British Borobudur Buddha:
Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, Orientalist Antiquarianism,
and a Material Historiography of Java (1811-1816)

by

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Class of 2013

A thesis submitted to the
faculty of Wesleyan University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts
with Departmental Honors in History

Middletown, Connecticut April, 2013
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Acknowledgments

This thesis, like the Borobudur Buddha statue, is an artifact of time, labor, and ideas striving to be realized for which I thank all who have assisted me in its creation.

My gratitude to my thesis advisor, Jennifer Tucker, whose intellectual insight and indefatigable enthusiasm motivated the words on these pages. The astuteness, rigor, and ingenuity in your own work are an inspiration. I also thank my faculty advisor, Javier Castro, for believing in my promise and whose conscientious judgment conditioned the aspiring scholar in me. I especially thank William Pinch in History for introducing me to the world of the British Empire and for taking me under his wing throughout my Wesleyan career. I owe what little proficiency I have in research and writing to your guidance. I express my gratitude to Phillip Wagoner in Art History who graciously apportioned his time and tolerance in indulging my queries when most needed. I thank Tony Day, whose kindness and scholarship allowed for my own research. Michælle Biddle, librarian, conservator, and mentor, thank you for your unremitting support in my academic pursuits. I also acknowledge the History Department and every professor at Wesleyan University and Université Paris IV Sorbonne for fostering my learning and growth, especially Typhaine Leservot, Catherine Ostrow, Stephanie Kuduk-Weiner, and fellow Javanese Pak Sumarsam, Pak Harjito, and Bu Maeny.

In research, I am indebted to the Davenport Grant and the White Fellowship in the History Department for funding the entirety of my research in Washington D.C., London, Jakarta, and Borobudur in summer 2012, without which this thesis would never have been realized. I am obliged to the librarians, curators, and scholars who paved the way for my inquiries and archival work. I would like to especially thank Annabel Teh Gallop of the British Library for imparting her expertise on Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles and Jennifer Howes of the British Library for assisting me in navigating the prints and drawings collections on British antiquarianism. I also thank Helen Porter at the Royal Asiatic Society library for discovering Godfrey Baker and the antiquaries with me. Much gratitude to Alexandra Green, British Museum Curator of Southeast Asia, for allowing me access to the Raffles collection. Additional thanks to John Miksic at the National University of Singapore, Yudi Suhartono at the Balai Konservasi Peninggalan Borobudur, and the staff at Freer and Sackler Galleries, Washington, D.C.

I am forever beholden to the late Mr. Freeman and the Freeman Foundation for the opportunity to study at Wesleyan University and thank John and Gina Driscoll and Alice Hadler for their continued support.

To my friends, peers, and formidable fellow dwellers of Olin’s thesis carrels.
To my Indonesians.
To my father, mother, and sister.
To my two grandmothers.
Abbreviations

Add. Mss.: Additional Manuscripts, British Library (London)
ANRI: National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (Jakarta)
APAC: Asia, Pacific and Africa Collection, British Library (London)
Asiatic Journal: The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies (London)
BL: British Library (London)
BM: British Museum (London)
BSAS: Batavia Society of Arts and Sciences (Jakarta)
F: prints, drawings, and photographs, BL APAC (London)
EIC: East India Company
IOL: India Office Library, BL APAC (London)
IOR: India Office Records, BL APAC (London)
JMBRAS: Journal of the Malayan Branch of the RAS (Kuala Lumpur, Singapore)
JSBRAS: Journal of the Straits Branch of the RAS (Singapore)
KITLV: Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (Leiden)
Mss. Eur.: European Manuscripts, BL APAC (London)
RAS: Royal Asiatic Society (London)
RSL: Royal Society of London (London)
SAL: Society of Antiquaries of London (London)
THC: Tang Holdings Collection (Singapore)
VOC: Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie/Dutch East India Company
WD: prints, drawings, and photographs, BL APAC (London)
ZSL: Zoological Society of London (London)

Orthography

(Modern standard) (Alternatives)
Place names
Bengkulu Bencoolen
Bogor Buitenzorg
Jakarta Batavia, Jacatra
Melaka Malacca
Meluku Moluccas
Penang Prince of Wales Island
Semanap Samanap
Semarang Samarang
Solo/Surakarta Sooracarta, Souracarta, Surakerta
Sulawesi Celebes
Yogyakarta Djocjacarta, Djocjocarta, Djojocarta, Jogjakarta
Temples
Borobudur Barabudur, Boro-bodo, Boro-boedoe
Prambanan Brambana, Brambanang, Prambana
Maps and Illustrations

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“The embodied soul is eternal in existence, indestructible, and infinite, only the material body is factually perishable.”

– Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 18

“Should any accident occur to us, or should we never be heard of more, you may conclude we have been eaten.”

– Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles to the Duchess of Somerset, 12 February 1820
Introduction

How does an artifact tell the history of world encounters? Meet Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (1781-1826), colonial administrator, amateur antiquary, and a thorough Regency-Era dandy.¹ Jamaican born and London raised, Raffles spent much of his professional, imperial life in Southeast Asia. After sailing to the East Indies as a young man, during the 1811-1816 British East India Company (EIC) interregnum in Java, modern-day Indonesia, Raffles was named Lieutenant-Governor of Java and its dependencies.² Raffles’s political exploits have been much written about.³ His administration of Java lives in Indonesian official history and popular memory as a time of great reforms, from land tenure to the revival of the Batavia Society of Arts and Sciences. But there is one facet of his colonial life rarely examined: his collecting of Javanese artifacts and how it influenced a material historiography of the British Empire.

I met Raffles, figuratively, from another character: the Borobudur Buddha head is a stone fragment of a full-body statue of the Buddha, taken by Raffles from the Borobudur, a ninth-century Buddhist monument in Central Java.⁴ The sculpture now sits in a wooden cabinet in room 33, Gallery of Oriental Antiquities at the British Museum in London.

¹ Fig. 6. Regency Era signifies the period between 1811 and 1820 when Britain was ruled by the Prince Regent later becoming George IV, the formative years of Raffles’s imperial career and the period of British colonization of Java.
² Java was, and remains, the most densely populated island in the archipelago. It was the administrative seat of Dutch authority in the East Indies. See a map of the East Indies, Fig. 1, and of Java, Fig. 2.
³ Raffles has been the subject of many biographies. See the most recently published Victoria Glendinning, Raffles and the Golden Opportunity (London: Profile, 2012) in addition to the comprehensive biography by C.E. Wurtzburg, Raffles of the Eastern Isles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984) and, certainly, written by his second wife and widow, Sophia Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (London: J. Duncan, 1835). His politics have often been analyzed, for example, in John Bastin, The Native Policies of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles in Java and Sumatra (London: Clarendon Press, 1957).
⁴ The Borobudur is the largest surviving Buddhist structure in the world. See fig. 5; the Buddha head: fig. 3; a headless Buddha statue on the Borobudur: fig. 4. Raffles additionally took two other Buddha head statues from the Borobudur.
London, some 7,500 miles from its former home. The Museum recently named the volcanic stone head as item no. 59 in its series, *A History of the World in 100 Objects*. The Borobudur was excavated in 1814, a crucial yet often overlooked juncture of political, cultural, and intellectual transformations: the burgeoning of British Orientalism, the rise of colonial antiquarianism, and important shifts in European imperial power structures. Building upon the Bourdieuan concept of “symbolic violence,” this thesis seeks to illustrate that though imperialism was perpetrated by military power and economic prowess, it was also enacted through cultural modes of control. In this, my research unearths processes that a number of scholars have begun to identify as crucial to understanding the imperial enterprise: antiquarianism in colonial contexts, object-collecting as imperial custom, and the role of imperial agents in visually and materially authoring colonized identities. I posit, simply, that the collection, interpretation, and representation of Oriental antiquities by British colonial agents were profoundly significant to how imaginations of the colonized territories and thus the British Empire were constructed through object transfer and display within the problematic Orientalism of several EIC agents around the Regency Era. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the Borobudur head traveled from the ninth-century Javanese monument to Raffles’s private collection before entering the British Museum in 1859. Its journey from a forested valley to halls of prized artifacts was an imperial expedition. Its narrative: a material historiography of Java.

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5 Cartel, Item 1228.176: “Borobudur Buddha Head,” British Museum. See the sculpture’s current display in Fig. 21.


7 As Nicholas Dirks, among many, writes of colonialism, “it was itself a cultural project of control” (Nicholas Dirks, *Colonialism and Culture*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 3).
This process, the formation of a historical imagination of an identity or nation like Java through the use of material artifacts is what I term “material historiography.”

