireland Irish : Tourism and National Identity since the Irish Civil War* (Syracuse, NY, 2009).
[101] Young, *Enacting Brittany*, 55–56.
[102] Edin Hajdarpasic, *Whose Bosnia? : Nationalism and Political Imagination in the Balkans, 1840-1914* (Ithaca, 2015), 189–192.
[103] David Atkinson, 'Constructing Italian African: Geography and Geopolitics' in Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Mia Fuller (eds.), *Italian Colonialism* (New York, 2005), 22.

The above discussion draws attention to an important duality in the very nature of modern tourism as a phenomenon: its nature both as a perceived vehicle of modernity, and its often overwhelming focus on the past and traditions. As shown by Buzard, tourism emerged out of a mixture of new technologies and demographic change, and the travel discourses it created were often borderline futurist (*avant la lettre*), such as Charles Dickens's depiction of train travel: "[s]omething snorts for me, something shrieks for me, something proclaims to everything else that it had better keep out of my way, – and away I go."[104] His less famous Dutch contemporary C.H. Clemens conveyed the same sense of progress: "[t]hrough gains in speed one wins time and space, and thereby the man of our century can see and enjoy more than in previous centuries."[105] At the same time, reflecting the cultural roots of tourism in Romanticism and perhaps also the legacy of the Grand Tour, tourists were from the very beginning interested in locales marked with history, or better yet, the authenticity of a place "*kept still*, out of history, suspended as if waiting for the visitor to make use of it".[106] This is of course on a fundamental level a dualism between the traveller and the local: the traveller represents modernity and is moved by the very forces of modernisation, while the local, the object of travel and traveller's gaze, stands in for an imagined past, exotic, romantic or otherwise. In the setting of the nineteenth-century colonies this division acquires a particular significance, as colonial society employed a tourist discourse both to normalise and legitimise the idea of the colonies as an extension of modern, European space, and to define local cultures and peoples as fundamentally different and un-modern.

1.4. Conclusion

The brief historiographical discussion in this chapter serves to prepare the way for the primary-source based analysis of the following chapters. In particular, by drawing attention to prominent strands of the European cultural history of tourism on the one hand, and the rapidly evolving fields of global history and new imperial history on the other, the stage has been set for the examination that follows in the next chapter, which will consider the main features of the genre of popular travel writing in the mid-nineteenth century, with careful attention to its two defining aspects: the colonial setting; and the

[104] Quoted in Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 44.
[105] C.H. Clemens, *Schetsen en verhalen uit de Rijn-provinciën* (Amsterdam, 1840), 96.
[106] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 179.

idea of popular travel; as well as at how these two sides interacted and became entangled in the act of travelling and writing. For an understanding of what that process looked like in practice, it is necessary to understand the nature of the books themselves and of the authors who wrote them, and to contextualise them in the wider ecosystem of the imperial and metropolitan cultures of the time. Having outlined the pertinent questions, it is now time to turn to the texts and actors wherefrom we shall seek the answers. The three research themes – the interplay of the anxieties and leisure of empire; colonial sciences and their relation with popular culture; and notions of race in travel writing – that were developed above will continue to weave in and out of the discussion throughout the five chapters that follow and will inform the analysis in each. Any attempt to separate the three would be self-defeating, as it will soon become apparent that each is inextricably linked to the others: it is precisely this capacity of popular travel writing to bring all of these rich themes together in a single corpus and show where they overlap and connect that makes it such an exciting genre of source material, and provides the discussion in the remaining chapters with its analytical edge.

Chapter 2

"Infinitely beneath the dignity of history": the culture of mid-nineteenth century popular colonial travel writing

2.1. The outlines of the genre

The significance of travel writing as a genre of nineteenth-century literary production has long been acknowledged. Charles Batten, for example, has argued that, by the end of the eighteenth century, it was probably the second-most widely read genre of literature, second only to novels and romances in popularity.[107] Furthermore, the two are in practice often difficult to keep strictly separate, as fictional accounts in the vein of Robinson Crusoe made use of elements of travel writing to appeal to the curiosity of the readership in all things different and far away.[108] Nor was that curiosity restricted to a specific segment of the reading public: the popular chapbook market made liberal use of romantic stories of the exotic, but equally, a highbrow publication like the *Edinburgh Review* has been calculated to have published as many as seventy-eight reviews of travel books in the period between 1802 and 1815 alone.[109] In short, travel writing was everywhere, and could hardly escape the attention of anyone with an inclination toward reading in their spare time. This chapter will sketch a broad overview of colonial travel writing in the period, firstly identifying some of the sub-genres (guide books, outside visitors' accounts, overtly scientific and political tracts) that are not of primary interest

[107] Charles Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction: Form and Convention in Eighteenth-Century Travel Literature* (Berkeley, 1978), 1.
[108] Nigel Leask, 'Romanticism and the Wider World: Poetry, Travel Literature and Empire', in J. Chandler (ed.), *The Cambridge History of English Romantic Literature* (Cambridge, 2009), 273.
[109] Massimiliano Demata, 'Prejudiced Knowledge: Travel Literature in the Edinburgh Review', in Massimiliano Demata and Duncan Wu (eds.), *British Romanticism and the Edinburgh Review* (Basingstoke, 2002), 87.

for the purposes of this thesis, and then moving on to describe the parameters of the genre of popular colonial travel writing that the analysis undertaken in the following chapters will be based on.

Before delving into subgenres and details, however, it is important to briefly consider what defines travel writing as a genre in the first place, beyond simply the act of describing mobility. As noted by Carl Thompson, travel writing is a category of literature marked by heterogeneity and hybridity, often blurring into adjacent genres such as autobiography, ethnography and fiction, to such an extent that any strict definitions are impracticable.[110] In discussing the term, Thompson makes a distinction between inclusive definitions like his, that allow for a breadth of genres, styles and structures, indeed even works that do not describe travel as such but rather an extended stay in a place; and exclusive ones such as that employed by Paul Fussell, which ascribe the title to only a very strictly delimited kind of text, one that takes the form of a prose narrative, recounts a personal experience of travel in a literary style, and is fact-based rather than fictional.[111] And while many of the works that will be analysed below broadly fit into that second, stricter definition, that is not the case for all of them and the general approach employed here is more inclusive, though explicitly fictional works have been excluded. So, for example, the works chosen here include both diary-form narratives of a single journey of some months; and autobiographical narratives recounting a series of trips and excursions over years; and even a few compendium or handbook-style descriptions of one or more colonies, where travel acts primarily as a structuring device in the presentation of content. This more inclusive definition has been adopted to better capture the variety of colonial travel, and its representation at the time. As Thompson notes, an exclusive approach will favour self-consciously literary works, when it is precisely the purpose of this thesis to uncover a wider, less elite-focused cross-section of who travelled and how. Paul Fussell's judgment that "just as tourism is not travel, the guidebook is not the travel book" suggests an elitist conception of "real" individualistic travel as opposed to mass tourism.[112] By contrast, this thesis argues that it is impossible to analyse nineteenth-century colonial travel in isolation from the tourism so popular in the metropole at the time, and that, even in the absence of a mature tourist industry, colonial travel and its literary representations did exhibit signs of the touristic.

It is also important to note that although the main focus of the analysis in this thesis is a carefully selected corpus of twenty-two published books – introduced in depth below – such

[110] Carl Thompson, *Travel Writing* (Abingdon, 2011), 9–12.
[111] Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 12–20.
[112] Paul Fussell, *The Norton Book of Travel* (New York, 1987), 15.

individual works only provide a very partial image of the colonial publishing landscape as a whole. As has been noted by Mark R. Frost, book publishing in British India during this period, though expanding, relied primarily on the patronage of wealthy sponsor rather than profit from sales, and books themselves remained a luxury item.[113] Often more important for the spread of texts was what Antoinette Burton and Isabel Hofmeyr have termed the "imperial commons", a varied sphere reaching from one end of the empire to the other, made out of periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets and chapbooks where texts were excerpted, reprinted and commented upon largely beyond the restrictions of copyright; many texts, or drafts or versions thereof, were also first printed in serialised form in these more ephemeral media before being collected into a single volume.[114] This is also very much the case with the works under consideration here, some of which saw earlier versions appear in the colonial periodical press, while many more saw passages extensively reprinted in the metropolitan press. Attention will be drawn to such linkages below as the books are introduced, and the third section of this chapter is devoted to a wider consideration of the position of popular travel writing within the varied and complicated world of the colonial periodical press. For purposes of focus and practicality, the majority of this thesis will focus on a close reading of the books themselves rather than trying to map out all their manifestations in imperial print culture. However, the various pre- and afterlives of these works are an important reminder that their texts and messages circulated among and influenced a readership that was far wider, both geographically and demographically, than the book-buying educated classes of Britain and the Netherlands were most of these volumes were printed.

On the broad canvas of the nineteenth-century travel literature, specifically *colonial* travel writing made up a significant sub-genre. Accounts of travel in the colonies was of course far from a new thing in this period, but the nineteenth century saw an undeniable increase in its volume. For example, Tim Hoppen, analysing what he calls the *Indisch reisliteratuur*, i.e. travel writing in Dutch from the so-called East Indies, has noted an "explosive increase", from a mere handful of publications in the latter half of the eighteenth century to roughly forty in the first half of the nineteenth (accounting for, according to his calculations, about eighty percent of all published literature on the East Indies.)[115] Naturally this remarkable increase was not only due to a change in literary tastes and fashions, but

[113] M. R. Frost, 'Pandora's Post Box: Empire and Information in British India, 1854-1914', *English Historical Review*, 131 (2016), 1063.
[114] Antoinette Burton and Isabel Hofmeyr, 'Introduction. The Spine of Empire? Books and the Making of an Imperial Commons', in Antoinette Burton and Isabel Hofmeyr (eds.), *Ten Books That Shaped the British Empire: Creating an Imperial Commons* (Durham, 2015), 1–28.
[115] Tim Hoppen, 'Negentiende-eeuwse Oostindische reisliteratuur: een verkenning', *Indische letteren*, 8 (1993), 63.

was made possible through a series of changes in the circumstances: primarily, an increase in the scope and intensity of colonisation in South and Southeast Asia and especially in such closely administered colonial spaces as Java, Ceylon and the Straits Settlements. This imperial expansion led to a greater number of Europeans residing in the region and, consequently, of European travellers journeying within the region, including across imperial boundaries. Unsurprisingly, that increase in colonial travel, outlined in the previous chapter, found expression also in published travel accounts. Notably, the period saw the emergence of the relatively new genre of anonymous or non-personal guide literature and "handbooks" in the region, while many other would-be authors chose the more conventional form of personal travel accounts published as individual monographs.

To begin with the handbooks and guides, it should be noted that these were far fewer than more conventional, personal travel accounts. Yet while the number of handbooks published for South and Southeast Asia in the period is very limited it is of crucial importance in showing how a key staple of European tourist culture was introduced and repurposed into a colonial setting at a relatively early date. Moreover, the genre has sadly thus far received next to no attention from historians. John M. MacKenzie's short piece on empire travel guides, noted in the previous chapter, is the major exception but even that piece provides little more than a brief overview and in facts ignores the earliest examples of the genre. The best-known examples of the genre are the two volumes of *A Handbook for India*, published by the company of John Murray in 1859, on the Madras and Bombay Presidencies respectively. Less known but equally relevant examples include *The Handbook of British India* (1854) by J.H. Stocqueller and *The Englishwoman in India* (1864), credited to "a lady resident" and promising "information for the use of ladies proceeding to, or residing in, the East Indies." A slightly different type of guidebook was published in the series of Bradshaw's railway guides, the *Overland Guide to India, Egypt and China* (1858), focusing primarily on very practical information on timetables and various means of transportation but also including more general guidance. Towards the end of the period under discussion there is also *The European in India; or, Anglo-Indian's Vade-Mecum* from 1871 by Edmund C.P. Hull. As is apparent from the titles, these works all focus on British India and will therefore be of little use here; yet some of them do also include sections on the surrounding areas, even on the Dutch East Indies. This (non-exhaustive) list of titles clearly shows that colonial travel guides on British South Asia were already an established genre, and a cornerstone of the tourist discourse, in the period under consideration. As for the Dutch, colonial handbooks are somewhat fewer in number, as is only to be expected considering the smaller size of the literary market, but also well-established as a genre by the 1860s: there is the anonymous *Het eiland Java* ('The island Java') of 1860; E.H. Boom's *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië* ('The Dutch East Indies') of

1864; and J.B.J. van Doren's *Noodzakelijk handbook voor hen, die naar Nederlandsch-Indië vertrekken* ('Essential handbook for those who depart for the Dutch Indies') from 1866.

Turning our focus into personal accounts, it is important to distinguish between insider and outsider voices. A rough division can be made between works by individuals who lived and worked in the colonies, often published after their return to Europe; and those written by professional travellers or various types of incidental visitors. Of the latter group, a prominent sub-genre were the around-the-world accounts that became very fashionable in the mid-nineteenth century after the advent of trans-oceanic steam shipping. Notable early examples include Ida Pfeiffer's *Eine Frauenfahrt um die Welt* (1850) and its sequel *Meine zweite Weltreise* (1856); George Simpson's *An Overland Journey Round the World* (1847); and Ludovic de Beauvoir's *Voyage autour de monde* (1869). Such works, though often also touching on South and Southeast Asia (although in a necessarily limited capacity), are generally so far removed from the concerns of colonial society and written for such a mainstream, metropolitan audience that their relevance for the particular questions raised in this thesis is limited. They do, however, provide an interesting outside perspective on the world of colonial travel, and illustrate well the international profile of travellers in colonial spaces during the period, and as such will be considered in a supplementary function where necessary.

More important for the questions here are the works written by members of colonial society themselves, as they reflect the day-to-day experience of the colonies more closely. Among these, we can make a provisional division between "serious," scholarly works on the one hand and lighter, entertaining accounts on the other. Among the first there are overtly political treatises, such as the preacher and activist W.R. van Hoëvell's famously anti-colonial *Reis over Java, Madura en Bali in het midden van 1847* from 1850 ('Trip across Java, Madura and Bali in the middle of 1847'); others are primarily scientific works, such as Franz Junghuhn's *Topografische und naturwissenschaftliche Reisen durch Java* (1845) ('Topographical and natural-scientific travels through Java') or the famous biologist and naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace's *The Malay Archipelago* (1869); a third common type were accounts of missionary work like James Selkirk's *Recollections of Ceylon* (1844), where proselytising and wider questions of civilisation and progress regularly take centre stage. As the focus of this thesis is specifically on the creation of a proto-touristic, Europeanised image of colonial life and society, these works will also mostly be set aside in the following chapters. In any case, unlike more leisurely travel books, many of these works have already been discussed exhaustively by historians in the context of the wider political and scientific debates that they participated in.

So, the travel writing that will form the primary source material for this thesis was not only *colonial* in its scope, but also *popular* in its tone. Indeed, in this thesis, "popular" will primarily

be used as an identifier of style – accessible and entertaining – and intended audience – non-specialised, general reading public – rather than as a measure of the books' success or size of readership. On the latter count, it is exceedingly difficult to provide hard numbers. As noted by Robin Jarvis for Britain, even establishing the size of the nineteenth-century reading public as a whole is a very complicated task, as estimates on levels of literacy vary.[116] For individual books, print runs provide only a crude measure, as the importance of commercial circulating libraries grew after 1780.[117] For the books considered here, the difficulties are multiplied, both because many of the appropriate sources have been lost – most of the books considered here were put out by relatively minor publishers whose archives no longer exist – and because of the difficulty, as noted above, of accounting, beyond the books themselves, for the readership of all the various snippets and excerpts published across the totality of the metropolitan and colonial periodical press. However, certain proxies, such as contemporary reviews and comments, can be used to gauge the extent of public interest in these works. We will return to this question, using a few examples from the corpus of twenty-two books, below after introducing the works themselves.

A specific focus on popular travel writing helps further to restrict the chronology of our analysis, bringing us to the middle decades of the century. Both contemporary observers and later literary scholars have pin-pointed the emergence of a new sort of travel writing from the colonies at that time. Nigel Leask has termed this a "Byronic" – referring to its roots in the culture of Romanticism – or "touristic" travel writing, emerging in British India around the 1830s.[118] And indeed the concept of tourism is of importance here. As was outlined in the previous chapter, middle-class tourism was a fashion very much on the rise in post-Napoleonic Europe, and it is this idea of travel, a conceptualisation based on leisure and accessibility that this new colonial writing seeks to capture, even if the reality of colonial travel was still in many cases rather different from contemporary European tourism. This new accent also had the consequence of shifting focus away from exploration and exoticism and toward more comfortable, everyday objects: for the Dutch case, Hoppen describes a more pragmatic tone, and a preference for scenes of European society and daily life, again from the (late) 1830s on.[119] More generally he notes a shift away from depicting travel as a professional activity and towards seeing it as a form of leisure, also because of the simple fact that,

[116] Robin Jarvis, *The Romantic Period: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature, 1789-1830* (Harlow, 2004), 57–8.
[117] Jarvis, *The Romantic Period*, 54–5.
[118] Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770-1840*, 219.
[119] Hoppen, 'Negentiende-eeuwse Oostindische reisliteratuur', 66–7.

for the reading audience, the Indies were becoming less and less a land of unknown mysteries and increasingly a well-described and studied Dutch possession.[120] Similar observations on the changing styles of the travel genre were made by contemporary observers in the mid-nineteenth century. Thus, for example, the Royal Geographical Society, in publishing the first edition of their *Hints for Travellers* (1854), a guide for aspiring amateur scientist-travellers, were afraid such a publication might be mistaken for the kind of frivolous tourist handbook that was popular at the time.[121] And the *Calcutta Review*, a leading opinion-former in British India, devoted a number of reviews and editorials to fighting the popular genre, "a class of literature" which it blamed for being "written and printed in hot haste" and riddled with mistakes both typographical and material.[122] Indeed, as the historian James Buzard has noted, the moniker of tourism, while describing certain material conditions of travel, has also, from its beginnings in the late eighteenth century, been a term of disparagement and a concept of contested cultural value.[123]

Having thus broadly sketched the cultural and historical context of the genre of popular colonial travel writing, it is time to turn toward the specific books that form the core of the analysis in this thesis. As has already been noted, these are by both Dutch and British authors and describe the spaces of Dutch colonial Java, British Singapore and the Straits Settlements, and British Ceylon. That the three locations can reasonably be thus placed side by side as elements of the same discourse, or as chapters of a single story of travel and colonialism in this period, is neatly evinced by a single quote from John Cameron's *Our Tropical Possessions in Malayan India* (1865): "I have seen both Ceylon and Java, and admired in no grudging measure their many charms; but for calm placid loveliness, I should place Singapore high above them both."[124] In that passage, the author explicitly considers Ceylon, Java and Singapore as a family of similar locales, and moreover participates in an ongoing debate about the relative merits of each, for his part admitting a preference for the latter (even if only since it is his purview to write a volume about Singapore and not the others.)

The selection made here covers twenty-two titles (thirteen in English and nine in Dutch) as can be seen from table 1. This is by no means an exhaustive sample, as the boundaries of any genre cannot but be vague and therefore a definitive selection process remains elusive; the works chosen

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[120] Hoppen, 'Negentiende-eeuwse Oostindische reisliteratuur', 68–9.
[121] Driver, *Geography Militant*, 61.
[122] 'The Merchant Abroad in Europe, Asia and Australia' (Review), *Calcutta Review* 29 (1857), xxv.
[123] Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 1.
[124] John Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions in Malayan India. Being a Descriptive Account of Singapore, Penang, Province Wellesley, and Malacca; Their Peoples, Products, Commerce, and Government* (London, 1865), 27.

are, however, the most representative of the features of the genre, and as a group form a coherent whole. We have already noted the exclusion of several subgenres of travel writing, such as the popular around-the-world accounts by professional travellers, or colonial literature that had a primarily scientific or political purpose. Three main criteria were emphasised in the process of selection: a significant focus on the region under consideration here, within the primary reference frame of the colonial sphere of the Indian Ocean; the authors' status as long-standing colonial residents or at the very least their embeddedness in colonial culture; and a decidedly popular emphasis, as evidenced by style of writing and stated authorial intentions. It will be evident that some of the works are more explicitly touristic while others merely exhibit touristic stylistic or structural characteristics; the weighting of each work in the analysis of the following chapters will consequently differ. The primary selection is provided here to elucidate the nature of the genre under consideration and to give an idea of the number of relevant books published during the period in question. It is not an exclusive list of the works referenced in this thesis: rather, over the course of the analysis that follows, attention will also be given to works written by outsiders and passers-through, and to the works of anthropologists and naturalists, as these provide crucial counter-points and alternative views that help to highlight the peculiar emphases and characteristics of the more specifically colonial and popular works.

As can be seen from the table, the selected books were published between 1841 and 1875, with the single exception of Douglas Hamilton's *Record of Sport in Southern India*, a memoir published posthumously in 1892, but included in the selection as it describes, and is based on notes written during, the author's stay in the colonies between 1837 and 1871, and can thus with good reason be considered a representative of that moment of literary culture, though unpublished at the time. In fact, the list has been composed to primarily include works describing travels that took place roughly before 1870 (regardless of date of publication); that end-date has only been adjusted slightly to include two Dutch works that provide key examples of a kind of Dutch colonial short-term tourism that would otherwise have been missing in the selection. The majority of the titles are from the 1850s and 60s, though the sample is too small to draw any conclusions on possible year-on-year cultural developments. It is, however, of interest to note that all five titles published before 1850 are British and as many as four of those are focused on Ceylon: it is clear that the island's prominent location on the major shipping routes of the Indian Ocean also meant that it enjoyed a noticeable head start in the race to provide new and exciting literature to adorn the shelves of the reading public.

Not a great deal of information can be drawn from the publication data of these works. Travel writing was simply such a broad and mainstream genre that publications within that field had few specific peculiarities of their own. There are, for example, no specialised publishers that jump out of the list; in fact, only one publisher, the Dutch Martinus Nijhoff of The Hague, occurs on the

list more than once, as the publisher of Gevers Deynoot's *Herinneringen eener reis* and Verkerk Pistorius's *Een bezoek naar Singapore*. A notable difference between the British and the Dutch groups is that all bar one of the British works were published in London, whereas the eight Dutch titles are from six different cities, but this is presumably due to the specific characteristics of the publishing industry in those two countries rather than anything specific to colonial travel writing. On

Year	Title	Author	Language
1841	*Rambles in Ceylon*	Augustus De Butts	English
1843	*Excursions, Adventures and Field-Sports in Ceylon*	James Campbell	English
1846	*Trade and Travel in the Far East*	G.F. Davidson	English
1850	*A Voyage to China*	Julius Berncastle	English
1851	*Mijne reis met de landmail*	Jacob Carel Frederik van Heerdt	Dutch
1853	*De Zieke Reiziger*	Charles Walter Kinloch ('a Bengal civilian')	English
1854	*The Bungalow and the Tent*	Edward Robert Sullivan	English
1854	*The Rifle and the Hound in Ceylon*	Samuel White Baker	English
1857	*Dagboek mijner overland-mail-reis*	Steven Adriaan Buddingh	Dutch
1860	*Batavia, in 1858*	August Wilhelm Philip Weitzel	Dutch
1862	*Schetsen eener mail-reize van Batavia naar Maastricht*	Jan Frederik Gerrit Brumund	Dutch
1864	*Life in Java*	W. Barrington d'Almeida	English
1864	*Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*	E.H. Boom	Dutch
1864	*Herinneringen eener reis naar Nederlandsch Indië in 1862*	W.T. Gevers Deynoot	Dutch
1865	*Our Tropical Possessions in Malayan India*	John Cameron	English
1865	*Jottings of an Invalid in Search of Health*	William Walker ('Tom Cringle')	English
1869	*Souvenirs of Ceylon*	Alastair MacKenzie Ferguson	English
1872	*Een reistochtje van Batavia naar Buitenzorg*	P. van Diest	Dutch
1874	*Mijne reis naar Java in 1869*	J. van der Chijs	Dutch
1875	*Een bezoek aan Sinagpore en Djohor*	A.W.P. Verkerk Pistorius	Dutch
1875	*The Straits of Malacca, Indo-China and China*	John Thomson	English
1892	*Records of Sport in Southern India*	Douglas Hamilton	English

Table 1. A list of the works chosen for the primary selection for the analysis in this thesis, with date of publication, author and original language.

a related note, it is important to point out that overwhelmingly, these works were published in the metropole: only one, William Walker's *Jottings of an Invalid*, was published exclusively in the colonies, in Bombay; additionally, two others – Alastair MacKenzie's *Souvenirs of Ceylon* and J.F.G. Brumund's *Schetsen eener mail-reize* – were printed in two separate locations, in London and Colombo, and Amsterdam and Batavia, respectively.

It should not, however, be assumed therefore that the cultural scene in the colonies was lacking in literary enterprise, and in fact the story of this kind of popular travel writing cannot be told without adequate consideration of the colonial society as a literary sphere. One of the problems here is that it is not always easy to trace the outlines of the print culture in the colonies in the period with any degree of accuracy. This is especially so for British India and the Malay Peninsula, where the number and variety of published journals and periodicals was as bewildering as their average lifetimes were short. As Brahma Chaudhuri has noted, much archival work needs to be done before the actual content of the British Indian press in the period can be properly analysed, and its variety appreciated.[125] A related problem is that many books, including travel books, that were published in the region, in Bombay or Calcutta or Batavia, were very small-scale affairs, often self-published or privately funded, and as a consequence can be hard to track down in the twenty-first century. So, for example, there are works like *Seven Months' Leave in the Straits Settlements, Ceylon, Madras and Bombay*, published anonymously in Calcutta in 1859. Evidently an exemplar of the kind of literary work that is the concern of this thesis, the title turned up during preliminary research in a review in a contemporary journal, but unfortunately further digging revealed that not only is the work incredibly rare, it is also nowhere available outside exclusive private collections in the present day. Or, to give a Dutch example, S.A. Buddingh's *Dagboek mijner overlandmail-reis van Rotterdam naar Java*, published as a pamphlet in Batavia in 1852, not quite as rare but still difficult enough to dig up were it not for the fact that its contents were also published that same year in a Batavia periodical, the literary journal *Biäng-Lala*.

The topic of the periodical press in the Dutch and British colonies will be returned to in the next section, while discussing the writing careers of the authors and the wider discourse that they were part of and participating in, but it is important to note here briefly the symbiotic relationship between periodicals, newspapers and travel books. It is when viewed from this angle that the idea of

[125] Brahma Chaudhuri, 'India', in Jerry Don Vann and Rosemary T. VanArsdel (eds.), *Periodicals of Queen Victoria's Empire: An Exploration* (Toronto, 1996), 180.

a *colonial* literary culture, and with it the figure of a *colonial* author, starts to take a recognisable shape. Not only were pamphlets like Buddingh's reproduced in periodicals, and other books reviewed in journals such as the *Calcutta Review*, but often to-be authors also used these as a practical forum to publish unfinished sections of manuscripts and shorter excerpts from their notebooks. For example, J.C.F. van Heerdt published fragments of what became his *Mijne reis met de landmail* (1851) in a variety of journals, including the mainstream literary titles *De Gids* and *Tijdspiegel* back in the Netherlands, but also the Batavian *Warnasarie*.[126] As for William Walker's *Jottings*, that book was originally conceived as a series of letters by the author to the *Times of India*, based in Bombay.[127] The press in the colonies was thus a fertile breeding ground for to-be authors and provided both models to emulate and an avenue for unfinished written work, where both the writers and the audience were mostly members of colonial society themselves.

In terms of genre, it is possible to divide the selection into a few sub-groupings. A few of the books are written primarily as memoirs, looking back on an author's career in the colonies or in one specific location. G.F. Davidson's *Trade and Travel in the Far East* is a memoir, as made clear by its subtitle *Recollections of Twenty-One Years Passed in Java, Singapore, Australia and China*. Augustus De Butts's *Rambles in Ceylon* is an account of his posting on that island for the duration of a few years. The same is true of James Campbell's *Excursions, Adventures and Field-Sports in Ceylon*, which is almost twice as long but in many ways almost identical to De Butts's work from a couple of years earlier. With reference to these memoirs, it is important to note that they do not attempt to cover their authors' entire lives; rather, they are specifically structured around travels in the colonies – either around the region, as in Davidson's case, or within a single colony, as in the latter two – and focused on the periods of the respective authors' lives when they were active as travellers. It is this feature that locates these works in the wider genre of popular travel writing, and therefore makes them relevant for the analysis here. The titles are also significant: keywords like "recollections" and (in Hamilton) "records", or the Dutch "herinneringen" ('recollections') used by Gevers Deynoot all indicate personal experience and testimony, to separate these works from fictional accounts and to give them an air of personal experience and authenticity.

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[126] Jacob Carel Frederik van Heerdt, *Mijne reis met de landmail van Batavia over Singapore, Ceilon, Aden en Suez tot Alexandrië in Egypte* ('s Gravenhage, 1851), vii.
[127] William Walker, *Jottings of an Invalid in Search of Health, Comprising a Run through British India and a Visit to Singapore and Java* (Bombay, 1865), frontmatter.

Another, more specifically colonial sub-genre is that of the so-called "invalid account" or account of convalescence. These are narratives describing shorter periods of time, generally trips of some weeks of months made with the specific purpose of convalescing from ill health in a location with what would have been considered a healthier climate. Of the varieties of travel considered here, this type of invalid travel arguably comes closest to the stereotype of modern tourism and is therefore of particular interest. From the works listed above, two fall explicitly in this category: the already-mentioned *Jottings of an Invalid in Search of Health* by William Walker, and *De Zieke Reiziger; or, Rambles in Java and the Straits in 1852* by Charles Walter Kinloch. The nature of the narrative is clear from both of the titles (the latter, in Dutch, translates literally as "the sickly traveller" – the choice of language seems to be nothing more than a stylistic flourish and a reference to the primary location of the narrative, Dutch Java.) Invalid accounts were also relatively common in the colonial press, and as pieces like 'Advice to Invalids Resorting to Singapore' in the *Journal for the East Indian Archipelago*'s 1851 volume make clear, they served a very specific practical purpose for the reading audience in the colonies: they could be read not merely for entertainment but also as guides for trips that the readers might themselves wish to follow, either in case of ill health or at some other opportunity for leisure.[128] Kinloch, in fact, points this out directly in the preface to his work, hoping that "even the crude notes [in his book] would not be without their use, particularly at the present time, when through the arrangements lately concluded with the Peninsular and Oriental Company, the chief port of Java has been brought within twelve days sailing distance of the Hooghly."[129] The invalid account is, then, in some ways a genre with its roots more deeply in the life of colonial society, and has a pragmatic function in the colonial context that an all-purpose memoir does not, though the latter may of course well corporate invalid narratives within its overall structure.

A third sub-genre that can be identified within the group of selected titles is that of hunt or sporting narratives, or memoirs specifically structured around the theme of hunting. Such a focus is again clear from the titles: *Rifle and the Hound in Ceylon*; *The Bungalow and the Tent*; or *Records of Sport in Southern India*. Two of these focus on Ceylon, and Ceylon was indeed famed for what it offered to a sporting gentleman, especially the prestige of elephant-hunting: in fact, beyond these two titles, the theme is also prominent in De Butts's and Campbell's works, with narratives of hunting excursions overwhelming all other topics. One factor that explains the over-representation of Ceylon

[128] 'Advice', *Journal for the East Indian Archipelago*, 5 (1851), 188.
[129] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, viii.

in the hunting genre has to do with the specific circumstances of that colony: unlike Java or Singapore, Ceylon was, in the mid-nineteenth century, widely advertised as a destination for "colonisation", in the sense of outward emigration from Europe.[130] As a consequence, the mix of its European population was somewhat different, including significant numbers of private landowners in addition to the expected colonial officials and merchants, and with them a distinct settler culture. Furthermore, it also appears true that British authors had generally more of an interest in hunting as a pastime than their Dutch contemporaries, quite possibly due to cultural differences between their respective home countries rather than between the specific colonies they resided in. What the hunting narrative has in common with the invalid account is a primary focus on relaxation, and hunting was indeed one of the most prominent colonial leisure practices.

In the group of Dutch works, one sub-genre is of particular importance: the so-called *mail-reis* ('mail journey') account, so named because it took the travellers from the Indies to the Netherlands, or the other way around, on the ships that also carried the mail between Europe and its Asian colonies. (The term land-mail, or overland-mail, sometimes used, refers to the crossing overland of Egypt from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, which was a necessary part of the trip before the opening of the Suez canal in 1869, and set it apart from the route oversea around the Cape of Good Hope.) Four of the selected books belong to this genre and make it clear in their titles: Van Heerdt's *Mijne reis met de landmail* ('My journey with the land-mail'), Buddingh's *Dagboek mijner overland-mail-reis* ('Diary of my overland-mail-journey'), Brumund's *Schetsen eener mail-reize van Batavia naar Maastricht* ('Sketches of a mail-journey from Batavia to Maastricht') and Van der Chijs's *Mijne reis naar Java in 1869* ('My journey to Java in 1869'). These are far from the only representatives of the genre in the Dutch 'Indies literature' of the time, and a number of titles have been excluded from the analysis here so as not to skew the analysis too much in favour of a genre that is not primarily focused on Southeast Asia and Ceylon in its geographical scope. Yet it is worth mentioning, for example, the several mail-journey accounts published by authors connected to missionary interests, either to promote missionary work or for the benefit of parishes back in the Netherlands. In this group belong the missionary H. van der Grinten's *Mijne reis naar Oost-Indie* (1867) and the anonymous *Dagboek gedurende den overtogt naar Indie* (1873), by "one of the Ursulines of Venray"; and J.A. Schuurman's *Mijne reis naar Java* (1869), the profits of which were to go "wholly to the benefit of the Evangelical-Lutheran orphanage in 's Gravenhage." These three

[130] Of the books studied here, the emigration argument is heavily endorsed in the preface to Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*.

works dedicate relatively little space for the locations that this thesis is concerned with, and in any case their overwhelmingly religious ideology and expression sets them quite apart from the leisurely, popular travel writing considered here. Yet their very existence bears testimony to the great popularity of the mail-journey genre at the time.

What makes the mail journey genre particularly interesting is that, unlike for the other works considered here, its primary location is that of the steamship taking the passengers across the India Ocean: in this kind of narrative, the various ports and colonial spaces travelled through are always, as it were, observed from outside and in passing – which is of course true of all kinds of travel, and touristic travel in particular, but here the material reality of the ship turns into an underlined symbol of the traveller's distance from the places on his or her itinerary, carrying the necessary bedding and food onboard and at most times putting an actual frame of steel between the two. The mail journey account is, then, an extreme version of the popular travel writing of the mid-nineteenth century, where the traveller has little to no control over his or her schedule and remains a passive, superficial observer, never free of his or her European frame. It is also, almost without exception, a quick read: the accounts here considered are small pamphlets, rarely much more than a hundred pages in length, cheap to produce and buy, which perhaps partly explains their enduring popularity. The mail-journey genre is a particularly interesting subgenre for the purposes of this thesis since it literally connects the three colonial locales of Java, Singapore and Ceylon: the itinerary of the trip would generally take the Dutch passengers first from Batavia to Singapore, there to wait for the British steamship from Hong Kong, stopping also at Point de Galle in Ceylon on its way to the Red Sea. Until the founding, in 1870, of the Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland ('Steamship Company Netherlands'), which provided a direct connection between the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies, the use of the British mail ships was by far the most convenient way to make the journey, further emphasising how international the experience of colonial travel in the period was.

Beyond the mail-journey genre, there is a number of works that narrate single journeys within the colonial sphere. Julius Berncastle's *A Voyage to China* is aptly summarised by its title, being a travel diary of the author's journeys across Britain's Eastern possessions and toward China; of interest for this thesis is the author's description of his stay in Singapore. *Herinneringen eener reis naar Nederlandsch Indië*, by Gevers Deynoot, similarly recounts the author's trip to and within the Dutch East Indies; it is set apart from the mail-journey accounts, with which it shares a very similar title, by including a lengthy account of Java itself and not being limited to the sea voyage. John Thomson's *The Straits of Malacca, Indo-China and China* has a similar structure, though what makes it special is Thomson's remarkable photography: the work contains as many as 68 engravings, among the most heavily illustrated titles here considered. Among the shortest and lightest of the works

considered here there are two brief pamphlets recounting more minor excursions: P. van Diest's pamphlet *Een reistochtje van Batavia naar Buitenzorg* ('An excursion from Batavia to Buitenzorg'), a simple account of a short trip of a couple of days from Batavia to Buitenzorg in the nearby highlands, where many high-ranking Dutch officials had their villas and spent their free time; similarly, *Een bezoek naar Singapore*, by Verkerk Pistorius, recounts a brief trip from Java to Singapore and its hinterland.

A final group of titles are structured around a quasi-encyclopaedic notion of gathering various kinds of information about specific colonies for the reader's use or entertainment: these include John Cameron's *Our Tropical Possessions in Malayan India*; *Souvenirs of Ceylon* as edited by Ferguson; and, on a smaller scale, A.W.P. Weitzel's *Batavia, in 1858*, which provides an overview of that city at the time of the writing as well as a historical sketch. The reason these works have been here included is that, regardless of their informational focus, their approach is anecdotal rather than scientific, and the narrative in the books is structured around travels made either by the authors or, in Ferguson's case, cited from elsewhere. For the same reason, E.H. Boom's *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, an early colonial handbook, has been selected, as it is based on the author's personal travel notes, adjusted into a guidebook format by the Dutch publisher Plantenga, famous for his European travel guides.

Having thus introduced the titles involved, we can now return to the question of the reach and popularity of these works. To that end, and in view of the constraints on space making it impossible to consider each work in depth, it is illustrative to consider the reception of two examples in the general contemporary press. The position of travel writing in the specifically colonial press will be discussed further at the end of this chapter. Among the earliest works in the corpus, James Campbell's *Excursions* was reviewed on publication by both specialised outlets (*Naval and Military Gazette*, *Foreign and Colonial Quarterly Review*) and general papers and magazines (*Atlas*, *Examiner*, *Spectator*). The general tone of the reviews praised, on the one hand, its entertainment value: the book is described as "pleasant reading" written in "good humour;" full of "delightful and exhilarating amusement;" where "hardly a page occurs which does not contain something novel and exciting."[131] On the other hand, the same reviewers either criticised the quality of the information contained, or expressed doubts regarding Campbell's authority on matters of serious colonial policy: "the gallant officer communicates but little information respecting Ceylon which we did not previously possess,"

[131] *Examiner*, 23 September 1843, 595; *Naval & Military Gazette*, 2 September 1843, 550; *Atlas*, 26 August 1843, 549.

lamented the piece in the *Atlas*, while the *Examiner*'s reviewer had to "confess that we cannot see the advantages" of the colonisation scheme proposed by Campbell. Perhaps the most concise judgment is provided by the *Spectator*: "he has the off-hand and fluent straightforwardness of a good military talker or story-teller, with much of their want of purpose or logic."[132]

We find the exact same mix of praise for entertainment value and criticism of informational content in the reception of d'Almeida's *Life in Java* two decades later, in almost the same words. The Spectator is again critical: "the book is in fact a very amusing, lively traveller's diary, but Mr. D'Almeida does not seem to have taken enough with him to the island to be able … to bring very much away."[133] And the charge in the *London Daily News* is even harsher, speculating whether d'Almeida can "communicate to his readers any thing [sic] but his own superficial impressions, or the stray gossip retailed to him … on his hurried journeys from station to station."[134] Yet, at the same time, prominent journals like *Athenaeum* and the *Examiner* characterised the work as "amusing" and "entertaining", quotes that were even included into advertisements of the work across a wide range of newspapers.[135] Altogether, d'Almeida had reason to be satisfied with the coverage of his work, if not with every detail of the content of that coverage: apart from the usual literary outlets, it was also reviewed in a few dailies, not only the *London Daily News* but also titles such as the *Morning Post* and the *Dublin Evening Mail*.[136] That makes it among the more reviewed of the works considered here, the majority of the works receiving only a handful of reviews, primarily in the literary and specialised press.

For establishing the reach of these and similar texts, however, it is necessary to look beyond reviews and take into account also the widespread practice of reprinting excerpts from published texts and other papers that was a hallmark of nineteenth-century print culture, as already noted. With that in mind we find that, quite apart from the handfuls of reviews these works got, passages from each were disseminated across a range of papers in sections variously titled "literary selections," "gleamings" and "varieties." So, for example, a brief anecdote from d'Almeida titled "Tiger Traps" – only one of several that made the rounds – appeared in papers such as the *Newcastle Chronicle*, the *Lancaster Gazette*, the *Dover Telegraph*, the *Sussex Advertiser* and the *Herts*

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[132] 'Colonel James Campbell's Excursions, &c. in Ceylon', *Spectator*, 19 August 1843, 784.
[133] 'Life in Java', *Spectator*, 27 May 1865, 589.
[134] 'Literature', *London Daily News*, 13 September 1864, 2.
[135] For the advert that was widely disseminated, see for example *Globe*, 12 August 1864, 1.
[136] *Morning Post*, 18 August 1864, 2; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 12 August 1864, 4.

Guardian.[137] Similarly, a story by Campbell of an encounter with a bear appeared in the *Wiltshire Independent*, the *Taunton Courier*, the *Westmorland Gazette*, the *Hereford Times*.[138] It is precisely the entertaining and accessible style of these works that made them eminently suitable sources for such clippings, and as can be seen from the variety of titles involved, they greatly expanded the geographical reach of each work's coverage, away from the largely London-based literary periodicals and to local dailies across the country. On the other hand, similar anecdotes were also gathered in another type of publication: middle class periodicals providing light reading for leisure and recreation. To provide just two representative examples, we find an extract from d'Almeida – a depiction of a sacrificial ritual at the crater of a volcano – on the pages of *Leisure Hour*, "a family journal of instruction and recreation" in 1865.[139] And similarly, in *Het Leeskabinet*, a Dutch publication of the same genre – "a miscellany for pleasant socialising for the refined circles" – various chapters of Van der Chijs's *Mijne reis naar Java*.[140] Extracts like these serve to show the penetration of colonial travel writing across various segments of mainstream metropolitan culture. It is this reach and appeal to the general readership, rather than the sales figures of any individual volume, that underline the genre's popularity and cultural relevance.

2.2. What makes an author?

One thing that the majority of the authors of the twenty-two works introduced above have in common is their relative obscurity, certainly in the twenty-first century but in most cases also in the eyes of their contemporaries. There are a few notable exceptions. Samuel White Baker, if not quite a household name like his contemporary and acquaintance Henry Morton Stanley, gained a certain fame as an explorer of the Nile, governor-general and all-round Victorian adventurer, though all of that came after his stint as a plantation owner in Ceylon, which is recorded in his *Rifle and the Hound*. August Wilhelm Philip Weitzel made a long and illustrious career in the Dutch Indies military that

[137] *Newcastle Chronicle*, 24 September 1864, 6; *Herts Guardian*, 1 October 1864, 6; *Lancaster Gazette*, 24 September 1864, 6; *Sussex Advertiser*, 3 January 1865, 5; *Dover Telegraph*, 1 October 1864, 6.
[138] *Westmoreland Gazette*, 19 October 1844, 4; *Hereford Times*, 30 September 1843, 1; *Wiltshire Independent*, 28 September 1843, 4; *Taunton Courier*, 27 September 1843, 3.
[139] William Barrington D'Almeida, '"Annual Offerings at the Crater of the Bromok"', *The Leisure Hour*, 14 (1865), 624.
[140] J. van der Chijs, 'Mijne Reis Naar Java in 1869 En Terugkeer over Engelsch-Indië, Palestina, Enz.', *Het Leeskabinet*, 39 (1872), 26–45.

peaked in his appointment as the Minister of War in 1873. Of the others, John Thomson is today remembered as a notable early photographer in the East; historians of nineteenth-century Dutch East Indies are likely to have encountered the names of J.F.G. Brumund and S.A. Buddingh at one point or another, as they were relatively busy – though not notably influential – writers touching upon a variety of topics. All in all, however, these were men – and they are all men, a point that we will come back to – a step or two down from the highest strata of colonial society, members of the well-to-do colonising middle class. In this section we will provide a brief overview of the backgrounds and circumstances of the authors of this selection of works, in order to elucidate some of the key characteristics of the genre as a whole.

Because of their relative lack of fame, it is not easy to find exhaustive biographical data on many of these authors. The data for the Dutch authors is, however, both more easily available and of a better quality than is generally the case for the British: as the Dutch literary and/or colonial circles of the nineteenth century were considerably smaller and, arguably, more insular by nature than their British counterparts, and due to the availability of a number of thorough high-quality national biographies, most individuals with published output can be tracked down with relative ease. As for their British counterparts, with some exceptions, the information is sketchier and scattered across various sources, and for that reason there are some inevitable blanks in the findings below. Some of the basic information – dates of birth and death, age at time of publication (of the work listed in the previous section) and occupation is gathered in Table 2 for an easy overview.[141] The purpose of this summary is to suggest certain broad commonalities in author profiles across the genre at hand and to prove at a glance that, though supposedly participating in separate national discourses, the Dutch and British colonial literatures of the period had more things in common than what separated them. Some notable differences that emerge from the data will be discussed at the end of the section.

It should be noted that though the table – and, indeed, much of the analysis that follows in subsequent chapters – denominates authors as either "Dutch" or "British," these labels are used as a shorthand reference to both the language in which they wrote and the political system that they were subject to, rather than to refer to a distinct national identity. Considering the global scope of this thesis and of the empires it discusses, and the variety of backgrounds among the individuals mentioned,

[141] The biographical data, where not otherwise indicated, is based on entries in the *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, originally published between 1911 and 1937 and now available in its entirety online on the website of the Koninklijke Nederlandse Adakemie van Wetenschappen ('Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences'): http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/retroboeken/nnbw.

assigning any such identities would be a foolhardy endeavour, especially as space does not allow us to delve into each figure in great detail. For one example of the complexities involved, William Barrington d'Almeida exhibits a dual identity in his very name, a descendant of both the prominent colonial-Portuguese d'Almeida dynasty and the British Barrington family. He was born in Singapore as a representative of that city's notably cosmopolitan colonial society and as such, trying to reduce his identity to "British" would be crudely misleading. In the absence of any personal evidence on how he thought of himself, the matter must be set aside. Not that such colonial-European dualities were rare. There is also Van Heerdt, who was born on Surabaya on Java and passed away on Ambon. Moreover, Van der Chijs and Brumund passed away on Java, and Berncastle and Walker in Melbourne, Australia. Therefore, to avoid the methodological danger of undue emphasis on "Britishness" or "Dutchness," the following overview is arranged not by nationality but by occupation, as divided into three broad categories: colonial officials, the military and independent professions.

Going through the categories one by one and starting with those who were directly employed by the colonial administration, we have J.C.F van Heerdt, a member of the council of justice in Batavia and in Semarang, and thereafter a customs official in the residency of Ambon. J. van der Chijs had a similar career, working in the general secretariat in Batavia, as a customs officer and later as an inspector of education. Like Van Heerdt, Charles Walter Kinloch was involved in the administration of law, working as a judge for the Indian Civil Service in Bengal. His career path left few overt archival traces, but the India Office records contain his initial application to the East India College in 1827 and a further record of some time spent on leave before a return to service in Bengal in 1845: as with Van Heerdt and Van der Chijs, his professional success appears to have been relatively unremarkable and there is little evidence of career progression.[142] A.W.P. Verkerk Pistorius is notable for having started his career in the colonial administration relatively late. He had originally moved to Java to work for a sugar factory; after a change of tack and the necessary studies back in Leiden – the alma mater of the great majority of these Dutch authors – he pursued a low-profile career as an official of the second class in various locations in the Indies.[143] Beyond officialdom, there are also figures who were employed by the colonial state for their specific professional skills. Among these is P. van Diest: not much can be said about his career, but in his book he presents himself as a mining engineer, and in the *Almanak van Nederlandsch-Indië* of 1871 he is listed as a chief engineer

[142] For the records in question see The British Library, London (from now on BL), India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/J/1/42/64-70 and IOR/E/4/784, 153.
[143] *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde* (Leiden, 1895), 168-186.

in mining, a specialised position within the administration.[144] Similarly, Julius Berncastle, a physician by training, found employment as a surgeon with the East India Company, though his overall career path appears to have been rather more expansive the Van Diest's on Java. Overall, however, none of these six authors stand out in the history books in any official capacity: rather, they can be said to have had relatively comfortable mid-level careers without a great deal of political influence.

Author	**Lived**	**Age at pub.**	**Occupation**	**Affiliation**
Augustus De Butts			military	British
James Campbell			military	British
G.F. Davidson			merchant	British
Julius Berncastle	1819-1870	41	physician	British
Jacob Carel Frederik van Heerdt	1819-1878	32	colonial official	Dutch
Charles Walter Kinloch	1810-1893	43	colonial official	British
Edward Robert Sullivan	1826-1899	38	businessman	British
Samuel White Baker	1821-1893	33	plantation owner	British
Steven Adriaan Buddingh	1811-1869	46	clergy	Dutch
August Wilhelm Philip Weitzel	1816-1896	44	military	Dutch
Jan Frederik Gerrit Brumund	1814-1863	48	clergy	Dutch
W. Barrington d'Almeida	1841-1897	23		British
E.H. Boom			military	Dutch
W.T. Gevers Deynoot	1808-1879	56	politician	Dutch
John Cameron			journalist/writer	British
William Walker	1838-1908	27	journalist/writer	British
Alastair MacKenzie Ferguson	1816-1892	53	newspaper owner	British
P. van Diest			colonial official	Dutch
J. van Der Chijs	1831-1905	43	colonial official	Dutch
A.W.P. Verkerk Pistorius	1838-1893	37	colonial official	Dutch
John Thomson	1837-1921	38	photographer	British
Douglas Hamilton	1818-1892		military	British

Table 2. Basic biographical data of the authors of the works selected for analysis, arranged by date of publication of work identified in Table 1.

[144] *Regerings-Almanak voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 44 (1871), 565.

The second professional category involves military men. It has already been noted that A.W.P. Weitzel went on to become a minister later in his career; however, in 1860, when his *Batavia, in 1858* was published, he had only just been promoted to the rank of major. (In fact, the title page of that work still gives his rank as captain.[145]) Douglas Hamilton's career as an officer in British India represents a similar case: he eventually retired as a general but only ranked between major and colonel during the time his posthumously published memoirs stem from. James Campbell, an officer in Ceylon, was a lieutenant colonel, a rank corresponding with that of E.H. Boom, who was a retired *kapitein-luitenant ter zee* (commander) of the navy. Finally, a little lower down the military ladder, there is Augustus De Butts who was a lieutenant at the time of the publication of his *Rambles in Ceylon.* Overall, then, this group of officer-authors represents the middle-ground of the military hierarchy, well above the rank and file but a good deal below the level where significant strategic decisions are made. Notably, their respective positions seem to have involved a fair amount of travel within the colonies, providing material for the eventual works. Explicitly military matters are not often touched upon in the texts, presumably also due to confidentiality issues, though Campbell does occasionally go on tangents.

In the third category, among independent professionals, we find a more varied and colourful group of people. Among the Dutch authors there are notably two clergymen, J.F.G. Brumund and S.A. Buddingh, both ministers (*predikants*) of the Dutch reformed church posted in various places in the East Indies. This should not be taken to suggest that Anglican clergy were not active writers, as shown for example by James Selkirk's anthropologically oriented *Recollections of Ceylon* (1844), already mentioned in the previous section. Such scholarly interests were in fact wholly common among missionaries: Brumund and Buddingh also had a keen interest in the colonial sciences, both occupying for some time the position of president in the Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen ('Batavian Society for Arts and Sciences'), the primary scientific society in the colony. Brumund is also remembered for his government-commissioned study of the famed Borobudur temple. However, in keeping with the topic of this thesis, we will here only consider their less specialised and more leisurely travel writing, which stands apart from their more professional works.

Both Brumund and Buddingh are primarily remembered nowadays as dilettante writers and contributors to journals on a wide variety of matters. If we put aside for a moment their religious

[145] J. G. Frederiks, *Biographisch woordenboek der Noord- en Zuidnederlandsche letterkunde* (Amsterdam, 1888).

occupations, a number of likeminded individuals can be found among the authors, engaged with the colonial press. William Walker, for example, was a regular contributor to the Bombay Times as well as an essayist on matters ranging from sewage systems to earthquakes to the human mind. Of William Barrington d'Almeida's professional occupations no trace was found, but he too appears to have been a dilettante writer in various genres. And the pinnacle of journalist zeal is represented by Alastair MacKenzie Ferguson and John Cameron, owners and editors of their own newspapers in the *Ceylon Observer* and the *Straits Times*, respectively. It should however be noted that boundaries between such independent occupations were often fluid: just as ministers aspired to be scholars and writers, journalists and newspapermen in the colonies frequently had to turn elsewhere to supplement their incomes and to secure a stable living, as noted by C.M. Turnbull.[146] Cameron, for example, dabbled in trading coal, cigars, wines and brandy and even as the director of the Singapore Ice Company. As such, he is comparable to G.F. Davidson, a merchant whose career took him all around maritime Asia and the Pacific. Likewise Samuel White Baker, though primarily nowadays remembered as a Victorian adventurer and explorer for his later exploits in Africa, was an opportunist that sought to make a living from running a plantation and advocating for European settlement in Ceylon in the 1850s.

Finally, among the authors selected there are two individuals who wrote as outsiders, not based in the colonies themselves. W.T. Gevers Deynoot stands out from the group as his stay in the colonies only amounted to a brief sojourn – he was a politician and an active member of Dutch civil society, making a long career as a member of the second house of parliament. His work has been selected for the analysis here partly because it closely corresponds to the features of the genre that is at issue; but also because of his long-term dilettantism in colonial matters, even if from a distance: he was, for example, chairman of the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde ('The Royal institute for the study of languages, land and peoples'), an institution set up to promote knowledge of the colonies as well as train prospective colonial administrators. The businessman, journalist and writer Edward Robert Sullivan has been included on a similar basis, as though he was not based there, he is remembered for a number of works on the region (*Letters on India*) and colonial travels more widely (*Rambles and Scrambles in North and South America*).

[146] C. M. Turnbull, 'The European Mercantile Community in Singapore, 1819-1867', *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, 10 (1969), 19–20.

It is clear from the above overview that the perspective captured across this range of travel books is very much that of a white, educated middle-class male making a middling career in the colonies either in the service of either the church, the military, or the colonial administration or in the pursuit of personal profit. Moreover, the table shows that where their age is known, the authors were overwhelmingly (though with a few notable exceptions) in or around their forties, which in most cases has given them enough time to reach a comfortable, relatively stable position in their careers without however rising so high as to have significant power or influence in colonial society. This is true across nationalities and individual colonies; there are, however, certain differences worth pointing out. At a quick glance, it appears that the Dutch group of writers is slightly more uniform in nature than their counterparts in the British colonies: among them there are now private landowners or independent merchants. It might also be suggested that the horizons of travel were somewhat broader for those authors that could benefit from the more extensive networks of the British Empire: Baker, as has been noted, went on to explore and otherwise gallivant in various parts of Northern Africa and the Middle East, whereas Berncastle and Davidson both travelled widely around the Indian Ocean and the Far East, as can be seen from their works. D'Almeida evidently, though his two-volume *Life in Java* is restricted to that one island, also travelled widely, including in the Philippines and Japan, of which journeys his wife published an account.[147]

It is not exactly surprising that these British travellers had broader opportunities to travel in the region and beyond. Quite simply, by the middle of the nineteenth century, British possessions encircled the Indian Ocean in a way that the Dutch could not hope to match; each of those possessions was an opportunity for a traveller with the right connections; and moreover, it was primarily British ships providing the connections between the various points on the map, especially during the few decades between the introduction of steam-shipping and the emergence of competitors under other flags to the British Peninsular and Oriental Company which enjoyed a near-monopoly for a time. So, for example, Julius Berncastle, a physician, appears to have sought out employment on those ships as a means to satisfy his wanderlust. For men like him, simply being a British citizen opened up the map in privileged ways, whereas for his Dutch contemporaries that map remained tightly structured around the lifeline between homeland and colony, the Netherlands and Java. This perhaps also explains the popularity of the mail-journey genre in Dutch literature, and its relative near-absence in

[147] Anna D'Almeida, *A Lady's Visit to Manilla and Japan* (London, 1863); discussed in Clara Sarmento, 'A Lady's Visit to Manilla and Japan: Gender, Travel and Intercultural Representations', in Clara Sarmento (ed.), *From Here to Diversity: Globalization and Intercultural Dialogues* (Newcastle, 2010), 6–11.

the Anglophone one: a British traveller needed not be restricted to that one route, and had many more potential stories to tell, whereas for many of the Dutch, it was that one route that came to effectively symbolise the life of the colonial middle class between the two continents.

It has already been noted above that all of the writers included in this core list, drawn up in an attempt to define the parameters of the genre, are men; before moving on, this notable exclusion of female authors deserves some further consideration. It is of course true that female travel writers, though significantly less numerous than their male counterparts, were far from absent in the literary scene of the mid-nineteenth century. We have already referred to the wife of William Barrington d'Almeida, an author in her own right, though her writings did not touch upon the places considered in this thesis. Likewise, Fanny Parks's travel diaries from India (*Wanderings of a Pilgrim in Search of the Picturesque*, 1850) have been well studied by historians of travel writing.[148] With reference to Southeast Asia and Ceylon, we will elsewhere have occasion to refer to a handful of works by female authors writing on these places, including: Isabella Bird's *The Golden Chersonese* (1883), on the Malay peninsula; Marianne North's autobiography biography *Recollections of a Happy Life* (1892), which includes passages on her travels in all of Singapore, Ceylon and Java; and Ida Pfeiffer's *Meine zweite Weltreise* (1856), a major portion of which is dedicated to the Dutch East Indies. And naturally, this is without even beginning to consider the many writings, in whatever unpublished form, produced by women resident in the colonies. To give just one example that is pertinent to this study, the correspondence of M.J. Duymaer van Twist-Beck, the wife of a governor-general of the Dutch East Indies, describes an official tour of inspection across Java that she accompanied her husband on – a tour that in many ways reflects the more leisurely trips discussed in this thesis.[149]

For various reasons, these works do not correspond to the parameters of the genre as described above, and as such are not central to the analysis in this thesis. Briefly, it can be said that simply being women undertaking substantial travels alone made these authors unique and notable figures; whereas the focus here is on much more mundane tourists and tourisms. Pfeiffer, as an

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[148] Shampa Roy, 'Inside the Royal Zenanas in Colonial India: Avadhi and Other Begums in the Travel Accounts of Fanny Parkes', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 16 (2012), 47–63; fore more studies on women colonial travellers, see Julia Kuehn, 'Colonial Cosmopolitanism: Constance Cumming and Isabella Bird in Hong Kong, 1878', in Julia Kuehn and Paul Smethurst (eds.), *New Directions in Travel Writing Studies* (London, 2015), 263–80; Sylvain Venayre, 'Au-delà du baobab de Madame Livingstone. Réflexions sur le genre du voyage dans la France du xixe siècle', *Clio. Femmes, Genre, Histoire*, 28 (2008), 99–120; Indira Ghose, *Women Travellers in Colonial India: The Power of the Female Gaze* (Oxford, 1998).

[149] Extracts from the correspondence between M.J. Duymaer van Twist-Beck and her sister J.C.J.B. Cost Budde Beck on the topic of the journey to and across Java, Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Collectie 101 A.J. Duymaer van Twist, nummer toegang 2.21.058, inventarisnummer 56.

Austrian, was moreover an outsider to the British and Dutch Empires, and in any case her travels were self-consciously global – as seen from their titles – rather than colonial in their framing, distinct from the books listed above.[150] The same is largely true of Bird and North, who travelled over significant parts of their respective lives and all over the world: they were professional travellers. The relevant books by the latter two also appeared after the period that is the focus of this thesis, based on travels that took place in the late 1870s. Even so, all of these works are important counterpoints to an otherwise masculine genre and, for that reason, will be discussed where appropriate. It is, however, also worthwhile to consider for a moment the reasons behind the relative dearth of female authors within this genre, that is, popular travel writing on Southeast Asia and Ceylon, in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. One relatively simple answer is demographical: the European communities of some of these colonies were still, in the period in question, heavily male-dominated. That is especially true of Singapore, where the gender ratio according to the census of 1871 was about three to one excluding personnel onboard merchant vessels and almost four to one when including them.[151] All colonies had more men than women residents, though most in less radically skewed numbers: Ceylon at about three to two in 1861, and Java about five to four in 1847.[152]

None of that of course eliminates the fact that there were thousands of European women in the region at the time, many of them at comfortable, elite levels that ought to have given opportunities to engage in writing work. It is true that travelling in the colonies was still considered a somewhat risky venture for independent women: figures like Ida Pfeiffer were regularly praised for their bravery – and occasionally lambasted for their stubbornness – for taking on the challenge. Moreover, soldiers, who made up a significant part of the authors, were of course always men and, especially in the lower and middle ranks, rarely brought wives into the colonies. Yet travelling women were far from a rarity in the region. In fact, several of the male authors listed above travelled with their wives, including the aforementioned d'Almeida and Kinloch. It is a curious feature of the genre that, while the image of the colonies they convey is regularly very family-friendly and wholesome, these accompanying spouses are barely mentioned: their presence can be spied in the use of the first

[150] Pfeiffer and the genre of celebrity around-the-world travel narratives, as well as the entanglements of that genre with contemporary imperial politics, are discussed in detail in my 'Java on the way around the world: European travellers in the Dutch East Indies and the transnational politics of imperial knowledge management, 1850-1870', *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* (forthcoming).
[151] Great Britain Census Office, *Census of England and Wales. For the Year 1871. General Report.* (London, 1873), 310.
[152] *Census of the British Empire: Compiled from Official Returns for 1861*, (London, 1864), 257; Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië, 9:4 (1847).

person plural – we travelled, we went – or in very occasional references, almost like slips of the tongue – "ourselves and our good lady were obliged to…"[153] Considering how packed these works are with all manner of personages, the writers' wives seem to be deemed barely worth a mention. Whatever the motive – desire for privacy or literary conventions – this choice does emphasise the genre's peculiarly male perspective as well as its fundamental lack of intimacy. Women are occasionally observed, sometimes conversed with, but never truly engaged with on a physical or emotional level.

The survey of the writers' backgrounds and careers above helps to make sense of the point of view embodied in popular colonial travel writing, and brings to focus some of its limitations and biases; but it is also important to consider how these writers saw themselves as individuals and authors. For that purpose, the best source are the prefaces of the various works, as they often contain statements of the intended purpose of the written work, or hints at the authors' self-identification and evaluation of their own skill and the fruit of their labour. For an exemplary summation of many of the fundamental elements and statements that these prefaces generally incorporate, one can simply turn to the first paragraph of G.F. Davidson's *Trade and Travel in the Far East*. This remarkable paragraph, which can be seen as a programme statement for the entire genre of popular colonial travel writing, bears quoting at length and is therefore reproduced below in its entirety:

> "The following pages were written to beguile the tediousness of a long voyage from Hong Kong to England, during the spring and summer of 1844. When I state, that the whole was written with the paper on my knee, for want of a desk, amid continual interruptions from three young children lacking amusement during their long confinement on shipboard, and with a perpetual liability to be pitched leeward, paper and all, – I shall have said enough to bespeak from every good-natured reader a candid allowance for whatever defects may attach to the composition. It is necessary, however, that I should also premise, that the sketches are drawn entirely from memory, and that the incidents referred to in the earlier chapters, took place some twenty years ago. That my recollection may have proved treacherous on some minor points, is very possible; but, whatever may be the merits or demerits of the work in other respects, it contains, to the best of my knowledge and belief, nothing but truth in the strictest sense of the term; and, as imbodying [sic] the result of my own personal observations in the countries visited, it may possess an interest on that account, not always attaching to volumes of higher pretensions."[154]

From this paragraph can be extracted several recurring elements of how our authors conceptualised the purpose and nature of their work, and their role as authors. Firstly, there is an insistence that the process of writing has been accidental or incidental – that the author is not a professional writer, nor did he necessarily envisage publication as an end-point of that process; that

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[153] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 79.

