Faces and Places: Group Portraits and Topographical Photographs in the Photo Albums of the Sugar Industry in Colonial Java in the Early Twentieth Century

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Master of Arts

Alexander Supartono
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This thesis titled
Faces and Places: Group Portraits and Topographical Photographs in the Photo Albums
of the Sugar Industry in Colonial Java in the Early Twentieth Century

by
ALEXANDER SUPARTONO

has been approved for
the Center for International Studies by

________________________________________
William H. Frederick
Associate Professor of History

________________________________________
John R. Schermerhorn Jr
Director, Southeast Asian Studies

________________________________________
Daniel Weiner
Executive Director, Center for International Studies
ABSTRACT

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Faces and Places: Group Portraits and Topographical Photographs in Photo Albums of the Sugar Industry in Colonial Java in the Early Twentieth Century (138 pp.)

Director of Thesis: William H. Frederick

This thesis is a case study of photographic representations found in the photo albums of Java’s sugar industry. The photographs constitute evidence of the colony’s industrialization as much as of the development of non-Western photography practice, which both legitimize colonialism by the application of science and technology. By looking at the material I explore the connection between the sugar industry and photography in order to shed new light in both areas. In chapter 1 and 2, I introduce the historical context of the colonial sugar industry and the colonial photography practice in Java. In chapter 3, the historical analysis of several group portraits in the photo albums explores the continuation or discontinuation of race issues in the colonial Java sugar world. The topographical photographs of bridges in chapter 4 demonstrate both the domestication of the imagined geographies of the colony and the new mobility of people generated by the industry. The last chapter is a reflection on how the historical analysis of the photographs of the sugar industry may provide ground for further studies in the history of Indonesian photography.

Approved: _____________________________________________________________

William H. Frederick

Associate Professor of History
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I save the last line for Alexandra Moschovi, without whom I would not have been able to finish this phase and with whom I will depart for the next one.
For

Dolorosa Sinaga and Ardjuna Hutagalung
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CHAPTER 1: SUGAR, COLONIAL INDUSTRY IN JAVA AND JAVA SUGAR

PHOTOGRAPHS

Javanese food, as they say, is sweet and sugary. Visiting a Javanese market, one might already taste the sweetness of Javanese snacks from their visual appearance, suggesting the long existence of sugar in the Javanese dietary culture. The relief of the 12th century Penataran temple in Blitar, East Java depicts a scene of collecting sugary sap from a palm tree into a bamboo tube. Interestingly, according to Matsuyama’s investigation, sugar was not included in Java’s foods and meals in the European navigation records during the 16th century. This may be because the Javanese liking for the sweet taste was particularly tied to palm sugar, which was habitually used in Javanese food from ancient time and therefore widely known as “Javan Sugar.” Probably brown palm Javan sugar was not known to European travelers in the 16th century because by then for them the source of sweet taste always came in crystalline white form. Although some scholars argue that the sugar cane (Saccharum Officinarum L.) is probably native to and was first domesticated in Indonesia or at least in Southeast Asia, cane sugar was not used in Javanese food until much later. Before World War II there was no cane sugar in Javanese coffee. But present-day coffee lovers always complain of the excessive sweetness of coffee served in Java, and it is considered impolite for Javanese to serve

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coffee or tea without sugar in it.\textsuperscript{3} Roger Knight explains that the extensive use of factory cane sugar among Javanese was the twentieth century development, following the collapse of export oriented cane sugar industry in 1930s. Quoting world sugar historian H.C. Prinsen Geerligs’s observation on the Java sugar industry in 1912, “The sugar produced in the European sugar works is chiefly consumed by Europeans, Chinese and wealthy natives.” Meanwhile the majority of Javanese consumed, as termed by the Dutch, “the People’s sugar” (\textit{Bevolkingssuiker}), that is brown palm sugar.\textsuperscript{4}

Coming via the Mediterranean and planted for the first time along Spain’s southern littoral in the eighth century, sugar cane became a commodity that revolutionized European habits of consumption by the 14\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{5} The history of sugar production entered a phase of massive production based on the land of colonies and slavery, when Columbus’s second voyage brought the plant to the island of Santo Domingo of the New World in 1493. Sugar cane would become the dominant colonial commodity in the New World colonies (the Atlantic islands, the Caribbean and Brazil) until the 18\textsuperscript{th} century before the imperial power, especially the British, transformed the

\begin{footnotesize}
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\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{3}] Matsuyama paints an interesting comparison between Java’s sugar cane that world’s highest yield per unit area and domestic consumption before and after WW II and notices the complicated penetration of the sugar cane in their traditional dietary culture. The Javanese more easily embraced coffee and tea introduced as commercial crops during the colonial age than sugar cane. See Matsuyama, \textit{ibid.}, p. 253.
\item[\textsuperscript{5}] The Saccharum species were first discovered in Papua New Guinea in 8000 B.C., then was carried to India, the Philippines and the Indonesian archipelago. For a concise history of the world’s sugar cane production and consumption, see Mintz, \textit{Sweetness and Power}, chapters 2 and 3.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
production areas to the Old World of colonies in Asia (India, Java and the Philippines) and Africa in the second colonial era.\textsuperscript{6}

In Java the United East Company (VOC) started to get involved in the sugar business when they sponsored Chinese settlers in the area surrounding Batavia in the 17\textsuperscript{th} century. The Chinese settlers brought their sugar technology when they immigrated to the archipelago from the 14\textsuperscript{th} century onwards\textsuperscript{7} and produced sugar for local consumption. The existing Chinese network in sugar manufacture encouraged the VOC to inject Dutch capital so that the production could become commercially significant.\textsuperscript{8} The Dutch main interest was the profit from trade rather than the sugar production. The VOC maintained their protection of the Chinese-owned cane cultivation and sugar manufacturing following the success of the first export in 1637. However, the Chinese sugar technology eventually failed to secure a feasible expansion of production. Their mills needed large-scale human labor, cattle, and firewood, and by 1826 only one third of the mills were still operating. The attempt to regenerate the old sugar industry in Batavia and West Java by passing it to small groups of European landowners and manufacturers in the course of the

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{6} The lengthy introduction of the edited volume \textit{Sugarlandia Revisited} maps and incorporates the Asia and America sugar history into the world sugar system, which was “integral to mercantilism, the slave trade, inter-metropolitan rivalry and other processes that marked the very formation of Western colonialism.” See Ulbe Bosma, Juan Giusti-Cordero and Roger G. Knight, \textit{Sugarlandia Revisited: Sugar and Colonialism in Asia and the Americas, 1800 to 1940} (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), p. 5.
\end{flushright}

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\textsuperscript{7} Matsuyama, \textit{Dietary Culture}, p. 259.
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\textsuperscript{8} Other sources of finance were wealthy Chinese, locally resident Dutch, most of whom were high-ranking officials of the company itself, including the son of Governor-General. See Roger G. Knight, “From Plantation to Padi-field: The Origins of the Nineteenth Century Transformation of Java’s Sugar Industry, \textit{Modern Asian Studies} 14, 2 (1980): p. 181. Descriptions of the early development of the sugar industry in Java rely on this source.
\end{flushright}
Raffles administration (1811-1816) also failed. New capital and up-to-date machinery from Britain as well as overseas connections to India failed to secure adequate land and labor supply. The industry also failed to compete with rice cultivation, and consequently the labor-intensive sugar crop was always lacking an adequate workforce. The solution to the land and labor problem arrived when the Dutch East Indies colonial government implemented the Cultivation System (Cultuurstelsel) in Java in 1830.

In the first year of his administration in the Dutch East Indies, Governor General Johannes van den Bosch (in office 1830-1833) introduced the Cultivation System. According to Fasseur’s essential study of the system, this policy was not mentioned in any constitutional regulation applying to the Dutch East Indies that Van den Bosch brought from the Netherlands, therefore it was local and situational and applied mostly in Java. In order to take over the unsuccessful previous scheme in extracting profit from Java, which laid the economic productivity before the hand of private enterprise, Van den

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Bosch proposed a governmental-administrative enterprise with a system to cultivate products suited for the European market, which was later simply known as the “Cultivation System” (Cultuurstelsel). Based on Van den Bosch’s letter of advice in response to Commissioner General Viscount Du Bus’ colonization proposal, Van Niel concluded that Van den Bosch “wished to make Java an asset to the motherland in the shortest possible time by having it produce tropical agricultural products, chiefly coffee, sugar and indigo, at such low prices that they could compete with similar product from other parts of the world, … where slaves had been or were being used.”12 The way in which the system was implemented at the practical level was more complicated than the general assumption that Javanese peasants had to give one-fifth of than land and one fifth of than labor time for the government-owned estate.13 It closely tied to the land rent system and the complex involvement of various group (peasants, village leaders, Javanese gentries and Chinese middlemen) in the arrangement of the government-sponsored cultivations.14 However it can be said that the main pillars of the system were cheap land and cheap labor to cultivate exportable crops.

14 For case by case study of the implementation of the Cultivation System in sugar industry see Van Niel, Java Under the Cultivation System; Roger G. Knight, Colonial Production in Provincial Java: The Sugar Industry in Pekalongan-Tegal, 1800-1942
The implementation of the Cultivation System in the sugar industry was peasant coercion and sugar cane rotation with rice cultivation in densely populated lowland Java. The system provided a solution to the previous problem of the lack of both land and workforce at the expense of Javanese peasants. The government sugar system had put peasants, in Geertz’s words, “one foot in the rice terrace and the other in the mill,” which formed the distinct character of the Java sugar workers that was “part time proletariat” as he “remained a peasant and at the same time that he became a coolie.”

Moving the industry center from western Java (Batavia) to eastern Java (Surabaya), which provided a readily available workforce, especially seasonal migrant workers from nearby Madura for harvesting the cane, the government sugar cultivation significantly expanded from 31,989 bouws (22,392 ha) in 1840 to 41,151 bouws (28,805 ha) in 1850. Sugar production increased from 752,657 pikuls (46,484 tons) in 1840 to 1,406,464 pikuls (86,863 tons) in 1850. The export value of sugar rocketed from 1,6 million florins in 1830 to 17 million florins in 1850, for which the British India administrator J.S. Furnivall praised Van den Bosch, noting that he had brought “sudden and profound, almost miraculous” economic progress to the Indies. Another
Englishman, James William Boley Money, dedicated his 1861 publication to “General Johannes van de Bosch, Great Statesman and the Author of the Java Culture System.”

The title of the book made clear its intention: “Java or How to Manage a Colony: Showing A Practical Solution of the Questions Now Affecting British India.” The success of the Cultivation System, which was exemplified in the sugar industry, had become a model for the neighboring imperial power. From this point on, the sugar industry had become the backbone of the Dutch East Indies economy and Java glowed on the map of the world sugar producers. The sugar industry had become the most important element in the Cultivation System, “the only system by which Java could remain ‘the cork on which the Netherlands floated’”18

The course of Java’s sugar history until the WW II showed that the industry survived major events both political and economic. The decline of the Cultivation System in 1870 and the Liberal triumph in the Netherlands brought more investment to the sugar industry in Java as the new liberal government decided to hand the industry over to private enterprise. The 1884 world economic crisis caused by the sudden fall of sugar prices drove many small companies out of the arena but invited more capital flowing to the industry. In that very same year five different banks financed 76 sugar plantations and 18 new modern factories were built. In 1885 sugar production in Java reached 380,000 tons, which was almost eight times the production in 1830. The early twentieth century witnessed the golden years of sugar production in Java. The production touched three

18 This oft cited statement was used for the first time by the Minister of Colony G.L. Baud (1848-1849) to the Governor General P. Merkus (1841-1844). See see Fasseur, Colonial Exploitation, p. 57.
million tons by the 1930, reaching the top level in the world as well as the highest yield per hectare on a total of 200,000 hectares of sugar plantations. The 1,930 boilers used in 178 sugar factories across Java evidenced the modern industry.¹⁹

The glorious days of Java sugar industry were not only reflected in academic works before WW II but also in different kind of publications.²⁰ In the tourist book published in English by the Official Tourist Bureau of the Dutch East Indies in 1927, the Java sugar industry was presented as one of the highlighted tourist attractions, both the modern factory and the plantation. Two photographs, each depicting sugar plantations and factories in operation, accompanied the description of the industry. Interestingly, a very similar photograph of a sugar cane plantation also appeared in sugar photo albums of the Tropenmuseum collection, which suggested they were taken by the same photographer at the same time (Album # 529 p. 12).²¹ The commercial road maps of Java, Madura and Bali also featured sugar plantations and factories across Java as “points of interest” along the journey one might want to stop by.²² Already half a century earlier, in 1869, biologist Alfred Russel Wallace complimented the wealth of the industrious

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¹⁹ Furnival, *Netherlands India*, p.195-199; Knight, *Narratives of Colonialism*, p. 32; Bosma, Giusti-Cordero, and Knight, eds. *Sugarlandia Revisited*, p. 84
²¹ The Official Tourist Bureau, *Come to Java* (Batavia: Weltevreden, 3rd edition, 1927), pp. 28-31. The Album # 529 is an official album of Java Sugar Syndicate based in Surabaya, East Java. The tourist book did not mention the photographers but the album mentioned photographer Kurkdjian who run a big commercial studio in Surabaya as well.
population in the new sugar center in eastern Java although “…here and there the white building and tall chimney of sugar mills became monotonous.”

The remarkable development of the sugar industry in Java during the course of the nineteenth century was on the basis of industrialization and was characterized by the scientific approach to production. The sugar industry’s outstanding achievement owed much to the introduction of improved agricultural methods and the modernization of the machinery in sugar factories. The Sugar Syndicate established a private experiment station in Pasuruan, East Java in 1885 searching for cane varieties that had high sugar content and were resistant to moisture and drought. Different cane varieties’ names such as *Black Cheribon, Noble Canes* and *Demak Idjo* demonstrated the dynamic of the industrial nature of plantation production. According to the International Institute of Agriculture (today’s Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation), by the second decade of twentieth century, Java consumed five percent of the world’s total consumption of chemical fertilizers. Naturally, the sugar cane plantation was the biggest chemical fertilizer consumer, considering the big field areas it occupied and the agricultural advancement it had achieved.

Another important aspect of the Java sugar industrialization was the sugar manufacturing technology. The capital injection since the early nineteenth century

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enabled the industry to absorb all the major advances in Western sugar machinery. They brought the advanced applications of the boiling house and vacuum pan invented in the European beet sugar industry to Java and modernized the industry from about 1850 onwards. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Java sugar industry had been transformed, as observed by Knight, “from heavily dependent manual labor and ‘rule of thumb’ in the manufacturing sector into one dominated by the most technically sophisticated form of continuous, scientifically based mass production that the world had yet seen.”26 The new equipment from the West did not arrive by itself but was accompanied by a legion of skilled artisans: trained mechanics, machine operators and engineers as well as chemists and botanists. Together with locally trained artisans, managerial officers and traders, these people were in charge of running the industry day-to-day: the office management, the operation of the boiling houses and the organization of the plantation work. Through the course of the nineteenth century they constituted the very core of the formation of a new social group, namely the Indies bourgeoisie. They established and inhabited new sugar towns across Java and it is their photo albums we will look at in the following chapters.

Along with their prosperity, individuals working in the company as well as the companies themselves were very well documented. They could afford to employ photographers (or in a few cases use the camera themselves) to photograph both the workings of the industry and their social and personal lives on the plantations. As loose prints for various uses or assembled in elaborate albums, these photographs are now kept

in the photographic collections of different museums and archives in the Netherlands, namely, the Tropenmuseum of the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) and The Print Room of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam; the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV), and the Photo Collection of Leiden University in Leiden; and the Wereldmuseum and The Netherlands Photo Museum in Rotterdam. This material, which is largely unpublished, offers a different view from the written material I discussed above. They provide insight into Dutch colonial practices in the sugar industry and shed new light on formerly unexplored areas.

The Java sugar photographs under discussion were produced in the course of the colonial period, but they were produced by the private (colonial) enterprises that characterized the late phase of colonialism. Unfortunately, we do not have any direct information to answer the question why did they make those photographs and albums? Why did they document their life in Java sugar world so well? To my knowledge, no study has approached this question yet. Using limited available data in the photo albums (i.e. captions, titles and dates) and putting it in the bigger context of the sugar industry we might arrive at the suggestion that they wanted to represent their success in the Indies. The way in which these photographs and albums represent their life in Java sugar industry is the main concern in this thesis. As I discuss in the following chapters, their photographic representation has distinct characteristics. Such characteristics might take many different forms, for example in the material of the albums and the photographs, in

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27 Recently the Wereldmuseum handed their photography collection, which mainly consists of nineteenth century Dutch travel photography, that is, colonial photography, over to the Netherlands Photo Museum.
the selection of subject matter, in the organization of photographs in photo albums, and in the photographs’ placement and captions.

Critical studies on colonialism and documentary photography as well as inquiries into the use of the camera in colonial projects provide important frameworks for looking at Java sugar photographs. My analysis combines historical materials with ideas from critiques both of colonialism and photography. Both the selection of the photo albums from different collections in the Netherlands’s archives, and the approach I have chosen to examine them have changed during my field research, as I briefly describe below.

I conducted my research specifically in the Tropenmuseum collection. During a residency program at BAK (Base for Contemporary Art) in the Netherlands in May-June 2007, I examined the holdings of colonial photography in the collection of the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam. Between 1,000 – 1,300 digitized photographs were examined on that occasion, concentrating on formal photographs produced by employees in the sugar companies for the purposes of official company albums and personal family albums (which number a total of 51 albums) as well as hundreds of individual photographs related to the sugar industry. I selected 452 photographs from both photo albums and the catalogue of individual photographs. This first selection was based on the formal photographic qualities of the photographs, as I was interested in the aesthetics of colonial photography at the time. Nonetheless, that encounter provided a first insight into the organization of the industry and Dutch-native relations in the factories and on the plantations.
On a second fieldtrip, in summer 2009, particular attention was paid to the context of the photographs in the photo albums of the Tropenmuseum’s collection. This material was cross-referenced with relevant photographic material found in other museums and archives in the Netherlands, namely KITLV (The Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies) in Leiden, The Wereldmuseum and The Netherlands Photo Museum in Rotterdam and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Although the Rijksmuseum has the oldest photography collection to date and KITLV’s collection is the most oft-cited one, the Tropenmuseum of the KIT (Royal Tropical Institute) retains the biggest collection on the subject. This is, most probably, a direct consequence of the fact that following the gesture of the Netherlands Society for Industry that founded the museum in 1871, the institution enjoyed the continuous support of wealthy Dutch businessmen. This museum, which was later named the Colonial Museum and Indisch Institute, was specifically devised to “exhibit material from the Dutch overseas territory.”28 As such and holding the most comprehensive collection of the subject contextualized by its rich history, the Tropenmuseum’s collection of photo albums of the sugar industry will be the main primary source of study in this thesis.

In the collection of the Tropenmuseum, there are 2,500 photo albums, of which 80-85 percent is about the Dutch East Indies. There are 51 photo albums and approximately 1,300 photographs of the collection, which are related to the sugar industry in Java dated ca. 1880-1930. Its holdings can be categorized in two large sections: Sugar Factory and/or Plantation albums, and sugar family albums. Each section

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can then be divided into smaller sections: big and small sugar factory/family. This socio-economic categorization leads to the selection of specific albums as case studies for further analysis. Below is a list of selected photo albums with brief descriptions. Technical information of each album is in appendix 1:

1. Album # 256
   Title: Souvenir aan Poerwokerto en Kalibagor (Pietermaat-Soesman Album #1)
   Description: The title of the album indicates the intention behind its making: it is a visual token of the sugar factory and plantation in Poerwokerto and Kalibagor. This is the biggest and the first out of the five albums of the Pitermaat-Soesman family. Apart from the official depiction of the factory and other infrastructure, this album features some personal activities and domestic life of the factory director and other European managerial staff in a formal manner. They were photographed in front of their new houses, which were provided by the company.