The nineteenth century saw the expansion of European powers and subsequent subjugation of other parts of the world in search of new commodities, market, and labor, an effort initiated by the continent’s audacious merchants and trading companies.8 From 1815 to 1914, overseas territories controlled by European nations expanded from 35 percent to around 85 percent of the earth’s surface.9 In South and Southeast Asia, the main imperial powers were Britain, the Netherlands, and France.10 As the nineteenth century wore on, commercial ambition translated to political domination.11 The British EIC began establishing mercantile and, gradually, political control in parts of India in the seventeenth century. From 1786, the EIC extended its reach to Penang in the Malayan archipelago.12 The Dutch Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC), meanwhile, commandeered its monopoly of the archipelagic spice trade from its colonial base in Java. In 1811, during the Napoleonic wars, Britain took Java from the Netherlands which was then annexed to France. Raffles, an EIC administrator, was named Lieutenant-Governor of the island. Alongside his colleagues, surveyor Colin Mackenzie (1754–1821),13 EIC Captain Godfrey Baker (1786-1850), and the American naturalist

8 The major European imperial powers being Britain, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Portugal, and, to a lesser extent, Belgium.
10 France did not hold significant colonial presence until later in the century with their protectorate of Cambodia in 1863 then parts of Vietnam in 1884 and Laos in 1893 (ibid., 214).
11 The EIC was dissolved in 1858, transferring governance of the Indian subcontinent to the British crown. The Dutch Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC) was similarly disbanded in 1800 with all territories falling under the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
13 Fig. 7.
Thomas Horsfield (1773-1859), Raffles embarked on expeditions throughout the island, combining military or administrative duties with an Orientalist passion for collecting manuscripts and objects of antiquities from Java’s Hindu-Buddhist *candi* remains. Prior to British arrival, Javanese antiquities remained relatively neglected under the Dutch. In 1814, Raffles ordered Dutch engineer H.C. Cornelius to excavate the Borobudur, removing damaged reliefs and sculptures. Our Buddha head thence entered Raffles’s collection, later bequeathed to his nephew, William Charles Raffles Flint, before in 1859 entering the British Museum as item 1228.176: “figure of Buddha head.”

This thesis traces the relic’s travels to situate it in the conjunctures of these encounters. The Buddha head is subaltern displaced, displayed; a culture colonized. Imperialism is often appraised in terms of political struggles and violent altercations. But empire was forged not only by soldiers and muskets; it is an ideological fiction set in imagined geographies. To appraise colonial power one ought to thus recognize its articulations in the realm of culture and the manipulation of those cultural representations. Taking that critical vantage point, one which examines colonialism and

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14 Fig. 8.
15 I will use the term “*candi*,” the Indonesian term to signify early modern Hindu-Buddhist monuments in Java comprising devotional temples or political structures.
16 It was only after the British left that the Commissie tot het Omsporen, Verzamelen en Bewaren van Oudheidkundige Voorwepen (Commission for the Discovery, Collection, and Conservation of Ancient Objects) was founded in 1822, though more professionalized archaeological work did not begin fully until later in the nineteenth century. The Archaeological Service was created in 1913 as an official organ to consolidate archaeological activities in the Dutch East Indies (R.P. Soejono, “The Genesis of Indonesian Archaeology,” in The Indonesia Reader, ed. Eric Tagliacozzo and Tineke Hellwig (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 29).
17 See the temple around the time of the excavation, with partial visual reconstruction, in Fig. 15, View of the Very Remarkable Ruines, called by the Javanese Borro Boodoo, by H.C. Cornelius or draftsman, ca. 1807-15, watercolor, pen, and ink. 1939.3-11.06, 1, BM.
18 By “subaltern,” I am recalling Gayatri Spivak’s use of the term, drawn from Antonio Gramsci’s “On the Margins of History: History of the Subaltern Social Groups” (1971) which describes those in subordinate or inferior class positions, and influenced by the *Subaltern Studies* group who use the term to signify contributions made “independently of the elite” (Robert Young, White Mythologies: Writing History and the West (London: Routledge, 1990), 159-60.
19 Perhaps it goes without saying, but one primary influence in my research and historiographical approach is Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities (New York: Verso, 1991).
culture, as deployed by the ingenious analyses of scholars like anthropologist Nicholas Thomas or historians Nicholas Dirks and Ann Laura Stoler, the following historical narrative thus problematizes the identitary construction of imperial agents, objects, and what became to be understood as lived colonial realities through the control of cultural artifacts. In 1817, Raffles authored *The History of Java*, three volumes which became the predominant literary and visual representation of Java in imperial Britain. Artifacts, too, served as tools for historiography. Through the activities of men like Raffles, Orientalist antiquarian interpretation and object-collecting replicated and reaffirmed colonial power structures. In response to post-colonial critique, chiefly by Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and Pierre Bourdieu, I argue that it is through the Orientalist study and collection of colonial artifacts that dominant historical interpretations discursively displaced the self-enacting agency of the colonized subject outside the realm of official history.

Overall, I posit three main arguments in relation to the literature on the British Empire: 1) that the British Empire was constructed *in* the imperial territories as much as an impetus from Britain, 2) that the Empire was created by the acts of individual colonial actors like Raffles or Mackenzie, as opposed to a unified, homogenous imperial project, and 3) that material artifacts and antiquarian interpretation were instrumental, if not partly foundational, to historiography. I will illustrate these in conjunction with critical historical analyses on Raffles’s Orientalism and the British colonization of Java by closely studying three stages of the Buddha head’s voyage: 1) EIC rule and British Orientalism

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as it was recontextualized in Java (ca.1810 – 1816), 2) the problem of antiquarian
interpretation in excavations on site, with the Borobudur as a case study, and 3) antiquarian collecting and the dislocation of the objects and discourse from Java to the imperial metropole (1816 – ca.1859).

Literature Review

My approach thus occupies a curious gap in historical literature. The British Empire has invited the writing of many volumes, with much of the literature concentrating on the Indian subcontinent leaving relatively scant historical work on the EIC’s brief colonial period in Java. Where in those few cases the British interregnum in Java has been discussed in the political or economic sense, I have opted for an approach informed by historical, archaeological, and anthropological inquiries by calling attention to how objects, much like texts and images, can serve as tools for imperial historiography. My approach thus intersects with studies in material culture, yet where those tend to be preoccupied by heritage and repatriation debates, I am more interested in critically examining collecting’s historiographical significance. My thesis will not, therefore, be another to implore moral judgments as often incited with cases like the Parthenon Marbles or Akkadian steles. It will, however, analyze the dialectical tensions between collector, object, and colonial representation, the likes forwarded in the


relatively recent works of Richard Davis, Annie Coombes, Maya Jasanoff, Catherine Hall and others. My research involved original archival research; there is, at the time of this writing, no published studies on the particular Buddha head or on Borobudur’s colonial history. A rarely congruous effort is art historian Sarah Tiffin’s work on Raffles and the visual representation of Javanese candis, which I will draw upon and complicate by introducing the role of object-collecting. In this effort to slightly enrich existing historical scholarship, I will thus engage with three distinct through increasingly intersecting clusters of literature on 1) the British Empire, 2) the subaltern and Orientalism, and 3) visual and material culture in history.

First, our narrative is necessarily situated within the larger historical discourse on the British Empire. My own approach is much influenced by Albert Memmi’s Portrait du colonisé, précédé du portrait du colonisateur (1957) which first posits that the colonizer and the colonized formed part of the same mutually constituted reality. This informs my analysis of the British Empire and subaltern historiography. The political, economic, intellectual, or cultural motivations for British imperial expansion has been subject to much historical debate with differing perspectives questioning the spatialities and temporalities of constructs like empire, metropole, and periphery and the routes of


25 To clarify, throughout my discussion, I will use terms like “imperial” and “colonial” interchangeably.

26 In the context of the British Empire in Asia, we see the same idea articulated, for example, by Eugene Irschick as the “dialogic process.” See Introduction in Eugene Irschick, Dialogue and History: Constructing South India, 1795-1895 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
cultural connections.\textsuperscript{27} Traditional imperial historiography, for example, geographically and conceptually divides the global space between the core/metropole and periphery/colonial, portraying a structural cartography with a British center emanating to imperial edges.\textsuperscript{28} With authors like P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, we see this picture diversified, understanding empire not as a product of one “official mind” but the collective work of the “gentlemanly capitalists.”\textsuperscript{29} Still, the traditional view remains inadequate in linking the local and particular with the general and universal. More recently, we then see a viewpoint which analyses the relations instead as circuits of people and materials.\textsuperscript{30} Historians like David Lambert and Alan Lester thus argue that empire was constructed via “imperial careers” where each individual’s life and contribution to imaginative constructions were recontextualized in each locale as they traveled across the British Empire.\textsuperscript{31} I here adopt that vantage point, integrating places and populations previously thought as discrete into one analytic frame through Raffle’s “imperial career.” Though I still frame my analysis in spatial concepts and use terms like “metropole” to signify London and “periphery” or “imperial territories” to refer to extra-Britain geographies, I emphasize interconnectedness in the Javanese context: temporally, as interactions between pre-colonial Muslim sultanates, Dutch colonists, British agents, and geographically, as in India, Penang, Java, and London. Even as I follow those interactions to London, rather than viewing it as a unilateral return to a deterministic imperial center, our narrative reveals continued conversations across

\textsuperscript{27} For an overview of the discourse, see the “Introduction” in Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, ed. Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).