[154] G. F Davidson, *Trade and Travel in the Far East; or, Recollections of Twenty-One Years Passed in Java, Singapore, Australia, and China* (London, 1846), i–ii.

instead, the text was written "to beguile the tediousness of a long voyage". Secondly, there is the issue of the "merits and demerits", including a candid admission that there may be factual errors and inaccuracies – "recollection may have proved treacherous" – as well as defects that "attach to the composition", i.e. stylistic and literary weaknesses. And thirdly, an argument that, considered from another angle, it is the very personal and first-hand nature of the experiences that gives them an interest "not always attaching to volumes of higher pretensions." Davidson therefore reframes a shortcoming as a virtue, making a distinction between two classes of colonial literature, on the one hand the professional, factual and encyclopaedic and, on the other, the personal and impressionistic, and argues that the personal interest and emotional identification of the latter compensates for any shortcomings in the informational content. In other words, entertainment over education.

These three fundamental statements can be found, in various forms, in many of the books here considered, by both British and Dutch writers. So, among self-identifying "accidental authors", we have Charles Walter Kinloch who assures his readers that his *De Zieke Reiziger* was "written solely for the Author's own amusement, and to fill up an idle hour or two"; and that its publication came about only "at the solicitation of friends."[155] Douglas Hamilton, in an unfinished preface to his posthumously published memoirs, similarly puts the blame on his friends:

> "'[w]hy have you not written a book about your sporting adventures?' is a question often asked me by my friends when they were looking over my sketch books and I was describing the various scenes … during my illness the subject was again pressed upon me, and I have put together the following pages, extracts from my journal"[156]

Relatedly, several of the prefaces exhibit a pronounced reluctance to admit any ability as a writer: "[t]he journal has no pretension to literary merit", says Kinloch; and as for Hamilton, "book writing is not my forte and I have not the slightest pretension to any literary talent."[157] And William Walker uses very nearly the same words, like a shared mantra of the genre: "I do not pretend to any literary excellence; the incidents of my travel, which were interesting to myself, and which I hoped would be informing to others, I jotted down."[158]

The Dutch writers are equally modest. Van Heerdt starts out his work by claiming that when he started his journey to Europe, he "had no plan to describe and make public that journey", and moreover, that when he did write, his "unfamiliarity with the style, in which topics of this nature

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[155] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, vii.
[156] Douglas Hamilton, *Records of Sport in Southern India, Chiefly on the Annamullay, Nielgherry and Pulney Mountains, Also Including Notes on Singapore, Java and Labuan, from Journals Written between 1844 and 1870* (London, 1892), v.
[157] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, vii; Hamilton, *Records of Sport*, v.
[158] Walker, *Jottings*, frontmatter.

… are to be offered for readers, soon became apparent."[159] Van der Chijs blames the very fact of publication of the cunning of his publisher, assuring that he had only wished to write a piece for a journal, making "no claim to lasting worth [and not knowing] that the Publisher had had many extra prints made with an eye on a separate publication."[160] It is not the intention here to suggest that these men are to be taken at face-value when they so disarmingly reveal their own shortcomings or lack of ambition as authors: certainly, language of this kind is partly explained by literary conventions and a preference for an appearance of humility. Moreover, both Kinloch and Walter published several works in their lifetimes, so that even if their successes were limited, they clearly had *some* enduring pretensions as litterateurs. The same goes for d'Almeida, from whom at least one unpublished play, a comedy in two acts, has survived as a testament to his literary hobbies.[161] Rather, this pose of amateurishness, even carelessness, is to be seen as evidence of genre consciousness and self-fashioning as a popular travel writer.

Several of the prefaces also touch upon the notion of a division between serious and popular, informative and entertaining in colonial literature. Augustus De Butts notes, of the available works on Ceylon:

> "It is true, indeed, that histories of the island are not wanting; but lighter works giving those minute details of scenes and impressions which, though interesting to the general reader, are infinitely beneath the dignity of history, are nowhere to be found. It is after reflecting upon this *hiatus* in light Oriental literature, that the author has ventured to submit the following "Rambles in Ceylon" to the reader, in hope that they may in some measure obviate the unmerited indifference generally entertained towards that interesting and important colony.[162]

James Campbell, who prefers to use his preface to addressing the debates of the day on colonisation and emigration, cordons off these serious topics with a warning: "those persons who prefer lighter themes will have the kindness to pass my preface … and proceed to the work, where, I trust, they will find that I have provided them with a tolerable supply of amusement."[163] It is as if the author is here reassuring the reader that the body of the work will deal with much lighter and more pleasant fare. Van der Chijs owns up to ignoring the heavier questions altogether: "I have felt myself incapable, based on mere fleeting impressions, of making judgments on political issues or other serious matters."[164]And Weitzel, in his *Batavia, in 1858*, similarly makes his excuses, explaining that he does

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[159] Heerdt, *Mijne reis met de landmail*, vi.
[160] J. van der Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java in 1869: en terugkeer over Engelsch Indie, Palestina enz. in 1870* (Utrecht, 1874), frontmatter.
[161] A manuscript of the play (*Gretna Green*) can be found in BL, Western Manuscripts, Add MS 53475 F.
[162] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, v–vi.
[163] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, iii.
[164] Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, frontmatter.

not want to write "in a scientific direction" as "too many learned presentations on the state of Batavia have already been published for me to feel capable of adding anything new."[165] This observation, also to be found in De Butts above, is in fact a crucial statement that can be expanded to account for the genre as a whole: by the middle of the nineteenth century, the colonies of the region had already been the subject of serious scientific work for some time, and the amount of publications of that nature had been steadily and quickly growing over several decades. This saturation of the market, and on the other hand the retreat of scientific work to increasingly specialised niches, made space for openly leisurely and populist writers such as the ones analysed here.

In an interesting inversion, William Walker acknowledges, defensively, that the genre he has chosen has a reputation for unreliability: "judging from the general repute of 'invalid's' books, it is likely that mine may receive a summary judgment of condemnation from its title alone."; a condemnation that he seeks to avert by assuring that "these 'Jottings' are an account of what I saw and did at the various places I visited."[166] That might seem an oddly redundant statement by Walker, and certainly a far from robust defence of his book's value, but this small sentence is repeated in numerous variations in many of the other works: as already seen above in the quote from Davidson, it is precisely this claim to personal testimony – rather than factual correctness or literary merit – that supplies these texts with their value as parts of the corpus of popular travel writing. Berncastle says much the same thing though in more words: "I have given some account of the places at which the ship in which I went out touched, and of the persons with whom I happened to come into contact, in the hope that such details may not be unacceptable to general readers"; while the Dutch Brumund gives it a more poetic spin, hoping to "place the reader onboard and ashore, there to see, to hear and perhaps to feel, what I saw, heard and felt."[167] It is important to note the references to the "general reader" in De Butts and Berncastle, as these expressions further underline that the intended audience of their works is the general population and not a small circle of colonial experts and high-brow literati. John Thomson uses the same phrase to explain his use of materials from an earlier publication, "which could not reach the body of general readers in my larger and more costly work."[168] Clearly, these books, and the genre of popular colonial travel writing as a whole, were designed as mass-

[165] August Wilhelm Philip Weitzel, *Batavia in 1858 of schetsen en beelden uit de hoofdstad van Nederlandsch Indië* (Gorinchem, 1860), 3.
[166] Walker, *Jottings*, frontmatter.
[167] Jan Frederik Gerrit Brumund, *Schetsen eener mail-reize van Batavia naar Maastricht op reis en thuis* (Amsterdam, 1862), iii.
[168] Thomson, *Straits of Malacca*, vii.

market products and, far from trying to hide that reality in high-brow pretensions, openly flaunt it as a selling-point.

A further element that, though absent from Davidson's preface, crops up in several others, relates not to the value but to the function of the publications. Many of the authors express a wish that their texts might be used by future travellers hoping to emulate the writers. Kinloch, as already mentioned above, hoped that "in the absence of any work whatever of the nature of a Hand Book relative to the Straits and Java, even the notes of "De Zieke Reiziger", or the Invalid Traveller, would not be without their use", directly positioning his work as essentially a tourist guide, but he was far from the only one.[169] Similarly, Walker states that he has "also supplied information which will, I am sure, be found of service to intending travellers."; and Berncastle hopes that his narrative will "prove of some utility to those who may hereafter follow the same track."[170] The Dutch authors of mail-journey accounts are particularly aware of how easy it would be for their readers to follow their footsteps: Van Heerdt positions his text as "similar [to the accounts] that I have often given face-to-face to persons who were intending to try this journey"; and Brumund describes his preferred audience as "not only the armchair travellers seated by their hearths, but also the increasing numbers of Dutch mail-journeyers."[171] Travel in the colonies was rapidly becoming an easier, more attractive prospect, not merely because of steam technologies but also changes in regulations and the culture of travel itself, paving the way for full-scale colonial tourism later in the century.

Although these are but passing mentions, they are significant in setting this kind of travel writing apart from other contemporary and earlier sub-genres: on the one hand, the exotic adventure accounts of earlier periods, when travel to the east was both more exclusive and more perilous, were intended primarily for home entertainment for the reading public in Europe; on the other, the more high-minded, encyclopaedic and scientific works that were being produced in quantity in the nineteenth century, had as their primary purpose the production and dissemination of knowledge, filling the shelves in the libraries of institutions and government offices as well as educated readers. By contrast, this kind of popular travel writing engaged the reader directly: even if a minority of the readers was likely to truly follow the example of the authors, the invitation was still standing, the possibility a real one.

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[169] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, vii–viii.
[170] Walker, *Jottings*, v; Julius Berncastle, *A Voyage to China; Including a Visit to the Bombay Presidency; the Mahratta Country; the Cave Temples of Western India, Singapore, the Straits of Malacca and Sunda, and the Cape of Good Hope. Vol 1.* (London, 1850), viii.
[171] Heerdt, *Mijne reis met de landmail*, vii; Brumund, *Schetsen eener mail-reize*, iii–iv.

New technologies are a part of this story, as these authors well knew: hence the specific reference of Kinloch to "the present time, when … the chief port of Java has been brought within twelve days sailing distance of the Hooghly [at Calcutta]."[172] Or Thomson's adulation of "the agency of steam and telegraphy" which is bringing the East "day by day into a closer relationship with ourselves."[173] Of the Dutch writers, Van der Chijs explicitly advertises the services of the "three companies [that] eagerly compete for passengers and cargo [for the East Indies]."[174] And, away from the seas, Van Diest explains the reason for publication as "the increasing interest and awareness that shall be directed toward Buitenzorg because of the [coming] railway connection."[175] Technology was, however, an enabling rather than a defining factor in what was, essentially, a cultural phenomenon: the fashion for comfortable travel for the European middling classes across an ever-increasing portion of the world.

2.3. Responses and reactions: travel writing and the colonial press

Popular travel writing, like any genre, could of course not exist in a vacuum. It has already been noted that several of the authors here considered practised their skills and made their first forays into print in the world of the periodical press, in titles published both back in Europe and in the colonies themselves. There was, then, a kind of symbiotic two-way relationship between the periodical press and our travel authors: on the one hand, the former provided a relatively low-threshold avenue to publication for beginning authors; on the other, literary journals of course also reviewed the published travel books and shaped the public response. This section is primarily concerned with what is here termed the colonial periodical press: that is, journals and periodicals that focused primarily on colonial matters. It is useful to think of the colonial press as two separate but linked spheres of activity: firstly, the journals and papers published in the metropole, in this case primarily in London and the major cities of the Netherlands, that sought to inform European audiences on the colonies and the related debates of the day; and secondly, the press in the colonies themselves, in this case in British South and Southeast Asia, and the Dutch East Indies. This section briefly examines how the

[172] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, viii.
[173] Thomson, *Straits of Malacca*, v.
[174] Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, frontmatter.
[175] Pieter Hendrik van Diest, *Een reistochtje van Batavia naar Buitenzorg en omstreken* (Amsterdam, 1872), 2.

emergence of colonial popular travel writing was felt in each of those categories, focusing on a few of the most significant titles of the time. Examining their reactions to the genre and the different motives underlying those reactions, it becomes apparent that journals in the metropole, published with the specific aim of militating for colonial interests and encouraging emigration, found popular travel writing if not exactly relevant to their interests then in any case expedient for attracting a wider readership, and therefore embraced the genre; by contrast the press in British India was far more wary of such trivialities bringing down the esteem for colonial culture more generally and thus also the reputation of the old Anglo-Indian elites.

As regards Britain, and more specifically London, the specifically colonial press in mid-nineteenth century was an ever-changing landscape and fraught with risk for newly-launched publications, so it is difficult to quickly draw a coherent outline of the field, especially since journals often carried very similar titles and frequently merged together in search of long-term feasibility. A good example of the general turbulence is provided by the brief but eventful existence of the (later *Fisher's*) *Colonial Magazine and Commercial Maritime Journal*, which started in 1840 and folded halfway through 1845: in that short period of time it went through two relaunches and retitlings. More established journals could also run into trouble, such as the *Asiatic Journal* (known under various titles), which for decades had been the leading publication on Britain's Asian possessions but in 1851 had to merge with the more popular relative newcomer *Simmond's Colonial Magazine and Foreign Miscellany*, published since 1844. Although the specific reasons behind such reorganisations are difficult to track, it is notable that the *Asiatic Journal* represented an older kind of publication: it was associated by the public with the old Anglo-Indian elites of the East India Company, a claim the journal itself strenuously denied, and showcased ethnographical and orientalist pieces, often written by amateurs. By contrast, the "colonial magazines" launched in the 1840s were more practically oriented on the political debates of the day and on matters of commerce, and had a specific interest in promoting emigration overseas and the "colonisation" of spaces such as Australia with a European population – it is in this sense that the word "colonial" is so often used in the titles of the day.

The turbulence of the field meant that journals could not always follow a consistent editorial line. And just as the *Asiatic Journal* had to first refashion itself as the *Asiatic and Colonial Quarterly Review* and then merge with a competitor, the newer generation of journals also had to make adjustments, and it is here that popular travel writing played a role. In the first place, these journals were strongly political publications, militating for the interests of British colonisers and encouraging emigration. That programme primarily called, on the one hand, for think pieces of a political nature and on the other, for statistics- and information-heavy articles on the commerce and economic exploitation of the colonies. These twin interests are reflected in the preface of first volume

of the *Colonial Magazine and Commercial Maritime Journal*, in a mission statement to "assist in the removal of abuses" (against emigrants) and to "seek out new and profitable fields for the employment of the surplus labour and capital of the mother-country".[176] The first volume closely sticks to those principles, with pieces addressing topics ranging from the reforms of colonial government to trade in colonial produce, and the relative strength of Britain's colonial rivals. By comparison, the last iteration of the journal in 1844 presents a very different picture, and a rather more colourful variety of materials. These include original poetry – 'A Welcome to Papa', a narrative in verse of a man returning home from Canton – a piece on 'European Sports and Pastimes in India', billed as "a few pages of gossip respecting European life in India, under its recreative phases", and a promise in the preface of "the first parts of two interesting serials" in the following volume.[177]

There was no definitive shift away from the learned debates and serious subject matter, as those continued to take up the majority of pages, but certainly the publishers had come to appreciate the value of lighter readings in balancing weightier pieces and drawing in new readers. Or, as the *Magazine* itself put it, "to relieve [the readers'] craniums of the weight of statistical knowledge, and withdraw awhile from the dry study of political economy and colonial interests."[178] This change no doubt reflected the contemporary popularity of popular travel writing, but it was also, more directly, a response to demands from the readership. As much was openly acknowledged in *Simmond's Colonial Magazine*, in a preface to its fifth volume in 1845: "[i]n conformity with the wishes of a large number of our readers, we have latterly interspersed a portion of light literature with the more heavy statistical and general matters presenting themselves for discussion".[179] In *Simmond's*, that meant serial stories with colonial themes with titles like 'Australian Sketches' or 'The Emigrant: A Tale of Australia', and poetry such as 'The Indian Hunter' by Longfellow, as well as travel writing.[180] The travel pieces also bore the marks of the increasing popularisation of the genre, as attested to by titles such as 'Random Recollections of the Mosquito Shore' or 'Rides, Rambles, and Sketches in Texas'.[181] The purpose of such pieces, rather clearly diverging in tone from the weightier concerns of the editorial line, was to take advantage of the popular demand for humorous and anecdotal travel

[176] 'Preface', *Colonial Magazine and Commercial Maritime Journal* 1 (1840), front matter.
[177] 'European Sports and Pastimes in India', *Fisher's Colonial Magazine and Journal of Trade, Commerce and Banking*, 1 (1844), 225, and the preface to the same volume.
[178] 'European Sports and Pastimes in India', 225.
[179] 'Preface', *Simmond's Colonial Magazine and Foreign Miscellany* 5 (1845), iv.
[180] The examples here are from *Simmond's Colonial Magazine and Foreign Miscellany*, volumes 5 and 6.
[181] In *Fisher's Colonial Magazine and Journal of Trade, Commerce, and Banking* 1 (1844) and *Simmond's Colonial Magazine and Foreign Miscellany* 8 (1846), respectively.

writing and, perhaps, also to attract future emigrants through the imagery employed in these pleasant and often adventurous stories.

The periodical press in British Ceylon and Singapore, during the period in question, was patchy in the extreme, even compared to the chequered history of the colonial press in London. The bibliography collated by J. Don Vanna and Rosemary T. VanArsdel in *Periodicals of Queen Victoria's Empire* shows few titles that survived for more than a year or two. That is not to imply that there was no literary activity in these places, merely that it is very difficult to give any kind of satisfactory overview of its activities and leanings. In terms of journals with a specifically literary or more widely cultural emphasis, Ceylon saw the publication, at least, of the two titles *Young Ceylon* (1850-1852) and *Ceylon Quarterly Magazine* (1871). In Singapore we find *Chermin Mata* (1858), a "quarterly magazine of literature and instruction", and the *Singapore Review and Monthly Magazine* (1861).[182] On the other hand, looking beyond periodical publications and into the world of daily and weekly newspapers, it would be remiss not to remark upon some of the obvious connections our writers had with these. Thus, for example, William Walker, under the pseudonym "Tom Cringle", wrote both his *Jottings of an Invalid*, and an earlier work (*Letters on Practical Subjects*, 1863) in the first place as series of letters to the *Times of India* and to various Bombay newspapers, respectively. Of the other authors, Alastair MacKenzie Ferguson was the owner and editor of the *Ceylon Observer*, and his *Souvenirs of Ceylon* should be seen in the context of his work as a newspaperman. Similarly, John Cameron was the editor and owner of the *Straits Times*, one of the primary Singapore newspapers in the 1860s and 70s, although it is unclear whether this was already the case at the time of publication of his *Our Tropical Possessions* in 1865.[183] It is thus evident that some, though by no means all, of the British authors here considered were active participants in the literary circles of the various colonies where they were resident.

Any substantial analysis of the contents of these various journals and papers and their relation to the genre of popular travel writing will have be left for future research; in any case, considering the very limited print runs of almost all of the literary journals mentioned above (perhaps with the exception of the slightly longer-lived *Young Ceylon*), it appears impossible to draw any far-

[182] Jerry Don Vann and Rosemary T. VanArsdel, 'Outposts of Empire', in Jerry Don Vann and Rosemary T. VanArsdel (eds.), *Periodicals of Queen Victoria's Empire: An Exploration* (Toronto, 1996), 312–22.
[183] C. M Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore, 1819-2005* (Singapore, 2009), 130.

reaching conclusions for the whole period under consideration here from such limited materials.[184] This scarcity of materials, especially when seen in relation to the colonial press on Dutch Java – which is considered below – is primarily a consequence of the different status of the colonies in their respective imperial frameworks: Java being the crown-jewel of Dutch overseas possessions; Ceylon and Singapore, though significant in their own right, still relegated to a peripheral role around the centre that was British India.

It is to India, then, that one must look to in order to learn more about the workings of the British colonial literary sphere in the region. The space here, and the focus of this thesis, do not allow an expanded overview, and in fact the variety of the Indian press in the nineteenth century has not been exhaustively studied. As a market it was certainly tough and not many titles survived for long, like in Ceylon and Singapore, but due to the greater size and European population of India the actual number of titles was of course far greater.[185] One case in particular is important for our concerns. Calcutta, as the capital of British India, was also the natural hotspot for publishing, and perhaps the most influential and certainly one of the most long-running of its publications was the quarterly *Calcutta Review* (founded in 1844), a literary magazine consisting largely of lengthy review essays, with a focus on colonial and Indian topics. And although the richness of the Indian colonial press should not be underestimated, the *Review* was without a doubt the most authoritative voice in the sphere of British Indian colonial culture. Its mission statement was to enrich the public sphere of colonial society by providing a "vehicle for the publication of papers, of a more lengthy and elaborate character than is adapted to the columns of a daily or a weekly newspaper", and to encourage a more informed debate among the elites – and only the elites – for, as the editors went on to say: "[t]he bane of this country is ignorance: ignorance, not in the dark recesses of native life – there it is comparatively harmless – but in high places, – among the ruling body – among the men to whom inscrutable Providence has submitted the destinies of India."[186] Such a lofty goal did not allow much patience for trivialities.

The *Calcutta Review* took pride in providing space for a multitude of opinions, but its reviews of popular travel literature, when they were given space at all, exhibit a fairly uniform stance.

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[184] Note: some of these titles I will examine during my next research mission to London, to the extent that they can be found in the collections of the School of Oriental and African Studies; others, especially those published Singapore, I will try to locate when I go to Southeast Asia next year.
[185] Brahma Chaudhuri, 'India' in J. Don Vann and Rosemary T. VanArsdel, eds, *Periodicals of Queen Victoria's Empire* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 180.
[186] 'Advertisement', *Calcutta Review* 1 (1844), i-ii.

Furthermore, it is possible to trace the increasing exasperation of the reviewers as the trickle of popular "Indian literature" grew to a veritable flood around the middle of the century. Particularly noteworthy is an editorial essay from 1855, which certainly bears quoting in length, if only for its marvellously venomous tone. It starts with noting how India has become the object of much public attention: "it has become the fashion to know about it, and to regard a somewhat accurate knowledge of it as part of the education of a gentleman." Consequently, "[t]he literary market still cries for more works on India, and obscure *litterateurs* come forth with inaccurate compilations, and old Indians with the fruit of many years' experience."[187] The writer then works himself into an imaginative fury:

> Hence the literary activity of the past few years, which we believe is but the beginning of a course of authorship and intelligent enquiry, that will finally cause Mr. Titmarsh and his *confréres* to produce in abundance such works as a *Journey from Cornhill to Calcutta ; Holiday Ramble in the Himalayas ; A Vacation Tour on the Banks of the Bhavany ; Mr. Albert Smith's Ascent of Mount Dhwalagiri ; Murray's Hand-book to the Mutlah and Damoodah ; Jottings on the Deck of a Steamer on the Godavery – –*[188]

And so on, until winding to the merciless conclusion:

> We can easily understand that a publisher's Overland Literary Circular of the next twenty years, will contain such announcements as above. The Khyber Pass will then be as often trodden by Cockneys as the Trosachs or Killiecrankie is now ; the great inland seas of America, and the mighty falls of Niagara will be despised, before the Chilka lake and the cataracts of Cavery ; and the sonorous voice of the travelled John Bull will be heard abusing the "young men" in the hotels of Kashmir, in as choice Hindustani, as is the French, wherewith he now signalises himself in the Champs Elysèes, or at Baden Baden.[189]

The encroachment of the world of tourism into the East is here seen as a potential cultural disaster, the tidal wave of dilettantes and ignorant scribblers loosening the grip of the old colonial elites on India and how it is represented in writing. It is notable that the writer's predictions, apparently meant as exaggerations, proved rather accurate. The made-up titles are very similar to actually published ones such as *Rambles in Java and the Straits Settlements,* or *Jottings of an Invalid in Search of Health*; moreover, the first *Murray's Handbook* to India was published only a few years later, in 1859. In a world where publications moved freely between the metropole and the colonies, the old elites and opinion-shapers of the latter had no effective way to control the literary fashions of the day.

The sentiment in the above quotes was by no means a one-off, either, but clearly representative of the editorial line of the journal. This impression is reinforced by the fact that such review articles were anonymous and their views could thus not be pinned on individual contributors. Even in reviews of individual travel books, the criticism is usually implicitly or explicitly broadened

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[187] 'Minor Works on India', *Calcutta Review*, 24 (1855), 92.
[188] 'Minor Works on India', 93.
[189] 'Minor Works on India', 94.

to include the whole genre. So, for example, one book is described as "a fair specimen of the class of literature to which it belongs", "written and printed in hot haste, disfigured by probably 1,024 typographical, and 1,536 material, mistakes, but containing also a good deal of information, which would be valuable if only it could be depended on."[190] A paucity of reliable information is a constant source of worry: on recent travel writing from Ceylon, a review notes that "we must candidly confess that there is at the present moment no lack of writers on the subject, though we can scarcely say as much for the sound or useful information given to the world in most of the books which have appeared."[191] On occasion a direct connection is drawn between the triviality of content and the popularity, i.e. mass market appeal, of the works: "it were of little consequence to know on what theme the genius of Mr. Percy Algernon Orlando Byron Jones might choose to vent itself, were it not for an assumption … that several hundreds of other Joneses, and Smiths and Robinsons, and Browns, and Whites and Hopkinsons may read what Mr. P.A.O.B. Jones has written."[192]

Such trivialisation and popularisation of the tone of colonial literature, and of the broader colonial culture that the *Calcutta Review* saw itself as a champion of, was anathema to the journal's reviewers. Partly the sarcasm and distaste were the natural reactions of a seriously-minded publication and its editors towards frivolous fashions, but there were also deeper dynamics at play. As discussed in the previous chapter, the mid-nineteenth century saw a conflict of views on how British India was best governed, with the old hands of the East India Company – an institution whose time came to an end in 1858 – most memorably defended by John Stuart Mill against those who wished the colony to be ruled from London.[193] The *Review* was similarly minded to defend the interests of the established colonial society against newcomers and metropolitan intruders, and took the fight on to a cultural level.[194] The "Cockneys" and the "travelling John Bulls", exchanging tourist guides for reliable information and garbled phrase-book expressions for genuine language skills were seen as a threat to the serious, informed colonisers of old, especially because they seemed to be in the ascendancy culturally. Even worse, the tourist stylistics and phraseology of the popular accounts gave Indian colonial culture a decidedly middle-class, ho-hum appearance, which would hurt its prestige in the

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[190] 'The Merchant Abroad in Europe, Asia and Australia' (Review), *Calcutta Review* 29 (1857), xxv.
[191] 'Ceylon, Past and Present', *Calcutta Review* 26 (1856), 314.
[192] 'Mr. Sullivan on Ceylon', *Calcutta Review* 24 (1855), 367.
[193] John Stuart Mill, *Memorandum of the Improvements in the Administration of India during the Last Thirty Years, and the Petition of the East-India Company to Parliament* (London, 1858).
[194] A good case study of the role of the colonial press in determining and constructing colonial identities is Rochelle Pinto, *Between Empires: Print and Politics in Goa* (New Delhi, 2007); for a metropolitan perspective, see Julie F. Codell (ed.), *Imperial Co-Histories: National Identities and the British and Colonial Press* (Madison, 2003).

eyes of the metropolitan audience. In short, the tension had both a geographical and a class element: on the one hand, between metropolitan and colonial society and their relative status in colonial policy; and on the other, between the swelling colonial middle classes, many of them freshly arrived in the East, and the established Anglo-Indian elites. Tourism and popular travel writing, to an extent, served as symbolical pawns in these wider debates.

The periodical press in the Dutch East Indies was rather more streamlined than that of the British Asian possessions, and primarily centred on Java. One important section of it were the publications of various learned societies, the most venerable of these being the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences, which published the *Tijdschrift voor Indische taal-, land- en volkenkunde* ('Journal for the studies of Indian languages, lands and peoples') from 1853 onward; the *Natuurkundig tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië* ('Journal for the natural sciences in the Dutch Indies') from 1851 and the *Tijdschrift voor nijverheid en landbouw in Nederlandsch-Indië* ('Journal for industry and agriculture in the Dutch Indies') had a similarly professional/scientific focus, as is apparent from their titles. These publications, largely analogous to the journals of the various Asiatic and scientific societies of British India, naturally had little interest in travel writing of a distinctly popular and leisurely bent. More hospitable was the all-purpose *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië* ('Journal for the Dutch Indies'), yet this publication moved, along with its editor, the politically active Reformed Church minister W.R. van Hoëvell, back to the Netherlands after running into trouble with the authorities.

In the literary sphere, two relatively short-lived publications on Dutch Java are of particular interest from the point of view of the authors considered here: *Warnasarie* (1848-1858), an "Indisch jaarboekje" ('Indian year-book'); and *Biäng-lala* (1852-1855), advertised as an "Indian reader for a pleasant and cosy pastime."[195] The titles themselves are telling, translating as 'colourfulness of flowers' and 'rainbow', respectively. These were journals dedicated to providing entertainment first and foremost; regardless of the fact that they were also the primary representatives of the European literary scene on Java, they made few claims to the kind of highbrow seriousness that the *Calcutta Review* affected. The use of Malay for both titles may be to underline their being situated in a colonial, rather than metropolitan, context, where some knowledge of the language could be expected of most Europeans educated enough to be subscribing to a literary journal; or merely to supply an additional flourish of exoticism. It should not be taken to mean that the intended audience

[195] The genre of journals is discussed in Zonneveld, 'Javanen', 76–8.

spread beyond the Dutch population of the island, as the actual language between the covers remains, in all cases, Dutch.

It has already been noted that S.A. Buddingh published one of his travel diaries originally in *Biäng-Lala*.[196] His fellow traveller and preacher J.F.G. Brumund likewise published a travel fragment from a trip on Java, in four parts.[197] In general, these kinds of fragments were among the most common materials of the journal. For example, volume three from 1854 contains three such pieces: 'Fragment of my diary: an excursion to the Pangerango and Gede'; 'A hunting adventure on the Kloet'; and 'Notes and incidents on a trip from Ambon to Java.' Much the same is true for the slightly longer-lived *Warnasarie*, the volumes of which contain several contributions by both Buddingh and Van Heerdt. It may be considered a measure of the relative smallness of the literary circles on Java that the two founders of *Biäng-Lala*, W.L. Ritter and A.L.J. Tollens, also count among the busiest contributors of *Warnasarie*; indeed, the latter even ended up taking over as the paper's editor. His preface to the last volume of *Warnasarie* is weighed down by pessimism, expressing a fear that "in this volume, the belles lettres of the Dutch Indies find their grave."[198] Yet, seen from another angle, both periodicals clearly had an important role to play in the wider 'Indies literature'; though their print-runs of four and eleven years, respectively, remained short, they came about exactly at the time of the emerging fashion for popular colonial literature, including travel writing; and not only did they constitute one of the few outlets for materials of that sort, they also contributed directly to the later publication of monograph works like Van Heerdt's *Mijne reis* or Buddingh's *Dagboek*, and helped spread the name of these and other authors.

The colonial press in the Netherlands is rather quickly summarised, as at the period under discussion here this largely consisted of Hoëvell's *Tijdschrift*. In the context of Hoëvell's work as an activist for colonial reform and later as a politician, it is not surprising that the journal is not primarily concerned with travel writing, especially of the popular sort. Yet it could not, through its "Monthly overview of Indian literature", avoid noticing the genre and its emerging popularity. The tone with which the reviews deal with the genre is generally positive: the editorial line seems to be, more or less, that any literature on the Indies is better than no literature on the Indies. There seems to equally be an acknowledgment that lighter reading has its value in raising interest in the colonies and attracting a general readership. Thus, for example, the review of Weitzel's *Batavia, in 1858*, notes

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[196] Steven Adriaan Buddingh, 'Dagboek mijner overlandmailreis', *Biäng-Lala* 1:1 (1852), 105-67.
[197] J.F.G. Brumund, 'Eenige dagen in de residentie Pasoeroean', *Biäng-Lala* 4:1 (1855), 53-76.
[198] 'Aan den lezer', *Warnasarie*, 11 (1858), vi.

that "among the great number of political treatises, outbursts and polemics over the Indian questions that are currently flooding the fatherland, it is truly a pleasure to receive this piece of a different, less serious and less contentious nature."[199] Brumund's *Schetsen* is welcomed similarly warmly – perhaps not surprisingly considering that another version of a fragment of that travel account had some years earlier appeared in the *Tijdschrift* – and recommended by way of "a travel book, to show the way – a Murray's or Baedeker's", i.e. a guidebook for intending travellers to the Indies.[200] Overall, then, the *Tijdschrift* took a positive attitude toward the emerging genre, seeing it primarily as good advertisement for the colonies and a means to getting the attention of the wider reading public in the Netherlands, attention that might then be induced to spread to more serious affairs. Such considerations took precedence over questions of literary and aesthetic value, which in any case fell outside the journal's remit. In this way, its approach was much the same as of the contemporary pro-colonisation journals of London.

2.4. Conclusion

In preparation for the content analysis undertaken in the next chapter, this section has sought to provide a brief overview of the specifically literary context where the travel books in question where published, and the many interactions these works and their authors had with the periodical press of their time. The overall picture is varied, even occasionally bewildering, and moreover one has to keep one eye on the specificities of the British and Dutch print industries, and on the different production contexts of colonial and metropolitan publications. Yet, in general, there is also a core of strong commonalities and unifying characteristics that bind the genre together into a whole that transcends national and imperial boundaries. Among these one notable common thread is the middle-class, male perspective assumed by much of the genre, and the close alignment of that perspective with both the newly-established culture of mass tourism in Europe, and the new colonisation occurring in the Indian Ocean region – and beyond – at the time, justifying the historiographical framing adopted in chapter

[199] 'Batavia, in 1858 (Review)', *Tijdschrift Voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 22 (1860), 312–20.
[200] 'Schetsen Eener Mail-Reize (Review)', *Tijdschrift Voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 24 (1862), 314–6; an extract of a version of the diary was published earlier in Jan Frederik Gerrit Brumund, 'Schetsen Eener Overlandreis', *Tijdschrift Voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 20 (1858), 209–29.

one. That theme and its many manifestations will continue to be a recurring feature of the analysis in the remaining chapters.

It is also apparent from the preceding examination that the genre found its way to the shelves and salon tables of a broad metropolitan audience and had an appeal far beyond any specific interest in colonial matters, as shown by the incorporation of fragments and extracts of the genre in general-purpose readers like *Leisure Hour* or *Het Leeskabinet* as well as in lighter colonial publications. In turn, this mainstream appeal was evidently exploited for weightier ends by more serious-minded publications, such as the varied pro-colonisation and pro-emigration periodicals published in London that sought to attract a wider readership for their political programme; simultaneously, established colonial societies were wary of the newly popular phenomenon, seeing in it a reflection of their more general, gradual losing of control as a new age of empire, with corresponding new people and new habits, kicked in. Colonial tourism was superficially frivolous – often ostentatiously so – yet at the same time deadly serious and political. This duality will be pursued further in the next chapter, where we move from outside to inside, turning the focus from the context and broad characteristics of the genre to an analysis of the most salient narrative and stylistic strategies employed by these books to re-imagine this new touristic and contested image of empire.

Chapter 3

Leisure on the road: styles and recurring themes

3.1. Time and space in popular colonial travel writing

Before moving on to a close reading of the narratives and the place-specific content of popular colonial travel writing, it is necessary to consider the wider literary and stylistic characteristics of the genre. It is a peculiarity of this group of books that, as noted above, they self-consciously describe places that had, at the time, already received a good deal of attention and representation in the colonial corpus; moreover, many of the writers acknowledge that their works cannot be considered to make significant additions to the informational content or the knowledge value of earlier publications. A lack of ambition or lofty aims should not, however, obscure the fact that these writers were doing something different and giving colonial literature a fresh twist in the process. This difference is primarily stylistic, a matter of representation and focus; a consequence of a number of authorial choices that served to change the image of the colonies of the region as represented to the reading public. Here we consider the peculiarities of the representation and conceptualization of time and space as they appear to the reader in these works.

It has already been noted, in the analysis of the prefaces of these works that was presented in the previous section, that their authors often sought to represent their writing process as somewhat accidental and slapdash, a consequence of circumstances rather than of personal choice and in any case assailed by various outside disturbances and distracting factors. This leads us to consider a characteristic of the kind of time that is written across these pages: this is lived-in time, momentary and contingent, changing and personal. Fast, too. It is tempting to read the influence of steam-powered mobility into such accounts that emphasise the rapidity of travel and its changing impressions; in practice, though, such techno-teleological simplifications should be avoided. The steam-ship was an

unavoidable aspect of colonial travel in the Indian Ocean of the time, but on land – and much of the travel in the books here considered takes place over land – it was still horses and carriages that formed the primary mode of transportation over longer trajects. It is, then, the cultural mode of representation, rather than the technological mode of transportation, that defines the stylistic emphasis on the rapidity of travel and the variability of the landscape.

When Kinloch emphasises that his work contains "the record of a *hurried* visit to the Straits and to the Island of Java"; or when Van der Chijs insists that his "*fleeting* [*vluchtige*] impressions" [emphasis in both cases mine] prevent him from making serious judgments, they are both establishing the limits of their genre, and pleading for an appropriate response from the reader.[201] Their work is not to be compared to the kind of serious literature that requires time and dedication both to write and to adequately take in; it is, instead, to be seen as almost improvisational and certainly impressionistic, a writing in motion both as regards its subject matter – travel – and its internal logic, casually flitting from one topic to another. The same writerly ethos is apparent in many of the titles of the works: as, for example, William Walker's *Jottings*, in the sense of brief notes scribbled down in haste; or the *Rambles* of both Augustus De Butts and Kinloch, the choice of word cleverly suggesting the aimless and casual tone of both their travels and the accounts thereof – or rather, it would be clever were it not a literary device adopted by dozens of publications of a similar nature in the middle decades of the century.

That this chaotic sense of hurry and aimlessness extends – or is thought desirable by the authors to make it appear to extend – from the travels themselves to the process of writing is apparent from the many references made to the incompleteness or lack of proper preparation of the published works. The scene as presented by Davidson is perhaps the most colourful, comprising not only a "lack of a desk" and the "continual interruptions from three young children" but all of this onboard a ship, with "a perpetual liability to be pitched leeward, paper and all."[202] The struggles of Gevers Deynoot were more dramatic, having lost his Indies notebooks in an accident, not that it stopped him from publishing his account, of course: "had I been able to rescue my notes, personally written down on the spot, from the shipwreck, I could have relayed more; now it is only the impressions of a tourist as briefly recalled from memory."[203] The word 'tourist' here is important, for even though the term was not at the time, nor for another couple of decades more, widely in use to describe travellers in the

[201] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, vii; Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, frontmatter.
[202] Davidson, *Trade and Travel*, i.
[203] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, frontmatter.

colonies (especially in the Dutch literature) it nevertheless makes a direct connection between the type of literary activity that Gevers Deynoot and the other writers here considered were engaged in, and the booming tourist culture of contemporary Europe.

The primary consequence of adopting this kind of touristic, impressionistic style in describing the colonies was to emphasise the personal content of these accounts over the kind of abstract and structured information that could be find in the many hefty works of colonial science that were produced in the nineteenth century, or the supposed distance and impersonality of works produced by the colonial administration and its many adjunct parts. Time in these more popular and populist works takes on a smaller, more human scope – reduced to the length of a journey or, at best, a stay of several years in the East – as opposed to the geological or evolutionary time dealt with by famous naturalists like Franz Wilhelm Junghuhn or Alfred Russel Wallace who also travelled in the region at the time. This compression of time into more human dimensions also affects the depiction of people, always favouring the individual and his life-span over great narratives of groups and entire peoples. Thus, for example, Verkerk Pistorius's lament on account of his visit to Singapore: "… our Indian travel accounts are the poorest as regards interesting personalities. Very rarely does one find portraits or cursory impressions of persons of some name, and all the more, descriptions of the races of men."[204] He is interested in the individual, in "a couple of Easterners of name and worth", and sets himself against the older, conventional forms of colonial literature that traced the narratives of entire populations from the dawn of history all the way to the present day.

The time of the tourist is characteristically full of incident, fundamentally lived-in and always seen from the perspective of an individual. In such a frame, the past has no concrete structure, becoming second-hand anecdote at best. In fact, the primary structuring element of the narrative is the visual apparatus of the author himself. For example, among the many brief accounts by Dutch visitors passing through Ceylon, and in particular through the port city of Point de Galle, we find a the many temporal layers of the island mixed up carelessly and presented primarily in the order that they catch the author's eye.[205] And the first thing to catch the eye of most Dutch travellers are, naturally enough, the remains of the period of Dutch colonisation of the island: the VOC emblem sculpted onto the city walls of Point de Galle is mentioned by several of the authors, perhaps the most prominent symbol of the island's Dutch history, though now displayed alongside a British coat of

[204] A.W.P. Verkerk Pistorius, *Een bezoek aan Singapore en Djohor: eene voordracht* ('s Gravenhage, 1875), 12.
[205] A brief overview of Dutch descriptions of Ceylon can be found in Zonneveld, 'Ceylon in Reisverhalen', 35–45.

arms.[206] The fort built by the Dutch is also commonly commented on, its strength and impregnability praised by Van Heerdt who feels, as a Dutchman, "ashamed of the actions of [the Dutch] Governor Angelbeek" who surrendered it to the English in 1795 "without a fight." Other details considered worthy of notice are the gravestones and coats of arms of the Dutch governors to be seen in "the now English" church. What is notable of all these examples is that the way they are presented they are sights that also function as historical anecdotes or signposts, and each of them refers to the same moment in the history of the island: the handover of power from the Dutch to the British, or the English as they are frequently referred to. Moreover, each of them symbolises power and domination, from the coats of arms to the fort and to the monuments for governors: the view of Ceylon transmitted through these fleeting glimpses is therefore one that gives primacy to narratives of colonisation and rule through their unavoidable visual presence.

The hierarchy of notability that orders Dutch accounts of Ceylon has a clear enough temporal aspect: first and foremost are the traces of Dutch colonisation, dating from between 1640 and 1796; in second place, and viewed specifically from the perspective of Dutch loss, comes the period of British rule, represented by its symbols now set aside the earlier, Dutch ones. A distant third, and in fact absent from several accounts, is the more distant, pre-Dutch, history of Portuguese presence on the island. E.H. Boom's travel guide covers this with a single sentence, simply stating that "the Portuguese were the first Europeans to settle here in 1505"; Van der Chijs is equally brief but at least he hints at the reason why the Portuguese is history is so quickly passed over, remarking that "of the Portuguese rule there are few if any remains to be found."[207] The story of the Portuguese, not being – overtly – inscribed in stone and in the structures of the city, largely escapes the attention of our travellers. Yet even so it is still more remarked upon than the pre-European history of the island, the very possibility of which seems to simply not occur to most of these authors, or if it does, as for Boom, it does so in the shape of a legend from a mythological rather than historical time: "there is a tradition among the people that this island was the location of paradise."[208] Yet it isn't exactly that this apparent lacuna can simply be ascribed to racism or an ideology of European superiority; nor even merely to ignorance, though that almost certainly did play a role among this group of authors who, for the most part, had no particular expertise in the history of the region, even of the Dutch

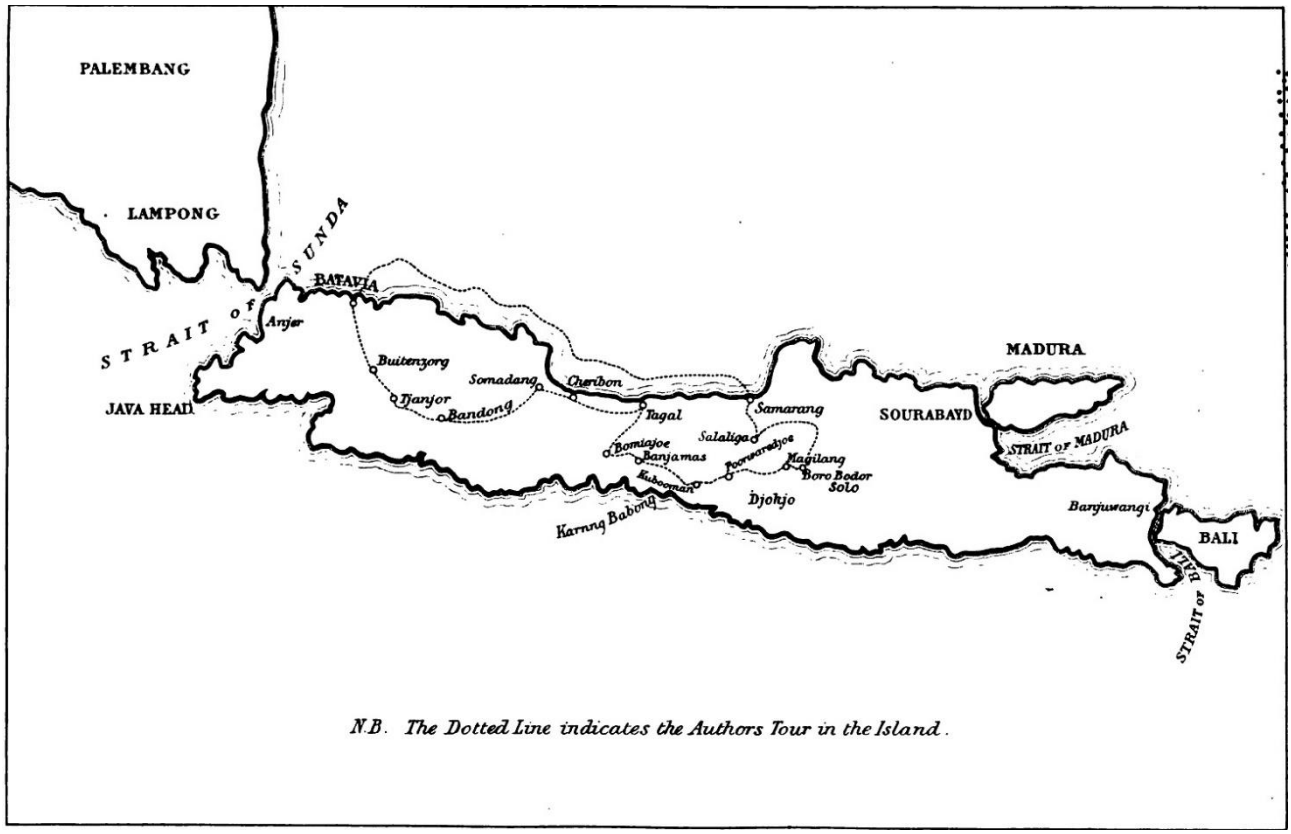
[206] For example, Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 19; E. H. Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië: Overlandreis naar Batavia; zeereis naar Batavia, Batavia en omstreken, etc* (Zutphen, 1864), 38–9; Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 20.
[207] Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 40; Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 20.
[208] Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 40.

colonies. The primary reason is the authors' itinerary of travel, which rarely took them much beyond Point de Galle, where their ships stopped over, or at best Colombo, about half a day's travel away by horse. The island has its share of ruins and monuments from the pre-European period, but these passers-by on their mail-journey simply had no time to go find them: their impressions are delimited not only by what is most familiar and noticeable, like the famous VOC emblem, but also by what is available and visible among the most convenient routes.

If the tourist's itinerary and perspective, with their gaps and blind spots, become the structuring device around which the chronology of the visited locations is narrated, it is only natural that the same goes for the spatiality of the same. These travel books are not works of geography, and they show little interest in providing information or ascribing meaning and content to the blank spaces beyond the paths travelled on. This kind of subject-centred conception of space is readily apparent in the map of Java affixed to the beginning of Kinloch's *De Zieke Reiziger*, which can be seen in Illustration 1 below. The most striking feature of the map is its emptiness, which is in fact a stylistic choice: a number of smaller islands, especially around the western end of Java, are not shown, a simplification unnecessary for what is a full-page illustration. Great swathes of the inland are equally empty: clearly this is no topographical map, but nor is it much of anything else, either. Apart from a few capitalised names of larger cities and islands, the only towns inscribed on the map are those the author passed through. It is first and foremost a map of his individual journey, not of Java.

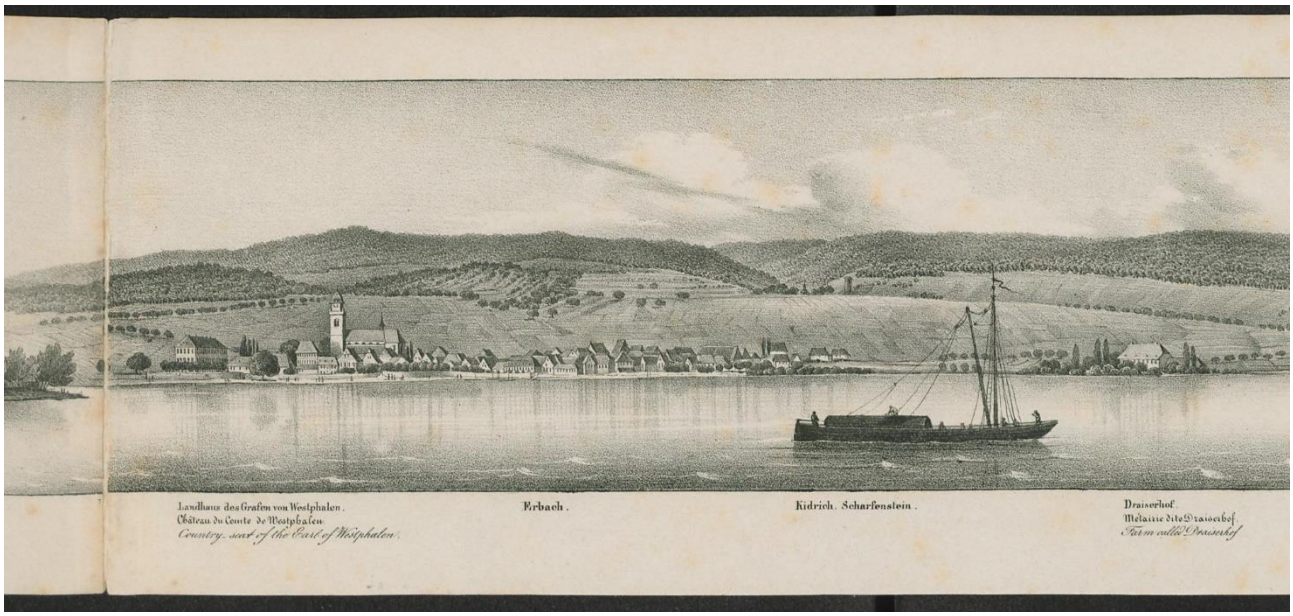
Java as presented in the map is doubly stripped, firstly of content, as quite literally the only markings on the map are the towns the author himself visited; and secondly, of context, as the single hint of a world existing outside the tight framing of the map is the southern tip of Sumatra that extends into view. It is not a reasonable way to present the Dutch East Indies, the majority of which is cut out – even the relation of the archipelago to the neighbouring British possessions can nowhere be divined. But that is not the intention here. Rather, the map presents the island as a subjective experience, wrapped around the author's narrative. This feature, common in the popular travel books of the period, is taken to an extreme in this particular example, as the map does not even acknowledge the existence of infrastructure and travel routes, presenting instead only a single smooth continuous line reflecting neither the contours of the terrain or the paths taken by actual roads. It is a line that merely traces the author's steps, abruptly beginning and ending in the port of Batavia, the scene of both arrival and departure. A dotted line – how better to depict the transience of experience as opposed to the permanence of concrete infrastructure?

A conceptualisation of space entirely different from Kinloch's non-map can be seen in a near-contemporary – published ca. 1840 – official itinerary map of Java, a detail of which can be seen below. The map makes clear the extensive and, for the time, relatively sophisticated network of roads



Ill. 1. The map of Java printed in the frontmatter of Charles Walter Kinloch's De Zieke Reiziger (1853).

Ill. 2. A detail from an "itinerary map" of Java (ca. 1840) by L.G.I.G. Schönermark and G. Herber, showing the extent of the road network in West Java between Batavia and Cheribon. Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden, D D 54,6.



Ill. 3. A section of the fold-out illustration in F.C. Vogel's Panorama des Rheins (1833). The reader is supposed to move along the illustration as he travels on the river, folding it out sheet by sheet.

that covered routes between settlements – thick double lines with zigzagging edges for the main post roads, double lines for "major interior roads for carriages", single lines for smaller roads for horses. Comparison with Kinloch's map shows not only that the path in the latter is drawn with a free hand, ignoring the actual bends of the road taken, but also that the placement of the major towns on the route is rather liberal to say the least. Most importantly, the two maps reflect the difference between the administrative and informative concerns of official maps and travel as a person-centred experience, respectively.

The subjectivity of space, and spatial representation, in these works extends beyond illustrations and maps and into the language of the narratives. In fact, what is notable is the general lack of reliance on maps to represent space in what is a subgenre of travel writing. Several of the works are altogether without maps of any sort; only E.H. Boom's *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië* – which, as noted above, doubles as a structured guidebook – has more than one, that is, two: one of the city and environs of Batavia, and another of the Dutch East Indies as a whole, on this occasion with context and all. Naturally this can plausibly be explained with economical reasoning. The majority of these works – with notable exceptions that will be discussed in the next section – are pamphlets and booklets aiming for the lower-to-middle end of the market; illustrations remained costly though increasingly less so in the period; and certainly it would have seemed unnecessary for a publisher to go to the trouble of seeking out up-to-date detailed maps of far-flung colonies to furnish books that

often quite openly flaunted the unsuitability of their contents for serious, learned contexts and discussions. There is, however, more than simple economics at play.

The genre of tourist guidebooks, even in its more established form – in the shape of the famous Murray and Baedeker guides – in contemporary Europe, largely eschewed cartographical representation in favour of text-form itineraries of suggested routes. As regards illustrations, certain publishers of travel guides at the time took the idea of subject-centrism in spatiality to its natural conclusion in the so-called panoramas that presented travel as a series of scenes and vistas from the traveller's perspective, as opposed to the bird's-eye view of a map. A particularly impressive example, F.C. Vogel's *Panorama des Rheins* (1833) consists of two continuous fold-out depictions of the entire right and left banks of the Rhine, all the way from Mainz to Coblenz, as they would be seen by a passenger on a boat, with simple inscriptions providing the names of towns and major sights along the way.[209] The sheer geographical scope of such a depiction is impressive, and all the more so when considering that all of it is given without ever relinquishing the subjective, moving perspective of the individual. All of these examples: the travel guides of the period, the *Panorama* and the colonial travel books here considered consistently privilege the traveller's, or tourist's, point of view over any idea of objective or abstracted observation.

In the absence of maps it is most often left to the written narrative to convey a sense of space to the reader, and the narrative naturally enough remains tied up with the view opening up for the traveller-author. The repeated references to passing through establish the limits of such a scheme clearly enough. "Descriptions of the scenes through which I passed, and reminiscences of the adventures I encountered *en route*" is how d'Almeida characterises his work.[210] The route, of course, does not reach everywhere, especially when one travels in a hurry. So Van der Chijs, for example, is forced to turn back on his brief tour of Ceylon: "we would gladly have ridden through to Colombo, to see some more of this beautiful island, but had to return onboard by 11 o'clock; the ship does not wait."[211] Here, time and space meet: the lack of time, the hurry and contingency of the tourist's programme – the possibility of an accident, or the schedule of a ship – work to delimit the scope of his travels, the number and nature of places he can cover before returning home.

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[209] *F.C. Vogel's Panorama Des Rheins Oder Ansichten Des Rechten Und Linken Rheinufers von Mainz Bis Coblenz*, (Frankfurt am Main, 1833).
[210] William Barrington D'Almeida, *Life in Java: With Sketches of the Javanese; in Two Volumes. Vol. 1.* (London, 1864), vii.
[211] Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 19.

For context, it is important to note that in the immediately preceding decades, in the first half of the nineteenth century, the dominant form of travel writing from the region was still exploratory. For the Dutch case, this notably consisted of the various publications by the scholars of the Natuurkundige Commissie voor Nederlandsch-Indië ('Commission for Natural Studies in the Dutch Indies') which conducted numerous expeditions in the archipelago in the years 1820-1850 – expeditions whose purpose it naturally was to probe beyond the beaten path, and in as much detail as possible.[212] For Ceylon and the Straits, less extensive spaces that had by the nineteenth century been rather thoroughly explored, the primary genre of literary description until the middle decades of the century was that of the historical or statistical compendium, another genre that by its nature aims at abstracted and categorical representation with complete spatial coverage. Naturally, more scientifically-minded travel books continued to be published, especially around the peripheries of the region, from either expeditions to the more outlying islands of the Indonesian archipelago, or from marine survey voyages such as that of H.M.S. Fly, which touched upon Eastern Java in the mid-1840s. Yet as far as the colonial centres of the region, with significant European populations – such as the three cases chosen for this study – are concerned, the popular travel writing that started to trickle out from the 1840s onward, beginning with Ceylon, radically changed the logic of spatial representation, reducing the varied expanses of that island, and of Java and the Straits Settlements, into brief checklists alongside the itinerary of a casual traveller.

A related feature of the representation of colonial reality in popular travel writing has less to do with maps, or with longitudes and latitudes, and more with the depiction of social spaces. The traveller for leisure divides space up in different ways than an explorer does, and expects a different kind of sociability from the destinations of his travel. In concrete terms, it is a question of infrastructure: the tourist travels from hotel to hotel, or across the seas on a steamship that doubles as a moving hotel itself.[213] Moreover, the routes he takes are to a large extent predetermined by where others have gone before and continue to go.[214] It is here that the culture of leisurely travel most clearly entangled with the practices of power: not only did travellers frequently journey from one receiving

[212] Individuals related to the Commissie who published travel accounts include the botanist Caspar Georg Carl Reinwardt and the (among other things) geologist Franz Wilhelm Junghuhn.

[213] On the experience of mobility on steam ships, see Martin Dusinberre and Roland Wenzlhuemer, 'Being in Transit: Ships and Global Incompatibilities', *Journal of Global History*, 11 (2016); Roland Wenzlhuemer, 'The Ship, the Media, and the World: Conceptualizing Connections in Global History', *Journal of Global History*, 11 (2016); Douglas Hart, 'Sociability and "Separate Spheres" on the North Atlantic: The Interior Architecture of British Atlantic Liners, 1840-1930', *Journal of Social History*, 44 (2010), 189–212.

[214] Harry Liebersohn, 'Recent Works on Travel Writing', *The Journal of Modern History*, 68 (1996), 618.

resident or assistant resident to the next, with letters of recommendation in hand; their paths also often exactly reproduced those taken by authorities on their periodic official inspections. Thus, for example, Kinloch's route on Java closely followed that of the Governor-General Duymaer van Twist on his first trip across the island, also in 1852, even to the extent of passing through the exact same tea and coffee plantations near Bandung.[215] Routes were also often determined or limited by legislation and regulations, so that for example all passenger ships leaving or entering the Straits Settlements had to depart or arrive at one of the three major ports – Georgetown in Penang, Malacca or Singapore – and touching down elsewhere was illegal.[216] Such referred routes, with their attendant itineraries, were becoming well-established by the 1850s, making it increasingly easy to compare experiences between different travellers but also giving authorities more of a control over what visitors saw.

Popular travel, as is apparent from the term, is also a social activity in a way that scientific expeditions and surveying voyages are not. Thus we have, in the Dutch mail-journey accounts, the repeated roll-calls of who was there *too*, who shared the journey with the authors, and depictions of the social life onboard, of the "talkativeness and relaxed cosiness that gave the appearance of many years of acquaintance among those present", as Van Heerdt puts it.[217] This kind of gentle sociability is the prevailing tone of the travel literature here considered: it emphasises these travellers' preference, not only for the familiar over the unknown, but also for the comfortable over the uncertain. Certainly there are some among the authors, like the big-game hunter Samuel White Baker, who boast of their "anecdotes of individual risk and hairbreadth escapes", but the majority tend to agree with the view put forward by Van der Chijs, remembering a famous Dutch adventurer of the late eighteenth century: "I was constantly reminded of the travels of Haafner and of his fervent descriptions, without ever being subjected to any of the dangers that he encountered."[218] It is a quote that encapsulates not only the author's personal preferences, but also a fundamental shift in the realities of colonial travel between his time and a mere half-century earlier.

Depictions of hotels, of the quality of the accommodation and the level of service, are everywhere in these books, often threatening to take centre-stage over and above the outdoor reality

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[215] The governor-general's journey is described in the correspondence of his wife M.J. Duymaer van Twist: 'Extracten van de briefwisseling tussen M.J. Duymaer van Twist aan haar zuster J.C.J.B. Cost Budde-Beck betreffende de reis naar en over Java' (1851-1855), NA Den Haag, Collectie 101 A.J. Duymaer van Twist (2.21.058), inv. nr. 56.

[216] 'Act for the Regulation of Passenger Ships' (Act XXXI, 1867), in NA London, Colonial Office Records, Straits Settlements Acts, CO 274/1.

[217] Heerdt, *Mijne reis met de landmail*, 11.

[218] Samuel White Baker, *The Rifle and the Hound in Ceylon* (London, 1854), viii; Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 18.

of colonial life. Not that these depictions are even mostly positive or anything like glowing recommendations of the establishments visited: on the contrary, accommodation-related mishaps and disappointments appears to be almost a cherished trope of the genre, often described in lively detail. J.F.G. Brumund's stay in the Mansion House Hotel in Point de Galle provides a good example: not only did he have to suffer the "martyrdom", as he puts it, of the fierce mosquito bites and the ruckus made by two drunk Englishmen playing billiards, he was also subjected to the indignity of sleeping on a couch in the "lady's room" – a salon of some sort – that was only made ready for him at some point towards midnight. But, all martyrdom aside, it makes for a good story, a splash of low-stakes humour that takes up a couple of pages of his account and draws a smile or two from the reader. Brumund himself is fully aware of how small his complaints in fact are, compared to the overseas adventurers of the past for whom "there were adventures and strange incidents everywhere on an Indian journey"; instead, his journey from Batavia to Europe has become "more comfortable than a boat trip from Amsterdam to The Hague used to be." Nostalgically but, at the same time, with more than a hint of relief, he concludes: "all the poetry of travel is a bygone thing; everyday it becomes, like everything, more flat and prosaic."[219] And indeed, how could you argue otherwise, if the greatest travails of a journey across half the planet consist of nothing but some insistent mosquitoes and a few rowdy hotel guests disturbing your sleep?

There are a lot of references to infrastructure that serve to highlight the penchant of these travellers, and of their chosen genre of writing, for comfort and sociability over risk-taking and duress. Hotels and steamships are one part of it, as are the reassuring if restrictive schedules of ships and carriage services. Servants, generally non-Europeans, and the constant, often-humorous misunderstandings with them, are a recurrent topic. Yet it should be remembered that travel in the colonies was not the same as contemporary tourism in Europe. Comparatively, the infrastructure was lacking, though less and less so; the number of travellers far more restricted. Singapore, Colombo and Batavia certainly boasted hotels, more than one even; but not everywhere on Java did. Here we come to another face of the social reality of these travellers: in a hotel or on a ship, one could pay his way to comfort, and social life in those contexts is almost by definition among equals, though with a separation between first and second-class passengers; or guests paying more or less. Elsewhere, as for example in the smaller towns of Java, the social dynamic was different. Generally, one had to rely on the good graces of the local officialdom, possibly acquired through mutual acquaintances or letters

[219] Brumund, *Schetsen eener mail-reize*, 67–8.

of recommendation. Yet such letters, even when used, were nothing more than a concrete symbol of the two-fold commonalities – ethno-cultural and class-based – between traveller and host: both were European, or in any case could at least confidently identify as such; and both represented the respectable classes of colonial society. As the following sections will show, these two parameters worked to circumscribe the travel narratives contained in these works just as effectively as coordinates of time and space did.