2. Album # 264
   Title: Souvenir aan Poerwokerto en Kalibagor (Pietermaat-Soesman Album #2)
   Description: This is the second album out of the five albums of the Pietermaat-Soesman family. The captions are handwritten and without ornament. The arrangement of the photographs in the album suggests that a professional photo studio probably produced it. It has consistency in size and in terms of the placement of the photographs in the center of the page. On the album cover there is a trace of a lost medallion that used to be attached there. The photographs in the album are not particularly well executed, especially those that depict factory interiors. The organization of the photographs in the
album is a comprehensive depiction of the whole process of sugar production including 3 photographs of the final product (gula pasir), which is hardly ever seen in other albums.

There is a series of group portraits of different levels of employees, a categorization that only exists in this photo album.

3. Album # 259

Title: Souvenir aan Poerwokerto, Kalibagor en Banjoemas (Pietermaat-Soesman Album #3)

Description: This is the third album of the Pietermat-Soesman family, which includes Banjoemas as the coverage area. The photographs are rather random in terms of production criteria and selection, depicting mainly landscapes in the region and local activities such as cow trading.

4. Album # 362

Title: Gezichten van Diverse Plaatsen (Pietermaat-Soesman Album #4)

Description: This is the fourth album of the Pietermat-Soesman family, which seems to put together different kinds of photographs (miscellaneous) that do not fit into the themes of other albums. The sizes of the photographs vary, and so do the depicted subjects. Based on the quality of the photographs, it seems as if different photographers, a combination of trained amateur and professionals, took them. However, this album is a product of a professional image-maker or most probably a photo studio. The design of each page of the album follows the size of the photograph, including a printed caption. Not all photographs in this album are digitized.
5. Album # 807
Title: Proefstation voor de Javasuikerindustrie te Pasoeroean 1926
Description: The title is printed in golden lettering. Atelier Kurkdjian, the most famous photo studio in Surabaya, East Java, produced the photographs and the album (the name is embossed in the lower right corner). There is a numbering system in front of some captions (indicating perhaps a studio print number). The captions are professionally handwritten.

6. Album # 529
Title: Algemeen Syndicaat van Suikerfabrikanten in Nederlandsch-Indie. Suiker op Java in Beeld
Description: This is the most complete and comprehensive visual report of sugar production. The first page of the album depicts a rice field and the last page shows the shipping of sugar. The captions are written neatly under each photograph in the lower right corner. There are two photographs that show two European women working in the office.

C. Small Sugar Factory Photo Album

7. Album # 485
Title: No. 1 Suikerfabriek Sedatie 1914
Description: Although this album is fairly small, it is not a personal/family photo album because the selection and organization of the photographs was made in a rather formal manner. The caption is typewritten and glued onto the page.
8. Album # 486

Title: No. 2 Suiekréparation Sedatie 1914

Description: This album differs from the first album of the series as it includes some personal representations of the family.

9. Album # 626

Title: S.F. Delanggu

Description: The size of this album is fairly small. Photographs are cut and glued onto the page. The captions are handwritten by pencil on the back of the page.

As it is clear from the list above, photo albums provide very limited information. At the same time, the photographs, the albums, the photographs structures in the albums and the combination of the three provide abundance of unprocessed information, which offer a myriad possible interpretations. Their meaning has changed over time, from its initial intention to the contemporary reading almost a century later. As a starting point, in order to unpack what the visual anthropologist Elizabeth Edwards calls the “social biographies”\(^{29}\) of the albums and the photographs, I have laid the basic historical context above in which those albums were produced.

\(^{29}\) Taking further Appadurai’s notion of the social life of things and making a special connection between photography and anthropology, Elizabeth Edwards has argued that colonial photography was not only the representation of colonial power. The photographs’ process of production, consumption and distribution should be considered from which its phase had its own meaning. Their constant link to the past, present and future makes them historically and socially active, therefore creating “a clear biographical intention.” See Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology and Museums* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), p. 13-14. For broader discussion on this subject see Elizabeth Edward and Janice Hart, eds., *Photographs Object Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (London: Routledge, 2004).
In chapter 2, I will move to discuss the photography context of the production of the albums that is, the nature of photography and photographers’ works in the period of discussion. In this way, I aim to showcase the social relation between sugar industrialization and industrial representation through the modern technology of the camera. In the chapter 3 and 4 I will not attempt to examine the pattern of selection of the photograph in terms of subject matter or the organization of photographs in those nine case studies. Instead, I will identify the dominant photographic genres in sugar photo albums, which were mainly characterized by the early practices of commission and commercial photography in Java at the time. Thus chapter 3 and 4 will focus on two of the dominant photography genres: portrait and topographical photographs.

Portraits in the non-Western nineteenth century photography world, especially those in the colonies, were often used in anthropological surveys and classifications of racial type. Critical investigation on this issue has revealed the racist tone in such practices and the failure to understand cultural differences. In chapter 3, I will focus on several group portraits in the albums to explore the continuation or discontinuation of the aforementioned contestation in the late colonial society in the Java sugar world.

Chapter 4 will take into account another important photography role in conquering colonial territories: topographical photography. Continuing the revelation of photography as a powerful means to organize, familiarize and domesticate the colonial landscape, I will discuss unusual topographical photographs that consistently appear in the selected photo albums: those of modern bridges. As we will see, bridge photographs
were not only displaying the colonizers’ achievements in modernizing the colony, but also demonstrated the new social mobility of both Europeans and the local people. Finally, in the last chapter I will look at the relationship between the particular episodes of colonial sugar photographs with the larger history of history of photography in Indonesia. In doing so I will briefly examine the perception of colonial photography in contemporary Indonesia and review a possible connection of photography tradition before and after the independence of Indonesia.
CHAPTER 2: THE PHOTO ALBUMS, PHOTOGRAPHY IN JAVA

The Tropenmuseum’s extensive photograph and photo album collection of the sugar industry in Java at the turn of the twentieth century leave immediate questions: why and how were they produced? The vast production of sugar photographs and photo albums in Java reflects the global dissemination of photography and at the same time shows its local appropriation within a specific context of industrialization in the colony. This visual material confirms a strong causal connection between the prosperous sugar industry and the dynamic of photography practices as well as a dynamic encounter between the prosperity of the sugar elite and their need to document and represent their achievements and happy life in the Indies using the service of newly expanding commercial photographers in Java. In this chapter I will situate the sugar photographs and albums in the context of the development of photography in the period under discussion. Consequently the discussion will focus on the practice and development of commercial photography in Java in general, and specifically on the nature of photographic commissions within the sugar world in Java.

Despite the amount of available visual material, there are comparatively few scholarly treatises on the subject, which means that the photographic representation of the sugar industry and the industrialization of the colony at large remain under-discussed. One might come across sugar photographs in different disciplinary contexts. They have appeared mainly in publications of scholarly works on history, anthroplogy and gender studies in colonial Java, and have often served as cover illustrations or have sometimes
been used to strengthen or substantiate arguments on the aforementioned subjects.\(^{30}\) The rich body of visual material has not been greatly integrated into scientific investigation, which created “an asymmetry between a sophisticated analysis of science and its complexity […] , on the one hand, and an unproblematized use of visual images as representations of subject, on the other.”\(^{31}\) Comparing scholarly work on sugar enterprise and photography, let alone sugar photography in Java in the period of discussion, one would easily find the ‘asymmetry.’ As I have shown in the previous chapter, scholars from different disciplines in the area and era could not afford to avoid the subject of sugar. Whereas the sugar photographs, as other bodies of photographs from many different topics in different archives in the Netherlands, are still awaiting for a ‘pictorial turn’\(^{32}\) to take place.

The aesthetic tradition of the medium in the colony, which intertwined with local culture and climate, has not received adequate scholarly attention yet in the field of art/photo history and exhibitions in which photography is the subject of inquiry. In regard


\(^{32}\) W.J.T. Mitchell introduced the term ‘pictorial turn’ in the 1990s to point out the ever-growing significance of visual images in social science and humanities, which requires and has created new interdisciplinary and theoretical approaches. Questioning Richard Rorty’s ‘linguistic turn’, Mitchell argues that in the world of spectacle it is the pictures now that transform and form our world surrounding us, and hence our identity. See W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). For the most recent discussion on the topic, see Neal Curtis, ed., *The Pictorial Turn* (London: Routledge, 2010).
to the immense material of sugar photographs and the significance of sugar industry in Dutch East Indies history, it is rather surprising to learn that there has not been any exhibitions specializing on the subject.\textsuperscript{33} The aesthetic tradition of the medium itself has not yet found its place, for example in the 2009 publication of the subject of photography in the region, \textit{Photographies East: The Camera and its Histories in East and Southeast Asia}. The contributors of this interdisciplinary volume, who are mostly anthropologists (curiously there are no essays by photo historians), focus on particular appropriations of the camera in different historical eras and areas in which photography directly or indirectly had been involved, such as colonial and anti-colonial violence, political representation, rituals, and modernity. This book on photography, in which, as some writers observe, “the very absence of images is the point,”\textsuperscript{34} presents itself as a great leap forward in view of the lack of photography’s conventional histories in the region, reflecting upon the overlooked available photographic material. It is this leap that makes it difficult for photography scholars interested in the region to comprehend the pathway of the medium in historical context of the region.

The history of photography in the non-Western world before the Second World War is often classified as ‘colonial photography.’ The phrase refers to historical photographs that were produced by mainly Western photographers (with the exception of a small number of native photographers), who worked in accordance to the colonial path,

\textsuperscript{33} The exhibition archive of the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam shows that this material has not been used for any exhibitions organized by the museum itself or, to my knowledge, as loan material for other exhibitions.

mainly across Asia and Africa. Photographic practice in the colonies has sometimes been located within the broader historical frame of ‘nineteenth century photography.’ The 2008 publication of the *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography* edited by Hannavy included relatively complete names of Western photographers working in the colonies, for example Isidore van Kinsbergen, Walter Bently Woodbury and James Page in Java, G.R. Lambert in Singapore and Malay Peninsula, John Thompson in mainland Southeast Asia and China, and Samuel Bourne in India, but interestingly has no entry on “colonial photography.” The encyclopedia also does not recognize the existence of local/indigenous photographers working in the course of the nineteenth century, such as Kasian Cephas of Java and Nilmadhav De of Bengal. Christopher Pinney notes that in 1857 the Bengal Photographic Society had thirty Bengali members and there were

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36 It is noteworthy here that the term ‘colonial’ photography has been commonly used in many scholarly publications for example, Geary, *German Colonial Photography*; Wolfram Hartmann, Jeremy Silvester and Patricia Hayes, eds., *The Colonising Camera: Photographs in the Making of Namibian History* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town, 1998); Anne Maxwell, *Colonial Photography and Exhibitions: Representations of the "Native" and the Making of European Identities* (London: Leicester University Press, 1999); Hight and Sampson, *Colonialist Photography*.

37 This seems to neglect the fact that a book celebrating Cephas’ oeuvre has been circulated in the Western academia and photography scene, see Gerrit Knaap, *Cephas, Yogyakarta: Photography in the Service of the Sultan* (Leiden, the Netherlands: KITLV Press, 1999).
hundreds of Indian-run photo studios operated all over the country in 1870-1890. Karen Strassler also reminds us of the significant existence of the Chinese-run photo studios in the Dutch East Indies, which by the early twentieth century outnumbered European and Japanese photo studios. Following the camera’s immediate departure to the colony after its invention, colonized people, landscape, nature, ancient monuments and culture were among the popular subjects. Photographic activities in the colony during the camera’s early days did not make their way into scholarly attentions until more than a century later. Martin Gasser’s survey of historiography of the histories of photography based on published books from 1839-1939 shows the history of the medium was based on technique and Western practice in the Western world, overlooking the practices in other parts of the world.

The use of the camera within the context of specific episodes of colonial history has attracted significant critical attention since the late 1980s, both in the context of colonialism and in the histories of photography itself. When visual anthropologist Elizabeth Edwards launched the call for papers for the History of Photography journal’s edition on production and analysis of photography within anthropology in 1996, she got

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40 Martin Gasser, “Histories of Photography 1839-1939” in History of Photography 16, 1 (Spring 1992): pp. 50-60. Continuing Gasser’s article, Anne McCauley’s piece suggests the plural form of ‘histories’ of photography to anticipate different paths of the medium in the history beside the aesthetic and technical ones. While her discussion has broaden the scope of photography’s histories, McCauley mentioned nothing about the development of the medium outside Europe and North America, see Anne McCauley, “Writing Photography’s History before Newhall,” History of Photography 21, 2 (Summer 1997): pp. 87-101.
submissions focusing mainly around colonial expansion and consolidation of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. This shows that the culture of imaging facilitated greatly by photography in the colonies has attracted more and more scholarly inquiry. The development of photography in the non-Western world, which coincides with adventurism, science and imperialism, had created distinctive practices, which shows that cultural and technological implementations of the device were locally determined. English photographer Walter Bentley Woodbury who worked in Java after 1857, solved the technical problem of working with the collodion process under tropical conditions. This technological appropriation made his business with his associate James Page in Java, Woodbury and Page Photography Studio, the most celebrated studio from that era.\textsuperscript{43} Cantonese photographers in the Dutch East Indies, who were known for their


\textsuperscript{42} Invented by Frederick Scott Archer in 1851, wet collodion process was the most popular method for making negatives until 1880. Glass was used to support the negatives and syrupy solution of flammable compound in ether and alcohol (collodion) was used as the binding agent for the light sensitive layer. The light sensitive emulsion was poured over the glass sheet and exposed in the camera while still wet. It is vital to keep the emulsion moist throughout the process, so the photographers have to develop the negative on the spot. See terms and technique pages in Flip Bool et al., \textit{Dutch Eyes: A Critical History of Photography in the Netherlands} (Zwolle, The Netherlands: Waanders Publishers, 2008), p. 568 and Saskia Asser and Gerda Theuns-de Boer, \textit{Isidore van Kinsbergen 1821-1905: Photo Pioneer and Theatre Maker in the Dutch East Indies} (Zaltbommel, The Netherlands: Uitgevereij Aprilis, 2005), p. 285.

\textsuperscript{43} Later Woodbury invented the woodburytype photomechanical printing process in 1864, which allowed high production and high quality in the same time. The printing process was widely used in England and Europe, see John Hannavy ed., \textit{Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography} (New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 1509-1510. I will discuss the sugar-related work of Woodbury and Page in the later part of this chapter. For the photography work and biography of the Woodbury and Page studio in Java, see Steven Wachlin, \textit{Woodbury and Page: Photographers Java} (Leiden, The Netherlands: KITLV Press, 1994).
expertise in making furniture, constructed their own cameras using imported German lenses.\textsuperscript{44} The natives’ fear of the camera and superstitious beliefs around the photographic process, which were exploited by Westerner photographers, contributed to the formation of photographic practice in the colony. British explorer Joseph Thomson told stories in his East Central African Expedition of 1878-80 that ‘by leaving the camera standing alone he had kept a whole village totally deserted for a day.’ Similarly, in China British photographer John Thomson wrote in 1860s that many Chinese believed that the ‘photographic process involved the use of eyes stolen from children.’ James Ryan argues that such accounts had proven the failure of Western photographers to understand culture difference; hence their photographs of natives were the result of a power exercise against the sitters.\textsuperscript{45}

Illuminated by Edward Said’s landmark \textit{Orientalism} (1978) through a variety of case studies and interdisciplinary methods, scholars have framed different photography practices in the colony as an inherent inscriber of the imperialist project. The camera had become a very useful device not only to actually describe the Orient, but above all to create and maintain Western knowledge (discourse and imagination) about the East.\textsuperscript{46} Joan Schwartz (1996) implements Said’s notion of “imagined geography” in her observation of travel photographs in the first two decades after the public announcement of the daguerreotype. Discussing the work, among others, of French photographer Maxime Du Camp in Egypt, Nubia, Palestine and Syria in 1849-1851, Schwartz

\textsuperscript{44} Strassler, , “Photography’s Asian Circuits,” pp. 1, 4-5.
\textsuperscript{45} Ryan, \textit{Picturing Empire}, pp. 143-144.
demonstrates the significant role of photography in constructing the imagination of the Orient in the Western world, which was dictated by Westerners’ “needs, beliefs and expectations.”

James Ryan has followed a similar trajectory in his *Picturing Empire* (1997). Observing the use of the camera across the British Empire, Ryan reveals the Western colonialist gaze in surveying lands and creating landscapes as well as classifying natives and illustrating tribes for the introduction of the colony to the British traders, explorers and school children. The camera transformed “unknown space into familiar scenes” that would attract the interest of the British commerce as well as the curiosity of school children to the colonized territory.

The invention of photography in Paris in 1839 was announced at the dawn of the hey day of Western imperialism. Anne Maxwell brilliantly made the connection between the two, photography and imperialism, in her analysis of the presentation of colonized people in the international exhibitions in the metropolis and the photographs of the colonized people made by photographers from the same period. The impact of visual representation, both in live display in exhibitions and widely circulated photographs, of the unknown colonial territory, the ‘mysterious Asia’ and the ‘dark Africa,’ Maxwell argues, had helped shape European identities by defining the colonized people as the “other.”

Although considerably brief and less extensive, Oriental imperialist powers also employed photography. The reports of the Japanese Scientific Expeditions to Manchuria in 1933 included photographs of poor housing and portrait of the local people.

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48 Ryan, *Picturing Empire*, p. 72.
49 Maxwell, *Colonial Photography and Exhibitions*, p. ix
suffering from endemic goiter. These kinds of photographs were widely published in the Japanese press, which in turn confirmed the Japanese modernity and superiority and therefore justified the Japan emperor’s rule of pan-Asia.  

Apart from photography’s ultimate embedment with the imperialist project, both in the direct service of colonial rulers and the private sector, the first arrival of daguerreotype cameras in the colony made a detour to its final destination. In British India, a few months after the public announcement of its invention, an import company in Calcutta advertised daguerreotype cameras in the local daily newspaper. It was soon followed by the earliest known daguerreotype image and other advertisements in Bengali papers about the use of the daguerreotype by English residents. Commerce in British India took immediate action to profit by the applied technology of the camera. In the Dutch East Indies the daguerreotype’s detour was science and archeology. Anneke Groeneveld points out that the first arrival of the daguerreotype in Batavia (Jakarta) was in “aid of science” and employed to “mak[e] an inventory of the country and its people population.”

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51 Pinney, *Camera Indica*, p. 17.
52 Groeneveld et al., *Toekang Potret*, p. 15. In her later publication, Groeneveld consistently argues that it was also through mainly archeological discipline that colonial photography gained a place within the history of Dutch photography by the publication of Ingeborg Leijerzapf’s *Fotografie in Nederland* in 1978. Four out of five colonial photographers featured in Leijerzapf’s book worked on archeological and geographical views: Adolph Schaefer, Isidore van Kinsbergen, Kasian Cephas and Daniel D. Veth. See Anneke Groeneveld, “View of the Dutch East Indies” in Flip Bool et al., *Dutch Eyes*, p. 302.
The camera was a long-awaited device to assist the Dutch growing scientific interest on the distant and unknown East Indies. The Royal Dutch Geographical Society and the Dutch government had been actively supporting exploration and archeological expeditions, mainly in Java, since 1805. The counterpart of this effort in the colony was the Royal Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences (Koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen). Founded in 1778 by naturalist Jacob Cornelis Matthieu Radermacher, the widely known Batavian Society had gained more prestige and power as the government’s agent in promoting reputation of the Dutch in the civilized world. Consequently the nature of the camera’s departure to the Indies was “to test and employ photography in our tropical region” and “collect photographic representations of the principal views, etc. and also of plants and other natural objects.”