\textsuperscript{31} Lester, Colonial Lives Across the British Empire: Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century, 25.
territories of the Empire. The British Empire was hence constituted by these moments of encounters in which each locale – metropole or periphery – were active sites for the construction and reconstruction of identities like metropole and colony in the first place.

On that note, this thesis additionally responds to contending scholarships on the “subaltern,” namely between the perspective associated with the Subaltern Studies group and that of its critics, the “early modern school.” The subaltern, neo-Marxist perspective, exemplified by scholars like Ranajit Guha, Gayatri Spivak, and Bernard Cohn, posits that in imperial historiography the prevailing narrative was one produced by ‘elitist’ paradigms, whether British colonial or native elites. Orientalism became instrumental. Edward Said’s seminal critique of Orientalism contends that structural sets of representations formed by the West through imperialism acted to define, understand, and in so doing, construct knowledges of the “Orient” as opposition and constitutive of the “Occident.” As such, Orientalism became in a Foucauldian sense the “Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.” Subaltern histories or modes of knowledge were thus oppressed or marginalized as myths or legends outside the political representation of official history.

On the other hand, however, critics of the subaltern perspective argue that it reduces the imperial reality and reinforces that dichotomy of colonizer and colonized. Historians like C.A. Bayly thus offer perspectives which emphasize the influence of pre-

32 William Pinch outlines this debate, using Bernard Cohn and C.A. Bayly, in “Same Difference in India and Europe,” History and Theory 38, no. 3 (1999).
33 Pinch, “Same Difference in India and Europe,” 391. Important to note, though often finding mutual grounds, the post-colonial scholars should not be confounded as one and the same with each offering differently nuanced or often directly oppositional views from the next.
colonial or native structures in enabling European colonialism. My approach is situated within the two. I sympathize with the subaltern stance on the elite construction of the dominant narrative and use the work of several post-colonial scholars in the theoretical parts of this thesis. However, as our narrative will soon reveal, power relationships in the British Empire was much more complex. As opposed to assuming a separate “subaltern” identity and space repressed by the dominant, I posit that those concepts were in the first place actively constructed by colonial and native complicits alike. In the porous networks of the Empire, we witness British power interacting with native structures in the form of Indian sepoys or Javanese informants. Similarly, my research supports the Saidian claim that Orientalism advanced the imperial project. I argue, in short, imperialism allowed for Orientalism which, in turn, further empowered imperial endeavors. However, I question Said’s assumption of ideological intentionality between Orientalism and imperial subjugation. As several of Said’s critics point out, Nicholas Dirks among them, attributing totalizing power to the homogenized structure of Orientalism may lead one to miscalculate at times divergent voices among the colonists who engaged in it as well as the cultural spaces of resistance by the subaltern. I argue, the Orientalist studies of Raffles and his peers were not extensions of a violently domineering institution but instead a culmination of personal ambitions and socio-intellectual aspirations fostered by opportunities provided by empire in travel, certainly, and through interactions with colonized communities. In this, I depart from a Saidian image of empire as a homogenous, hegemonic structure to examine how individuals and their reception of

36 As Bhabha critiqued Said, the emphasis must be shifted from imposing a political-ideological intention to examining how those representations actually served the goals of empire (Bhabha, “Difference, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonialism,” 200).
37 Nicholas Dirks, Colonialism and Culture, 10.
Java’s Hindu-Buddhist past can have resounding effects on the discursive construction of the British Empire. This thesis illustrates how in his Orientalist pursuit, Raffles was as much fashioning an image of Java as he was of himself as Britain’s imperial agent.\textsuperscript{38} While this approach by no means absolves Raffles or other imperial agents, it begs for a more nuanced consideration of the complex realities of the colonial enterprise.

Finally, my thesis continues recent developments in historiography that increasingly value the role of visual and material culture in the representation and thus construction of an empire. Over the past few decades, there has been a rise in iconographically based historiography of the British Empire, particularly drawing upon landscape illustrations, including the work of Jeffrey Auerbach, John Crowley, and Barbara Stafford.\textsuperscript{39} This approach recognizes that around the 1750s, Britons began engaging in a mental construction of a global geography that linked the metropole with colonial territories, informed by the pictorial medium.\textsuperscript{40} Beginning with military survey sciences to document topographies,\textsuperscript{41} in India, trained artists began arriving in the late 1700s to depict architecture, landscapes, and cultures of the subcontinent, some of

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\textsuperscript{38} As Said’s critic, Robert Young, argues, Orientalism was as much a dislocation of the West or the imperial elite from itself and that the discursive contradictions equally affected the representation of those in power. See Young, \textit{White Mythologies: Writing History and the West}, Chapter 7, “Disorienting Orientalism.”


\textsuperscript{40} See Crowley, \textit{Imperial Landscapes: Britain’s Global Visual Culture 1745-1820}. Crowley attributed the shift to the increase in printing and consumption of visual commodity in Britain: artists in imperial territories began translating their etchings, pencil and ink drawings or watercolors into prints and painting for popular consumption in Britain (ibid., 4).

\textsuperscript{41} The first regional cartography of the Indian subcontinent appeared in the 1780s: James Rennell’s survey of Bengal (1765-71) (Upinder Singh, \textit{The Discovery of Ancient India: Early Archaeologists and the Beginnings of Archaeology} (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004), 2). The first archaeological survey of India only began in 1861. The official Archaeological Survey of India was established in 1871, the Indian Meteorological Department in 1875 (ibid.).
whom, like Thomas and William Daniell, going on to visually record Java.\(^4^2\) In the scholarship on the British Empire in Asia, we thus have remarkable works like Mildred Archer’s *Early Views of India* (London, 1980), Pheroza Godrej and Pauline Rohatgi’s *Under the Indian Sun: British Landscape Artists* (Bombay, 1995), and Jennifer Howes’s *Illustrating India* (Oxford, 2010).\(^4^3\) However, as Crowley, Auerbach, Tiffin, and others noted, such portrayals of colonial scenes served, through visual representation, imperial motivations from territorial expansion to legitimizing subjugation of colonized peoples. This we shall see manifest in the realm of material culture.

Indeed, archaeology and museology have long been occupied with the colonial history of material culture. Borobudur, for example, has been treated by art historians, from the canonical works by Dutch archeologists N.J. Krom and T.H. van Erp to surveys by more recent scholars.\(^4^4\) A historical inquiry thus necessarily complicates more traditional scholarship in archaeology. Following the work of authors, as I earlier cited, Nicholas Dirks, Tim Barringer, as well as the focused case analyses in Richard Davis’s *Lives of Indian Images* (1999) or Annie Coombes’ *Reinventing Africa* (1994), less concerned by the objects artistic or material characteristics, I seek to unpack what they came to represent within the surrounding social, cultural, and political processes. However, for

\(^4^2\) Among the first was Lieutenant Francis Swain Ward, a military officer with art training, who left for India in 1757 and then exhibited paintings from his campaigns in southern India, Bengal and Bihar at the Society of Artists in London from 1765-1773, possibly the first time that a picture of Indian monuments was on public display (Crowley, *Imperial Landscapes: Britain's Global Visual Culture 1745-1820*, 171).


the purposes of this thesis, I will focus less on the public reception of the display or representation of Oriental antiquities in any general sense in the interest of exploring the psychology of Raffles himself and how he personally historically constructed these modes of representations.

The key is collecting and antiquarianism. Historians, art historians, and museum scholars have long charted histories of particular collections, only recently complemented by analyses on the social, cultural, and psychological contexts of collecting. Moreover, beyond generally studying the practice, historians have honed in onto the more personal focus: the collectors. To then forward a comprehensive analysis on the practice, I draw on histories of “scholarly” societies in Britain including the Royal Society of London and the Society of Antiquaries, situating collectors like Raffles in their cultural and socio-economic contexts. I am particularly indebted to Philippa Levine’s *The Amateur and the Professional* (1986) and Rosemary Sweet’s *Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (2004) which examine the role of antiquaries in founding studies and constructions of British national history and

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46. For example, Henry Shelley published as early as 1911 *The British Museum, Its History and Treasures* (Boston: L.C. Page and Company, 1911).