3.2. Sources of information

A notable feature of popular travel writing is that it is, in most cases, a second-generation genre: as already noted, these are generally not books written by explorers or adventurers, instead treading relatively familiar ground. Consequently, their relationship with information, as it pertains to the places travelled through, is different. The author of a popular work does not need to find out or discover new things, for he already has the fruits of the labours of that first generation to hand. There is an epistemological shift: the author goes from being a *source* of information – questioning, probing, examining the landscapes and people around him – to a *filter*, making use of pre-published, often more scholarly or information-heavy works and extracting from those what is necessary to contextualise his personal observations. This change is not always made explicit in the texts, as citations are at best haphazard and often entirely absent, but it is clear from the level of detail and variety of information presented in many of these works, often in the form of highly condensed summaries stylistically distinct from the more personal main narrative, that the authors made use of a wealth of pre-existing literature. In the following paragraphs the example of Ceylon is used to construct an outline of such a corpus of colonial knowledge and the ways in which it fed into more popular genres of writing.

Naturally, this shift also brought about a transformation of the relationship between the traveller-author and his surroundings. Most of the authors here considered were poorly if at all acquainted with the languages local to the places they travelled in, and as much out of necessity as for comfort had to rely on other Europeans, either in print or face-to-face, for practical guidance. The experience of travel, or at least the writer's understanding of the context of the experience, therefore becomes mediated through a doubly Eurocentric lens: firstly, the author's own upbringing and conceptualisations, and secondly, the European works he consults to make sense of what he sees. This detachment from the local comes through in the following passage from Campbell's *Excursions*,

where he depicts a visit to a Buddhist temple and his attempts to engage one of the priests – "a very aged and venerable looking man" – in conversation:

> Through the medium of the rest-housekeeper, who interpreted, I asked him a number of questions; but the answers I received afforded me little information or satisfaction. But to a work recently published by Major Forbes – – entitled "Eleven Years in Ceylon," I must refer the reader for such information as he may require respecting the Boodhoo religion, as well as for what is known of the ancient history of this wonderful island, its antiquities, &c.; and also for accounts of its princely elephant-shooting, all which subjects he has handled in a very able, amusing, and truly interesting manner.[220]

This passage highlights several aspects of the role, and the uses and limitations of information in the genre of popular travel writing. Firstly, there is the inability to communicate directly with the priest, necessitating the mediation of the rest-housekeeper. Secondly, the mediated conversation is considered unsuccessful. Whether this is because of inadequate translation or simple misunderstanding between the participants is not clear, but Campbell's aside that he received "little information or satisfaction" is telling, as it mixes a moment of learning with an expectation of entertainment and enjoyment. Thirdly, and crucially, the author shrugs aside this failed attempt at communication, indeed making use of it as an opportunity to recommend to the reader a superior source of information: Major Forbes's *Eleven Years in Ceylon* (1840), published three years previously. The notion that a British major of the 78th Highlanders regiment, even after an eleven-year tour of duty on Ceylon, was better-placed to provide information on Buddhism than an actual priest of the religion, and also on the history and antiquities of the island, is of course blatantly absurd. What Campbell presumably means here is that the information contained in that book is simply more intelligible and better suited to him and his needs. Forbes's book is in the same language and the same genre as Campbell's; and its contents exhibit the exact mix of information and satisfaction mentioned above. It is no coincidence that Campbell mentions elephant-shooting alongside Buddhism and antiquities as topics of interest, or that he characterises Forbes as a writer as both "able" and "amusing". In their shared genre, information is not only derived from European sources and mediators, its primary function is to give flavour and local specificity to the entertainment of the narrative.

Naturally Forbes was not the only author Campbell drew upon in his narrative of Ceylon: several other sources are noted throughout the two volumes of his *Excursions*. Many of these hail from the turn of the century, the period immediately following the handover of the European-

[220] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 42.

controlled parts of the island from the Dutch to the British in 1795 as a consequence of the tumult of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe. Examples are Robert Percival's *An Account of the Island of Ceylon* (1803) and James Cordiner's *A Description of Ceylon* (1807), and the Viscount Valentia's account in his broader *Voyages and Travels to India, Ceylon, the Red Sea, Abyssinia and Egypt* (1809).[221] Later works referenced include *The History of Ceylon from the Earliest Period to the Year MDCCCXV* (1817), credited to the pseudonym Philalethes, and Dr John Davy's *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon* (1821), as well as the "just published" *Manual of Useful Information upon Ceylon* by J.W. Bennett.[222] The latter, though now untraceable, appears to be an earlier version of *Ceylon and its Capabilities*, by the same author, published in the same year as Campbell's *Excursions* in 1843.[223] A further source of information for Campbell were government-sponsored publications such as the *Ceylon Almanac*, to which he refers more than once.[224]

The above list of works cited by Campbell forms and outline of an emerging corpus of printed works dealing with the topic of Ceylon from a variety of perspectives; a corpus on which an author of a more leisurely style could draw to fill in the blanks in his own narrative. It is not peculiar to Campbell, though he does name his sources more consistently than most of his contemporaries. For example, De Butts includes an entire appendix based on information sourced from the *Ceylon Almanac* and also references Davy more than once; and Walker uses the later, similarly scholarly *Sketches of the Natural History of Ceylon* (1861) by Emerson Tennent.[225] Of the others, Sullivan's *The Bungalow and the Tent* makes obvious use of both historical and statistical reference works, providing far more detail than the author could possibly have collected himself, but the journalistic style of the work dispenses with explicit citations. In any case, it is clear that by the 1840s information was readily available in print form. That corpus developed in stages: already in 1822, an unpublished note under the title 'Hints for a Young Man Going to Ceylon' listed several of the works mentioned above, including Cordiner and Davy, as advisable reading for the long sea voyage.[226] This guide, apparently prepared for the benefit of a brother of an official in the Colonial Office, suggests the formation of an early canon of British works on the island that continued to shape narratives in the

[221] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 47, 151.
[222] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 72, 76, 93.
[223] The connection of the title mentioned by Campbell to *Ceylon and its Capabilities* is mentioned in a short review of the latter in *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Miscellany*, Vol I (1843), 534.
[224] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 72.
[225] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 79; Walker, *Jottings*, 209.
[226] 'Hints for a Young Man Going to Ceylon' (1822) in 'Pearl Fishery and various memoranda,' NA London, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 59/28.

following decades. Several layers can be identified within that canon: in the first group of works, from the first decade of the 19th century, are the exhaustive all-around descriptions of the island of Cordiner and Percival, designed to introduce the largely unknown and then newly acquired colony to readers. In the decades that followed, more specialist and professional works emerged as a larger and more varied English population experienced the island first-hand: these include the Philalethes's treatise on history, or Davy's accounts which draw largely on his expertise and interests as a medical doctor. Finally, Campbell's generation, from about 1840 onward, of popular travel writers felt that their environment was sufficiently mapped out by earlier works that they could focus on rather more frivolous topics such as the elephant-shooting that is prominently discussed in *Excursions* as well as Forbes's *Eleven Years* and several of the other works on Ceylon considered here.

Knowledge derived from and approved by fellow European authors trumps any local sources, so that when Campbell discusses the pre-colonial history of the island, he admits that "[t]he Singalese themselves possess - - many curious documents, or ancient records, which are supposed to contain the history of the country", but that in those sources, "where truth is obvious, so much of what is fabulous has been mixed up with it, as to render it difficult, if not hopeless, to attempt to separate the one from the other."[227] Yet this indigenous knowledge could be salvaged, and it is worth considering the process through which it was filtered into the popular works of the mid-nineteenth century. For this purpose, the example of the three works by Forbes, De Butts and Campbell – military men all three – published between 1840 and 1843, are illustrative. All three refer to the researches of George Turnour, a colonial administrator and prominent scholar, known among other things for his translation of Ceylonese historical documents, including the chronicle *Mahavamsa*, which appeared in print in 1836.[228] Of the authors, Forbes – by far the most scholarly-minded of the three – actually collaborated with Turnour at some stage of that work, includes some of it in his *Eleven Years*, and was generally heavily influenced by him intellectually.[229] De Butts is far less interested in scholarly matters himself, but "begs to recommend" Turnour's translation of *Mahavamsa*, which in his opinion succeeds in "penetrating the tangled labyrinth of commingled truth and fiction, which, in the lapse of ages, has wound itself round this ancient and interesting record."[230] Finally, Campbell makes no direct

[227] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 72.
[228] George Turnour, *An Epitome of the History of Ceylon: Compiled from Native Annals, and the First Twenty Chapters of the Mahawanso* (Ceylon, 1836).
[229] Jonathan Forbes, *Eleven Years in Ceylon: Comprising Sketches of the Field Sports and Natural History of That Colony, and an Account of Its History and Antiquities* (London, 1841), 5.
[230] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 134.

reference to Turnour anywhere in his work, but – as seen above – recommends Forbes's work instead, commending it in the very same terms for separating "the truth" from "the fabulous."[231]

In these works one can identify four slightly different ways to represent indigenous sources, each a little further removed from the original: firstly, Turnour's original, hands-on translation work of sources previously unknown to Europeans, based on a relative mastery of the language; secondly, Forbes's collaboration with Turnour, learning from the latter and engaging with the project as a transcriber and amateur enthusiast with at least some relevant language skills; thirdly, De Butts's reading of Turnour's published work and recognition of its value as a second-hand interpretation of local knowledge that he himself has no access to or engagement with; and finally, Campbell's perusal of Forbes's representation of Turnour's work, twice removed from the original and intermixed with hunting anecdotes and scenes of military life. It is of course a coincidence more than anything else that the order of publication of the works in question corresponds exactly to this scheme of ever-increasing distance from the original, but it does reflect the general trend in colonial travel writing at the time, and the increasing separation of popular colonial literature from more professionalized, scholarly colonial science.

Although all the examples from the corpus of printed works on Ceylon discussed above were written in English, and by British authors, it should not be assumed that its dissemination was limited to a British or Anglophone audience. The Dutch colonial travel writers of the time had access to and made use of the same works, and indeed the example of Brumund's *Schetsen* (1862) provides an illuminating case study on how these materials disseminated across Europe and the world. Brumund quotes Percival when discussing how the Dutch originally ceded the island to the British, but his reference is not to the original but to a French translation, *Voyage à l'ile de Ceylon* (1803).[232] Other references are mediated by way of the periodical press of the day. One of his sources is an article in the 1843 volume of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, which turns out to be an excerpt from the above-mentioned *Ceylon and its Capacities* by J.W. Bennett.[233] Another is a piece or unclear provenance from the Dutch journal *De globe* from 1849, which in its turn cites a number of British authors, including Davy, Cordiner and Forbes.[234] And all of these sources are of course mixed up with Dutch ones: the author of that *De globe* piece cites Jacob Haafner, a turn-of-the-century adventurer;

[231] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 72.
[232] Brumund, *Schetsen eener mail-reize*, 60.
[233] Brumund, *Schetsen eener mail-reize*, 80.
[234] Brumund, *Schetsen eener mail-reize*, 79; H. Picard, *De globe: keur van reisverhalen en merkwaardigheden van vreemde landen en volken* (1849), 323.

there is also a clarifying footnote by the editor of the journal drawing on Abraham van der Aa's compendium *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië* (1851 – different from E.H. Boom's travel guide of the same name discussed elsewhere in this thesis); and Brumund himself juxtaposes Percival's narrative of history with that provided by Dirk van Hogendorp.[235]

The mixture of translations, anonymous quotes, excerpts published in magazines, editorial comments and second- or third-hand citations described above perfectly encapsulates how the production of knowledge about the colonies permeated European literary culture in the 19th century across borders and genres; the two examples of Campbell and Brumund also show just how much information these kinds of popular mid-century authors had at their disposal, the great majority of it produced after 1800. (The notable exception is Robert Knox's prisoner narrative *An Historical Relation of the Island of Ceylon* from 1681, to which Campbell among other refers to, but even that work was virtually unobtainable before its reproduction in Philalethes's 1817 *History of Ceylon*.) And while Ceylon is perhaps the best example (out of the areas here considered) of the richness of print materials that popular travel writing could pick and choose from, similar structures of citation can be outlined in the cases of Java and the Straits Settlements. For Java, the obvious point of reference, especially but not exclusively for British authors, is Stamford Raffles and his seminal *History of Java*: Kinloch refers to it continuously in his *Zieke reiziger*, and it is also cited in Van der Chijs's *Mijne reis naar Java*.[236] Douglas Hamilton, while describing his brief sojourn to Java, draws on two very different books: Narrative of the Surveying Voyage of H.M.S. Fly (1848) by the naturalist Joseph Jukes; and the entirely touristic *Voyage autour du monde* (second volume on Java, Siam and Canton, 1869) by the French Ludovic de Beauvoir.[237] For Dutch-speakers the available body of writings on Java was of course far greater, as can be seen from the various references in the books by Dutch authors: encyclopaedic eighteenth-century compendiums like François Valentijn's five-volume *Oud en nieuw Oost-Indiën* (1724-1726); more recent overviews like Carel van Hogendorp's *Beschouwing der Nederlandsche bezittingen* (1833); a medical reference work in P. Bleeker's *Bijdragen tot de geneeskundige topographie van Batavia* (1846); language guides like *Handleiding tot de kennis der maleische taal* (1845) or *Javaansche spraakkunst* (1835); and finally, more intimate memoirs such as W.A. van Rees's *Herinneringen uit een loopbaan van een Indisch officier* (1862).[238] It is not

[235] Picard, *De globe*, 322–3; Brumund, *Schetsen eener mail-reize*, 58.
[236] For example: Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 77; Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 45.
[237] Hamilton, *Records of Sport*, 80.
[238] The examples here are drawn from Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, xx, 46; Weitzel, *Batavia in 1858*, 9, 11, 50.

necessary to go into all of these works in greater depth, but one can see in the whole a similar outline as in the case of Ceylon: a preponderance of works published post-1800; and a general shift over the first half of the century from encyclopaedic, general reference works to more highly specialised studies.

Apart from printed works, information could of course be derived from personal meetings and discussion with people more closely acquainted with the locales. As has already been noted, this was not likely to come from interactions with non-European individuals: lack of language skills and social restraints usually made sure of that. More commonly, authors remark upon what they learned during encounters with officials, fellows travellers or plantation owners. Information acquired through such channels was of a different nature than that read in books: whereas reference works like those mentioned above could be used to provide historical outlines, to describe the characteristics of indigenous peoples or to furnish up-to-date statistics on the economics of a given colony, informal conversations were a source of more pragmatic advice.

3.3. Illustrations of leisure

What was said about maps in the previous section largely also applies to other forms of illustrations: most of the popular colonial travel books of the period made little to no use of them, presumably primarily due to the costs involved. Of the books, only about half are printed with engravings; of these, a few come with only a single illustration on or alongside the title page. The rest, nine titles in all, can be considered to use illustrations as a genuine and significantly meaningful accompaniment to their texts. While this thesis makes no attempt at an exhaustive analysis of the use of illustrations in popular colonial travel writing, such an endeavour being impossible within the space available, this section will however consider briefly the extent to which visual materials were used and the ways in which they interacted with the texts and narrative meanings of these works, as no analysis of the genre would be complete without taking those materials into account. In this section we will therefore propose, showcasing some notable examples along the way, a few key conclusions on those issues.

Recent years have seen a wealth of scholarly work discussing the visual culture of empires and the depiction of colonies and colonial life in paintings. Southeast Asia has been no exception to that trend – though Ceylon seems underserved by comparison – with several lavishly illustrated

volumes, occasionally accompanied by museum exhibitions, dedicated to the theme.[239] One common through-line in those works, equally applicable to the Dutch East Indies and the Straits Settlements, is the prominence of the landscape as the topic of choice across the nineteenth century. Susie Protschky has discussed this preference in terms of the so-called *mooi Indië* ("beautiful India") style that privileged pleasant and calm natural and agricultural landscapes as the default visual language of the Dutch empire.[240] Similarly, Sophie McAlpin has noted that the landscapes that seemed to attract British artists in Malaya were decidedly tamed, with painters seeking to emulate views of the English countryside and impose its logic on the tropical environment.[241] For the purposes of this chapter, this notable feature of colonial visual culture can usefully be interrogated from the point of view of two contemporary art theoretical concepts, the picturesque and the sublime.

The picturesque is concept that was elaborated and debated in late-eighteenth-century Britain, notably by William Gilpin in his *Three Essays* (1792).[242] From its beginnings, it was a concept that tied together the visual arts and the practice of leisurely travel: two of those essays are titled *On Picturesque Beauty* and *On Picturesque Travel*, respectively, and much of the early debates around the concept were centred on the British Lake District, arguably the birth place and undeniably an early hotspot of modern tourism.[243] The concept was developed as an attempt to codify a language for the depiction of nature that was in line with the latest fashion in travel: it called for "natural" irregularity and pleasant variety presented in a contained way on a human scale, standing between earlier ideals of ordered classical beauty and transcendent sublimity.[244] Over the early nineteenth century the Romantic sublime and the touristic picturesque became the main competing modes of

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[239] Marie-Odette Scalliet and Karin Beks, *Pictures from the Tropics: Paintings by Western Artists during the Dutch Colonial Period in Indonesia* (Wijk en Aalburg, 1999); Susie Protschky, *Images of the Tropics: Environment and Visual Culture in Colonial Indonesia* (Leiden, 2011); Hong Suen Wong and Roxana Waterson, *Singapore through 19th Century Prints & Paintings* (Singapore, 2010); Jason Toh, *Singapore through 19th Century Photographs* (Singapore, 2009); Irene Lim, *Sketches in the Straits: Nineteenth-Century Watercolours and Manuscript of Singapore, Malacca, Penang, and Batavia by Charles Dyce* (Singapore, 2003); William Farquhar, John Sturgus Bastin, and Chong Guan Kwa, *Natural History Drawings: The Complete William Farquhar Collection : Malay Peninsula, 1803-1818* (Singapore, 2010); Gael Newton, *Garden of the East: Photography in Indonesia 1850s-1940s* (Canberra, 2014); see also Syed Farid Alatas, 'The Arrest of Diponegoro: Visual Orientalism and Its Alternative', in Sanaz Fotouhi and Esmail Zeiny (eds.), *Seen and Unseen: Visual Cultures of Imperialism* (Leiden, 2017), 19–33; James R. Ryan, *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire* (London, 2013).

[240] Protschky, *Images of the Tropics*, 148–9.

[241] Sophia McAlpin, *The Landscape Palimpsest: Reading Early 19th Century British Representations of Malaya* (Clayton, 1997), 38–9.

[242] William Gilpin, *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; on Picturesque Travel; and on Sketching a Landscape* (London, 1792).

[243] Susan Glickman, *The Picturesque and the Sublime: A Poetics of the Canadian Landscape* (Montreal, 2000), 13.

[244] Stephen Copley and Peter Garside, *The Politics of the Picturesque: Literature, Landscape and Aesthetics Since 1770* (Cambridge, 1994), 4.

landscape painting. Whereas the former emphasised the majesty of nature and the smallness of the human observer in its midst, the latter sought precisely to scale down sublime sights like the Alps onto a manageable level.[245] Or, more explicitly, to "establish defined limits to the experience of nature as a psychological defence against the uncontrollably and frightfulness of the Sublime."[246] Nor was this a mere mental effort: from its beginnings, the concept was also employed "for the purpose of improving real landscape," as the subtitle of an influential 1794 pamphlet has it.[247]

Against this European cultural context it is significant that colonial landscape painting was so thoroughly dominated by the picturesque and by depictions that insert human habitations and interventions into natural scenes. That choice for control and calm was not purely aesthetic, as has been noted by many scholars. For Ceylon, Elizabeth Mjelde suggests that the picturesque was "a form of representation that coincided with, aided and served as a form of colonial violence" and used European-coded views to "delocaliz[e] Sri Lankan land and people."[248] Protschky similarly argues that the focus on "stasis, peace and prosperity" through calm rural scenes worked to legitimise colonial domination and occlude its less palatable or problematic aspects.[249] Thus, for example, the Java War of the 1820s received little if any attention from artists in the colonies, despite its massive significance for the life of the colony.[250] Nor did that language merely work to disguise domination and violence, it also actively recast the colonies as familial safe spaces full of familiar human activity. As noted by James Beattie, the sublime was generally thought of as masculine and rugged, and the picturesque as feminine and gentle: the employment of the latter style was therefore also a way reassure mid-nineteenth century concerns about unchecked masculinity and morally suspect adventurism in settler societies.[251]

The introduction above provides the general framing for the discussion of illustrations below, yet there are two specific points that are unique to the corpus of materials here and worth

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[245] Guglielmo Scaramellini, 'The Picturesque and the Sublime in Nature and the Landscape: Writing and Iconography in the Romantic Voyaging in the Alps', *GeoJournal*, 38 (1996), 49–57.
[246] James S. Ackerman, 'The Photographic Picturesque', *Artibus et Historiae*, 24 (2003), 82.
[247] Sir Uvedale Price, *An Essay on the Picturesque, as Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful: And, on the Use of Studying Pictures, for the Purpose of Improving Real Landscape* (London, 1794).
[248] Elizabeth Mjelde, 'Colonial Violence and the Picturesque', in Philip Dwyer and Amanda Nettelbeck (eds.), *Violence, Colonialism and Empire in the Modern World* (New York, 2017), 54–5.
[249] Protschky, *Images of the Tropics*, 149.
[250] Jean Gelman Taylor, 'Visual history : a neglected resource for the longue durée', in David E. F. Henley and H. G. Schulte Nordholt (eds.), *Environment, trade and society in Southeast Asia: a longue durée perspective* (Leiden, 2015), 193.
[251] Beattie, *Empire and Environmental Anxiety*, 77–8.

highlighting before proceeding further. Firstly, while cultural historians of empire have worked extensively on the politics and ideologies behind imperial visual culture, only few have drawn attention to the explicit link that exists between the colonial picturesque and early European tourism: therefore, it is not only that paintings operated on an imperialist, ideological level; they also specifically chose to wield tourist culture as the weapon of that ideology. Leisurely travel is not merely one window among others into the process of colonisation: rather, the production of imperial tourism went hand in hand with the construction of a touristic empire. Secondly, while the visual language employed by travel books was undeniably close to and influenced by the connected but distinct sphere of the visual arts, it is impossible to analyse the illustrations of those works without a due consideration for the logic of the book that underpins their employment. An analysis of that logic cannot be undertaken with reference to a single image, or a series of unrelated images: rather, one must consider the range of illustrations within a work and their relation to the text.

There are, among the group of books outlined in the previous chapter, three that employ illustrations to such an extent that they may be considered to be primarily picture-books. This is certainly true of MacKenzie's *Souvenirs of Ceylon*, subtitled *A Series of One Hundred and Twenty Illustrations of the Varied Coast, River and Mountain Scenery of the Beautiful "Eden of the Eastern Wave"* – the work is primarily intended as a visual compendium of the sights and curiosities of the island, though it also includes extensive written materials borrowed from elsewhere. John Thomson's *The Straits of Malacca* is likewise most remarkable for its illustrations, partly based on the author's pioneering original photography, numbering up to sixty-eight pieces. And finally, Douglas Hamilton's posthumously published *Records of Sport* comes embellished with just under a hundred of his sketches, and one suspects that that rich visual material was the primary motive for the book's belated publication. Of the illustrations in these three works, however, the focus in the latter two is mostly beyond the region under consideration here, on China and India respectively. While those books provide interesting examples for the ways in which the colonial spaces of Southeast Asia were connected, in the imperial imagination, with the neighbouring regions, a deeper analysis of the whole range of pictures therein falls beyond the scope of this thesis.

Beyond those three examples, the works that will be considered in this section are: of the Dutch titles, Van Heerdt's *Mijne reis* and Van der Chijs's similarly titled account; and among the British, James Campbell's *Excursions, Adventures and Field-sports*, Kinloch's *De Zieke Reiziger*, John Cameron's *Our Tropical Possessions* and Baker's *The Rifle and the Hound*. It is notable that, considering also the more richly illustrated works mentioned above, it would appear that the British books make somewhat more use of pictures; all the more so as the engravings in *De Zieke Reiziger* and *Our Tropical Possessions* are printed in colour, a feature none of the Dutch books have. This can

primarily be explained by the different nature of the Dutch books, many of which are lightweight and pamphlet-like compared to the more substantial British ones – presumably a consequence of differing print cultures at the time. As an aside, it is interesting to note that the most obvious national difference between the two groups of works has to do with the format and presentation of the books rather than their content or style of writing, hinting at a greater divergence on the level of industry than existed in authors' personal styles and preoccupations. In general, the illustrations in these works can broadly be divided in three categories, corresponding to the division of themes in the second part of this thesis: depictions of natural scenes and landscapes – the most important genre as already noted; of buildings and monuments; and finally, of people, either in groups or as individuals. Or, on the other hand, to use a different logic, they can be divided along an axis of familiar/exotic, European/foreign: are the landscapes chosen for their exoticism and curiosity or because of their resemblance to European nature; are the chosen structures modern buildings or ancient ruins; and are the people, or are they represented as being, of European ancestry or indigenous.

An analysis from this latter perspective hints at the ways in which the authors in question, or their publishers, thought about and visualised colonial society, and the relationship between Europe and Asia, familiar and exotic in a colonial setting; or at the very least at how they chose to represent it to the reading public. It also puts to test the arguments made by Mjelde and others, as to how artists sought to use images to Europeanise the colonies. Moreover, the analysis below will also pay attention to two further aspects in the use of illustrations: firstly, the positioning of the illustrations and the relations between individuals pictures within the context of a single book; and secondly, the provenance and authorship of the images, and what that tells us about the conventions of the genre. The various choices having to do with the application of imagery may of course not always be completely conscious and drawing meanings from individual images or works is a tricky endeavour, but taken as a genre, it is possible to make some general observations about the visuality it afforded to colonial realities.

In the case of landscape illustrations, one particular subject emerges as a clear favourite of the authors: the port scene, of which there were a few variations. These could be presented as seen from the sea, from on board a vessel, as in the example below of Penang from Van Heerdt (we will come back to the accompanying picture of the Sphinx); or from atop a hill, overlooking the harbour, as in the view of Singapore found in Cameron; or, finally, directly from the harbour looking out to the sea, as in the Galle view from *Souvenirs*. These are only three examples of such illustrations among many: we similarly find views of Penang, Singapore and Cirebon on Java in Kinloch; Cameron includes several of Singapore alone; and *Souvenirs of Ceylon* likewise includes several variations from both Colombo and Point de Galle. Of course, such an emphasis on the sea hardly

comes as a surprise, considering the maritime nature of each of these colonies and the networks of shipping that they both depended upon and lay at the heart of. Moreover, the theme was by no means restricted to travel literature; within the region, it was generally common in the works of nineteenth-century British artists working in Malaya, as shown by McAlpin.[252] Yet, there are certain aspects of these scenes that have a special significance when seen alongside travel accounts: for one, they tend to prominently foreground ships, and therefore transport, in their imagining of the colony, suggesting on a symbolical level the connections between these places and the wider world. Naturally, that connection could be thought of as commercial, the bustling port scenes highlighting the number of craft bringing in wares to sell, a reading suggested by scholars like Roxana Waterston.[253] Yet it also implied travel, especially in the ship-board views that placed the artist themselves in the moment of arrival.

Another common feature of this type of illustration is that they also suggest a certain kind of genteel sociability and leisure, generally in the form of casual strollers either alongside the harbour or at some well-placed lookout, as can be seen from two of the examples below. It is also notable that such figures could be either European or Asian: in the view of Galle the group of three – two men and one woman – in the centre are evidently Europeans; but in the Singapore view, an otherwise almost identical group is clearly supposed to be Asian, with loose-fitting clothes and turbans. This seems to contradicts McAlpin's suggestion that Europeans were generally depicted as observers and Asians in subordinate roles like servants.[254] What this suggests is a kind of elite sociability – the figures in both pictures appear to be relatively wealthy – where shared cultural norms and modes of leisure could override strict racial categories. Crucially, this is not racial mixing – there is no crossing of boundaries taking place in either picture – but rather a case of inclusion, on strictly defined terms, of different categories of people in an idealised image of colonial society based on European cultural norms. From the perspective of travel writing, it is also important to note that such groups could be seen to be travellers and tourists, as excursions of this sort either to viewing points – or along seaside esplanades, were a recurring feature in travel accounts, as will be seen in the following chapters. Taken as such, these illustrations become more than visualisations of colonial – elite – lifestyles: they can also be read as tips and suggestions for things to do in these places as travel destinations.

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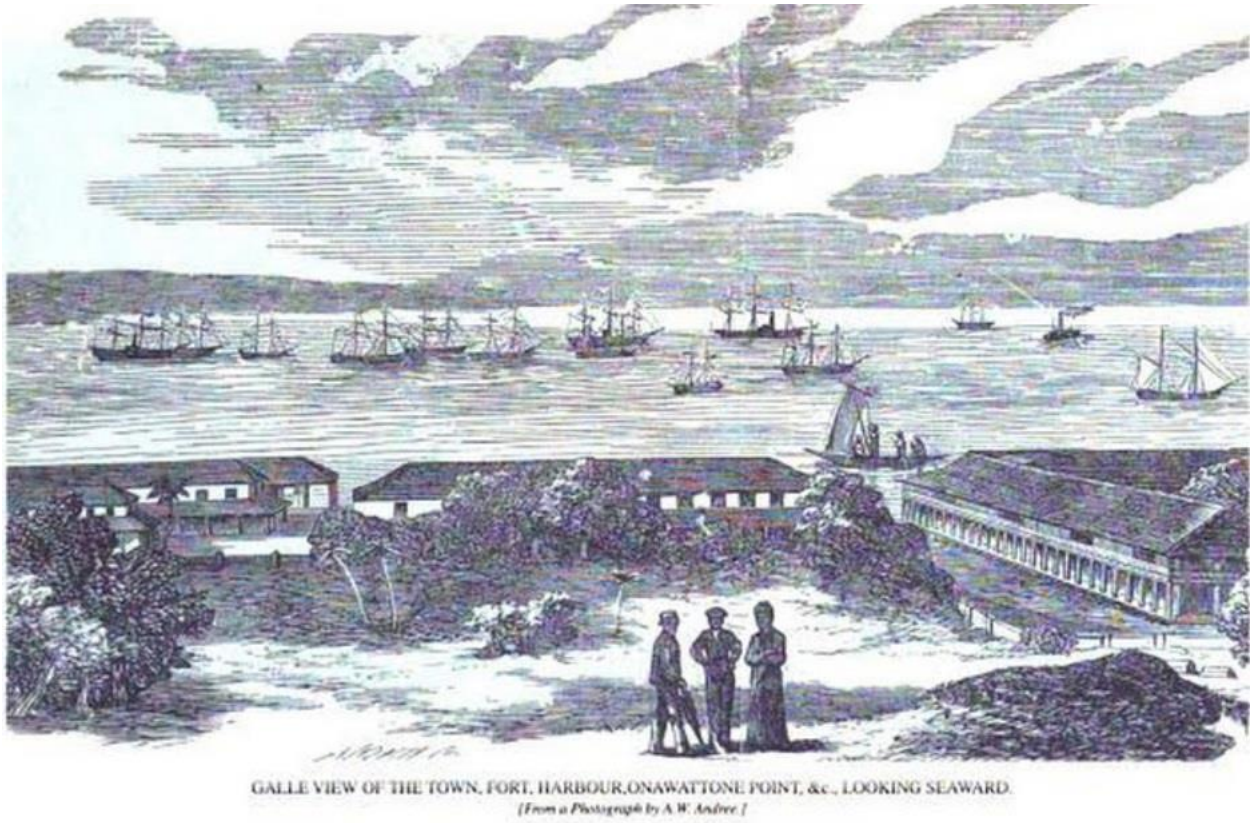
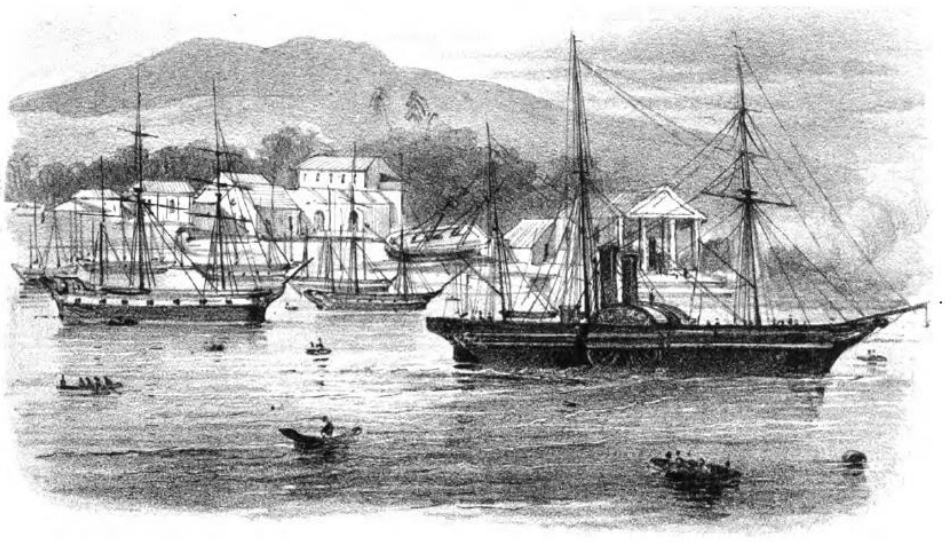
[252] McAlpin, *The Landscape Palimpsest*, 19–21.
[253] Waterston, 15
[254] McAlpin, *The Landscape Palimpsest*, 24–5.

Ill. 4. A view of Singapore from Government Hill, taken from John Cameron's Our Tropical Possessions.



Ill. 5. A view of Point de Galle and its harbor, from Souvenirs of Ceylon, edited by Alastair MacKenzie Ferguson.



Gezigt op Poeloe Pinang.

De Sphinx.
(bij de Pyramiden van Gizeh.)

Ill. 6. Two views, of Penang and the Sphinx at Giza, as presented in Van Heerdt's Mijne reis.

Another type of illustration that takes nature as its starting point are the many views of volcanoes, mountain peaks and waterfalls that can be found in several of these works, representing some of the popular sights and excursion destinations of these colonies. Some of these sites will be considered in depth through their textual descriptions in chapter four; for the illustrations, it is important to note that they have an obvious debt to the influences of European Romantic landscape painting, with its preference for the Alps, Vesuvius and other such grandiose scenes. Nor was that similarity accidental, as there is evidence already from the 1810s of colonial officials on Dutch Java advocating for European-trained painters to be sent to the East to provide appropriately Romantic depictions of their environment.[255] Of course, these are classic "sublime" sceneries in the sense discussed above, yet the treatment of the theme in these books is notably picturesque, with carefully placed buildings or figures distracting the eye from the majesty of nature and establishing a human element. In the example from Kinloch, Mount Ciremai is framed twice over firstly by the small boat in the foreground and secondly by the calm townscape of Cirebon. The volcano is flattened by the presentation, coming across less as a wonder of nature and more as an intriguing tourist sight. Similarly, another image in that work significantly and explicitly frames Mount Salak as seen "from the Buitenzorg hotel."[256] The same flatness is evident in the harbour and hill views discussed above, where the vastness of the seas is bound by harbours and dotted by numerous decorative ships; and the lush vegetation of the tropics is reduced to a mere decorative, garden-like framing for a leisurely excursion. Using a familiar visual language and fashionable imageries was a way to bring these tropical locations closer to European audiences: simultaneously, the privileging of the picturesque over the sublime worked to suggest a sense of comfortable tourism over exciting yet potentially risky adventures.

A final and particularly interesting subset of nature-centred illustrations can be found in the illustrations of hunting scenes that are peculiar to a subset of the books considered here. These images, two examples of which are given below, can be found in large numbers in Baker and Hamilton, all of whom were passionate hunters, as were De Butts and Sullivan, whose works however have no illustrations. The pictures here are noticeably more active and livelier than the sedate vistas discussed above, commonly depicting the heat of the moment and the thrill of action – the hairbreadth

[255] Marie-Odette Scalliet, '"Back to Nature" in the East Indies: European Painters in the Nineteenth Century East Indies', in Marie-Odette Scalliet and Karin Beks (eds.), *Pictures from the Tropics: Paintings by Western Artists during the Dutch Colonial Period in Indonesia* (Wijk en Aalburg, 1999), 39.
[256] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 50.

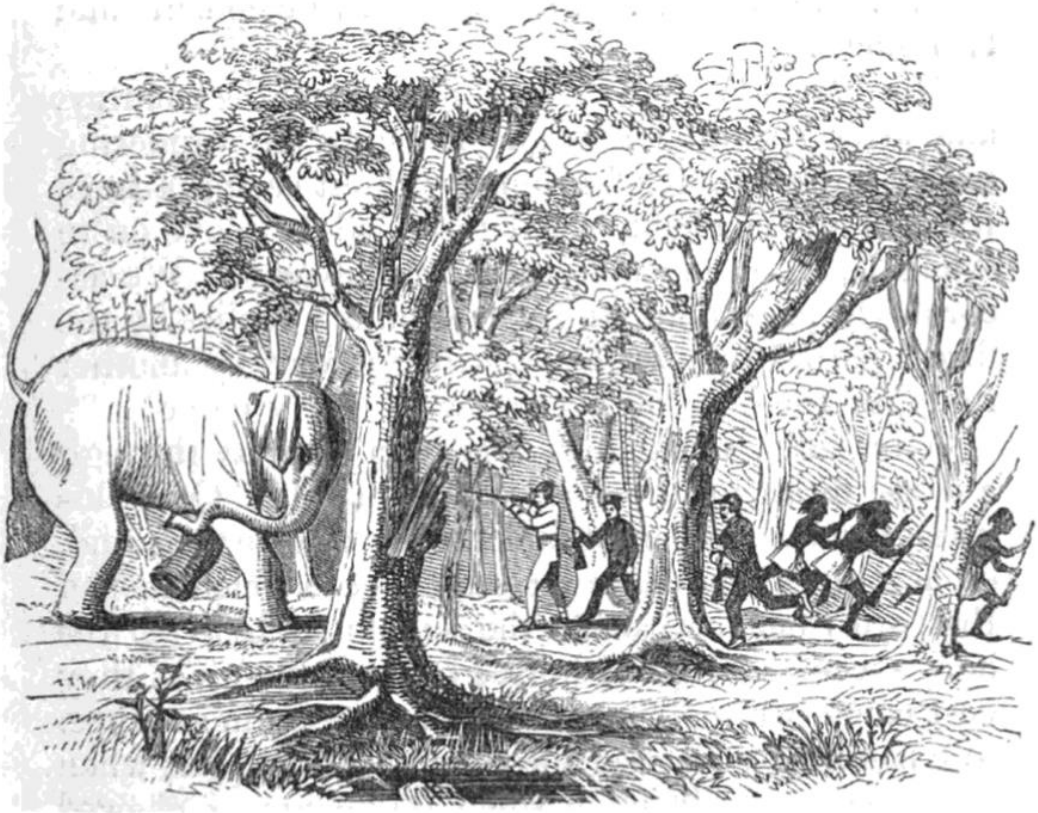
Ill. 7. A view of Mount Ciremai as seen from the sea, from Kinloch's De Zieke Reiziger.

escapes that Baker boasts of in his preface. Wildlife is the main attraction: boars, stags, wild buffaloes – and most importantly, elephants and tigers. There is action, but the agency is naturally restricted to the white hunters and the noble beasts, the protagonists of the conflict. The role that indigenous servants play in these pictures is revealing. To take the two examples, from Baker, below, we can see two options: either they are erased from the scene completely, as in the first one, which presents the author at the moment of an unlikely feat of skill and daring; or, alternatively, they are included in the picture but merely to provide contrast to the imposing European protagonist, as cowering in hiding or actively running away. It is notable that these pictures are almost always centred on the weapon, which becomes a potent symbol of European domination: it was only the white hunters that were allowed to shoot these weapons, and the indigenous servants only acted as gun-bearers. Thus, the numerous pictures depicting the moment of discharging the weapon all focus the reader's attention on this moment of peculiarly and exclusively European agency, incorporating in that act not only the dynamic of the relation between master and servant but also the supposed technological superiority of the former.

The trope of the cowardly servant, evident in the second picture, is also a recurring feature in the texts themselves, as will be discussed in chapter four, but distilled into a pictorial form as here its impact on the reader is even greater: in Baker's sketch, we have the author at centre-stage, erect and aiming his gun steadily, while everything is in flux around him, with the panicking servants hurrying to one side and the rampaging elephant closing in from the other. It is also notable that in this and many other illustrations like it, the European protagonist is face to face with the beast, a worthy opponent, while the servants, apparently unimportant, are set aside and out of sight. What such pictures conveniently – and, one suspects, intentionally – ignore is the essential service provided by these people, on whom the European hunters were regularly dependent not only for menial labour and supplies but also specialised tasks such as guiding them through the wilderness and tracking the prey. Far from passive and cowardly, their familiarity with the environment and possession of specific skills were awkward reminders of the fundamental vulnerability of the European newcomers in the colonial environment, reminders that illustrations like Baker's sought to draw the attention away from.

Moving on from nature scenes and into architectural themes, there is again one master trope that seems to take precedence: pictures of official residences and other such prominent European landmarks. We find these in Van der Chijs – the governor-general's palace at Buitenzorg and the resident's house in Yogyakarta; in Kinloch – the Dutch church at Batavia and two separate pictures of hotels/inns; and in great numbers in Fergusons *Souvenirs of Ceylon*. Some of these are reproduced below to draw attention to the uniformity of the style across different colonies and authors of different nationalities; a detailed discussion of the iconic depiction of Buitenzorg in Van der Chijs

CHARGE IN HIGH REEDS.



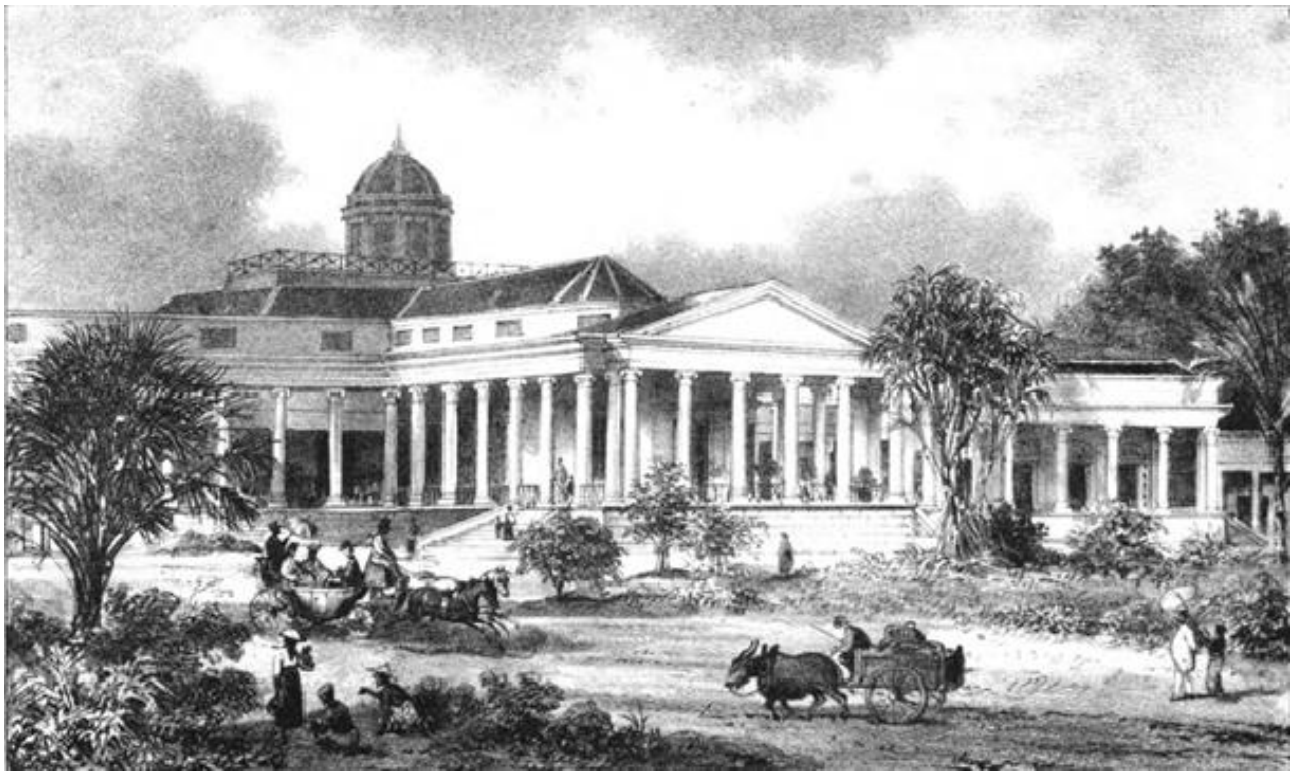
PANIC AMONG THE GUN-BEARERS.

Ill. 8. Two illustrations of hunting scenes from Samuel White Baker's The Rifle and the Hound.

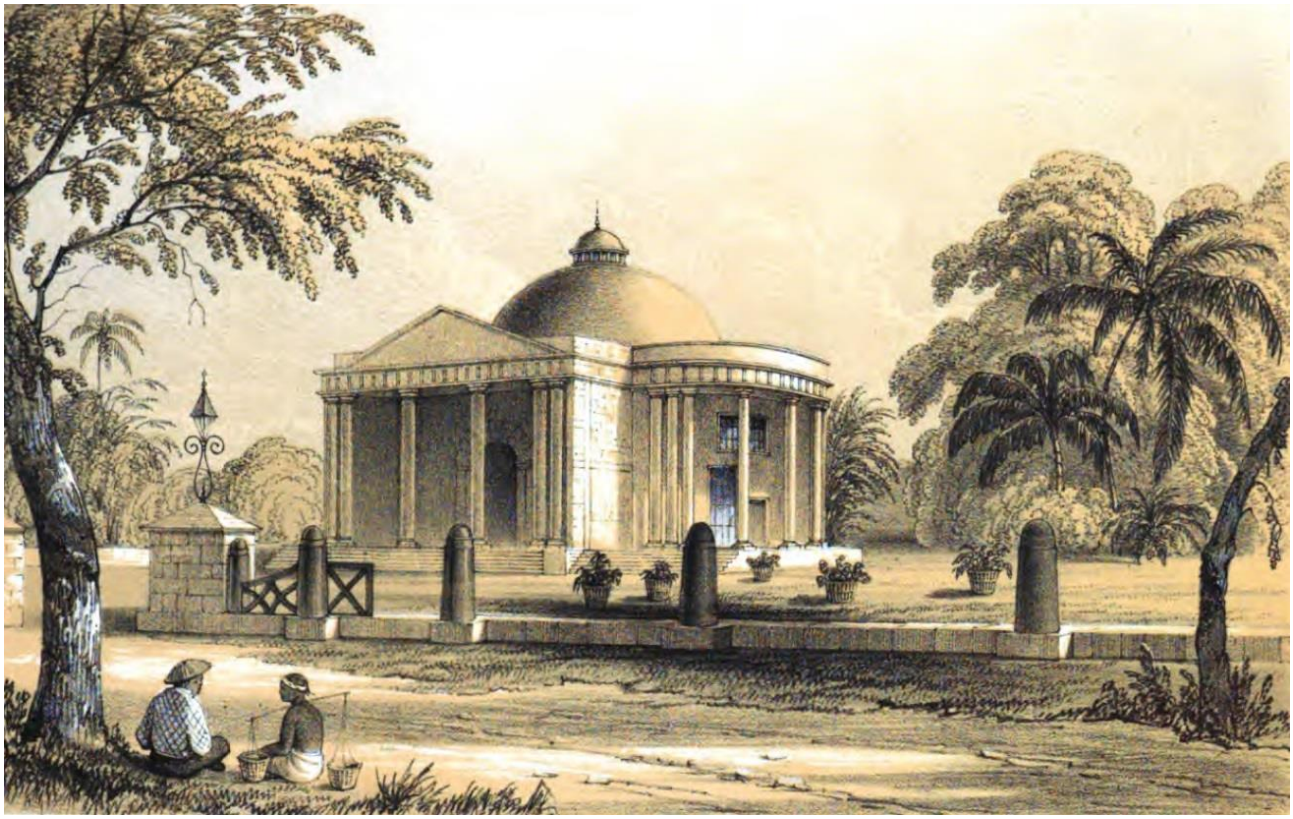
serves to elaborate on some of the main themes and meanings of this type of scene. The picture is centred on the typically neo-classical – the primary style of colonial architecture in the period – façade of the palace, which takes up the bulk of the space. Yet this is not simply a decontextualized architectural illustration, nor simply a tourist view of an important local sight: instead, there is a lively everyday scene taking place in the foreground with a number of figures and groups representing various sections of Javanese life. On the right one can see a man casually strolling into view, dressed in the whites of a colonial gentleman; an indigenous servant follows two steps behind carrying a parasol in place above the man's head. Approaching the centre from the left is another casual group of three Europeans with a servant, possibly on a pleasure-ride in a carriage drawn by two horses. This is contrasted by the ox-cart that trudges along the middle part of the foreground, presumably an indigenous labourer carrying some unidentifiable produce. What appears to be a mother and a child are walking up the main steps of the palace, to be received by a man in formal attire. The group of three, apparently in conversation most in front can be identified as indigenous by their hats and crouching position.

It would be difficult not to interpret a picture like this as an idealised representation of the Dutch colonisation of Java. There is an air of pleasant sociability among the group out for a drive; the other gentleman seems to be enjoying a relaxing Sunday stroll; the family scene on the steps completes the ideal. And as for the Javanese, they effortlessly slot into this vision without taking up too much space, most of them depicted in slightly submissive poses as if wary of attracting too much attention. The name Buitenzorg, literally 'beyond cares', is significant, though perhaps reflecting more the naming conventions of eighteenth-century European country life than any specifically colonial ideology: in any case, the location depicted carries a heavy double symbolism of power and leisure, the palace being simultaneously the seat of the governor-general of the Dutch East Indies as well as the social hub of the resort-town where many colonial officials had their villas and spent their free time. To depict it rising so serenely in the background of the groups representing the many sections of Javanese society, each in its right place, evidently satisfied, is to represent an idea of colonisation without friction, of power at rest. The overall effect is much the same as in the harbour scenes already discussed above, with the difference that those sought to frame their Romanticised ocean views in a distinctly European visual and cultural vocabulary, these images symbolise the European dominance over the colonial space in a specific architectural form.

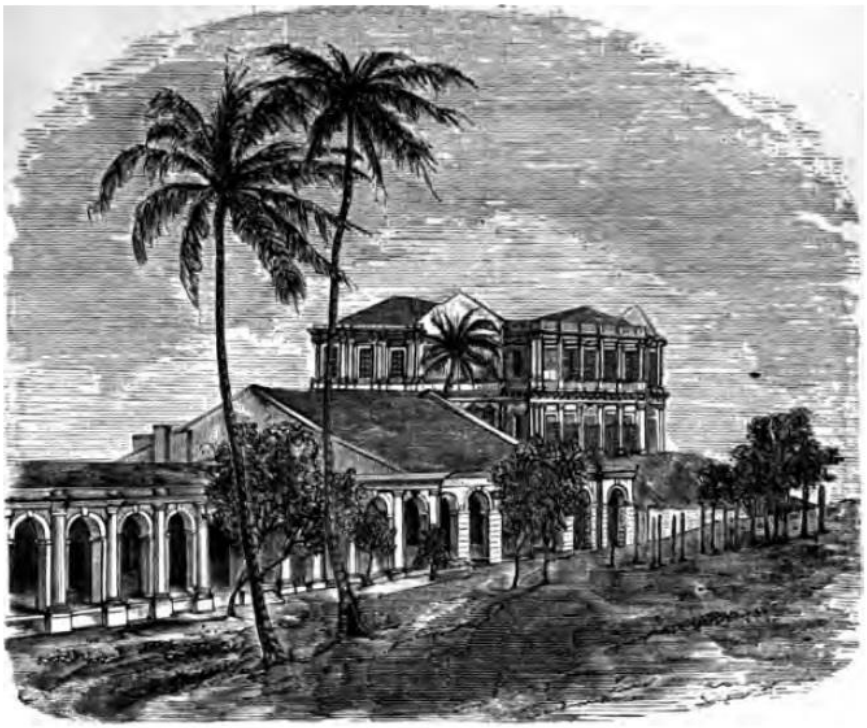
It is also worth noting the ways in which these architecture-focused illustrations tend to reflect the itineraries of our travellers: beyond such official buildings, necessary points of visit for the bureaucratic processes involved in colonial travel, we can also find in these books pictures of various



Ill. 9. Illustration of the governor-general's palace in Buitenzorg on Dutch Java, from Van der Chijs's Mijne reis naar Java in 1869 (1874).



Ill. 10. The Dutch Church at Batavia, from Charles Walter Kinloch's De Zieke Reiziger.



MOUNT LAVINIA, NEAR COLOMBO.
[*From a Photograph by Slinn & Co.*]

ENTRANCE TO QUEEN'S HOUSE, WITH SIR EDWARD BARNES' STATUE, COLOMBO.
[*From a Photograph by Slinn & Co.*]

Ill. 11. The mansion of the Governor of Ceylon at Mount Lavinia, near Colombo (above) and a view of Queen's House, Colombo, from Souvenirs of Ceylon.

settings that are directly related to travel and transport: firstly, there are the afore-mentioned hotels sketched by Kinloch, necessary and comfortingly familiar stops along the way for a European tourist; street and roadside scenes can be found in Cameron and Van der Chijs; and there is a special focus on recently completed railway terminals and bridges in *Souvenirs*; all of these draw attention to recent infrastructural developments and serve to construct an image of colonial life where travel is easy and comfortable, and suggest to the reader that following on the footsteps of the respective authors is a possible and indeed desirable endeavour. As such they also support the authors' textual descriptions that, as will be seen in the following chapters, regularly emphasise and highlight the modern infrastructure, whether in the shape of new roads or convenient coach services, that facilitates travel in the colonies of the region.

Of course, the architectural attractions of the region were by no means limited to European-designed structures and, as Victor Savage has noted, ruins and remains of temple complexes and cities formed one key set of associations with Southeast Asia in the imperial imagination of the nineteenth century. These are also to be seen in the works under consideration here, specifically in Kinloch, for ruins on Java, and in Ferguson's *Souvenirs*, for Ceylon. The depictions of these sites and the various authors' experiences of them will be discussed in chapter five, but it is of interest here to raise one point that is specific to these accompanying illustrations: both include drawings or photography not made by the authors themselves but rather sourced from individuals working on the respective sites in some scholarly or scientific capacity: in Kinloch, this is in the form of a drawing of the Mendut temple "reduced" from a sketch by an Italian artist working for the Dutch government in cataloguing the site; in Ferguson, we have photography on a variety of archaeological sites from "photography by Lieut. R.W. Stewart," of whom no more is said but his name is accompanied with the designation of a Fellow of the Royal Society, so it seems safe to assume that his interest in documenting the sites was of a (amateur) scholarly nature. This borrowing of imagery between popular and scientific genres is significant, as it draws attention to the way in which these sites were being constructed as both popular attractions and archaeological objects of study simultaneously, and elucidates the direction in which information flowed between the two fields, with popular authors making use of specific findings and, as here, illustrations, but largely excluding any wider scholarly context. That mechanism of filtration and decontextualization is emblematic of the larger process by which imperial popular culture, including travel writing, made use of and disseminated the colonial sciences.

That relationship between sciences and popular culture is also significant as regards the depiction – in illustrations – of individuals and groups of people. Here the travel books regularly borrow the visual language of anthropology and ethnography, following in the footsteps of seminal

works like Raffles's *History of Java* with its famous portraits of indigenous types. Yet it is immediately obvious that these works have neither the exhaustive scope or the systematic detail of works written with a more scholarly ethos. Some, like Kinloch's or Van der Chijs's, only include a couple of arguably ethnographic portraits, more for colour and decoration than anything else: naturally, the price of including illustrations would also have militated against any more comprehensive treatment of the topic. In Campbell's *Excursions*, ethnographic illustrations are given here and there but never as a consistent series, instead employing two different styles and drawn by at least two different artists, so that they never reach anything approaching a scientific or systematic perspective. Below, examples of the two series of illustrations are contrasted with each other to underline the disparity. One set are reproductions of very detailed ethnographical types, made by indigenous artists according to the author but drawn up in an unmistakably, classically European style, almost certainly originating in some more highbrow publication; yet elsewhere, when Campbell wishes to depict the "people from various countries" to be met at the Galle bazaar, he instead employs a different local artist whose sketches are in a radically different, simplified style, in no way comparable to the other set.

This generally un-systematic and haphazard use of ethnographic illustrations is something that the genre as a whole has in common: several include ethnographic depictions, often borrowed from other authors, but they are frequently inadequately framed to make sense of in an anthropological way. For example, to return to Van Heerdt, he includes a page with four figures: a stoker and a sweeper onboard the Hindustan, the P&O Company's steamship; a Persian shopkeeper at a hotel; and a *sepoy*, and Indian soldier. The characters are defined by their profession rather than place of origin, which is not even hinted at apart from the – supposedly – Persian merchant; the rest appear vaguely Indian or South Asian; the stoker is identified as a *lascar*, a catch-all denomination for sailors around the Indian Ocean. The pictures serve the purpose of exhibiting varieties of clothing and of ethnic types, but they are not categorised or presented according to any clear geographical or ethnographic scheme – rather, what they have in common, thus set aside, is that each represents a figure that the author encountered along his route. It is only this eclectic logic of the tourist that associates all of these characters with each other, and Penang with Giza, as discussed above. The same eclecticism can be found at work in Ferguson's *Souvenirs of Ceylon*, though that work is geographically fixed within the confines of Ceylon and has far greater space for its ethnographical depictions. The page reproduced below, to give just one example, illustrates this chaos of perspectives and attitudes, showing a seamless transition from serious, studied and distinctly ethnographic portraiture, paying careful attention to details of clothing and facial features, and into casual sketches

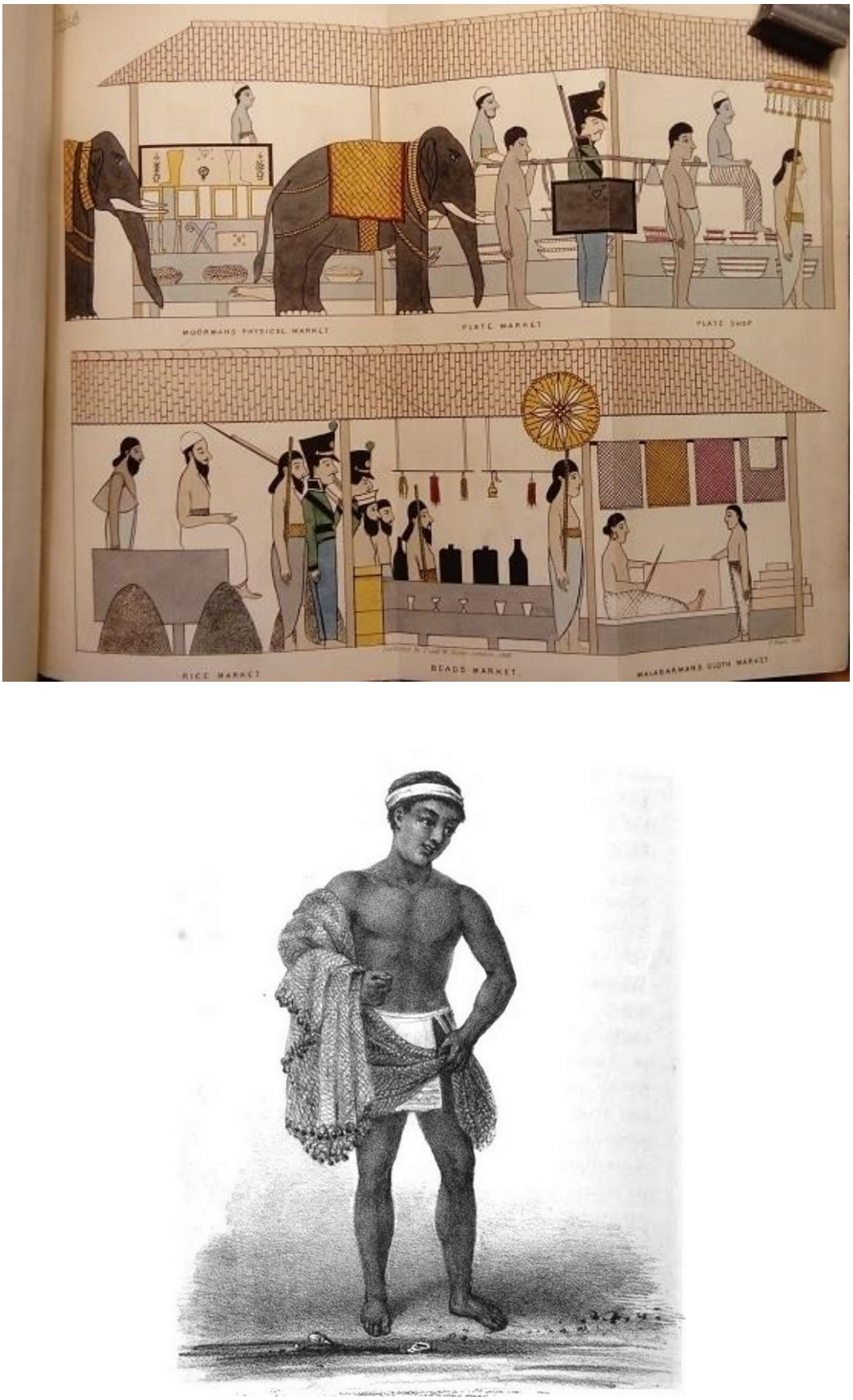
Vuurstoker aan boord van de Hindostan. (*Laskar*).

De veeger aan boord van de Hindostan. (*Klinger*).

De Perzische Shopkeeper in het Prins Wallis-hotel

Een Sepajer

Ill. 12. Two collections of ethnographic sketches, from Van Heerdt's Mijne reis (above) and Ferguson's Souvenirs of Ceylon (below).



Ill. 13. Two ethnographical illustrations from Campbell's Excursions, Adventures and Field-Sports in Ceylon: scenes at the Galle bazaar (above) and a Ceylon fisherman (below).

of exaggerated types and racial caricatures. Within the touristic discourse these works were taking part in, the difference between the two modes of representation was simply not a significant consideration.

Moving beyond singular themes, it is also worth considering how the pictures relate to each other within a single book. To that end, we will here consider some examples from the books that exemplify a specifically touristic eclecticism and logic in their choice of topics and presentation. In Van Heerdt, we will return briefly to the view of the port of Penang Island, already discussed above. On the actual page, this typically Southeast Asian scene is printed side by side with a very different topic: the Sphinx at Giza – as famous a sight in the mid-nineteenth century as it remains today. The sight of this page, as seen below, is peculiar. Naturally the decision to have two illustrations one on top of the other is based on the limitations and technicalities of the printing process: yet when seen together, the juxtaposition has an aesthetic dimension that is not without significance. Not only are these two views of Penang and Giza some 7,500 kilometres apart on two separate continents, they also have relatively little in common in terms of climate, location, architecture or any other immediately obvious measure. At the time, in 1851, Egypt was not even strictly speaking colonial – at least in the European sense – but a province of the Ottoman Empire. What the two locations do have in common, first and foremost, thus embedded in Van Heerdt's book, is that they both happened to be on the author's route, and indeed on the route of all mail-journey travellers. In the reference frame of those travels they are presented as de-contextualised impressions, views flashing by – one of them literally as seen from a ship passing by. As illustrations, they only make sense when viewed from the perspective of the narrative of the author's journey, not as a depiction of any kind of existing place. They are individual visual elements of an *outside-Europe* or a *not-Europe*, a conceptual space that one can travel through while leafing through Van Heerdt's book as one would travel across the seas on a boat.