The historical context of the camera’s early days in the Indies in the mid-nineteenth century was the heyday of the government-generated Cultivation System (1830-1870). This export-oriented agriculture system had brought economic success for the colonial government. In consequence, in the Netherlands there was a growing need of information about the colony, where the prosperity had came from. This was the initial purpose of the camera’s arrival in the Dutch East Indies, to make the colony more

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53 The initial purpose of this society was to collect “all information that contributes to the development of the economic activities of the VOC.” In the later phase they became much more active in collecting and classifying archeological and culture material from all over the archipelago. The present Indonesian National Museum was to become the collection house of the Batavian society. See Kenji Tsuchiya, “Javanology and the Age of Ranggawarsita: An Introduction to Nineteenth-Century Javanese Culture,” in Takashi Shiraishi, ed., Reading Southeast Asia: Translation of Japanese Scholarship on Southeast Asia (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program Cornell University, 1990), pp. 82-83.

54 Groeneveld et al., Toekang Potret, p.16
familiar with the “mother country” by representing “princip[al] views, plants and natural objects.” It coincided with the time when the Dutch government started to open the colonies to the wider public for private investment and as a field of scientific research and adventure for tourism. As I have shown in the previous chapter, prior to the end of the Cultivation System, the Dutch government encouraged entrepreneurs and skilled laborers from the Netherlands and Europe to invest and work in the colony and the sugar industry was exemplary of this effort. Simultaneously, following the economic success in the Indies, more and more people from the Netherlands and Europe came to visit and some of them decided to stay, owing no less to the wide distribution of photographic images, which presented ‘the pictures’ of the until then unknown Indies. Following the post cards and cartes de visite in the late nineteenth century, the early twentieth century witnessed the exposure of the Orient for the Western tourist industry, which employed photography extensively in travel book publications. However, despite photography’s significant role in the tourist industry and maintaining the late colonialism, it was art and science that paved photography’s way in the Dutch East Indies. Accordingly it is important to turn our attention to the institution, like the Royal Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences, as a means of drawing a picture of early developments in photography and thus gaining an insight into the nature of early photographers’ works in the Dutch East Indies.

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55See for example Arthur S. Walcott, Java and Her Neighbours: A Traveler’s Notes in Java, Celebes, the Moluccas and Sumatra (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1914); Thos. H. Reid, Across the Equator: a Holiday Trip in Java (Singapore: Kelly and Walsh, 1908); Augusta de Wit, Java, facts and Fancies (The Hague: W.P. Van Stockum, 1912).
The publication of meticulous drawings, engravings and blueprints of temples and other antiquities in Raffles’ three volumes *The History of Java* in 1817 by artist/draughtsman William Daniell,\(^56\) highlighted by his ‘discovery’ of the world’s wonder, the Buddhist temple Borobudur, had provoked the interest in the art of drawing and painting in the Dutch scientific expedition in the Indies. In consequence more and more visual artists worked in the Indies either employed by the government or through art and science societies’ commissions or independently.\(^57\) The Dutch draughtsman Adrianus Johannes (Jan) Bik (1790-1872) and the French painter and draughtsman Ernest Alfred Hardouin (1820-1854) were among the artists who worked in Java. This was the atmosphere on the arrival of the daguerreotype when the visual representation (especially in terms of graphic tradition) of the Indies was already established. Batavian Society members would often show their collections of drawings, lithographic prints and paintings of antiquities to photographers they assigned.\(^58\)

Interestingly, the minister of colonies J.C. Baud (1840-1848) assigned health officer and/or army officer Juriaan Munich (1817-1845)\(^59\) “to test and employ

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\(^{56}\) Sir Stamford Raffles was the Governor General during the five years of British interregnum (1811-1815) in the East Indies. Three volumes of *The History of Java* complete with 66 plates, more than half of them are in the volume 2. See Sir Stamford Raffles, *The History of Java Vol. 1-3*, with introduction by John Bastin, (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1965 [1817]).


\(^{58}\) Asser and Theuns-de Boer, *Isidore van Kinsbergen*, pp 94-96.

photography in our tropical region.” Munich had successfully carried out tests of the daguerreotype process in the Netherlands, but his photographic experiment and archeological exploration in Java in 1842, a year after his arrival, was a failure. The plates were less light sensitive in the tropics and too sensitive to moisture and high temperature, which made all 64 of his pictures disappointing and as far as is known they have not survived. Munich’s replacement was a professional German daguerreotypist Adolph Schaefer whose business in The Hague was declining prior to his departure to the Dutch East Indies in 1844. Schaefer arrived in Batavia on a government loan for equipment and travel expenses, which he would pay off by making daguerreotypes. His first assignment was to photograph the antiquities collection of the Batavian Society, which was followed by a much bigger commission: to pursue a detailed documentation of Borobudur. Although he failed to complete the job, the 58 daguerreotypes out of a total of 988 Borobudur reliefs that he made in 1845 were the first known detailed photographic images of an archeological site. No ancient monument was photographed as extensively as Borobudur before. This even predated the much more world-famous Maxime Du Camp daguerreotype work on archeological sites in Egypt, which were dated 1849-
The most recent publication of the Dutch photography history, *Dutch Eyes* (2008), recognizes Adolph Schaefer’s assignment as the first Dutch state photography commission ever.63

The significance of the Javanese antiquities photographic project can be explained by the pressure for the Dutch government to have an up-to-date Java archeological map following its neighboring colonial rulers, especially the British archeological survey in India established in 1861, which employed photography extensively,64 let alone Napoleon’s expeditions in the middle east since 1800, which were exemplified photographically by the work of Maxim Du Camp (1822-1894). The prestige rivalry among imperial powers boosted the early development of photography in the colonies. It was the period when most European photographers were relatively dependant on governmental assignments. In these early years, photographers had to constantly move from one place to the other in order to find clients. After the government terminated his Borobudur contract, Schaefer moved from Semarang to Batavia, then Surabaya and even

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63 Bool et al., *Dutch Eyes*, p. 522. The second one took place more than 50 years later when the Dutch government commissioned Adolphe Zimmermans to photograph the coronation of Queen Wilhelmina in 1898.
64 Publications on the nineteenth century Indian photography would not miss this photography landmark which was brought to the world history of photography by the work of Irish photographers John Burke and William Baker. See Omar Khan, *From Kashmir to Kabul: The Photographs of John Burke and William Baker, 1860-1900* (Munich: Prestel, 2002); John Falconer, *India: Pioneering Photographers: 1850-1900* (London: The British Library and The Howard and Jane Ricketts Collection, 2001). Many of photographs from this expedition are now held in the India Office Collections of the British Library.
to Sumenep on Madura to try his luck before he returned to Batavia completely bankrupt. As early as the late 1850s photographers already competed for Javanese antiquities project assignments to secure their financial stability, as these tended to be long-term projects. What was more, the high-profile government assignment would automatically escalate their reputation not only in Java but also within the nineteenth century photography world. Such competition involved technical improvements and adjustment to working in the tropics and social networking among photo studios, photographers, high-ranking government officials and, most importantly, the Batavian Society. Hence the Javanese antiquities project is an ideal case in describing the nature of photographic works in Java in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The long awaited completion of the Javanese antiquities project, especially the Borobudur project, had laid a battleground among commercial photographers to win the commission. From their elite acquaintances they learnt that the government would eventually continue the project. By the end of the 1850s some commercial photographers already operated in Batavia. The local newspaper Java Bode already advertised their service as early as 1855. Traveling photographers like L. Saurman, C. Duben and A.F. Lacouteux set up their temporary studios in hotels, whereas the first photographers based

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66 Although there is no evidence that photographers in Java had heard of the success of Maxime Du Camp in Egypt, it is still worth assuming that they had learnt of Du Camp’s works considering the relatively small photography world at the time that made possible the immediate spreading of photography’s technical improvements as well as the emergence of high-profile photography projects such as Du Camp’s Egypt expedition.
in Batavia, Woodbury and Page, located their studio in the elite area of Koningsplein.\textsuperscript{67} Studio location was essential for them in order to socialize with the elites, their future clients and sources of information for assignments. Writing to his mother in Manchester, the Englishman Woodbury described his studio’s neighborhood as the “Hyde Park of Batavia” which was “the residence of all the fashionable, among them myself.”\textsuperscript{68} Having heard that the Javanese antiquities project would soon be continued, Woodbury even took some photographs of them on his own initiative. Although the Batavian Society bought some of Woodbury’s photographs of Javanese antiquities, and despite his optimism, the commission was not given to him.\textsuperscript{69}

When the Dutch Government decided to continue the Javanese antiquities project in 1862, a year after the British archeological survey in India was established, the assignment went to Isidore van Kinsbergen (1821-1905), a Bruges-born artist who arrived in Batavia in 1851 as a lithographer, set painter, singer, and actor of Théâtre Français de Batavia. In 1854 Van Kinsbergen began his photography career as assistant to the Frenchman Antoine Francois Lecouteux, the first photographer in Batavia who produced photographs on glass and paper. Trained as a painter, Van Kinsbergen colored and retouched Lecouteux photographs. His talent, artistic background and passion along

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{68} Wachlin, \textit{Woodbury and Page}, p. 11.
\item \textsuperscript{69} In 2 September 1857 letter to his mother, Woodbury wrote: “It is most likely from what we have lately heard that we may be commissioned to make photographs of them from the government” as quoted in Asser and Theuns–de Boer, \textit{Isidore Van Kinsbergen}, p. 26.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
with his excellent social networking had an immediate effect on his photographic
career.\textsuperscript{70} In early 1862 he was appointed official photographer of the Dutch East Indies
diplomatic mission to Siam, thanks to his contact Alexis Louden, the General Secretary
of the East Indies. In the same year, after the Siam mission Van Kinsbergen was assigned
again to accompany the new Dutch East Indies Governor General L.A.J.W. Baron Sloet
de Beele’s trip through Java. In this trip Van Kinsbergen got the opportunity to
photograph several archeological sites, the Prambanan and Borobudur temples as well as
the Sultanate of Yogyakarta and Surakarta in Central Java. During this trip the Batavian
Society informed Governor General Sloet van de Beele of the decision to continue the
Javanese antiquity project. Being able to present the newly made Prambanan, Borobudur
and Sultanate photographs, and being the present governor general’s official
photographer, had made Van Kinsbergen the most likely candidate for the biggest Dutch
government photography commission ever. On 27 December 1862 Van Kinsbergen
signed a 37,000 guilder contract with the Batavian Society to photograph Javanese
antiquities on 41 archeological sites across Java in 1863-1867. Van Kinsbergen won the
highest profile commission to date over other more established contemporaries including
his ex tutor Lecouteux and the well-known Woodbury and Page studio.\textsuperscript{71}

Although the value of Van Kinsbergen’s contract with the Batavian Society
corresponded to a large sum of money, it was the prestige of the job that photographers

\textsuperscript{70} For a comprehensive biography of Isidore van Kinsbergen see Gerda Theuns-de
Boer, “The Many Talent of Isidore van Kinsbergen: A Life Spent in Service to Theatre,
Photography and Archeology”, in Asser and Theuns–de Boer, \textit{Isidore Van Kinsbergen},
pp. 10-85, also see, Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer, “Isidore van Kinsbergen: Photographer
\textsuperscript{71} Asser and Theuns-de Boer, \textit{Isidore Van Kinsbergen}, p. 40.
chased after. Van Kinsbergen was reported to have rejected a commission to make portraits of 140 officers that was worth a one-year contract with the Batavian society for one month’s work.\footnote{Asser and Theuns-de Boer, \textit{ibid.}, p. 40.} Having said that, in the period under discussion photographers earned their main income still from making portraits for private individuals. High-profile commissions from the government were important to make them famous and to boost their prestige and reputation, which in turn invited clients who were, in Woodbury’s description, “principally Dutch, a few English and French and a few better class Chinese – the Malays are too poor to pay for it.”\footnote{Wachlin, \textit{Woodbury and Page}, p. 13.}

The end of the Cultivation System in 1870, which marked the peak years of the colonial agro industry, witnessed the solid potential development of commercial photography in the Dutch East Indies. The first Java-based photo studio, the English firm Woodbury and Page in Batavia, had already been operating for 13 years. Its founder Walter Bentley Woodbury had already returned to England and was replaced by his brothers Henry James and Albert Woodbury. This dynamic evidenced the success of the photography business in the Indies. Many other studios were also flourishing, including the Belgian Isidore van Kinsbergen, the Dutch Jacobus Anthonie Messen, French A.F. Lecouteux, H. Lecotey and C. Parants, and the German firm Petz and Co. and C. Kruger and A Wulisch.\footnote{The most comprehensive and detailed survey on the photographers and photo studios operating in the Dutch East Indies 1839-1939 which included dates and places was done by Steven Wachlin, “Commercial photographers and Photographic studios in the Netherlands East Indies”, in Groeneveld et al.\textit{Toekang Portret}, pp. 177-192.} The international character of early commercial photography in Batavia reflected the cosmopolitanism of the city in the second half of the nineteenth century. The
growing European community and the formation of an elite society was a logical result of the Dutch East Indies economic success, which provided ever-growing clients for photographers. The comfortable daily life photographers led is eloquently described in Woodbury’s letter to his mother: “We rise at about 6 and take a walk for half an hour and then come back to breakfast at 7 – after breakfast from about half past 7 to 10 or 11 are our principal business hours as it is then pretty cool, at 12 we have what they call tiffin, a sort of luncheon. After tiffin we take a siesta for an hour and on waking have a cup of tea brought in to us, the rest of the afternoon we pass away by finishing the morning portraits, reading, drawing or anything else until 5 o’clock when we bathe and dress for dinner which we have at half past 6, after dinner we take a drive somewhere for about an hour or two, come home, have a cup of tea and go to bed at about half past 9, - such is our daily life, one day exactly like another.”

The commercial photographic activities in the colony capital of Batavia soon extended to other cities and towns across Java and Sumatera following the ever-growing economic development and the spreading European communities outside the capital. This development also coincided with the handing over of the industry to private enterprises at the end of the Cultivation System. From 1870 and the decades that followed, European commercial photographers network started to set up their studios in Bogor and Cirebon (West Java), Yogyakarta and Magelang (Central Java), Surabaya and Malang (East Java).

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76 Chapter 4 will discuss in greater detail the European communities and the European population change in Java in the discussion of bridges photographs and new mobility in the sugar world.
Their main business was still making portraits of Europeans, high class Chinese and local elites, besides producing series of cartes de visite depicting local crafts, customs and views for the open market.

However the interesting development from this period, following Groeneveld, was the enormous expansion of topographical photography.77 The second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century commercial photographic studios in Java and Sumatera had already produced a vast number photographs of roads, buildings, railroad, factories, and plantations (sugar, tea, tobacco, coffee, rubber), not to mention the standard topographical views such as mountains, rivers and paddy fields. The photography collection of the Rijkmuseum in Amsterdam holds a very interesting photo album in this regard.78 The album, a token from the Surabaya Sugar Syndicate to the Resident of Surabaya, F. Beyerinck (1876-1884), consists of a series of photographs that systematically depicts Surabaya’s cityscape: hotels, roads, the harbor, churches, the Chinese neighborhood, the post office, canals, bridges, big houses, parks and gardens. It also includes a photograph of the gamelan orchestra, group portraits of local leaders (bupati), old temples and stone statues, alun-alun (city park center), and Javanese kampung (village). Interestingly, despite being assigned by a sugar syndicate, this album showcases only nine (out of fifty three) photographs which are directly related to the sugar industry: a photograph of a machine in a factory interior; a portrait of Javanese workers sitting on the ground and European supervisors standing in front of a factory;

77 Bool et al., Dutch Eyes, p. 306.
five photographs of factory buildings; a photograph of activities in front of the factory, and a photograph of the sugar plantation. This particular collection is one of the earliest sugar photo albums and probably the first systematic cityscape album, whose topographical features, I will argue, would inform subsequent sugar photo albums.

Apart from government-commissioned photographs for the aid of science in the early days of photography in the Dutch East Indies, commercial photographers constantly produced topographical photographs. From time to time they traveled to capture the ‘wonder’ of the beauty of natural tropical scenery in photographs, which always had potential buyers. Walter Bently Woodbury of Woodbury and Page studio already advertised his photographs of some cities in East Java (Malang, Kediri and Ngantang) for sale in *Java Bode* on January 30, 1861. Large business and agriculture enterprises also commissioned photographers to document their achievement exemplified in various plantations and factories. Such a commission was frequently followed by opening a new branch of studio in the area due to the profit potential. The Singapore-based German studio Lambert and Co. opened their branch in Medan, North Sumatera in the 1880s in

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79 The earliest sugar photo albums held in Dutch archives appear to be album # 256 “Souvenirs aan Poerwokerto en Kalibagor” taken also by Woodbury and Page studio and dated 1880-1900 of the collection of the Tropenmuseum Amsterdam and photo album # 909 “Souvenir de Kadhipaten 1895” taken by unknown photographer/studio of the collection of the KITLV, Leiden.

80 In 1879 Woodbury and Page studio published a catalogue of 693 photographs available for public to purchase. This catalogue contained more than 160 photographs of Batavia, which were not necessarily taken at the same time and purpose. See Wachlin, *Woodbury and Page*, p. 198, Bool et al., *Dutch Eyes*, p. 306. That makes the Rijkmuseum photo album probably the first body of photographs that was made for that purpose.

response to previous commissions to document a tobacco plantation in the area.82
Another German photographer, who used to work for Lambert and Co., Charles J.
Kleingrothe, opened his own studio in the same city and specialized in the “photographic
documentation of the cultivation and processing of tropical agriculture products.”83

Nineteenth century landscape and cityscape photography was often seen as a
topographical photograph because it visually represents, following the Oxford dictionary
definition of topography: “the surface features of a place or region collectively” in the
most accurate detail.84 This fit well with many imperial projects in the colonies: to
familiarize with the yet unknown territory; to study soil conditions of the unexplored land
for plantation or road; for military purposes as well as to show the new topography of the
new industrialized colony. Hence photographs of the sugar plantation landscape
depicting native workers under European supervision as well as ethnographic portraits of
local people and culture would be seen as an explicit reflection of social relations within
colonial society. In the same vein, basic topographical and landscape photographs such as
scenery of mountains, seashores, rivers, valleys, lakes and indigenous cultivation, as

82 John Falconer, A Vision of the Past: A History of Early Photography in
83 Peter Kors, “Kleingrothe’s Images of Technology: The Reassuring View of the
Indies,” in Reed, Towards Independence, p. 54.
84 The entry of “Topographical Photography” in the Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-
Century Photography lists books about the work of nineteenth-century photographers
such as Roger Fenton (1852-1860), Pioneer Photographer of Brazil (1840-1920),
Photography in Nineteenth Century America, Francis Frith in Egypt and Palestine: A
Victorian Photographer Abroad etc. See Hannavy ed. Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-
Century Photography, pp. 1395-1397.
Ryan compellingly argues, was “a powerful means of organizing and domesticating imperial landscape.”