47. For example, the anthology edited by John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, ed. *Cultures of Collecting* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 1994) and Susan Pearce, ed. *Visions of Antiquity: the Society of Antiquaries of London 1707-2007* (London: Society of Antiquaries, 2007) were among the first to explore how and why people collect what they collect. For our context of British Java, the literature thus progressed from catalogues which simply listed the collections, such as Mildred Archer’s *British Drawings in the India Office Library* (1969) to works which addressed the colonial, historical context such as Annabel Gallop’s *Early Views of Indonesia* (1995).


In recent years the literature began expanding to analyze the imperial scope, as exemplified by Roderick Weir Home’s *The Royal Society and the Empire: The Colonial and Commonwealth Fellowship* (2002) which, through examining trends in Fellows elections into the Royal Society throughout the nineteenth century, elucidates how scholarly activity aligned with growing British imperial ambitions in India. My thesis likewise presents Raffles and his fellow collectors not as impersonal or isolated EIC agents but as culturally situated amateur antiquaries whose enthusiasm for Orientalist studies engaged with their work as colonial agents. My historical findings on the Raffles and Buddha head narrative thus critically investigate such intricate relationships between objects, antiquary, and empire. Finally, in the process of this thesis, without any pretense of supplying a definitive answer, I expect not to especially criticize nor align with any particular author, approach, or theory. My thesis, rather, is an imperfect response to the questions posed in those bodies of scholarship in an attempt to better understand the historical realities of the British Empire in its cultural multivalence.

**Research and Methodology**

I arrived at these pages through research, beginning in the summer of 2012. In primary source research, I began, like many who write about Raffles, with *The History of Java* (1817) as well as his biography by his widow Sophia Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and

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52 In this, I am greatly indebted to the Davenport Grant through the Public Affairs Center and the White Fellowship through the History Department at Wesleyan University.
Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (1835). Most of my archival research was conducted in London, United Kingdom in three repositories: the Asia, Pacific and Africa Collection and Print Collection at the British Library, the British Museum collections, and the Royal Asiatic Society library. At the BL APAC, I concentrated on Mss. Eur. D742: Raffles Family Collection, Mss. Eur. F148: Raffles-Minto Collection, and Mss. Eur. Mack Priv: Colin Mackenzie’s papers. Finally, to complement the sources on Raffles, I consulted the journals of Godfrey Baker and John Crawfurd at the RAS library. I also tapped into visual evidence, namely sketches, paintings, and watercolors. They include the Mackenzie and Horsfield drawings in the BL Print Collection. With regards to the Borobudur, I viewed the Raffles drawing collection in the British Museum for the prints he commissioned of reconstructions of the monument while relying mostly on the drawings in the Baker Collection at the RAS Library for some of the earliest sketches of the Borobudur and other Javanese antiquities. My research also brought me to Java, perusing Indonesia’s National Archives in Jakarta. My archival research was supplemented by the invaluable field trip to the Borobudur and a visit to the Center for Borobudur Heritage Conservation. Secondary source research was conducted at the British Library and continued at Wesleyan University during the academic year.

Introducing the British Borobudur Buddha

Our historical narrative thus charts the life of Raffles and his fellow Orientalists and antiquaries through their imperial careers as their personal narratives conversed with

the ideography of the British Empire. In Chapter One, “An Orient,” we begin with a brief political history of the British Empire in Java. I will introduce our primary cast of characters: Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, Colin Mackenzie, Thomas Horsfield, and Godfrey Baker. Here, I contextualize the Javanese colonial experience within the larger imperial network and Orientalism as it historically developed in India. For clarification, in my discussion, I use the term “Oriental” to refer to the body of inquiry and knowledge relating to ancient to early modern Hindu-Buddhist objects, literature, and history of the geographical east but the east as a Saidian imagined construct. Historically situating Orientalism beginning with the efforts in India by Warren Hastings and Sir William Jones’s Asiatick Society of Bengal, I illustrate how key Orientalist paradigms were transported to and transformed in Java through the flow of colonial agents, placing that process within structures of Dutch predecessors, Javanese informants, and Indian sepoy assistants. Analyzing the Orientalist endeavor as conducted as individual pursuits, both as part of and beyond Company duty, I argue that information and knowledge construction was, again, not a project of a hegemonic empire but as an assemblage of personal contributions to the imperial enterprise.

Chapter Two, “A Foreign Country” then hones in on the exploration, description, and representation of Javanese candis on site, as influenced by the British surveyors’ Orientalist assumptions and expectations. I explore the methodologies for surveying and documenting antiquities by Raffles, Mackenzie, Horsfield, and Baker as

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54 In the nineteenth century, before the professionalization of archaeology, our EIC men engaged rather with amateur antiquarianism. Upinder Singh identified that the formative phase in antiquarian and early archaeological research occurred during EIC rule in India, thus between the conquest of Bengal in the 1750s to the Revolt of 1857. In India, interest in ancient monuments began around the middle of the eighteenth century, with the first precise descriptions of sites written by men like Anquetil Duperron, Carsten Niebuhr, and Pierre Sonnerat (Singh, The Discovery of Ancient India: Early Archaeologists and the Beginnings of Archaeology, 1-7).
they traveled the island and discovered the buried vestiges, using the Borobudur excavation as a close case study. In this chapter, I pit our EIC men’s antiquarian adventures with the problematic ways in-situ perception and description of antiquities interacted with imagined power cartographies, primarily in subsuming Java’s historical agency into the same imperial chronotope as India. I thus focus my analysis on, first, how the British silenced Javanese representation of their antiquities in favor of Indianist interpretations. Second, expounding upon analyses forwarded by, among others, Sarah Tiffin on how perceptions of archaeological ruins informed constructions of a “barometer of civilization,” I examine how Raffles and his peers imposed a narrative of decline onto Javanese society to justify colonial rule.55

Finally, we follow the narrative as Raffles and the Borobudur Buddha head left Java at the restitution of the island to the Dutch. Chapter Three, “Artifact and Empire,” thus closes in on how the relationships between the object, the collector, and imperial processes were reconfigured in the imperial metropole. Examining the movement of objects from the imperial territories into the metropole, I analyze the effect of the artifact’s dislocation from its home to the space of Western categorization and classification. In transferring Javanese artifacts to Britain, Raffles displayed to British society a materially constructed image of Java as representative of a colonial reality. This process I situate in the context of “scholarly” societies in London, as these intellectual and socio-economic currents influenced the activity of the imperial antiquary like Raffles. We then see how, within those settings, such imperial identities were imagined and,

through the artifacts, sensed and experienced in its deceptive material authenticity.

Collections were thus crucial in replicating and reaffirming the imaginative construction of a cohesive geography of an empire in which assorted territories and peoples become conceptually configured into the imperial universal. Finally, drawing upon post-colonial and cultural critique, including Said, Spivak, Bhabha, and Pierre Bourdieu, I posit the ways in which antiquarian collecting acted as a mode of historiography which discursively created the power structure of the imperial dominant and the silenced subaltern.

Raffles and the British Borobudur Buddha thus provide an analytical sliver into the complexities of imperial relations as fashioned by both the colonizer and the colonized. Moreover, in prioritizing the personal narrative, I argue for a view of the British Empire as a constellation of connections and ideas formed by individual men and their imperial careers where in each imperial site these identities were formulated and reformulated. This history thus does not seek to simply narrate the physical movement of objects and peoples in a global space but examine how places, and imaginations of those places, were in themselves created by the objects and individuals as they traversed the real and imagined geography of the British Empire. With this, let us turn to Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles and his Javanese adventures.
I. An Orient

On 4 August 1811, sixty British ships landed on Batavia on the northwestern coast of Java.\textsuperscript{56} After the offensive by East India Company (EIC) troops and Indian sepoys, the city and its surroundings fell under British flag by 26 August.\textsuperscript{57} Aboard one of the invading vessels was Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles.\textsuperscript{58} Raffles arrived as a petty EIC administrator seeking to make a name for himself, eager to annex the island into the expanding British Empire. He would leave, five years later, Borobudur Buddha sculpture in tow, as the principal source of Oriental knowledge on Java and its dependencies, having crafted an imperialist course of Javanese history and its place in the British imperial imaginary. Our journey begins with one artifact and one man. Yet their narratives reveal the networks and structures which contributed to an imperial historiography of Java, a critical juncture of Orientalism, antiquarianism, and the material imagination of an empire.

In this chapter, we thus commence with a brief political history of the British occupation of Java (1811-1816) before meeting young Raffles, following his EIC career and his Lieutenant-Governorship of the island. Next, illustrating the historical development of British Orientalism as it began in the Indian context, I will examine how ideas and methodologies were transposed onto the Javanese ecumene. We end the chapter as the EIC men set off to survey, catalogue, describe, and study the island, exploring their methods and rapports with native informants in their quest for Oriental

\textsuperscript{56} M.C. Ricklefs, \textit{A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1200}, 4th ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 137. See maps, Fig. 1, 2.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{58} Fig. 6.
knowledge. Through this overture, I seek to present a historical insight into the conditions and practice of Orientalism in the Javanese, introducing the tension between imperialist historiography and the loss of subaltern agency which threads through our historical narrative of Raffles and his Borobudur Buddha. First, let us begin as the first European ships arrived on the Javanese shores.