As in Van der Chijs's work, the provenance of the illustrations is not immediately clear. The engravings carry the name of their author as well as that of the printer, but just who chose them and how cannot be determined – in any case, it is a notable feature of these Dutch books that there is no explicit link between the author of the text and that of the illustrations. Both are generic enough and not necessarily based on first-hand observation: the Sphinx, notably, appears to have its nose intact, which it certainly no longer did in the nineteenth century. Whether that is a matter of artistic licence or a consequence of careless copying from an external source, or perhaps an error in such an original source, cannot be said. Van Heerdt's textual description of the Sphinx does not, in fact, specifically mention the missing nose, which is somewhat curious considering the otherwise high level of detail, remarking even upon the "barely noticeable beard under the chin"; he does, however,

mention the face as being "too damaged" to properly make out its expression, so there is no reason to suspect him of fabricating his account.[257]

More interesting than the factual accuracy of the depictions, however, is to consider their significance in the tourist imaginary of the time. The Sphinx and the pyramids, and their role in the Mediterranean travel imagery of the time has been amply covered by historians of nineteenth-century tourism: by contrast, Penang Island seems a very obscure location, certainly not boasting any sights of comparable uniqueness. Yet Penang was on the itinerary of many of the people travelling in Southeast Asia, and was frequently described by travellers like Van Heerdt, for the simple reason that it served as a coal-depot for passing steamships. (As an aside, the same reason accounts for the prominence of Aden in the so-called overland journey accounts of the time.) In another example of the interconnectedness of technology and culture, the island became – in the eyes of European travellers –if not quite a celebrated sight in itself, then in any case a pleasurable stopover with advantages that were widely acknowledged: its greenery and the scenic mountain vistas, as well as its high-quality fresh fruit. Much deeper knowledge of the island one could not expect to gather during the few hours that were permitted ashore. For such visitors, Penang was a rest stop with a view, a little island paradise in a region not exactly short on such places, elevated to a status of greater recognition due to its logistically important location.

If the choice of illustrations in Van Heerdt exemplifies the logic of a tourist in motion, those found in James Campbell's *Excursions, Adventures and Field-sports* exhibit another side of the tourist experience: a pronounced, superficial eclecticism in its mixing and matching of subjects. In fact, one of the most notable features of Campbell's work is its deliberate mixing of illustrations from different sources and of wildly different styles, all – if the narrative is to be believed – chosen by or drawn at the request of the author himself. There are, in addition to the borrowed ethnographic sketches mentioned above: a set of three pictures detailing the agricultural practices of the locals, apparently made to order but seemingly also referring to the illustrations – having the same topics and titles – found in Robert Knox's *An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon* (1681), the text of which Campbell also quotes from; a series of scenes drawn by an indigenous artist, depicting various scenes both from Ceylonese myth or history; and even a sketch of the author's dog – though sadly, by the author's own confession, "justice has not, by any means, been done to him" – made by an

[257] Heerdt, *Mijne reis met de landmail*, 79.

acquaintance on a hunting trip.[258] On several levels – of visual language, subject matter, authorship – the mix of illustrations in Campbell's work is defined by inconsistency and superficiality, leading to a lack of a clear visual identity.

Campbell's work is unique in the extremes to which it takes its visual eclecticism, but the basic feature is common within the genre. We have already noted Kinloch's borrowing of work from an artist met along the way; his work also contains, set alongside the many landscape views and architectural details, botanically detailed depictions of the coffee and nutmeg plants that seem to be completely out of place alongside the content of the rest of the book. Arguably these books, not having any particular focus on a certain topic – botany, ethnography, geography – end up trying to do a little bit of everything, and borrowing freely from a variety of sources while doing so. Again, the purpose is not really to use these visual elements to provide information, in the sense of a structured and categorised narrative, but to give snapshots of this and that from along the way. And that is precisely the impression that leafing through *Excursions* imparts on the reader, as from one page to another one variously comes across a Ceylonese fisherman, a full-page illustration of a cobra, a group of ploughmen on a field, or some scenes of local history, some in colours and others black-and-white, some detailed and others sketched, all in wildly different styles. This variety is taken to its logical conclusion in the 121 illustrations of *Souvenirs of Ceylon*: to give just a small flavour of the overall confusion of topics in that work, a glimpse at the headings in the list preceding the illustration suffices: these include "illustrations of the chief towns," followed by "the ruined cities," "demonolatry," "elephant hunting," "the Ceylon railway" and a barely coherent category of "oddities."[259] In no sense do these form a coherent, studied whole as an image of colonial Ceylon; rather, the categories have evidently been influenced by a mix of motives, ranging from exoticisation – ruins and idolatry – to symbols of progress like the railway, to fashionable forms of leisure such as hunting. This is true of the entire volume, and of much of the genre as a whole: the visual materials are often borrowed from elsewhere; the logic of their presentation is almost always confused, representing the superficial fashions of tourist imagery rather than any deeper sense of place.

Finally, before moving on from our analysis of illustrations, it is worth considering also the positioning of pictures within the book in greater detail. Here the opening image, generally placed

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[258] James Campbell, *Excursions, Adventures, and Field Sports in Ceylon; Its Commercial and Military Importance, and Numerous Advantages to the British Emigrant. Vol 2.* (London, 1843), 110–1.

[259] Alastair Mackenzie Ferguson, *Souvenirs of Ceylon: A Series of One Hundred and Twenty Illustrations of the Varied Coast, River and Mountain Scenery of the Beautiful 'Eden of the Eastern Wave'* (Colombo, 1869), 1–4.

before the title page, is of particular importance. That device is employed by several of the books, and one subject in particular comes up repeatedly. Van der Chijs's *Mijne reis* opens with the image of the governor-general's palace in Buitenzorg, already discussed and presented above. Cameron's *Tropical Possessions* places the view of Singapore from Government Hill, likewise already reproduced, in that same place. And in Berncastle's book we find a similar harbour view of Canton, this time as depicted from on board an approaching ship. The very location of these images makes them important: being the first thing the reader sees upon picking up the book affords them a privileged status that turns them into something more than a simple illustration – they become a statement of intent, a visual crystallisation of the ideas contained in the text that follows. As such, it is far from coincidental that the topics of these illustrations all symbolise colonial power: Government Hill and Buitenzorg were both seats of the power, and in the Canton view the skyline is – like in many contemporary variations on the theme – dominated by a row of European and US flags. Moreover, building on the discussion of two of these scenes above, it is readily apparent that the visual language of they employ locate that power within an idealised, calm and peaceful setting where the tensions of the colonial situation disappear from view and are replaced by an impression of leisure. These examples show how the placement and strategic selection of such images was therefore a key method used by authors and publishers to reinforce their favoured image of European imperialism.

3.4. Conclusion

Building on the overview of the genre and the contextualisation presented in chapter two, the discussion above has focused on some salient features of the contents of the books themselves and on how they drew from the wider cultural and textual ecosystem they were a part of. In doing so through a careful analysis of selected narrative and stylistic strategies, the relevance of the research themes introduced in chapter one has become apparent. The touristic conception of time and space and the intensely first-person-centred narrative style evidenced by most of these works was essential in developing the flat, superficial image of colonial societies that allowed readers to populate their imagination of empire with notions of leisure and homely comforts rather than the vagaries and anxieties of domination and its contestation. We have also seen the intricate web of intertextual references and quotations that link these popular accounts to the contemporary canon of emerging colonial sciences, underlining the importance of the former in disseminating the findings and reinforcing the influence of the latter, while local and indigenous voices were largely cast aside as uninteresting or uninformed or simply absent. That relationship was not without its contradictions,

however, as shown by the usage of ethnographic imagery in these books in ways that seems to both co-opt the language of scholarship while garbling the presentation with de-contextualised eclecticism and idiosyncrasy: this contradiction will be pursued further in the remaining chapters.

In general, illustrations – though not uniformly employed across the genre, perhaps due to issues of cost – could also be selected and presented in ways that served to diffuse the anxieties raised by the experience of being a European resident in a colonial setting, as well as the tensions between the familiar and the exotic as inscribed in the landscapes and urban vistas of the region. As such, they provide a microcosm of the larger narrative manoeuvres at play in these works, as will be seen in part two of this thesis. In the last section above, the subjects of illustrations have been broadly divided into three categories: natural landscapes, architectural sites, and people. This basic division will also serve to structure the argument in part two, where we will turn from a general analysis to a close reading of the texts of the travel books under consideration, with a separate chapter devoted to each of those topics. The three chapters of that part will continue to probe at the themes identified in this one, but do son in the context of specific, selected locales in each of the colonies under consideration, and with reference to concrete contemporary developments in the processes of colonisation on the ground.

Part II. An empire imprinted on the page and on the landscape.

Introduction to Part II

The garden, the palace and the ballroom: a visit to the botanical gardens as a model experience of colonial life

While Part I of this thesis focused on examining the historical context and form of the literary works here under consideration, the three chapters of Part II will move on to a more in-depth analysis of their content. It is important to note from the outset that, although the works all represent the genre of travel writing, and the stories and narratives recounted on their pages all relate to the act of travelling in some form or other, travel itself is here only a secondary consideration. Or, to put that another way, the act of travelling is important because of the kinds of experiences it promotes and the kinds of narratives it makes possible. The primary aim of these chapters – and this thesis – is less to elucidate and interrogate the phenomenon of colonial travel, but that of colonisation and of colonial society as it is revealed through this specific corpus of sources. For this purpose, travel writing, and especially the kind of popular travel writing considered here, has several advantages over other, more stationary kinds of texts produced in the colonial setting. Evidently, it has a personality and intimacy missing from official documentation; its timescales – usually in the order of weeks or months – and rhythms built around daily routines such as meals and sleep provide a more immediate and lived-in glimpse of colonial realities than memoirs constructed years or even decades later. And finally, the fact that these are all published works, rather than, say, personal diaries or correspondence, means that it is possible to trace the process that led to publication, and the response each work generated, and therefore to examine wider questions about the representation and interpretation of colonialism and colonisation at the time on a cultural rather than merely individual level. Their popular nature helps us see how empire was seen by large audiences in Europe, and how the colonial middle classes themselves sought to represent it.

Beyond travel, the other theme that crops up consistently throughout all the works considered here is that of social life and sociability in a colonial setting: relations between people and

images of individuals and groups of people, from servants to businessmen, European officials to local nobles. This is no coincidence: travel is, in most scenarios and certainly in the case of Europeans travelling in Southeast Asia in the mid-nineteenth century, an endeavour dependent on the support, assistance and approval of others. This support could take many forms, from service jobs (porters, guides, servants etc.) to official (customs, police) to informal (friends, local contacts, new acquaintances): consequently, travel writing tends to provide a concise cross-section of a large variety of inter-personal encounters and of the settings where those encounters took place. That is not to say that these works faithfully reflect the composition of the societies visited by the traveller; far from it, they often exhibit very specific prejudices and blind spots, as will be seen. Yet, in the case of colonial travel in the period under consideration here, and in the body of popular travel writing it generated, it does closely reflect the social life of those societies as experienced by the colonising elites. In this period of proto-tourism, where a separate industry had not yet fully emerged to service outsiders and travellers for leisure, the servants and workers hired, the institutions and infrastructure made use of, and the functions and dinners attended all existed, in the first place, for the benefit of the colonial state and its servants. Indeed, most of these travellers, even if away from their regular postings and off duty, represented and served those states, and therefore usually slotted in naturally enough to the existing social circles.

Intimately related to the forms of colonial sociability and social life, the guiding theme of the following three chapters will be the notion of imperial anxieties, widely discussed in the recent historiography, as experienced in a variety of settings and with reference to various subject matters. Such concerns were an ever-present feature of nineteenth-century imperialism, in part a consequence of the collision between, on the one hand, the numerous first-generation newcomers that flooded in to feed the demands of the rapidly expanding colonial machine, and on the other, the long-established colonial families and elites that were often more or less racially mixed and had developed highly specific, hybridised social and cultural forms peculiar to themselves. The resulting clash of cultures, combined with the increased and increasingly intensive engagement between the colonial masters and the indigenous populations, occasioned by the needs of export agriculture and ever more invasive administrative control, led to fears about how to protect the boundaries between European and Asian, home and away, and how to reconcile the cultural and social independence of the colonisers with an undeniable dependence on indigenous labour, mediation and collaboration. Those fears, in turn, were reflected in a demand for a more regulated, ordered society, arranged according to a European model, where spatial, cultural and social boundaries were well-defined and carefully policed. The following chapters will therefore look at attempts to delineate and codify the limits of colonial Southeast Asia and Ceylon, as they were experienced by the colonising middle classes, and as they were represented

for mass consumption in the literary market back in Europe; and examine how those boundaries were co-produced by the process of institutionalisation and regimentation of colonial societies that was taking place in the period, fundamentally transforming the experience of colonisation.

The analysis is divided by scale, using the words and conceptualisations of the travellers themselves and moving in three steps from larger to smaller reference frames both in terms of time and space. Thus chapter 4 will be devoted to an analysis of how the authors think about the colonies they travel through as natural environments, and what role they ascribe to landscapes and non-human life in their representation of those places. Here the depictions often touch upon the totality of nature, encompassing whole islands and peninsulas and contemplating geological timeframes, even if those depictions are frequently based on minimal experience and wholly inadequate understanding. But nature, however framed, is also a setting for social interactions: these come, for example, in the form of guides in the wilderness; hosts on visits to famous gardens; and friends and companions on hunting trips. The experience of nature is therefore socially mediated through these interactions, with both fellow Europeans and locals. Chapter 5 will then zoom in and look at depictions of constructed environments, where the scope of representation is usually limited to a medium scale taking in individual cities or clusters of ruins, and the timeframes considered reflect architectural time, meaning spans of centuries at most. Again, these buildings naturally serve as a backdrop to encounters, and the chapter will show how information about them and the interpretation of their purpose and meaning as elements of colonised space was socially produced. Finally, chapter 6 will close in on individual encounters and on the role of interpersonal relations in colonial society, focusing on a handful of selected persons – both European and local – that prop up in the travellers' accounts, and examining their function as nodes in social networks, as well as the institutional frameworks that enable and facilitate that function.

Another way to think of the division of the chapters that follow is to consider them as reflecting the experience of moving through a space like the botanical gardens of Buitenzorg on Java, to take one prominent and symbolically significant example. The visitor moves through the gardens, first encountering and commenting upon the beauty of the plant life and the lushness of the greenery; then arrives at the mansion, the seat of the governor-general, situated at the centre and commanding the surrounding landscape; and finally enters into the hustle and bustle of social life within, a ball perhaps or a dinner party. The garden becomes a metaphor for the colony as a whole, with its botanical riches, its projection of power through built structures, and its high society; but evidently it is a badly skewed metaphor, substituting systematically ordered and labelled specimens for wilderness, neo-classical styles for centuries of local architecture, and imposing strict socioeconomically and racially defined constraints on the roles and behaviour of individuals. It is an idealised, programmatic

metaphor of a specific, contemporary vision of colonial life, and its written descriptions constitute an attempt – conscious or otherwise – to disseminate that ideal not only within the colonies but also to the audience reading these books back in Europe. Nor is that image merely engineered for the purposes of this thesis: it is there, for example, in Samuel Baker's boast of having "the whole of Ceylon for my manor."[260] Through an understanding of how that homely and controlled ideal, evidently designed to assuage and dismiss the pervasive anxieties raised by the lived experience of empire, was constituted on these three levels, and of its relationship with concrete changes happening on the ground, an image will emerge of colonisation both as a social phenomenon, determined through interactions based on class, nationality and mobility, and as a cultural product, interpreted and processed for popular consumption and a European audience.

All the chapters in Part II will draw on examples from all the three areas that have been discussed above in Part I, i.e. Java, the Straits Settlements and Ceylon, but naturally some of these provide more material for specific themes than others. No attempt is made to discuss every relevant theme or topic contained in these books, which in any case would be a hopeless endeavour; rather, a series of representative case studies have been selected to elucidate the main arguments. Therefore, for example, the focus in chapter 4, on the natural environment, will fall primarily on Java and Ceylon, with their greater size and hinterlands; the Straits Settlements, and especially Singapore with its rapid growth and urbanisation, will become more prominent in chapter 5, which focuses on architecture and infrastructure; finally, chapter 6, dealing with the social life of the colonising middle classes, the different settings where encounters between individuals could take place and the limits imposed upon sociability by those settings, will draw on all the colonies equally, although primarily on examples from their primary settlements, i.e. Batavia, Colombo and Singapore. It should also be noted that the analysis will not, for the most part, consider the British and Dutch works examined as separate categories, as by and large they represent one singular and trans-European genre of travel writing, with shared imageries and vocabularies. Instead, attention is drawn to national differences only where it is relevant for the wider argument.

[260] Samuel White Baker, *Eight Years' Wanderings in Ceylon* (London, 1855), 16.

Chapter 4

Natural beauty and the pleasures of the landscape

4.1. Green visions: from "Edens of the East" to botanical gardens

The widespread use of landscape imagery in illustrations of popular colonial travel writing was already commented upon in chapter 3, but the importance of the natural environment is equally clear in the textual content of these works. This chapter will consider a few of the important ways in which nature and the landscape are represented by the authors in question, and the roles that they are assigned in their ideas of colonial life. This first section will deal with the commonly evoked idea of the region of Southeast Asia and Ceylon as a paradise or a garden of Eden, and examples of how that imagery was applied. A connection will also be made between various concrete developments in the society and infrastructure of these colonies, such as new forms of transport and the establishment of botanical gardens, and how these fed into a different mode of representation of nature. The second section of this chapter will then look at the more active stories of hunting and other wildlife anecdotes, and how these narratives assign specific roles to the various participants: the European hunters, the indigenous servants and the wildlife, respectively. Finally, the third section will examine the relationship between ideas of health and how it is connected to the natural environment, as well as specific ways of engaging with nature in ways that were considered healthy, such as the sport of mountaineering and the related exoticism and thrills of contemporary volcano tourism.

In many ways, nature often provides a vivid first impression to our author-travellers on their arrival to a new land. Thus, for example, the wild beauty of the coastline of Ceylon was commonly among the first things commented upon by travellers to that island. "I know of no point in either hemisphere, where tropical nature indulges in more marvellous redundancy than at Point de Galle", is the opening line of Edward Robert Sullivan's *The Bungalow and the Tent*; or as De Butts

puts it in his *Rambles*, "the bold and wild coast of the island stands unrivalled by any part of the Indian peninsula."[261] Campbell's description betrays a more romantic inclination toward lavishness:

> But how truly striking were the lofty mountains, and how picturesque the forms of the range of hills, and how finely undulating the surface of the nearer and more level country, which lay before us, and stretched along to the left as far as the eye could reach, beautifully wooded even to the water's edge! Nothing can be more enchantingly lovely and verdant than Ceylon, as it first presents itself to the surprised and worn-out voyager.[262]

Verkerk Pistorius's first impression of Singapore exhibits similar extravagance. "What a wealth of colours and forms! We feel as if we're staring in a kaleidoscope. From the light green bosom of the sea rise, like so many gigantic brooches, a number of cone-shaped coral-stones, covered from foot to top with a gleaming, metallic green."[263] It is notable that, narratively speaking, these observations are made from the outside looking in: from the deck of the ship, so to speak, and therefore from within a reference frame detached from the actual reality of the colony that is the destination of travel. This is of course a literary device first and foremost, and could be modified when necessary: Kinloch, being of the opinion that "Singapore does not look well from the roads," substitutes the seaside perspective for a depiction of the "extensive paronamic view" of the city nestled among the surrounding hills, as seen from atop Government Hill, to which he cuts immediately after announcing his arrival to the port, dispensing with any depiction of landing procedures; a similar sleight-of-hand is used in the scene of his arrival at Penang.[264] What is important is to provide the reader with a panoramic snapshot of the colony as embedded in its natural environment, often highlighting the verdant, lush hills in the background, before zooming into the details of lodgings, encounters and other practical arrangements.

Similarly, the beauty of nature is often brought up as a way to signal transitions from on city or location to another: upon leaving the social environment of a town, a hotel or the residence of a host, visual depictions of the environment take the place of human interactions. For example, Van der Chijs sets on the road on Java thus: "[t]his trip began over the Mac Madon [Megamendung], with the loveliest views over the burnt-out craters as well as into the valleys, with the most beautiful gradations of colour."[265] And Kinloch repeatedly emphasises the refreshment afforded by the "exceedingly pretty" hill views, the "rural beauty" of the land and the "pure and reviving mountain

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[261] Edward Robert Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent; or, a Visit to Ceylon* (London, 1854), 13; De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 11.
[262] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 32.
[263] Verkerk Pistorius, *Een bezoek*, 7.
[264] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 8, 10.
[265] Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 62.

air" while travelling through the Java highlands.[266] In passages like this the focus zooms out from details of day-to-day life to the general features of the landscape, giving the narrative some variety and a sense of rhythm, in effect allowing the reader also a moment of rest and refreshment in between more packed and densely populated stretches of the prose. It is important to note that this stylistic device reflects the modes of transportation employed by the authors: like the steamships that carried passengers between and into the colonies, the post-coaches and carriages made use of by our authors on their inland trips allow a mobility in relative comfort and a kind of moving observation deck from which to examine the passing landscape. Crucially, this type of travel was by no means a given in the colonial setting: travellers on Ceylon frequently make a point of noting the better quality of the roads on that island, and the superior comfort of the regular coach service connecting Colombo to Point de Galle and Kandy, as compared to the palanquins ("abominable conveyances" in De Butts's words) still widely used by the British in India at the time.[267] Similarly, the easy availability of post-horses for traveller's coaches is widely praised in the books on Java, even if opinions on the temperament of the ubiquitous Java ponies vary wildly: Davidson, an admirer of the latter, goes as far as to suggest that there is "nothing more exiting and agreeable than a ramble amongst the mountains of this favoured isle, under the direction of the post establishment."[268] Likewise on Java, the quality of the "splendid highway" of the Great Post Road, which shortened travel times across the island considerably, draws several envious comments from British visitors like Walker who wistfully notes that "we have held India for this century past" without building anything comparable.[269] In these places, limited as they were, it was possible for European travellers to observe the surrounding environment from a position of relative comfort and detachment, when compared to contemporary travellers in more outlying parts of those same colonies or even somewhere like India, generally considered a reference point for colonial societies in the region.

Another thing that becomes apparent from the language and style that these authors use to describe the nature of the region in quotes such as those discussed above, is an implicit dichotomy that applies to the way they see the colonies as a whole. It is a dichotomy of detail and background; of content and illustration. The action, so to speak, of these books takes place in the cities and towns,

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[266] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 70–1, 77.
[267] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 86.
[268] Davidson, *Trade and Travel*, 22.
[269] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 40; Walker, *Jottings*, 189; Wim Ravesteijn and Marie-Louise ten Horn-van Nispen, 'Engineering an Empire: The Creation of Infrastructural Systems in the Netherlands East Indies 1800–1950', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 35 (2007), 284.

on sight-seeing routes and at evening balls, around dinner tables and in conversation with travel companions. To all of this, with the partial exception of activities like hunting, nature serves as a background rather than something to truly engage with or describe. This is another point of distinction from earlier genres of colonial travel writing, such as the exploration/adventure narrative that has to literally struggle through the landscape; or the writings of naturalists that specifically focus their attention on the details and variety of plant and animal life or geological formations. For more popular authors nature is primarily illustrative: a shared language of tropical and Edenic imagery designed to whet the readers' appetite and give a touch of local flavour to the narrative. What is important is not merely an emphasis on the beauty of the environment in absolute terms; that beauty is also frequently placed in the context of and compared with the other colonial domains of the region, with the paradises of Java and Ceylon invariably coming out on top. The Ceylon coastline is "unrivalled by any part of the Indian peninsula" according to De Butts; "within the wide range of what are called 'Indian limits,' there is no climate to be found superior to that of Java" asserts Kinloch.[270] These are places that are not only beautiful; they are more beautiful than any other in the region, and therefore more attractive both as travel destinations and as topics to write about.

The idea of India and especially the islands of the East as paradise-like 'Edens' became firmly established in the British imperial imagination over the course of the seventeenth century, as noted by Richard H. Grove in an influential work.[271] By the nineteenth century that imagery had come to assume another layer of meaning, framing those far-away islands as paradisiac, idyllic reflections of the idealised past of the now-industrialised British Isles.[272] Ceylon in particular had become routinely referred to as "the Eden of the Eastern Wave" or "the Paradise of the East" and had a special role to play not merely as a mirage of the past but also as a simpler, gentler get-away from the travails and political complexities of India – both symbolically and literally. And while Ceylon perhaps had a head-start in accumulating this kind of mythos – the association of the island with the biblical paradise, due to the famous Adam's Peak, dates from the fourteenth century – much the same kind of language was frequently used in the nineteenth century to describe both Java and the British Straits Settlements, not surprisingly as these various locales are rather similarly positioned and enjoy similar

[270] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 11; Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 114.
[271] Richard H. Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1860* (Cambridge, 1996), 42.
[272] Aparna Vaidik, 'The Wild Andaman Islands: Island Imageries and Colonial Encounter', in Deepak Kumar, Vinita Damodaran, and Rohan D'Souza (eds.), *The British Empire and the Natural World: Environmental Encounters in South Asia* (New Delhi, 2011), 22.

climes. So, for example, Kinloch describes Somadang on Java, borrowing an Italian poet's words – originally applied to Naples – as "un pezzo di cielo caduto in terra" ['a piece of the heavens fallen to the ground'].[273] Cameron notes that "some theologians … have fixed the Paradise of unfallen man on one or other [of Java and Ceylon]", but insists that the beauties afforded by Singapore are equally, or indeed perhaps more, fantastic: [p]erfumed isles are in many people's minds merely fabled dreams, but they are easy of realization here."[274] Among the Dutch authors, many were equally quick to praise their possessions in the "gordel van smaragd" ['belt of emeralds'], as the contemporary writer Multatuli famously referred to the Indonesian archipelago. "In a word, this lovely land is a kind of earthly paradise," assures Boom of Java as a whole, while Van der Chijs remarks upon Tjomas, a common centre of leisure on that island, that "Paradise cannot have been more beautiful."[275] Evidently the language used by these authors and others calls back to a commonly shared notion in the travel literature of the time.

The religious content of these quotes and similar expressions elsewhere should not be overstated, though it is true that various scholars over the centuries had a genuine interest in associating Ceylon in particular with the biblical paradise. For the popular travel writers under consideration here the association is more by way of cliché and convention, a regurgitation of an established travel lexicon – established and familiar up to today, as the notion of unspoilt paradise beaches continues to permeate tourist catalogues and advertising. Yet the imagery, though superficial, is not without its share of connotations, some of which take on a specific significance in a colonial setting. The "Paradise of unfallen man" as quoted above calls to mind the so-called noble savage, and that narrative has a special significance in the areas under discussion.[276] Of the many colonies of the Indian Ocean, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements and the Dutch East Indies were distinguished from the adjacent India and China by the relative lack of diplomatic and military might of their indigenous rulers and elites. As a consequence, the power politics of these places were stacked more in favour of the European coloniser, and authors could more easily take on a condescending, patronising tone in their depictions – it is a feature of paradises that their political realities should not get too complex or unmanageable. Docility and lack of energy are stereotypes recurrently applied to each of the Malays, Javanese and Sinhalese in the literature of the period, as will be seen in later chapters. Naturally this

[273] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 71.
[274] Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 27–8.
[275] Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 12; Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 58.
[276] Bakker, 'Beeldvorming', 77–8.

distinction functioned more on the level of ideology than reality, as for example the struggles of the Java War between 1825 and 1830, or the Matale Rebellion of 1848 on Ceylon, showed.

Moreover, it is not just that the inhabitants of paradise are by implication more peaceful and easily dominated, because without sin – in fact in stereotypical descriptions of these paradises the indigenous inhabitants often disappear from sight altogether. It is nature that affords beauty and worth in these narratives, perhaps through the actions of, or as an icon recalling, the grace of God. Beauty of this sort is mythical and dreamlike, as the language implies, and therefore fundamentally unreal and inhuman. It is not that these travel books do not consider, or even describe at length, the local populations, but they almost systematically exclude the human element from any discussion of the most notable and highly prized characteristics of these oceanic Edens. Mary-Louise Pratt, in her seminal *Imperial Eyes*, pointed out the erasure of human elements in Alexander von Humboldt's depictions of South American landscapes and in Romantically influenced naturalist literature more generally.[277] And while none of these authors of popular travel writing could be categorised as naturalists, or indeed show much inclination for the extended study of nature or anything else, there is something similar in their preferred style, evidently a holdover from literary Romanticism. As noted above, human and nature are separated around poles of (European) town and (tropical) landscape, social and visual, detail and background. The tone of the narration is similar to the favoured genre of landscape views that enjoyed primacy in their choice of illustrations, as shown in chapter 3 above; yet it is a peculiarly tamed sort of Romanticism, more controlled and unthreatening by far than the vast and imposing Humboldtian vistas. There is a marked preference for tranquillity and calm, which can be read to have a double significance: on a personal level, as an assurance of peace and leisure for weary invalids and leave-takers like Kinloch and Walker; and regionally, ideologically, as a fantasy of colonial stability and viability.

This appreciation of stability works its way into depictions of nature: the ecstatic language of heavenly paradises is often undercut by repetition and cliché; and the true ideal of the colonial landscape turns out to be not the untouched wilderness in any case unreachable by post-coach, but the botanical gardens set up by the scientific institutions of the colonial state. The botanical garden takes over from and replaces the garden of Eden in the imagination of the colonial traveller; its systemic and labelled exemplars of natural beauty represent the ideal of paradise through, rather than in spite of, colonisation. Such gardens appeared throughout the region over the course of the first half

[277] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London, 2008), 121–2.

of the nineteenth century. The famous garden of Buitenzorg on Java opened in 1817 under the auspices of the German botanist C.G.C. Reinwardt; Alexander Moon started developing the gardens at Peradeniya, Ceylon in 1821, although they were officially opened only in 1843; a first, unsuccessful effort at starting one in Singapore was launched by Stamford Raffles in 1822, while the gardens at their current location date from 1859.[278] It is also notable that not only were these gardens founded around the same time, they were also connected by trans-colonial networks of collaboration: thus, for example, the Dutch sent the botanist W.H. de Vriese to Ceylon and Peredeniya in 1857 to investigate coffee cultivation there for lessons to take back to Java, a trip that he prepared an extensive report on.[279] Yet apart from their specific scientific work, the ethos driving the development of these sites was inextricably linked with the wider cultural movement driven by the European newcomers in the mid-nineteenth century. As argued by Andrew Goss, they sought to employ natural history as one of a range of tools to recast the colonies in the shape of polite European society.[280]

The colonial botanical garden as a locus of science and empire has been amply studied by historians in recent decades, but the role of such institutions in the social life and leisure of the colonies is less commonly discussed.[281] And yet, it was primarily in that light that they were experienced by the majority of the visitors, as is apparent from the descriptions of travel writers. For example, the gardens at Buitenzorg are praised by Weitzel for their restorative effect: "[h]ere one can breathe freely and fully, here one's body regains its strength from the fresh mountain air."[282] Walker prefaces his visit of the same by admitting an "utter ignorance of botany" but delights in the endless variety of a "paradise of lovely flowering plants and trees."[283] Gevers Deynoot, somewhat less impressed by the arrangement of the grounds, criticises a certain "stiffness" that diminishes the aesthetic impression. All three, being non-specialists, appraise the place primarily as a destination for a relaxing visit and a pleasant stroll. The same is true of the gardens on Ceylon and in Singapore: "[i]f

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[278] Bonnie Tinsley, *Visions of Delight: The Singapore Botanic Gardens Through the Ages* (Singapore, 1989), 28; David N. Livingstone and Charles W. J. Withers, *Geographies of Nineteenth-Century Science* (Chicago, 2011), 130; Theo F Rijnberg, *'s Lands plantentuin, Buitenzorg 1817-1992: Kebun Raya Indonesia, Bogor* (Bogor, 1992), 22.

[279] 'Voorlopige aantekeningen betreffende Ceylon, naar aanleiding van een kort verblijf op dat eiland in november en december 1857 door dr. W.H. de Vriese en dr. J.E. de Vrij' (1857), NA Den Haag, Commissie W.H. de Vriese tot Onderzoek der Cultures in Nederlands-Indië (2.10.21), inv. nr. 6.

[280] Andrew Goss, *The Floracrats: State-Sponsored Science and the Failure of the Enlightenment in Indonesia* (Madison, 2011), 14–5.

[281] For more on the relationship between botany and empire, see Donal P. McCracken, *Gardens of Empire: Botanical Institutions of the Victorian British Empire* (London, 1997); John Gascoigne and Neil Tranter, *Science in the Service of Empire: Joseph Banks, the British State and the Uses of Science in the Age of Revolution* (Cambridge, 1998).

[282] Weitzel, *Batavia in 1858*, 39.

[283] Walker, *Jottings*, 173–6.

we take a morning's walk – – it is usually in the botanical gardens", notes Campbell of the former, while Van der Chijs does not even mention the scientific aspect while describing his excursion to the "pleasure grounds" [*lusthof*] of the latter.[284] Nowadays, all three gardens are among the major sights of their respective countries and receive large numbers of visitors annually, but their positioning as tourist destinations is by no means a post-colonial or twentieth-century invention: instead, it was a part of their function within colonial societies from the very beginning.

Of course, the vision of the natural environment of the region as put forward in these gardens was far removed from reality, for two reasons. On the one hand, they were often explicitly designed to follow an aesthetic model imported from Europe. The gardens at Singapore were designed by Lawrence Niven following the "English landscape" design popular in Europe since the eighteenth century; the same style was applied by Stamford Raffles to the gardens around his residence in Buitenzorg during his stay on Java, which went on to become the foundation of the botanical garden set up by Reinwardt on the same site. It was a romantic style that had little to do with the surrounding tropical nature, with bamboos bent to create cathedral-like arches and paths designed for maximum aesthetic pleasure for casual strollers.[285] The Peredeniya garden even went so far as to order park benches all the way from England to secure the desired level of comfort, as revealed by an 1874 memorandum, which also calls for "new showy kinds" of plants to improve the appearance.[286] On the other hand, where aesthetic considerations did not have primacy, the gardens followed the naturalist's order. Specimens were "all arranged in lines" or "planted in pairs, in classified groups; every group having its class name on a long narrow board."[287] Van Diest captures the duality of aesthetics and botany in one sentence in praising the "charming yet so very scientific layout" of the garden in Buitenzorg."[288] This seeming contradiction in purposes was a common feature of this type of garden: Sujit Sivasundaram has similarly noted how the Peradeniya gardens exhibited a mixture of ornamental gardening, devoted areas for commercial and medicinal plants as well as others arranged according to the Linnean model.[289] It is also worth noting that not only was the arrangement of the plants minutely controlled; many of the plants themselves were imports introduced from all around

[284] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 51; Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 22–3.
[285] Walker, *Jottings*, 174.
[286] 'Correspondence respecting the coffee-leaf disease in Ceylon', in NA London, Colonial Office Records, Confidential Print Eastern, CO 882/2/14.
[287] Walker, *Jottings*, 173–4.
[288] Diest, *Een reistochtje*, 1.
[289] Sujit Sivasundaram, *Islanded: Britain, Sri Lanka, and the Bounds of an Indian Ocean Colony* (Chicago, 2013), 193.

the world through the global networks of empire. In a sense, the gardens became to represent not so much the specific nature of the various colonies where they were based, but a microcosm of the natural variety of empire as a whole. This symbolic function is perhaps accidentally underlined by William Walker, when among the few specific plants he seeks out and names at Buitenzorg are the famous water lily *Victoria regia* and the bougainvillea, both native to South America and named after the British monarch and the French explorer Louis Antoine de Bougainville, respectively.[290]

Even more than Buitenzorg and Peradeniya, the botanical garden of Singapore was, before its acquisition and reorganisation by the government in 1874, almost purely a place of entertainment. The historian Timothy P. Barnard has characterised its early role as "a private recreational park, not a research center," with regular performances by a military band, fireworks displays and flower shows making it a fixture of the social scene of the city, and many paying the required subscription fee merely to attend these activities.[291] Crucially, he also points out that the restrictions on access meant that the grounds were off-limits to the majority of the city's non-European population, an exclusion that Van der Chijs also remarks upon: "this extensive new park is only for members and foreigners, and no natives can make use of it."[292] The gardens were therefore not merely an idealised version of the nature of the colony, but also of its social constitution. And while the gardens in Buitenzorg and Peradeniya were not members-only, there is no suggestion that access was any less exclusive. For Buitenzorg, Boom's guide from 1864 notes that "access is willingly granted upon request made to the gardener J.E. Teijsman," indicating a different way of policing entry to the grounds.[293] Other forms of exclusion were also at play. With reference to Peradeniya, it has been noted that the site had been in use as a royal garden before the arrival of the Europeans, possibly dating back as far as the fourteenth century, with Alexander Moon's institution being merely the latest iteration of a longer, decidedly less European history.[294] There is also a precedent to the Buitenzorg complex's role in colonial times, as it occupies roughly the same space as the capital of the Sunda Kingdom until the sixteenth century, Pakuan Pajajaran.[295] Yet these

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[290] Walker, *Jottings*, 173, 175.
[291] Timothy P. Barnard, *Nature's Colony: Empire, Nation and Environment in the Singapore Botanic Gardens* (Singapore, 2016), 27–8.
[292] Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 22.
[293] Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 74–5.
[294] Sivasundaram, *Islanded*, 185.
[295] 'Beschrjiving van de residentie Buitenzorg houdende een overzicht van de geschiedenis, het bestuur, inwoners en voortbrengselen van handel, nijverheid en landbouw, opgemaakt door de luitenant-kolonel F. Scharten' (1840), NA Den Haag, Ministerie van Koloniën 1814-1849 (2.10.01), inv. nr. 3065, 1-3.

precedents, though often known to scholars at the time, are mentioned rarely if at all by nineteenth-century visitors, in whose view the history of those places starts exactly with the names of the European early-nineteenth-century botanists and statesmen listed above. The cumulative effect of all these manoeuvres is that the gardens, while supposedly a showcase of everything that is strange and exotic in the nature of the colonies, come across as comfortingly European and curiously detached from their Asian, tropical surroundings.

As the botanical gardens represented a taming and a Europeanising of tropical nature, a similar process of disillusionment and rationalisation can be read in the way many of the popular travel writers discuss certain myths concerning specific plants and locations. One example is the much-cited legend that, upon approaching Ceylon from the sea, a traveller would first notice the gentle scent of cinnamon wafting over the waters carried by the breeze. This notion is universally derided by mid-nineteenth-century writers: "[t]he strong and delicious scent arising from the cinnamon tree exists only in Oriental fable," asserts De Butts; and Campbell agrees, saying that although he "had heard and read much" about said breezes, "we were doomed to be disappointed – nothing of the kind was perceptible."[296] The myth was equally familiar, and the reality equally disappointing, for Dutch travellers: "[t]ruly, it is more than time to make an end to the claims, made by some about the Indian islands, as if they were paradises whose air is always fragrant with the lovely scents of flowers and spices," announces a clearly exasperated Brumund.[297] The "oriental fable" had come face to face with the everyday experience of the increasing numbers of Europeans flocking to the East, and had been found wanting.

A similar disenchantment is recorded by travellers to Java concerning the mythical upas tree, famed for its lethality. Davidson's account of the tree is characteristic:

> Before quitting Java, I must say a word about the far-famed upas-tree. Such a tree certainly exists on the island; but the tales that are told of its poisoning the air for hundreds of yards round, so that birds dare not approach it, that vegetation is destroyed beneath its branches, and that man cannot come near it with impunity, are perfectly ridiculous. To prove their absurdity, a friend of mine climbed up a upas-tree, and passed two hours in its branches, where he took his lunch and smoked a cigar.[298]

Kinloch is equally dismissive, explaining that "'the poisonous breath of the upas tree' exists but in the poet's imagination", as a superstition that has been dispelled by "the progress of knowledge, and the extension of civilization;" while Walker calls the thing a "wonderfully absurd story of

[296] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 23; Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 31.
[297] Brumund, *Schetsen eener mail-reize*, 78.
[298] Davidson, *Trade and Travel*, 38.

childhood."[299] It is important to note that both of these demythologisations are directly linked, by the authors themselves, with the gardens and plantations created by the colonial state: the cinnamon of Ceylon is, for De Butts, far from a fable and instead an everyday backdrop to "the most fashionable and agreeable" rides in the plantations around Colombo; and it is at the gardens in Buitenzorg that Walker gets to witness the non-lethality of the upas-tree first-hand. And it is remarkable that Kinloch credits the discovery of the truth concerning the latter to "the extension of civilization" – implying a success story of the botanists working in the colonies versus indigenous superstitions – while immediately admitting that "the natives" were not only fully aware of the true nature of the tree but also knew how to manipulate its sap in order to make it into a poison that could be used in hunting.[300] This apparent contradiction is perhaps possible because Kinloch himself learns about the matter not directly from the locals but from a European gentleman, "Mr. L," who in turn had witnessed the way the tree is used by the people of Java. As discussed earlier in chapter 3, one can see here another example of how the information received and related by popular travel writers has been mediated and processed by other Europeans, placing the original, indigenous source at a remove.

The examples of cinnamon and the upas tree both relate to the scents produced by exotic plants and the mythical qualities of the air in the tropics, and while both of those proved to be a source of disappointment and unrealistic expectations for our travel writers, it is interesting to consider the role that direct, sensory experiences – including non-visual ones, such as scents – play in these narratives. Certainly, the eye has a privileged position among the post-Romantic writer's observational apparatus, but in these texts there is a veritable plethora of first-hand impressions that demand the reader's attention: colours and scents, even tastes, jump out from the page. Often, these are associated with plant life: "[w]e saw now also the muscat tree with its picturesque yellow fruit, the coffee bushes and fine cinnamon trees, to which the high cacti and other trees added their colour and scent", in the words of Van der Chijs on Ceylon.[301] Here the cinnamon is no longer a singular legend, but rather a detail in an ensemble of delightful colours and scents. In Buitenzorg, P. van Diest leads the reader to see "the rare flowers and especially roses, the scents of which reach us faintly to be replaced a little further off, near the end of our trip, by the scent of certain varieties of vanilla."[302] We have already noted Verkerk Pistorius's admiration of the "wealth of colours and forms" at the

[299] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 62; Walker, *Jottings*, 174.
[300] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 63.
[301] Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 18–9.
[302] Diest, *Een reistochtje*, 13.

port of Singapore, and the kaleidoscopic coral-stones with their "gleaming, metallic green."[303] Colours and scents, and occasionally flavours, come up again and again, so as to impress on the reader the subjective, personal experience of travel, its emotional and transient content over and above any informational or universal value.

This general impressionism sees to serve two functions: firstly, it keeps the focus of the narrative strictly in the moment and the individual, never expanding the scope of enquiry to an unmanageable level. There is a marked preference for sensory experience over abstract reasoning, which seems to occur as a side product of the rules of the genre, rules largely borrowed from the European tourism of the period: focus on what accords pleasure, on what is pleasant to experience; politics, if they are to be touched upon, only ever need to be dealt with as one might do in casual conversation around a dinner-table. Even though some of the questions thrown up by the realities of colonisation may turn out to be complex and vexing, nothing need be solved as soon enough the surrounding landscape will again have changed and a new set of stimuli will be present for the author-traveller's distraction. As a consequence, the genre of popular colonial travel writing exhibits a general tendency to present both colonies as spaces and colonisation as a process as relatively unproblematic, or at the very least their problems as solvable and fundamentally not too serious. Such problems are only given space where the author has a ready-made solution in mind.

Nor is the specific nature of the sensory stimuli accidental. They are, primarily, aspects or elements of nature but, as mentioned above, the popular travel writer's preferred vision of nature is one of gardens and plantations rather than true wilderness. And so the objects of observation, the things that attract the most involved descriptions – flowers, jewels, corals, spices, fruit and so on – by and large represent the products of colonial agriculture and other industries, or the samples of the naturalists' gardens. Nature, but only in its productive and profitable guises – tropical environment dished out in moderate doses and pre-prepared for the tourist's consumption. These are things that have their specific places and categories in the encyclopaedias of the century, things with both a monetary and a knowledge value attached to them. Again one can see in the arrangement of the narrative the central contradiction of popular travel: on the one hand, the preference for an experience that is both intimate and personal; on the other, a desire to contain risks and minimise unexpected outside influences that leads travellers to stick close to established models. The former can be read in the emotional immediacy of sensory description; the latter in the choice of its object. Where high

[303] Verkerk Pistorius, *Een bezoek*, 7.

Romanticism favoured the Byronic, unknowable wilderness, or the vast and massive landscapes of Humboldt, the post-Romanticism of the mid-nineteenth century has a more sedate feel, preferring a pleasant stroll around the gardens.

The botanical garden, a centuries-old form in Europe but in its colonial form a distinctly nineteenth-century phenomenon (the first East India Company gardens in Calcutta and St Helena date from the very end of the eighteenth century), was a powerful symbol of imperial control over the tropical nature of the colonies; though these installations frequently had pre-colonial predecessors and influences, such hybridity was rarely acknowledged by European observers at the time. Their symbolic significance was largely due to their ability to combine in one spatial form associations ranging from the scientific to the aesthetic and the commercial and even the social, though this last function is often overlooked in the literature. As the above discussion shows, they also served as a discursive nexus for travellers and writers to construct their narratives of colonial environment around. Moving on into the next section, the focus of the analysis will step down from the level of the symbolic and the stylistic and into the concrete realities on the ground, as we move to consider the impact of plantations and resorts on the natural landscapes of the region, and the role such settlements played in the genre of popular travel writing.

4.2. Homes away from home: plantations and health resorts in the highlands

As discussed in previous sections, this impulse for comfort also explains why the majority of popular colonial travel writing in the period came from spaces of relatively established European presence, such as Java, Singapore and Ceylon. The extent of European control over these areas was not measured simply in things like cartography and administrative reach – it was also inscribed into the environment itself. If the botanical gardens of each colony were an idealised model of the relationship between empire and nature, the former drawing profits and productivity from the latter, it is in the many plantations that sprung up all around the region where this vision was to be realised and stamped on the land itself. This process of turning the natural environment of the colonies into what Jayeeta Sharma has called “an imperial garden” was especially notable on Java and Ceylon, both significant centres of export-oriented agriculture and settler activity, but Singapore also had its fair share or

plantations surrounding the urban parts of the island.[304] On Java, under the infamous *cultuurstelsel* ('cultivation system'), the administration demanded either a fifth of all village land to be devoted to export-crops, or alternatively forced labour service on government-owned plantations.[305] This led directly to an increase in the production of sugar, tea, coffee and indigo – all crops of significant economic importance but also noteworthy additions to the scenery, as our travellers were quick to note.

For travellers, plantations quickly became sights worth a visit in their own right. This was not a phenomenon peculiar to colonial travel, but in fact a point of interest shared with European travel culture: as noted by Aileen Fyfe, so-called industrial visits – in Europe, mostly to mines and factories – were a standard feature of early tourism; in the colonies, observing the working of plantations seems to have satisfied a similar curiosity.[306] Both Kinloch and d'Almeida, on their tours of Java, admired a number of coffee and other plantations, each remarking upon their peculiarly and pleasantly quasi-European character: similarly to the botanical gardens discussed above, these plantations where a place where European design and planning could meet and, to some extent, subdue the natural environment, the latter embodied by the coffee plant that is not even native to the region. Thus we have, from Kinloch, a description of the plantation of Mr Philippeau at Lembang, where one finds "the flowers and fruits of Europe, intermingling with those of a tropical clime, and attaining the most perfect luxuriance amid perpetual verdure, and in a temperature that has all the agreeableness in it of an European summer"; or, in d'Almeida, at Batoe, the "Government coffee godowns, kept in the true Dutch style of order" flanked by "the villa of the Contrôleur, designed after European model."[307] On Ceylon, De Butts – who is actively advocating for European settler agriculture on the island – laments the lack of "rustic farms, or cultivated fields, which animate, and, as it were, clothe the face of nature." – clearly suggesting this image as a vision of a potential near

[304] Jayeeta Sharma, *Empire's Garden: Assam and the Making of India* (Durham N.C., 2011), 5; see also Roland Wenzlhuemer, *From Coffee to Tea Cultivation in Ceylon, 1880-1900: An Economic and Social History* (Leiden, 2008); Kumari Jayawardena, *Class, Patriarchy and Ethnicity on Sri Lankan Plantations: Two Centuries of Power and Protest* (Hyderabad, 2015); Ulbe Bosma, 'The Cultivation System (1830–1870) and Its Private Entrepreneurs on Colonial Java', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 38 (2007), 275–91; Cornelis Fasseur, *The Politics of Colonial Exploitation: Java, The Dutch, and the Cultivation System* (Ithaca, 2018).
[305] Robert E. Elson, 'International Commerce, the State and Society: Economic and Social Change', in Nicholas Tarling (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia: From c. 1800 to the 1930s, Volume Three* (Cambridge, 1992), 137.
[306] Aileen Fyfe, 'Natural History and the Victorian Tourist: From Landscapes to Rock-Pools', in David N. Livingstone and Charles W. J. Withers (eds.), *Geographies of Nineteenth-Century Science* (Chicago, 2011), 380.
[307] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 66; D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 252.

future.[308] These few examples show the peculiar aesthetic of the genre: the idyllic, leisurely walks and rides against the background of economic exploitation of the natural environment.

Yet that imagery of idyllic calm was, of course, largely an idealised construct. Frequent references to Europe may often have been merely the most convenient frame of reference for a European author writing for a European audience, but they also served to make the colonial setting appear more familiar and therefore more comfortable. Such rhetorical tricks also helped downplay the less palatable associations that plantation life in the colonies had. For one, there was the constant anxiety about the potential for moral degradation, construed largely in terms of sexual profligacy, for single white male plantation-owners settled outside the polite society of the colonial cities and surrounded by an indigenous labour force. With reference to Ceylon, James S. Duncan has noted the prevalence of such concerns and their awkward clash with the self-consciously proper and bourgeois self-image of the settler classes.[309] Those concerns may have had some basis in the demographics of the island's European society, though early census data is sketchy: whereas a 1832 census showed a nearly equal division between European men and women, another one from 1861, after a couple of decades of incoming settlers, suggests a significant skewing towards men at a ratio of about three to two.[310] Similar highly racialised concerns were felt on Java, where a 1857 treatise on the benefits and downsides of settler colonisation on the island argued that, while an influx of new European settlers could improve the existing Dutch stock, any potential racial mixing would always tend to weaken the European and strengthen the indigenous element and therefore be a threat to colonial society.[311] In any case, the emphasis placed by authors on the European quality of the plantation setting, and their frequent erasure of the workers labouring on those plantations, seems designed to alleviate any such moral and racial concerns. They also reveal that the famous garden of Eden that these travellers were looking for was always a garden first and foremost, and an Eden only in the second instance.

A concrete example of the ways in which travellers' entertainment-focused accounts could distort and occlude the harsher realities of colonisation can be found in the case of the tea plantation run by a H.A.W. Brumsteede (spelling of the name varies across sources) near Bandung,

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[308] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 27.

[309] James S. Duncan, *In the Shadows of the Tropics: Climate, Race and Biopower in Nineteenth Century Ceylon* (Aldershot, 2016), 44.

[310] Robert Montgomery Martin, *Statistics of the Colonies of the British Empire* (London, 1839), 375; Great Britain Census Office, *Census of England and Wales for the Year 1861* (London, 1863), 200.

[311] 'Verhandeling over de kolonisatie van Europeanen in Nederlandsch-Indië (1857), NA Den Haag, Collectie 193 Reynst (2.21.138), inv. nr. 16.

Java. This plantation was a common feature of travellers' itineraries on the island in the 1850s, perhaps due to its ideal location near the famed volcano Tangkuban Perahu, and was often visited in conjunction with Philippeau's above-mentioned coffee plantation. Kinloch was among its guests, as were the more famous globetrotters Ida Pfeiffer and Friedrich Gerstäcker; the incoming governor-general Duymaer van Twist likewise paid a visit during his first inspection trip in 1852.[312] All of these travellers recorded largely positive appraisals. Kinloch reports having passed a "most agreeable morning" inspecting the workings of the plantation; Gerstäcker goes further, commending his host's "most kind and friendly manner" and wondering out loud "how well the dark sons of a hot clime have entered into the spirit of the thing."[313] In general, each of the authors seems more interested in explaining some of the basics of tea cultivation and processing to their audience rather than enquiring into the specifically colonial nature of the operations. As such, all of these accounts miss out on Brumsteede's apparent habitual infliction of arbitrary torture on his workers, including keeping them detained in a hot shed for long periods of time: these details have survived instead because of a letter from a local informant in the pages of the reformist Hague-based Dutch journal *De Indiër*, and because of the eventual charges and conviction that followed from its publication and the ensuing scandal.[314] It is generally not easy to find such alternative angles on the exact locations and times depicted by our travel writers, but Brumsteede's case clearly underlines the fundamental inability of touristic writers like Kinloch, even though experienced in colonial matters elsewhere, to uncover the true workings of colonial societies other than their own. This inability was due to both practice and purpose. Their visits were too fleeting and hurried, their aim in travelling too centred on leisure and entertainment: as a consequence, their views on issues like the plantation economy remained idealised or, at best, abstract and uninformed.

In some cases, this idealised, tamed image of the tropical environment could be inscribed on the map of the colony itself, such as in the case of the famed "Lady Horton's Walk" in Kandy in the Ceylon highlands. This walk, mentioned by most of the authors who make a trip to the inlands of the island, and named after the wife of the former governor of the island, is a characteristic example

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[312] Pfeiffer's and Gerstäcker's visits are discussed in my 'Java on the Way around the World,' *BMGN – LCHR* (forthcoming).

[313] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 65; Friedrich Gerstäcker, *Narrative of a Journey Round the World, Comprising a Winter-Passage Across the Andes to Chili: With a Visit to the Gold Regions of California and Australia, the South Sea Islands, Java, &c* (New York, 1853), 565–7.

[314] 'Strafoefeningen te Tjiecomboeleit in de afdeeling Bandong, Preanger-Regentschappen', *De Indiër*, 28 July 1855, 2; the conviction is reported in 'Particuliere correspondentie van "de Indiër"', *De Indiër*, 5 July 1856, 2.

of the new culture of leisure in the Eastern colonies. William Walker's mention of it is telling: "[a]lthough Kandy will not bear a near inspection of its native portion of the town, yet when gazed on from the summit of 'Lady Horton's Walk,' as this hill path is called, nothing can be more enchanting."[315] Here Walker directly juxtaposes the reality of the "native portion of the town" experienced up close, and the aesthetic enjoyment of the view from the privileged vantage point of the Walk. Seen from the Walk, the indigenous presence, evidently thought of as a source of discomfort and anxiety, is erased and gives way to an ordered, pleasant overview of the city. This erasure works even at the level of the name the path, a legacy and a memorialisation of European presence in stark contrast to the name of the city, which is not only indigenous but also coterminous with the kingdom that the British had only recently invaded and therefore suggestive of conflict. It is also not insignificant that the name of the path refers to a (European) woman, as this was by no means common in the colonial topography of the time (with the notable exception of the omnipresent Queen Victoria): Lady Horton's figure here symbolises not only the European conquest of Kandy but also the feminisation and taming of British colonial society itself. A comparable case elsewhere in the region was Mount Olivia on Penang, named after the wife of Stamford Raffles. It is striking that, in describing that hill, the author J.T. Thomson employs the exact same image of distancing oneself from the ground-level for greater aesthetic enjoyment: "[d]istance lends enchantment to the view; but close proximity dissolves the charm." The feminine association in both cases adds to the sense of secure and homely leisure, a garden walk on the grounds of the mistress of the house, the house being the island of Ceylon or Penang, respectively, and the master, naturally, its British governor.

Another, related aspect of the paradisiacal image of the colonies discussed here was that they were thought to have some of the healthiest climates in the region and were thus considered ideal destinations for individuals with ailing health in their search for convalescence. This idea is directly addressed in the very titles of two of the works under discussion: William Walker's *Jottings of an Invalid in Search of Health*, and Charles Walter Kinloch's *De zieke reiziger* ('the sickly traveller'). Both of those author's were stationed in India, in Bombay and Bengal, respectively, and sought refuge in Singapore and Java and, in the case of Walker, also Ceylon. Of course, the idea of health resorts was nothing new in the region, as highland areas had long been considered to have more salubrious climates and were therefore the location of the various "hill stations" in India established for colonial

[315] Walker, *Jottings*, 208.

officials to escape the heat of summer.[316] For the same reason, Buitenzorg had been the resort of choice for the Dutch based in Batavia ever since the eighteenth century. Nor were such resorts in any way peculiar to the European colonisers, but instead mere continuations of long-standing practices among local elites predating European colonisation. What was different, however, in the health tourism of the nineteenth century in the region was its fundamentally international and trans-colonial nature. Developments in transport technology and infrastructure opened up the whole region for those with the necessary means and connections, and what better destination for travelling invalids than the island paradises of Ceylon, Singapore or Java?

The idea of establishing health resorts for invalids was widely discussed in all three colonies at the time. Singapore in its entirety was considered a healthy get-away within the region and attracted its fair share of convalescents, as can be inferred from a piece published in the *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia* in 1851, titled 'Advice to Invalids Resorting to Singapore.' From the nature of the advice in question, not limited to "the best exercises for the recovery of health," but also including recommendations for sightseeing (a Chinese temple "not unworthy of a visit") and practical arrangements (on the quality of the hotels, and to bring your own servants from Calcutta), it can readily be seen that such invalid stays were a kind of tourism from the very beginning.[317] Moreover, within Singapore there was lively discussion about where best to accommodate such visitors. Already in 1845, the Singapore Free Press discussed proposals to build a "sanatarium [sic] for invalids from India and elsewhere."[318] It is important to note that this was conceived as an international venture, and was explicitly connected with the expansion of steam shipping and the increased passenger traffic that was likely to attract to Singapore. As the author of the piece notes: "it is not improbable that steam may put us in regular intercourse with Batavia, Manila, and New South Wales; under such circumstances, there seems every probability of Mr Bright's project succeeding." In 1850 there was again talk of establishing by-subscription bungalows on Bukit Timah, for a "change of scene and, in a slight degree, of climate also," although that government-backed scheme was apparently never realised.[319] Letters in the local newspapers also praised the potential of the adjacent Johore for "those who seek health or wealth," often noting the convenient accessibility of the area

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[316] Catherine Weinberger-Thomas, *L'Inde et l'imaginaire* (1988), 148.
[317] 'Advice to Invalids Resorting to Singapore', *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, 5 (1851), 188.
[318] *Singapore Free Press*, 14 August 1845, 2.
[319] Charles Burton Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore, from the Foundation of the Settlement Under the Honourable the East India Company, on Feb. 6th, 1819, to the Transfer to the Colonial Office as Part of the Colonial Possessions of the Crown on April 1st, 1867* (Singapore, 1902), 536–7.

from Singapore, especially with the advent of railroads.[320] The Dutch author Verkerk Pistorius, who visited Johore precisely during the construction of the first portion of its railroad, notes the Sultan's plans to "make it into a second Buitenzorg", serving Singapore in the same function as the latter did Batavia.[321]

On Ceylon, the highland areas of Kandy and especially the plains of Nuwara Eliya were similarly appreciated for their healthy climes, and were, as De Butts notes, where "the governor and all the magnates of the land" spent their summers.[322] The latter's establishment as a hill station is attributed to Edward Barnes, governor of Ceylon between 1824 and 1831, who started work on a road to facilitate access to the plains. An 1846 article praises renewed efforts to establish a sanatorium there, with enlarged and improved accommodation, a "respectable European and his wife" in charge and even a regular omnibus connection to convey passengers and supplies. This was a forward-looking venture, intended to take advantage of current trends, as the journalist hopes "to see Nuwera Ellia become a favourite place of resort for the invalids of the Presidencies [of British India]."[323] That hope again draws attention to the regional, trans-colonial character of invalid travel. Of our authors, Samuel White Baker was sent to Nuwara Eliya on doctor's orders to recover from an attack of "jungle fever" and was so taken by the experience that he returned to establish his own plantation there.[324] The guidebook *Souvenirs of Ceylon* describes the advantages of the "health-restoring mountain plain" in great detail and anticipates the great increase in traffic that the opening of a railway connection is likely to occasion.[325] The discourse around the role of the plains on Ceylon was in many ways similar to the way Johore was talked about in Singapore, as a place for "health or wealth," i.e. resorts for invalids and plantations for enterprising individuals, and one whose importance was sure to grow with the increased and increasingly easy traffic both to the highlands from the surrounding areas, and to the colony from around the wider region.

The highlands of Ceylon provide another example of the blind spots and deliberate omissions of travel writing. Baker arrived in Ceylon – for the second time – to set up a plantation and start a new life in Nuwara Eliya in the autumn of 1848. At this time the European community of the

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[320] Straits Times, 27 April 1872, 2; Straits Times, 5 March 1870, 2.
[321] Verkerk Pistorius, *Een bezoek*, 44.
[322] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 155.
[323] 'Newera Ellia', *Monthly Examiner*, 11 (15 December 1846), 209 (consulted in NA London, Colonial Office Records, CO 59/3).
[324] Baker, *Eight Years' Wanderings in Ceylon*, 7.
[325] Ferguson, *Souvenirs of Ceylon*, 180–3.

island was in the midst of the turmoil following from, and considerable concern regarding, the events of the so-called Matale Rebellion of July-August of that year. That event, originating in Matale north of Kandy, constituted a peasant uprising, largely motivated by opposition to newly introduced draconian taxation policies, and though it was quickly contained, its aftermath reverberated in the colony for several months, even years.[326] Yet, despite that coincidence of timing, and also of place seeing as he himself sought to settle in the Kandyan highlands, Baker makes no mention of the rebellion or the distress it occasioned when describing his first months on the island. Instead, he frames the climate as the only obstacle or source of opposition: the howling monsoons, the roiling mists and the ceaseless rain. In his telling, the people of the island are deprived of all agency, political or otherwise: instead, they merely constitute a faceless mass of underlings "almost impossible to persuade … to work."[327] All action is focused on his self-presentation, the heroic persona that in the end compels even the forces of nature to wave "flags of truce," giving way to a scene "like a beautiful cool midsummer in England." What was at the time experienced as a period of danger and a moment of anti-colonial mobilisation is reframed as a success story of man over the environment, the coloniser over the colonised land – perhaps with the purpose of thus attracting more British colonisers to the island.

On Java, Buitenzorg was, except the seat of the governor general and the location of the botanical garden, also the most famous and the most accessible of the highland resorts considered healthy for the Europeans of the island.[328] That confluence of power, science and leisure is of course no coincidence: these were the three important building blocks of the ideal of the new European society in a colonial setting, as discussed throughout this thesis. For travellers, Buitenzorg was something between a tourist attraction to visit and a resort to retire to: invalids from not only Java but colonies beyond the Dutch East Indies came there, as underlined by the visits of both Kinloch and Walker all the way from India, and moreover the former's apparently entirely accidental running into "two Indian friends – – come to Java in quest of health" there.[329] However, Buitenzorg was far from the only such location on the island, and the Dutch colonial administration was busy setting up establishments for convalescents in comparable locations in other parts of Java. Both Van der Chijs

[326] Miles Taylor, 'The 1848 Rebellions and the British Empire', *Past & Present*, 166 (2000), 164–5.
[327] Baker, *Eight Years' Wanderings in Ceylon*, 17–8.
[328] For more on Dutch debates around tropical climates, see Hans Pols, 'Notes from Batavia, the Europeans' Graveyard: The Nineteenth-Century Debate on Acclimatization in the Dutch East Indies', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 67 (2011), 120–48.
[329] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 46.

and Gevers Deynoot visited the fort at Oenarang (now Ungaran) in Central Java, famed for its healthy climate and the location of a sanatorium since 1849.[330] Another such institution was formed in 1856 in Malang, in East Java: this was visited by Barrington d'Almeida, who speaks in glowing terms of the surrounding "lovely country."[331] In Boom's guidebook *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië* both places are recommended for their healthy climate and good mountainous views.[332]

What is notable about such resort towns and hill stations is that they are often described as essentially European spaces, not only in terms of their principal inhabitants but also in terms of the nature itself. The climates that were so famously considered healthy and restorative are in practice often described in terms of comparisons with Europe. This is clear in Barrington d'Almeida's depiction of the surroundings of Malang: "[t]he adjoining fields are mostly meadow-land, studded here and there with trees, giving the landscape quite a European appearance, and carrying us in fancy home again."[333] As an aside, it is perhaps interesting to note that d'Almeida was a native of Singapore, and his family history was deeply intertwined with the history of empire in the Indian Ocean region: his paternal grandfather had relocated from Portugal to Macao, and then Singapore; his maternal grandfather had come to Bengal from Britain. Nevertheless, the reference to "home" here is clearly one to Europe, and perhaps Britain, where he returned at the end of his life. More widely, it is easy to see that in the reference frame of writers such as d'Almeida, even those who had lived the majority of their lives in Asia, Europe remained the prototype against which to measure the comfort afforded by, and the familiarity of any given location. Indeed, one suspects that it is the mental relief derived from European associations that lies at the root of the famous restorative power of resorts such as Malanga as much as any specific effect of the climate.