There could not be any better literal applications of “domesticating imperial landscape” than placing the imperial gaze of topographical photography in the family album. It is in this line of logic that in each category of sugar albums in the Tropenmuseum collection (small/big family/company album) varieties of topographical photographs are consistently present in considerable number. Five big albums of the Pietermaat-Soesman family provide evidence of this pattern. The “Souvenir aan Poerwokerto en Kalibagor” (Album # 256) has more than half landscape and cityscape photographs out of 91 photographs in the album, not to mention the three opening photographs, which are topographical views of the resident’s house, city park and factory backyard. Photographs depicting transportation infrastructure come to prominence especially in photographs of bridges. As I go on to argue in chapter 4, the notable existence of modern bridge photographs in family albums does not only display the scenery change of the Java rural areas, but also reflects the new mobility in the sugar world. “Suikerfabriek Sedatie 1914”, (Album # 485) a small and simple family album, whose quality suggests that an amateur photographer took photographs, also consists predominantly of topographical views of factories, bridges and roads. These even outnumbered portraits, which usually are the main features of the family photo albums. The fifth photo album of the Pietermaat-Soesman bundle, titled “Album Bali” (Album # 160) consists only of photographs of Balinese landscape and culture. The album has no

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captions, which make the photographs impersonal. The studio logo and printed number in the lower left corner in every photograph suggests that they were purchased from an Armenian photographer who was based in Surabaya, Onnes Kurkdjian. Such a practice amplified the circulation of topographical photographs into the domestic domain of the family in the colony. At the same time photographers continuously produced them in response to the market demand. It was a common practice to put together photographs by different photographers in the same album, as evidenced in Pietermaat-Soesman family album number four, “Gezichten van Diverse Plaatsen” (album number 362). Photographers also often exchanged stock photographs with each other and put them together in the same album.86

The sugar syndicate and/or company albums in the Tropenmuseum collection confirm the existence of topographical photographs in a more systematic way. The album of “Proefstation voor de Javasuikerindustrie te Pasoeroean 1926” (Album number 807) consists mainly of portraits and topographical photographs. The first seven photographs in the album display long views of different buildings from different perspectives, which are followed by depictions of various activities, and group portraits of employees. We will find similar patterns in the album of “Algemeen Syndicaat van Suikerfabriekanten in Nederlandsch-Indië, Suiker op Java in Beeld” (Album number 529), which give us a more comprehensive depiction of the overall process of the sugar production, from

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86 The earliest known family photo albums in the Dutch East Indies are the albums for Mientje van der Hucht (1862) and the album of the J.C. van der Pot family. The later, which is in the collection of RotterdamWereldmuseum, contains photographs by both the Woodbury and Page studio and Isidore van Kinsbergen, see Bool, Dutch Eyes, p. 306.
cultivation, harvesting sugar cane, transporting and processing in the factory until shipping. Studio Kurkdjian in Surabaya produced both albums. It shows how economic development had nourished photo studios in a hub city of industrialization like Surabaya. In 1914 there were 75 sugar factories around Surabaya (including Madiun, Kediri and Pasuruan)\(^{87}\) not to mention other enterprises. Meanwhile the number of commercial photo studios in Surabaya alone (excluding Madiun, Kediri and Pasuruan) significantly increased from five photo studios in 1870 to 29 photo studios in 1915.\(^{88}\) One might imagine regular photography commissions to produce commemorative or jubilee albums on various occasions from those sugar companies.

The need to make photographs and photo albums I have described above evidently affected photography’s development in Java at the turn of the nineteenth century. But more importantly it had also established, I would argue, a distinct character for industrial photographic representation in the colony. This character further developed in the two dominant forms of the photo albums, those of portraits and topographical photographs, which will be discussed in the following chapters.


CHAPTER 3: THE PORTRAITS, RACE IN THE SUGAR WORLD

One may start discussing race in the sugar world of Java from a page of a photo album that has an additional layer on it. The practice of putting additional layers over photographs as a means to overlay additional information that was not inscribed in the photograph was often adopted in late nineteenth century and early twentieth century photo albums. Nonetheless, as I will argue in this chapter, this distinct practice can lead us into the complex nature of the mixed colonial society and shed new light on various aspects of race relations in well-established sugar enterprises in Dutch East Indies Java. Hence, before we depart, a brief overview of the nature of the colonial community on whose formation sugar enterprises had a significant impact will contextualize our discussion.

The long presence of the sugar industry in Java, especially since the introduction of the Cultivation System in 1830, created local mixed colonial societies in which European communities played a central role as the elite of what I would term “sugar towns.” Their spread followed the newly established sugar enterprises across the island, mostly in central and east Java. A small colonial administrative unit such as the Residency of Pekalongan on the island’s northern coast is a perfect example of a typical...

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89 In fifty-one sugar photo albums in the collection of the Tropenmuseum Amsterdam dated 1870-1930, there are four pages in four different photo albums that have an additional layer. See Album# 256 p. 14, Album # 807 page 20, Album# 808 p. 26, Album# 2018 p. 51).

90 A map of sugar factories in Java produced in the early twentieth century, which I will discuss in the next chapter, gives the most graphic illustration of the spread of sugar factories throughout Java, which naturally were followed by the distribution of the European community. See chapter 4.
sugar town in mid-nineteenth-century Java. The resident’s house and office and the post office composed the urban center. In the main street, two Europeans (one German and one French) ran two different shops, providing European food and beverages, clothing and fashion articles, whereas some other shops, presumably in the same area, were run by Chinese. According to Verslag Residentie (Residence Report) of Pekalongan in 1819 and 1823, as described by Roger Knight, the Chinese neighborhood was in the western sector, including the house of the Kapitan, the Chinese leader, who was appointed by the colonial government. Contrarily, the house of Javanese Bupati (Regent), the main mosque and markets occupied the eastern part of the town. The local inhabitants (Javanese) lived around the urban core in different kampung (urban neighborhoods). Apart from sugar manufacturers, the European community in the sugar town was typically composed of colonial government officials, business people, and military personnel when there was local military establishment in town.

The sugar manufacturers in Java were, one might argue, the latest legion of colonial explorers, who, armed with technology and modern management skills of factory production, worked under the auspices of the colonial government and, most importantly, enjoyed the support of the capital supplier both in the metropolis and the

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91 Arthur van Schaik and G. Roger Knight, “An Anatomy of Sugarlandia: Local Dutch Communities and the Colonial Sugar Industry in Mid-nineteenth-century Java,” in Bosma, Giusti-Cordero and Knight, eds., Sugarlandia Revisited, p. 57. Hereafter, the following description of a typical sugar town in mid-nineteenth century in Java and beyond will rely on this source.

92 Series of photographs depicting military activities did appear occasionally in the sugar photo albums. For example, one of Pietermat-Soesman’s album entitled “Gezichten van Diverse Plaatsen” (View from Different Places, album # 362) has ten military photographs.
colony. They were, in Mrazek’s term, “engineers of happy land,” the main agents of the sugar manufacturing technology: chemists, specialist engineers in steel and steam, and mechanists who pushed forward the industrial frontier in the colony. They arrived together with the shiploads of imported machinery from Great Britain and Continental Europe. Their initial assignment was to supervise the assembly of the machines, subsequently working for the factory, but would eventually stay for the rest of their life. Suikerlord (sugar barons), wealthy Indies and sugar manufacturers recruited them, brought them out of old world Europe and sponsored their prolonged stay in the colony. The life story of the English-born Thomas Jeoffries Edwards (1815-1865) illustrates the pattern of European skilled labor in Java in the period in question. He arrived in Java as a specialist of steam engines and steam pumps at the age of 27, married a locally born Eurasian woman, Anne Baird, and died as the general manager of a sugar factory in North Java. The newcomers of European birth like Edwards were called Caucasians, but they were better known as totok, which derived from a term to refer to Java’s Chinese who were born in Mainland China, whilst peranakan was used for those who were locally born. Edwards’ wife Anne Baird was a creole, an Indies-born white European; and finally the last and the biggest group was the mestizo, the mixed-blood of white Europeans and local women. They were mostly known as Indo, a derogatory abbreviation for Indo-Europeans. The mestizo and the Indo formed the biggest group of the colonial


community. Although the exact figure of this population is not available, the number ranged between 70-80 percent of Europeans who were Indies born.\footnote{Ulbe Bosma, and Remco Raben, \textit{Being Dutch in the Indies: A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920} (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008), p. 22; Knight, \textit{Narratives of Colonialism}, p. 54; Robert Cribb and Audrey Kahin, \textit{Historical Dictionary of Indonesia} (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2004), p. 122.}

The source of demographic data from 1850-1930 was the \textit{Koloniaal Verslag} (Colonial Report), which was compiled by the residents in charge and was published every five years. The scope and content of the Colonial Report naturally changed over time, and so did the demographic data. Although the administrative racial classification was slightly different than the one in the census, interestingly, the racial categories were never fundamentally changed. In the census’ category there were Europeans, Chinese, Indigenous and Other Asian Population.\footnote{P. Boomgaard and A.J. Gooszen (eds.), \textit{Changing Economy in Indonesia: A Selection of Statistical Material from the Early 19th Century up to 1940, Volume 11, Population Trends 1795-1942} (Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Royal Tropical Institute, 1991).} On the contrary, judicial practice, legislation and executive policy recognized only three different groups of the population: Europeans, Inlanders (Natives) and Foreign Orientals. Chinese were the largest group in the last category, which also included Arabs, Japanese and Indians. In the course of the Dutch East Indies colonial state there had been no change in the racial categories. The change occurred according to the criteria by which the European category was legally defined, which obviously had an impact on daily matters. For the time of United East Indies Company (VOC) in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the law equated Christian natives with Dutchmen and other European Protestants. Thus, in the early days of colonization religion was the principal criterion of categorization instead of race. In the
course of the Dutch East Indies colonial state Article 109 of 1854 formally distinguished between Europeans and natives, which gave the Europeans privileges over the natives in terms of the conditions of employment and service. For mostly practical reasons, there had been some equalization of different racial and social groups with Europeans, and as a result the racial classifications were never exactly specified. The Chinese were made subject to European law to simplify business dealings, and the Japanese were equalized for purely political reasons. Small groups that were not clear either way were allocated to one or the other without any clear pattern. For example, Armenians were classified as Europeans and Arabs as natives, wives of Europeans as Europeans; children of legitimate marriage followed the father whereas the illegitimate ones followed the mother. Christian natives and natives who were not Christian but able to demonstrate that they were perfectly assimilated with the European community were still counted as European. In short, the question of who belonged to the European community or not, as Fasseur argues, was merely decided based on practice rather than following certain regulations, “the criteria was purely ethnological… as having been decided ‘by nature’.” 97 Fasseur suggests that the impact of racial classification could not be located generally within various domains of, for example, community life and kinship, organization in the city, the village, the factory or the plantation by using a framework of regulations. On the contrary the internal structure of the colonial community dictated the practice and ‘the nature’ of racial classification, which transcended the legal racial category construction. This leaves

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us to look at the site of daily practice of the colonial community, as they are reflected, photographs in the family album.

Figure 1. Page 14 with transparent paper, Album# 256, KIT.  

Figure 2. Page 14 without transparent paper, Album# 256, KIT.

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98 This is the list of names and their occupation, which is handwritten on the transparent paper: 1. Mr. Pietermaat-Administrator, 2. Mr. Lange-Factory supervisor, 3. Mr. J. H. van der Welde-Plantation employee, 4. Mr. Ottenhoof-1st Engine man/Machinist, 5. Mr. W. R. van der Welde-Former assistant Bookkeeper/Accountant, 6. Mr. von Balluseck-Plantation employee, 7. Mr. Nolson-Accountant/bookkeeper, 8. Mr. Ko Mien He-Cashier, 9. Mr. Ten Cate-Plantation employee, 10. Mr. van Oordt-Assistant Chemist, 11. Mr. Philips-Chemist, 12. Mr. Jager-2nd Engine man, 13. Mr. van Stenus-3rd Engine man, 14. Mr. Francke-Weighbridge Supervisor, 15. Mr. Langras-Assistant Factory Supervisor, 16. Mr. L. Frans-Student Machinist, 17. Mr. M. Frans-Plantation employee.
We are looking at two photographs of one page of a family photo album. The album consists of 98 pages of 49 leaves. Ninety-one photographs adhered to both sides of each leaf, a single photograph on each decorated page. All the photographs are gelatin silver prints in two different sizes: 21x27.5cm (page 1-84) and 16,5x11,5 cm (page 85-91). This physically formidable album measures 42x35cm in size and is 8,5cm thick, which is considered a large size album of the collection, with a golden embossed title on the cover.

The album is entitled “Souvenir from Poerwokerto and Kalibagor.” The title of the album suggests the intention of its making: a token that is a visual representation of the sugar plantation and factory in Poerwokerto and Kalibagor in Central Java, Indonesia. This album is the first and the biggest of five albums that were donated to the museum by the Pietermaat-Soesman family on June 27, 1929. Information about when each photograph was taken is not available, but the album is dated 1905. It implies that the album had already made its way to the Netherlands not long after its making, which indicates families and friends in the Holland as the designated audiences of the album. Woodbury and Page, one of the biggest and most famous photo studios in the capital of Batavia, was assigned to take the photographs and presumably produced the album as well. Apart from the official depiction of the factory and other infrastructure, this album also shows some personal activities and scenes from the domestic life of the factory director and other European staff in an unusually formal manner. They were photographed in front of their new houses, which were, as the captions suggested, provided by the company.
The page under discussion is numbered fourteen. This page is preceded by a series of photographs of the factory’s exterior and succeeded by a series of photographs of houses of European staff of different employment status. At first glance, the transparent paper that layers this page, which also covers the caption, simply has an identification function. The numbers on the transparent paper refer to the persons in the succeeding photograph, whose names and occupations are handwritten on the lower part of the paper. One has to lift up the layer to look at the persons whose faces appear in silhouette on the transparent paper. The attachment over the transparent paper in the album page suggests that it was added later after the Woodbury and Page photo studio delivered the album and the photographs. Putting another layer on the photograph was a strategy to attach additional information that has not been embedded in the photograph. Accordingly, it is reminiscent of what I call “the stereoscopic model of vision.” Both the stereoscope and the transparent paper held temporal information, which repositioned the viewer’s relationship to the photograph. Equivalent to the illusion of depth and three-dimensionality provided by the stereoscope, the transparent paper provided space to list their names and occupation, which is a clear honorific representation system. In his

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99 The stereoscope is a device that offers slightly two different photographic images (stereograph) to each eye in order to get a three-dimensional illusion of the same depicted object. The illusion of depth on the two-dimensional surface of the photograph is an achievement in representing nature, a celebration of what is seen from which relations based on private property can be drawn. I argue that it is a step further from what has been accomplished by ‘regular’ photographs. The stereoscope is both a concrete technological advancement and an illusion of three-dimensional representation. It is a literal answer for a metaphorical desire of the bourgeois order. It is one of the bourgeois, optic-based enjoyments whose popularity is comparable to other forms of visual imagery in the nineteenth century such as the camera obscura. The three-dimensional illusion was not meant to convince nor to provide visual information. It is a momentary pleasing experience when one peeps into a stereoscope device.
seminal article “The Body and the Archive” Alan Sekula called this kind of practice a “ceremonial presentation of bourgeois self”\textsuperscript{100}; in this specific case, it is a celebration of the success of the Dutch sugar agro-industry in the tropical Indies.

Applying Foucault’s ideas about the panoptic principle in our daily life, Sekula argued that photography “welded the honorific and repressive functions together.”\textsuperscript{101} The double representational function of photography repressed and honored its subjects. Each pole of representation implicitly takes its place in a social and moral hierarchy, which most evidently operates in portraiture. Either honorific or repressive functions, each contains certain social and moral hierarchy, whose base lays on economic relationships.

The numbering system of the list of people on the transparent paper is a plain manifestation of Sekula’s idea. There are seventeen persons on the list whose numbers are registered hierarchically, although not in a strict manner. Number one refers to Mr. Pietermaat, the factory/plantation administrator (general manager), whose family had donated the album to the museum. Mr. Ottenhoof, the first engine man/machinist is number four on the list, whereas Mr. Jager and Mr. van Stenus, the second and the third engine men, are numbers thirteen and fourteen respectively. The accountant, Mr. Nolson, at number seven is followed by the cashier, Mr. Ko Mien He, who is at number eight.

The numbering system also corresponds to the arrangement of their pose. Mr. Pietermaat naturally is in the center of the group, sitting in his chair in a straight posture with a commanding gaze. It is clear that he is in charge. The person who is also sitting in the chair on his left in a more relaxed posture is Mr. Lange, the factory supervisor. On the

other hand, as might be expected, young fellows, such as plantation employees, Mr. M.
Frans and Mr. Ten Cate along with Mr. Langras, the assistant factory supervisor, and Mr.
L. Frans, the student machinist, are standing on the far left and far right sides of the
group, while older and higher ranked members of the group are standing in the middle.

As Sekula has observed, this model of composition is perpetuated from the early
modern form of seventeenth century portrait painting with less extensive leveling of
social relationship. Unlike painting, photography requires much less planning and
arrangement beforehand in the picture plane. This explains some hierarchical
inaccuracies or inconsistencies of order in group portrait photographs that are not
possible in group portrait paintings. In the case of our group portrait above, one hardly
finds particular order of posing or composition within the different levels of social
hierarchy, apart from the fact that the director and the senior employees persons are
settled in the middle and the younger ones on the sides. As for the numbering system on
the transparent paper, interestingly Mr. Phillips, the chemist, is settled at number eleven
below his assistant chemist, Mr. van Oordt, who was put at number ten. Sekula perceives
such inconsistencies as photography’s subversion of the privileges inherent in portraiture,
which could lay a new basis for the “hierarchy of taste.” Mr. Pietermaat appeared to be
the only person whose pose still referred to the convention of seventeenth century
portraiture, whereas the rest of the group seem to pose themselves as they pleased. The
honorific convention of the portrait is changed by the momentariness of the shooting and
the sheer photographic practices. One needs much less time and money to have his or her

102 Sekula, *ibid.*, p. 6
portrait photographed then painted. Consequently portraiture in photography offered much more pose possibilities for the sitter than in painting, which was argued by some scholars as the democratic dimension of photography.\footnote{Liz Wells, ed., \textit{Photography: A Critical Introduction}, (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 251.}

On the other hand, the new role of photographic portraiture, which is impossible to be performed by the painted portrait, “came to establish and delimit the terrain of the \textit{other}”.\footnote{Sekula, “The Body and the Archive,” p. 7.} This is the repressive side of photographic representation. The album page that we have discussed provides evidence of Sekula’s contestation. The printed caption in Dutch below the photograph translates as follows: “Façade of the new office, as seen from the main street, before which appear the administrator with the Europeans and some of the local personnel. Amongst the local staff, there are supervisors who have already worked 25-30 years for the factory as garden or factory supervisors”.\footnote{The Dutch caption in the album page follows: “Voorfront van het nieuwe kantoor, van den grooten weg gezien, waarop voorkomen, de Administrateur met het Europeesche-en een gedeelte an het Inlandisch Personeel. Bij hen Inlandsch Personeel Zitten mandoers, die reeds 25-30 jaren, als tuin – of fabrieksmandoers in dienst van de Fabriek zijn.”} As the caption indicates, there should be another group of people apart from the administrator and the “European personnel” in the photographs, who are not registered on the list on the transparent paper. These are “the local staff” and “supervisor,” who although having already worked for the company for more than half of their lives, did not make it into the list on the transparent paper. The caption also confirms what Sekula termed as the construction of bourgeois norms by creating a demarcation zone between respectability
and “deviance.” The deviance in the photograph refers to those who do not belong to the group and who are celebrating themselves. The deviance is the other. The transparent paper materializes these demarcation lines, the terrain of the other. It is a layer of the norm that regulates those who were worth remembering and those who were not, those who existed and those who did not exist on paper. This piece of paper is both a concrete material layer and an abstract paradigmatic entity, whose function is complementary to each other: to mark and honor the respectable and cover and repress the other. Different from the function of the stereoscope that reveals the three-dimensional illusion, an additional imagery that is not inscribed in the photograph, the transparent paper conceals what is inscribed in the photograph both literally and metaphorically.