1. The British East India Company in Java

Prior to British arrival, Java had long received foreign guests, from the earliest Hindu and Buddhist monks, Chinese and Arab traders, and, in the sixteenth century, the first Europeans: Portuguese merchants sailing off their first conquered port in Malacca. By the early nineteenth century, however, it was the Dutch Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) who accomplished trade near-monopoly and a semblance of political supremacy over the island. In June 1596, a fleet of four Dutch ships anchored on Batavia on the northwestern coast of Java. A 1749 treaty granted the VOC rule over the former Mataram Empire: Java was subsequently divided into the political rule of the VOC and the two native sultanates or keraton, the susuhunan of Surakarta and kesultanan of Yogyakarta. By the late eighteenth century, however, the VOC suffered from scandals, inept administration, and financial bankruptcies. On 1 January 1800, the VOC was dissolved with all territorial possessions transferred to the royal government. In Java, however, the change affected little of the daily administration: the same personnel kept

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60 Under the Dutch, the island’s provinces were divided into fifteen residencies (Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1200*, 133). The native sultanates were not free from internal conflicts. Pakubuwana IV of Surakarta (r. 1788-1820) harbored grudges from their loss to Yogyakarta in 1790 which motivated Surakarta’s alliance to Britain in the siege of Yogyakarta in 1812 (ibid., 133-34). The sultanates, which still exist today, are also referred to as the Surakarta or Yogyakarta keraton or palace.

61 Ibid., 134.

62 Ibid.
their office and continued their old policies. We had then a political ecology of Dutch administrators with the still relatively sovereign Muslim rulers. The dynamics shifted, however, with the advent of the Napoleonic Wars.

In 1806, the French annexed the Netherlands. Louis Bonaparte’s new government sent Marshall Herman Willem Daendels (1762-1818) as Governor-General in Batavia, tasked specifically with bolstering military capacity against potential British skirmish in the Indian Ocean. In his efforts, Daendels radically transformed native-Dutch relations. His government, now backed by a stronger military, reduced the sovereignty of the native courts, treating them not as pseudo-independent entities but as vassals of the Dutch government, a restructuring which lasted for the remainder of Java’s colonial period. In May 1811, Daendels was replaced by Jan Willem Janssens (1762–1838). Prior to arriving in Java, in 1806, Janssens had surrendered a Dutch territory, the Cape Colony, to the British; he was forced to do the same in Java. Over the period which became termed as the British interregnum (1811-1816), the British East India Company would replace the VOC as the dominant European power on the island.

The EIC, royally chartered in 1600 as “Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies,” was a British joint-stock company trading

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63 Ibid.
64 Dutch Residents were installed at the native courts but functioned as ambassadors rather than imposing colonial rule (ibid.).
65 Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) then installed his brother Louis Napoleon on the Dutch throne (ibid., 135).
66 This Daendels achieved, increasing the native forces in Dutch service from 4000 to 18,000 men (ibid.).
67 The Residents-at-court were redesignated as Ministers, meaning, representatives of European authority (ibid.). While Pakubuwana IV of Surakarta reluctantly accepted the terms, the sultanate of Yogyakarta revolted in 1810 only to be violently defeated by Daendels’s reinforced troops. For more details on the failed rebellion, see ibid.
68 Ibid., 137.
69 Ibid.
primarily in tea, cotton, silk, indigo, salt, and opium. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, British interest concentrated largely on India, its most profitable colony in the Far East trade. As such, Dutch dominion of the spice commerce in the eastern islands went tacitly accepted. The only permanent British settlement in the Indies at the time was Bencoolen on the west coast of Sumatra, founded in 1685. Yet the currents began to change as the Napoleonic Wars rippled to the Pacific. With Netherlands annexed to the French, Britain’s rival, Dutch holdings in the eastern islands became a potential threat. Rumors of an invasion of Java had been circulating since early 1811, under the administration of the Governor General of India, Gilbert Elliot, Lord Minto (1751-1814). As the Wars intensified, Minto grew more and more disquieted by the looming Dutch and hence, by proxy, French presence in Southeast Asia. On 17 January 1811, Minto pressed the Government-in-Council at Fort St. George to invade Java, the seat of

72 The British thought that the best route to China was through the Strait of Sunda; Bencoolen would have made a convenient port. Bencoolen’s promise was never realized once the Straits of Malacca proved to be a better alternative (C.E. Wurtzburg, Raffles of the Eastern Isles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 23). The British also briefly considered the Celebes in central Indonesia though Celebes’ spices, too, proved less valuable than India and the EIC soon dismissed it (Bastin, “Raffles and British Policy in the Indian Archipelago, 1811-1816,” 85). The EIC focused instead on reducing their presence in the archipelago. On 3 May 1803, British Resident at Ambon, R.J. Farquhar, was instructed to leave his post, the last British port in the eastern archipelago (Bengal Foreign Consultations, 15 March 1803, cited in ibid., 86).
73 The Prince of Wales Island Gazette of 19 January 1811 reported, “Nothing had transpired respecting the intended armament, or expedition, which was reported to be in agitation at Bengal, but the general conjecture pronounced it to be for the Isle of Java” (The Prince of Wales Island Gazette, Vol.5 No.256, 19 January 1811, reprinted in John Bastin, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (Liverpool: The Ocean Steam Ship Company Ltd., 1969), pl. 2).
74 Wurtzburg, Raffles of the Eastern Isles: 54. Historian Vincent Smith writes of Minto’s policies: “The most brilliant chapter in Lord Minto’s Indian Government is that of his foreign policy […] It was the glory of Lord Minto’s administration that whereas at its commencement dread of a French invasion of India haunted the imagination of statesmen, at its close France had lost all her acquisitions eastward of the Cape” (Emma Elliot-Murray-Kynynmound Countess of Minto, ed. Lord Minto in India (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1880), 239).
Dutch power. The Secret Committee of the Government-in-Council responded: Britain was to advance. However, there was a caveat. The Committee instructed Minto, “It is by no means our wish or that of His Majesty’s Government, that [settlements in the East] should be permanently occupied as British Colonies; [...] We merely wish to expel the Enemy from all their Settlements in those Seas.” This sentiment differed, however, from the views we learned of Raffles and the sympathetic Minto. Raffles wrote to his cousin, “All my views, all my plans, and all my mind were devoted to create such an interest regarding Java as should lead to its annexation to our Eastern empire.” Raffles’s imperialist ambition to claim Java will, as we shall see, shadow his perception of the island as well as his enacted policies. With Java’s long-term future remaining undecided, Britain prepared for conquest.

On 18 June 1811, Raffles and Minto left Malacca on his Majesty’s ship the Modeste, commanded by Captain George Elliott. The fleet of over ninety sails landed forty-two days later in Batavia, taking the city by the end of August 1811. This moment marked the beginning of Java’s integration into British imperial historiography. Minto announced the victory to authorities in England to that effect:

An empire, which for two centuries has contributed greatly to the power, prosperity, and grandeur of one of the principal and most respected states in Europe has been thus wrested from the short usurpation of the

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75 Minto pleaded, “It is evident indeed that recent events in Europe [...] increase in a high degree both the importance and the urgency of extinguishing in the Island of Java, a power which is now formally as well as substantially directed by French Counsels” (Lord Minto to Government-in-Council, Fort St. George, 17 January 1811, IOR Factory Records: Java, quoted in Bastin, “Raffles and British Policy in the Indian Archipelago, 1811-1816,” 88).
76 Secret Committee dispatch, 31 August 1810, quoted in ibid.
77 Ibid.
78 Raffles to Lord Minto, Malacca, 10 June 1811, quoted in Sophia Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, vol. 1 (London: J. Duncan, 1835), 107.
80 S. Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, 1, 112.
French government, added to the dominion of the British crown, and converted from a seat of hostile machination and commercial competition, into an augmentation of British power and prosperity.  

Raffles echoed the celebration, writing to Minto, “I have now only to congratulate your Lordship on the most splendid prospect which any administration has beheld since our first acquisition of India.” Thus began the British interregnum in Java, a period of political, military, as well as historiographical significance in Java’s narrativized history.

Here I should note a key feature of British rule on the island: unlike the Dutch who then still acted primarily for commercial interest, the British had shifted how it viewed its imperial role from purely mercantile to governance, a mindset reinforced throughout their decades in India. With the consolidation of political control in India, Governor-General Arthur Wellesley (1769-1852) expressed in his proposal for the Bengal college: “The Civil Servants of the English East India Company […] can no longer be considered as the agents of a commercial concern; they are in fact the ministers and officers of a powerful Sovereign; they must now be viewed in that capacity.” This vision of their role not only as tradesmen but colonial administrators allowed for its agents, Raffles included, to expand their reach into the various aspects of the colonized life, whether civil laws, land reforms, and indeed, the preservation of their cultural history and material artifacts.