Other writers were equally quick to draw a connection between such healthy highland locales and Europe. Kinloch described the city of Bandung on Java, not far from Buitenzorg, with its climate "[in which] the Indian invalid could not fail to gain health and strength," as "the Montpelier [sic] of Java," however little such a comparison would appear to make sense on the surface.[334] Sujit Sivasundaram has discusses at length the many ways in which the plains at Nuwara Eliya were conceptualised as European-like spaces by contemporary authors, as "a little Britain, at times very

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[330] Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 46; Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 88 plus the thing from the geneeskundige weekblad.
[331] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 226; *Het eiland Java: opmerkingen, wenken en raadgevingen*, (Kampen, 1860), 28–9.
[332] Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 96, 139–40.
[333] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 227.
[334] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 64–5.

English and at others very Scottish" both because of its supposedly un-tropical climate and the possibility of growing European vegetables in the soil.[335] It is easy to find quotes in the travel books of the time to support such a notion. Baker mentions the "Italian climate" of the Ceylon highlands, while De Butts, praises "the Alpine region" for the contrast it presents "to the generality of Oriental landscapes."[336] As for Johore, a reader's letter to the *Straits Times* from 1870 twice draws parallels to what was likely the writer's homeland, describing the weather as reminiscent of "a March day in Scotland," and the waterfalls on the river Pulai "put [him] in mind of some of our Scottish falls on the Clyde."[337] The variety of the imagery used in these quotes and elsewhere is bewildering and often appears to make little sense from a twenty-first century perspective, but there is a coherent through-line of trying to find, in various ways, a little bit of Europe away from Europe.

Another thing to note is that, all around the region, these health resorts and hill stations were being sought and established at this same moment in time around the beginning and middle of the nineteenth century. In India, where the practice of spending the hot summers in the higher altitudes of Kashmir had been well established in the Mughal court, the British started to look for their own retreats in the early decades of the century. One of the first was Simla in the Himalayas, where a military base was established in 1819, and the benefits of whose climate were soon discovered by the officers posted there. It was followed by Nilgiris and Mahabaleshwar, near the major cities Madras and Bombay, respectively, where people started to build for-rent bungalows for seasonal visitors in the 1820s.[338] The development of Nuwara Eliya in Ceylon in the 1830s, and the various discussions and schemes for building similar resorts in the Straits Settlements or in their immediate vicinity in Johore, were therefore a simple continuation of a wider trend in the British colonisation of the region; moreover, that trend that was also taken up by the Dutch as can be seen from the establishment of sanatoriums on Java around 1850. The historian Martin Meade, who has worked on the hill stations and on the Anglo-Indian bungalow specifically, makes the point, already alluded to above, that such resorts were frequently imagined as comfortable transplants of Europe, where officials and civilians could escape not only the heat of the summer but also the responsibilities and complexities of colonisation more widely; this imaginary was, in turn, reflected in the architecture of the bungalows,

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[335] Sivasundaram, *Islanded*, 202–3.
[336] Baker, *Eight Years' Wanderings in Ceylon*, 17; De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 210–1.
[337] 'A Trip to the Mountains in Johore', *Straits Times Overland Journal*, 12 May 1877, 9.
[338] Weinberger-Thomas, *L'Inde et l'imaginaire*, 148–9.

which copied aspects of the villas of British seaside resorts or romantic Swiss alpine cottages.[339] These Indian hill stations and especially the famous Nilgiris are often mentioned as a point of reference by travel writers in the region. De Butts estimates that there is "little, if any material difference" between the climates of Nuwara Eliya and Nilgiris, although he states a preference for the former on account of its greater proximity to the main settlements of the colony and the superior facilities for travelling in Ceylon.[340]

For the would-be colonisers of the mid-nineteenth century, the nature of the tropics was not merely an aesthetically pleasing backdrop to the business of empire: it was also an environment that one had to live with and live in, an accommodation that required specific forms and practices to make palatable. These forms, in the shape of the plantations and resorts discussed above, were designed, both in their execution and in the ways they were described by writers and travellers, to bring a touch of Europe into the colonial setting, a home away from home. Yet a home is more than a place: it is also a set of actions and practices that create a balance between familiarity and rest on the one hand, and entertainment and excitement on the other. To examine the construction of that balance in the colonial lifestyle more carefully, the next section will shift the focus of the analysis away from *where* people lived and travelled and toward *what* they did there: in what settings was direct engagement with the tropical environment allowed and desirable, and in what ways were such interactions framed and interpreted by the genre?

4.3. Scenes of the hunt and other sports in the wild

A common point of intersection between the aesthetic appreciation of the natural environment and the general association of the high ground with health and salubriousness, as discussed in the previous sections, was the practice of scaling mountains and volcanoes, popular among colonial travellers at the time. On Java, in particular, the many volcanoes of the island became popular attractions in their own right, sought out for the views the provided as well as for the potential excitement of volcanic activity. That mixture of danger and adrenaline with the comforts of leisurely travel – a feature that remains a commonplace of so-called "adventure tourism" today – represents one attempt at

[339] Weinberger-Thomas, *L'Inde et l'imaginaire*, 149.
[340] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 213–4.

reconciling the connected but contradictory languages of the sublime and the picturesque, as discussed above. Moreover, that effect was not exclusively to be found on the mountaintops: other recurring scenes with a similar flavour include the many anecdotes of big game hunters, going after elephants and the other exotic fauna of the region, as well as the spectacle of the tiger fights arranged on Java. Each of these elements and their associated imageries were taken advantage of by authors who sought, in their different ways, to add a little spice to the notion of the tropical wilderness, increasingly tamed on the ever-expanding plantations, and some heroism and individualism to the figure of the European in its midst, in danger of becoming little more than a cog in the machine of colonisation.

The volcanoes of Java provided a range of opportunities for travellers depending on their specific preferences and circumstances. A casual visitor like Charles Walter Kinloch was happy enough to scale the Tangkuban Perahu, close to Batavia and just off the main route favoured by most tourists, near the city of Bandung. Its famous crater was also relatively easily accessible – a "somewhat fatiguing walk of about five miles" in Kinloch's words.[341] Seemingly more enthused than Kinloch, whose depiction of the volcano runs at a mere two dry paragraphs, d'Almeida took the time to descend inside the crater in order to get a better look at its active part. Notably, he describes the difficulties of the climb quite convincingly, including the "almost perpendicular" descent and the path covered with "loose stones" and "slippery" cakes of clay.[342] What he does not convey very well at all is the help of the guides and servants that accompanied him: in fact, the presence of a helper only comes through in a subordinate clause, almost by accident, in a reference to the crater "which the Mandoer told us was a mile in circumference."[343] More than one helper, in fact, *mandoer* being a Dutch loan word (borrowed via Malay but originating in Portuguese) referring to a head servant or overseer, even if the rest of the team is completely invisible in d'Almeida's narrative.

The simultaneous foregrounding of the danger and exoticism of the volcano and the exclusion of the help and guidance provided by servants is a consistent feature of all the accounts considered here, even those of more adventurous travellers like the big game hunter Douglas Hamilton. Hamilton, like d'Almeida and the Dutchman Gevers Deynoot, all visited the famous Mount Bromo in the east of the island, somewhat further off the beaten track and a more laborious climb.

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[341] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 69.
[342] William Barrington D'Almeida, *Life in Java: With Sketches of the Javanese; in Two Volumes. Vol. 2.* (London, 1864), 255.
[343] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 254.

Hamilton luxuriates in the details of the precarious ride "along the jagged ridge of the outer wall" of the volcano, on a path "not more than five feet broad, with a precipice of a thousand feet on one side, and from four to five hundred feet on the other."[344] The crater itself is described by d'Almeida variously as a "dreadful abyss" and "perfect pandemonium," and as if that wasn't enough he then displaces the narrative perspective to that of the – entirely rhetorical – "ignorant, superstitious natives," a neat framing device that allows him to use more fantastical and phantasmagoric language than would otherwise be acceptable for an educated observer like himself, calling forth "the shrieks, yells, and groans of a multitude of discontented spirits ... suffering unutterable torments."[345] This contrasts amusingly with Gevers Deynoot's more collected depiction, which retains the rational European framing throughout and instead imagines the booming of the volcano as "like a hundred steam engines."[346] Through that pair of near-contemporary quotes the experience of the volcano becomes a powerful symbol for both the supposed backwardness and superstition of the Javanese and for the modernity of Europe, while the intended audience gets a glimpse of both the thrill of primal fear and a comforting reaffirmation of the triumph of reason.

Modernity also impinged on the experience in more mundane ways, such as in the ever-present infrastructure that facilitated the ascent and hint at the popularity of the destination at the time. The various accounts mentions more than one *pasanggrahan* (Malay *pesangerahan*), a government-run bungalow or lodgement in the surroundings of the mountain, supervised by retired non-commissioned officers, where travellers were "capitally housed and fed" in preparation for the ascent or for rest afterwards.[347] Separately, d'Almeida also mentions "two huts … erected near the foot of the Bromok [sic] for the convenience of chance visitors," although it is unclear if these had any permanent staff.[348] At the final ascent to the crater, d'Almeida and Gevers Deynoot mention steps with railings and a bamboo ladder, respectively – it is difficult to say if the two descriptions refer to the same structure – set up to help visitors make the climb: these may have been a relatively new introduction, as Hamilton, who visited the site about a decade earlier, makes no mention of any such installation.[349] In any case, the presence of such facilities indicates a certain popularity among travellers and a regularity to their visits.

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[344] Hamilton, *Records of Sport*, 70.
[345] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 160–1.
[346] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 125.
[347] Hamilton, *Records of Sport*, 71; Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 124–6.
[348] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 158.
[349] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 159–60; Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 125.

Ceylon, while lacking in active volcanoes, was famed for its mountain scenery, praised by most visitors to the island. Mountaineering for exercise and aesthetic enjoyment was an established pastime by the 1840s, as is evident from De Butts's description of Pidurutalagala, the highest peak on the island:

> It is usual to consider Pedrotallagalla one of the principle "lions" of the plains, and to quit them without climbing its rugged sides would, in the opinion of all good and true Anglo-Cingalese, imply a lamentable lack of energy … The ascent is, in many places, extremely steep, and, on the whole, rather trying to any but accomplished pedestrians. The mountain path is frequently choked up with the luxuriant jungle that surrounds it, which, unless kept in check by the constant presence of the pruning-hook, would speedily obliterate all traces of it.[350]

This quote reveals several details of the role of mountaineering in Ceylonese society: firstly, that the mountain was a "lion," that is a sight and an attraction in its own right as acknowledged by "all good and true Anglo-Cingalese", and something travellers would come to seek out from further off; secondly, that the climb was also considered to have an element of physical exercise, requiring "energy" and being suitable for "accomplished pedestrians;" and finally, that the route up was continuously maintained and the jungle "kept in check" for the benefit of visitors. It appears that the popularity of the climb increased, and its associated infrastructure improved, over time, as Ferguson's *Souvenirs of Ceylon* from 1875 assures that "ladies and children" could now ride "almost all the way" to the top.[351] The popularity of the mountains was however also a source of some tension, recalling tourism's permanent push-and-pull between individualism and popularity, adventure and comfort. Thus, while De Butts's description seems benevolent enough, his contemporary Campbell was more jealous of the mountain scenery, imagining the prospect of an influx of interested visitors from around the region – a realistic fear, as it turned out – and comparing it to the masses of "soulless tourists" he had accompanied in Scotland and North America, among other places.[352]

Not the highest but certainly the best-known of Ceylon's mountains was and remains the so-called Adam's Peak, famous for its mythical and religious associations. Whereas Pidurutalagala was primarily of interest for the spectacular views it afforded, Adam's Peak provided a different experience, in some ways similar to that described for Mount Bromo on Java above. There is a similar mix of fantasy and rationality: at the volcano, d'Almeida sought to cast its workings in a mythical and nightmarish light while distancing himself as a rational observer from such imaginings; similarly, accounts of Adam's Peak always bring up the various legends of Adam, Buddha, or Shiva leaving

[350] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 217.
[351] Ferguson, *Souvenirs of Ceylon*, 182.
[352] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 244–5.

their footprint on the summit of the mountain, while also moving to discredit any notion of a modern European traveller believing in the "numerous and amusing" tales.[353] This is most clearly achieved in Souvenirs of Ceylon, which sets out an entire taxonomy of the location's associated superstitions, from Buddhists and Hindus to Muslims and the Chinese and even "the Portuguese, whose credulity was not inferior to that of the pagans they came to conquer and Christianise," all of whom are then contrasted with the modern traveller, a "pilgrim seeking after the beautiful in nature," having thus sublimated the primal urge for mythmaking into an aestheticized appreciation of the environment.[354]

Framing mountains and volcanoes as an attraction for travellers was of course by no means a phenomenon restricted to the Indian Ocean region or to the lives of colonial society. Indeed, mountaineering was a popular pastime in mid-nineteenth-century Europe: it is from this time that the popularity of the Alps as a tourist destination in their own right, rather than just a passage on the Grand Tour toward Italy, stems from.[355] As for volcanoes, mass tourism to Vesuvius and the adjoining Pompey, though a long-standing tradition, began to take shape as an industry around the same time.[356] It was only natural for would-be tourists in the colonies to seek to emulate those familiar trends in their own tropical surroundings. It is important to note that these locations were not invented as travel destinations by the Europeans: both Adam's Peak on Ceylon and Mount Bromo on Java, to use two of the examples discussed here, have a history of cultural significance that long precedes colonial times, being longstanding sites of pilgrimage for Buddhists and Hindus, respectively. What the European visitors of the nineteenth century did was co-opt some elements of that pre-existing cultural significance, occasionally adopting some of the travel routes and infrastructure involved, while transposing a new layer of meaning, derived from European tourist culture, on to their experience. The coexistence of these two layers was well understood by European travellers at the time: De Butts, for example, in his account of Adam's Peak, makes a point of mentioning separately "the devotees who frequent [and] the curious who visit it," that is, the pilgrims and the tourists. The double significance is even more obviously – and curiously – underlined in d'Almeida's twin account of Bromo, to which he made two separate excursions on consecutive days, as if to experience each mode of visit separately. The first account is marked by the classic hallmarks of a Vesuvius narrative, with foreboding silence anticipating the destructive potential of the site, the romantic solitude of the

[353] Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent*, 89.
[354] Ferguson, *Souvenirs of Ceylon*, 77–8.
[355] Heafford, 'Between Grand Tour and Tourism', 25–47.
[356] Towner, 'Grand Tour', 323.

travellers and the sublime majesty of the volcano; the other, on the occasion of the yearly Hindu festival still celebrated there today, is full of the hustle and bustle of locals and pilgrims, of the noise and colour of festivities and anecdotes of rituals and superstitions, highlighting the exoticism of the experience.[357] Such accounts provide examples of an emergent colonial tourism and of its habit of meshing elements of local religious and cultural practices with contemporary imported European fashions.

Nature and sport are also intertwined in another recurring feature in the travel writing of the period, the hunting scene. Potentially adventurous, in theory representing an encounter with true wilderness, these stories and scenes often devolve instead to cosy anecdotes that might just as well have taken place in Europe, if not for the – frequently underlined – larger and more exotic nature of the prey, or the specific ethnicity of the accompanying servants. The works that focus specifically on sporting reminiscences, either during a specific journey or over a longer stay in the East, are Hamilton's *Records of Sport*, already discussed above, which includes accounts of hunting trips not only to Java but also Singapore; as well as Baker's *The Rifle and the Hound* and Sullivan's similarly titled *The Bungalow and the Tent*, both from Ceylon; scattered anecdotes can also be found in a number of the other works, as hunting was in many ways one of the primary expected activities of male travellers of good standing in the region, especially among the British. Elephant-hunting on Ceylon gets head-billing in most cases, as the most iconic example of the pastime; but the tigers of Java and, to a lesser extent, those in and around Singapore were of an almost equal fame in such narratives.

The lack of true wilderness and adventure in these stories is aptly captured by the title chosen by Sullivan, the tent and the bungalow referring to the considerable comforts of camp-life that these gentleman hunters invariably enjoyed after the exertions of the day, in the end "turning into comfortable beds, with pillows and musquito [sic] curtains, in a good-sized tent, after a good, almost luxurious dinner, of curry and rice, beer and sherry."[358] The author himself notes the lack of hardship, in an almost disappointed tone, comparing Ceylon to previous experiences in North America: "[t]here is certainly far more luxury in the East, but you miss the independence, and the light, exhilarating sensation, arising from the sense of perfect health."[359] Baker is rather less wistful or desirous of more

[357] Claire L. Kovacs, 'Pompeii and Its Material Reproductions: The Rise of a Tourist Site in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Tourism History*, 5 (2013), 35; Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour*, 99.
[358] Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent*, 174.
[359] Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent*, 175.

spartan excursions; on the contrary, he prefaces a lengthy list of the necessary equipment on a hunting trip with a simple statement of intent: "[t]here is one thing necessary to the enjoyment of sport in Ceylon, and without which no amount of game can afford thorough pleasure; this is personal comfort."[360] As in other regards, Baker has a high opinion of himself also as an organiser – "I generally manage to combine good sport with every comfort and convenience" – and his instructions to would-be hunters are detailed indeed: just the comestibles to be carried around come to "oil, tea, coffee, sugar, biscuits, wine, brandy, sauces &c., a few hams, some tins of preserved meats and soups, and a few bottles of curaçoa [sic], a glass of which, in the early dawn after a cup of hot coffee and a biscuit, is a fine preparation for a day's work."[361] These few quotes already provide ample evidence of just how thoroughly pampered and sheltered a gentleman-hunter like Baker or Sullivan in fact was on these hunts, and how far from any unmediated contact with the environment.

The sophistication and complexity of these hunting trips naturally suggests a large reserve of labour to draw from to the fulfilment and satisfaction of the protagonists' needs. References to the coolies or servants employed on these parties can indeed be found all over the works, yet their presence is distinctly de-centred. It is notable, for example, that Baker, while providing the exhaustive list of equipment and supplies above, and expounding on the importance of good planning and organisation, makes no mention of the number of servants required, or indeed of the arrangements made to secure those services. It is more than a hundred pages later that the reader learns, from an off-hand remark, that at least on the specific occasion recounted there the author employed "upwards of fifty coolies and servants."[362] Another casual remark in Sullivan's *The Bungalow and the Tent* would seem to confirm that number as relatively common, mentioning forty "volunteers amongst the coolies of the adjoining estate" procured for the author's party.[363] For Hamilton on Java, "whole districts were turned out to beat the jungles" to aid in the hunt, though there is certainly some exaggeration there.[364]

Reasons for the reluctance to detail the practical arrangements of labour are difficult to point out with any certainty: the commonplace nature of comparable retinues for Europeans of class in colonial society may well have made further elaboration unnecessary in the authors' eyes; or

[360] Baker, *The Rifle and the Hound*, 73.
[361] Baker, *The Rifle and the Hound*, 74.
[362] Baker, *The Rifle and the Hound*, 190.
[363] Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent*, 129.
[364] Hamilton, *Records of Sport*, 57.

perhaps a realistic depiction of the work carried out by servants as opposed to the sportsmen themselves was seen to detract from the merit of their individual exploits. In general, servants only really come up in these narratives when they do something wrong or unsatisfactory, or if one of them has a specific role in some – generally humorous – misadventure. Servants' shortcomings are a frequent source of comic relief, an emphasis that contrasts sharply with the authors' reluctance to exhibit their own weaknesses. For example, we never learn in either of Baker's two volumes of Ceylon hunting stories of the incident when he – or his brother, but both were present – accidentally shot and killed his own horsekeeper, believing him to be an elk.[365] For that anecdote, we must turn to the local press instead, but it seems certain that had the fatal mistake been committed by an indigenous servant, the scene would have been laid out with relish in Baker's writings. As it is, the readers are left with a silence that underlines both an embarrassment over the misdeeds of colonizers and an eagerness to weaponise humour as a constituent element of social hierarchy, habitually punching down rather than up. In any case, the effect is similar to what has been discussed in earlier sections: non-European persons, their presence and work, are curiously erased from these accounts of sporting life as they are from depictions of plantations and gardens that are represented as sites of visual delight instead, or from the volcano excursions that come across as noble and solitary adventures.

Apart from the many comforts of the camp and the large retinue of servants, these hunting excursions are also generally notable for the lack of effort required of, or difficulty visited upon, the sportsmen. Baker's promise, in his preface, to recount "hecatombs of slaughter" turns out to be rather an adequate description of many of these excursions: the captured prey piles up, the servants "could not dry the venison sufficiently fast to prevent the deer from stinking as they were killed"; or, as Campbell dryly notes, "[i]n truth, I could kill far more than I have stated … were it not that I get tired of firing."[366] By his account, on Ceylon "you could bag, without much difficulty, and without a dog to point the game for you, twenty or thirty couples of snipes in a few hours … and, in the mornings and evenings, some deer, elk, hogs, pea and jungle-fowl, and probably a few alligators."[367] It isn't really about the thrill of the hunt, then, as the challenge seems all but perfunctory. And it is perhaps to balance that sense of facility that the authors spend so much time waxing lyrical on the great and potentially dangerous beasts – the elephants and tigers but also wild boars and buffalos – even if these

[365] 'Fatal Accident at Nuera Ellia', *Examiner*, 23 February 1850 (consulted in NA London, Colonial Office Records, CO 59/5).
[366] Baker, *The Rifle and the Hound*, 190; Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 184.
[367] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 183.

were far from the most common prey. And indeed these anecdotes provide occasional tension and excitement. As if to vouch for the reality of the risk, several authors recount stories of narrow escapes and even recent fatalities, although these are undercut by descriptions elsewhere. For example, the death of one Major Haddock caused by a rogue elephant is relayed by both De Butts and Baker as relatively recent news – "some years ago" wrote Baker in 1854 – whereas it actually took place in 1828, and its enshrining in local legend merely serves to underline how rare such accidents actually were.[368] Indeed, De Butts's prosaic depiction of the elephant hunt – "an every-day and ordinary amusement" – probably gets closer to the experience.

Two close-call anecdotes by Hamilton and Sullivan are particularly instructive in examining the wider role and significance of hunting scenes in colonial literature. The stories, recounting encounters with a boar and an elephant, respectively, are notable in repeating the exact same narrative beats: the authors are charged upon by the beast; they turn around to receive a loaded weapon from their personal gun-carrier, but find, to their horror, that the servant has run away; and then have to deal with the situation through some combination of their skill and physical prowess.[369] Baker also, as satisfied with himself as ever, shares an anecdote with a similar moral, describing how he prepared for elephant-shooting by collecting the weapons from the gun-bearers beforehand and sending them up a tree, "as I knew that they would run away in the event of danger."[370] In general, the cowardly and fleeing servant is a constantly recurring trope in these stories, and a narrative device that conveniently leaves the European adventurer and the rushing beast alone on the scene at the moment of their climactic encounter, dismissing any possible concerns with the heroism of employing vast retinues on one's excursions. Realistic or not, it certainly serves to reinforce and underline the authors' personal courage in the face of danger, while at the same time establishing a secure hierarchy between the prowess and virility of the European and the cowardliness and unreliability of the Asian. While big-game hunting undeniably was an activity with its fair share of risk, it is difficult to avoid the feeling that these stories are embellished and emphasised to distract attention from the otherwise general comfort and high level of service enjoyed by the hunter-writers. To provide anecdotes that "would have created a slight sensation in some al fresco parties in England", to borrow Sullivan's phrasing; or to "inspire ardour in the heart of many a British sportsman, and induce them, at least to

[368] Baker, 116; Asiatic Journal 26 (1828), 752.
[369] Hamilton, *Records of Sport*, 83; Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent*, 214–5.
[370] Baker, *The Rifle and the Hound*, 81.

talk of taking a steam trip to Ceylon, for a season's hunting and shooting", as Campbell puts it.[371] To please the audience; and to live up to an assumed standard that was expected of tales of colonial sports by that audience.

A final example of the intersections of sports and the wild is provided by the various animal-based spectacles that were often organised for and sought out by European travellers. Perhaps the most famous of these were the ceremonial tiger fights (though the word was often used interchangeably to describe leopards) arranged on Java, evidence for which has been found from the early seventeenth century onward and until the turn of the twentieth century when the island's tiger population went extinct.[372] According to Peter Boomgaard, who has written an in-depth study of the ceremony and its changing role in Javanese society, the peak period for the fights was around 1830-1870, that is, almost exactly the period covered by this thesis, and that at this time the performance had lost much of its ritual significance and exceptionality, having become a common amusement arranged for the benefit of European travellers, even those of no official rank.[373] A glance through the travel books of the period seems to confirm the omnipresence of the ceremony: of the authors considered here, Davidson provides a first-hand account of one of the two main forms of the ceremony, where a tiger is circled by ranks of men armed with spears and forced to try to make an escape; d'Almeida describes the other, where a tiger and a buffalo are made to fight each other, in great detail though apparently from second-hand sources.[374] Moreover, Hamilton laments that his visit to the court in Surakarta fell on Ramadan, as this prevented him from witnessing the spectacles, of which he was well aware of from other written accounts.[375] The two Dutchmen Gevers Deynoot and Van der Chijs also mention them, though the latter explains that he refused to take part in the spectacle because of its violence.

It is hardly surprising that these writers, having no local expertise, were not well aware of the meanings of the tiger ceremonies in a Javanese context. To that end, it is interesting to compare them with a near-contemporary account written by Jonathan Rigg, an English plantation-owner on Java and a dedicated amateur linguist, as well as a regular contributor to the scientifically minded,

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[371] Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent*, 292; Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 58.
[372] Peter Boomgaard, 'Death to the Tiger! The Development of Tiger and Leopard Rituals in Java, 1605-1906', *South East Asia Research*, 2 (1994), 144; see also Peter Boomgaard, 'Tijgerstekerijen En Tijger-Buffelgevechten Op Java, 1620-1906', *Indische Letteren*, 21 (2006), 45–56.
[373] Boomgaard, 'Death to the Tiger', 162–3.
[374] Davidson, *Trade and Travel*, 17–20; D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 24–7.
[375] Hamilton, *Records of Sport*, 79–80.

Singapore-based *Journal of the Indian Archipelago,* where his portrayal of the fight was published in 1850.[376] Rigg's narrative effectively displaces the beast from the centre of the narrative in favour of a detailed, almost ethnographical description of the ceremony as a whole. Not only is his account longer by far than either of the other two, he also spends several pages describing in minute detail the preliminary ceremonials before the tiger even makes an appearance.

> The old man announced to the Emperor, that all was in readiness for the tiger fight, and after a few words had been exchanged between them, wine was handed round to the guests by half-caste lackeys in European clothing. On a separate small tray, were brought two glasses, one for the Emperor and one for the Resident. The Emperor then gave the toast "Slamat ngadu machan" (success to the tiger fight) which was immediately drunk off without any hurrah or other to do, such being the etiquette on these occasions.[377]

As this brief quote shows, Rigg shows a keen eye on both the rules and conventions that direct the action, and the ceremonial roles and power relations, extending even to the seating arrangements of all the present notables, both Javanese and European. He focuses especially on the comportment, dress, accessories and even the hairstyle of the emperor (rather the susuhunan, the ruler of Surakarta.) His narrative, reflecting his scholarly interests – he is best known for publishing the first dictionary of the Sunda language – is filled with Javanese terminology and phrases as well as proper names and shows great care for the different titles and ranks of the nobility present as well as their personal relations. As to the fight itself, Rigg gives a full account of the gestures of the attendants, the accompanying music and other such ritualistic detail.

By contrast, Davidson dispatches with all the preliminaries and context in a single, throwaway sentence: "the native chief of the district, with his friends, and the European officials of the place, occupied a gay pavilion," before moving on to describe the spectacle itself.[378] And the same goes for the other popular travel books considered here: the scene is simple and focuses on the thrills of the action. The authors emphasise emotional response instead of cool observation, one noting how the tiger made his "young heart quake a little" while another refers to the audience "breathless with excitement."[379] Instead of a careful delineation of status, power relations and the attendant honorifics, the most notable title in both Davidson and d'Almeida goes for the anthropomorphised tiger itself: "his royal highness" and "king of the jungle," respectively.[380] The wildlife is here the true star of the show, while little attempt is made to frame the spectacle in its socio-cultural context. In fact, both

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[376] Jonathan Rigg, 'Tiger Fight at Solo', *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia* 4 (1850), 75-84.
[377] Tiger fight, 77-8.
[378] Davidson, *Trade and Travel*, 17.
[379] Davidson, *Trade and Travel*, 18; D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 26.
[380] Davidson, *Trade and Travel*, 17; D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 26.

Davidson and Van der Chijs disassociate the event from its local specificity and find an appropriate framing in their European backgrounds: for the former, the "dog-fighting and cock-fighting, which were formerly so much practiced in Britain;" and the latter explains his decision to forego the show by reference to the distaste he had felt before while attending an unspecified "animal fight" in Europe.[381] This decontextualization is indicative of the conventions of the genre that the authors were self-consciously writing within: colonial experience as anecdotes and curiosities, in a form that provided easy clippings for the more entertainment-focused magazines and compendia of the time to mix and match as they saw fit. Foregoing any notion of geographical congruity, such works might mix a fox chase in Ireland with elephant catching in India, or segue from a piece on the leaning tower of Pisa to the Niagara Falls to a fight between a man and a tiger at a cruel rajah's whim.[382]

The examples considered in this section – volcano tourism, mountaineering, hunting scenes and tiger fights – all point out in various ways at the attempts made by authors of popular travel writing to bring a sense of exertion and adventure and a thrill of danger into the environment and landscapes they travelled through. Taken together, these practices are an interesting mix of European and Asian influences, of the familiar and the exotic, and show evidence of a careful calibration of the balance between the comfort of the former and the excitement of the latter. They also frame the protagonists of these narratives in a series of distinctive roles relative to the natural environment of the colonies: as vigorous and energetic mountaineers; in solitary contemplation by the crater of a volcano; as daring adventurers on the hunt; and as comfortably seated spectators by the ring. It is a curious mix of Romantic ideals, the realities of colonial hierarchies and touristic routine, eclectic yet thoroughly indicative of the wider ethos of the genre of popular imperial travel writing.

4.4. Conclusion

Nature had a central role in the imagery that was associated with the colonies of the Indian Ocean in the European imagination. Not for nothing was the word "paradise" frequently used to describe each of Ceylon, Java and the Straits Settlements: these were places that were often thought to represent the

[381] Davidson, *Trade and Travel*, 20; Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 44.
[382] Examples here are from *Percy Anecdotes*, 24 (1821) and *The Pictorial Cabinet of Marvels* (1878).

ultimate in natural beauty, a charm that was only added to by the promise of the succulent fruit of the tropics and the exotic, not to mention dangerous, wildlife. And yet, this image of untouched paradisiacal purity – evidently never actually truthful to begin with – underwent a significant transformation over the course of the nineteenth century, a transformation that is nowhere as clearly visible as in the corpus of popular travel writing that is under discussion here. The idea of untouched wilderness that appealed to and was fed by the fashionable romanticism of the early nineteenth century, was always one that tended to erase the local, non-European populations from the picture and to minimise their impact on and presence in the landscape. Conveniently, this rhetorical manoeuvre left the stage free for a repopulation and a refashioning in the European image, a process in which imperial popular culture was heavily implicated, and which crafted a significantly Europeanised ideal of the Indian Ocean colonies as a space, and of the colonial way of life within that space.

That idealised image, however, had to be carefully framed to ensure the desired effect. The many examples discussed in this chapter have already hinted at the significant amount of artifice that went into constructing a mid-nineteenth-century visitor's supposedly direct and natural experience of the tropical environment: from the new roads that allowed quicker passage through inconvenient jungles to the botanical gardens where specimens of the lush vegetation could be observed at leisure, each with its own painted label; from the plantations that inscribed colonisation into the very landscape of the colonies, to the sanatoria and resorts that reinvented a little bit of Europe away from Europe; and finally in the proto-tourist infrastructure and maintenance that facilitated excursions to volcanoes and picturesque mountain summits, and the large retinues that made even life in the wilderness a comfortable experience for aspiring big game hunters. Yet, as discussed above, in each of these cases the authors of these accounts were more often than not somewhat reluctant to disclose the full extent of such institutional framing and facilitation, or vacillated between an appreciation for the homely comforts it provided and a desire for the thrills of a real adventure or the unmediated luxuriousness and vastness of the landscape.

That tension between comfort and unease, between the picturesque and the sublime, lies at the heart of one of the many anxieties of empire. On the one hand, the landscape had to be tamed, made subservient and modified according to Eurocentric models, whether in the form of the English garden or a coffee plantation; on the other, it was its very untamedness that held the promise of pleasure and excitement in the first place. And by no means was this a merely aesthetic anxiety, as the shaping of the environment had very real, pragmatic consequences. Concerns about the environmental degradation caused by resource extraction were widespread in the nineteenth century and have indeed been identified by some as the origin of modern environmentalism; it has also been

noted that the colonial sciences developed not only to exploit natural resources but also, in a significant way, to protect them from that very exploitation, through methods such as conservation and soil management.[383] Moreover, there was also a social dimension to that anxiety: the idea that Europeans were simply unfit to withstand the full force of the tropical environment, to which the local, indigenous peoples were naturally adapted. This discrepancy raised the spectre of dependence, and of weakness in the face of a supposedly subservient people: a direct threat to the relations of power that underpinned the colonial system.

Travel writers, and travel writing as a genre, were in many ways ideally suited to address each of these anxieties. Or rather, not to address them, as exclusion and erasure often served to soothe potential concerns much more efficiently than any argumentation could. It was much easier for a traveller, here today and gone tomorrow, to pick and choose, to narrow down the frame, than it would have been for a stationary observer, or a local expert. Yet, with a little contextualisation, reading these books and then stepping back, it is easy to see the rhetorical strategies at play: the substitution of the institutionalised botanical garden for observing nature in the wild, and the obscuration of the indigenous roots of that institution; the convenient silence over the services provided by Asian servants on supposedly adventurous excursions, or the labour conditions of indigenous workers on plantations visited; and an enthusiastic inclusion of anything with even a whiff of familiarity about it, even if just a bush of brambles by the roadside. Indeed, perhaps the most efficient weapon of popular travel writing was its employment of tourist culture and imagery to familiarise the exotic: to describe the volcanoes of Java in a vocabulary developed by Grand Tour goers climbing Vesuvius; or an elephant hunt as if it were for a stag in the Scottish Highlands. Here the tropical becomes merely a piquant addition to a securely European narrative foundation: an inversion of the reality beyond the book where it was the very process of colonisation that was being imposed upon a tropical, non-European landscape.

Of course, the natural landscape of the colonies of the region nowhere existed as a space separate from the people inhabiting it, nor where the forms of that inhabitation aesthetically or politically insignificant, as has already been made clear above in the discussion on the Europeanised plantation structures and the highland resorts designed to create a sense of familiarity in their European visitors. The next chapter will delve deeper into this analysis through a focus on

[383] Deepak Kumar, Vinita Damodaran, and Rohan D'Souza, 'Introduction', in Deepak Kumar, Vinita Damodaran, and Rohan D'Souza (eds.), *The British Empire and the Natural World: Environmental Encounters in South Asia* (New Delhi, 2011), 2–4.

architectural interventions and urban design, examining the concrete, structural frames that our travellers lived in and moved through. Where this chapter has focused on the idea of empire – as represented in these books – as an imposition on the natural landscape, the next one flips that set-up by looking at the ways in which the major colonial cities of the region, supposedly a safe haven for polite European society, were a symbolic frontline in the imperial imagination between safe and unsafe, comfort and discomfort, and as such a key site of anxieties distinct but closely related to the ones discussed in the chapter. Here again the genre of popular travel writing was well placed to ease concerns and breed confidence, through its prominent representation of the rapidly evolving architectural vistas of the colonial cities as sites of reassuring Europeanness, as well as through its clever utilisation of manmade constructs like monuments and memorials to inscribe new, familiar meanings directly into the environment. And, as this chapter has repeatedly noted the indigenous influences and hybridities of colonial natural imagery, the next chapter will also examine the roles that Asian architectures played in European authors' conceptualisation of the constructed landscapes of the region.

Chapter 5
Constructed landscapes

5.1 Monuments and memorials

As noted in the previous chapter, the role of the natural environment in popular colonial travel writing was often to provide a picturesque background for the narrative, the majority of which took place within an artificial, constructed environment. This chapter will now focus the analysis on the different elements of that world of architecture and man-made things, to examine the various ways in which space was appropriated through the act of building and how a series of new constructs came to act as signposts for the progress of colonisation and to define European travellers' experience of life in the region. At the same time, the imprint of indigenous cultures on the landscape was minimised and, when it could not be ignored, relegated to a distant historical dimension without any clear connection to the present day. The analysis will be divided in three sections. In this, the first one, the focus will be on the various European-built monuments and other localised "sights" that came to inscribe a set of historical and ideological meanings literally into the landscape of the colonies in the region. The second section will then take a broader look at colonial cities and their architecture, and how these developed in the nineteenth century and came to represent certain ideals of colonial life. Finally, in the last section, the question of indigenous and non-European architecture will be examined, with specific focus on the many historical temples and ruins that drew the attention of European archaeologists and ethnologists, and on how popular travel writers made use of and streamlined the work of the former to create a place for such constructs in their narratives.

One of the less obvious though very nearly omnipresent ways in which travel books normalised the idea of colonised areas as European spaces was through the frequent description of individual monuments and objects that memorialise some specific event or part of the history of the

areas as European possessions. Such monuments had the same role in writing as they did in real life: to become a part of the landscape and the environment, a constant reminder of the specific past that they are referring to, thus literally inscribing that past, or rather interpretation of the past, into the space of the colonies; or, in other words, colonising that space on a cultural level.[384] The word "monument" is here used in a broad sense: such objects could be actual statues or sculptures, ordered by government authorities and designed for a specific purpose; man-made remnants of the past, such as wrecked ships; or individual buildings or locations tied up with specific anecdotal histories.

Many of the simpler monuments memorialise important deaths, and many such memorials became significant tourist sites in their own right. One example is the monument erected near Anjer in the residency of Bantam on Java, in honour of Charles Allan Cathcart, a British ambassador to China who died en route in 1788 and was buried in Dutch territory. This monument, apparently dating from the British interregnum, is highlighted by J.F.G. Brumund in a 1840 piece in the *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, and he specifically mentions it as a place that attracted visits from the numerous Englishmen that passed through the lively harbour.[385] No surprise, then, that the monument is also included in Boom's guidebook *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië* among the important sights of the place.[386] Cathcart's grave monument is a good example of the way the Anglo-Dutch past of the region became a concrete part of the landscape in a form that could be easily identified and consumed by both Dutch and British travellers and residents: the specific history that it refers to, i.e. that of the failed British embassy to China that preceded MacCartney's, is not important nor indeed even touched upon by either Brumund or Boom; Brumund even badly mangles the name ("Catcheast") – curiously enough as he would have been able to read it inscribed on the stone. What matters, though, is that the person in question is of high rank – both authors mention his military rank – and a representative of the British state, the primary competitor and occasional ally of the Dutch in the region. In short, he represents the same institutions and the same colonising interests as the visitors to his grave, the presence of his monument a sign of the long roots of the European presence in the archipelago.

A similar instance of the Anglo-Dutch heritage of Java can be found in the Buitenzorg gardens. As noted in the previous chapter, the entire gardens once belonged to the estate of Stamford

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[384] For more on this topic, see the contributions in Dominik Geppert and Frank Lorenz Müller, *Sites of Imperial Memory: Commemorating Colonial Rule in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Oxford, 2015).
[385] Brumund, 'Reisje door de residentie Bantam', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië* 3:2 (1840), 699-700.
[386] Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 121–2.

Raffles and were to some extent refashioned under his rule, a point that is also referred to by William Walker; what makes that connection clearer and more concrete, however, is the grave monument of Raffles's wife Olivia Mariamne, who passed away on Java, that can also be found within the grounds. This monument is mentioned by both Dutch and British nineteenth-century visitors to Buitenzorg, and remains – although in an entirely rebuilt state – an important sight in the Bogor gardens to this day. The monument is not important because of its beauty – as Gevers Deynoot points out in his typically terse style, it "doesn't say much for the taste of the English in those days [i.e., 1815;]" an equally unimpressed anonymous British visitor comments on the "mediocrity" of the funeral verse.[387] What makes it – and Mount Olivia on Penang, mentioned in the previous chapter – a spot worth notice is, instead, the historical connection with Raffles, in many ways the most prominent figure in the European imagining of the history of the region, a famous name from the near past that served as a lynchpin and axis around which the wider story of the colony could be told.[388] Less famous names could have specific significance for specific visitors: thus, for example, Walker mentions, aside from the monument to Lady Raffles, also the much less impressive grave of Captain J. Drury, for no other apparent reason than the significance of discovering the name of a fellow Englishman at a Dutch graveyard.[389]

The ways in which a graveyard, repurposed as a tourist sight, could work to reconfigure the historical narrative attached to a place is clear from a passage in John Cameron's *Our Tropical Possessions*, where the author describes the "ancient tombs" found in Malacca, at the cemetery of the ruined St. Paul's cathedral.[390] The notion of reading history from the gravestones is here made explicit:

> It is not to the walls however of this old church that we must look for the story of the past. At our feet lie the chronicles of the dead – – The earlier stones – those marking the resting-places of the Portuguese – are mostly granite and of a plain and simple character. Those set up after the Dutch accession have much finer carving – – The rules of admission, too, appear to have been calculated with singular foresight, for though every nook of the old ground is now appropriated, still the tenants of no particular generation predominate, but commencing three hundred years back, the dates come gradually down to within the present age.[391]

[387] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 60; *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*, (1854), 115.
[388] Han Mui Ling, 'From Travelogues to Guidebooks: Imagining Colonial Singapore, 1819-1940', *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 18 (2003), 261.
[389] Walker, *Jottings*, 174–5.
[390] Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 355–61.
[391] Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 355–6.

What is immediately apparent from the heavily redacted quote above, is that the "story of the past" the author is looking for has a specific, and by no means particularly ancient start date – 1568, the earliest he can find among the stones, and almost exactly three centuries before the publication of Cameron's volume – and also a very specific scope, i.e. that of the European settlement of the city and its surroundings. That story starts with the Portuguese, continues with the Dutch and finally, with the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824, becomes incorporated with the wider history of the British possessions of the Indian Ocean. Naturally, there is no mention of any tombs for non-Europeans. As an aside, the comparison between the simple Portuguese and the more refined Dutch draws on a familiar trope in the colonial literature of the time, which shall be discussed at greater length in the next chapter: in short, British authors generally found greater common ground with the Dutch, who were considered to be more disciplined, civilised and "European" in their behaviour and mode of being in a colonial setting.

Colonial graveyards were far from just functional spaces. The lessons Cameron draws from St. Paul's are numerous: a late-sixteenth-century gravestone of a Jesuit bishop makes him pause and marvel at the ambition of the Catholic church in those days; another one from a century later, for the wife of a Dutch official, leads him to consider the comforts and virtues of familial life in colonial society. All in all he considers the grounds, from the point of view of a visitor, as "one of the chief attractions of Malacca," in the same way that Walker felt about the little graveyard at Buitenzorg: these are places where the specifically colonial, European history of the places in condensed into a simple, streamlined narrative, in the form of a space with exclusive access, open only to Christians and, in most cases, Europeans. As such, they perform the same function as regards the history of the area, as the botanical gardens considered in the previous chapter did in relation to the nature of the tropics. And while it is clear enough that, unlike botanical gardens, cemeteries were by no means a nineteenth-century invention, it is worth noting that the phenomenon of cemetery tourism, that is, the positioning of cemeteries as major sights and destinations for leisurely visits, as Cameron explicitly does, dates from the Romantic period.[392]

A memorial of a different kind became an important reference point for travellers on Ceylon making the trip between Colombo and Kandy: on that road stood a monument to a Captain Dawson, deceased in 1829, a military engineer responsible for the construction of that very road

[392] The culture of cemetery tourism is the topic of Paul Westover, *Necromanticism: Traveling to Meet the Dead, 1750-1860* (Basingstoke, 2012); see also Samantha Matthews, 'Making Their Mark: Writing the Poet's Grave', in Nicola J. Watson (ed.), *Literary Tourism and Nineteenth-Century Culture* (Basingstoke, 2009).

among others. Campbell appears to have been a personal acquaintance of said Dawson, profusely eulogising the feats of his late friend in facilitating access and the spread of civilisation to the Ceylon highlands, "an undertaking worthy of the enterprising and lofty genius of Napoleon."[393] De Butts makes much the same point when his narrative stops to catch a breath at the monument: "this indication of the presence of civilized man [.i.e., the road built by the Royal Engineers under Dawson] affords a striking contrast to the wildness of the mountain scenery around." When Walker came to the scene a couple of decades later, his attitude was significantly different, reflecting wider developments in the life of the colonies: he has no special reverence for the figure of Dawson, already receded to the mists of time, and instead of marvelling at the feat of the original construction of the road, complains about its perceived shortcomings: "[i]f I should ever chance to become the Governor of Ceylon, I should order the monument – – to be taken down to furnish (in part) materials for a rough parapet on the precipitous side of the road."[394] That Walker represents a later generation, and is in general less involved in the business of the colonisation of Ceylon than the military men De Butts and Campbell were, is clear, but his priorities are the same: just like the latter two praise the figure of Dawson for his part in enabling the further penetration of the colonising might of Britain into the highlands of Ceylon, Walker merely expects that same process of infrastructural refinement to keep up with the times and provide for ever more comfortable and leisurely modes of travel. In both cases, the monument that stands by the road is really devoted to the ideal of technological progress intertwined with colonisation, rather than the individual.

The importance afforded to the ideal of technological superiority, especially in conjunction with spreading infrastructure and improved transportation, is also clear from the anecdotes connected with another location between Colombo and Kandy: the bridge at Peradeniya, crossing the river Mahaweli. Several travel writers, including De Butts, Sullivan and Walker, relate the story of an indigenous myth associated with the river: that to bridge it was an impossible task, and that the completion of such a work would presage the defeat of the Kingdom of Kandy. Each of these authors also takes up the opportunity, on passing the bridge, to jubilantly declare the triumph of Western civilisation over the superstition of the Kandians. Consequently the spot, like Dawson's monument above, takes on a wider significance as a general symbol of colonisation, a symbol of "the permanent domination of the English over their [the Kandians'] romantic and, until of late,

[393] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 2*, 154.
[394] Walker, *Jottings*, 203.

independent country," in De Butts's phrase.[395] Sullivan assures the reader that the construction of the bridge "quite convinced the Kandians that their day was come, and that all chance of opposing their destiny, or of liberating themselves, was hopeless" – an evidently dubious claim considering the Matale rebellion that took place in Kandy in 1848, some fifteen years after the completion of the bridge and six years before the publication of Sullivan's volume.[396] Walker, less wedded to Ceylon specifically, draws a wider conclusion, praising the "British levers by which so many Asiatic prophecies have been outflanked and brought to nought."[397] The cases of the Peradeniya bridge and the Dawson monument recall two themes that recur throughout in the colonial travel writing of the time, and have already been noted in previous chapters: the juxtaposition of dynamism and change as introduced by the Europeans on the one hand, and the stagnation and historical passivity of the Asians on the other; and the disenchantment and demythologising of the exotic east when faced with European, scientific rationality.

In other cases, monuments were set up in the memory of individuals who were still alive at the time, or of specific historical events. In Singapore, the setting up of a monument memorialising the visit of the Marquis of Dalhousie, governor-general of India, created public debate in the press in 1850. A public meeting decided upon an obelisk to be built with public subscription, to honour the Marquis's "recognition of those great principles of freedom from all commercial restrictions to which the prosperity of the Settlement is due."[398] The purpose of the monument was therefore not simply to stand as a reminder of the visit of the governor-general, but also as a statement of ideology and a defence of Singapore's status as a free port. It is also of interest that the project was mixed up with ongoing debates about how best to memorialise Stamford Raffles, the founder of the city. A statue of Raffles was eventually unveiled in 1887, but this came as a consequence of decades of plans and debates. A proposal for such a statue, to be placed on the Esplanade, the fashionable waterfront drive of the city, was already floated in the press in 1848.[399] When the Dalhousie monument was discussed, concerns were voiced that this should not take up the place that had been planned for the statue of Raffles; others suggested that the visit could be memorialised *with* the statue of Raffles, thus killing two birds with one stone, though that proposal was not adopted.[400] Later, in 1858, Commercial Square

[395] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 116–7.
[396] Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent*, 110–1.
[397] Walker, *Jottings*, 202–3.
[398] Buckley, *Anecdotal History*, 530–2.
[399] Buckley, *Anecdotal History*, 496.
[400] Buckley, *Anecdotal History*, 530–1.

in the centre of the city was renamed Raffles Place, and the Singapore Institution, a place of learning founded by Raffles, was renamed after him in 1868.

These are of course only a few examples of the many places that the name of Raffles has been – and continues to be – attached to over the centuries, but the eagerness to find an appropriate way to commemorate his person is significant. The writer of an 1875 article in the *Straits Times*, listing the many sights of the city for a curious visitor, declares himself "much disappointed and surprised to find no public monument worthy of the name created to his memory," a disappointment exacerbated by the prominence of the obelisk for – in his opinion, the much less deserving – Dalhousie.[401] The exact same comparison is made by the Dutch J.F.G. Brumund on his visit to Singapore: "to honour him, who promised much but gave nothing to Singapore, there is a pillar, and for Raffles, the founder, to whom Singapore owes everything, no statue nor a pillar, indeed no monument whatsoever."[402] In these quotes, there is exasperation at the perceived politics of memorialising and at the competing interests of the prominent members of society that drove such projects. Yet fundamentally, both Dalhousie and Raffles were seen to represent certain important ideas – free trade, and the city's founding myth, respectively – that were seen as deserving of being embodied in concrete form in the townscape.

Perhaps the most commonly remarked upon monument on Java was the pillar erected in Batavia in 1826 to commemorate the victory at Waterloo. Like Dalhousie's obelisk in Singapore, it was by no means a universally liked addition to the townscape, and many contemporary comments were highly critical of the design and execution. Van der Chijs remarks upon the "ridiculous little lion" that decorated the top of the pillar; Gevers Deynoot likens it to a poodle.[403] "A contemptible affair, and unworthy of the event it is intended to commemorate," is Kinloch's summary judgment.[404] Undeniably, however, the monument, placed as it was at a prominent location in the renamed Waterlooplein (square), soon became one of the major sights of the city, for better or worse. Naturally, the victory over Napoleon at Waterloo was something that both Dutch and British visitors could equally appreciate, and a monument in its honour was, among other things, a convenient way to tie up the spatiality of the colony with a specifically European historical narrative. But that was not all, as Waterloo had a very specific set of meanings in the colonial context. These are expounded upon at

[401] *Straits Times*, 14 June 1875, 3.
[402] Brumund, *Schetsen eener mail-reize*, 33.
[403] Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 29; Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 31.
[404] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 34–5.

great length in the almost unbearably pompous sermon given at the first annual gathering, in 1826, of the Waterloo Society of Batavia, the body behind the monument project.[405] Firstly, and most importantly, the victory at Waterloo, and the end of the Napoleonic Wars, indirectly led to the end of the British interregnum in the Dutch East Indies, and to the Dutch regaining control over their colonial possessions. Secondly, the reorganisation of the colonies that followed gave occasion to a great number of newcomers to make the trip to the East, leading to a substantial increase in the Dutch population of the archipelago. Thirdly, and most dubiously, the sermon posits Waterloo as a moment of resurgence of the Dutch national spirit, of a moral reinforcement with its attendant civilising benefits in colonial society.

The overheated celebratory rhetoric of the sermon can by no means be taken as indicative of how the colonial society of Java more widely felt about the significance of Waterloo, or interpreted the presence of the new monument. Yet if one looks past the forms of expression, it is clear that the monument was being posited as a confirmation of, and a justification for, the Dutchness of the East Indies, "bought with Dutch gold and earned with the blood of our fathers" – no mention here of the blood of anyone else – a Dutchness reconfirmed and redoubled in a new period of intensified colonisation after Waterloo.[406] For understanding the wider context in which the monument was raised, it is also important to remember that this all took place during the early phases of the Java War, when Dutch authority on Java faced a serious challenge from the forces of Prince Diponegoro. It also appears significant that another, better received monument was later raised in the immediate proximity of the Waterloo pillar, commemorating General Andreas Victor Michiels, who fought in the Java War, suppressed various later rebellions and was killed in 1849 while commanding the Dutch East Indies Army against various kingdoms on Bali. That later monument was put up in 1855 to commemorate Michiels and all who had fallen, in the words of the speech given at the opening ceremony, "since the establishment of Royal Dutch rule *in* and *for the Indies* [emphasis in the original]," thus creating an obvious link with the Waterloo pillar.[407] The juxtaposition of the two objects in the shared space of the Waterlooplein suggested a heroic continuity from the Napoleonic

[405] Dirk Lenting, *Twee gelegenheids leerredenen: de eene bij de eerste jaarlijksche feestviering van het Genootschap van Waterloo, te Batavia gevestigd, op den 19 junij 1826, en de andere bij de viering van 's konings geboortedag, invallende op zondag den 24 augustus 1823 : beiden uitgesproken te Batavia* (Batavia, 1826).
[406] Lenting, *Twee gelegenheids leerredenen*, 19.
[407] Adrien Abraham Théophile Mounier, *Inhuldigingsrede Bestemd Om Uitgesproken Te Worden Den 19 Februari 1855 Bij de Plegtige Onthulling Ban Het Gedenkteeken Op Het Waterlooplein Te Batavia* (1855), 2.

Wars fought (primarily) in Europe and the colonial conflicts of the East Indies in the decades that followed, never mind that the motives and aims of the two were hardly comparable.

Another monument of interest in Batavia is mentioned by d'Almeida in his Life in Java: a tablet or a plaque, dating from the eighteenth century, commemorating the "detested memory of Peter Elberfeld, who was punished for treason," accompanied by what d'Almeida claims are the remains of the skull of the conspirator in question, and situated, according to E.H. Boom's guidebook, at the location where his house used to stand.[408] The monument, erected in 1722, represents an earlier and different tradition of memorialising than the mostly nineteenth-century examples discussed above, but it is interesting for the way d'Almeida frames it by telling in great detail the story of Elberfeld, as "learnt from a friend, who recounted to me all he knew of that individual's history."[409] Elberfeld (also known as Erberveld) was a wealthy private merchant and resident of Batavia, the son of a German father and a Siamese woman, who was executed in 1722 on charges of plotting a revolt and the slaughter of the Europeans of the city.[410] To these basic facts d'Almeida's version of the story adds a considerable and almost certainly fictional romantic detour in the form of a supposed niece of Elberfeld, "Meeda," tragically in love with "a young Dutch officer," – tragically because her uncle "would rather see her dead than the wife of a Dutchman" – who ends up denouncing the plotters to her lover and thus the authorities. These additions are significant because they emphasise the theme of the dangerous and uncertain allegiances of the Indo-Europeans of Java: on the one hand, there is Elberfeld, who "from childhood clung to native ideas and customs;" on the other, Meeda, "whose mind and tastes – – inclined her to the European side." The story of the conspiracy was still very much in circulation in the mid-nineteenth century, as shown by the publications of an 1843 short story and an 1866 historical account on the topic, yet neither of these versions has the details of d'Almeida's – which itself might have been made up by the author or based on local traditions – and neither puts the accent on an Indo-European's choice between the two sides of her heritage.[411] The troubled attitude of the European colonial elites toward the Eurasian communities in the nineteenth century will be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter, but the Elberfeld monument is a good example

[408] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 36; Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 70.
[409] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 37–51.
[410] William Bradley Horton, 'Pieter Elberveld: The Modern Adventure of an Eighteenth-Century Indonesian Hero', *Indonesia*, 76 (2003), 147–98.
[411] The other two contemporary versions of the story can be found in Wilhelm Leonard Ritter, *Indische herinneringen, aanteekeningen en tafereelen uit vroegeren en lateren tijd* (Amsterdam, 1843); Leonardus Gulielmus Gisbertus de Roo, *De conspiratie van 1721* (1866).

of how that anxiety was embodied in a physical form that became a focus for recounting morally charged local stories and histories.

It is curious to note that although d'Almeida provides a lengthy exposition of the Elberfeld case, and regardless of his general enthusiasm for historical anecdotes of various types, his two volumes contain barely a reference to the Java War, the most significant rupture in the island's history over the first half of the nineteenth century and only three decades distant at the time of his visit. He makes an off-hand reference to a Dutch decoration earned by the Susuhunan Pakubuwono VIII of Surakarta for his loyalty during the war, and briefly points out "certain intrigues" that caused his predecessor Pakubuwono VI to be exiled on Ambon – he was in fact charged by the Dutch for supporting Prince Diponegoro's rebellion.[412] Diponegoro himself is not mentioned anywhere. Elsewhere he briefly – in one paragraph – notes the exploits of Ali Bassa, a lieutenant of Diponegoro's, in resisting the Dutch but makes no reference to the wider context of the war, the amount of people involved or the anti-colonial sentiment that it embodied.[413] This downplaying of the significance and extent – and even the fact – of the war is curious. It is a feature that is largely reproduced across the body of works considered here: most seem ignorant of Diponegoro and the war; the guidebook by Boom and the near-contemporary, uncredited *Het eiland Java* only point him out in the context of monuments to his downfall scattered along a tourist trail, primarily in describing the place where he was captured by the Dutch and the forts where he was then imprisoned.[414] The notable exception is Gevers Deynoot who comments repeatedly on traces of the war and what can be learned from its memory. Whether this general amnesia is best explained by intentional motives or incidental choices on the part of the authors is unclear; what is certain, however, is that the consequence for the narrative is to make the colony seem much more controlled and safe from the colonisers' perspective, and their rule appear less contested.

It is important to note that many of the monuments described above were, although explicitly or implicitly supported by the administration, originally conceived and promoted by various civil society organisations or ad hoc groupings: the Waterloo Society in Batavia was already mentioned above; Captain Dawson's monument on Ceylon was funded by "friends and admirers" or "the English society of Ceylon", as recounted by Walker and De Butts, respectively, likely referring

[412] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 72–4.
[413] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 4–5.
[414] See for example Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 63, 117; *Het eiland Java: opmerkingen, wenken en raadgevingen*, 17, 50.

to some kind of public subscription scheme; the same was true for Dalhousie's obelisk in Singapore, which was funded through a collection of $5 subscriptions from the European and Asian populace. The civil society and its functions in the colonial states of the region in the mid-nineteenth century will be considered at greater length in the next chapter, but these few cases provide an example of the ways in which such organisations and coalitions could actively shape the space of the colonial cities and inscribe specific meanings onto its canvas, generally in the form of the pillars and obelisks popular at the time.

A final category of monuments that deserves attention here is that of unintentional monuments, that is remnants of the past that dot the landscape and come to take on a new significance as a point of interest for visitors. A good example is provided by Walker on Ceylon, when he spots the wreck of a P&O steamer *Erin*, "wrecked some eight years ago," lying on the coastline near Colombo.[415] (As an aside, one of the other travel writers of the period, S.A. Buddingh, was waiting for the *Erin*, during his journey back to Europe, in Singapore, and found out about its wreck in Point de Galle, as recounted in his *Dagboek*.[416]) In many ways, the P&O, operating in the Indian Ocean from the 1840s, played a role in the travellers' imagination not unlike that of Stamford Raffles: a familiar name that ties the region together through its influence and the remnants or representatives of its presence. In Walker's narrative, the wreck – perhaps counterintuitively – gives occasion for an admiring remark: "they have been in existence thirty-two years, and have never lost a passenger's life by wreck of mishap caused by the Company's servants," followed by the exclamation, "[n]o drowning!" This rhetorical inversion turns the shipwreck into a symbol of the comfort and security of modern steam transportation, especially when considered in contrast to the often fraught passages of the sail era that had come to an end only a couple of decades earlier.

There is also another location in Walker's travels, an apparent witness to failure that the author recasts in a similar way as a success: the roads at Surabaya, where a group of private merchants tried to set up a (Scottish-designed) floating dock – due to restrictions on the use of the government-owned main docks – which however sank on the first occasion it was trialled. The dock itself was apparently lost to the depths, but, like above, Walker takes up the opportunity to make a wider point about private enterprise and technological progress, even going so far as to suggest that the merchants

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[415] Walker, *Jottings*, 197.

[416] Steven Adriaan Buddingh, *Dagboek mijner overland-mail-reis van Batavia naar Nederland, via Triest, in 1857: zijnde een tegenhanger van het Dagboek mijner oveland-mail-reis van Rotterdam naar Java, vid Southampton, in 1852* (Arnhem, 1857), 14–5.

of his home city, Bombay, would do well to emulate their Dutch colleagues, and that a similar project, with the right precautions, couldn't fail to be profitable.[417] Walker's optimism was perhaps exaggerated, as the dock that sunk in 1863, a year before his visit in Surabaya, was only the first of four such instalments that all went down in the Dutch East Indies in the latter half of the century, without ever being in service for any extended period of time.[418] It is, however, not the real story of technological failure that is interesting in this small anecdote: rather, what is significant is the way in which Walker makes use of that story and spins it into a positive example. Notably, the need for floating docks came about in the first place due to the expansion of private (non-government-directed) trade on Java, i.e. the exact process of the expansion of European settlements that also created the conditions for increased travel, and consequently the boom in popular travel writing that Walker represents. As such, it is impossible to suggest that Walker is merely an observer; rather, his occupation as a professional writer and very presence in the region are inextricably linked to the processes of colonisation he describes.

To return to Ceylon, another example of this sort of "failure tourism" can be found in MacKenzie Ferguson's *Souvenirs of Ceylon*. That work lists, among the main sights and visit-worthy places of the Nuwara Eliya plains, the site of "Baker's Farm," where Samuel White Baker – one of the authors already discussed in previous sections – sought to establish a plantation with his brother.[419] Not only does this show that "the once elegant mansion – – now only marked by the luxuriant fuchsias" had evidently become a tourist attraction in the decade or so after Baker had left the island, the description in *Souvenirs* also achieves two other things: firstly, it casts Baker, now significantly more famous and knighted after his explorations in Africa in the 1860s, as a pioneering hero of the colonisation of Ceylon, and turns the site of the farm into an ad hoc memorial for his deeds; and secondly, it asserts that the current, unattended state of the site is a mere blip, and that "[a] time will come – when the large tract of land still owned by Sir Samuel Baker will be turned into good account."[420] Walker, then, far from an opportunistic prospector that has since turned his attention elsewhere, becomes an example for new generations of plantation-owners to emulate as they spread through the plains and the island and in doing so reassert the validity of the image of the European nature of the colony, which was discussed in the previous chapter.

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[417] Walker, *Jottings*, 190.
[418] Campo, *Engines of Empire*, 371–2; De Gids, vol 31:2 (1909), 1660.
[419] Ferguson, *Souvenirs of Ceylon*, 181.
[420] Ferguson, *Souvenirs of Ceylon*, 181–182; Baker was knighted in 1866.