The “second” group in the photograph is rather less visible in its presence, although the numbers are fairly large. The members of the group wear dark attire and Javanese traditional batik with carefully folded head-cloths. The color of their regalia is in line with the color of the ground, marking a big contrast when compared to the white colonial outfit of the Europeans. They sit with their legs crossed on the foreground before the Europeans who either sit on chairs or stand above them. They sit in a similar way, putting their hands on their laps and slouching their back, whereas people behind them sit and stand as they wish to be seen. While the Europeans present themselves as individual subjects in front of the camera, the second group seems to be under the domination of the camera as they stare back at the camera in almost similar looks. Every individual of local staff becomes identical. They seem to perfectly occupy the terrain of the other; both the

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generalized look and contingent instance are defined. According to Sekula, the law-abiding body—“a body that was either bourgeois or subject to the domination of the bourgeoisie”\textsuperscript{107} is associated with the invention of the modern criminal body. The effort to identify the figure of criminal genius that is indistinguishable from the bourgeois and the criminal biotype that is distinct from the bourgeois was the bourgeois “systematic defense of social relationship based on private property.”\textsuperscript{108} Applying this theory to the photograph in discussion, one would notice that the identical appearance of every local staff individual constitutes a biotype. They are many in numbers but one in essence. The local personnel become one prototype that is distinct from European staff.

Judging from the local personnel’s pose, attire and sitting position, one might argue that their overall appearance yields the representation of their European colleagues. Their presence is part and parcel of the construction of bourgeois norms. The gap between their sitting position and the position of the European staff, who appear to be bigger because of the color contrast, draws imaginative lines that demarcate an area between the honored and the repressed subjects. This single photograph and its transparent paper layer is a fairly literal display of Sekula’s notion of the double system of photographic representation. The construction of social hierarchy also appears evidently both among the European subjects and between the Europeans and local personnel, both in the photograph and on the transparent paper.

\textsuperscript{107} Sekula, “The Body and the Archive,” p. 15.
On the other hand, taking a closer look at the photograph, one can find a kind of *criminal genius*\(^{109}\) among European staff, which as a matter of fact was already distinguishable from the name list on the transparent paper. In number eight, the cashier bore a non-European name: Mr. Ko Mien He. The caption does not specifically mention Mr. Ko Mien He’s particular identity, which is neither European, nor ‘local.’ However, in the photograph he appeared as European staff. He stood among the European staff, dressed like his European colleagues and presented himself as a unique, independent individual. Unlike the other non-Europeans in the photographs, he was the exceptional one, who was indistinguishable from his bourgeois colleagues. His name suggests that he is a Chinese. Chinese, Indian, and Arab communities have had a long-standing presence in the Indies, but their populations continued to receive new influxes of immigrants and were considered “foreign” by the colonial government. They fell under the racial category of ‘foreign oriental.’ Having arrived as traders, the first Chinese settlers were recorded since approximately the 10\(^{th}\) century. Since then the role of the Chinese in the archipelago’s history has been very particular. Briefly, they have always been there but they have never been considered an integral part of the indigenous community. For the context of our discussion, because of their significant economic power the colonial government kept track of them by having a special category of Chinese in the census. One could also find all the names of Java’s Chinese officers by residency and district in

\(^{109}\) Deriving from Foucault, Sekula uses the term of criminal genius in discussion of the construction of criminal body in the prison photograph, to name the type of criminal photograph that looks alike the bourgeois. See Sekula, *The Body and The Archive*, p. 15.
the the *Regeerings Almanak* (Government Almanac). The *Almanak* was, in Rush’s term, “a demography of power among the Javan Chinese.”

As mentioned briefly in chapter one, the Chinese were involved in the sugar industry in Java since the beginning. They produced the first commercial sugar cane in the outskirts of Batavia under the sponsorship of the VOC in the 17th century. Although their main role in the industry was pushed aside during the process of the industrialization of the manufacture of sugar in the course of the cultivation system in the early 19th century, the Chinese presence in sugar businesses never vanished, a fact that is exemplified in figures like Oei Tiong Ham. Oei Tiong Ham owned a sugar-centered trading company whose success earned him the name of “Java’s Sugar Lord” in British circles. In the 1890s he expanded his business into sugar production as well by taking over five sugar factories. By the end of nineteenth century there were local sugar kings in Java: Tan Tjien Kie from Cirebon, West Java; Kwee Hoo Tang from Semarang, Central Java, and Han from Pasuruan, East Java. Inside the European-owned plantations and factories one could easily find Chinese artisans and workmen. The arrival of the most modern machinery apparently also created skilled Chinese operatives. The high-tech

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111 Furnivall, *Netherlands India*, p. 41.
Sugar Factory Wonopringo, for example, hired a Chinese expert to run and supervise the machines.\footnote{Knight, \textit{Narratives of Colonialism}, p. 19.}

This historical background explains why in this group portrait Mr. Ko Mien He does not seem to suffer a lack of sophistication, standing in the middle of white bourgeois colleagues. One might argue that he did not pose as bourgeois because he himself is a legitimate bourgeois. Mr. Ko certainly does not look white, but in this photograph social hierarchy was determined by one’s technical and managerial skill rather than skin color. The ‘nature’ of work in the factory, following Fasseur’s argument, determined Mr. Ko’s social class as belonging to the European. In the colony, the dress code, food and housing of the European community was “a unique cultural configuration,” which had “particular social order of colonial rule.”\footnote{Ann Laura Stoler, “Rethinking Colonial Categories: European Communities and the Boundries of Rule,” \textit{Comparative Studies in Society and History}, 31 (1989): p. 136-137. This article is chapter 2 in Stoler, \textit{Carnal of Knowledge}.} This configuration of the bourgeois social order in the factory made possible for a non-European like Mr. Ko to be included because, as it was allowed by his occupation, he was able to maintain the private property based on social relations. Therefore Sekula’s notion of \textit{criminal genius}, the indistinguishable other, seems to work differently in this case. Mr. Ko’s “Chinese body” was neither subject to the dominion of the bourgeoisie, nor repressively represented. The photographic representation of Mr. Ko, like his other European colleagues, functioned honorifically. Thus the \textit{criminal genius} works to identify that Mr. Ho was the only non-European who qualified to be part of the bourgeois European community in the factory.
Mr. Ko’s occupation as cashier also sheds some new light on the repressive side of Sekula’s photographic double representation. As a cashier, the person who handles all payment in the factory and plantation, one will naturally assume that he had to have a complete list of names of the paid employees. That is to say that he knew the names of all Javanese employees, who squatted in the photograph. This suggests that the absence of their names on the transparent paper does not necessarily mean that they are unknown. Masters always know their slaves. Nonetheless, when we look at the names on the transparent paper and we find no names of Javanese in the photographs regardless their life-long work in the plantation and factory, we are likely to think that this is a straightforward manifestation of colonial racism; that is, the non-existence of the Javanese name proves racial discrimination. We tend to perceive such practice as drawing the line between the colonizer and the colonized, therefore familiarizing the distinction between We and They by creating, in Sekula’s words, “the terrain of others.” However the case is hardly as black and white as it appears on the surface of the black and white photograph. Some studies on the nature of working relationships between employers and employees in colonial days show that this had never been a mechanical encounter between colonizers and colonized. So did the historical novels written both by Dutch and Indonesians, which depict complex relationships between both parties, intertwining issues of apprenticeship, loyalty, marriage, forbidden love, race, and gender.

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118 See for example Ann Laura Stoler and Karen Strasler, “Memory-Work in Java: A Cautionary Tale” in Stoler, Carnal Knowledge, pp. 162-217 and Tinneke Hellwig,
A brief historical survey, triggered by details in the photograph - the Chinese cashier and unnamed Javanese - has encouraged us to distinguish between the notion of repression and non-recognition. I argue that in the case of the colonial photograph, the absence of the names of the natives in captions or other text attached to the photograph does not necessarily articulate the repressive function of Sekula’s double representation of photography. The collection of the Amsterdam Tropenmuseum, from which the photograph under discussion comes, shows that the natives generally remain unnamed. Although in the photographs they are the central figures, they are, effectively, on their own and not posed next to their masters. They are normally noted by their occupation: nursemaid, gardener, houseboy, servant, and cook instead of their name. The photographs were also normally taken next to objects and sites that mark their occupation: kitchen, garden or stable, or when they were at work: cleaning, nursing, serving, or just standing ready for orders. The natives remained unnamed not because they are unknown or their presence inessential. They were essential for their master but yet they were not part of the family or the family friends whose name ought to be mentioned in the album.

In the account of her family history in the Dutch East Indies, Dutch historian Frances Gouda makes use of her own old family album. Finding a photograph of “a beautiful Javanese woman in sarong and kebaya” who was her oldest sister’s nanny and carried her as “an angelic golden-haired baby in her arms,” Gouda had to ask her mother the Javanese woman’s name. Obviously the name of the person who took care of her oldest sister almost twenty four hours a day is not written in the album, but she is

identified by her occupation: the nanny. Nevertheless her name is well remembered: Siti.\textsuperscript{119} The absence of Siti’s name in the family album, I argue, was not an attempt to wipe her name out of the family history. Therefore the decision not to write her name down in the album was not a form of race-based repression because her name is still recognizable in the memory of the family. The reason why her name was not in the album, I suggest, is because it was the common practice at the time frame and geographical place in discussion. It was not unusual to leave unnamed those who were not family members or friends in photo albums. This commonality transformed into a norm, which signaled non-recognition instead of repression. Thus the motive of such practice is, in my view, practical instead of ideological.

Two other photographs from the same sugar album may bring this issue to light. On page 68, there is a back garden photograph depicting native gardeners, horses and the stableman, and a dog sleeping in the foreground. The caption explains the daily activity but mentions no names but the occupation of the natives except the dog’s name, “Dieng” (album # 256, photo # 60004380). This page is preceded by a photograph that shows three European ladies in the backyard gazebo: Mrs. Pietermaat and the ladies of the Boes Lutjen accompanied by their dogs “Matjan” and “Baby” (album # 256, photo # 60004379). Like other pets in the European bourgeois family, the dog is considered as member of the family whose name is always mentioned on most occasions, certainly in

\textsuperscript{119} Frances Gouda, \textit{Dutch Culture Overseas: Colonial Practice in the Netherlands Indies 1900-1942} (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995), p. 12.
the photo album. In another photo album, a page is devoted to a full portrait of the family dog, which is captioned “Blackie our dog” (Album # 626, page 24). This album is modest and simple, quite small in size and has only 24 pages. Yet the family had the need to devote a page to a special member of the family: Blackie. The dog becomes evidence of their splendid and happy life in the Indies as other bourgeois families in Europe.

Another practical reason to keep natives’ name out of the album is the intended audiences. Their names deliberately are unrecognized because they are insignificant for the audiences to whom the photographs are intended. Albums’ titles such as “Souvenir from…., Views from…” are generic titles one could find in most family photo albums in the collection. This tells us that the intended audiences were families and friends in the Netherlands. After all, those albums made their journey to the Netherlands and ended up in the collection of Amsterdam Tropenmuseum. The album served as a visual report of their life in the Indies. Therefore the occupations of the natives became more interesting than their names. Information of the native subject’s job fulfills families and friends’ curiosity about how daily life looked like in the Indies. We can see that the information that native supervisors had worked for the factory for more than twenty years is more interesting than their names. Through photographs it seems pleasing to tell family and friends that in the house are two gardeners, a chauffeur, a stableman, a cook, servants,

120 Discussing canine pet culture in European bourgeois family, Haraway compellingly argues that human-animal companionate family is the product of nineteenth century capital accumulation, which led to the present day global companion-animal industry, see Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet*, Minneapolis (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), p. 47.
nursemaids, houseboys who are at their service any time of day. As Gouda suggests, their names may be known and remembered. However, for the purpose of the photo album, they are recognized by their occupations instead of their names.

In this light, a series of group portraits from another Pietermaat-Soesman family album provides more evidence of the practice of leaving native names out of the photo album. In the last six pages of the album entitled “Souvenir from Poerwokerto and Kalibagor” (album # 264, pages 31-36) there is a series of group portraits of non-European employees. Unlike three other Pietermaat-Soesman albums, captions in this album are not printed, but handwritten. Looking at the consistency and shape of the handwriting and comparing them to other handwritten captions in more modest albums, it appears that a professional must have done this, possibly the photo studio. The size and quality of the photographs also suggest the work of a professional as does the arrangement of the photographs in the album. It has consistency in size, and the photographs are placed in the center of the page. On the album cover, there is a trace of a lost medallion that was once attached there. The photographs in the album are not particularly well executed, especially those that depict factory interiors, which are overexposed. The organization of the photographs in the album is a comprehensive depiction of the whole process of the sugar production including photographs of the final product, which is hardly ever seen in other albums. Therefore it is less personal and more formal when compared to other Pietermaat-Soesman family albums. The formality of this particular family album is marked by the series of non-European group portraits, which only exists in this album. They are well arranged and organized, both the people in the
photographs and the photographs in the album (Figure 3-8). Situated at the end of the album, this series is preceded by two group portraits of European employees with and without their wives, children and dog, and succeeded, strangely enough, by a photograph of a European cemetery.

*Figure 3.* Group: Cashier, warehouse manager, cashier assistant, writer and assistant writer together with the office worker (office and plantation), Album # 264, Page 31, # 00016330, KIT.

*Figure 4.* Group: Plantation supervisor, weight measurement person, cart supervisor, Album # 264 Page 32, # 00016331, KIT.
Figure 5. Group: Boilers and laboratory assistants, Album # 264 Page 33, # 00016332, KIT.

Figure 6. Group: Chinese strike breaker sugar boilers and laboratory assistants, Album # 264 Page 34, # 00016333, KIT.

Figure 7. Group: Chinese strike breaker, Album # 264 Page 35, # 00016334, KIT.
The captions in the series of the group portraits of non-European employees above do not mention any names, let alone the existence of transparent papers. In the captions, Chinese is the only identity that indicates the ethnicity of the photographed subjects, whereas the rest are we might assumed to be Javanese. They are addressed by their occupation. The first photograph depicts thirteen barefoot adult males in formal Javanese attire from bottom to top (sarong, beskap and batik headdress) and a boy holding a sweeper upside down. As the caption reads, they are “cashier, cashier assistant, warehouse manager, writer and assistant writer together with the office worker” (Figure 3). They are all acknowledged by their occupations, their functions in the factory, including the boy who is “an office worker.”

It is noteworthy that the boy is designated as “an office worker,” whereas in the domestic context with exactly the same of duty he will be called as “jongos,” which literally means “house boy”. Whether it was a public appropriation from “jongos” to “office worker,” which was needed for such formal representation of the factory in the caption of the photo album needs further investigation. Scholars have argued how the colonial power used language to impose their dominion, see Carol A. Breckenridge, and Peter van der Veer Orientalism and Postcolonial Predicament: Perspective on South Asia (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); Knight, Narratives of......
stare back to the camera with a certain level of self-confidence. Certainly the presence of
the photographer and camera device did not intimidate them. Some of them even hold
their smile and keep their chin up, signaling self-dignity. The second photograph is more
crowded than the previous one (Figure 4). Taken in the same location, there are twenty-
one Javanese males, who are standing and sitting. Two of them are inside the office,
behind the glass door. Their posture does not look as comfortable as that of the gentlemen
in the previous photograph. Following the caption, they are “plantation supervisor,
weight measurement person, cart supervisor.” Fewer people are in the third photograph
(Figure 5). Their appearance suggests their ethnicity. The first group with sarong, beskap
and batik headdress are Javanese, whereas the second group with trousers and male
zhongshan are Chinese. However the caption only mentions that they are “boilers and
laboratory assistants.” The caption of the fourth photograph is the only one that mentions
the non-occupation description of the subject that is “Chinese strike breakers,” who were
photographed together with “sugar boilers and laboratory assistants” (Figure 6). This is
the second mixed ethnic photograph of the series. The fifth photograph is a mono ethnic
group portrait again, whose striking job is: “Chinese strike breaker” (Figure 7). The last
photograph of the series is the most crowded one (Figure 8). Most of the men are
squatting on the ground, some sitting on the stair and the rest are standing. Judging from
their attire they are all Javanese, are generally designated in the caption as “Factory
personnel: supervisors, smiths, carpenters and bricklayers.”

Colonialism; Stoler, Carnal Knowledge. However, this particular case shows the effort of
the colonial power to make their dominant and dominating language more suitable for
family and other fellow Europeans.
This series is, indeed, unique in many respects. This is the only series of group portraits of non-European employees in the collection.\textsuperscript{122} Because of its place in the family photo album, this series is also not part of the photo contest, which was organized by Tropenmuseum – then the Colonial Museum – in 1917.\textsuperscript{123} In sugar photographs, as in industrial colonial photographs elsewhere, non-European employees are never photographed individually; they were usually photographed in groups with other non-European employees or, in most cases, with European employees. As I will discuss later, the group portraits of non-European employees are mostly taken in conjunction with other events such as a director’s farewell or a factory’s anniversary, whereas the series in discussion seems to be especially made in order to systematically document, at first glance, the existence of different ethnic backgrounds among non-European employees in the factory. However, one would learn that this series was arranged in hierarchical order at work, which one would assess from the captions, their attires and the level of their self-

\textsuperscript{122} Even in the supposedly most formal and comprehensive sugar factory album of the “General Syndicate of Sugar Factories in the Dutch East Indies” (\textit{Algemeen Syndicaat van Suikerfabrikanten in Nederlandsch-Indië}, Album # 529) such series do not exist. My observation in other archives that hold sugar album/photographs collection such as KITLV in Leiden and Rijkmuseum in Amsterdam showed that similar series did not exist.

\textsuperscript{123} In response to the announcement of Ethical Policy (Dutch ethical responsibility for the welfare of their colonial subjects) in 1901, the museum tried to organize an exhibition emphasizing the prosperity in the colony. They received submissions from different Dutch companies in the Dutch East Indies studio portrait series of non-European employees. The exhibition was never realized. However, a series of non-European Singkep Tin company in Bangka-Belitung Sumatera was exhibited almost a century later in a different context, which was a photo festival in Leeuwarden in the Netherlands in 2006. In the photographs employees were unnamed, only their occupations and sometime their ethnicities were mentioned, see Wim Melis, ed., \textit{Another Asia: Photography from South and Southeast Asia} (Groningen, The Netherlands: Aurora Borealis), pp. 121-123 and p. 250.
confidence in front of the camera. In the album, the photographs were structured and organized from page to page in similar hierarchical order. Although it is not one hundred percent consistent, the number of persons in the photographs also followed the hierarchy. The first photograph has thirteen persons in it and the last one has more than one hundred persons. Even for European employees such organized and well arranged series did not exist. European group portraits are naturally many but they are less formal, unorganized and scattered over albums.

On this account in the first Pietermaat-Soesman album (Album # 256), there is a comparable series where European employees were photographed in a particular hierarchical order. There are five photographs on pages 8-12 depicting European employees in the front of their houses. The first photograph of the series is of the plantation employee, Mr. Franz. He is standing on the porch, with the dogcart with horse and coach boy ready in the driveway (Album # 256, Page 8, photo # 60004322). The second one is another plantation employee, Mr. Ten Cate, who is also standing on the porch accompanied by his little daughter (Album # 256, Page 9, photo # 60004323). The third photograph depicts the factory supervisor Mr. Lange and his wife. They are standing on the porch, and the Javanese gardener is standing in the small tropical garden in front of the house (Album # 256, Page 10, photo # 60004324).

The fourth of the series is a more full presence of the household; the bookkeeper, Mr. Nolson, with his wife and little daughter, are in white outfits standing on the porch stairs. Three *babu* (female servants) in black clothes accompany them, two of them standing in the far right and left, with the last one posing squatting near her *tuan* and
nyonya (masters) (Album # 256, Page 11, photo # 60004325). Corresponding to his colleague, the first Engineman Mr. Ottenhoof and his wife are sitting on the chair on the porch. His two little daughters are on his lap whereas a dog and the babu are sitting on the porch stairs (Album # 256, Page 12, photo # 0004326). While the men are wearing typical white colonial outfits, that is, the same dress they wear at work, the wives in the series are wearing sarong and kebaya as “the most appropriate dress for our ladies in the Indies […] elegant clothing, provided that one knows how to wear it”\textsuperscript{124} No captions in this series mention anything about the presence of domestic workers in the photographs, including their occupations. In my opinion, they are not considered as part of the factory album presentation as they did not work for the factory. This series was not particularly meant to show the hierarchical work position among European employees; it is far from complete for that purpose. A succeeding photograph of the series depicts the old factory housing of a plantation employee, Franz, which suggests the preceding series was meant to show the new factory housing. The caption also stated “new house” (nieuwe woning) of Mr. So and so. The factory provided houses in accordance to one’s position at work. As the house hierarchy goes along with the work hierarchy, a comparison could be made between the group portraits of non-European employees and the ‘house portrait’ of European employees.