In Java, to administrate the newly conquered territory, Minto appointed Raffles as Lieutenant-Governor. With regards to the Javanese people, Minto believed that
British rule would liberate the poor natives from centuries of Dutch oppression. The Governor-General wrote to Raffles,

To the native princes and people the abolition of Dutch power would alone afford a gratification of rooted passions, and a prospect of substantial relief and advantage, which may be expected to withdraw them from the Dutch and unite them to our cause and a system of connexion between them and the English Government may be founded on principles so manifestly beneficial to the people of the island, as to attach them to our alliance, and ensure tranquility between us.\(^{85}\)

This attitude, one which designated Britain as benevolent colonial rulers, would frame British self-conception of its role in the imperial territories. Minto’s Proclamation distilled this philosophy which came to characterize British colonialism in Java, termed by Raffles and his contemporaries and by modern scholars of the period as “native welfare.”\(^{86}\) Criticizing the previous Dutch government, Raffles claimed on behalf of the Javanese people, “The refusal of their late Government to treat for their interests […] has rendered the consequent establishment of the British authority unconditional.”\(^{87}\) The new British administration thus promised a new era in modern governance on the island. Raffles’s 1813 Proclamation states, “For the satisfaction of the inhabitants and people of Java, the following provisions are made public, in testimony of the sincere disposition of
the British Government to promote their prosperity and welfare.” 88 There is one further crucial item in the Proclamation which evinces how Raffles and the British saw Java vis-à-vis the Empire: “His Majesty’s subjects in Java will be entitled to the same general privileges as are enjoyed by the natural-born subjects of Great Britain in India.” 89 Integrated into the constructed imaginary as an extension of India, Java has thus become part of the Empire.

Next came the battle which affirmed British political supremacy. With regards to the native rulers, Minto’s Proclamation of 11 September 1811 stated, “The undue influence and authority of the native chiefs have been restricted.” 90 In the Yogyakarta court, finding an uncooperative Sultan Hamengkubuwana II, in June 1812, some 1,200 EIC troops supported by 800 native allies 91 stormed the royal keraton in an artillery barrage. 92 Hamengkubuwana II was deposed and exiled to Penang. 93 The fall of Yogyakarta marked the only time in history that the Javanese court was forcefully taken by a European power. But the military victory was not all. As residents fled or were killed by the exploding shells, British forces and their allies pillaged the surrounding compounds: the palace was plundered, its archives looted. 94 In conquering Yogyakarta, Raffles lay claim to not only political sovereignty but the material culture and history of

88 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
90 Ibid., Appendix L.
93 Raffles then installed Natakusuma on the throne under the name Pangeran Pakualam I (r.1812-29). The Pakualaman throne still co-exists today with the Yogyakarta keraton although the Sultan of the keraton (Hamengkubuwana II’s line) is recognized as the legitimate political ruler of the region as Governor of the province in modern-day Indonesia (Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1200, 138).
94 Panular, “Babad Bedhah ing Ngayogyakarta” (1816), Canto I, verse 5, 67.
the island and its inhabitants. Yet who was this man and whence came his imperial and Orientalist ambitions?

2. Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles: Colonial Administrator

Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles was born at sea on 6 July 1781 aboard the West India trading ship *Ann* off Port Morant, Jamaica. In this sub-chapter, I will introduce Raffles’s life up to his Javanese excursion to examine his role in the occupation of Java as well as his contributions to Orientalism in the East Indies. Born into this immediately imperial world, Raffles was the only surviving son of a captain in the West India trade, Benjamin Raffles. While Raffles senior remained at sea, his wife and their new child returned to Britain. Thomas Stamford Raffles was baptized at a parish church in Eaton Bishop, Herefordshire on 4 July 1784. The Raffles family, absent the father, soon became strained in resources. Benjamin’s profits in the West Indies provided for the bare essentials yet the family of six children faced mounting debts. Thus was Raffles’s childhood, the only son in a struggling, lower-middle class family of a petty mercantile agent of the British Empire. However, incidentally the EIC was expanding their trade in India and beyond, offering young Raffles new opportunities to make a living. In 1795, after two years at boarding school, at age fourteen Raffles was placed as an extra clerk in the East India House on Leadenhall Street.

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95 The morning of the 6th of July or the 5th by a-day-at-sea which is counted from noon to noon (Wurtzburg, *Raffles of the Eastern Isles*, 15; S. Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, 1, 1).
96 Five more children followed him, all girls except Benjamin junior who did not survive infancy (Wurtzburg, *Raffles of the Eastern Isles*, 16).
97 Ibid., 15.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid., 16.
100 Partly through the influence of his uncle, Mr. Hamond (S. Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, 1, 3; Wurtzburg, *Raffles of the Eastern Isles*, 18). The job, earning him a base
The teenager was then likely not especially cognizant of the major events which changed the balance of European maritime powers to later affect his life. Raffles’ entry into the East India House coincided with several important developments. That year, the Netherlands was drawn into war which led to its annexation to France. With British victories in South Africa and Southeast Asia, the Dutch was further forced to hand the Cape of Good Hope and Malacca to Britain. These events would later prove significant for Raffles’s life. The young man was, in the meantime, much preoccupied with the desk duties at the office. However, it was also then that Raffles found his early intellectual calling that would motivate his later studies. Amidst the minutiae of administrative tasks on Leadenhall Street, Raffles cultivated an interest in the sciences, particularly languages and, later, natural history. He told his cousin, “My leisure hours […] still continued to be devoted to favourite studies […] and to prosecute inquiries into some of the branches of literature and science; this was, however, in stolen moments, either before the office hours in the morning, or after them in the evening.” Such testimonies lent to the image of Raffles as a man of learning: “All I ever presumed to consider myself,” he writes, “was – a lover and admirer of all that I could reach in literature and science.”

Through a combination of his aptitude, connections, and opportunities, Raffles moved his way up the EIC ranks. The major leap came in 1805. When the Court of Directors decided to expand their Penang settlement in Southeast Asia, Raffles took up

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101 Wurtzburg, Raffles of the Eastern Isles, 18.
102 Raffles to Thomas Raffles, quoted in S. Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, 1, 3.
103 Quoted in ibid.
On 8 March 1805, Raffles became the gazetted assistant secretary to the new Governor of Penang, Philip Dundas (1763–1807). Perhaps it was adventure, perhaps financial promise: Raffles was to make 1,500 pounds per year up from the humble 70 yearly pounds at his starting position. In addition to the happy occasion, six days after his promotion Raffles married his first wife, also a character of imperial background, Olivia Marianne Fancourt (1771-1814), a woman ten years his senior and widow of an assistant surgeon in Madras, Jacob Cassivelaun Fancourt. Olivia later died in Java; Raffles remarried in 1817 to Sophia, daughter of J.W. Hull, Esquire of Ireland.

In April 1805, Dundas and his new officials left England on the Ganges. Raffles was accompanied by his new bride and his favorite sister, Mary Anne. In September 1805, Raffles first set foot on the East Indies archipelago. The sight which greeted him was not unlike that so romantically described in the pen of another traveler:

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104 Ibid., 8-9. Raffles had to thank for this appointment his friend William Brown Ramsay’s father, William Ramsay Sr., EIC Secretary in 1792, for recommending him to Director Sir Hugh Inglis for the post (John Bastin, Letters and Books of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles: The Tang Holdings Collection of Autograph Letters and Books of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2009), 25). Here we begin to see the importance of personal connections in imperial careering, something we will see play out throughout this analysis.

105 Wurtzburg, Raffles of the Eastern Isles, 21.

106 Ibid.

107 The marriage, however, gave rise to a scandal, questioning Raffles’s quick rise in the EIC structure. A supplement to Colburn’s Biographical Dictionary of the Living Authors of Great Britain and Ireland, printed in 1816, read: “Mr Raffles went out to India in an inferior capacity, through the interest of Mr Ramsay, Secretary to the Company, and in consequence of his marrying a lady connected with that gentleman” (quoted in Wurtzburg, Raffles of the Eastern Isles, 21). Raffles defended his marriage to his cousin: “My resolution to proceed to India and my appointment to Prince of Wales’s Island [Penang] were made before the marriage took place, and when I was about to quit all other ties and affections it was natural that I should secure one bosom friend, one confidante on my journey who would soothe the adverse blasts of misfortune and gladden the sunshine of prosperity” (quoted in ibid., 21-22).