All of the examples considered above are or European design and, in the case of actual purpose-designed monuments, recreate and transpose well-established European architectural styles in a colonial setting. It is, however, important to acknowledge that not all such objects were created by Europeans. It is impossible here to outline an accurate image of the different ways of memorialising used by the various indigenous and non-European groups in the region, as these often did not capture the attention of European travellers or were poorly understood by them. A notable exception, and one that again draws attention to the busy connection between Batavia and Singapore, are the gifts given to authorities in both cities by the King Chulalongkorn of Siam (also known as Rama V), on his first state visits made in 1871. These took the shape of two identical elephant statues, which can still be seen in Jakarta and Singapore today.[421] (As a point of interest and not insignificant symbolism, the one in Singapore was moved from its original location in front of Victoria Hall in 1919 and replaced by the statue of Raffles discussed above, on the occasion of the city's centennial celebrations; the Batavia one was also moved, after a brief initial period in the resident's house, to the Museum of the Society for Arts and Sciences.) Of the authors considered here, the majority wrote their works before these visits took place; one of the exceptions, the Dutch Verkerk Pistorius writing in 1875, claims to have met in person the ambassador of King Chulalongkorn, tasked with the delivery of one of the statues to Batavia, while on board a ship from Batavia to Singapore.[422] Curiously, this encounter leads him to describe the monument in Batavia, which he is evidently familiar with, but he does not make a connection between that and the one in Singapore, even though it is the latter city that his account actually describes. The statue itself he describes as "curious, but not very artful." Its twin in Singapore also had its detractors, specifically the Straits Times journalist announcing its unveiling in 1872, to whom it "does not look by any means imposing" but rather "for all the word like a comfortable little porker;" a letter-writer to the Straits Observer in 1875 agrees, noting it had acquired by then the nickname "the Indian pig."[423] These scattered quotes are not much to draw on, but it would appear that the twin elephants, lacking the familiar European cultural context and well-defined significance of the monuments discussed above, generally failed to engage the imagination of either the public at large or travel writers specifically: consequently, mentions of them are scarce

[421] Adolf Heuken, *Historical Sites of Jakarta* (Jakarta, 2007), 273; more about Chulalongkorn's tours can be read in Patricia Pui Huen Lim, *Through the Eyes of the King: The Travels of King Chulalongkorn to Malaya* (Singapore, 2009); see also Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık, 'The Sultan, the Shah and the King in Europe: The Practice of Ottoman, Persian and Siamese Royal Travel and Travel Writing', *Journal of Asian History*, 50 (2016).
[422] Verkerk Pistorius, *Een bezoek*, 13.
[423] 'Life at Singapore,' Straits observer, 14 June 1875

and frequently casually dismissive, just as the objects themselves were shunted about by authorities not quite sure what to do with them.

The various kinds of monuments considered above were but a minor part of the townscapes of colonial Southeast Asia and Ceylon around the middle of the nineteenth century, although their number was steadily increasing in line with the general expansion of the colonial states. Yet their cultural weight was more significant than that of the stone used in their construction: they formed points of reference for travellers, including from neighbouring colonies, such as the many authors considered here; and they populated the landscape with familiar European architectural shapes and designs, such as the obelisk. More importantly, the cemeteries and grave monuments, through repeated recounting in travel books and the press, served to populate the localised historical narrative with exclusively European figures, normalising the colonial present through a claim to the past. Other statues and monuments, like those of Captain Dawson on the road to Kandy on Ceylon and General Michiels in Batavia, embodied the key principles and ideals of the colonising ethos, such as the spread of infrastructure and technological superiority, or the heroism and justification of the colonial military. Less obviously triumphant symbols, such as the shipwreck of the steamer *Erin*, or the ruins of Samuel Baker's farm, nevertheless found their place in the literature as historical curiosities and remnants of an earlier stage in the inexorable forward march of imperialism, their failures recast as pioneering predecessors to later success.

Monuments are important because they are good at catching attention – even if that attention is negative, as in the case of the Waterloo pillar in Batavia, or Dalhousie's obelisk in Singapore – and because they condense historical narratives and ideological significance into singular, concrete objects. They thus function in much the same way when printed on paper as they do in the landscape, as reminders and shorthand for larger arguments and interpretations, in this case on the topic of the idealised vision of colonial society. However, in order to truly appreciate the significance of that larger vision, and to properly contextualise the argument being made by these monuments, one has to step back from the details and look at the wider architectural landscape. To that end, the next chapter will consider at length the major colonial cities of the region – especially Batavia and Singapore but also Colombo – as attempts to construct concrete, real-life representations of the ideal colonial society. That ideal required specific individual buildings but also wider planning of the public space and its meanings as well as delimitations, variously enforced, between European and Asian, or, more ideologically, between comfortable and uncomfortable, safe and unsafe.

5.2. Townscapes and urban environments

While the statues, monuments and memorials considered above formed the details of the landscape around which greater narratives could be wound, it was the wider townscapes and colonial architecture generally that were responsible for the first impressions of newcomers and the ambience experienced by travellers and residents alike. The cities of all the colonies here considered were growing rapidly over the course of the nineteenth century, in line with the wider process of colonial expansion and the increasing numbers of Europeans making their way to the East, and that naturally necessitated a significant wave of new construction. The change in Singapore was the most radical, growing from its modest beginnings in 1819 into a global metropole by the end of the century. This transformation was a source of pride and a significant element of the city's identity, at least from the perspective of the elites. At a public ball organised to celebrate the 35-year anniversary of the colony in 1854, the ballroom was decorated with a large transparency with two views of the city on it: one "as it might be supposed to appear before it became a British possession, thick jungle clothing the whole landscape, and the one indication of the presence of man being one solitary fishing *prahu* [boat] in the bay;" and the second depicting the then-current view, where "Churches, Court-houses, and Schools told that order and civilisation had been firmly established, while the residence of the Governor, on the eminence overlooking the town, presided over the whole."[424] Modern architecture in that quote, from a contemporary witness, comes to symbolise not only the development of the city, but more generally the spread of civilisation and the taming of the tropics, and – in the symbol of the governor's residence – the domination and success of the colonial state.[425]

Unsurprisingly, Singapore was far from alone, among the cities of the region, in experiencing such changes. In the Dutch East Indies, a plan for the improvement or *verfraaiing* – a term that literally translates as "making prettier" – of the main towns was circulated among officials in 1838. A notable feature of that plan is its mixing of aesthetic and socio-racial prescription, calling for improved cleanliness and appearances alongside the setting up of separate neighbourhoods for

[424] Buckley, *Anecdotal History*, 582.

[425] For further literature on these themes, see A. Ghafar Ahmad, *British Colonial Architecture in Malaysia 1800-1930* (Kuala Lumpur, 1997); Huib Akihary, *Architectuur & stedebouw in Indonesie, 1870-1970* (Zutphen, 1990); G. A. Bremner, *Imperial Gothic: Religious Architecture and High Anglican Culture in the British Empire, C. 1840-70* (New Haven, 2013); Brenda S. A. Yeoh, *Contesting Space in Colonial Singapore: Power Relations and the Urban Built Environment* (Singapore, 2003); Mariam Dossal, *Imperial Designs and Indian Realities: The Planning of Bombay City, 1845-1875* (Bombay, 1991).

"natives and foreign Asians" (*inlanders en vreemde oosterlingen*) respectively, and a distinction between neighbourhoods where houses had to be built of stone with tile roofs, and where "less respectable" materials could be allowed.[426] A deliberate racial and social logic was being built into the cityscape in the name of progress and decoration. The development was general, felt across the region: in Penang; Batavia and Semarang on Java; Colombo and Point de Galle on Ceylon. At the same time as monuments were being set up to commemorate the past and impose a reading of the history, the present was being fashioned and shaped through the ongoing construction and reconstruction of these cities.

This process, and how it was reflected in the accounts of travellers, will be considered in this section in two parts. The first part examines the new or reconstructed European towns and administrative centres that arose in many cities of the region around the middle of the century, and significantly changed the spatial distribution of the city and the concrete settings of the life of the European elites, while at the same time transforming the image of the cities as represented in the literature of the period. The second part will then focus specifically on the neighbourhoods and parts of cities dedicated to the indigenous and non-European inhabitants, what was their relationship to the new European centres and how they were seen to fit into the greater picture of a colonial city. Most of the standout architecture discussed below will be "European" in nature, even if lightly adjusted and hybridised to suit the needs of the region and the climate – more importantly, most of it is discussed by the authors here considered in terms of its "European-ness." That is however not to suggest that such a selection is representative of the reality of how these cities looked at the time. Even though the European population was on the rise throughout the region, they remained a minority in each and every one of these cities. The influx of Chinese immigrants in the Straits Settlements was particularly significant, and raised fear and concerns in the colonial elites. Such concerns could be, and were, addressed socially, through regulating the movement and behaviour of different groups of people: these developments will be discussed at greater length in the next chapter. But that debate was also conducted on the level of architecture itself. One of the functions of travel writing, in its depiction of colonial cities, was precisely to gloss over this disparity between power and numbers, and to draw the lines of where "European" ends and "non-European" begins, just as one of the functions of colonial architecture was to establish an imposing hierarchy in the cityscape itself.

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[426] 'Beschrijving van een plan tot verfraaiing van de hoofdplaatsen op Java' (1838), NA Den Haag, Collectie 193 Reynst (2.21.138), inv. nr. 9.

Of the cities of the region, the growth of Singapore, brought about by massive immigration, was the most rapid: from mere hundreds upon its founding in 1819, the number grew to 10,000 by the mid-twenties, reached 50,000 in the forties and then doubled to a 100,000 by the seventies.[427] Europeans were drastically in the minority: in fact, over the period under consideration here, the portion of inhabitants of other than Chinese, Malay or Indian descent hovers approximately between 3 and 4 percent. Some idea of the size and growth of the elite level of the European community can be derived from a comparison of the lists of "principal inhabitants" of the city, as published in the *Singapore Almanack and Directory* in 1856, and again in the *Colonial Directory of the Straits Settlements* of 1875. These lists, consisting of prominent male residents, not exclusively but overwhelmingly European, jump up from about 400 names in 1856 to approximately 900 in 1875.[428] While it is difficult to determine the exact criteria based on which these directories were compiled, and how comparable they remain across the decades, they do nonetheless suggest a notable growth of the European community in the middle decades of the century, roughly in line with the trend in the general population.

This doubling, of both the European and the general population in the middle of the century of course left a mark in visitors' writings from the period and influenced the impression they got of the city. Berncastle comments on it directly, noting the colony's founding "no further back than 1819, the population amounting, in 1836, to 30,000, and at present, to a much greater number."[429] Cameron's description in his *Our Tropical Possessions*, from 1865, is somewhat more evocative, going beyond mere numbers:

> [i]n place of the little pathway that must have led through the jungle to the Malay village [that was located there before], composed, probably, of a cluster of attap-covered huts, are now the busy thoroughfares of a great commercial emporium. The first thing that strikes the stranger on landing as remarkable is this appearance of bustle and activity, heightened by the motley character of those who compose the crowd.[430]

Cameron here hints at a wholesale moderation that has taken over from the "Malay village" of old and turned the place into a modern metropolis. This notion is taken further in the latest of the works

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[427] Numbers based on census data found in Saw Swee-Hock, 'Population Trends in Singapore, 1819-1967', *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, 10 (1969), 39.
[428] *The Singapore Almanack and Directory for the Year 1856*, (Singapore, 1856), 55–65; *The Colonial Directory of the Straits Settlements, Including Sarawak, Labuan, Bangkok and Saigon, for 1875.*, (Singapore, 1875), 139–57.
[429] Julius Berncastle, *A Voyage to China: Including a Visit to the Bombay Presidency; the Mahratta Country; the Cave Temples of Western India, Singapore, the Straits of Malacca and Sunda, and the Cape of Good Hope. Vol 2.* (London, 1850), 10.
[430] Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 51.

considered here, Thomson's *Straits of Malacca*, from 1875, sings the praises of modernisation and even a kind of proto-globalisation, suggesting "we might almost as well live in London as here."[431]

It was however not just the feel of the city that changed: there was a simultaneous radical change in the concrete structures of the city. At the time of Berncastle's visit, the major architectural sights of the city were relatively few, not very impressive and could be taken in by the author over the course of a casual evening stroll: "we walked out in the evening, passing by the English church, a very fine new building, the Theatre, Government House, and the [Raffles] Institution."[432] These buildings, which were constructed in 1836, 1845, 1822 and 1837, respectively, represent the first generation of colonial architecture on the island. Public buildings from this time were often relatively small-scale and functional, with few aspirations toward genuine grandeur. As Constance Mary Turnbull has noted in her seminal history of the city, the administration at the time simply did not have the resources to promote an architecture to match the rapid commercial progress of the colony: merchants' storehouses were used for government offices, and a private residence served as the courthouse. The resident's accommodation in the so-called Government House was just a bungalow with thatched palm-leaves for a roof.[433] However, the second generation, which followed soon after in the middle decades of the century, was different and significantly changed the cityscape. For example, out of the notable buildings mentioned by Berncastle in 1850, all but the Raffles Institution were replaced by newer, more impressive buildings over the course of the 1860s. The new St. Andrew's Cathedral was built at the site of the old church and completed in 1864, and became perhaps the most prominent landmark of the city; the function of a theatre hall was built into the Victoria Hall, completed in 1862, which primarily served as a Town Hall; the relatively humble governor's residence, originally built for Raffles, was replaced by a massive palace in 1869.[434] Everywhere ad hoc solutions were being replaced by lasting landmarks: all three of the above remain among the key historical sights of the city today.

This wave of construction, which coincides with and is closely related to some of the monument projects discussed in the previous section, essentially amounted to a significant redesign of the cityscape through an updating of the loci and symbols of European presence and power. A

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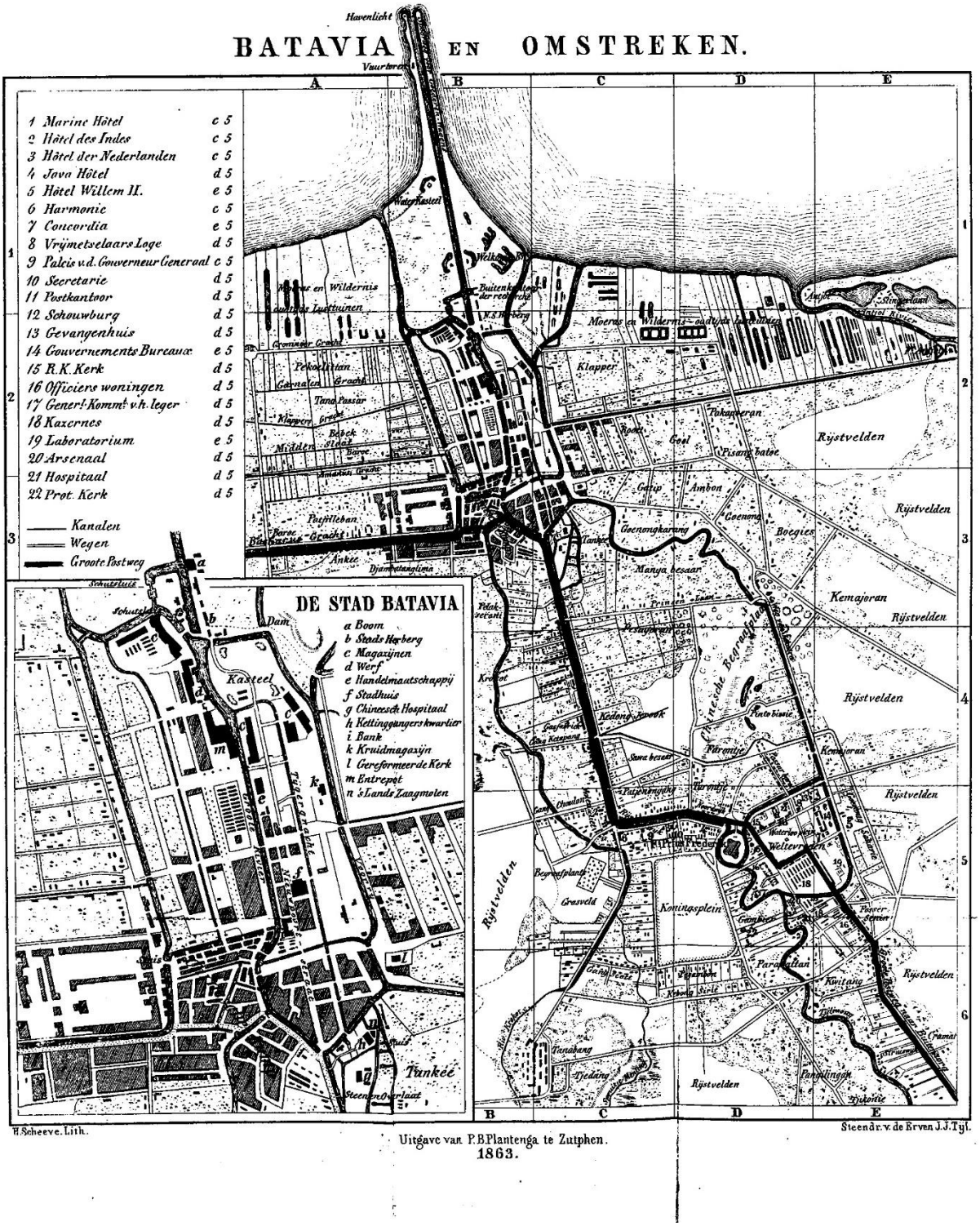
[431] Berncastle, *A Voyage to China, Vol 2*, 8–29; Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 49–72; Thomson, *Straits of Malacca*, 53–77.
[432] Berncastle, *A Voyage to China, Vol 2*, 10.
[433] Turnbull, *History of Modern Singapore*, 64.
[434] The dates, unless otherwise mentioned, are from Jane Beamish and Jane Ferguson, *A History of Singapore Architecture: The Making of a City* (Singapore, 1985).

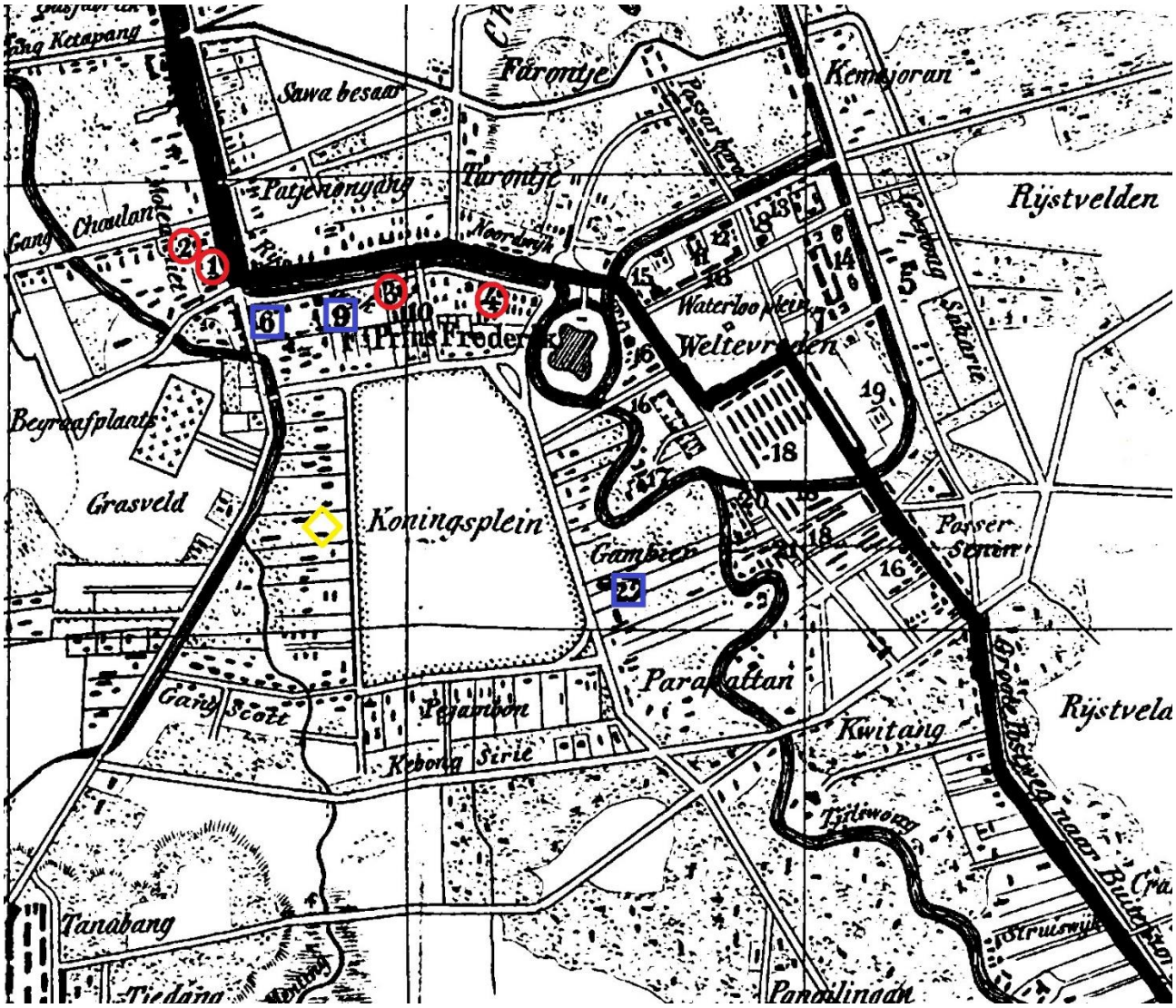
similar redesign took place in Batavia, although there the process was more evenly spread. The architectural history of that city of course reached far further back than that of Singapore, but the nineteenth century saw a wholesale relocation of the administrative centre and European residences of the city further away from the coastline and to the area of Weltevreden, situated around the square of the Koningsplein.[435] This was a process that had started already before the British interregnum but gathered pace in the decades after the resumption of Dutch rule. Among the important structures built in the immediate vicinity of that square in the middle of the century are the Protestant Willemskerk (built 1834-9), the museum of the Royal Society of Arts and Sciences (1864-8), and the new governor-general's palace (1873-9).[436] One way to measure the significance and cultural weight of this new centre is to consider the map of "Batavia and surroundings" printed in Boom's Nederlandsch Oost-Indiê, published in 1865 (the map is dated 1863): not only does this map illustrate well the distance between the old town and the new; on it are also marked twenty-two major sights and sites of interest in the city, including hotels, churches and other notable buildings. Although the map, as reproduced below, has been overlaid with a 5x6 grid to facilitate locating the items from the list, eighteen of the twenty-two can in fact be found in the two squares between which the majority of the Koningsplein is divided (the remaining four are all in a third square immediately adjacent.) There is a separate map of the old centre, with thirteen annotations, but the sites around Koningsplein are both more numerous and more immediately touristic in nature, whereas those of the old town are primarily commercial (warehouses, banks, sawmills.)

Of course, it is precisely in these new or rebuilt centres that travellers were likely to find their lodgings: indeed, the process of redevelopment of these areas included the construction of, or conversion of existing buildings into, hotels. So, in mid-century Batavia, following Boom's guidebook, there were four hotels "of the first rank:" the Marine Hotel, the Hotel des Indes, the Hotel der Nederlanden and the Java Hotel, all of which went into business around 1830, and were located around the Koningsplein, as can be seen from the annotated map of the area below. Of the travel writers considered here, the ones who stayed at hotels (some found lodgings with acquaintances) invariably made use of one of these: Kinloch at the des Indes (at the time still called the Rotterdamsche Hotel), though he complains and suspects that the der Nederlanden might have been

[435] Akihary, *Architectuur & stedebouw in Indonesie, 1870-1970*, 12–3.
[436] Heuken, *Historical Sites of Jakarta*, 260–73.



Ill. 14. Map of "Batavia and surroundings" from E.H. Boom's Nederlandsch Oost-Indië (1865). The old centre can be seen near the top, around square B2, and in the separate, enlarged map. The new administrative centre in Weltevreden around Koningsplein is near the bottom.



Ill. 15. Detail of the map around Koningsplein. Marked in red (circles) are the main hotels of Batavia, from left to right: the Hotel des Indes, the Marine Hotel, the Hotel der Nederlanden and the Java Hotel. In blue (squares), some of the major sights around the square, from left to right: the building of the Sociëteit Harmonie, a popular club; the old governor-general's palace (replaced by a new, adjacent structure in the 1870s); and the Protestant church Willemskerk.) In yellow (diamond), the approximate location of the Museum of the Society of Arts and Sciences, built a few years later in 1868. Note also the Waterlooplein, discussed in the previous section, immediately to the right of the Koningsplein, an important part of the new European town.

a better bet; Walker at the Java; Gevers Deynoot at the des Indes, but only after having been turned away from the fully booked Marine.[437] In terms of location, at least, there was little to set one apart from the other: all four were in the immediate vicinity of the governor-general's palace and the residences of other notable Europeans, as well as important loci of the social life of the city.

Unfortunately, not much can be said in detail about the culture of these early colonial hotels. The historiography on the topic is very scarce; one notable example, Maurizio Peleggi's exploratory paper on nineteenth-century colonial hotels in Asia opens up interesting avenues of inquiry but focuses primarily on a later, post-Suez period of luxurious palatial hotels like the famous Raffles (1887) in Singapore, itself another monument to the colony's semi-mythical founder.[438] An ineffable aura of imperial nostalgia lingers around these flagship hotels, supported by modern marketing but also a history of lavish commemorative publications. Few of these exemplify the contrast between imperial fantasy and colonial reality like the book put out in 1948, right in the middle of Indonesia's bloody independence struggle, to celebrate Batavia's Hotel des Indes.[439] By contrast, the profile of mid-nineteenth-century hotels is essentially non-existent. An obvious problem is a lack of archives, especially pertinent in this pioneering period when hotels opened and closed, moved and changed hands at a rapid rate, often operating in make-shift settings and converted private buildings. It is this ad hoc nature of the market that presumably explains many of the contemporary travellers' often negative impressions of their lodgings. Brumund's withering assessment of Singapore's Hotel de l'Espérance – "neither spacious nor pleasant" – is a representative example of the genre of comment.

It seems that the hotels were in fact appreciated more for what they represented rather than what they were able to provide. In Van Heerdt's *Mijne reis* are found curious reproductions of the visiting cards of two Point de Galle hotels; these are evidently not provided for information, of which they contain little apart from an address.[440] Rather, they are juxtaposed with a noisy crowd of servants harassing the author, each recommending this or that lodging to the newly-arrived passenger. One can read in Van Heerdt's stated preference for the neat, well-designed cards bearing the European names of the two proprietors a suggestion that these hotels with their ephemera functioned as a controlled safe space, an institutional frame that kept the tumult of local life at an arm's length. That

[437] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 31; Walker, *Jottings*, 168; Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 27.
[438] Peleggi, 'The Social and Material Life of Colonial Hotels', 124–53.
[439] J. M. B. Gelink, *50 jaar N.V. Hotel des Indes, Batavia: 1897-1947* (Batavia, 1948).
[440] Heerdt, *Mijne reis met de landmail*, 15–6.

impression is supported by a look at another contemporary source of information on these hotels, newspaper advertisements. These are generally short, formulaic and light on information but the underlining of European credentials and connections is a notably common feature. Thus, for example, in an 1847 paper the proprietor of the Oriental Hotel in Colombo refers to his "long experience in Europe as Cuisinier and Confectioner" as enabling him "to make superior arrangements for the comfort and general satisfaction" of his customers.[441] It is notable how experience in a different if connected industry in Europe could be framed as a competitive advantage, suggesting that these hotels were seen not as mere accommodation but as a wider extension of a European hospitality industry into a colonial setting. Similarly, an 1858 advert for the Hotel de l'Esperance promises a menu corresponding to contemporary standards in France.[442] Elsewhere, adverts frequently refer to the availability of European papers, and sometimes assure that their wines and spirits are sourced from Europe. Available entertainment seems to have been limited but at least in Singapore hotels habitually mention billiards as a draw. From a regional perspective, it is particularly interesting to note that Batavia hotels were advertised in Singapore papers and vice versa – an arrangement that made good commercial sense considering the flow of passengers between the two and further evidence of a truly trans-colonial culture of travel.[443]

Beyond their institutional and cultural framing, the location of these hotels had a significant impact on the way incoming visitors experienced a city, as can be read from many of the accounts. The hotel is naturally the first place that a traveller wants to get to upon arriving in the city. For visitors to Batavia, this meant a quick ride through the old town and a few miles along the road inland to get to Weltevreden, literally by-passing all the native kampongs on the way. In Kinloch's narrative, Batavia *is* Weltevreden, as he jumps immediately from the Customs House to his hotel and from there to an elaborate description of the lifestyle and manners of the Dutch on Java: the rest of the city has simply disappeared.[444] Moreover, the only illustration of the capital that he provides depicts the Protestant church, essentially right across the square from his hotel.[445] In Gevers Deynoot's telling the exclusion is more explicit: he first describes, in a hasty half-page, the ride from the port to the hotel, noting a couple of the sights of the old town and remarking on the Chinese

[441] Advert in *Examiner*, 29 June 1847 (consulted in NA London, Colonial Office Records, CO 59/3).
[442] Advert in *Java-bode*, 6 February 1858.
[443] See for example the adverts for Hotel des Indes and the Marine Hotel in *Straits Times*, 11 September 1858; and the above-mentioned advert for Hotel de l'Espérance in *Java-bode*, 6 February 1858.
[444] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 30–1.
[445] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 34.

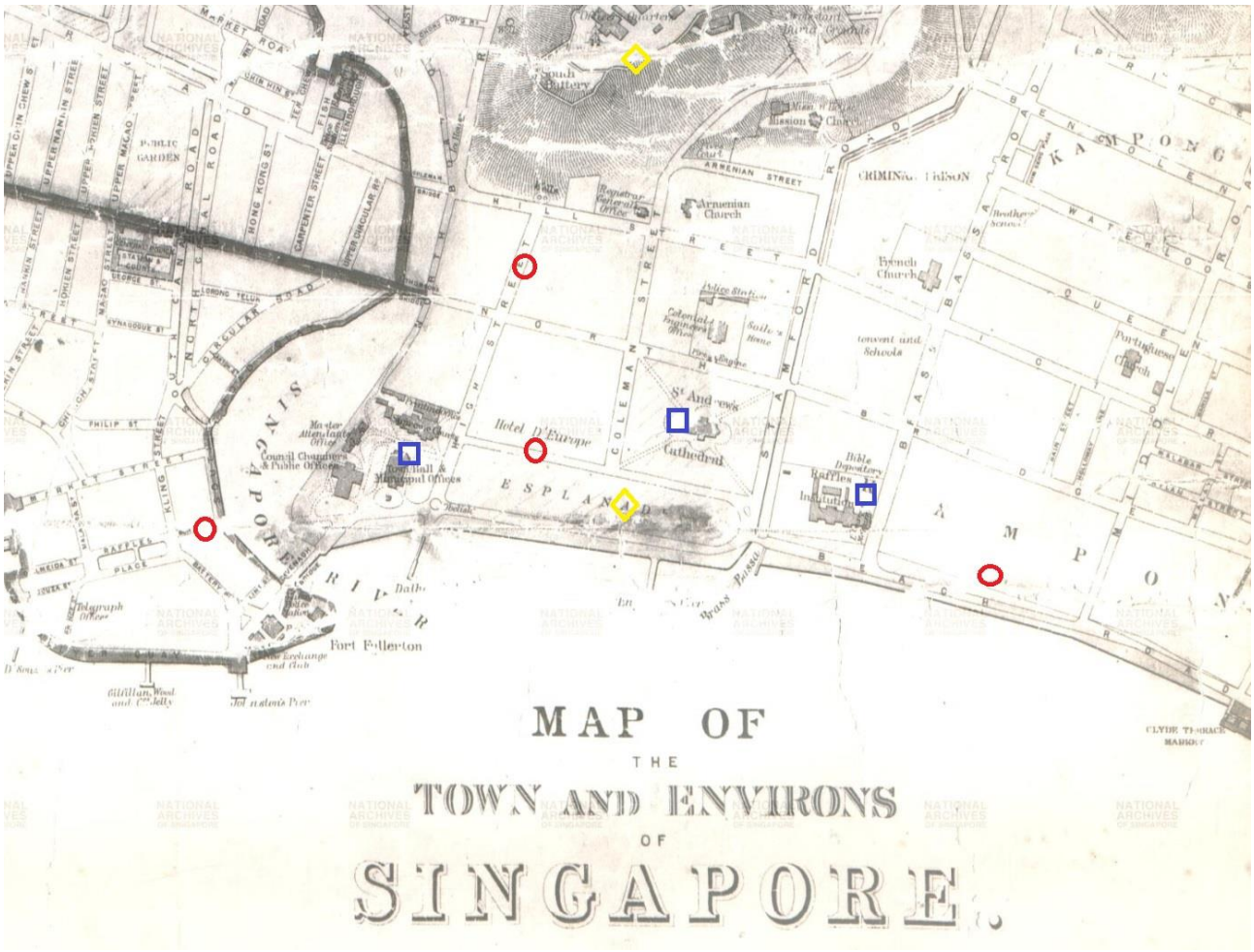
neighbourhood in passing. A couple of pages later he returns to elaborate the point, briefly commenting on the poor repair of the old town and the dirtiness and crowdedness of the Chinese neighbourhood, but admitting: "about the old European town there is not much to say." After these couple of pages he turns his attention to what he calls "New Batavia," a description that takes up dozens of pages, going over the social life of the new town and its main sights, describing the many notable buildings in detail and pointing out the European cemetery "not far from my hotel" – in fact almost immediately adjacent to it, as can be seen from the map.[446]

This racialised spatial division of the city was symbolically reproduced in the reception organised for Governor-General Rochussen upon his first arrival in the city in 1845. The streets from the harbour to his palace in the new town were to be lined with soldiers and officers in a highly specific order, starting with the city's European militia by the palace, followed by regular European soldiers, Javanese pikemen, Chinese officers, "Papangers and Moors" and finally "all further natives" near the harbour.[447] Thus the governor-general could survey all his new subjects in a crude ascending civilisational hierarchy mapped out directly on the spatial layout of the city, with the white colonial elites occupying the centre. This hierarchy is reflected, though less explicitly, in the accounts of less lofty European travellers, whose hotels were close by the administrative centre and at a significant remove from both the old town and the native kampongs. This meant that travellers were likely to ignore the latter – there was little reason to return toward the coast once one had reached the pleasant grounds of Weltevreden (the name literally and not insignificantly means "well satisfied," being of a piece with that of Buitenzorg, or "without care"), but it also meant that all the major, recently constructed sights of the new town were always within a stone's throw from where they were staying.

It should be noted that, while the urban composition of Singapore was not spread out in the same way as in Batavia – there being no old town to begin with – the spatial distribution of the functions of the city was largely similar. On the map below, from 1878, one can see the commercial centre on the left-hand (southern) side of Singapore river, and the administrative or European town immediately on the right-hand (northern) side. From a traveller's perspective, the primary sights of the city, as well as the hotels, were largely centred in the latter part. Here we can find the new cathedral

[446] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 28–34.

[447] The elaborate set-up is described in 'Programma voor de ontvangst van Rochussen als gouveneur-generaal van Nederlands-Indië in Java, met ingekomen levensberichten van Rochussen, opgesteld vanwege zijn benoeming tot gouverneur-generaal, door Adriaan van Bevervoorde' (1845), NA Den Haag, Collectie 284 Rochussen (2.21.141), inv.nr. 1.



Ill. 16. A map of Singapore dating from 1878. In blue (squares), the most notable buildings of the city, starting from the left: the Victoria Hall, St. Andrew's Cathedral, and the Raffles Institution. In yellow (diamonds), Canning (earlier Government) Hill, a popular viewing point of the city and the site of a fort; and the Esplanade, a sports field and waterfront drive. In red (circles), the locations of the main hotels of the city according to the Straits Calendar and Directory of 1861, from the left: the London Hotel, the Adelphi, Hotel de l'Esperance and Hotel d'Europe (notably, d'Europe, had taken over the premises of de l'Esperance by 1878.)

and town hall, already discussed above, as well as the Esplanade, a fashionable waterfront ride adjoining a field for sports and festivities that served much the same function in the social life of the European elites as Koningsplein in Batavia. Here were also the major hotels: the London Hotel (opened in 1841), the above-mentioned Hotel de l'Esperance, the Adelphi (earliest mention from 1850) and the Hotel d'Europe (1856). The hotels moved around a fair bit in what was a competitive market, but their locations according to the 1861 directory of the city are marked in the map below, with only the London hotel on the south bank of the river, directly overlooking the river. Generally speaking it can be seen that, as in Batavia, there is a separation of the commercial and administrative parts of the city, with the entertainments and social life falling to the domain of the latter. The native towns spread out both to the north of the European town, and inland from the commercial town: these were essentially outside the remit of casual visitors unless one wanted to specifically seek them out. That much is clear from the visitors' narratives: the Dutch visitors seemed to have a preference for the Hotel d'Europe, that being the choice of accommodation of each of Van der Chijs, Gevers Deynoot and Verkerk Pistorius; The Esperance received the custom of Brumund and, of the British, Walker. Kinloch and Berncastle lodged at the London Hotel. For a brief visit, such as those of Van der Chijs or Walker, the situation of their respective accommodations was ideal for some casual walks that took in the Cathedral and the Victoria Hall, and perhaps the view from Government (or Canning) Hill. Those with more time, like Gevers Deynoot, could drive around the city and perhaps visit a temple in the Chinese town, but more elaborate descriptions of the outer parts of the city are sorely lacking, whereas the social life of the Esplanade takes centre stage in almost every narrative, as it did in the layout of the city.

Staying for a while on the topic of the Singapore Esplanade, the history of this urban feature are important. First of all, it should be noted that what travellers routinely call the "Esplanade" is in fact a two-fold space: firstly, the sea-front drive discussed above; and secondly, a large open field used for sports and social events that has long been designated with the Malay word *padang*. It is not surprising that the name Padang does not feature in European travellers' lexicon in the period under consideration; but more importantly, the depiction of that space as a locus of fundamentally European bourgeois sociability belies its mixed historical roots. As shown by Chee-Kien Lai, the padang as an urban design principle in fact derives from the Persian *maidan*, which was adopted and adapted by the British in India beginning with Calcutta and spreading out from there among the

colonial cities of the region and eventually in Penang and Singapore.[448] By the mid-nineteenth century, however, such spaces had come to be seen more as reflections of the Champs-Elysées in Paris rather than any non-European model, in another example of the erasure of the Asian in the urban landscapes of empire and, especially, in their representation in print. That was true not only in Singapore and Batavia but also, for example, in Lahore, where the Lawrence Gardens, built in the 1860s, came to be represented as a representation of the civilising influence of European culture and social life.[449]

The above discussion, using the examples of Singapore and Batavia, shows that the new wave of colonisation in the nineteenth century left a strong imprint in the architecture of the colonial capitals of the region. New administrative centres were constructed in the middle decades of the century, using more monumental architectural styles and upgrading the cityscapes to more clearly reflect an ideal of European exclusivity and leisure. It is no accident that visitors to these cities got immediately caught up in this vision of "New Batavias" and European Towns: it is here that their hotels were found, within walking distance of all the new and beautiful things. The hotels that largely defined the spatial reach of a visitor's stay, were themselves a new element in the colonial cityscape, having appeared from around the 1830s in Batavia and a little later in Singapore. The cities were in effect closing in on themselves, with accommodation, entertainment and social life all side by side in the European core, and the vastly increasing non-European population, as well as all the industry and commerce, safely outside.

Visitors to Colombo often had much less to say about the architecture of the city than the accounts of Singapore and Batavia considered above. For example, when Campbell, writing in 1843, lists "everything deserving the notice of a stranger" in the city, he does not mention a single building, but only the kinds of gardens and scenic views discussed in the previous chapter: "the too much cried up cinnamon gardens, the lake and its beautiful scenery, the pleasant rides and drives of the Galle face."[450] This apparent lacuna is perhaps because of the development of the former city in the period was rather different, and more modest, than that of the latter two. By the middle of the century Colombo had a reputation, as Walker notes, as "the cleanest and most European-looking [town] in the East."[451] It is unclear where exactly Walker has picked this up, and how widely shared such a notion was, but the exact sentiment can already be found in Robert Percival's 1803 work *Account of*

[448] Chee-Kien Lai, 'Maidan to Padang: Reinventions of Urban Fields in Malaysia and Singapore', *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review*, 21 (2010), 56–57.
[449] William J. Glover, *Making Lahore Modern: Constructing and Imagining a Colonial City* (Minneapolis, 2008), 66–8.
[450] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 49.
[451] Walker, *Jottings*, 197.

the Island of Ceylon, which states that Colombo is "built more in the European style – – than any other garrison in India."[452] What is meant by that European-ness seems to primarily have been the regular grid of wide and tidy streets in the Fort at the core of the city.[453] Yet, by Walker's time, it had started to fall behind the times, at least in the author's opinion, as he notes when he returns to the topic a couple of pages later: "Colombo is said to be the most English-looking town in the East, yet notwithstanding its being clean and tidy, it does not, in my opinion, resemble one."[454] What accounts for the difference between the sincerity of Percival's statement and the open scepticism of Walker sixty years later? Perhaps merely a difference of temperament and preferences between the two authors; but it is also true that, compared to Singapore and Batavia – both of which Walker visited immediately before Ceylon – Colombo saw significantly fewer flagship construction projects in the intervening decades.

The British made only relatively minor changes to the architecture of the city they inherited from the Dutch in the 1790s. The heart of the city remained in the Fort, in the manner of the walled White Towns of British India. Of the important buildings of the fort, the governor's residence (known as the "Queen's House" during Queen Victoria's reign) was bought from the family of the last Dutch governor; another prominent Dutch residence was converted into a church (St. Peter's) for the British community (although its exterior was improved with a veranda and the omnipresent classical columns of the neoclassical colonial architecture of the time in the 1830s). For a visitor in the middle decades of the century, there was little that was new or impressive to be excited about, as can be seen from the many lukewarm assessments. For De Butts, the only thing of note in the Fort is the "long and straggling" Queen's House, which however at least "redeems the general character of the surrounding houses, which are, for the most part, insignificant in appearance."[455] In Edward Sullivan's characteristically terse and scathing style, the whole city is "about as hot and unpicturesque a place as it has ever been my luck to visit."[456] Walker finds some merit in "a good-looking block of buildings in the Italian style, built and used for public offices" and "a handsome light-house, signal

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[452] Robert Percival, *An Account of the Island of Ceylon, Containing Its History, Geography, Natural History, with the Manners and Customs of Its Various Inhabitants: To Which Is Added, the Journal of an Embassy to the Court of Candy* (London, 1803), 102.
[453] Nihal Perera, *Decolonizing Ceylon: Colonialism, Nationalism, and the Politics of Space in Sri Lanka* (Boulder, 1999), 49–50.
[454] Walker, *Jottings*, 199.
[455] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 17.
[456] Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent*, 29–30.

and clock tower, built as an Italian campanile."[457] Notably, the latter, erected in the central intersection of the Fort, is one of the few examples of the city's new monumental architecture in the early-to-mid nineteenth century, having been completed by the British in the late 1850s.[458]

Apart from the clock tower, the one truly significant example of mid-century reconstruction in Colombo is not a structure in itself but a space designed to mediate between the safety of the walls of the European town and the surrounding open landscapes: the Galle Face promenade overlooking the sea, between the coastline and the Fort. This space, the "Hyde Park of Colombo" had been in use as a popular spot for evening drives for some time already, as can be read from Henry Sirr's 1850 work *Ceylon and the Cingalese*.[459] Yet the existing land and its usefulness as a social space was improved through the construction of a modern promenade between 1856 and 1859, under orders of the then-governor Henry Ward.[460] Such fields and drives were an important feature of the colonial cityscape of the period: like the Galle Face, the Esplanade in Singapore, the development of which dates from the 1830s, stretched between the coastline and the European town (various reclamations have since distanced the Esplanade Park in its current form from the waterfront) and served much the same functions, as a setting for early morning walks and evening gatherings, as well as outdoor concerts by military bands and occasional sports.[461] And likewise the Koningsplein in Batavia, around which the new European town arose over the first half of the nineteenth century. In all of these cities, and indeed elsewhere in the Indian Ocean region, the reimagining of the colonial city in the nineteenth century was centred on such open spaces, built on urban principles transposed from Europe and imitating locations like the Champ de Mars in Paris. In this context, it is also important to note that the walls of the Colombo Fort, a decidedly early modern structure, were taken down in 1870, giving the European town a more open feel while also symbolising the confidence of the colonisers in the success of their project and safety of their position. William Skeen recorded his impression of the changes as the ramparts were being dismantled: "[l]ike a butterfly emerging from its chrysalis, the city stript of its warlike garniture, becomes daily more and more beautiful to view."

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[457] Walker, *Jottings*, 197–8.
[458] Perera, *Decolonizing Ceylon*, 80–1.
[459] Henry Charles Sirr, *Ceylon and the Cingalese: Their History, Government, and Religion, the Antiquities, Institutions, Produce, Revenue, and Capabilities of the Island. Vol. 1*. (London, 1850), 36.
[460] Fr Devay, *Journal d'un voyage: Dans l'Inde anglaise, à Java, dans l'Archipel des Moluques, sur les côtes méridionales de la Chine, à Ceylan. 1864* (1867), 213.
[461] Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 19–20.

Excepting the development of the Galle Face, what was behind the comparative architectural inertia in the otherwise relatively successful colony of British Ceylon? Partly mere circumstance: Singapore had to be built from nothing and then rebuilt due to its rapid growth; Batavia had to find a solution to the exodus of all with the means to escape from the unhealthy coastal areas. There was no such pressing need in Colombo, the architecture of which was even admired by the first generation of its new masters. At the same time, the British were busy in constructing a visible legacy elsewhere on Ceylon: in the city of Kandy, which had been conquered and annexed – along with the entire Kingdom of Kandy – in the Second Kandyan War in 1815. The burst of highly symbolic construction that took place in that city to imprint British rule into the cityscape has been discussed elsewhere by Nihal Perera, and had some of the same characteristics as the projects in Singapore and Batavia discussed above.[462] There was an esplanade named after Queen Victoria, as well as a lavish pavilion for the governor and an imposing Anglican church. Unlike in Batavia or Singapore, however, these buildings coexisted in a space with pre-existing Kandyan architecture, and were specifically built to visually dominate over the latter. Other Kandyan landmarks, such as the Royal Palace, were modified and converted into the use of the colonial administration. These actions were not taken only to provide comfort and agreeable surroundings to the colonisers; they were also intended to impress upon an audience – the indigenous community – the reality of European domination; by contrast, the European-ness that was built into Singapore and Batavia and, to a lesser extent, Colombo, over the nineteenth century was primarily designed to act upon the imagination of the European communities of those cities, impressing upon them a comforting and exclusive ideal of a European cityscape in the East.

One example of how travel writers used narrative forms to reinforce the social boundaries of colonial cities can be found in Weitzel's *Batavia in 1858*. It is important to note that the explicit purpose of this work was to provide and outline of the city of Batavia at a specific moment in time, and to give readers – specifically, readers in the Netherlands – a purposefully optimistic picture of its development and growth during the first half of the nineteenth century: it is therefore a text that very self-consciously crafts an idealised image of the place. In a remarkable passage, Weitzel describes the *kampongs* of the Javanese that made up a significant majority of the city. (Notably, Batavia was not strictly divided into European and native towns in the style of, for example, Singapore.) His rhetorical trick is in giving "two very dissimilar descriptions of one and the same native kampong,

[462] Perera, *Decolonizing Ceylon*, 56.

both of which could however be true, very true."[463] These are in the form of two hypothetical – apparently not drawn from direct experience or observation – early morning walks in the city, the difference amounting to the imagined (Dutch) observer's attitude and disposition. "If you are healthy, reader, and feel refreshed in the cool morning after a restful sleep," and many other optimal circumstances besides, then, Weitzel asserts, such a walk through the kampong is a most delightful affair, full of idyllic sights: palm trees swaying in the breeze, clouds of blue smoke winding up from the houses, families bathing in the river, etc. "Observing this scene, you feel a pleasant feeling rising in you and would want to keep on staring at it, if not for the rising sun warning you that it is time to continue on your way." This ideal is contrasted with what might happen if one undertook the same excursion in a bad mood, "unhappy with the Indies, the administration, or yourself," or disturbed by bad dreams. Then everything will appear chaotic: the water of the river dirty with the waste from "a hundred kampongs," houses falling apart, filthy and feral dogs following you around and the "big-bellied brood" of the inhabitants parading around naked. Working up to a crescendo, the narrative describes the unfortunate passer-by nearly getting hit by a coconut thrown down from a palm tree by a careless native, then bumping into a wandering buffalo and soiling his clothes, and finally, having decided to smoke a cigar and walking into a hut to ask someone for a light, seeing the inhabitants "sit crouching on the ground, picking at each other's hair and rendering each other services that we shall not name here." What a difference a good night's sleep can make, at least in Weitzel's estimation!

Obviously, there is a great deal of humour in the juxtaposition of these two hypothetical walks, and the moral of the story would appear to be that in a bad mood one sees bad things and vice versa. Yet the specific nature of these two descriptions of the native kampong bears closer analysis. The fundamental difference is that in the first, positive telling of the story, the kampong is experienced almost exclusively as a visual phenomenon: the plants in the background, the bathers in the river, the hustle and bustle of the life of the neighbourhood. This privileging of seeing is worked into the language itself, as the quote above, about the pleasure of just staring at the scene, shows. Moreover, the original Dutch uses here the word *tafereel*, which approximately corresponds to "scene," but originally refers to a painting or a tableau. Weitzel therefore deliberately frames this positive depiction of the kampong as something akin to a picture or an object of art that one merely appreciates from a distance rather than engages with. This is contrasted with the multi-sensory overload of the negative version: the "stinky kampong," the unbearable concert of the "crying and barking dogs," the

[463] Weitzel, *Batavia in 1858*, 22–7.

dirty buffalo bumping into you. What is more, here the hypothetical observer is drawn to interact with the inhabitants first-hand: in swearing at the careless man up in the tree ("you dumb beast!"), and in entering a house to ask for a light but recoiling in horror from the behaviour of the people found inside. The conclusion is easily drawn that, as far as Weitzel is concerned, the people are a pleasant enough backdrop to colonial life as long as one need not engage with them too closely or get mixed up in their ways of life. It is therefore not merely that former story shows the kampong in a positive light and the latter in a negative one: the former depicts it merely in its outward aspect, as seen from the detached position of an outside observer; the latter brings the observer into full contact with the life of the inhabitants, leading to nothing but disaster and unpleasantness all around. This distinction closely parallels the one made in the previous chapter between the carefully styled pleasure gardens set up by the European elites and the messy realities of the landscape that they preferred to ignore. Moreover, the uncleanliness and unpleasantness of the native towns is a recurring trope in many travel books of the time, and was indeed a prominent concern among imperial elites in the period, as has been noted by William J. Glover.[464]

The discomfort and disagreement inspired in European observers by Asian inhabitations and residential areas was already mentioned in chapter four, with reference to William Walker's excursion to Kandy and J.T. Thomson's stay in Penang. In those passages, both authors sought refuge from that supposed unsightliness not from the European settlements but by retreating to the pleasant garden-like atmosphere of the hills overlooking those cities. That evasive strategy already suggests a fundamental weakness in the ability of colonial city planning to truly embody the ideal society that it was designed to represent: reality was inevitably more out of control, refusing to stick to the lines drawn up by the architects. However populous the white societies of those cities, there was no way to ignore the massive discrepancy between their numbers and those of the various resident Asian populations. Yet, for travellers, those cities did at least provide a series of familiar imageries and reassuring meanings organised according to decidedly European principles and self-consciously modern in their execution. That, of course, was far from true of the broader architectural heritage of the region, which posed different challenges to the authors considered here. The next section will take a closer look into those situations were European travellers were brought face to face with major constructions and ruins of indigenous origin, too obviously significant to ignore but impossible to fit

[464] Glover, *Making Lahore Modern*, 48; for more on the topic, see Robert Peckham and David M. Pomfret, *Imperial Contagions: Medicine, Hygiene, and Cultures of Planning in Asia* (Hong Kong, 2013); Peckham, *Empires of Panic*.

into the categories and ideologies that guided thinking about architecture in the Europeanised urban setting.

5.3. Remnants of the past: the role of indigenous architecture

Whereas contemporary indigenous architecture often passed without much comment in the travel books here considered, the remains of ancient architecture were a different issue altogether and were often specifically sought out as curiosities and important sights, much like they still are today. Whereas the rapidly developing colonial capitals built by the Europeans were supposed to represent the positive face of modernity, these sites were permanent reminders of the past. However, while the history of the "discovery" of such sites by Europeans and the subsequent archaeological studies conducted was well documented at the time and has been carefully studied by historians in latter times, the contemporary development of what might be termed ruins tourism in the nineteenth century is less well understood. This is especially the case for Southeast Asia and Ceylon, where such remains came to the attention of the European colonisers at a relatively late date. In this section, two prominent examples of major ruin complexes in the region, the Borobudur temple on Java and the city of Anuradhapura on Ceylon, as well as some more minor ruins, will be considered, and written accounts of them analysed to elucidate the framings and interpretations employed by travellers to make sense of such remains in relation to their everyday experience of the colonies.

When it comes to imperial representations of major indigenous architectural remains, it has become a commonplace to assume that they were generally framed as symbols of the - Romantically tinged – decline of the civilizations that constructed them, contrasted to their less spectacularly monumental present state; and as indicative examples of the rise and fall of civilisations which was thought to legitimate European powers' dominance around the world.[465] There was a general tendency to associate such remains in the colonies with the ruins of the classical world and the elaborate ideas and imaginaries surrounding ancient Greece and Rome, an observation made by, among others, Nigel Leask for nineteenth-century India, and also confirmed by Sujit Sivasundaram

[465] Nayar, 'Marvelous Excesses', 229; Roxana Waterson (ed.), *The Architecture of South-East Asia through Travellers' Eyes* (Kuala Lumpur, 1998), xx.

with reference to Ceylon specifically.[466] As such, it has been generally accepted that the imperial imagination situated ruins doubly in a temporal and a spatial framework, contrasting their antiquity with the contemporary rise of European empires, and placing them in a cross-civilisational taxonomy that exchanged some of their local specificity for global comparisons. Yet, as the analysis below shows, that framing was far from a universal feature of imperial travel writing, and its application depended on the circumstances of the observer.

To briefly introduce the two major sites discussed here, the Anuradhapura archaeological site represents the ruins of an ancient capital city of the Rajarata Kingdom and an old centre of Buddhist worship. Habitation in the area dates back to at least the seventh century BCE, though its period of flourishing was roughly from the fourth century BCE until the eleventh century CE, after which the site fell into ruin. The ruins and the adjacent modern city of the same name lie in the northern part of the island, the latter being now the capital of the North Central Province of Sri Lanka. By comparison, the Borobudur compound, a massive Buddhist temple covering some 2 500 square metres, dates from the ninth century CE and apparently abandoned by the fourteenth century among the general decline of Hindu kingdoms on Java and the ascendancy of Islam. The temple lies in Central Java near the city of Yogyakarta.[467] Both complexes are nowadays recognised as UNESCO World Heritage sites and are among the respective countries' most visited tourist sites. This modern history of ruin tourism dates back to the mid-nineteenth century, as can be seen from below.

It is easy enough to find evidence that, by the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the major ruins of Ceylon and Java were already being adopted as standard features in the typical traveller's itineraries of those islands. As regards the Borobudur complex, Gevers Deynoot, in 1864, could already write: "who, knowing anything of Java, has not heard of this temple?" and even earlier in 1852 Kinloch was "particularly anxious" to visit the "far famed" temple.[468] The fame of the temple among a European audience derives from its description in Stamford Raffles's *History of Java*, published in 1817, as noted by Marieke Bloembergen and Martijn Eickhoff.[469] That work's

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[466] Sujit Sivasundaram, 'Buddhist Kingship, British Archaeology and Historical Narratives in Sri Lanka c. 1750-1850', *Past & Present*, (2007), 134 fn 87.

[467] The dates and basic historical data here are drawn from the UNESCO World Heritage List [http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/], from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and from the website of the Sri Lanka Arhaeology Department [http://www.archaeology.gov.lk].

[468] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 114; Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 90.

[469] Marieke Bloembergen and Martijn Eickhoff, 'A Wind of Change on Java's Ruined Temples: Archaeological Activities, Imperial Circuits and Heritage Awareness in Java and the Netherlands (1800-1850)', *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review*, 128 (2013), 90.

international reputation as the principal source on the complex is also attested to by direct quotes in both Kinloch's *De zieke reiziger* and Van der Chijs's *Mijne reis* (other authors may conceivably have used it without citing, or recycled its content through second-hand sources.)[470] Not that the site was very well understood by its visitors: while most correctly describe it as Buddhist, Van der Chijs, travelling in 1869 when the matter was certainly already settled, labels it Hindu: this must be out of ignorance concerning the difference between the two, as he also mangles the name of the site as "Boero-Boedha", possibly suggesting – incorrectly – that the latter part is derived from the word Buddha.[471] Estimates of the temple's date of construction range from the sixth century to the curiously precise yet wildly inaccurate "about the year 1344 A.D." found in d'Almeida, a claim beyond any consensus opinion at the time for which no source is given.[472] (The temple is now thought to have been built in the ninth century; Raffles's broad estimate in 1817 was between the sixth and ninth centuries.)

Such inaccuracies were hardly a concern for these visitors, as their interest was primarily aesthetic. It is notable that of the five authors (in order of visit: Kinloch, Hamilton, d'Almeida, Gevers Deynoot and Van der Chijs; there is also a perfunctory description in Boom's handbook) that provide accounts of Borobudur, none delve in any meaningful depth to its origins or try to elaborate on what the site can teach one about the history and civilisation of Java. This is in stark contrast to the commonly made assumption that such ruins were primarily thought of and interpreted as symbols of the more general decline of the civilisations that once gave birth to them. Such notions of decline are not mentioned by any of the authors considered here, nor do they make use of the opportunity to refer to the population's general historical shift from Buddhism and Hinduism to Islam. Of more interest, and mentioned by most, seems to be the view of the surrounding valley that can be enjoyed from the top of the temple: in fact, for visitors to better appreciate that view, by the early sixties the summit had been modified with a "kind of temporary roof for the accommodation of visitors," mentioned by both d'Almeida and Gevers Deynoot, which can also be seen in an illustration from a contemporary German magazine, below.[473] Hamilton's minimal account – "the temples … are of great size and filled with exquisite carvings and statues" – almost immediately veers into an "exciting adventure" with a

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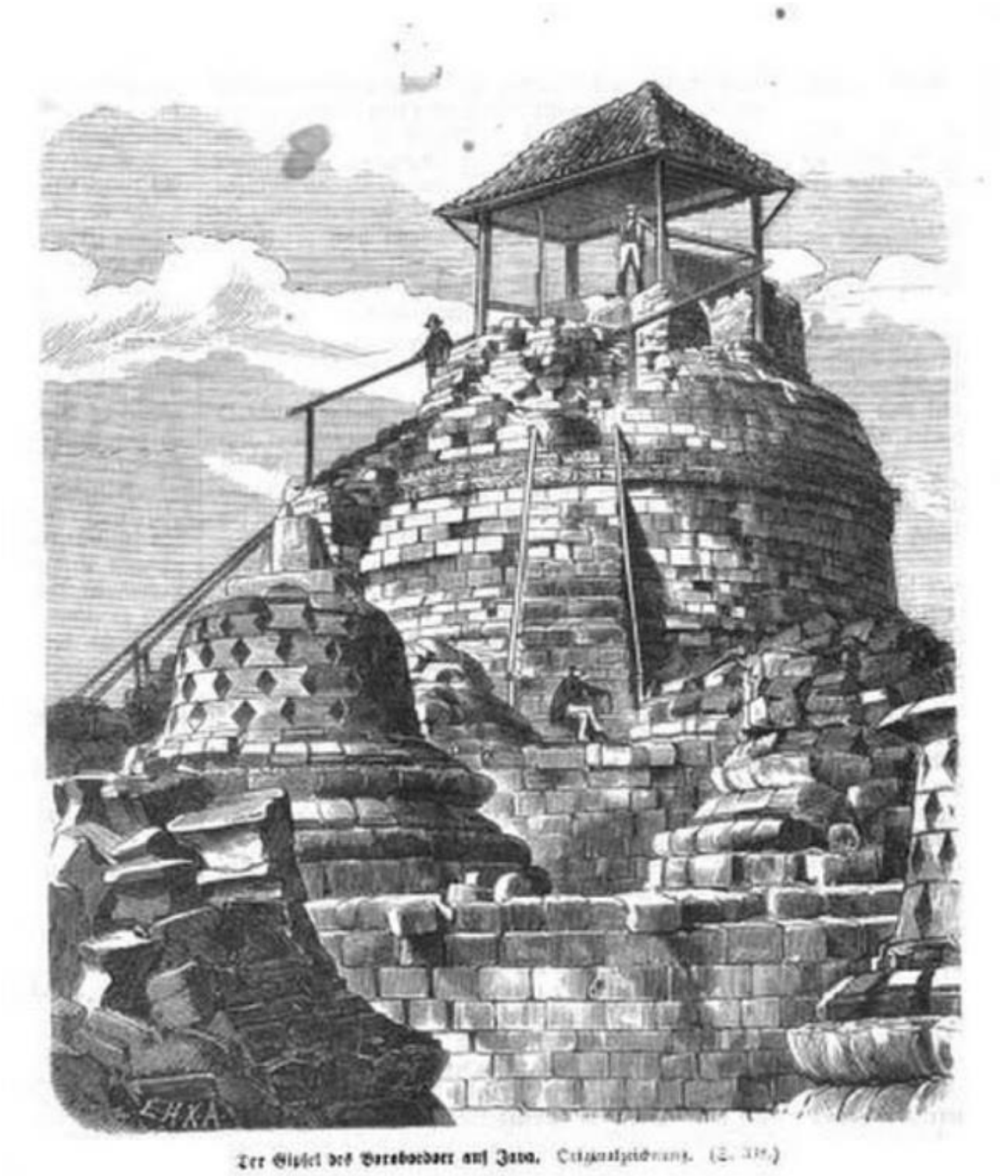
[470] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 94; Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 45; Raffles's initial description can be found in Thomas Stamford Raffles, *The History of Java, Vol 2* (1817), 29.
[471] Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 45.
[472] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 179.
[473] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 177–8; Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 115.



Ill. 17. A contemporary illustration of the top of the Borobudur temple, showing the railings and the roof set up at the top for the convenience of visitors, and a group of European visitors enjoying the view. From Über Land und Meer. Allgemeine Illustrirte Zeitung 19:25 (1868), 397.

python, in line with his sportsman's interests. Only d'Almeida seems to have examined the temple in any real depth, giving detailed descriptions of several of the scenes sculpted into its walls – but even here, the interpretation is muddled. For example, he identifies a series of reliefs as telling the story of Rama, which however is not to be found on the Borobudur, but instead in the Prambanan complex of Hindu temples some distance away. Such confusion was almost certainly due to some misunderstanding of information sourced from a third party. Even allowing for the inaccuracy of the interpretation, d'Almeida's depiction fails to provide any wider context for the temple visited. This is characteristic of all the accounts: these authors were relatively happy to have merely visited and seen the site; seeking meaning in it was unnecessary, to the extent that Gevers Deynoot even suggests that maybe the thousands of guilders spent by the government on making detailed drawings of the temple's many features might have been "overdoing it."[474] In general, it can be said that the archaeological study of the site and its invention as an attraction for curious visitors took place in two parallel yet separate movements.