Comparing the two series there is hardly any evidence of ethnic based racial discrimination between European and non-European employees and among non-

\textsuperscript{124} This is a line from a popular manual handbook written by J. Kloppenburg-Versteegh in 1913 as quoted in Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, Women and the Colonial State: Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies 1900-1942 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000), p. 128.
European employees. Beside the norm not mentioning non-European subjects in photo albums from the period in discussion, the naming of European employees here seems to identify the house where he and his family lived. Again this caters to another practical reason. The seemingly named, unorganized, less formal and private style of the series of the portraits of European employees still suggests work hierarchy based on categorization nonetheless. This category is principally similar to the categories of the series of unnamed, organized and formal group portraits of non-European employees. My description of each photograph in non-European employees’ group portraits also shows that the ethnic-based racial grouping is not consistent as two photographs (Figure 5 and 6) mixed the Chinese and Javanese. Alternatively, the consistency is in the categorization of hierarchy at work.

There is, however, an exception to be made in this regard. Evidence shows that the names of native workers were given in the caption of another sugar album in the collection. The photograph in question is on page twenty-one of “Experiment Station for the Java Sugar Industry in Pasuruan in 1926” (Proefstation voor de Javasuikerindustrie te Pasaeroean 1926) album. The album is typical of the official type of photo albums of sugar factories. The title is printed in golden lettering. Atelier Kurkdjian, the most famous photo studio in Surabaya, East Java, produced the photographs and the album (the name of the atelier is embossed on the lower right corner of each photograph). There is a numbering system in front of some captions, indicating perhaps a studio print number. The captions are professionally handwritten. The Experimental Station (Proefstation) at Pasuruan in East Java is one of the stations established in three geographical regions of
sugar production in Java by the end of 1880. In the following decade, they published the Archive for the Sugar Industry in the Netherlands Indies (Archive voor de Suikerindustrie in Nederlandsch-Indië), which presented Java’s colonial sugar manufacture as a world model where “the scientific study of the cane has reached its highest level”.125 Albums of this type were usually made to profile the company and used as token for directors who were leaving or visiting important guests (local resident or directors of other sugar factories).126

The Experiment Station album depicts various aspects of the station: the main building from different points of view, sugar museum, activities in different offices, workshops and laboratories. Although the album is relatively thin, it describes the station thoroughly. It has only thirty-one pages with one photograph on each page, which suggest that they were carefully selected and organized in order to give viewers the best possible impression of the Experiment Station. Javanese employees appeared at work in considerable numbers, in the offices, workshops and laboratories, where Dutch supervisors were not always present. In the photographs, they were portrayed as skilled administrative staff with typewriters and planning tables working in the most up-to-date office environment (Album # 807, page 12 and 14, photo # 60028799 and 60028801). In

125 This is an account of Noel Deerr, the writer of Cane Sugar: A Textbook of Agriculture of the Sugar Cane, the Manufacture of Cane Sugar and the Analysis of Sugar House Products, published in 1911 as quoted by Roger Knight. For further discussion on the technological advancement within the sugar industry in Java and its place in the world, see Roger Knight’s first chapter “Sugar, Technology and Colonial Encounters” in Knight, Narrative of Colonialism, pp. 1-25.

126 Albums of the same kind in other collections have the names of the addressed person in ornamented hand writing on the first page. See for example, Album # 60 “S.F. Tjepiring 1915” of the KITLV collection in Leiden, the Netherlands.
the workshops and soil laboratory they were experimenting and testing the most advanced sugar cane technology at the time (Album # 807, page 11, 13, 15, 17 and 18, photo # 60028798, 60028800, 60028802, 60028804, and 60028805). As a result, the way the Experiment Station album characterized their Javanese employees is distinct from the majority of the workforce in the industry, who were semi-skilled manual workers. They look confident in what they were doing in the photographs and lively staring back to the camera, which is in contrast with the usual passive and under-camera-dominated type of depictions of Javanese workers in the industry.

Toward the end of the album there are five group portraits (page 19, 20, 21, 22 and 29), the captions of which reveal the intention of the album’s making: they were taken on the occasion of the farewell of Dr. PH. van Harreveld and Dr. Kuyper. The first group portrait, taken on June 25, 1926, is a photograph of Dr. van Harreveld with all European employees together with their wives. There is a sheet of blueprint paper glued on the back of the previous leaf. The blueprint functions as the aforementioned transparent paper. Every person in the photograph is figured and numbered on the blue print paper and their names were written above and below their figures. This is the only photograph in the album that provides a tool from which one can trace every personal name in the photograph. The second group portrait on page 20, which was taken on June 26, 1926, depicts Dr. van Harreveld with Javanese employees, whose caption addresses them as the natives (de Inlanders).

The fourth one is a photograph of only Javanese employees. They were more than one hundred persons squatting, sitting and standing in front of the station’s main
building. The photograph is not dated and the caption designated them as the native employees (Inlandsch Personell). The last group portrait on page 29 is a farewell photograph of another person, Dr. J Kuyper, who is sitting among Javanese employees in the front of the Museum building. The caption mentions the names of the leaving person, the date, August 23, 1926, but not the Javanese employees.

Figure 9. Album # 807, page 21, photo # 60028808, KIT.

The photograph above is the third group portrait in the album (Figure 3). The photograph itself is unusual. To begin with this is the only photograph in vertical frame, whereas the rest of the photographs of the collection are horizontal, following the widely available format of the camera in the early twentieth century. Wearing what seems to be their best outfits, the seven Javanese males were photographed indoors against a giant
glass window. Strong lights from the window illuminate them from behind, which must have made it hard for the photographer to adjust the exposure. But despite the technical difficulty, the photograph indicates aesthetic consideration in terms of theme, composition and lighting. The number of persons in the photograph is fairly small, which gave the photographer the opportunity of making a portrait in the traditional convention, that is, in vertical frame. The other group portraits usually have more than twenty persons, which left the photographer no other choice but a horizontal frame. Taken inside an empty big hall, the photographer placed them in front of an giant oval window resulting in a nicely composed photograph giving a sense of how big the hall was and at the same showing the photographer’s technical ability controlling the exposure in such a demanding situation.

On top of its technical and aesthetic quality, what makes this photograph exceptional is the caption that displays the names of all the sitters, who are Javanese employees. It makes this photograph the only photograph among more than 6,000 sugar photographs of the Tropenmuesum’s collection, in which the names of non-European employees are given.127 The four standing gentlemen are Iskandar, Soetedjo, Ngasimden, Djaelani and Soemo, whereas those who are sitting are Adi, Ngasino and Oerip. Unlike the common norm of the photo albums in the period, they were not identified by their

127 In the Proefstation album series in the collection there is a page, whose caption mentions three Javanese names of Javanese: Soejono, Raden Ajoe Soejono and Koesnadi (Album# 808, page 26, photo # 60028288). In a similar blue print on the back of the previous leaf, three natives were figured, numbered and named from a photograph, as stated by its caption, “The Inauguration of the New Building 21 April 1925.” Considering their names and the occasion they were attending, they were not the Experiment Station’s employees therefore it is a different case all together, which however would worth pursuing further.
occupations, or as in the case of the Experiment Station album, by their racial classification: “Inlandsch or Inlander Personell.” The photograph was not dated, like all group portraits in the album in which Europeans were absent, although one would guess that the photograph was probably taken at the same time as another three photographs in which Europeans were present. The caption addressed them as *de oudegedienden*, which literally means “old-timers,” which suggest that they had their jobs in the station for a long time, perhaps since the station was established in the end of the 1880s. Non-European employees are usually photographed in a big group, which suggests that the eight employees in the photograph on discussion were selected from hundreds of other employees of the station. The photograph on the next page depicts more than one hundred native employees who are addressed as native employees (*Inlandsch Personell*).

In the sugar industry at large, the Javanese employees at the Experiment Station could be classed as permanent workers. In the factory and plantation, permanent workers were artisans who eventually became foremen. They recruited and supervised seasonal workers and served as a middleman between European employees and native workers. Although they did not have anyone to supervise, they worked with the European supervisor as close as their contemporaries in the factory or plantation. Thus, among other non-European employees, those eight gentlemen were important Javanese old-timers whose names were worthy of being written in the caption. Their names should not

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128 Knight, *Narratives of Colonialism*, p. 15.

129 There is no literature to my knowledge that specifically discusses the Experiment Stations’ workers in Java colonial sugar industry. For further discussion of sugar factory workers, see Elson, *Javanese*, chapter 4, and Elson, “Sugar Factory Workers,” pp. 1139-174.
be forgotten. The assigned photo studio most probably provided the professional handwritten caption, hence one might imagine that the European managerial staff especially asked and gave their names to the photo studio because these eight gentlemen had had noteworthy bonds with the leaving person to whom this album was dedicated. Here again we find another practical reason why names of non-European employees are given or not. As I have discussed several cases above, the decision to exclude or include native’s name and occupation in the photo album was not a consistent one, as it was required by an ideology. The patterns are different from one album to the other depends on the practical purpose of the respective album, which is based on a practical need rather than an ideological one.
CHAPTER 4: THE BRIDGES: NEW MOBILITY IN THE INDUSTRIALIZED COLONY

In the post-factum exhibition catalogue of the “Semarang International Colonial Exhibition” in 1914, there is a map of sugar factories and plantations in Java, which is accompanied by a list of 190 factories. The map is an addition to the highlighted showcasing of the sugar industry in the exhibition, which was exemplified by a solid concrete sugar pavilion, tables with impressive numbers of sugar production and export, as well as photographs of sugar plantations and the most modern factory machinery to date. More than a presentation of the spreading success of the sugar industry all over Java, this map also visually symbolizes the accelerated mobility driven by business motivations in the newly industrialized colony. The same celebration takes place within the domestic space of sugar family photo albums in the series of photograph of bridges.

Colonial maps and topographical photographs validate what Edward Said refer to as “imaginative geographies.” Both genres contributed significantly to the geographical knowledge of colonized territories, which was formulated by the Westerners’ need and imagination of the East. Scholars have explored Said’s idea of the role of the camera in the imperialist project in visualizing the construction of the imagination of the empire, making it more real and part and parcel of the scenery. Photography’s role in conquering and mapping the colonial territory, as I go on to show, also manifested

movement and mobility in itself. While the map is the abstraction of the movement and mobility, the topographical photograph openly displays the desire to travel within the colony, both for business and pleasure. In this chapter, I will shed light on the connection between the public and domestic celebration of the sugar industry success story, which took place in the Semarang colonial exhibition and in the sugar photo albums. Such a connection is exemplified in the map in the exhibition catalogue and the topographical photographs of bridges in the sugar photo albums. Both may be seen as the enactment of the idea of the empire in the colony, signaling the new mobility in the colony.

The Semarang Exhibition was the first and only international-in-scope exhibition in the colony of the Dutch Empire. It was inspired by the great international exhibitions in Europe and North America, especially the first and only “Amsterdam International Colonial and Export Exhibition of 1883” in the motherland, Holland. Since the beginning of the World’s Fair and expositions, marked in 1851 by London’s “Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations,” World’s Fairs (also known as International Exposition) were not just exhibition of the world. As Timothy Mitchell has shown us, they did not simply attempt to put the world on display but, most importantly, to establish some kind of order, both in terms of the Occident and the Orient. In the last

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132 Every exhibition had a different name but was generally referred to as “World’s Fair” or “International Exposition”. Before WWII, the word “colonial” was not always being used despite the permanent presence of colonial objects in the exhibition. For an overview of the international world exhibitions, see John E. Findling ed., *Historical Dictionary of World's Fairs and Expositions, 1851-1988* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990); Erik Mattie, *World's Fairs* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998).

world fair that was exclusively dedicated to the success of colonialism entitled

*L’Exposition Coloniale Internationale de Paris* in 1931, Portugal, The Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Italy and the United States joined France that was to host it. Britain and Germany were absent because the former had just had their own show in 1924-25, and the latter had lost their colonies after WWI whilst Japan had not yet been seen as a worldwide imperial power.\(^{134}\) The new arrangement of world colonial power as it was reflected in the world colonial exhibitions also brought new policies in the colonies.

Discussing the Dutch participation in the five international exhibition, which are Amsterdam 1883, Paris 1889, 1900, 1931, Brussels 1930, Marieke Bloembergen argues that one can observe the shifting nature of Dutch colonial policies from the different emphases on the presentation of the Dutch East Indies section in each exhibition. Therefore, the colonial section of the Dutch entries to the world exhibitions can be seen as “a form of self-reflection” in which “colonial images often tell us not just about the colony, but also – and more notably – about the image maker,”\(^{135}\) thus the colonizer. At the Amsterdam colonial Exhibition in 1883, it was the “ethnographic” object that highlighted the Dutch presentation on the Dutch East Indies, displaying households good, tools, craft, art and an entire living village, staging the daily activities of the Aceh, Ambon, Makasar and Javanese village inhabitants. Beside the popular success of restaging Javanese *Kampung* in the *Exposition Universelle* in Paris 1889, the Dutch East


Indies section emphasized the private enterprises in the colony. It continued at the Paris World Exhibition of 1900, which presented the modern colonial economy along with the display of Javanese antiquity. At the Brussels exhibition in 1930, instead of a separate pavilion the Ethical Policy brought the Dutch East Indies object inside the Dutch House, including the main attraction Javanese *Pendopo* (traditional house) where twelve native craft persons exhibited their work in progress. Finally in Paris 1931, the Dutch presentation reflected new colonial relations and native elites were involved significantly in arranging the Dutch East Indies entry, choosing artistic and religious objects including a copy of Mendut temple and Balinese dances.

Assembled for display of colonial objects/subjects as exotic trophies, these artifacts and collecting practices illustrated the way in which the West has treated the “outside world.” Carol Breckenridge links the circulation of objects from India in the exhibition with the institutionalization of the new colonial practice in the second half of the nineteenth century. The everyday objects and activities in the colony were put on

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136 Ethical Policy (*Ethische Politiek*) was a new Dutch colonial policy in response to Queen Wilhelmina’s speech in 1901, “As a Christian power, the Netherlands is obliged to carry out government policy in the Indies in the consciousness the the Netherlands has a moral duty to the people of these regions.” Accordingly the Dutch East Indies colonial government started to improve health care, education, and public work for the benefit of the colonized subjects in the archipelago. Budget cut in the 1930 great depression effectively ending the Ethical Policy. Scholars criticized this policy for its “paternalist humanitarian, economic and political motives,” which in turn had strengthens the nationalist movements. See Bloembergen, *ibid*, pp. 46-48.

137 Bloembergen provides lengthy discussion for five World’s Fairs, which were officially dedicated and hosted by imperial power, see Bloembergen, *ibid*, chapter 2-6.


display in the metropolis to serve purposes relating to commerce and enhance the prestige of the colonial regimes. The international exhibitions were a cultural technology, whose purpose was to create an *imagined ecumene*\(^{140}\) between the colony and the metropolis. They characterized the cultural specificity of modern nation-state in global relations and familiarized the metropolitan public with the colonies. Objects from the colonies were not only transformed into a kind of “spectacle of the ocular”\(^{141}\) but also became cultural forms that forged the national identity of the colonizer’s modern nation-state. As for the international scope of the exhibitions, this went beyond national boundaries, to assemble an imagined *ecumene*, either the *Victorian Ecumene* for the British Empire and in the Dutch context the *Wilhelminan Ecumene*.

In this line, I will look at similar exhibitions in the colonies and try to draw linkages between them. One of the main motives of colonial exhibitions in the metropoles was to foster a certain nationalism or sense of national consciousness\(^{142}\) in which colonial territory, culture and other resources were the integral part of the *imagined ecumene*. Local exhibitions in India, organized in the 1840s, were to prepare material for the “Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations” in London 1851. However, as Gyan Prakash has shown us, the exhibitions in the colony would gain momentum of their own in the decades to follow. Some of them were initiated locally and turned into traditional fairs, as exemplified in the 1865 Nagpur exhibition, the 1873 Fureedpur exhibition in

\(^{140}\) Breckenridge uses this term at the same line of, as she notes, Anderson’s “imagined communities”. She used the term of *Victorian Ecumene* to refer to the British Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century, Breckenridge, *ibid.*, p. 196.

\(^{141}\) Breckenridge, *ibid.*, p. 196.

\(^{142}\) Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles*, p. 12.
Bengal and the 1883 Calcutta International Exhibition. These exhibitions drew high enthusiasm and attracted the imagination of an enthusiastic native public, as they displayed the highest modern achievements in the colony. The Allahabad Exhibition of 1910-1911 stated its purpose as “to instruct viewers in different methods of production and in the functioning and benefits of machines.” In other words, the application of (Western) science and technology for the industry in the colony was the main motive and attraction, which highlighted the achievement to modernize the colony. In the 1936 “South Africa Empire Exhibition” in Johannesburg, despite the segregation and domination practice in the exhibition and in the city, visitors had “an urban cosmopolitan experience.” Such experience and enthusiasm for modernity seemed to surpass existent racial and cultural discrimination, at least in the specific moment and place of the exhibition.

The “Semarang International Colonial Exhibition” proceeded in much the same manner. This exhibition was undoubtedly a comprehensive display of the Dutch success in managing and extracting benefits from the colony. In addition to that, being the first extensive exhibition in the Dutch East Indies, the Semarang exhibition had immediate symbolic meaning of the “completion of the conquest and final incorporation of the entire

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143 Gyan Prakash argues that colonial exhibitions in the colony not only staged the superiority of Western science, but also objectified the natives. Science required recognition from the natives, who were the object as knowing subjects. Thus, the exhibitions provided space for the natives as knowing subjects and as such they would become a legitimate part of the scientific/colonial discourse. See Gyan Prakash, “Science ‘Gone Native’ in Colonial India,” Representations 40 (Fall 1992): p.179.

archipelago into the Dutch colonial state.\textsuperscript{145} The state formation of the Dutch East Indies colonial state was erected from the ruin of the East India Company (VOC). Established in 1602, this company was the first public limited company in the world. Its success started from the monopoly of spices from the Banda Islands and the Moluccas.\textsuperscript{146} For a period of two centuries, accelerated by capital and military power on behalf of the Dutch state, the VOC maintained their dominion in the archipelago. The decline of the company came from within: corruption of its own officials and increasing costs of administration. The situation was worsened by competition in the region, specifically with British India and French Indochina. The last big blow was the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War in 1780-1784, which finally brought this monopolistic and powerful trading organization down in 1796. The only agency of the Dutch contact with Java and the East Indies for almost two hundred years was gone precisely a year after the French occupation of Holland in 1795. During this decline, The Hague eventually stepped in and brought the company territories under the administration of the state in 1800 and the United East India Company became The Dutch East Indies colonial state. This marked the transformation of the colony from “the trading ground of a private company to the national territories of colonial power”, a development that has been described as “imperial revision.”\textsuperscript{147}


In the course of the imperial revision in 1808, the Dutch government formed the Ministry for Colonies, which was responsible for colonial affairs and appointing the governor general as the Dutch government representative in the Dutch East Indies. The colonial state of the Dutch East Indies reached its peak years in the early twentieth century following its political and economic success. Dutch sovereignty was effectively established in the territory of modern Indonesia today. The Dutch East Indies contributed about twenty percent to the Netherlands’ national income. According to W.H. van Helsdingen, the president of Volksraad (representative body of the Dutch East Indies), the annual sum of 700 million guilders had flown from the colony to the motherland between the war periods. Only comparable to British India, this was the highest profit an imperial country ever achieved from their colonies. Thus the Semarang exhibition was a logical celebration of the progressive development in the colony in the new modern era.