109 Ibid., 22.

110 Ibid. Raffles later arranged for the arrival of his other sisters, Harriet and Leonora, in Penang (ibid., 41). Meanwhile, Raffles continued to provide for his family back in England. He wrote to his mother on 22 October 1817 that “My friend Mr. John Tayler will take care of you […] Should any accident happen to me your £400 a year is still secure — therefore you can never I hope be again distressed for money” (reproduced in Bastin, Letters and Books of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles, Ch. 1, Letter 1, 40).

111 S. Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, 1, 9.
The island presented a most beautiful and irregular outline, involved in those delicate tints of grey which, as the sun rose, through a humid atmosphere, changed to a beautiful pink. [...] as we approached [...] opening gradually to our view, until the whole extent of the picturesque Isle formed one side of our splendid panorama; whilst, on the other side, not more than four miles off, the hilly and jungly coast of Queda [Kedah] displayed almost equal beauty [...] At present it is one of the prettiest places I ever saw; the red roofs of the houses glittered in the sun through the surrounding thick foliage of the trees.  

Raffles settled on the island, living with his wife in a bungalow on a foothill they christened Mount Olivia, while Mary Anne and her husband lived on an adjoining hill.  

Raffles and his British sensibilities and youthful imperialist ambitions thus arrived in the archipelago as the islands became a site of imperial contest, military and imaginary.  

In 1806, Raffles was appointed as the Governor’s new secretary. In an initiative unprecedented in the Penang government, Raffles began employing Malay natives into the administration, adopting a British imperial policy earlier practiced in India by Warren Hastings (1732-1818). Indeed such transfer of ideas and policies across imperial peripheries would be central to the development of British imperialism, as we shall discuss in greater depth regarding British Orientalism in India and Java. In Penang, Raffles’s natives were thus hired, as in India, chiefly for translation, at first paid from Raffles’s private accounts before the Council agreed to finance the employment, marking the first time the Penang administration directly sponsored the employment of natives.  

Raffles began cultivating his relationships with the locals, a habit which would prove...

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113 Olivia Raffles to John Leyden, 3 August 1808, quoted in ibid., 65.  
114 Ibid., 45. In addition, Raffles worked as Licenser of the Press, Malay Translator to the Government, and Clerk of the Recorder’s Court under Sir Edmond Stanley (*Bastin, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, 8).  
115 Raffles explained to the Governor in Council on 20 February 1806, “These men were engaged by me and, hitherto, have been maintained at my expense, but I have now to regret the narrow limits of my income will no longer admit of continuing so expensive an establishment” (Raffles to the Governor in Council, 20th February 1806, quoted in Wurtzburg, *Raffles of the Eastern Isles*, 41). On 6 March 1806, the Committee “resolved that Mr. Raffles be allowed the natives he requires, the Board relying on his not keeping them longer than is necessary for the completion of the work on which he is employed” (The Governor in Council to Raffles, 6 March 1806, quoted in ibid., 42).
invaluable throughout his imperial career. The regular encounters aided him in acquiring a working proficiency of Malay, in addition to providing him an entry into, as I will examine further later, colonial knowledge. His widow, Sophia Raffles, remarked,

> With many he conversed personally, with others through the medium of interpreters. [...] this early habit, which he always retained, of associating with the natives, and admitting them to intimate and social intercourse, [...] the knowledge which he thus acquired of the different products of the neighbouring countries, of the nature and extent of their trade, of their customs, manners, and feelings, greatly assisted him in the discharge of those high and responsible duties.\(^\text{16}\)

As such, Sophia recounted, “The details of the government proceedings, as far as related to local arrangements and regulations, together with the compilation of almost every public document, devolved on Mr. Raffles.”\(^\text{17}\)

It was also from these encounters that Raffles first gained an antiquarian interest in Oriental histories and culture. Raffles was generally praised for his interest in native customs. His colleague Captain Travers wrote of how Raffles would “labour so much [...] not only in his official capacity but in acquiring a general knowledge of the history, Government and local interests of the neighbouring States.”\(^\text{18}\) Raffles began publishing his queries on native traditions, contributing, for example, to the preface to John Leyden’s *Sejarah Melayu: The Malay Annals* (1821) after the two met in Penang.\(^\text{19}\) Raffles also formed a lifelong friendship and collaboration with William Marsden (1754-1836), a reputed Orientalist and member of the Royal Society of London, Royal Asiatic Society,

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\(^{16}\) S. Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, 1, 15.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 10.


\(^{19}\) Ibid., 38. Raffles and Leyden collaborated on many projects. Sophia Raffles wrote, “The similarity of their pursuits, and the congeniality of their sentiments, soon led to an unreserved intimacy, which, as the knowledge of each other increased, strengthened into an attachment that was only severed by death” (S. Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, 12).
and Royal Geographical Society. Such connections were vital to the flourishing of Oriental studies in the imperial territories, facilitating the transfer of ideas for governance, research, and, indeed as we shall witness, problematic Orientalist paradigms. All praises said, Raffles was not, however, free from criticism. The United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine published this delightfully snarky insight in the January 1836 issue: “Mr. Raffles was at that time just coming into notice as a clever man and thorough Malay scholar. I forget what he did then besides giving good dinners to our local bigwigs, and being the life and soul of what little society (European) there was gathered up and down among the coconut trees.”

In any case, beyond entertaining guests among the palm trees, Raffles’s primary role became foreign policy. Minto and Raffles grew to be two key actors in British policy in the East Indies. One island caught Raffles’s attention: Java. As Britain considered attacking the island against the Dutch and French, Raffles convinced Minto of annexing the island, “worthy of his Lordship’s consideration.” Minto finally revealed the EIC’s official plans to Raffles in February 1811, writing, “I count upon meeting with you at Malacca; and then, in communication with yourself and Sir Samuel Achmuty, the final plans, military and political, will be settled.” As may be evident, Raffles was not a

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120 Marsden was born in 1754 and joined the EIC to Bencoolen on 29 May 1771. In 1803, he returned to England where he was appointed First Secretary to the Navy in 1803. He retired in 1807 to dedicate his time to historical and linguistic studies (ibid., 42). Marsden also published a History of Sumatra (1783) and Numismata orientalia or The Eastern Coins ancient and modern described and historically illustrated (1823-5) (Margarita Diaz-Andreu, A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 215). His relationship with Raffles began when Marsden approached Dundas on the subject of Malay language and history. Dundas referred him to Raffles, starting a productive collaboration and friendship (Wurtzburg, Raffles of the Eastern Isles, 42).

121 Quoted in Wurtzburg, Raffles of the Eastern Isles, 65.

122 Quoted in ibid., 89. Minto was sympathetic to the proposition. Raffles recounted, “On the mention of Java, […] ‘Yes,’ said he, ‘Java is an interesting Island; I shall be happy to receive any information you can give me concerning it.’ This was enough to encourage me” (quoted in ibid.).

123 Minto to Raffles, Calcutta, February 1811, quoted in S. Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, 1, 45.
military man. Yet Minto valued Raffles’s role in the affair, namely his relations with the natives. Leading up to the conquest, Raffles appealed to the native rulers of Sumatra, Madura, and Bali for their assistance against the Dutch. In May 1811, Raffles joined the invasion forces and left his Penang office for Java. The battles ensued and in September 1811, the Dutch Governor Janssens capitulated. Minto returned to Bengal while Raffles moved into his new residence in Buitenzorg, the administrative center of the former Dutch Governor forty miles from Batavia, marking the Javanese chapter of his life and conversely the British chapter of Javanese history.

In Buitenzorg Raffles “kept a most hospitable table” while commuting weekly to Batavia to attend council. Raffles’s Buitenzorg estate, which still exists today, is a neoclassical complex of residential wings and offices atop a small hill, surrounded by the vast greens of the West Javanese countryside. European officials would stroll in the surrounding gardens as the Union Jack flew over the red-tiled roofs. Raffles’s duties, however, would soon pull him away from the pleasant estate. As Lieutenant-Governor, Raffles took frequent diplomatic trips to the far eastern districts of the island. On these

124 Minto wrote to Raffles, “I have no doubt that the communications you will have opened with the Island of Java and adjacent countries will have furnished authentic knowledge of the dispositions we shall meet there, and enable us to place our enterprise upon a footing which will ensure the concurrence and co-operation of the native states” (quoted in ibid.).
125 Mss. Eur. F148/5, Raffles-Minto Collection; Mss. Eur. D742/1, Raffles Family Collection, BL APAC.
For example, Raffles negotiated directly with the Sultan of Palembang, persuading him to expel the Dutch from the Sumatran territories (Bastin, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, 10).
126 S. Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, 1, 111.
127 Mss.Eur.148/11, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
128 Journal of Captain Travers, quoted in S. Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, 1, 140.
129 Journal of Captain Travers, quoted in ibid.
130 The building itself was a white, oval central structure with two wings composed of semi-circular rows of offices (“Government House, Buitenzorg, Java c.1812 before renovation by Raffles,” probably by J. Flökkenschild or PC Karsseboom, watercolor, 406 x 593mm, WD2956, BL APAC Print Collection, reproduced in Mildred Archer and John Bastin, The Raffles Drawings in the India Office Library (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1978), pl. 28).
131 Ibid.
voyages, he also used the opportunity for another pursuit: his curiosity for Javanese culture and tradition. Sophia wrote, “During this tour he found employment for his active mind in visiting all the remains of antiquity in the country and collecting information connected with its early history, with which Europeans were previously unacquainted.”