Descriptions of Anuradhapura and the other major ruins of Ceylon share many of the characteristics of those of Borobudur: in particular, there is a striking similarity between Hamilton's account of Borobudur, where he is distracted from the temple by a python, and Campbell's musings on a set of ruins on Ceylon which are abruptly cut off "by my observing, coiled up on the top of a crumbling wall, a large harmless … rat-snake;" similarly, the depth of his interest in the architecture can be gleamed from his admission that "we had now spent a good deal of time in exploring these ruins, and also in amusing ourselves by throwing sticks and stones at a number of small, green, cross-grained monkeys, which had taken up their abode in some tall trees overhanging a brook."[475] The same relatively careless attitude is evinced by Sullivan, who segues effortlessly from a brief description of the remains of the past glories of Ceylon into a humorous description of the habits of the various types of ants on the island. In the many hunting narratives from Ceylon, the ruins largely provide an aesthetic backdrop for the authors' wildlife adventures, a curiosity and only occasionally an opportunity to comment on some aspect of local culture or history.

Yet there is a major difference, with respect to the accounts of Borobudur discussed above, in the quality of those comments on the occasions they are proffered. Here, more in line with the generally accepted notions of imperial travel writing, ideas of civilizational ebb and flow are

[474] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 114.
[475] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 308.

prominent. For Campbell, "the accounts which we have of what Ceylon once was, are indeed surprising; and they would be beyond belief, were it not for the remains of the stupendous works, which have been spoken of;" and similarly for Sullivan, the magnificence of the ruins "in a country like Ceylon, which can at present boast of so little energy and so scanty a population, is very surprising."[476] And the differences do not end there: not only are authors here drawn to speculate on the erstwhile splendour and subsequent fall from grace of the local population, they also seek to frame that narrative in a global, comparative context: Campbell makes an intricate comparison between the magnitude of the irrigation works at Anuradhapura and the Grand Canal of China;[477] whereas De Butts draws at length on Edward Gibbon's *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* to connect the ruin of Anuradhapura with its diminishing trade with that European empire.[478] Sullivan's framing, and the way he assigns worth to ruins of Ceylon, is particularly interesting:

> The only reasons why these remains of ancient grandeur are not so interesting as those of Egypt or Assyria, is that they are totally unconnected with any historical associations. In that they resemble those of Yucatan, or the Tumuli and buried cities of North America, without, however, sharing the peculiar attraction of those cities, viz. mystery.[479]

This brief passage seems to posit two contradicting measures of interest for such sites: firstly, having "historical associations," by which he presumably means some prominence in the narrative of the cultural history of the Mediterranean and the Middle East, to which Europe itself is inextricably linked; secondly, and conversely, "mystery," that is, a lack of knowledge concerning their origins. In his estimation, Ceylon can boast of neither, being too far removed from the European frame of reference to relate to but too well known and too closely linked to a currently existing society to provide the grounds for thrilling speculation.

What might account for the striking difference in European travellers' views of Borobudur and Anuradhapura, in that the former was seen largely outside any global or trans-imperial context, whereas the latter tended to be primarily seen through just such a framing? No single explanation seems adequate. It cannot simply be a matter of differences in Dutch and British imperial culture, since the accounts of Borobudur found in writings by authors from both of those countries are largely similar. Nor can it be entirely due to the different roles of Java and Ceylon in the European imagination, as it is evident enough that other, more scholarly-minded visitors to Borobudur

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[476] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 2*, 210; Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent*, 160.
[477] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 2*, 211; Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent*, 160.
[478] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 2*, 211; De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 247.
[479] Sullivan, *The Bungalow and the Tent*, 160.

employed precisely the sort of framing found in De Butts and Campbell, above. For example, the Dutchman J.F.G. Brumund, one of the several men commissioned to provide descriptions the complex, whose less specialist writings have been discussed in previous sections, published a lengthy piece of his impressions in the *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, in 1858: not only does he favourable compare the merits of Borobudur relative to "the most wonderful monuments of the Egyptians, Persians and the Chaldeans" – although still inferior to those of Rome and Greece; he also discusses at length the "rise, blossoming and demise" of the civilisation that had constructed it.[480] Nor was such a global framing a mere rhetorical trick, but a reflection of scholarly practice, as can be seen from the appointment of Conrad Leemans, a famous Egyptologist and director of the Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, to oversee the publication of the first major government-commissioned study on the Borobudur.[481] Colonial archaeology on Dutch Java, then, employed the same global framing as that on British Ceylon, and indeed some sense of competition existed between the two, as shown by Brumund's boasts that Leemans's upcoming volume would put any comparable work from British India to shame.[482]

Rather than local or national differences, then, the reason for the diverging views of Borobudur and Anuradhapura has to be sought elsewhere. The likely cause was a combination of several circumstances, a closer look at which will help elucidate the workings of popular colonial travel writing as a genre more generally. Firstly, the books discussed above, with reference to the two ruin complexes, are not quite identical: the ones on Anuradhapura were mostly written by authors whose stay on Ceylon was lengthy, measured in several years; the ones on Borobudur, by contrast, are mostly by temporary visitors to the island. This goes some way toward explaining why the former might have had more elaborate and sophisticated ideas concerning the ancient remains of the island, having spent longer in the midst of the colonial society there. And, on a related note, both De Butts and Campbell published their works in the early 1840s, at a time when self-consciously popular travel writing had not yet fully diverged from the more knowledge-oriented colonial literature, a genre toward which those authors make occasional nods regardless of their generally casual style. Yet these considerations can only provide a partial answer, as they do not apply to all the accounts considered

[480] Brumund, 'Te Boro-Boedoer', Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië, 20 (1858), 353, 361-2.
[481] Margarita Diaz-Andreu and Margarita Díaz-Andreu García, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology: Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Past* (Oxford, 2007), 219.
[482] Brumund, 'Te Boroboedoer', 280-1.

here: Sullivan, for example, was a mere tourist on Ceylon, and Van der Chijs made his whole career on Java and was certainly well-steeped in its colonial society.

A second and related potential explanation can be found in the specific feature that all the books considered here have in common: travel. Borobudur was easy to visit in a way the Anuradhapura was not: less than thirty kilometres from Yogyakarta, the seat of the Sultan and a major population centre, it was essentially right on the route of any traveller on the island that ventured outside the administrative centre of Batavia and Buitenzorg. Anuradhapura on the other hand lies in the northern part of Ceylon, far from the European centres of Galle and Colombo, and more than a hundred kilometres north from the old capital Kandy in an area that, until the Kandyan War of 1815, had been closed off to Europeans. Quite simply, the town was not on the route of a casual visitor like William Walker, whose tour of Ceylon – typically – only covered the route from Galle to Kandy and back, or the many Dutch writers who made a brief stop on the island, rarely reaching beyond Colombo. This relative difficulty of access meant that accounts of Anuradhapura were written by authors who had a specific reason to travel more widely and whose knowledge of the location was deeper, or who were perhaps positioned at the British station there. This contrasts with the evidently hasty excursions to Borobudur made by the likes of Kinloch and Gevers Deynoot.

A third reason has more to do with the wider context of imperial knowledge production. It is relevant that the amount of information available on the two complexes at the time of the writing of these accounts was not equal: the first comprehensive study on Borobudur, *Bôrô-Boedoer op het eiland Java*, was published in 1873 (also in French), and could therefore not provide references for any of the more popular accounts discussed here (appearing almost certainly too late to make an impression even on Van der Chijs's *Mijne reis* from 1874.)[483] More generally, as has been noted by Marieke Bloembergen, interest in and appreciation of Javanese antiquities in the Netherlands only really took hold in the 1870s and 80s, with the wider professionalisation of the field and increasing number of publications available.[484] By comparison, on Ceylon this process of dissemination and popularisation of knowledge seems to have taken place a little earlier: central to it was the publication in 1836, some years before the period under consideration here, of George Turnour's translation of the *Mahavamsa* manuscript which narrates the origins of Anuradhapura: but that translation was merely the centrepiece of early British interest in the site in the 1830s and 40s, which has been

[483] Conrad Leemans, *Bôrô-Boedoer Op Het Eiland Java* (Leiden, 1873).
[484] Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles*, 197.

discussed at greater length by Sujit Sivasundaram.[485] Notably, Sivasundaram has also raised the point that the relative importance of the site for the British was not borne out of mere archaeological interest, but also had to do with the political expediency of appropriating a site of powerful symbolic significance in the local culture.[486] This was less of a concern for the Dutch on Java, where the Borobudur, a Buddhist complex in an overwhelmingly Muslim society, could hardly be construed as a symbolic locus of resistance or rebellion.

From these two case studies, certain conclusions can be drawn on both the significance of indigenous ruins in the imperial imagination, and on the mechanics of popular travel writers' interpretation of such sites. That interpretation, although always emphasising entertainment and personal satisfaction, also depended upon the scientific and political considerations associated with empire. On Ceylon, travellers framed ruins in a long historical perspective, since that is how they had been discussed in the early scientific literature: crucially, that scientific construction had also had time to be popularly disseminated through works such as Major Forbes's *Eleven Years in Ceylon*, a book that straddles the fence between scholarly and popular in a way that the later works considered here do not. But while the presence of scientific studies made a deeper historical perspective and more elaborate framing possible, it was the political situation that made it expedient: there was a clear motivation to depict the ruins of Ceylon as symbols of the decay of the local civilisation generally and of the Kingdom of Kandy especially, given the recent war of conquest and the ongoing contestation of British authority on the island. By contrast, the ruins on Java were not as urgently politicised: here, too, there had been a recent conflict over control of the island, the Java War; but there was no obvious identification between the Muslim nobility behind that uprising and the Hindu and Buddhist ruins of the island. As such, European travellers on Java could frame their excursions to Borobudur as simple leisure and relaxation, and largely ignore the more elaborate writings of the scholars who were at the very same time working on the first generation of archaeological studies on the complex. In both cases, science and leisure – as European cultural constructs – were making concurrent and competing claims on these Asian sites: but it was the politics of empire that determined when the two would visibly intertwine in the imperial imagination, and when they could be largely left apart as separate fields of activity.

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[485] Sivasundaram, 'Buddhist Kingship, British Archaeology and Historical Narratives in Sri Lanka c. 1750-1850'.
[486] Sivasundaram, 'Buddhist Kingship, British Archaeology and Historical Narratives in Sri Lanka c. 1750-1850', 131.

5.4. Conclusion

While nature provided the backdrop for the wider experience of empire and frequently supplied its most impressive vistas, it was the buildings – big or small, imposing or functional – and the rapidly growing cities that set the stage for the everyday reality and the routines of the European community of the colonies. In an important way, imperial architectural forms were both a refuge from, and a site of, imperial anxieties. An example much discussed in the literature is the bungalow, an omnipresent – and global – housing solution for colonial servants whose homely comforts were supposed to relieve the constant unease and alienation of the colonial situation. Yet it has also been noted how its structural form, designed to allow free passage of air to provide the necessary ventilation in a hot climate, also made it impossible to strictly separate masters from servants and private from non-private, leading to fears of intermixing and indecency precisely where it was most essential to avoid such threats, that is, at home.[487] While the historiography has exceedingly focused on the Anglo-imperial bungalow, it should be noted that the Dutch colonial villas of the time were designed on the same premises and exhibited the same mixture of European designs and local adjustments.[488]

In many ways, that fundamental duality of the bungalow was also a feature of the colonial city writ large: the many construction projects and great plans of the mid-nineteenth century were designed to create a sense of home away from home in a colonial setting, to give the European settlers, colonial officials and other newcomers a reassuring, reliable cultural framework to hold on to. That framework, though made of wood and stone and other concrete materials, in fact functioned on a number of levels: aesthetically, imported European neoclassical styles quickly became the main form of architectural expression in public edifices; chronologically, monuments, statues and popular sites like cemeteries reinforced a historiography that was decidedly imperial, underlining recent achievements and introductions at the cost of the longer history of indigenous societies; and perhaps most importantly, forms like theatres, clubhouses and esplanades provided the setting for very specific, and specifically European, social practices and routines.

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[487] Peter Scriver, 'Empire-Building and Thinking in the Public Works Deparment of British India', in Peter Scriver and Vikramaditya Prakash (eds.), *Colonial Modernities: Building, Dwelling and Architecture in British India and Ceylon* (London, 2007), 81; Glover, *Making Lahore Modern*, 177.

[488] Sidharta, 'The Dutch architectural heritage in Indonesia', 5. Paper from the seminar 'Change and Heritage in Indonesian Cities' held at the Indonesian Institute of Architects in September 1988. Microfilm consulted in the Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden, Bijzondere Collecties.

Yet at the same time, it was precisely in these rapidly growing cities that the overwhelming numerical superiority of Asian populations was felt most acutely, leading to constant fears like those expressed by the European residents of Singapore concerning the influx of Chinese immigrants. Likewise, those growing populations led to problems, real and imagined, with sanitation and administration, thus threatening the shatter the ideal of a controlled, orderly urban space before the plans had even been fully drawn up, let alone realised. Many of these fears mirrored contemporary concerns in Europe where the industrial revolution was bringing in more and more workers into cities and in the process transforming urban landscapes across the continent; yet in the colonial context these debates acquired a specifically racialised tone, and the anxiety was only heightened by the colonisers' feeling of being on foreign ground, of being "not at home in empire," to quote the title of Ranajit Guha's seminal paper.[489] Moreover, there was a risk of exacerbating that exact sense of foreignness by considering the undeniably concrete, remarkable architectural achievements scattered around the region in the form of magnificent temple complexes and ancient cities. Both the past and the future seemed to represent a tangible threat to the present that the colonisers had worked to construct.

Of course, if one could not be at home in empire, what better way to manage that alienation than to accept one's status as a passer-by, as a traveller? Travellers could wilfully ignore many of these concerns, or when they discussed them, to box them away in a stray paragraph of superficial observations, not as problems that need engaging with. This is precisely the reason why the genre of travel writing was such a potent cultural form for describing the ideals of empire; a travel writer was free to choose the examples – palaces, statues, parks – that made a place appear in the desired light, but crucially also free to move on before the practicalities and realities of the colonial situation became too evident or taxing. Passing through colonial cities and dropping by to see temples and ruins, these visitors treated them essentially as stops on a tourist trail, picking out the most important sights along the way but never lingering for long. The comfort provided by home was substituted by the leisure of a tourist destination. Moreover, the structures themselves were increasingly built to facilitate such superficial tourism, especially with the introduction of European-style hotels in all the major cities of the region, with transport links becoming more and more regular and convenient, and services like travel agents helping with all the arrangements.

[489] Guha, 'Not at Home in Empire', 482–93.

It has already been noted that architecture and city planning had a fundamental social dimension, being used as tools to direct the behaviours and movements of individuals and masses alike. Public buildings were built for specific social uses, monuments adorned public spaces that were meant as places of gathering and relaxation: consequently, the material forms cannot be adequately understood without due consideration of the ways people inhabited them. To that end, the next chapter will focus on the routines and rituals of colonial social life, examining the ways in which people met and interacted, and the complicated negotiations of race and status that such encounters often entailed in the specific colonial context of the region. This and previous chapters have repeatedly drawn attention to the various ways in which the very things that were advertised as quintessentially European, from botanical gardens to hill stations to town squares, were in fact the hybridised products of centuries of cultural entanglement under imperialism. Yet that entanglement also had a very human dimension, and the next chapter will also consider at length at the various social, cultural and rhetorical practices that were employed to define the hazy boundaries between European and Asian, a process in which popular travel writing was deeply implicated.

Chapter 6

Colonial sociability and individual encounters

6.1 Clubs and ballrooms: the settings of social life in the colonies

The reorganisation of architectural space that was discussed in the previous chapter naturally left an imprint also in the way that people lived in these cities, and on the available forms of entertainment and leisure in the colonial capitals of the mid-nineteenth century. Some of the new structures had new functions that added new elements to the ways people interacted with each other; others provided upgrades on pre-existing practices. As the European cores of the cities grew more exclusive, their social life began increasingly to resemble that of the European cities of the time in an intentional process of imitation and recreation. This chapter will focus on the settings and practices of that social life, as well as its representations in the travel writing of the time. These two objects of analysis can be seen as the elements of a two-step staging and reimagining of colonial life: firstly in practice, occupying the spaces and structures discussed in the previous chapter, and with specific modes of behaviour and rules of inclusion and exclusion; and secondly, on the page, where a further element of selection and framing are introduced in order to shape an idealised image of those practices. This chapter will be divided into three sections. This first one will focus on the most commonly noted forms and rituals of the social life of the colonial elites, such as the various clubs and societies, as well as less institutionalised gatherings and festivals; the focus will be on the image of colonial sociability that such events and settings were designed to embody and transmit, as well as on questions of membership and access. The second section will continue examining these same issues, but instead of general practices will zoom in on and consider in greater detail a handful of specific individual encounters picked from the travel works of the time. Finally, the last section will again zoom out and consider the question of how people are categorised and grouped under headings like

"European," "native" or "Eurasian", and how such taxonomies reflect the realities and ideologies of colonial society. Together, the latter two sections examine how and on what basis, in a colonial setting, an individual could hope to be acknowledged as an individual and as a person of interest; and conversely, how and for what purpose stereotypes and labels were used to erase and distract from that individuality. Altogether, an analysis of the sources will show that although being European was the outward ideal of colonial social life, it was far from the only criterion of what was acceptable or desirable, and that boundaries that appeared rigid on the level of discourse could often be transgressed in practice.

To start with Singapore, the change that took place in the social life of that city can be easily enough traced in the autobiographies of some of the prominent inhabitants at the time. For example, it is described at length in the memoir of William Henry Macleod Read, a prominent merchant who arrived in the city in 1841. In fact, Read ascribes much of the credit for the change to himself and his friends:

> We three thought, and voted the place dull, and wondered how we could manage to put a little life into it. The only game, as before said, barring cards, was Fives, and there was only one court for that. No cricket, football, nor golf; no theatre, no library, no racecourse.[490]

Fives itself was a relatively recent introduction, the court having been built just a few years earlier in 1836.[491] This dull state of affairs is contrasted with the changes that occurred in the following years:

> Before Governor Bonham went home, in 1843, we had obtained from him a grant for a race-course, about a mile from the town; raised the necessary funds to make and drain it, and, on February 27, 1843, I won the first race run over it, on an Arab named "Colonel." Theatricals soon followed, temporarily in Dutronquoy's Hotel; a library was started in 1844; an Assembly Room, for balls and meetings, was further inaugurated, to which a theatre was attached, and a performance given on March 14 of the same year.[492]

No doubt Read may well exaggerate the role of himself and his friends here, even though his influence in the European society of Singapore at the time is well known, but in any case the list of outcomes, whatever the process, is a matter of historical record. Nor did the transformation end here: the Singapore Cricket Club was established in 1852, and from Kinloch's work we read about a bowling alley immediately adjacent to Dutronquoy's London Hotel, a "pandemonium" which "is lit up every night, and is filled with townspeople and others, who play at bowls and drink brandy and water until a late hour of the night.[493] As already noted in the previous chapter, the amateur theatricals

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[490] William Armstrong and William Henry McLeod Read, *Play and Politics: Recollections of Malaya* (London, 1901), 5.
[491] Cho and Leary, *Modern Sports in Asia*, 10.
[492] Armstrong and Read, *Play and Politics*, 5–6.
[493] Cho and Leary, *Modern Sports in Asia*, 11; Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 11.

moved to the new and more spacious Victoria Hall – replacing the earlier Assembly Room – in the 1860s, sharing space with the new town hall. Also in the 60s, the Tanglin club was founded and became a social hub for the British inhabitants; the Germans also had their own Teutonia club.[494] Other proposals were discussed but never carried out, such as the building of a "place for bathing" at the waterfront adjoining the Esplanade, the heart of the social life of the city.[495]

The previous chapter already briefly discussed the esplanades and parades that, architecturally speaking, formed the focal point of the new European towns of the nineteenth century. It is only natural that the position these spaces take on the pages of travel narratives is as prominent as it was in the cityscape itself. The descriptions of the social life of the "beau monde" of the colonies are frequently given in admiring, idyllic terms. Here is John Thomson's summary of the Esplanade in Singapore:

> The esplanade runs round a large enclosure of fine green turf – a convenient cricket-field and recreation ground – while the road itself forms a fashionable resort where in the cool of the evening, and in a double row of carriages, the wives and families of the residents move continuously in opposite directions for one or two hours at a time. In these daily circumgyrations we not only meet our acquaintances, and exchange nods of recognition, but enjoy the gentle exercise and the fresh sea breeze, which are so essential to good health in the tropics.[496]

The function of the Galle Face is described in much the same terms in *Souvenirs of Ceylon*:

> This is the favourite evening resort of the "society" of Colombo, who drive or ride out after the heat of the day had moderated to "eat the air," which comes fresh from the sea, to hear the music of the military band, or otherwise to amuse themselves. Fore pedestrians there is a broad footpath between the carriage road and the sea, stretching for nearly a mile, grateful, not only to ladies and children, in whose interest Sir H. Ward recommended the path to the care of his successors, but to wearied planters from the hills seeking "a sea change."[497]

The reference to Henry Ward points to an inscription, in grey marble, placed along the promenade that read, according to the French author François Devay: "recommanded [sic] to his successors, in the interest of the ladies and children of Colombo."[498] That reference to wholesome family life is not coincidental, as the healthiness that both of these quotes underline was not merely to do with the body: the esplanades embodied a conceptualisation of colonial life in its totality, one that was not on physical exercise but also on respectable family life and an exclusivity of social contacts, at least in one's free time, contacts which furthermore took place not in the privacy of one's home but in the most prominent public settings of the city. Naturally, such a symbolical locus was open to contestation

[494] Buckley, *Anecdotal History*, 556.
[495] Buckley, *Anecdotal History*, 452–3.
[496] Thomson, *Straits of Malacca*, 61.
[497] Ferguson, *Souvenirs of Ceylon*, 149.
[498] Devay, *Journal d'un voyage*, 213.

and dispute. A journalist complained in 1847 of what he called a "Galle Face nuisance:" "the natives" being allowed "to resort to the spot without any hindrance whatever … to perform the most disgusting ceremonies."[499] What those ceremonies consisted of is not elaborated upon, but clearly for this writer the promenade was to be a wholesome – i.e. middle class, European – space, and any Asians present should at least have the dignity to behave like their rulers. And he was certainly not alone. That same ideal of exclusivity is aptly symbolised by the image in the quote from Thomson above, of a handful of Europeans circling, repeatedly, every day, around the same walk in both directions, running into the same faces again and again; it is also clear in Sirr's depiction of the evening drives at Galle Face: "– – the carriage drive that divides the race-course from the greensward is thronged with carriages of every shape and description, principally, if not entirely, occupied by Europeans, whilst the fantastically-clad Eastern attendants run at the horses' head, or at the side of the vehicle."[500]

The Koningsplein in Batavia, though not situated on the waterfront – which in Batavia was considered unhealthy – had otherwise the same functions, as is clear from the description in Boom's guidebook: "It belongs to the favourite spots of recreation of the beau monde, where many walks are made. In the evening one meets there many a quiet stroller, enjoying himself under the trees by the light of the houses and the gas lamps along the way."[501] As a curiosity, d'Almeida credits the existence of a race-course in one corner of the field to the influence of the English residents and their "*penchant* for the turf."[502] Owing to that penchant, the races – held, naturally, on the Esplanade and the Galle Face – were a central fixture of the social calendar both in Singapore and in Colombo: in the former, the two-day event gave occasion to an accompanying public ball; in the latter, at least in De Butts's time, the races went on for several days.[503] All such activities and entertainments had the purpose of creating an essentially European public space in a colonial city, as was sharply and disapprovingly noted by the French traveller François Devay in Colombo:

> The English, who like it a little too much to turn into England every place where they go, have repeated here what they have done in Madras and in Calcutta; and what I will no doubt find in Bombay: they have cleared a vast space, to the south of the fort, under the pretext of green lawns and race tracks. It is the fiftieth degree of latitude transported to the sixth: which is not very logical.

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[499] 'Galle-Face Nuisance', *Monthly Examiner*, 14 (16 March 1847), 287 (consulted in NA London, Colonial Office Records, CO 59/3)
[500] Sirr, *Ceylon and the Cingalese*, 52.
[501] Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 67.
[502] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 8–9.
[503] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 196; Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 289; De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 28.

The flipside of this desire to populate the public space with European pastimes was that attempts by others to use it for different purposes, such as religious festivals, could cause discomfort and alarm in the European population. This was particularly true at moments of tension, such as during the Indian Rebellion of 1857: official correspondence from Penang from August of that year records "a very considerable degree of fear and panic among the European community" on the occasion of the holy month of Muharram that marks the Islamic New Year. According to the report, groundless rumours of planned atrocities led some to vacate the city for the supposed protection of ships in the harbour or for refuge further inland.[504] Thus, at a moment of perceived crisis the very act of staging a Muslim festival in the public space of the city could be perceived as an act of violence against the colonial order and its representatives.[505]

Such concerns did not exclusively target the Muslim population. Around the same time, Penang's Chinese population was facing a similar atmosphere of distrust and struggling to retain their rights to public space.[506] An 1856 petition from Penang's Chinese population complained that permission had been recently denied for various ritual practices – *wayang* performances in the streets, processions, music and crackers at weddings – eroding rights that the Chinese had enjoyed since "time immemorial."[507] Those denials had to do with an atmosphere of distrust and new regulations that gave the government increased controls over the uses of public space. In Singapore, the Chinese community even went on strike to protest the new laws in January 1857.[508] And in 1858, public processions were further restricted by official decree across the Straits Settlements.[509] What these records show is that the use of public space was a continuous source of contestation between the various communities of the Straits Settlements, and that Asian communities went to great lengths to protect their rights as inhabitants.[510] Sometimes that contestation turned violent, and rioting was a

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[504] 'Correspondence regarding the alarm felt among the European community at Penang during the Mohurrum [Muharram] festival, August 1857 to November 1858,' in 'Collections to the Narratives of the Proceedings of the Government of the Straits Settlements, for the 2nd half of 1857 and the 1st quarter of 1858,' BL, India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/L/PJ/3/1069 No.69, Collection 6.

[505] The background of the 1857 incident is elaborated in Rajesh Rai, 'The 1857 Panic and the Fabrication of an Indian "Menace" in Singapore', *Modern Asian Studies*, 47 (2013), 365–405.

[506] Jean Elizabeth DeBernardi, *Penang: Rites of Belonging in a Malaysian Chinese Community* (Singapore, 2009), 43–52.

[507] 'Chinese Procession at Pinang', *Straits Times*, 11 November 1856, 6.

[508] 'Public Meetings', *Singapore Free Press*, 8 January 1857, 4.

[509] 'Straits Settlements, Restriction of Public Processions Through', in BL, India Office Records, IOR/E/4/852, 1590-1.

[510] A similar argument is made in Yeoh, *Contesting Space in Colonial Singapore*, 9–10.

relatively common occurrence in the period.[511] Yet it is striking how completely one community's social practices could be demonised as nothing but potential sources of trouble, while another's were foregrounded as symbols of progress. Such was the difference, in official discourse, between a *wayang* show and a concert by a regimental band.

Against that background, travel writers' efforts to underscore the availability of European pastimes and public amusements were far from innocent. That reinvention of city spaces through leisure and social practices was intended not merely to make life in the city more pleasant, but also the make it feel safer – for some. The civil engineer John Turnbull Thomson (not to be confused with the photographer John Thomson, discussed above and in previous sections), comments at length in his memoirs on the improvements in the security and moral standing of Singapore over the first decades of its existence, harshly criticising the state of affairs during the early years of the colony under the "Company's Government, being based on Asiatic principles rather than European." He attributes the subsequent progress to two factors: firstly, an improvement in the maintenance of law and order, as brought about by the influence of Thomas Duncan, the city's first superintendent of police appointed in 1843; and secondly, on the "general advent of European ladies [that] gave a better tone to the morals of the community than in other parts of the Far East."[512] Both arguments are worth considering at length. The first one embodies the notion that administration of the colony was transforming into something more modern and European in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, due in large part to the influence of newcomers (like Duncan) from Europe who were not involved in the lifestyle and interests of the old East India Company elites. This process took concrete form in 1858 when the Company was nationalised by the Crown, and continued in 1867 when the Straits Settlements were administratively fully separated from British India. On the other hand, the influx of newcomers from Europe was not merely a matter of increasing numbers, as Thomson's other argument shows, the "general advent of European women" suggesting a significant transformation in the gender composition of the European community; that same transformation was also reflected in Henry Ward's consideration for the "ladies and children of Colombo" in constructing the new promenade at Galle Face.

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[511] R. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion* (London, 2002), 146; for an exhaustive overview, see C. M. Turnbull, 'Internal Security in the Straits Settlements, 1826 – 1867', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 1 (1970), 37–53.

[512] John Turnbull Thomson, *Some Glimpses Into Life in the Far East* (London, 1865), 203–10.

The details of this demographic transformation are rather difficult to parse from the patchy census data of the nineteenth century. For Ceylon, no detailed figures on the composition of the population are available before the general census of 1871. For Singapore, where the data is more complete, in the five censuses between 1830 and 1836 the ratio of men to women in the European community (excluding Eurasians) averages about 3,16:1, with a broad but not consistent downward trend and the quality of the underlying data more than a little questionable. In the far more complete 1871 census, considered the first proper one to be conducted on the island, that ratio is at 2,72:1.[513] The change might not appear radical, but its significance is more apparent when one looks at the data by age group, sadly only available in the 1871 census. In it one can see that the gender disparity is the less pronounced the younger the generation: among the British in the 41-to-50 bracket, the ratio is 50:13 (3,85); among the 31-to-40, 106:33 (3,21); and the 21-to-30, 118:54 (2,19). Moreover, the number of British children in the "ten years or under" category is a remarkable 121, against a total (all ages) of 594.[514] Evidently, the European community of the city was becoming increasingly family-based, leading to the "better tone to the morals of the community" highlighted by Thomson, and also to the introduction of a range of more genteel and wholesome sports and entertainments in the social life of the colony.

A similar transformation was underway over the first half of the nineteenth century on Java and especially in its capital, Batavia. The European population was certainly growing: at the beginning of the British interregnum, the number of Europeans on the island was estimated at about 4,000; in 1852, the number for Java was 17,285, a four-fold increase, with an additional 4,832 elsewhere in the archipelago; by 1872, that had again almost doubled up to 36,467, and continued increasing from there due to relaxed controls on land-owning and the immigration that encouraged.[515] In a move to what has been termed the "New Colonial" by Jean Gelman Taylor, after the British interregnum political power in the Dutch East Indies was decisively removed from the old, often mixed-race Indies families in favour of newcomers from Europe. The conservative governor-general and later minister of colonies J.C. Baud was personally repulsed by the presence of large numbers of Eurasians in the colonial administration.[516] From 1825 onward, all civil servants were supposed to

[513] Thomas John Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca: Viz. Pinang, Malacca, and Singapore, with a History of the Malayan States on the Peninsula of Malacca* (London, 1839), 284–5; Office, *Census of England and Wales, 1871*, 310.
[514] Office, *Census of England and Wales, 1871*, 311.
[515] Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, 128.
[516] C. Fasseur, *De indologen: ambtenaren voor de Oost 1825-1950* (Amsterdam, 1993), 73.

have been born and educated in the Netherlands.[517] In 1851, the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land en Volkenkunde was established in Delft to educate to-be colonial officials, meaning that those people increasingly got their knowledge about the colonies on the school-bench in Europe rather than from first-hand experience.[518] Overall, mixed Indies culture became a thing to abhor and be ashamed of, as a new generation of colonisers started reshaping the Indies to conform to their explicitly European ideals. That clash of interests and of ways of knowing is underlined in a letter from 1845 by the reformist W.R. van Hoëvell, who praises a Delft-educated official's ability to – scientifically – "see things down to their particulars," but also notes "a great prejudice" against the Delft Academy among the colonial elites and that "the general public feels that one must live in the Indies to know the Indies."[519] As Gelman Taylor has showed, the result of this clash was an eventual side-lining of the old Indies dynasties, which often led to such families embracing their Indonesian heritage and abandoning their administrative ambitions, while the newcomer elites increasingly married other newcomers.[520] Consequently, racial boundaries in the colony became harder and more fixed.

A new, European society required European entertainments, and these were duly provided. The theatre of Batavia, built in 1821 and located just off the Waterlooplein in the new administrative centre, is frequently mentioned in appreciative tones by travellers. Among the visitors was Kinloch, who witnessed a performance of the opera *La juive* by Fromental Halévy, a popular piece from 1835, "to which the company – – did very fair justice."[521] In contrast to the amateur theatricals of Singapore, the theatre seems to have regularly hosted professional French companies, perhaps visiting from Mauritius: these are noted by both Kinloch and Weitzel, and during Gevers Deynoot's visit such an agreement had recently been cancelled.[522] Walker also notes upon the abundance of entertainments: "[t]he Dutch are a very social and pleasure-seeking people in Java. They support and opera, theatre, concerts, and patronize all importers of novelties in the way of amusement, fully up to their merit – – they have an abundance of their own music."[523] Nor were music and theatricals the only form of entertainment: the Sociëteit de Harmonie, a club for European elites,

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[517] Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, 118.
[518] Maarten Kuitenbrouwer, *Dutch Scholarship in the Age of Empire and Beyond: Kitlv - The Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies, 1851-2011 ... Het Koninklijk Instituut Voor Taal-, Land)*, ed. Harry A. Poeze, trans. Lorri Granger (Leiden, 2013), 29.
[519] NA Den Haag, Collectie 058 J.C. Baud (2.21.007.58), inv. nr. 621.
[520] Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, 120–3.
[521] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 34.
[522] Weitzel, *Batavia in 1858*, 31; Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 33.
[523] Walker, *Jottings*, 164.

opened in 1815 – under Raffles's rule – in a new building facing the Koningsplein.[524] The exclusivity of this heart of the elite social life of Batavia is well illustrated by the description of the annual King's Day celebrations, the biggest event of the year, in Weitzel's *Batavia in 1858*:

> All Europeans and equals, whose business and other occupations do not prevent it, and whose social position at all allows it, are invited. – – The building is then beautifully illuminated from the outside, and surrounded by thousands of natives, whose curious looks reach inside through the open doors and windows, and whose ears with luck manage to catch the notes of the dance music.[525]

As the beginning of the quote suggests, the space was not open only to Europeans: the "equals" referred to might be a veiled reference to the mixed-race elites of the old Indies dynasties, or also to the more high-ranking or wealthy Chinese and Javanese elites. The quote also makes it clear that not all Europeans were invited, but rather only those of an adequate "social position." Yet what is most clear is who was excluded: the "thousands of natives," a faceless mass who in the imagery of the narrative are left literally standing just outside the illuminated circle of the celebrating elites, in what is one of the more ideologically charged symbolic depictions of elite social life in the colony. One can only imagine where the club's titular harmony is to be located in this picture.

It is not coincidental that, in Weitzel's quote above, the reference to the dominant population is "Europeans" rather than "Dutch:" the elite social life of the colonial capitals was both trans-colonial and fundamentally international in nature. This is clear enough from a number of casual remarks thrown about by various authors. Of the British community of Batavia, Davidson notes how "the Governor's parties were thronged with our countrymen and countrywomen;" similarly, Kinloch points out "the very large number of English residents at Batavia, and the constant influx of English visitors from different quarters of the globe."[526] A register of foreigners given permit to reside outside of Batavia on Java between just 1834 and 1842 lists sixty names in total, predictably dominated by British (twenty-two), German (eleven) and French (eight) incomers.[527] For travellers, such expatriate communities were an invaluable resource to draw on, as is evident from Kinloch's expressed gratitude for "the exceeding kindness and attention that we have met with during our stay on the island from the English society at Batavia."[528] Gevers Deynoot notes, among the entertainments provided during

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[524] Heuken, *Historical Sites of Jakarta*, 281.
[525] Weitzel, *Batavia in 1858*, 40.
[526] Davidson, *Trade and Travel*, 10; Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 31.
[527] 'Staat houdende de namen van vreemdelingen, aan wie na de uitvaardiging der Indische Publicatie van 10 Januari 1834 (Staatsblad nr. 3) toestemming is verleend in Oost-Indië te blijven' (1835-1842), NA Den Haag, Ministerie van Koloniën 1814-1849 (2.10.01), inv. nr. 3220.
[528] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 117.

the races at Singapore, the performances of "good vocal group of the Germans," probably organised by the Teutonia Club, one of the fixtures of the social scene of the city. [529] In the year of Deynoot's visit, a series of letters to the *Straits Times* discussed the shortcomings of British society and Singapore and the "admirable institution" of the German club was more than once suggested as something of an example for the English to follow and imitate.[530] Perhaps not coincidentally, the Tanglin club was founded the following year.[531] Incidentally, these letters also reveal that access to the Teutonia was not exclusive to Germans or German-speakers, but "any one [sic] introduced by a member is welcome" and "once admitted is on an equality with any of the other [members]," suggesting relatively free mixing between the European nationalities – there is, unsurprisingly, no mention of Asian members. Andreas Zangger, who has studied the German community in Singapore in greater depth, has suggested that not only did the Teutonia, founded in 1856, provide an – albeit limited – setting for Anglo-German mixing, at least during the more important celebrations, but that the European clubs of which it was the first notable example were part of a more general shift toward exclusive, European-only social life in the colony.[532]

As an aside, it should be noted that in addition to the social clubs described above an important role was also played by the much more specialised scientific societies in each colony: the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences (*Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*) and the Ceylon branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (the Straits Asiatic Society was founded a little later, in 1877.)[533] These societies are linked to the story of colonial sociability being told here, but are curiously absent from the travel books themselves. Of the authors, at least Brumund and Ferguson were members of their respective societies, as was indeed common for educated residents in the colonies, but the scientific work and Enlightenment principles of these bodies were an uneasy fit with the more entertainment-oriented nature of the books, beyond certain exceptions such as accounts of brief visits to the Batavian Society's new museum, which was mentioned in chapter five. This shows that, even in a self-consciously Eurocentric representation of colonial society, not all European

[529] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 196.
[530] Letters with the heading 'Social Apathy', *Straits Times*, 19 & 26 November 1864.
[531] Barbara Walsh Schreck, *Forty Good Men: The Story of the Tanglin Club in the Island of Singapore, 1865-1990* (Singapore, 1991), 17.
[532] Andreas Zangger, *Koloniale Schweiz: Ein Stück Globalgeschichte zwischen Europa und Südostasien (1860-1930)* (Bielefeld, 2014), 105–7.
[533] Sang Kook Lee, 'Contentious Development: Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore', in Park Seung Woo and Victor T. King (eds.), *The Historical Construction of Southeast Asian Studies: Korea and Beyond* (Singapore, 2013), 161.

societies and activities received equal notice. Of course, specialised clubs could also be thoroughly entertainment-driven, such as the short-lived Ceylon Hunting Club mentioned by De Butts.[534]

Europeans did not socialise across nationalities merely within specific cities and locales: these connections also extended across colonial boundaries and the seas that separated the various British and Dutch possessions of the region. Such connections were naturally useful for travellers, and the networks they formed provided support and information to such individuals as had access to them. To take one example, J.F.G. Buddingh, a Dutchman resident for some time on Java, could call on his friend in Batavia, a German merchant by the name of Eugen Zorn, to provide letters of introduction to the German businessman Robert Zapp in Singapore, and to a J. Black – presumably British – in Point de Galle; the latter two men, in turn, were in a position to help Buddingh by providing him accommodation during his stay in those two cities, thus saving him from the hotels he found "miserable." Similarly, Gevers Deynoot found his lodging in Singapore through a letter of introduction to members of the Dutch community there; and d'Almeida frequently used such letters, acquired from Dutch friends, when seeking out the favour of local officials during his travels on Java.[535] And a different kind of international network that travellers – and more broadly any European newcomers – frequently drew upon was formed by the hotel owners of the region, who frequently represented "outside" nations. To take the example of the establishments on Java, one can find in the books considered here mentions of an English married couple keeping a hotel in Pasuruan in East Java; a Frenchman in Bandung and also, based on the name at least – Mr. Cressonier – the Hotel des Indes in Batavia. Likewise in Singapore, the Hotel d'Europe was founded by the Frenchman J. Casteleyns, and the London Hotel by Gaston Dutronquoy, a Francophone native of the island of Jersey; Mr. Boniface, the proprietor of Alexandra Hotel, were William Walker stayed in Penang, would also appear to have been a Frenchman or of French descent. As an aside, it is not immediately clear why French or Francophone individuals seem to have been so heavily involved in the hotel business in the region, in this period that precedes French colonisation in Indo-China. While this handful of names may not seem like a lot at first glance, it should be remembered that this was at a time when most colonial cities were lucky to boast one hotel and many had none. Evidently, the business had a highly international character from the beginning, at least in the colonies of Southeast Asia.[536]

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[534] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 225–6.
[535] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 22; D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 129, 307.
[536] Walker, *Jottings*, 182; D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 129; Boom, *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, 60.

The international connections that bound the colonies of the region together and connected them to the wider world, were not felt only in the human presence of visitors and foreigners. One of the functions of the many societies and clubhouses discussed above had less to do with bringing people together, and more with bringing the outside world to them: their reading rooms, where newspapers from around the world could be found and perused. These are frequently remarked upon by travel writers, as important sources of both entertainment and information – but, crucially, information about the world outside the boundaries of the colonies rather than within them. William Walker, while in Colombo, praises such establishments on both Ceylon and Java:

> Colombo supports a very good and commodious reading-room, where I went to hunt up Bombay news. As I could not see anyone to whom to introduce myself, I sat down, and was soon deep in the columns of the *Times of India*. During my wanderings I was surprised at the number of places in which I found the familiar broad-sheet. Fully one-half of the Dutch in Java read English, and in all the large towns they have handsome clubs or reading-rooms, where I always found the *Times of India* on their tables, in company with joyous, dear old *Punch*, the *Illustrated London News*, and a large brotherhood of other newspapers.[537]

This exchange worked both ways: on visiting Singapore, J.F.G. Brumund visited the "*reading-house*" (presumably referring to the public library at the Raffles Institution) to have a look at the newspapers of Java.[538] Kinloch also has words of praise for the Singapore library, where "both the English and the Indian newspapers are regularly taken in" and "there is no difficulty in keeping oneself 'au courant' with European and Eastern politics."[539] Of course, the regular provision of newspapers from not only the neighbouring colonies but all the way from Europe had a lot to do with the advancements in transports brought about by steam technology; but the prevalence of such amenities in the mid-nineteenth century is also another example of the increasing Europeanisation and institutionalisation of elite social life in the colonies.

While the colonial social life described above served, in an important way, to create a sense of home, of a Europe away from Europe, for the colonising middle classes that frequented its institutions, an examination of its rituals also provides an insight into the boundaries and fragilities of that sense of community. Whereas performances, by touring professionals as well as local amateurs, of European music and theatricals served to bring a sprinkling of European culture into a colonial milieu, similarly the presence of indigenous forms of music and spectacle emphasised, for European authors, the foreignness and exoticism of the places they travelled through. This could provide

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[537] Walker, *Jottings*, 199.
[538] Brumund, *Schetsen eener mail-reize*, 36.
[539] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 18.

colourful background decoration, but more often was a source of some consternation, as is evident from the example of gamelan music and its accompanying dances on Java. For European observers, these performances were often bemusing, sometimes unbearable. Gevers Deynoot describes the singer's "screaming" voice and the "tedious" movements of the dancers; for d'Almeida, the music was "poor and unmelodious" and the dances "very monotonous."[540] Moreover, many authors make clear that these negative assessments are a matter of cultural incommensurability, not personal taste: one author considers it a mark of the "childishness" of the Javanese that they can listen to such music for hours on end; the uncrossable nature of the cultural boundary is underlined in Van der Chijs's description of a celebration with "gamelan music for the natives" and "good dance music for the Europeans."[541] It is notable that these authors seem to have had less trouble accepting the tiger fights described in chapter 4 as a valid and engaging entertainment than the cultural performances of human musicians, which are almost universally treated with indifference. The thrill provided by wild beasts was one that could be framed in the familiar guise of wildlife and hunting anecdotes, after any excess cultural detail had been stripped away; by contrast, the direct sensory experience of dance and music, following unfamiliar conventions, could apparently only be rejected wholesale. The closest to a tentative acceptance that can be found in these sources is d'Almeida, who suggests that the gamelan could be "brought to great perfection in the hands of a European *maestro*."[542] One can see here a reluctance to engage with an alien culture too closely and certainly not on their terms: enjoyment of the gamelan, especially when played by an Asian musician, might destabilise the commonly accepted norms of polite colonial society too far. For them, music was a language like any other that required translation to be intelligible across cultural boundaries.

The discussion above has examined at length the many ways in which travel writers sought to represent the colonial societies of the region as forward-looking, safe and comfortably European spaces. It is, however, important not to take at face value such evident whitewashing of empire as is presented in sources like these. Rather, such a foregrounding of the seemingly familiar, white and European society embedded within familiar, Western architectural and recreational spaces is a rhetorical strategy that worked, consciously or unconsciously, to hide the inherent ambiguity in the meaning and status of being "European" in colonial societies. To bring that ambiguity, and the anxieties associated with it, better into view, it is necessary to look at not only what people did but at

[540] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 70; D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 34.
[541] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 93; Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 63.
[542] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 1*, 31.

how they saw and understood each other: to that end, the next section will examine in depth the categories and taxonomies used by the travel writers of the time and the stereotypes and associations that the genre attached to certain individuals and groups.

6.2. Grouping and categorising

In no way could the inhabitants of the colonial societies discussed here be comfortably divided into two groups bearing labels like "European" and "Asian": that fact was, naturally, universally understood at the time although expressing it openly could be a much more awkward proposition. The broad term Eurasian (a master category of sorts that will be used here for the sake of consistency: in contemporary usage, a wide variety of related but not equal terms were in use, including but not limited to Anglo-Indian, Indo-Dutch or simply *Indische*) could be used to refer to individuals of mixed European and Asian ancestry. Such people were in most cases the foundation of the pre-nineteenth-century colonial elites, often hailing from families that had long roots in the East, yet it is curious to note how rarely they are explicitly mentioned in the travel writing of the time – and remember, the writers of these travel books in most cases were representatives of the new generation of colonisers, first-generation newcomers from Europe. In their narratives, there appears to have been something of a general reluctance to tackle the question of Eurasians directly. In some cases it could be externalised, as on Ceylon, where it is generally discussed by British writers as a problem of the other European communities that had settled on the island previously. For the newcomers, it was a problem that required action to counteract or at least occlude: thus, for example, an official in 1822 noted that "the Portuguese spoken in Ceylon is of the worst description of patois" and that its use by officials should be discouraged as tending to disincentivise the learning of English among the populace.[543] In effect, that off-hand comment argues for a wholesale cultural erasure of a community with centuries-long roots yet not accepted as either European or local; and its replacement with a new, more rigidly European colonising order. That line of thinking formed the basis of an entire social hierarchy, as can be seen from the following quote from Campbell:

> It may, however, surprise him [the reader], that I have taken so little notice of these people [the Dutch and Portuguese natives]; but the fact is, we have little or no intercourse with either, especially with the latter; for, although their ancestors were once of importance in the island, the have so completely degenerated, through reduced circumstances, want of education, and intermarriages with

[543] 'Remarks on Ceylon Dispatches,' nr. 39 (21 October 1822), in 'Pearl Fishery, Civil Fund etc., and various memoranda,' NA London, Colonial Office, CO 59/28.

> the Singalese, Moors, &c. that it may truly be said of them, "that the mighty have indeed fallen;" so much so, that I believe the Portuguese race in Ceylon will, before many years have elapsed, have become extinct, or be no longer distinguishable.[544]

The central argument of this quote is reinforced by an accompanying illustration that depicts a "Ceylon-Portuguese" in the manner of an ethnographic sketch, highlighting the foreignness of the character.

Campbell's quote contains all the essential ingredients of the British view of the Eurasians of Ceylon: that they were essentially different from and below the British; and that there is a clear hierarchy in which above the hopelessly mixed Portuguese stand the more respectable Dutch. It is there also in De Butts, who terms the Portuguese "degenerate in the extreme," but has kinder things to say of the Dutch:

> In no respect are they changed. Honest and industrious, the obtain universal respect. This wide dissimilarity [with the Portuguese] may in some measure be attributed to the cold and phlegmatic character of their nation, which recoils from that familiarity and intercourse with the native which have proved so injurious to the Portuguese.[545]

Yet even this respect did not help in securing any special social position to the Dutch, and it should be noted that the Dutch community was not considered truly European, but merely less mixed than the Portuguese one, who were depicted as borderline Asians. Campbell's suggestion that there was "little or no intercourse" between them and the British may well be somewhat exaggerated, but it is rare to find the Dutch mentioned in any social or casual context in the travel works of the period. Campbell briefly mentions "one or two of the more respectable Dutch families" that took part in the "balls and suppers" organised by British officers, suggesting some limited level of elite-level mixing.[546] Strikingly, the Portuguese and Dutch communities are wholly absent in both Edward Sullivan's *The Bungalow and the Tent*, and Samuel White Baker's *Eight Years in Ceylon*. These latter works, from 1854 and 1855 respectively, were published a good decade after those of De Butts and Campbell, perhaps suggesting an increasing distance between the British and Eurasian communities over time.

If the Dutch elites only existed on the very edges of the British society of Ceylon, it is curious to note that the Dutch visitors to the island seemed equally uninterested. This is clear from Van Heerdt's list of the peoples of Point de Galle. After mentioning the British, Moors and Malabars, and noting the absence of the Chinese, he rounds up the tally in one brief paragraph:

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[544] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 258–9.
[545] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 25.
[546] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 2*, 227.

> Moreover, one finds at Point de Galle: Klings, Bengals, Malays, whom we visited in their separate kampong near the citadel, Arabs, and a mass of coloured Christians or mestizos [Christen-kleurlingen of mestiezen], – commonly known as sinjos.[547]

Here the Dutch are not even explicitly mentioned, being instead subsumed under the rubric of "coloured Christians" or *sinjos*. What Van Heerdt does recognise as Dutch are the buildings, the houses of the European part of town giving him "an impression of old Dutch architecture" and the citadel being a "mausoleum of the earlier greatness of the Netherlands."[548] For him, the Dutch are a part of the history and heritage of the island, but the living element of that heritage – the Dutch community – had slipped too far away from their roots to be taken seriously. When Buddingh visited Point de Galle a few years later, he found little more: of the five individuals he lists as being the people with whom he spent his time, four were British, and only the fifth, the magistrate A.C. de Vos, of Dutch descent. De Vos is characterised by Buddingh as "the only one on Ceylon who still speaks Dutch and is of Dutch descent."[549] That is almost certainly an exaggeration, but it does appear to be true that the Dutch language had quickly fallen out of use in the little more than half a century of British rule. Writing in 1862, J.F.G. Brumund also laments that "during the two days that I was there [Point de Galle], I met no one with whom I could have spoken in the mother tongue."[550] It seems likely that the replacing, or creolisation, of the Dutch language is here used as shorthand to suggest a more general cultural and racial distancing, to avoid putting into words the unpleasant idea that the Dutch have become as "degenerate" as the Portuguese before them.

On Java, the question of European and Eurasian was a little more ambiguous, due to the fact that there was no (lasting) regime change to mark the boundary between the old and new colonisations, as on Ceylon. As seen above, on the latter island those categories closely – though not exactly – corresponded to those of "British" on the one hand and "Portuguese"/"Dutch" on the other. On Java, no such rhetorical shorthand was readily available. Instead, the concept of mixed-race families and individuals is often broached in more delicate and roundabout ways. In Kinloch's *Zieke reiziger*, for example, one can find the rather mean-spirited story of his "fat landlady," a "Female Bluebeard" who had apparently survived ten marriages, had a habit of dressing up on Sundays "looking for all the world like a prize peony at a horticultural show" and a "singular fondness for the newspaper," which however the author supposedly catches her holding upside down, revealing her

[547] Heerdt, *Mijne reis met de landmail*, 18.
[548] Heerdt, *Mijne reis met de landmail*, 18–9.
[549] Buddingh, *Dagboek*, 15–6.
[550] Brumund, *Schetsen eener mail-reize*, 57.

lack of education and literacy.[551] The woman in question is never referred to as mixed-race or Eurasian or any other such term; nor, in fact, is she said to be Dutch or European either, but her dialogue is given in Dutch and the author uses the Dutch title "Mevrouw" to refer to her. Naturally, the juicy details of the story may very well be made up or based on local gossip rather than observation – certainly the story of the newspaper held upside down is a little too cliché to be taken at face value. (Also, one can find the story of the landlady's deceased husbands repeated in another contemporary travel work, but there the number given is seven, not ten.[552]) But in outline the anecdote does conform to a number of stereotypes concerning Eurasians: the constant remarrying suggesting a relative laxness of sexual morals; the disregard for European standards of education as revealed in illiteracy; even the clumsy attempts at appearing European by wearing formal dress in inappropriate ways or at the wrong times.

Another of Kinloch's encounters has a similar flavour, this time with the resident of Bagelen, a "Mr. B." What first draws the author's attention is that "[t]he Resident's family made a considerable party of themselves, mustering, as it did some twelve or fourteen strong, inclusive a troop of children of various ages." This in itself seems like a clue, but the really interesting passage follows a little later, describing the eating habits of this "troop of children:"

> But just look at those children; did ever nursery of this or any other land produce such wolfish appetites? Having no particular appetites ourselves, we had abundant leisure for noting what was going on around us; and as we saw those tiny creatures, some of whom could barely lisp their mother tongue, cramming down their throats in rapid succession a heterogeneous mass of soup, and beef steak, pork, pickles, and salad, with puddings, cakes, jams, jellies, fruits, and bonbons to conclude with, we require no further explanation of the general sickly appearance of the Dutch children in Java. We thought of the rosy cheeked children of Great Britain, and contrasted with feelings of pleasure the wholesome restraints and healthful habits of our English nurseries, with the baneful system under which the children of the Dutch are brought up in Java.[553]

The "baneful system" in question being, of course, that of employing indigenous nannies to take care of the children – a practice far from unheard of elsewhere in the British colonies, it should be noted. The resident in question is not Eurasian – a quick look at the *Almanak en naamregister* for the appropriate year shows that the person occupying that position was a certain Reiner de Filliettaz Bousquet, who had several relatives in the East Indies and had spent at least three decades there himself, but was born in Europe, as was his wife. But what Kinloch is here criticising is the un-

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[551] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 59–61.
[552] Gerstäcker, *Narrative of a Journey Round the World, Comprising a Winter-Passage Across the Andes to Chili*, 553.
[553] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 86; food was in fact one site of power for servants over their masters, as discussed in Ishita Banerjee-Dube and Cecilia Leong-Salobir, '"Mem" and "Cookie": The Colonial Kitchen in Malaysia and Singapore', *Cooking Cultures* (Cambridge, 2016), 84.

European character of family life on Java, contrasting the "healthful habits" of the English nurseries with the lack of manners and restraint exhibited by Bousquet's household. A decade earlier, Campbell raised the exact same concern of life in Ceylon, in an almost identical passage, describing how "native maid servants invariably spoil the children of Europeans, by every kind of indulgence," similarly noting the wanton gluttony of the children and the consequent "pallid and wretched" appearance of the children.[554]

These passages raise the spectre of interracial mixing, not of blood but of morals: a cultural indigenisation exhibited in a general laxness of manners. Moreover, Kinloch's aside "some of whom could barely lisp their mother tongue," though perhaps merely referring to age, might certainly also be construed as referring to the inadequate presence and influence of the European parents, or rather mother, in the upbringing of the children, leaving them open to cultural hybridisation. All of this should be read in light of Kinloch's statement, given a little earlier, that "[n]either the hotels nor the horses improve as we advance eastward [across the island of Java]," and that "[a]s regards the former there is on the part of the owners a perceptibly increasing disregard for cleanliness, and a corresponding predilection for greasy cookery."[555] In Kinloch's estimation the distance, measured in miles or the number of post stations, from the high society of the capital Batavia and the elite resort of Buitenzorg functions as a proxy for the general level of cleanliness and of acceptable manners, that is, for the European-ness of colonial society. As for Campbell, he even goes as far as to explicitly suggest the setting up of nurseries and schools run by European teachers in the salubrious highlands as an "object of national importance," so that not only can the children be raised by the right people but that that education would also take place in a suitably Europeanised social and natural space, in order to lessen the risk of accidental hybridisation.[556]

Of course, even the whitest and most European of social spaces, in Buitenzorg or Weltevreden, or Colombo or Singapore, were far from exclusively populated with Europeans, and in fact could not have functioned without Asian labour. Popular travel writing in general tends towards a double strategy in its depiction of this Asian presence in supposedly European enclaves: on the one hand, erasure and ignoring; and on the other, stereotyping anecdotes that serve primarily as comic relief in the greater narrative. A brief aside in the American Isabella Bird's *The Golden Chersonese*

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[554] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 256.
[555] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 74.
[556] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 257.

and the Way Thither (1883) (the "golden chersonese" referring to the Malay peninsula) manages to concentrate these two approaches into a single scene in Malacca:

> It is strange that I should have written thus far [this is on page 172] and have said nothing at all about the people from whom this peninsula derives its name – – In truth – – I had absolutely forgotten the Malays, even though a dark-skinned military policeman, with a gliding, snake-like step, whom I know to be a Malay, brings my afternoon tea to the Stadt-haus![557]

Strange indeed! But entirely in line with the conventions of the genre. It is not uncommon to find general ethnographic taxonomies and analyses in these works, but these are almost without exception curiously detached from the personal experience of the traveller, coming across more as passages learnt by rote from the more serious-minded colonial literature of the nineteenth century. Asians as real people, however, as individuals that one can see and perhaps interact with, tend to glide in and out of the picture as here, barely noticed – if not by the sudden appearance of the author's afternoon tea.

The early nineteenth century was a key period in the advance of colonial ethnography, also and perhaps especially in maritime Southeast Asia.[558] There was an urge to develop strict racial classifications that broadly corresponded with the contemporary drive to draw and police territorial boundaries. In Ceylon, British authorities sought to impose a division into "indigenous" Sinhalese and Kandyans on the one hand and "foreign" Malabars on the other, partly in order to relocate the latter population to their supposed homeland in India, a separate colonial jurisdiction under the East India Company.[559] In Southeast Asia, a succession of scholars debated the proper racial classification of the populations of the so-called "Malay archipelago" – itself an un-innocent term coined by the famed naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace in his 1869 book of the same name – in a process similarly entangled with the competing territorial claims of various European powers.[560] It was a volatile process that eventually settled on an arbitrary and ambiguous division between "Malays" and "Papuans" as proposed by self-proclaimed experts of dubious merit like George Windsor Earl.[561] Quite apart from the flawed premises of the effort, such categories left little space for the natural

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[557] Isabella Lucy Bird, *The Golden Chersonese and the Way Thither* (New York, 1883), 172–3.
[558] Warwick Anderson and Ricardo Roque, 'Introduction — Imagined Laboratories: Colonial and National Racialisations in Island Southeast Asia', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 49 (2018), 364.
[559] Sivasundaram, *Islanded*, 29–30.
[560] Ricardo Roque, 'The Colonial Ethnological Line: Timor and the Racial Geography of the Malay Archipelago', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 49 (2018), 388.
[561] George Windsor Earl, *The Native Races of the Indian Archipelago: Papuans* (London, 1853); the process is described in Chris Ballard, '"Oceanic Negroes": British Anthropology of Papuans, 1820-1869', in Bronwen Douglas and Chris Ballard (eds.), *Foreign Bodies: Oceania and the Science of Race 1750-1940* (Canberra, 2008), 157–202.

fuzziness of boundaries and in-betweenness of human communities, especially in a region of such high mobility as Southeast Asia.

Against that background, it is evident that the popular travel writers considered here, in most cases individuals of few scholarly pretensions, had a ready supply of scientific stereotypes and discourses to draw upon in their depiction of Asian peoples. These discourses are frequently condensed into brief paragraphs, a few pages at most, so as to set the stage for the central personal narrative. It is remarkable just how uniform the popular stereotypes are across the region and the various suggested racial denominations: from the Sinhalese of Ceylon, the Malays in the Straits or the Javanese, the commonplace descriptors are, to borrow from James Cordiner's *Description of Ceylon* (1907): "indigent, harmless, indolent, and unwarlike, remarkable for equanimity, mildness, bashfulness, and timidity."[562] Those adjectives are repeated almost word-for-word in Raffles's *History of Java* (1817) or John Crawfurd's similarly canonical *History of the Indian Archipelago* (1820), and they likewise resound throughout the travel books of the time.

Yet there is a notable difference in the employment of the terminology between the two genres of literature: whereas Raffles and Crawfurd acknowledge the prevalence and apparent accuracy of these stereotypes, they also elaborate at length on the probable causes of such characteristics and often argue against blanket racial explanations. Thus, for example, on the topic of indolence and deference, they both argue at length that this is not an intrinsic feature of the people but rather an adaptation to the despotic rule of their princes and of the Dutch: why work harder if the fruit of your labour is likely to be taken from you anyway?[563] Yet that qualification disappears entirely in the description of the Javanese in Kinloch, even though he refers to Raffles directly; Davidson even goes as far as to reverse the argument, suggesting that "a little wholesome coercion" on the part of the Dutch is perfectly justified precisely because of the laziness of the people, for the sake of the productivity of the colony.[564] Others like Weitzel merely make a desultory brief reference to an *aangeboren traagheid* ('innate indolence'), dispensing with any elaboration.[565] That simplification and loss of nuance is a general feature of the genre, though with a few notable exceptions: Gevers Deynoot, for example, produces a version of Raffles's argument as a justification for colonial

[562] James Cordiner, *A Description of Ceylon* (London, 1807), 92.
[563] Thomas Stamford Raffles, *The History of Java: In Two Volumes* (London, 1817), 251; John Crawfurd, *History of the Indian Archipelago: Containing an Account of the Manners, Arts, Languages, Religions, Institutions, and Commerce of Its Inhabitants* (Edinburgh, 1820), 42–3.
[564] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 113–4; Davidson, *Trade and Travel*, 34.
[565] Weitzel, *Batavia in 1858*, 121.

reform.[566] This is not to suggest that the more canonical colonial scholars of the period were in any way more disinterested or innocent than the authors considered here: their very endeavour was underpinned by racialised premises and Crawfurd in particular is often strikingly unpleasant to read. Rather, these two genres represent different modes of racism and racialised thinking in the nineteenth century: one couched in scholarly sophistication and scientific legitimacy, the other popular and casual. And leisurely travel writing had a crucial role to play as a cultural filtering system of sorts for the former, allowing a highly condensed and de-nuanced version of its findings to penetrate into the wider imperial popular culture.

Rather than go into greater depth on the whole range and variety of stereotypes employed by European authors, which have in any case been examined elsewhere in greater depth than is possible here, it is interesting to consider for a moment the specific narrative devices employed by this genre to draw lines between, and to define, different groups of people. Without doubt, one of the most effective rhetorical tricks used in these books to that end is humour, either in the form of sly references to national or ethnic stereotypes, or in specific little anecdotes or sketches drawn from personal experience. Humour is repeatedly employed to caricature Eurasians, especially the mixed-race descendants claiming Portuguese heritage: Thomson describes such a character that he met in Pinang as a "new type of man" and is "puzzled to determine what constituted him a European, and … forced to the conclusion that it was the beaver hat."[567] In such portraits, which are numerous, humour is used to create distance between the irreproachably European observer and the pretender to pseudo-European status, towards whom a mocking or patronising attitude is adopted. Elsewhere, it serves to underline the social hierarchy between master and servant: already, in chapter four, the recurring trope of the cowardly gun-bearer on the hunt, was alluded to; in fact that is only one subcategory of the more general figure of the inept, unreliable or otherwise ridiculous indigenous servant. It is present in Kinloch's depiction of Javanese washermen who "beat all your garments into shreds for the mere love of the thing" so that the author "arrived on the island with a perfectly new wardrobe" and "left it with scarcely a sound garment."[568] Thomson gives us a whole acerbically sarcastic scene of Chinese servants in Singapore:

> Stepping round to the servants' quarters … we find that 'Ah-Sin,' the cook, has been gambling overnight, and is not yet astir … A decided smell of opium pervades the room; but, after all, that must only be our own fancy, as no Chinese domestic ever smoked the vile drug, according to his own account.