Following Gyan Prakash’s argument on colonial exhibitions in India, along with propagating progress and civilization in the colony, the Semarang exhibition also had a pedagogical motive for the native audiences. The spectacles in the exhibition allured the natives with the wonder of the modern world under the great Wilhelminan Ecumene. The exhibition space covered 26 hectares in and around which the organizers mobilized hundreds of natives to build 600 meters roadway, 1,067 meters railway and 105 specially built buildings. Visitors were transported by tram service from one pavilion to the other and electric lights kept the whole exhibition space bright until midnight everyday. The harmonious every day life under the protection of the Dutch crown demonstrated in the

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148 Gouda, Dutch Culture Overseas, p. 48.
various “native” sections in the exhibition. This section consisted of a specifically constructed *kampung* scenery with its traditional architecture from all over the archipelago ornamented with electric street lamps and the joy of leisure time exemplified in the most modern entertainment, a Luna Park.¹⁴⁹

Initiated and organized by the chamber of commerce, the Semarang exhibition marked the significant role of the private enterprise in various industries. More than 100 buildings in the exhibition site hosted the highest achievements of agriculture, botanical and tropical science. Not surprisingly, the sugar pavilion was the biggest among other agro- industry pavilions. The concrete brick building hosted almost all aspects of the industry including models of various factories, a laboratory, and a hall of fame with portraits of important persons in the industry. Photographs of the pavilion in the catalogue show factory and plantation photographs, tables and graphics of production mounted on the wall. Perhaps one would also imagine that the sugar map was also on display (figure 10).

¹⁴⁹ For further details on every section and entry in the Semarang exhibition, see Joost Coté, “Staging Modernity,” pp.1-44.
The sugar map is the only map in the two-volume catalogue of the exhibition. Cartographer Inr. J.H. de Bussyy from Amsterdam signed it in the lower right side. The map unfolds sugar plantations and factories across the island as they created small and large clusters of sugar enterprises. The biggest cluster was located in East Java, expanding to the south following the Brantas River, and to the east along the northern coastline. Another cluster was formed in Central Java around the Sultanate cities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta. The small groups were mostly scattered along the Central and East Java northern coastline. One of them was settled in the Banyumas residency with six sugar factories: Kalireijo, Kalibagor, Klampok, Bodjong, Poerwokerto, and Remboen.

The spread of sugar factories and plantations across Java followed the path of the Great Mail Road built under Governor General Marshal Herman Willem Daendels. Upon
the Napoleonic General arrival in Java in 1808, Daendels ordered the construction of a
gigantic road-building project that crossed the island from west to east, from Anyer to
Panarukan along the northern coastline. Daendels’ initial mission was to defend Java
from the British, who ruled the seas. He had no choice but to build a proper road to move
soldiers and other military supports along the island. Despite its military purpose and
later significant economic impact, the road was named the Great Mail Road (Groote
Postweg) for the speeding up of postal delivery. The mail delivery from Batavia (West
Java) to Semarang (Central Java) was reduced from 10-14 days to 3-4 days.150 Daendels
gave Java the “pre-twentieth-century wonder of speed (18-20 kilometers per hour in the
best place)”, and, equally so, of order”151 as he also established a police force and stations
for security and post officers to change horses.

The economic impact of the Great Mail Road was immense. The wonder of speed
sped up the economy as well. The Great Mail Road was the road to a new empire: it
functioned as infrastructure and the transportation backbone for the cultivation system in
1830-1870 and the later liberal economic policy in which the sugar industry played a very
significant role. By the end of the nineteenth century, Java and Madura had 3,300 km of
large mail roads, 6,600 km of main inland roads and 10,500 km of minor inland roads
and unrecorded village roads.152 The Java sugar map shows that most of the sugar

150 Many of Daendels’ opponents wrote about the harsh working conditions during
the road’s construction. Major William Thorne listed about 12,000 Javanese workers
dying during the construction, see Peter J.M. Nas and Pratiwo, “Java and De Groote
Postweg, La Grande Route, the Great Mail Road, Jalan Raya Pos”, Bijdragen tot de Taal-
151 Mrazek, Engineers of Happy Land, p. 4.
152 Wim Ravesteijn and Jan Kop, For Profit and Prosperity, p. 78.
plantations, factories and sugar towns developed along the East Java northern coastline. They connected to the Great Mail Road as well as to eleven out of twelve sugar export harbors. Bearing the sugar map in mind, one could imagine the number of roads growing following the path of the Great Mail Road and making connections to plantations, factories, harbors and sugar towns. These roads formed a network of mobility and movement space.

There were three institutions of power, Benedict Anderson argues, which “shaped the way in which the colonial state imagine its dominion – the nature of the human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its ancestry”. They are the museum, the census and the map. One finds the conjunction of the three institutions in the catalogue of the Semarang exhibition. The catalogue itself is the repository of the antiquities and traditional architecture from different ethnic groups and archeological objects from across the archipelago as these were displayed in the exhibition. The Dutch colonial state collected, classified, organized and exhibited those ancestral materials to legitimate their dominion over the past. Thus the Semarang exhibition served its function as a museum, albeit a temporary one. From the point of commercial interest, the Semarang exhibition functioned as a census by displaying systematic quantification of people and goods produced. The catalogue provided different kinds of tables, presenting the numbers of agricultural exports, manufactures, factories, cars, train stations, alcohol consumption and the number of visitors divided into local and Europeans. These numbers kept track of the progress and therefore maintained the control of the colonial state.

Interestingly, the sugar map, being the only map in the catalogue, is not a formal cartography with precise detail of geography to lay the exact space of sovereignty. It does not have lines of longitude and latitude. Place names, signs for rivers, seas and mountains are not consistent but follow the location of the sugar industry. This is a paradigmatic case of the “map-as-logo: instantly recognizable, everywhere visible, colored and artistically made.”\textsuperscript{154} The red triangle is for beet sugar factories, the black triangle for is cane sugar factories, the “C” is for factories with carbonation procedure, the “S” stands for the \textit{sulfitatie} process, the ship image for the sugar export harbors, and some other images are to signify the train and tram lines that connected the plantation with the factory and the town/city as well as the rivers that flow along the plantations and factories. While visually pleasing and easily attracting the popular imagination, the sugar map gives considerably detailed information nonetheless.

The sugar map is the logo map visualizing a geographical conquest by the sugar industry. While the Semarang exhibition was the enactment of the \textit{Wilhelmina Ecumene}, the sugar map made the imaginative geographies tangible. Such tangibility was well paired with topographical photographs, which, as I have shown in chapter 2, occupied a dominant position in the Dutch East Indies photography since the late nineteenth century. Surely, being the biggest industry, topographical photographs of sugar plantations and factories as well as the cityscape of sugar towns and the landscape around sugar hubs constituted the most widely available visual evidence of geographical conquest of private enterprise over Java.

\textsuperscript{154} Anderson, \textit{Imagined Communities}, p. 175.
Topographical photographs both landscape and cityscape in the nineteenth and early twentieth century were evident of people’s mobility. Landscape photographs of remote areas: mountains, valleys, rivers and jungles resonated the “had been there” idea of photography, meaning that photographers, or anyone with a camera, had traveled to those places. The long distance travels of John Thomson in South, East and Southeast Asia, Maxime Du Camp’s expedition in Middle East, and Walter Bentley Woodbury journeys in Java brought European viewers closer to those places. Yet, their photographs were not only shortening distance but also, more importantly, encouraging them to travel and explore places far from home that were not unfamiliar anymore. Cityscape photographs demonstrated the speed of people’s mobility by depicting the modern immobile infrastructures: asphalt toads, train and tram tracks, bridges, and train stations. Widely circulated photographs of the colonies provided visual evidence of the beauty of its nature and the modernity of its cities. Photography played a great role in fostering people’s mobility to the colonies, and also capital, from the metropoles to the colonies.

While colonial topographical photographs validated and familiarized people in the mother land with the imaginative geography of the colony, the sugar map demonstrated the mobility of goods, people and capital in the colony that were stimulated by the industry. Holding 40% of foreign investment in agriculture valued £2,000 million by 1929 and 190 factories spread all over Java, the sugar industry generated public work, mostly transportation infrastructure, but also agriculture banks and housing settlements.
for workers.  The Java transportation map from the period shows crowded transportation lines around sugar hubs. One could imagine the infrastructure along the abstract lines of the transportation map, which facilitated and encouraged the movement of people as they resided closer to the economic center of the sugar industry. We should also include here another mobility issue which was not work related, such as family visits among managerial staff of the sugar enterprise in the same region and travel for pleasure. Such mobility, which appeared on the map in abstract lines, as I will go on momentarily, was recorded and structured by a distinctive type of topographical photographs: the photographs of bridges in the sugar photo albums.

It is rather unusual for today’s eyes to find photographs of bridges consistently present in family photo albums in considerable numbers. Three out of five Pietermaat-Soesman family photo albums in the collection of the Tropenmuseum offer this peculiarity. The first album, entitled *Souvenir from Poerwokerto and Kalibagor*, consists of ninety-one photographs, of which twelve are photographs of bridges. *Souvenir from Poerwokerto, Kalibagor and Banjoemas* is the title of the second album, which has nine bridge photographs out of forty-four photographs in the album, whereas the last one,

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157 A population map from the period under discussion confirms the dense population around sugar hubs, see “Java Population Map 1930” in Van Diessen and Ormeling, eds., *ibid*, pp. 211-212.
Views from Different Places holds five out of sixty nine photographs in the album. The bridges are plainly the focus of these pictures and not merely the background for other visual objects. This is a kind of landscape picture with bridges as the main depiction, one might refers as “bridge-scape.”

Why are there so many photographs of bridges in family albums? What is the significance of bridges in the life of the sugar family?

Photographs of engineering and architectural achievement in colonies’ key cities were common representations of the empire success. These photographs were put on display on any possible occasion, and especially in international colonial exhibitions. When the Dutch colonial pavilion at the 1931 L’Exposition Coloniale Internationale de Paris was destroyed by fire, it was “chiefly photographic material … sent quickly to Europe through our unsurpassable mail service”\(^{158}\) that saved the Dutch presentation of their colony. In the early twentieth century, the British Colonial Office Visual Instruction Committee (COVIC) developed a series of lantern slides as teaching material for British schoolchildren to learn about their Empire. The project’s official photographer Hugh Fischer took photographs of architectural icons built under the British rule all over India, including the famous Landsdowne Bridge over the Indus River built in 1887-1889. In his 1910 lecture, the educator and geographer Halford Mackinder specifically pointed out that Fisher’s Landsdowne Bridge photograph was taken from Suttian, “an old nunnery

\(^{158}\) Dutch official report on the 1931 Paris exhibition as quoted in Mrazek, Engineers of Happy Land, p. 105. For more information on the Dutch presentation in this last world’s colonial exhibition, see Bloembergen, Colonial Spectacle, chapter 6.
founded for women who preferred seclusion rather than the funeral pyre."\textsuperscript{159} The way in which Mackinder contextualized the photograph of the bridge, James Ryan concluded, “used this dramatic expanse of metal spanning the Indus not only as a sign of material strength but also a metaphor for the moral improvement of India under the British."\textsuperscript{160} Unlike that of the Landsdowne Bridge, which was “the most remarkable bridge in India,”\textsuperscript{161} the bridges in the photographs of the sugar industry present just regular bridges that connected the banks of relatively small rivers, but, at the same time, indicated modern infrastructure as well.

For Dutch engineers building bridges in East Indies was a very challenging task. It raised many more problems to erect a bridge in mountainous areas with streams and rivers flowing crisscross all over the landscape than in the flat landscape of the Netherlands. By 1900 in Java and Madura there were 250 stoned arched bridges with a span of more than 10 meters, 1,500 smaller arched bridges and 10,000 bridges constructed with iron girders and wooden deck.\textsuperscript{162} Bridges both for the railway and for road transport purposes in the Dutch East Indies were considered as a special engineering achievement in the Indies. This explains why every photograph of a bridge in the photo albums was always accompanied by a description of the bridge’s technical details.

\textsuperscript{159} Ryan, \textit{Picturing Empire}, p. 201.
\textsuperscript{160} Ryan, \textit{ibid.}, p. 201.
\textsuperscript{161} Ryan, \textit{ibid.}, p. 201.
\textsuperscript{162} The 563 pages of the newly published book about engineering works in Indonesia since the nineteenth century has a special chapter on building bridges, detailing different constructions of bridges to overcome natural obstacles including floods, see Ravesteijn and Jan Kop, eds., \textit{For Profit and Prosperity}, pp. 137-192.
Although most of the bridges were relatively small, they might have been the first ‘modern’ concrete bridge in the village that was built by Dutch engineers. Therefore the villagers would remember them for generations and the bridge would become the landmark of the area known as jembatan Belanda (literally: Dutch bridge). Having the Java sugar map in mind one might picture the existence of similar small village bridges in sugar enterprises all over Java. They connected sugar cane plantations and factories and hence one village to another, forming a web of transportation in rural Java. The sugar industry had significantly changed the rural scenery, turning paddy fields into plantations, factories and employee housing. As I have discussed in chapter 1, new capital flowed to the Javanese sugar industry in the late nineteenth century as the colonial government handed the enterprise over to the private companies that were established in 1870, which marked the end of the government generated “cultivation system”. Banks were flooding Java with credit, some of them even specializing in the financing of plantations.163 Consequently, people followed where the money went. The number of Europeans and Eurasians in Java increased significantly in the turn of the century, 33,642 in 1880, 62,477 in 1900, and 133,319 in 1920,164 whereas around 4,000 individual Europeans were working in the sugar industry in various aspects in the factories and plantations by 1920s.165 By 1930 about one million people would have worked for the sugar industry and only 50,000 of them were permanent workers.166 It means there were more than

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163 Furnivall, Netherlands India, pp. 196-198 and pp. 332-335.
165 Knight, Narratives of Colonialism, p. 29.
about 950 thousands seasonal workers who constantly commuted from their residences to sugar plantations and factories.

John Urry brings to light the necessity of paying more serious attention to the various forms of people’s movement and mobility. Although such activities were trivial and personal, they were economically, socially, culturally and politically organized. Family visits, holiday making as well as work-motivated migration always have correlation with the bigger social, economic, cultural and political mobility. The new industry needs new migrants, the new society creates new patterns of regular visiting and holidaymaking.¹⁶⁷ Since such movement and mobility, Urry continues, presuppose large-scale immobile infrastructure, they exemplified in the topographical photographs of plantations, factories, train stations, asphalt road and bridges, as well as landscape photographs of natural beauty.

Although the main purpose the bridges were to serve the company’s interest, the villagers took advantage of them on a daily basis. The bridges became part of the villagers’ daily life, hence increasing their mobility. The bridge was “the immobile infrastructure that made possible the socialities of everyday life,”¹⁶⁸ hence determining the socio spatial patterns of the villagers’ mobility.

¹⁶⁸ Urry, ibid., p. 19.
Figure 11. The bridge over Kali Sogra, built by joint cooperation between the government and the company, dated May 1901 (finished) No. 44 teeth 8.30 meter gauge rights.”, Album # 256, Page 57, # 00004369, KIT.
Figure 12. Bridge with concrete vaults of the Kali-Pekadja. Gauge between the abutments 4.4m, built by the Company. Above the bridge Kalikidang sugar cane plantation, Album # 259 Page 28, # 60004522.

As is the case at large in the Dutch family albums, the villagers do not appear much in the bridge photographs, let alone their mobility, unless they intersect with the mobility of Europeans. In the photograph above (figure 4), we see some villagers standing on the bridge, leaning toward the side from which the low angle photograph was taken. Although they hardly look posed, they stare back to the camera or perhaps to the photographer’s activity down in the river. The photograph is well arranged, using the bridge as a horizontal line on the picture plane and placing three quarters of the picture for the view below the bridge. On the river bank?, right under the arch of the concrete bridge, a young man squats in a defecating position, a common thing to do at that time, only without the presence of other people for such a private activity. Therefore the
photograph suggests a staged performance. The young man under the bridge would have left unless asked to remain in this position by an authoritative power. One would imagine the same authority asking the two villagers to squat on each end of the bridge in the other photograph (figure 2). Both of them seem tense, holding their hands nervously staring back to the camera.

One might tend to think that the infusion of native presence in the photographs of bridges is the legacy of colonial topographical photography in attributing racial and cultural difference. The dramatization of distance and difference characterized landscape photographs in depicting the non-Western world in nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{169} One might also look at these photographs as constituting a class relation (between the villagers and the photographer) and the exercise of power (they had to be there). However, if we consider the significance of bridges in the modernizing colony narrative and the technical detail in the photograph’s caption, I suggest that there was also a practical reason to position natives in photographs of bridges. The young man under the bridge and the two nervous fellows in the other photograph were asked to be in a particular position in order to give the sense of scale of the space.

The ideological aspect placing the natives on the bridge laid in the photographs’ visual connotation and context. These two photographs were in the Pietermaat-Soesman family albums and were the only sugar photographs in which natives were staged on bridges. The photograph in figure 1 is preceded by the photograph of another bridge where Mr. Francke is standing in the middle of the bridge, as the caption explains,\textsuperscript{169}

whereas the photograph in figure 2 is preceded by the photograph of a railroad bridge and succeeded by the photograph of a road bridge. The majority of these photographs in the photo albums have no natives in them. This means that the photographer would have easily cleared the bridges from natives before the photographs were taken, as is the case with the rest of the bridge photographs in the albums. They all have similar visual approach. Most of them were taken where the bridge cut the picture plane horizontally, some of them were taken from the left or right side and the bridge cut the picture plane diagonally. There were hardly any activities on the bridge such as people standing or walking. The distance from which the photographer stood also made impossible to see any activity on the bridge. Unlike the rest of bridge photographs, these two particular photographs were taken in quite close distance, thus enabling the viewer to see what was happening on the bridge. The visualization of these two bridge photographs was hardly determined by the need to share impressions of both places and modern bridges for the viewers in the Netherlands.\textsuperscript{170} They were most likely meant to demonstrate the direct experience of natives with bridges. Although those villagers might not be in the bridge photographs voluntarily, nonetheless they benefited by the existence of such modern bridges.\textsuperscript{171} Those bridges became part of the villagers’ daily activities.

\textsuperscript{170} Titles and notes in the photo albums suggest that they were intended as token from Java for the family in Holland. The Pietermaat-Soesman family in Amsterdam eventually donated these photo albums to the Tropical Museum.

\textsuperscript{171} In the Pietermaat-Soesman album “View from Different Places” there is a photograph of a bamboo bridge, which is put side by side with a modern bridge, Album # 362, page 19 and 20. The traditional bamboo bridge, while visually striking and cheap to build, required a great deal of maintenance and only lasted less than six years. Bamboo bridges also were not able to take too heavy load, which had been cause of much
Despite the fact that the main purpose of the bridges was to serve the sugar industry’s interest, they also gave the villagers experience the twentieth century speed-wonder facilitated by the modern infrastructure of the bridges, which made possible by the present of the sugar factory in the area. While the rest of the topographical photographs of bridges in the family photo albums demonstrated the new mobility of people and capital generated by the industry, the two photographs under discussion especially symbolized the new local mobility of the villagers who necessarily worked for the industry.

frustration during the cane-harvesting season. For more information on bamboo bridges, see Ravesteijn and Kop, eds., *For Profit and Prosperity*, p. 175.
CHAPTER 5: THE VIEWERS, COLONIAL PHOTOGRAPHY IN INDONESIA
AND BEYOND

It should not be surprising that photographs of the colonial days often leave viewers of the ex-colonized country with a certain taste of bitterness. A review of an exhibition on colonial photography in the Dutch Cultural Center Erasmus Huis in Jakarta in 2008 is paradigmatic of such a sentiment: “Dieng Plateau, 1938. Eight men wearing head cloths, sarongs and shorts were carrying two sedan chairs. A white man was in each of them. They were carried to a famous hot water spring in Central Java. The black-and-white photograph was not only depicting the exotic Dieng, but also displaying the dark picture of colonialism: the native was the “jongos” (term for male house servant) whose duty was to carry the “majikan” (master).”\(^\text{172}\) The exhibition featured the work of the Dutch traveler and amateur photographer Alphons Hustinx (1900-1972), a typical upper-class boy of his time who turned his hobby of traveling into a profession, writing and making photographs and films for travel agencies.

A Dutch Steamship Company assigned Hustinx to produce promotional material (film and photographs) about the journey to the East.\(^\text{173}\) In this context, the photograph under discussion aimed to show how tourists traveled in the Dieng Plateau in the respective period, but its function was overshadowed by the writer’s anti-colonial sentiment. Hustinx’ photograph hardly followed the tourist pictorial tradition of European

\(^{172}\) Andari Karina Anom, “Jejak Kolonialisme dalam Keindahan” (The Trace of Colonialism in Beauty), \textit{Tempo}, 13 July 2009.

\(^{173}\) Louis Zweers, “Travel of the Past”, in \textit{Travel of the Past: Photographs by Alphons Hustinx}, Erasmus Huis, Jakarta, June 24\textsuperscript{th}-July 28\textsuperscript{th} 2009. Hustinx was a well known amateur photographer, recognized as the pioneer of his kind, see Bool et al., \textit{Dutch Eyes}, p. 319.
settlers in the colony. Photographs of Europeans being transported in different types of carrying chairs by natives were usually motionless and frontal, so that their smiling faces were visible to family and friends back home. On the contrary, this photograph was taken from behind while they were walking in order to show the Dieng Plateau landscape.

Photography and colonialism bear unclear connotations in Indonesia because the correlation of the two simply has not properly penetrated the public discourse. Consequently, people often make blunt, simplistic and generalized accounts of photographs from the colonial period, which are often informed by an anti-colonial sentiment rather than critical curiosity. Or, they refer to “colonial photographs” just as “photographs from the Dutch time” (foto-foto jaman Belanda) or simply “old photographs” (foto-foto tua). In the academic discourse, colonial photography has not yet gained an appropriate place, either. Photography departments in many Indonesian educational institutions do not offer Indonesian photography history courses; leave alone courses on Indonesian colonial photography (or Dutch colonial photography in Indonesia). Books on photographers working in the colonial period, the majority of which have been published in the Netherlands, hardly ever make their way to Indonesia, even to small academic circles. Erasmus Huis seems hesitant to employ the term “colonial photography,” too, at least in their last two exhibitions of photographers working during the colonial period.174

174 The Alphons Hustinx exhibition was entitled “Travel of the Past,” whereas the previous exhibition was entitled “Through the Eyes of the Past” featuring the work of Jean Demmeni and held from 17 January-22 February 2008.
However, reviews of such exhibitions, as I have quoted above, have made an immediate connection between photography and colonialism, even if imagery and practitioners have not been described as colonial photography/photographers.\textsuperscript{175} If the term “colonial photography” in Indonesia has recently circulated and somehow been accepted as designating the practice of photography in the colonial days, it carries, nonetheless, a certain anti-colonial bias.\textsuperscript{176} Such bias in turn potentially runs the risk of obscuring the wider meaning that the photograph may convey.

Image content is fundamental for every photograph. It tells us straight away and on the simplest level of signification what the photograph is “of.” The visual elements of the picture plane (composition, framing and lighting) as well as the technical limitations of the camera equipment of the period significantly contribute to an understanding of the subject matter. However, a photograph is never alone. It is not adequate to discuss photographs simply in terms of visual description. John Tagg argues that the meaning of a photograph is constructed by visual elements in the photograph and the historical and

\textsuperscript{175} See for example the review on Jean Dammeni exhibition, Evi Mariani, “Exhibition Gives Light to Works of Unknown Colonial Photographer,” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, 23 January 2008.

\textsuperscript{176} In this account, it is interesting to investigate how Indonesian history textbooks contextualized and captioned colonial photographs in accordance with their cultural and political contexts. My observation shows that the use of colonial photographs has been to merely illustrate the description of a certain period in a fairly arbitrary manner. The books pay minimal attention to the photographs and only make use of the visual sensation of the photograph’s subject matter, leave alone to recognize them as colonial photographs. See Sartono Kartodirdjo, Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro, Nugroho Notosusanto, \textit{Nusantara di Abad Ke-18 dan Ke-19}. Vol. 4 of \textit{Sejarah Nasional Indonesia}, (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1975), pp 156-157, Parakitri T. Simbolon, \textit{Menjadi Indonesia} (Jakarta: Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2006), pp. 770-792.
cultural context of the photograph. This meaning also multiples and changes over time. For example, the inscription of the colonial gaze in a photograph, as Elizabeth Edwards has shown, has to be examined through the initial intention of the photograph’s production, distribution and consumption. By nature, a photograph’s references are external to itself, and therefore relying solely on the photographic image without taking into account the different contexts in which it exists limits photographic meaning to the evidential one.

Contextual reading may pave our way to understanding photographs in the way in which they were made. In chapter 3 and 4 I have tried to situate the omnipresence of group portraits and topographical photographs in the sugar photo albums in the historical and cultural context of the sugar industry and photography in Java in the respective period. As I collated relevant information about the photographs in discussion, I endeavored to minimize visual sensations embedded in the photographs, which could contribute greatly to the formation of an anti-colonial sentiment. In doing so, some details of the colonial community have come to the surface, thus contributing to a more complete picture of the Java sugar world. The group portraits of Europeans, Chinese and Javanese working in the industry do not simply verify a race-based social hierarchy. More than that, as I have discussed in chapter 3, group portraits demonstrated a complex social hierarchy, which was formed by the nature of working in the industry. Further discussion of the group portraits in the album has shed light on the fact that the non-

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existence of Javanese names in the captions did not necessarily signal colonial repression and race discrimination. Such practice was rather common in the period, which displayed non-recognition in the specific domain of photo albums. This analysis does not, of course, deny the practice of race discrimination in the course of colonialism. On the contrary, by looking at such detail we can understand how race relations worked on a day-to-day basis when class prevailed over race and capitalism equalized racial difference.

I employ the same logic when I examine the unusual presence of photographs of bridges in photo albums in chapter 4. Part and parcel of the success story of modernizing the colony, photographs of modern bridges showed the impact of the sugar industrialization on the infrastructure of transportation. More than that, the pattern of photographs of bridges in the photo albums also indicated a new character of mobility in the sugar world, which did not only derive from business motivation but was also informed by pleasure. A photograph of a bridge in one of the albums, whose hand-written caption informs the viewer it is located near the ancient monument of Borobudur, entails a desire to travel in order to experience the archeological site. The performative and the picturesque function of bridges and photographs of bridges are, according to John Urry, “necessary to account for why certain groups feel a burning desire,” which “mobilize huge numbers of people regularly to travel and then to move around particular sites.”

My discussion in this thesis has concentrated on two themes of photographs in the sugar photo albums: group portraits and photographs of bridges. There are other

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179 Urry, Mobility, p. 37.
interesting themes that are recurrent in these albums but cannot be discussed here due to
time and other practical restrictions. Indoor photographs of machinery in the newly built
sugar factories offer fascinating views of the photographic representation of the
manufacturing industry in the colony. While technically challenging, indoor photographs
of machinery in sugar factories in Java may provide alternatives or connections to a
morphologically and conceptually similar genre in Western industry in the early
twentieth century.\textsuperscript{180} Another important series of photographs in the albums is the private
and domestic photographs of European and Eurasian sugar families, which is a widely
researched topic.\textsuperscript{181} Therefore, integrating this series of photographs into scholarly
investigation on the subject promises a new outlook on the bourgeois life in the Indies.

The sugar photographs constitute a fragment of both the Indonesian history of
colonialism and the Indonesian history of photography. Even though the aftermath of the
glorious days of the sugar industry mediated through the photographs examined here has
been discussed in many scholarly works,\textsuperscript{182} the relationship of the particular episode of
the photographic development in the sugar photographs and colonial photography in
general with the bigger picture of photography’s development in Indonesia remains to be

\textsuperscript{180} Scholarly works on the subject of modernization and industrialization in the
colony provide an ideal frame to pursue this topic further. This can be perfectly paired
with the rapid development of Western industrial photography in the same period, see
Mrazek, \textit{Engineers of Happy Land}; Ravesteijn and Kop, eds., \textit{For Profit and Prosperity}.
\textsuperscript{181} See for example Gouda, \textit{Dutch Culture Overseas}; Locher-Scholten, \textit{Women
and the Colonial State}; Stoler, \textit{Carnal Knowledge}; Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, \textit{Being
Dutch in the Indies: A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920} (Singapore: NUS
Press, 2008); Roger G. Knight, “A Sugar Factory and its Swimming Pool: Incorporation
and Differentiation in Dutch Colonial Society in Java”, \textit{Ethnic and Racial Studies} 24, 3
(May 2004), pp. 451-471.
251-266; Knight, \textit{Narrative of Colonialism}, chapter 6.
explored. Steven Wachlin’s survey of commercial photo studios operating in the Dutch East Indies between 1850 and 1940 indicates that out of a total of 450 photo studios there were 315 that had European namesakes, 186 Chinese, 45 Japanese, and only 4 photo studios that bore “local” names, i.e., Cephas in Yogyakarta, A. Mohamad in Batavia, Sarto in Semarang, and Najoan in Ambon. However, Karen Strassler suggests that it was the Chinese who brought commercial photography to the fore in the Indonesian era. The Japanese Occupation (1942-1945) drove the European photographic business out of the archipelago and the War of Independence forced the exodus of Japanese studio photographers. While the presence of Chinese commercial photo studios suggests the continuation of this pictorial tradition of the colonial era, the photographs during the Indonesian revolution (1945-1949) offer a distinctly different tradition. The work of the Indonesian photographers the Mendur and Umbas brothers in the first Indonesian photo agency IPPHOS (Indonesia Press Photo Service) collection displays a different proposition, which signals the turn of photography from predominantly portrait and topographical genres into an engagement with photojournalism.

If the short period of the Indonesian revolution had created its own genre and tradition, which differ from the previous ones and continue until the present day, it is

worth questioning the continuation of the portrait and topography genres that were nurtured by the practice of colonial photography for the last 100 years. The Chinese photo studios that have survived in the colonial, revolution and independent eras presumably preserve this tradition. Therefore it is hardly the case that the sugar photographs and colonial photography in general represents just a colonial blip that disappears after independence. According to Karen Strassler, the number of Chinese-owned photo studios increased significantly in the first two decades in the 1950s and 1960s. Those photographers were either of direct descent from or apprentices of photo studios that operated in the colonial era.  

Another linkage of the colonial pictorial tradition can be found in the 1950s coffee-table photography books. Widely circulated, perhaps the first photography book on independent Indonesia, *Tanah Air Kita* (1950), demonstrates some continuation of the pictorial tradition in the colonial period, especially in portraits and topographical photographs. Edited by a Eurasian, N.A. Douwes Dekker and featuring Dutch and Chinese photographers, this book was published in 1950 with the support of both the Indonesian and Dutch Ministries of Information. Welcoming the Suharto New Order Era in 1970, a similar book with a suchlike pictorial approach, *Faith in Future: Indonesia at Work* (1970) was also published, but this time with a Japanese connection, edited by

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the Japanese Koji Nakamura and featuring the work of the Japanese photographer Yasushi Nagao.\textsuperscript{188} Along with political and historical information, these books are significant in this field of study for two important reasons: they showcase the continuous presence of Chinese photographers, who still operate most of the commercial photo studios in Indonesia today, and indicate “the symbolic return” of the Dutch and Japanese photographers after independence, who have long gone from the memory of contemporary Indonesians.

Recent publications on the work of colonial photographers, both in the format of popular photography books\textsuperscript{189} and exhibition catalogues, not only invoke the memory of the past with a different kind of sentiment. They also offer another level of complexity in looking at the historical continuum of photographic tradition(s) in Indonesia that are just beginning to unfold in very intellectually challenging ways.


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APPENDIX

Categorization, Information and Technical Details of Photo Albums

A. Big Sugar Family Photo Albums:

1. Album # 256

Title: Souvenir aan Poerwokerto en Kalibagor (Pietermaat-Soesman Album #1)

Date: 1880-1900

Text/Note on the first page: Kolonial Institut – Amsterdam, Schenking 191 27/6 ’29,
Onderwerp: S.F. Poerwokerto en Kalibagor, Afkoms: Mvr. Pietermaat Soesman (inside cover)

Photographer: Woodbury and Page

Album: 42x35x8.5 cm, 49 leaves, 98 pages, 91 photos

Photographs: 21x27.5 cm, gelatin silver prints, # 60004313-60004395 (page 1-84);
16.5x11.5 cm, gelatin silver prints # 60004396-60004402

Description: The title of the album indicates the intention behind its making: it is a visual token of the sugar factory and plantation in Poerwokerto and Kalibagor. This is the biggest and the first out of the five albums of the Pitermaat-Soesman family. Apart from the official depiction of the factory and other infrastructure, this album features some personal activities and domestic life of the factory director and other European managerial staff in a formal manner. They were photographed in front of their new houses, which were provided by the company.

2. Album # 264

Title: Souvenir aan Poerwokerto en Kalibagor (Pietermaat-Soesman Album #2)
Date: 1920

Text/Note on the first page: Kolonial Institut – Amsterdam, Schenking 191 27/6 ’29,
Onderwerp: S.F. Poerwokerto en Kalibagor 1920, Afkoms: Mvr. Pietermaat Soesman

(inside cover)

Photographer: unknown

Album: 41,5x52x4,5 cm, 36 leaves, 72 pages, 36 photos

Photograph: 19,5x27 cm, gelatin silver prints with a brown tone, # 60008358, 60016301-
60016336

Description: This is the second album out of the five albums of the Pietermaat Soesman
family. The captions are handwritten and without ornament. The arrangement of the
photographs in the album suggests that it was probably produced by a professional photo
studio. It has consistency in size and in terms of the placement of the photographs in the
center of the page. In the album cover there is a trace of a lost medallion that used to be
attached there. The photographs in the album are not particularly well executed,
especially those that depict factory interiors. The organization of the photographs in the
album is a comprehensive depiction of the whole process of sugar production including 3
photographs of the final product (gula pasir), which is hardly ever seen in other albums.

There is a series of group portraits of different levels of employees, a categorization that
only exists in this photo album.

3. Album # 259

Title: Souvenir aan Poerwokerto, Kalibagor en Banjoemas (Pietermaat-Soesman Album
#3)
Date: 1900-1910

Text/Note in the first page: Kolonial Institut – Amsterdam, Schenking 191 27/6 ’29,
Onderwerp: S.F. Poerwokerto en Kalibagor, Afkomst: Mvr. Pietermaat Soesman (inside cover)

Photographer: Unknown

Album: 32x26,5x7,5 cm, 23 leaves, 46 pages, 44 photos
Photograph: 16,5 x 11,5 cm, gelatin silver prints with a yellowish tone, # 60004496 – 60004539.

Description: This is the third album of the Pietermat-Soesman family, which includes Banjoemas as the coverage area. The photographs are rather random in terms of production criteria and selection, depicting mainly landscapes in the region and local activities such as cow trading.

4. Album # 362

Title: Gezichten van Diverse Plaatsen (Pietermaat-Soesman Album #4)

Text in the first page/Note: Kolonial Institut – Amsterdam, Schenking 191 27/6 ’29,
Onderwerp: S.F. Poerwokerto en Kalibagor, Afkomst: Mvr. Pietermaat Soesman (inside cover)

Photographer: L Kolling (amateur photographer), Cephas

Album: 34x43x5,5 cm, 16 leaves, 32 pages, 69 photos, page 16-32 (17): 1 photo per page, page1, 3-15: 2 photos page (38), page 2: 4 photo per page (4).
Photograph: 8x11 cm, 10,5x15,5 cm, 22x17 cm, 16x 22 cm, 26,5x20 cm, 20x13 cm, 28x10 (combined 2 photos in to a panoramic photo) gelatin silver prints, some with a yellowish tone, # 60030003 – 60030026

Description: This is the fourth album of the Pietermat-Soesman family, which seems to put together different kinds of photographs (miscellaneous) that do not fit into the themes of other albums. The sizes of the photographs vary so do the depicted subjects. Based on the quality of the photographs, it seems as if different photographers, a combination of trained amateur and professionals, took them. However, this album is a product of a professional image-maker or most probably a photo studio. The design of each page of the album follows the size of the photograph, including a printed caption. Not all photographs in this album are digitised.

B. Sugar Syndicate Photo Album

5. Album # 807

Title: Proefstation voor de Javasuikerindustrie te Pasoeroean 1926

Date: 1926

Text/Note in the first page:

Photographer: Kurkdjian

Album: 25x33,5x1,5 cm, 31 leaves, 31 pages, 31 photos

Photograph: 14x21 cm, gelatin silver prints, # 60028795-60028812

Description: The title is printed in golden lettering. Atelier Kurkdjian, the most famous photo studio in Surabaya, East Java, produced the photographs and the album (the name is embossed on the right down corner). There is a numbering system in front of some
captions (indicating perhaps a studio print number). The captions are professionally handwritten.

6. Album # 529

Title: Algemen Syndicaat van Suikerfabrikanten in Nederlandsch-Indie. Suiker op Java in Beeld

Date: 1925

Text/Note in the first page: 19/3-'82: van CB (handwritten)

Photographer: Kurkdjian

Album: 28x39x4 cm, 30 leaves, 30 pages, 30 photos

Photograph: 17x23 cm, gelatin silver prints, # 60007203-60007232

Description: This is the most complete and comprehensive visual report of the sugar production. The first page of the album depicts a rice field and the last page shows the shipping of sugar. The captions are written neatly under each photograph in the down right corner. There are two photographs that show two European women working in the office.

C. Small Sugar Factory Photo Album

7. Album # 485

Title: No. 1 Suikerfabriek Sedatie 1914

Date: 1914

Text/Note in the first page: Schenking 108/80 Mw J. ULTEE. Baggelaar A’dam 24/4-‘80

Photographer: Unknown

Album: 13,5x17x2 cm, 12 leaves, 24 pages, 24 photos
Photograph: 11x8 cm, gelatin silver prints, # 60023064-60023076

Description: Although this album is fairly small, it is not a personal/family photo album because the selection and organization of the photographs was made in a rather formal manner. The caption is typewritten and glued onto the page.

8. Album # 486

Title: No. 2 Suiekrfabriek Sedatie 1914

Date: 1914

Text/Note in the first page: Schenking 108/80 Mw J. Ultee. Baggelaar A’dam 24/4- ’80

Photographer: unknown

Album: 13,5x17x2 cm, 12 leaves, 25 pages, 25 photos (the last is glued on the inside back cover)

Photograph: 11x8 cm, gelatin silver prints, # 60023077-60023084

Description: This album differs from the first album of the series as it includes some personal representations of the family.

D. Small Sugar Family Photo Album

9. Album # 626

Title: (S.F. Delanggu)

Date: 1910-1930

Text/Note in the first page: Schenking 188/83 Hr. Nienaber, Amsterdam (handwritten)

Photographer: unknown

Album: 21x13x2,5 cm, 24 leaves, 24 pages, 24 photos
Photograph: 11 x 8 cm, gelatin silver prints with a yellowish tone, # 60024525 – 60024535

Description: The size of this album is fairly small. Photographs are cut and glued onto the page. The captions are handwritten by pencil on the back of the page.