[566] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 78–9.
[567] Thomson, *Straits of Malacca*, 20.
[568] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 37.

Elsewhere, direct quotes from servants, emphasising their poor or accented language, are employed to spice up stories of their unreliability, such as in Campbell's telling of a head servant cheating his employers: "Ma-am – long time no see wife – want to go to Colombo see wife. – Ma-am, want much all this from Colombo – (producing a long list of articles) – Ma-am, give me thousand dollars;" and later, when his deceit is discovered by the lady of the house, a dejected complaint: "[s]he look plenty sharp after everything – no great lady."[569] All of these passages allude, rather than to the specific stereotypes associated with one group of people or another, to a more general concern with servants who were indolent, deceitful or both, yet in all cases indispensable for the style of life of the colonial middle classes, and try to use elicit laughter as a remedy to the sense of unease that that dependence created.

It should not, however, be thought that humour was only used to denigrate the indigenous population; on the contrary, it was also often employed to distinguish members of one group of Europeans from another, or residents of one colony from those of another. British visitors in the region made merciless fun of the Dutch: from lambasting their habit of building canals everywhere they go "as [they] would not feel comfortable without one;" to their cooking, which "is not only not wholesome, but it is even worse, it is disgusting;" and even their architecture and "the strong love of plaster and whitewash which has at all times distinguished them."[570] One particularly inspired passage compares a tardy Dutch steamer to the people that built it: "the 'Koningen' [sic] happened to partake of the characteristic features of the nation whose colours she bore. She was round bottomed, and given to smoke, and she did not reach the Roads till the morning of the third day."[571] Nor were Dutch authors afraid to ridicule the British: one habit that drew frequent puzzlement was the use by the latter of punkahs to ventilate indoor spaces. "A strange sight, to make you dizzy," as J.F.G. Brumund bemusedly put it, observing a dozen punkahs wafting inside a church, a separate smaller one just for the priest, operated by servants from the outside through holes in the walls. Van Heerdt despaired about the cost of accommodation on Ceylon, jibing that the English consider cheap hotels "not gentlemanlike" (in English in the original, evidently to emphasise the stereotypically English nature of the concept).[572] Buddingh's pet peeve was more cultural: "English music is not melodious, and

[569] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 254–5.
[570] Walker, *Jottings*, 182; Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 33; Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 363.
[571] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 105.
[572] Heerdt, *Mijne reis met de landmail*, 21.

English male voices are… well... horrible to hear."[573] Clearly, then, jokes were a weapon that cut both ways, and both sides had a ready arsenal of stereotypes to draw upon to make mockery of each other.

Despite the superficial similarities, humour and jokes targeting fellow Europeans seemed to work on a different logic than those aimed at the indigenous population, as is evident from the above examples. The latter tend to start with an individual, personal encounter recounted in entertaining terms, which is then elaborated on to suggest a wider lesson about life in the colonies. This is especially evident in the scenes by Campbell and Thomson, starring the head servant and the Chinese cook, respectively, which both come with a clear moral – keep an eye on your servants. It is also there in Kinloch's story of the washermen, though here all remonstrations prove useless and only forbearance is suggested as a solution. It is crucial that in each of these cases, it is the irritation of a personal – real or fictional – encounter that is dissolved into laughter and then instruction. By contrast, the jibes made by the British of the Dutch, or the other way around, lack this personal and instructive aspect: the stereotypes mostly operate on a general level, describing cultural or behavioural characteristics – music, architecture, manners – that do not attach to a specific person or situation; instead of recommendations, they provide decoration and entertainment, at best some chuckles at the expense of a sometime-enemy and frequent competitor, but nothing need be done about them, nor do they seriously impinge on the narrators' comfort.

If ethnicity and nationality form one major axis along which categorisations and stereotypes are frequently arranged, another can be located in gender. The sexualisation of the indigenous woman in travel writing is of course a well-studied phenomenon, and its prevalence is, if anything, emphasised in a genre as male-dominated as popular imperial travel writing in the mid-nineteenth century was, as established in chapter two. And indeed, wherever indigenous women are considered as a group, it is their looks that the descriptions focus on. Examples are easy to find from all the three areas considered here: Cameron's section on the people of Singapore devotes a page to the "comeliness of [the Malay] women" that emphasises their attractiveness also to European – male heterosexual – observers; perhaps tellingly, this section is underlined in the index even more than in the text itself, picked out as being of special interest to readers.[574] (Also notable is that there is no such passage on Chinese women, who in general are far less sexualised in these works, perhaps due to their smaller numbers and less visible presence in the East Indies and the Straits.) It seems to have

[573] Buddingh, *Dagboek*, 11.
[574] Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 132.

been generally accepted that beauty was culturally specific: Gevers Deynoot similarly emphasises the "eye of the European" when assessing – this time, negatively – the looks of Javanese women.[575] And as with other stereotypes, depictions of women had already become remarkably rote and routine by the mid-nineteenth century. Deynoot is just one of many authors who lament the habit of Javanese and Malay women to chew on betel nut, which coloured their teeth, supposedly rendering them unattractive; on the other hand, their long "jet-black" hair frequently attracted admiring comments.[576] Elsewhere the shared notions are even more literal: for example, De Butts, Campbell and Ferguson's *Souvenirs of Ceylon* each quote the exact same passage from an earlier work, describing in minute detail all the good points of a "Cingalese belle" for the benefit of "all who profess themselves connoisseurs in female loveliness."[577] That passage, from Dr Davy's *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon* (1821) had evidently become a cultural commonplace in less than two decades, although its borrowing in these works perhaps also hints at a an attempt at distancing the author from too direct an appreciation of the indigenous female form. That explanation is supported by the notable silence by most authors on the topic of indigenous female dress: nowhere here can one find the trope of the topless native woman, so popular in later European art. After all, these were works aimed at the mass market of Victorian Britain; there were limits to how erotic the content could comfortably get.

One should not, however, think that it was only indigenous women that were subjected to such superficial, eroticised depictions in these books: in fact, European women could be likewise objectified, emphasising the gendered, rather than racial, axis of observation. Sometimes this took the form of comparisons: just as the teeth of Adenese women were considered superior to those of the Javanese by Van Heerdt, similarly the shapeliness of the latter was preferred by Cameron to those of Europe.[578] At other times authors felt free to criticise and assess European women quite apart from any exotic framing: Kinloch devotes a couple of pages to describing the shortcomings of the Dutch women on Java, not least their "indecent display of their persons" and lack of "delicacy" relative to English women.[579] Davidson, likewise, makes a comparison with his compatriots: "the fair-haired, blue-eyed, laughing romp of eighteen has, in that short period of ten or twelve years, become transformed into a stout and rather elderly-looking matron, as unlike an English woman of the same

[575] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 81.
[576] Walker, *Jottings*, 28; D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 88.
[577] De Butts, *Rambles in Ceylon*, 136–7; Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 241–2; Ferguson, *Souvenirs of Ceylon*, 189–90.
[578] Heerdt, *Mijne reis met de landmail*, 33; Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 132.
[579] Kinloch, *De Zieke Reiziger*, 35–6.

age as one can well fancy."[580] That judgment is strikingly close to Campbell's characterisation of a Sinhalese woman that supposedly "at a very early age … become ugly, old, withered-looking hags."[581] It is not that European women are everywhere treated as equal to Asian ones: clearly, for example, the expectation of propriety suggested by Kinloch is a specifically European standard. Rather, it is noteworthy that regardless of any internal variety in the comments, the superficial and aesthetic, and often crude, judgment of these travel authors is by no means exclusively directed at Asian women, but at women in general, reinforcing the gendered nature of the genre.

It is evident that people could be categorised and stereotyped along several axes, including nationality, race and gender; and as the vast majority of the authors travelling in this region at the time were white, male and European, it comes as no surprise that certain prejudices and preferences were deeply embedded in the genre. Yet, to understand this value system and its logic at its most subtle, one needs to look not only to how big groups and categories of people were described, but also at encounters taking place on an individual, interpersonal level. It is easy to paint a group, whether defined by race or gender, with a broad brush based on stereotypes prevalent in one's cultural environment or learned from social peers or institutional contexts; face to face, however, such prejudices may be more difficult to uphold, or at least significantly complicated. It is also worth considering whether a disconnect or a kind of cognitive dissonance existed or could be brought to exist between the way travellers described nations and ethnicities on the one hand, and the individual representatives of those groups on the other.

6.3. Individual encounters

When turning to look in greater depth at the range of individual encounters depicted in these works, the first and most obvious observation is that these were of course primarily, though not exclusively, between two Europeans and also mostly between two men, due to the social conventions of the time and the afore-mentioned exclusivity of most available social settings. Most often these scenes take place between the traveller and various locally stationed colonial officials who were an invaluable resource for information and contacts and often also a necessary stop for outsiders for bureaucratic

[580] Davidson, *Trade and Travel*, 10.
[581] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 172.

reasons, especially on Dutch Java. In this section, a handful of these encounters will be considered at length: who were the participants, and what brought them together; how they talked to each other (including the question of language), and about what topics; and where these meetings took place. To interrogate at depth the matter of boundary-drawing and group identities that have already been introduced in the preceding sections, the cases considered here fall into three categories: firstly, two Frenchmen, doubly outsiders due to living in British and Dutch colonies and subsiding outside the government payroll; secondly, two non-elite Eurasians claiming – largely unsuccessfully – some European status; and finally, two Asians who by contrast managed to achieve, through personal efforts or circumstance, some level of recognition and membership in European society. This analysis will help create a deeper understanding about what bound and connected individuals – who had generally never met before – together in the wider society of the colonial world of the Indian Ocean, and by what mechanisms individuals were included in or excluded from that society.

It has already been noted above that the European communities of the colonial capitals of the region were relatively cosmopolitan by composition, with a strong French and German presence in particular as well as a wide variety of other Europeans, not to mention Americans. We will here consider two Frenchmen in particular, a missionary stationed on the Malay peninsula and a hotel-owner in Pasuruan in the east of Java. The former, a Father Borie, is described at some length in Cameron's *Our Tropical Possessions*, in a passage recounting the author's visit to the mission, which was based within a community of the Jakun people near Malacca.[582] The way in which Cameron characterises Borie is interesting: nowhere does he mention the latter's nationality, which is also not obvious from the somewhat unusual name; the closest he comes is in mentioning as an aside the cleric's occasional preference for French wine. There is no mention of language, not to identify the one used for communication – both English and French, or some mix of the two, are plausible – nor to suggest any barrier to communication arising from it. Nor is Borie's Catholicism presented as a source of difference or distrust: by contrast, Cameron praises his work, though for an "imperfect religion," in disseminating European education and values among the Jakun. Clearly the setting of the Jakun village underlines the juxtaposition between the two European men and the Asian community they're surrounded by, but it is remarkable how readily and completely Cameron includes a representative of both a competing imperial power and a different faith into his narrative of "our" – that is, the British – tropical possessions.

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[582] Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 389–94.

What seems to settle beyond doubt Borie's inclusion in the book's conception of Straits society is his facility with a gun, as the Cameron devotes two pages – a roughly equal amount to what is spent on his missionary work – to relate an anecdote of Borie's about being cornered by a tiger which he successfully finished off with one shot. This story, far from the more rarefied air of debates on religion and civilisation, brings the encounter with this priest down to a distinctly secular level, sharing in the language of colonial hunting stories that were popular at the time and that were discussed earlier in chapter four. There is a clear sense that it is the telling of this adventure that truly breaks the ice between the author and his host: and indeed, Cameron evidently had a liking for these sorts of anecdotes, as he earlier recounts another second-hand tiger-hunting adventure in Singapore.[583] It should also be noted that not only does the tiger take precedence, in the narrative, over Borie's religious work, but also his amateur ethnography: there are a few scattered observations of the habits of the Jakun people, but it is only from an off-hand footnote elsewhere in the volume that we learn that Cameron not only discussed Borie's ethnographic work on the indigenous peoples of the Malay peninsula but even received some papers that he later translated for publication in the *Straits Times*.[584] No reference is made to such collaboration over the several pages Cameron spends on describing his encounter with Borie, while an evidently frivolous hunting anecdote, not even the first one in the book, receives ample attention. This prioritisation suggests two things about the ways in which popular travel writing conceptualised and contextualised people in a colonial setting: firstly, a scholarly, detailed understanding of the indigenous peoples of the region was clearly considered to be largely irrelevant within the bounds of the genre, even if the authors otherwise had a personal interest in such endeavours – a fairly rough division between European and Asian was adequate. Secondly, by contrast, adventures and anecdotes could be used not only to entertain readers, but also to suggest a sense of identification and shared cultural frameworks within the European community, across national boundaries.

These observations are supported by an examination of another case study, William Walker's account of his meeting with a M. Constant, a hotel-owner in Pasuruan.[585] A sense of community is evident in the tone of the telling: particular emphasis is given to Constant's gentlemanly manners, and on his ability to serve foods that "an Englishman can partake of with pleasure and

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[583] Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 105.
[584] Cameron, *Our Tropical Possessions*, 122; said papers appear to have been later published as a separate volume in Pierre Henri Dumoulin Borie, *An Account of the Aborigines, of the Malayan Peninsula, and of the Malayan and Other Tribes, at Present Inhabiting It* (Singapore, 1863).
[585] Walker, *Jottings*, 182–5.

satisfaction." Again we are not told what language Walker and Constant used to communicate, though English seems like the most likely option, although it is pointed out that Constant acted as an interpreter for his guests: between Europeans, however, communication seems to be a given. And, as Borie provided Cameron with insights into Jakun life, similarly Constant acts as a guide to Walker in the surroundings of the town: his Frenchness in a Dutch colony is in no way problematised or seen as worthy of elaboration; but his and his guest's shared Europeanness allows him to act as an intermediary in a foreign landscape, in an us-and-them dynamic that is reinforced by some crude joking: when, on an excursion, Constant fails to entice a crocodile to show up by using a live duck as a bait, he suggests that the animal "might have already breakfasted off a fat Javanese" and therefore lost its appetite. The joke suggests a shared category between the Javanese and the duck, as victim, whereas Constant and his European guests appear as the hunters, though here only in the metaphorical sense. European agency is contrasted with Asian vulnerability, just as in Cameron's telling Borie's killing of the tiger metaphorically re-enacts his civilising work in the Malayan wilderness.

Such meetings with fellow Europeans naturally make up the vast majority of these kinds of jovial encounters described in this body of works, yet there are notable exceptions that help in understanding how the lines between familiar and foreign, acceptable and questionable were drawn in the sphere of social life. Such questions were particularly sensitive in the case of Eurasians, as already discussed in the previous section. Here we will consider in greater depth two Eurasian inhabitants of Ceylon, of Portuguese and Dutch descent, as encountered by Campbell and Brumund, respectively. We have already noted the generally dismissive attitudes towards the Portuguese-Asians of the regions, as for example in Thomson's account of Malacca: a similar encounter, but sketched in much greater detail, and with more personal intimacy, is to be found in Campbell's *Excursions*, relating to an apparently independent hunter apparently going by the name "Don Pedro" ("styled by the natives" is how Campbell puts it, so it is difficult to know whether the identity is self-claimed or imposed from the outside.)[586] His character – "one of the most perfect figures I had ever beheld," Campbell exclaims – is drawn as a mixture of European and Asian attributes: a "Portuguese countenance" but a "darkened" complexion; a broad-brimmed hat, but no shirt on. Even his speech is ambiguous: he is said to speak English "tolerably well" but the only line of dialogue directly attributed to him is the plausibly Portuguese "Viva!" upon discharging his gun; there is no mention of his native tongue. It seems significant that he is not given a chance to talk for himself; rather, he

[586] Campbell, *Excursions, Vol 1*, 187–9.

comes across as a humorous caricature, a character treated with evident condescension – "I was really quite amused with this poor Don," the author smirks.

While Campbell quite openly invites the reader to laugh at the claimed Europeanness of his hunting companion through references to his implausible title and mix-and-match wardrobe, his foreignness is simultaneously clearly signalled through his actions and the way they are described. Here the focus is on ability and moral character as distinguishing a true European from a pretender: Don Pedro is depicted taking pleasure in shooting at whole flocks of birds without caring to aim for any single one, while giving out his characteristic cry at each shot. This is in complete contrast to the ideal comportment of a European hunter as it is described elsewhere in this book and others like it, where calm manners and accurate, sure handling of the weapon is emphasised as a virtue. With evident relish, Campbell also depicts a scheme devised by his companion to catch a crocodile by using a live dog as a bait, a trick the author however overrules as unconscionable and immoral. It is precisely this lack of inhibitions and standards that make Don Pedro such an effective caricature while also underlining his foreignness and difference from the author himself and his presumed audience back home.

A somewhat differently coloured encounter can be found in Brumund's account of his stay at Point de Galle. While there he came across an unnamed individual, a member of the Dutch community of the town, dating from the period of Dutch rule. Unlike Campbell, Brumund reproduces brief snippets of dialogue from the meeting, though translated into Dutch from the English that the conversation was apparently carried out in. The framing of the narrative is remarkable:

> …His father had still served under the Dutch. I could see it in his name, but not his language.
> Moreover, as a descendant of their people, he still loved them greatly.
> Nationality whispered into my ear: "quickly, give the man a manila cigar; but ask him how he could have forgotten his Dutch so completely."

Brumund's attitude here is a subtle mixture of empathy and distancing, and draws to light the obvious discomforts and untenabilities of nationalist thought in an imperial setting. As in Campbell, we have here the representation of the Eurasian as a mixture of the familiar and the unfamiliar, Dutch in name but not language. There is a sense of fellow-feeling, inspired by a shared nationality to act kindly toward the passer-by, but this is tempered by the latter's forgotten mother tongue. And what is this nationality that is mentioned? Crucially, Brumund refers to "their people" not "our people," suggesting an implicit distinction between the "real" Dutch and the Ceylonese Dutch: there might be some empathy between the two, but they could not be considered on an equal footing. Even that empathy is described in a way that creates a distancing effect: it is not given as a direct emotional response on the author's part, but rather is attributed to an abstracted "nationality" whispering into his ear. Language and literary devices are here used in subtle ways to defuse a situation that might

otherwise lead to a confusion of the roles of European and Asian that would work against the principles of the genre.

The continuation of the conversation brings into the picture also the British:

> "Oh," he continued, "no one speaks it [Dutch] here, and I was still a child at the time of the handover; but were the Dutch to return – which I wish they did, as I do not like the English, they despise us – how quickly would I speak Dutch again.
>
> "Strike him a match quickly," nationality followed up in haste; "tell him that the English stole Ceylon from us, acquired it with treachery, but that in the Archipelago we now have such rich and great possessions as never before."

This is a more direct critique of the British than can be found anywhere else in Brumund's book, and indeed a harsher judgment than any of the Dutch authors considered here made of the handover of Ceylon. But again it is given within the frame of this curiously distanced dialogue, and there is more than a slight suggestion that it is provided more out of empathy for the other person than out of any genuine feeling of political or national outrage. Again, it is not Brumund that is speaking, but that abstracted, rhetorical nationality. Certainly, the idea of the island's Dutch community retaining a feeling for the Dutch nation over their British successors, a notion that Brumund goes on to develop, is one that would have flattered readers in the Netherlands; the same is true of the assurance that, with the consolidation of the East Indies, the Dutch had not suffered any significant damage to the grandeur of their empire regardless of the loss of Ceylon. These morale-boosting asides prove, in the end, to be of more consequence than any genuine identification with the conversation partner: in his final remarks upon the encounter, Brumund unequivocally categorises his companion as one of the "native children" of the colonies, referring for the first and last time explicitly to his mixed-race descent.

These two scenes from Campbell and Brumund suggest that, while attitudes toward, and emotional responses to, Eurasian individuals could be either positive or negative, and tinged with humour or a melancholy sympathy, the fundamental distinction between who was European and who was not was always ultimately upheld. Naturally, that distinction was to some extent arbitrary, and required careful handling and deployment of literary devices to negotiate convincingly. Yet, while mixed-race individuals making a claim to European identity were generally met with condescension or outright ridicule in the travel works here considered, it should not be assumed that Europeanness was therefore defined as an exclusive racial category. Indeed, it is curious to note that at the same time Asian notables could reach a kind of functional membership of European society through a mixture of wealth and education. Two examples in particular, that is, two specific individuals, are worth considering at length, since they appear in more than one of the travel works of the period. Firstly, there is the famous Javanese artist Raden Saleh (1811-1880); and secondly, the prominent Singapore businessman Hoo Ah Kay (1816-1880), commonly known as Whampoa after his place of origin in Canton, China. Both of these men, close contemporaries, were something like celebrities in

their respective colonial societies, and as such it was only natural for visitors with the necessary connections to seek audience with them. Notably, those connections were generally European: for example, Gevers Deynoot acquired a reference from the Dutch assistant resident of Batavia in order to get to meet Saleh.[587] The celebrity of these two men is apparent in the way their names are always given in full, as opposed to the common practice of only giving the initials of residents and other officials that are met with along the way: both Whampoa and Saleh are considered to be interesting because of their personality and individuality, not because of the positions they held.

What made Raden Saleh an exceptional individual at the time was the fact that he had been educated – at the expense of the Dutch government – in Europe, and had then worked in various countries and at various courts there during the more than two decades that he remained abroad. That Saleh was in the habit of entertaining guests at his residence is evident from the sheer number of times he appears on the pages of various travel books, especially in and around the 1860s: in d'Almeida's *Life in Java* (1864), Gevers Deynoot's *Herinneringen* (1864), Van der Chijs's *Mijne reis* (1874); among works not considered in depth here, he also shows up in Albert Bickmore's *Travels in the East Indian Archipelago* (1868) and Ludovic de Beauvoir's *Voyage autour du monde* (1869). These audiences took place at his villa in the proximity of Batavia, "the richest residence owned by any native prince in the whole East Indian Archipelago," as Bickmore puts it.[588] Indeed, this building, that he had had constructed for himself, is frequently commented on by visitors – Bickmore even includes a picture of it in illustration. Authors tend to comment on the essentially Western character of the setting provided by the villa: Gevers Deynoot notes on the "mostly Dutch antique furniture;" Bickmore picks out the "Brussels carpet" and two "large steel engravings – – frequently seen in our own land [that is, the United States]."[589] Such familiar elements are mixed with a touch of artistic idiosyncrasy, a "somewhat fantastic" design or "a peculiar style of his own."[590] Both classes of comments emphasise Saleh's distance from his Javanese origin, as symbolised by his choice of residence upon return to his native island.

It should not be assumed that authors were intentionally trying to downplay Saleh's foreign-ness when commenting on the Western trappings of his lifestyle. In fact, it was not simply as a representant of Java that so many Westerners wanted to meet Saleh in the first place, but rather as

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[587] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 188.
[588] Albert Smith Bickmore, *Travels in the East Indian Archipelago* (London, 1868), 38.
[589] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 189; Bickmore, *Travels in the East Indian Archipelago*, 38.
[590] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 189; D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 292.

someone who had acquired his fame in Europe and was known to them for his life and acts there. For a Dutchman it might simply be because of the attention he attracted when he first arrived in Europe, as can be read from Van der Chijs's brief description "Prince Radin Salee [sic], well known for his stay in 's Gravenhage [the Hague]."[591] As for d'Almeida, he recalls reading in the papers that the Prince Consort Albert had commissioned two paintings from Saleh.[592] For others like Beauvoir, the painter's fame had a more scandalous tint: "Was it not for him that an English young lady poisoned herself? Did he not serve as a type for Eugène Sue in 'Les Mystères de Paris'?"[593] It is not clear from where Beauvoir got the former bit of gossip, and there appears to be some confusion about the latter notion – according to Bickmore, it is the character of "the Eastern Prince" in Sue's *Le Juif errant* (and not *Les mystères de Paris*) that was modelled on Saleh.[594] Be that as it may, it is clear that for many of the guests Saleh entertained at his villa, it was primarily this European celebrity that made him an object of curiosity, even if that was certainly added to by the exoticism of meeting a European-educated Javanese gentleman.

The conversations with Saleh recounted by various visitors reinforce this notion that it was his Western-ness rather than his Javanese-ness that was of interest. Naturally, all of these were conducted in European languages, of which Saleh commanded several, though opinions on his proficiency varied: with the British d'Almeida he is said to have conversed in "fluent" French, whereas according to the French Beauvoir "[h]e spoke French a little, and German very well" (they appear to have mostly talked in the latter.)[595] The Dutch visitors do not comment on the language used, which perhaps indicates that it was Dutch; that also seems likely considering Saleh's stay in the Netherlands. Regardless of language, Saleh appears to have been a consummate conversationalist, suiting his topics to the interests and background of his guests with ease: with d'Almeida he talked about his memories of the Prince Consort, whom he had apparently met several times; and with the American Bickmore, about the then-current American Civil War (Bickmore had served in the Union army), "remarking that he trusted that it would not be long before all the slaves in our land would be free."[596] The more light-hearted Beauvoir, in turn, depicts him "speaking, in Göthe's tongue, of

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[591] Chijs, *Mijne reis naar Java*, 59.
[592] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 288.
[593] Ludovic de Beauvoir, *Voyage autour du monde: Java, Siam, Canton* (Paris, 1869), 200; English translation from Ludovic marquis de Beauvoir, *Java, Siam, Canton* (1874), 173.
[594] Bickmore, *Travels in the East Indian Archipelago*, 38.
[595] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 288; Beauvoir, *Java, Siam, Canton*, 173.
[596] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 288; Bickmore, *Travels in the East Indian Archipelago*, 39.

French art, English beauties, and the curious recollections of European life."[597] Gevers Deynoot does not go into detail but also notes how he "spoke gladly and with much emotion about his stay in Europe."[598] How little Java, or the East Indies more widely, appears to have featured in these conversations, and how much it was overshadowed by Europe, can be illustrated by a pair of direct quotes as reproduced by Beauvoir and d'Almeida, respectively. Firstly, on Europe, to Beauvoir (in German and translated by the author into French): "je ne rêve plus qu'à l'Europe; car là on est si èbloui qu'on n'a pas le temps de penser à la mort!" ("I dream of nothing but Europe; one is so dazzled there that there is no time to think of death.")[599] Then, on Java, to d'Almeida (in French and reproduced in that language by the author): "Café et sucre, sucre et café, sont tout-ce qu'on parle ici. C'est vraiment un air triste pour un artiste." ("Coffee and sugar, sugar and coffee, that's all they talk about here. It's really a sad atmosphere for an artist.")[600] The latter quote in particular reflects the life of someone who has been fully immersed in the higher echelons of colonial society and their economic interests. Naturally, these quotes only illuminate the way he was seen by his European guests, and perhaps the way he wanted to be seen by them. There is, however, evidence elsewhere to suggest that Saleh himself actively negotiated and claimed a European identity for himself, at least when it suited his interests. For example, in one letter to Governor-General James Loudon, Saleh makes a complaint against a resident for calling him "ungrateful," with the following plea: "I am no Dutchman but I have become Dutch through a Dutch upbringing."[601] The quote and its context directly suggest both an idea of Dutch-ness as a cultural rather than racial identity, as well as a keen awareness of the fragility of such identities unless backed by colonial power, in this case the governor-general.[602]

In the travel accounts, that fragility also shines through in occasional remarks and touches of exoticising glee that make it clear that Saleh is not being considered quite on an equal level by most if not all of his guests. There is, for example, d'Almeida's somewhat patronising aside in an otherwise appreciative appraisal of a painting of his – "the too classical figures of the men – an exaggeration pardonable in a native artist depicting native subjects" – or Beauvoir's objectifying

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[597] Beauvoir, *Java, Siam, Canton*, 173.
[598] Gevers Deynoot, *Herinneringen*, 189.
[599] Beauvoir, *Voyage autour du monde*, 200–1; translation from Beauvoir, *Java, Siam, Canton*, 173.
[600] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 292; translation mine.
[601] 'Brief van Raden Saleh aan James Loudon d.d. maart 1872 inzake schilderijen geschonken aan Napoleon III en idem, 1874, met verslag van Raden Saleh over zijn verblijf te Djokjakarta, plus nota van onkosten' (1872-1874), NA Den Haag, Collectie 232 James Loudon (2.21.183.50), inv. nr. 29.
[602] An, intriguing case study of an Indian nobleman making use of European cultural convetions to fit in in early nineteenth-century Britain can be found in Daniel E. White, *From Little London to Little Bengal: Religion, Print, and Modernity in Early British India, 1793-1835* (Baltimore, 2013), 163–84.

fascination in depicting "this man of colour, in a green vest and red turban, with a kriss at his side, and a palette in his hand."[603] (It is not clear why the painter would have worn a *kris* blade in his atelier, and it is not unlikely that this detail was supplied by the author's imagination – such a manoeuvre would certainly fit his style.) But such details, like the references to the peculiarities of his villa, merely provide the flourishes in accounts that are otherwise grounded in symbolical imagery that foregrounds the commonalities between the participants and their shared idea of the West. One such symbol that is telling can be found in Bickmore's work, and concerns one of the engravings already mentioned above, titled – at least according to Bickmore's attribution – "the Mohammedan's Paradise."[604] It is not immediately clear exactly what the engraving in question was, but in all likelihood the motif in question – and perhaps the very design – were of Western provenance, if Bickmore was able to recognise in it something he had seen disseminated back in the United States. Little is known about Saleh's religious life and convictions, but he was certainly born a Muslim, and in fact descended from a notable Javanese-Arab family. It may well be that he became estranged from his religion during his stay in Europe, but it is still striking that the only mention of Islam in all of these accounts is this obscure reference to a Western piece of art. Considering that the Islam/Christianity axis was certainly one of the most important divisions in nineteenth-century colonial stereotypes, Saleh certainly comes across as one of "us" rather "them" in these Western works.

Hoo Ah Kay's prominence and celebrity in the society of Singapore had somewhat different roots, as he did not have European education or indeed any first-hand experience of Europe. What he did have, however, was a great deal of money and important connections, being one of the most successful businessmen of Singapore in his time, as well as the first Chinese member of the legislative council of the city.[605] As an example of his involvement in European society, he was one of the prominent merchants behind the Singapore botanical gardens, discussed in chapter 4; and he even sent his son to study in Europe.[606] Perhaps the most thorough portrait of him, and of the social life he led at his villa, is provided by John Turnbull Thomson in his *Some Glimpses of Life in the Far East* (1864):

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[603] D'Almeida, *Life in Java, Vol. 2*, 291–2; Beauvoir, *Java, Siam, Canton*, 173.
[604] Bickmore, *Travels in the East Indian Archipelago*, 38.
[605] Maxime Pilon and Danièle Weiler, *The French in Singapore: An Illustrated History (1819-Today)* (Singapore, 2011), 43.
[606] Barnard, *Nature's Colony*, 23; P. J. Marshall, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2001), 292.

> I was acquainted with Whampoa for years before we became intimate. My first intimacy commenced when I was asked, along with other friends, to his orange garden at Toah Pyoh. Here a neglected garden which Whampoa had bought, he soon converted into a tasteful *bel-retiro* [sic], with its avenues, fruit orchard, hanging gardens, Dutch walks, dwarf bamboos, and orange trees – – Whampoa's mind was that of a country gentleman of the old school, – one whom a Vandyke, a Poussin, or a Gainsborough would have loved, admired, and sympathised with in his pursuits. – – Many a happy party I have met at Whampoa's hospitable table, at both of his country-houses. The company was generally European, Chinese friends were occasional, nor did I ever meet more joyous company, more truly pleasant entertainment.

This lengthy – though heavily redacted – quote immediately shows many parallels with Raden Saleh, as discussed above. There is, firstly, the impressive villa, an eclectic but European style retreat (the *bel-retiro* of the quote would appear to be a corruption of the Spanish *buen retiro* and the Italian *bel ritiro*, for "good" or "beautiful" retreat) with Dutch walks and all manner of ornamentations; there is the association with European high society, in this case the rural aesthetic that aligns with famous (though admittedly outdated) painters such as Anthony van Dyck or Nicolas Poussin; and there is the recollection of the "generally European" company of the parties held there. As regards the villas, it is worth noting that such structures, though frequently framed in specifically European terms, had regional precedent in the pleasure pavilions of Mughal elite culture, from which they were adopted by both European and Asian elites in Bengal, as noted by Swati Chattophadhyay.[607] It seems likely that the same hybrid model was taken up by wealthy Singaporeans, though its mixed roots are of course not discussed by European travel writers.

Ludovic de Beauvoir also visited Whampoa's estate, but the depiction he gives is much more racialised and exoticised, emphasising the unfamiliar rather than the familiar, populating the garden with figures of dragons and elephants, and a group of live wild hogs herded by "a fine black monkey;" of Whampoa himself, Beauvoir paints a picture of a man "as fond of orchids as he is of dollars, which is saying a good deal for a Celestial," specifically choosing to contrast his garden with the stereotype of the Chinese as greedy, rather than to connect it with European rural ideals like Thomson did.[608] Yet in their harshness these remarks are an outlier and seem to reflect Beauvoir's personal attitudes towards the Chinese, which are in full view in the latter parts of his work devoted to China. The consensus image of Whampoa among European society would appear to be one of a harmonious coexistence of European and Chinese lifestyles: Enrico Giglioli's *Viaggio intorno al globo* (1871) tells that he "often invites his European friends, and serves the most lavish meals in the

[607] Swati Chattophadhyay, 'The Other Face of Primitive Accumulation: The Garden House in British Colonial Bengal', in Peter Scriver and Vikramaditya Prakash (eds.), *Colonial Modernities: Building, Dwelling and Architecture in British India and Ceylon* (London, 2007), 173.
[608] Beauvoir, *Java, Siam, Canton*, 195.

European style, where the most delicate and rare wines flow without parsimony," but modifies this by noting that "regardless of all this, Whampoa is a good Chinese, and loves and respects the rites of his country."[609] Similarly respectful in tone is the summary given in Charles Buckley's 1902 work *Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore*: "Mr. Whampoa – – was certainly the best known and most liked Chinaman in the Straits – – All visitors to Singapore had heard of him before they landed, and it was the first place enquired for when a drive was to taken [sic] out of town." Buckley also claims that "Mr. Whampoa was almost the only Chinaman in Singapore in those days who spoke English," which is obviously not true, the Chinese being represented on all levels of the society and business of the city, but perhaps suggesting the exceptionally prominent role he played among the European community of the city.

The focus on language in this and the other encounters discussed above draws attention to the theme of conversations and their role in literature and culture more generally. This is a topic that has been amply studied by cultural historians of the early modern period, though analyses in the context of the nineteenth century and especially empire remain rare. As regards travel writing specifically, Stephen Miller has noted that in his travel accounts from the 1720s, Daniel Defoe ranked locations according to opportunities for good conversation, with praise for places like Greenwich and peripheral areas like the Scottish Highlands coming in for scorn.[610] Conversation was therefore something of a shorthand for the cultural sophistication of a place, and a requirement for inclusion into polite society. This inclusion/exclusion dynamic is also highlighted in work done by scholars like Dena Goodman and Elizabeth Craveri on conversation in seventeenth-century France. They argue that the norms and conventions of polite society were developed as a way to delineate a clear identity and social space for the aristocracy independent from the absolute monarch and separate from old connotations of military values or political power.[611] And while nineteenth-century colonial societies were certainly a far cry from the Sun King's France in some respects, it is intriguing to read those works from the perspective of Benedict Anderson's famous remark that empire allowed the bourgeois to "play aristocrat off centre court."[612] For the colonial middle-classes, polite conversation

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[609] Enrico Hillyer Giglioli, *Viaggio intorno al globo della r. pirocorvetta italiana Magenta* (Milan, 1875), 201.
[610] Stephen Miller, *Conversation: A History of a Declining Art* (New Haven, 2006), 79–80.
[611] Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca, 1996), 111–2; Benedetta Craveri, *The Age of Conversation* (New York, 2006), 27–31; see also Elizabeth C. Goldsmith, *Exclusive Conversations : The Art of Interaction in Seventeenth-Century France* (Philadelphia, 1988).
[612] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1991), 150.

functioned as a vehicle for cultural aspirations and as a central element of the wider role-play that sought to transpose European *beau monde* into a colonial setting, though such a manoeuvre was necessarily accompanied by adaptations and adjustments.[613] The purpose of the ritual was to make a claim to a status that went beyond crude administrative control or military power, and reached into a realm of cultural superiority.

As is evident from the examples discussed above, that play of inclusion and exclusion through conversation went both ways. Both Raden Saleh and Hoo Ah Kay were able to use the rules of the game to their advantage and claim status and even admiration – in Saleh's case, it seems evident that his *habileté* in the art of conversation, as learned at the courts of Europe was far superior to that of many of his visitors. On the other hand, in the case of lower classes or those perceived to be otherwise socially inferior, conversation could be weaponised. This is most apparent in the many instances where the speech of servants and workers is reported in direct quotes, in broken language. Samuel Baker recounts his groom informing him of an accident: "I'm sorry to hinform you that the carriage and osses has met with a haccidint and is tumbled down a preccippice and its a mussy as I didn't go too."[614] Notably, Baker admits that those were not the actual words but rather just an imitation in a supposedly similar style: that similarity is dubious, however, considering Baker's partiality to unnecessary flourishes. Evidently, the language – however accurate – is here reproduced to make a point of the person's lack of education and sophistication. And, as Raden Saleh could in certain contexts be read as a European gentleman, the reverse occurs here. Baker's groom, a Henry Perkes, a recent emigrant from Britain, is implicitly equated to indigenous servants, both in his bumbling manner and imperfect speech, which corresponds closely with the figure of Campbell's Sinhalese *appoo*, discussed above. By contrast, in conversations with "equals" language ability is never foregrounded as a potential problem, which seems like a notable oversight considering that in several cases one or more of the parties were speaking in their second language, be it English, French, German or other. Miscommunication only seems to matter when framed as a marker of hierarchy.

Race, then, is far from the only vector of exclusion that can be read from these travel accounts. Or rather, it is apparent that race was a complex notion that travellers and writers approached from a number of angles, including that of culture and conversation. Racial stereotypes, in which all of our authors believed to varying degrees, were easier to apply on categories and masses,

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[613] Ann Laura Stoler, 'Rethinking Colonial Categories: European Communities and the Boundaries of Rule', in Nicholas B. Dirks (ed.), *Colonialism and Culture* (Ann Arbor, 1992), 321.
[614] Baker, *Eight Years' Wanderings in Ceylon*, 21.

and could often appear in a different light or be momentarily forgotten during a personal encounter. This is not to paint too rosy a picture: evidently, Whampoa and Raden Saleh were outliers as non-European elites with the knowledge and interest, the resources and the necessary connections to make their mark and be recognised among the high society of the colonies on a (near) equal footing. In the Ceylon accounts, no comparable figure can easily be found. Yet these two examples do undeniably show that the logic of inclusion and exclusion that operated in the British and Dutch colonies of the region was a matter of negotiation: just as the ambiguous status of "Eurasian," as exemplified by the two figures from Ceylon, could be read as either "European" or "non-European" depending on circumstances and the specific social setting, it was also possible for an individual of no European descent to occupy a valued place in European society. This required language skills for conversation and a familiarity with European topics to talk about as well as, naturally, the resources to surround oneself with enough European material trappings to make one's guests comfortable. In a way, that cultural dissolution – however partial – of racial boundaries was a reflection and a natural extension of a colonial sociability that, regardless of imperial politics, tended towards easy inclusion of fellow Europeans regardless of nationality, based on a shared code of manners, hobbies and cultural touchstones.

6.4. Conclusion

In the previous chapters we have considered at length the scenes and settings, both natural and architectural, employed in the popular colonial travel writing of the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Yet while those scenes certainly provide imposing and enchanting backdrops to the narratives contained in those books, they could only ever remain lifeless frames unless populated with the appropriate protagonists and the bustle of human activity. The discussion above has made it clear that the selection and representation of those actors involved intensely political and ideological decisions and was underpinned by anxieties not only about the place of Europeans in the colonies but indeed over the very definition of categories like "European," "Asian" or "Eurasian." Those anxieties could take on a variety of guises, many of which have been discussed by historians extensively: the pervasive sense of not belonging in a foreign environment, the fear of being dependent on the labour, and vulnerable to the numbers, of those that do, and perhaps most importantly the ever-present spectre of sexual profligacy and racial mixing, so influentially analysed by Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick

Cooper.[615] All of these worries, though regularly – consciously or unconsciously – obscured or downplayed, can be read from the pages of the travel books considered here, especially as regards places like Java, Ceylon and Malacca, where mixed-race colonial societies had centuries-long roots but were frequently met with the disapproval of the numerous European newcomers brought in by the high imperialism of the nineteenth century.

From the analysis above, three distinct strategies appear that were employed by authors to assuage such fears and concerns. The first one relates to the nature of the genre and to the circumstances of its writer: as travellers and tourists, their experience of the colonies they passed through was inevitably framed by the trappings of middle class, white colonial culture. This meant not only the plantations and hotels discussed in earlier chapters, but also and perhaps especially the social functions that kept them busy in the evenings, the clubs and reading rooms, theatres and concerts, balls and soirées where they established most of their contacts and absorbed most of the information on the locales that they went on to write about. It was only natural for someone passing through to want to make the most of their time, and entirely in line with the conventions of the tourist literature of the time to describe such events in detail. As a consequence, the image of colonial life that emerges from a casual reading of these books is, in long stretches, nearly devoid of any overt signs of colonialism, and resembles more closely a representation of the life of the upper middle classes in any contemporary European city, excepting slight variations in the climate and the food offered and the presence of a racialised class of servants. In important ways, these authors travelled in the colonies but wrote about Europe.

A second strategy was rhetorical: the use of humour and employment stereotypes to dissolve potentially awkward relations or encounters. Here it is important to guard against an assumption that such strategies were imposed strictly according to an opposition of European and non-European, a simplification that the literature has sometimes resorted to. Instead, such prejudices worked along a variety of axes: jokes were frequently made at the expense of fellow Europeans; women were often objectified in strikingly similar terms regardless of their descent or the colour of their skin; in particular, both humour and pathos could be variously used to belittle the potentially awkward claims of Eurasians to European status, while an undeniable dependence on retinues of servants was disguised through dismissive anecdotes about their misadventures. The use of such stylistic devices was carefully calibrated to suggest a multi-faceted imperial hierarchy, where the

[615] Cooper and Stoler, *Tensions of Empire*.

authors, invariably white, European men, always came out on top. It is also curious to note, considering the prevalence of moral panics about the sexuality of white single men in the colonies, that while the genre of travel writing regularly objectifies women, it is a curiously bloodless and formulaic objectification: none of the authors wanted to risk being seen as overstepping their boundaries or engaging in indecent behaviour. In general, it can be said that popular travel writing had a crucial role to play in the codification of stereotypes: authors frequently condensed the findings of lengthy ethnographical treatises by figures like Raffles into punchy, memorable one-sentence or one-paragraph statements.

Finally, writers had the option of picking out exceptional individuals to suggest wider points about social realities: polite and amiable conversations with wealthy and educated elite Asians suggested a sense of harmony that belied concerns about the volatility of the colonial situation or about the untenability of inter-racial relations. And similarly, buffoon-like caricatures of down-on-their-luck Eurasians served to distract from the very real issue of mixed-race colonial elites that the new system was not quite sure how to address. Of course, this range of rhetorical tricks could be employed by any author, but they were especially well suited to the narratives of travel writers, outsiders who were only ever expected to provide carefully selected glimpses and entertaining snippets and had little incentive to stray into deeper debates or elaborate descriptions. At their root, all these anxieties, like the ones discussed in previous chapters, embodied in natural landscapes or architectural forms, came down to the same tension between the familiar and the unfamiliar, picturesque and sublime, power and weakness. And like in the previous chapters imperial culture sought to negotiate that tension through a double movement, both practical and narrative, where the white colonial societies on the ground adopted and adapted European habits, forms and routines while their individual members made use of the peculiarly European and middle-class genre of tourist literature to depict and describe those societies, and during their travels contemporaneously helped invent a trans-imperial regional identity for themselves and their fellow colonisers.

Conclusion

Chasing away the blue devils: leisure and anxiety on the colonial tour

Regardless of romanticised stereotypes, the life of the coloniser in the tropics was far from continuous excitement and adventure, or at least had become so by the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The reality of that existence often proved to be far more mundane and enervating than expected, as aptly discussed by Jeffrey A. Auerbach in his recent work *Imperial Boredom*. For a contemporary witness, we can turn to Thomas Eyre Poole, stationed in Sierra Leone and writing about his experiences in 1850, who gave a most succinct expression of that overbearing sense of frustration: "Apathy and ennui triumph powerfully over the powers of thought and action; and these enemies to exertion and energy affect all alike, prostrating, at times, the most robust and active, and affecting him with the most disagreeable of all sensations, called by some 'the fidgets,' by others the 'blue devils.'"[616] Luckily, he had identified a readily available remedy to this affliction: "Then is the time for change, for amusement, for excitement. Mount your horse, if you have one … ; mount him, and be off to the country, no matter where, so that you can get quit of your hippishness." A somewhat self-interested prescription, perhaps, considering Poole's personal aspirations as a travel writer, but a good example of how the practices of colonial travel were shared across continents, and a clear summation of what those practices were intended to achieve. Travel and the variety it offered soothed the soul and distracted from the unresolved anxieties and questions that could so easily occupy a stationary mind.

And admittedly there was much to be anxious about. To turn our attention to the region that has been the focus of this thesis, the maritime colonial space of Ceylon, Java and the Straits

[616] Thomas Eyre Poole, *Life, Scenery and Customs in Sierra Leone and the Gambia* (London, 1850), 54–5.

Settlements: even though the consolidation of those colonies under European rule was progressing apace, as borders were being drawn and the limbs of the administrative machine reached ever deeper into the hinterlands, resistance was still an everyday fact and anti-colonial uprisings a very recent memory – in the case of the Java War of 1825 – or even a present reality, as in the case of the Matale Rebellion of 1848. The European communities of the region existed in a bizarre recreation of home comforts and familiar institutions translocated into a tropical setting, yet could never quite feel at home, quite let their guard down. For some, that ambivalence had a moral dimension, an uncertainty about the rightness of the deed that was being done; for others, it was a concern with personal safety or, more troublingly perhaps, with the notion of losing something of one's own identity under the influence of the unfamiliarity of the environment. Yet in both cases travel provided a refuge: not only by way of distracting the mind and engaging the body, but also through a comfortingly familiar cultural model to grasp onto in the shape of the touristic practices emerging in metropolitan culture over the first half of the nineteenth century. To be a tourist was to elevate oneself to a lofty observing position over the land, and to make a virtue of the unfamiliarity that emerged as a tangible threat at home. If home no longer felt like home: mount your horse and be off to the country! It remains the logic of tourism in the twenty-first century as it was in the nineteenth.

For a historian, this turn to colonial (proto-)tourism is an attractive object of study, for at least two reasons. Firstly, as a wonderful example of the transposition of European cultural models and social practices into a colonial setting that was quite different from the initial environment those phenomena developed in; and a case study for the adjustments and modifications that inevitably followed. And secondly, for the way in which it reaches across and brings together a wide variety of crucial developments in mid-nineteenth century imperialism and touches upon so many of the most urgent topics of colonial history in the period. The colonial tourist bore witness to and personally reported upon much that was central to the hopes and plans of the higher-placed administrators and ideologues of empire, from the expanding plantation economy to the planning and re-planning of cities to new modes of social life and socialisation. On all of that and more, the travel writing analysed in depth in the preceding chapters provides a unique, privileged vantage point. Yet, it is equally clear that that perspective had some obvious blind spots, which have also been discussed in depth above: if travel was to distract from the anxieties of empire, the traveller could hardly afford to pay attention to the sources of those anxieties. Thus, conflict and contestation disappear from sight, there is no trace of the violence inherent in the colonising project and the most magnificent remains of Asian civilisations are reframed as aesthetic trivialities or their historical significance belittled.

Many of these themes are familiar from the historiography, at least with reference to the more thoroughly studied case of India, but they can be reassessed from a wholly new, regional and

trans-colonial perspective when approached using popular travel writing as source material. Hill stations in India, for example, have been amply studied, but it is through reading the accounts of Kinloch and Walker, two India-based invalid travellers, that one understands that the conventional escapes from the summer heat encompassed not only Simla and Nilgiris but also overseas destinations like Nuwara Eliya on Ceylon or Penang in the Straits – indeed, even Buitenzorg on Dutch Java! And, crucially, that a regional tourist infrastructure was rapidly developing to profit off those connections, with resorts set up, advertisements put up in papers abroad and travel agents opening up shop in port cities across the area. As in Europe at the time, the different nations and colonial powers may well have been competitors and opponents on a political, international level, but for their – white, European – subjects individually the space was now relatively open and welcoming to travel through. To work towards a truly transnational (or trans-imperial) history of empire, much more attention needs to be afforded to everyday connections and co-existences like these, and to the personal experiences of empire that crossed borders with ease.

The analysis in this thesis has proceeded on two parallel levels, with one eye on the – administrative, infrastructural, social – changes on the ground in the colonial societies of the period, and the other on the representation of those changes in the travel writing of the time. Yet, crucially, these two levels are not truly separate: rather, they are two means to the same end, an attempt toward rewriting the imperial experience both on the paper and on the ground. The establishment of gardens, construction of theatres and laying of esplanades, the public concerts and sports that took place in those new spaces, all of that needed to be populated with the right words and associations to drive the message home, to claim a European identity for the Asian towns the planners had come to inhabit and the travellers to visit. The writing down, publishing and disseminating of that experience was a necessary part of the process, to sell – literally and figuratively – the idea of the colonial home away from home, of the European ideal made flesh in Asia, to audiences both in the region and in the metropole. The literary connection between the two was intended to feed from and to reinforce the other, more concrete, connection drawn by steam technology and, eventually, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. This was openly admitted by the many authors who advertised their works as guidebooks for the aspiring global tourist, acknowledging the ever-increasing facility of trans-oceanic travel.

The story, then, has evident global and regional – and imperial – dimensions, reflecting the far-reaching, boundary-crossing nature of nineteenth-century travel. But what of the local? Indeed, what of the people that populated these spaces to be re-configurated and for the majority of whom the circuits of the new colonial tourism were not available? It is an arguably deliberate feature of popular travel writing that it locks people other than the traveller-author into a very limited range of

predetermined roles: host, servant, guide. In this case, the hosts are generally to be found among the administrator-residents, the plantation-owners and, in the bigger towns at least, the pioneering generation of early hoteliers: without fail, they represent the entwined networks of colonial power and enterprise, and without fail they are white. This represented a notable shift from the experiences recounted by earlier generations of travellers: explorers mapping out unfamiliar ground; botanists pushing off the trodden paths; or colonisers inspecting newly-conquered territories. As recently as in the 1820s, travel on Java or Ceylon necessitated contact with the local indigenous communities and reliance on them for support and resources. By the middle of the century, that reliance was increasingly being supplanted by an ever-developing network of rest-houses, post-horses and established routes that could be looked up beforehand and determined the rhythms of travel, leaving little to chance.

As much – though not all – of that infrastructure was in the hands of white Europeans very much like the travellers themselves, the role of the indigenous and the Asian was increasingly reduced to that of providing an entertaining stop along the way – a brief meeting with a nobleman or a Buddhist priest, to furnish some local colour – or, in most cases, to provide labour as manservants, guides, porters, coachmen and the like. Yet, it is in the description of these roles that we encounter a curious reluctance on the part of the authors of the travel books examined. Frequently, it takes considerable digging into the texts to find out quite how dependent these travellers were on locals for the safe and smooth completion of their journeys: one can read the accounts of self-described hunter-adventurers like Baker for a good while before realising that they accomplished their deeds not heroically alone but accompanied by a retinue of dozens. Similarly for the volcanic excursions of those like d'Almeida, where it is only a slip of the tongue that intrudes upon the author's lofty philosophising and reveals the secure guiding hand of a local guide, keeping the visitor on the right path and away from the treacherous precipices and sliding sands. Elsewhere, the reader is regaled with humorous anecdotes of bumbling servants and supposedly hilarious misunderstandings, in passages that try a little too hard to disguise their writers' evident embarrassment at their lack of capacity for independent action.

The genre of popular colonial travel writing is therefore characterised by an erasure of the local that acts on two levels: firstly, on the micro-level of occluding and distracting from the role of local guides and experts, centring all agency and rational decisions within the narrative on the person of the author; and secondly, on a wider, historical level, ignoring anti-colonial sentiment among the local population and failing to mention or discuss significant recent events like the Matale Rebellion or broader connected themes like the exploitation of workers in the plantation economy. It is not always possible to ascribe these blind spots to the authors' intentional choices rather than

incidental neglect or genuine ignorance: it is a built-in feature of travel writing, especially in its leisurely, touristic, variant, not to probe too deeply into local circumstances or spend too much effort establishing the facts on the ground. It can be said, however, that that selectivity in subject matter closely coincided with the authors' own interests – providing casual, entertaining stories in line with the demand for touristic literature on the European market – as well as those of the colonial and metropolitan authorities who allowed all of this travel to happen, even occasionally encouraging it, and rarely sought to intervene in or censor publications within the genre. "Visit the colonies!" was an attractive message not only for the readers but also for the governments involved, especially in the case of places like Ceylon that were proposed sites for large-scale settlement, but also generally, as it helped legitimise the business of empire in the eyes of the public back home.

The superficiality and lack of attention to details that are defining characteristics of popular travel writing are also the feature that most obviously separates that genre from the other notable category of nineteenth-century colonial literature, the scholarly or encyclopaedic canon. This other genre, exhaustively studied by historians of culture and science, consisted of both specialised treatises in each of the fledgling colonial sciences – botany, ethnography, linguistics, anthropology, archaeology etc. – that were taking shape in the period, and of more generalised compendiums encompassing a range of – often numerical and statistical – information on a single location or region. The two genres – popular and scholarly – existed in a strange symbiosis, as parallel strands of a culture of empire eager to fill out all remaining empty spaces on the map with walls of text. At first glance, the two might appear diametrically opposed in their purposes: whereas the popular mode aimed to entertain, the scholarly sought to inform, supposedly representing two distinct interpretations and experiences of empire. The distinction is even explicitly made in the travel books themselves, our touristic authors protesting again and again that nothing of serious or scientific worth should be expected from their texts, which are mere "jottings" and "rambles." Yet the analysis above has shown time and time again just how entwined the two experiences were in reality.

Colonial science developed side by side and hand in hand with colonial leisure. On the one hand, this is clear from tracing the flows of information as inscribed on the pages of these books: references to the scholarly canon abound, sometimes in the form of systematic footnotes, often in passing mentions of authoritative names, occasionally even anonymised but recognisable hints at books read by the author. The mid-century generation of travel writers represented an epistemic shift whereby their first point of call for information about the regions travelled through was not the locals encountered on the way nor even the European residents of the colonial towns, but rather books, almanacs and journals published over the past couple of decades back in the metropole. Books intended explicitly as guidebooks for the aspiring tourists, such as Boom's *Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*,

even often came with a list of recommended reading to prepare for the trip. Such lists and references draw attention to the ways in which colonial knowledge production served not only to facilitate colonial rule, or to "orientalise" and "other" its subjects, but also to package the lands in question as consumable products both home and abroad, to wrap them up in guidance and explanations and reassurance for the benefit of the newcomer and tourist as well as the armchair traveller.

Aside from what was written on the page, science and leisure were also entwined in specific sites on the ground and the way they developed over time. For example, the botanical gardens that sprang up across the region over the nineteenth century had a significant role to play as laboratories for naturalists and nurseries for new, potentially economically viable crops, but they also formed a corner stone of the social life of cities from Kandy to Singapore to Buitenzorg. They were places to gather and exchange gossip, to admire the aesthetically arranged flowers and enjoy the shade of the groves, with military bands providing the entertainment in the evenings. The same duality can be observed at the major archaeological sites, where government-commissioned research teams did their digging and cataloguing at the same time as rest-houses were being set up and viewing platforms erected for casual tourists to admire the sights. What is more, the scholars studying the complexes seem to have occasionally doubled as guides for visitors, just as the artists working for those projects seem to have not infrequently gifted or sold their sketches to travellers as souvenirs or illustrations for their accounts. The empire was being invented simultaneously as both an object of study and a locus of leisure, at the exact same sites and sometimes through the work of the very same people. Unsurprisingly, both of those inventions and reinventions were deeply embedded in structures of power.

Then entanglement of science and popular culture left its marks also on the depictions of the people that inhabited the land: on the one hand, the period saw ethnographers putting out voluminous studies drawing boundaries between this people and that and then proceeding to sketch out their customs and manners in great detail, often with the purpose of facilitating the work of the governments that ruled over them. On the other, more touristic writers took those massive tomes and reduced their content into single-paragraph snippets or even just sound bites of a sentence or two, for a smattering of colourful detail to decorate the background of their own personal jaunts and exploits. The relationship between imperial popular culture and the colonial was therefore close but also often contradictory. In practice, the former served the latter both as a system of distillation, concentrating a highly selective and simplified version of its findings and interpretations; and as a method of dissemination, increasing its reach both spatially to literary markets around the world and socially to the mass audiences without specialised scholarly interests. Yet in fulfilling this function as a medium of transmission, popular culture also inevitably distorted the message it was relaying. It erased nuance

and overlooked complexity, often yielding to the temptation to exaggerate and provoke. That is how we get from, on the one hand, Raffles's considered if still stereotypical attribution of the supposed indolence of the Javanese peasant to the tyrannical structures he labours under to, on the other, Davidson's crude and antithetical remark that what is needed is "a little wholesome coercion" to get anything done on the island. Other topics, however well studied by scholars at the time, are conspicuous by their absence in these narratives, presumably due to having been considered too boring or unpleasant by the authors.

Classifications of European and Asian are central to many of the judgments and impressions conveyed in the travel works analysed here, yet a critical, historically contextualised reading of the texts reveals just how ambiguous those categories repeatedly proved to be. Idealised Europeanness, a comforting picture of Europe away from Europe, was the ideal image that was being sold to the readers of these works, yet in practice the situation in the societies of the region was far messier. This ambiguity took many forms and could be encountered in a variety of settings. All across the board, in Java, Ceylon and the Straits Settlements, European communities – whether Portuguese, Dutch or British – had been settled in one form or another for several centuries, and the idea that some notion of racial "purity" might have been retained and protected across all that time was merely an ideologues' fantasy. In practice, mixed families were the norm, and in places like Dutch Java they formed the backbone of the colonial elite in the period preceding the reorganisations of the mid-nineteenth century. Against this background, the writers considered here overwhelmingly represented the recent wave of first-generation newcomers who flocked into the colonies to man the administration, set up plantations or serve the military. That explains their frequent embarrassment when faced with evidence of racial mixing: the harsh jokes targeting the Portuguese communities in the Straits as well as Ceylon; or the disapproving complaints when witnessing indigenous nannies tending to white children. The same embarrassment explains also the insistence on depicting plantations and hill stations as exceptionally – culturally and naturally – European spaces, in order to deflect attention from the widespread worries of what the planters and soldiers got up to so far away from home.

Notably, the spectre of mixing was not only to do with bloodlines and sexual morals; it also reared its head in seemingly more innocuous contexts, with reference to things like culture and behaviour. Hence the concern with nannies, from whom the children might learn dubiously Asian manners; similarly, the instances where freshly-emigrated servants were ridiculed by authors as readily as their Asian counterparts show the great affinity between racial and class-based prejudices. But if, on the one hand, the new imperial culture of the nineteenth century sought to draw a firm line to protect the purity of the new settlers, in other instances such boundaries could be productively

negotiated between the different parties involved. The new parks and esplanades were not only a social space for Europeans, but also a European social space for Asians, a symbolic entryway to the civilisation of the colonisers. A public space for everyone to share in the colonial modernity, with hierarchies certainly – not all spaces were racially inclusive, especially in the case of the many social clubs of the period – but nevertheless acknowledging the reality that white men alone could not hope to run the colony, however pure their bloodlines and manners. On an individual level, that acknowledgment, and the acceptance of Europeanness as a cultural rather than racial category, meant that enterprising Asian individuals of the right means and connections could hope to claim considerable status in society through playing the right role: throwing the right kinds of parties and making the right kind of small talk. It is an unfortunate yet fundamental feature of the genre under discussion that Asian agency is regularly diminished and disregarded, but the cases of Raden Saleh and Hoo Ah Kay, who frequently appear on the pages of these books, and the – even if begrudging – respect shown for them, are evidence of their success in bending the rules of the social game to their own advantage.

The white, middle-class and male perspective embodied by these works of travel writing represents a fatally though necessarily limited perspective on mid-nineteenth-century colonisation, but those limitations correspond precisely to the wider shift that was taking place in the transnational imperial culture of the time. The authors, so uniform across the group, are a fair reflection of the character of the new generation of settlers and incomers that were reshaping colonial society towards the different, more meticulous and exhaustive form that it took on as the decades passed. The historiography so far has had an unfortunate tendency to focus on the "big men," the famous writers and notable politicians whose personal fame was enough to ensure special treatment at the time and heightened attention from scholars today. The purpose of this thesis has been to shine a light, not on any such individual but on a demographic – the colonising middle classes – that far outnumbered those men and everywhere followed in their footsteps, remaking the imaginaries of empire as they did so. They were not, however, the only actors shaping the culture of colonial travel nor by any means the only ones with access to its infrastructures.

Important work has already been done on individual women travellers toward the end of the nineteenth century, especially in places like India and China; and on specific journeys like the Hajj, undertaken by increasing numbers of Muslims from Southeast Asia as the century progressed. Yet there is space for much more work to be done to examine, for example, how and when the upwardly mobile Asian – be they Chinese, Sinhalese, Javanese or Malay – communities of the region came to participate in and shape the colonial tour, in the process adapting European touristic practices and imposing their own. It would be fascinating, too, though undoubtedly methodologically difficult,

to learn more about the development of local service sectors – guides, peddlers of souvenirs and snacks, rickshaw drivers etc. – in areas of high intensity tourism. And while the focus here has been primarily on the colonial "insiders," the Britons and Dutchmen that lived in the region, it would also be intriguing to learn more about the global marketing and dissemination of colonial tourism as a legitimate leisurely practice. For these questions and many more besides, the sources that have been chosen for analysis here can only provide partial and unsatisfactory – if occasionally tantalising – glimpses, and for the answers we must turn our eyes to future research.

The preceding chapters have shown that colonial tourism, or proto-tourism, given the lack of a specialised, established tourist industry during the decades discussed, has its roots in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, thus following close on the heels of the development of tourism in Europe, though with obvious differences and contextual specificities. This is a little earlier than commonly acknowledged: most analyses start from the post-Suez Canal period or even later, around 1900, periodisations justified by the development of commercial luxury liners, the establishment of dedicated tourist bureaus and the expansion of travel agents like Thomas Cook into India and beyond. Yet, as has been shown, the culture of travel that defines tourism depended less on such formal frameworks than on the desire on the part of individuals to travel like tourists – to alleviate the stress and frustration of everyday colonial reality by making an escape, allowing oneself to forget the responsibility and violence for a month or two of carefree excursions. The infrastructure – the guidebooks, the hotels and so forth – quickly followed where the demand existed, which is of course precisely how tourism continues to extend its seemingly unescapable reach around the globe today. In the present century, entire countries have turned to tourism to replace the flagging industries of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; yet if the story of global tourism had its beginnings in the period discussed here, it sometimes feels like the end cannot be far off, so overbearing has the industry's imprint become. In the meantime, it may be instructive to consider just how much has really changed between the first generation of colonial tourism and our more modern, global – or as many would say, neo-imperial – version. We go to the same places, the Borobudurs and Adam's Peaks of the world, often tracing the same routes; take photos if not capable enough with pen and paper to draw sketches like they used to; and jot down our experiences in notebooks or, as it may be, social media. Nothing is more natural than for people to make narratives, and to draw on familiar cultural models in doing so: it is, however, always worth considering whose interests are served by those narratives, and whose get overlooked or forgotten.

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