Raffles was thus one such imperial man who combined official duties with his thirst for Oriental knowledge. Raffles is perhaps now most known for his work on natural history. But he was also an avid collector of Oriental manuscripts and antiquities, developed from his early fascination with languages and philology. Throughout his time in Java he, with his European aides and native informants, amassed an impressive collection of classical and vernacular manuscripts. Among Raffles’s major projects was compiling *A Comparative Vocabulary of the Malayu, Javan, Madurese, Bali, and Lampung Languages*. Another ambitious commission was the translation of the *Brata Yudha* manuscripts. For these, Raffles gathered a team of “intelligent natives” whom he “assembled from different parts of the island, and also from Bali, Lampung, Madura, and Sumenap” to process the collected manuscripts. In his Orientalist researches in Java, however, Raffles was never alone. Rather, a network of Europeans and one American formed these collaborative connections around a shared interest in Javanese antiquities.

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133 Raffles, *The History of Java*, 2, Appendix E. Raffles also compiled a “Comparative Vocabulary of the Sanscrit, Kawi, and Pali” (ibid., Appendix E no. II) and a specific volume on Kawi (ibid., Appendix E no. III) translated by his main informant and translator, Panambahan of Sumenap. Raffles additionally put together the first comprehensive volume on ancient Javanese characters which he published as a table in his *History of Java* titled “Aksára Jáwa, or Letters of the Javan Alphabet” (see table in ibid., 1, 356-60).
134 The Javanese copy, previously belonging to Raffles, is now in the Royal Asiatic Society Library, while the English manuscript is now in the British Library as Mss. Eur. D132, BL APAC. His “Analysis of the Bráta Yudha, or Holy War, or rather the War of Woe: An Epic Poem in the Káwi or classic language of Java” was published in Raffles, *The History of Java*, 1, 415-68.
135 “Vocabulary in each language was carefully revised in concert with them, at the same time that it was recopied in the native and roman characters,” Raffles explained (ibid.).
Through a hybridity of interests, driven by impassioned curiosity, British Orientalist attitudes as reconfigured across colonized territories, from India to Java to, later on, the metropole, forged the British colonial enterprise and imperial imagination of Java.

3. British Orientalism: Historical Context and Characters

British Orientalism in Java was a product of a burgeoning interest in eastern languages and traditions, starting with the EIC’s earliest efforts in India a few decades earlier. The EIC established trade in India in the early seventeenth century, gaining monopoly against the French and Portuguese with Lord Robert Clive’s (1725-1774) victories during the Seven Years’ War (1756-1763). Edward Said, as with historians C.A. Bayly, Bernard Cohn, and others argue, albeit differently, that the success of British rule in India was predicated upon their ability to adapt to and manipulate native institutions, customs, and cultural symbols through identifying strategic information from native sources. The drive to study Oriental languages and cultures grew partly from that imperial desire to learn more about the populations they conquered and ruled. In 1772, Lord Clive admitted to the House of Commons that “Unacquainted with the genius or manners of the inhabitants, their laws, or the power of their magistrates, the English were little qualified for the task of government.” In response, the Regulating Act of

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137 See C.A. Bayly, Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Cohn, Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: the British in India. For an analysis on the two’s differently nuanced takes on British colonial knowledge, see William Pinch, “Same Difference in India and Europe,” History and Theory 38, no. 3 (1999).

138 Robert Clive, Lord Clive’s Speech in the House of Commons, 30th March, 1772, on the Motion Made for Leave to Bring in a Bill, for the Better Regulation of the Affairs of the East India Company, and of Their Servants in India, and for the Due Administration of Justice in Bengal, London, 1772, quoted in John Crowley, Imperial Landscapes:
1773 authorized a Governor-General and Supreme Council for Bengal, with authority over the presidencies of Madras and Bombay, and a Supreme Court in Calcutta. Through the Regulating Act of 1773, the Parliament of Great Britain acquired sovereignty over the Company, paving way to economic, political, and social reforms in India under a formally established government.

India’s first Governor-General was Warren Hastings (1732-1818). Hastings was instrumental in ushering in policies which recognized the importance of inquiring into native welfare and concerns, an attitude which Raffles emulated decades later in Java. Prior to taking office, Hastings impressed upon the EIC Court of Directors that the administration in India ought to “adapt our Regulations to the Manners and Understandings of the People, and the Exigencies of the Country, adhering as closely as we are able to their ancient uses and Institutions.” Hastings began employing Indians as local administrators, again a practice Raffles later adopted. In India, the British thus relied on munshis (writers, secretaries, mostly Muslims in northern India and some Hindus in the rest) and pandits (scholars, especially in Sanskrit) for their assistance in collecting revenues, keeping accounts, and negotiating with Mughal courtiers. With their knowledge of classical languages and literature, the native elites aided the British in

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139 Previously, Hastings held a post in the Council of Madras, then promoted to Governor of Bengal (ibid.). He is also remembered for his impeachment in 1787 and allegations of corruption though he was acquitted in 1795.

140 Decades later, a Court of Directors dispatch to India in 1814 stated the need “to consult the feelings, and even yield to the prejudices of the natives” (quoted in Moir and Zastoupil, The Great Indian Education Debate, 9).

141 Hastings to the Court of Directors, 1772, quoted in Cohn, Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge, 26.

142 Crowley, Imperial Landscapes, 176.

143 Moir and Zastoupil, The Great Indian Education Debate, 2. For a detailed examination on the pre-colonial structures of colonial knowledge in India, see Phillip Wagoner, “Precolonial Intellectuals and the Production of Colonial Knowledge,” Comparative Studies in Society and History 45, no. 4 (2003).
maneuvering political and diplomatic relations. Meanwhile, Hastings himself displayed great interest in native literature and traditions, both Hindu and Islamic (Persian), commissioning research to codify Islamic and Hindu legal texts. Furthermore, Hastings brought in a service of British elites to master Indian languages, traditions, and customs: our first Orientalists.

By Orientalist I mean therefore those dedicated to learning eastern languages, history, traditions, art, and antiquities, yet with that problematic imagination and idealization of a lost, classical Sanskritist or Indo-Aryan civilization. The Orientalists thus imposed categorical distance between classical, devotional Sanskritist literature, arts, and architecture and the practiced Hinduism of the day. In the former, the so-called scholars saw grandeur, wisdom, in all the marks of a great civilization. To construct that imagination, they looked to Ancient Greek and Latin texts – Pliny, Ptolemy, the Periplus of the Eritrean Sea and the like – for references to Indian sites. Living Hinduism, on the other hand, represented backwards idolatry, caste system, and societal structure. The Orientalist imagination of classical India was thus but a fabrication, one with resounding political motivations and, in turn, consequences. It is this dissonance that Edward Said critiques of the endeavor: that the “Orient” was an imagined entity to constitute the “Occident,” both as opposition to and as part of Western history and identity. An Orient, yet an imagined “Orient” was necessary to the existence of the Occident. It also gestured to the loss of native voice and agency in defining their own existence, a

144 Crowley, *Imperial Landscapes*, 177.
145 Scholars like AH. Anquetil-Duperron, Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d’Anville, and Thomas Rennell, for example, referred to Latin and Greek accounts in association with classical Sanskrit texts in their works (Upinder Singh, *The Discovery of Ancient India: Early Archaeologists and the Beginnings of Archaeology* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004), 7).
continued critique throughout this thesis. As Gayatri Spivak writes, and as we will test through Raffles’s narrative, “in the constitution of that Other of Europe, great care was taken to obliterate the textual ingredients with which such a subject could cathect, could occupy (invest?) its itinerary.” In defining and, in so doing, constructing knowledges of eastern cultures through structural sets of methodologies and representations, Orientalism became, Said argues, “a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.”

One of these structures of Orientalism, popular in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was philology or the study of cultures through linguistic and literary analyses of primarily text-based sources. Among those Hastings first patroned were philologist Nathaniel Halhed (1751-1830) in his English translation of Hindu legal texts published as *A Code of Gentoo Laws* (1776) and compilation of Bengali grammar (1778). Hastings also sponsored Charles Wilkins (1749-1836) towards the first English translation of the classical Hindu text *Bhagavad Gita*, published as *Bhagvad-gita, or Dialogues of Kreeshna and Arjoon* (1785). But the Orientalist study of languages had a fraught imperial resonance. In the 1780s Sir William Jones (1746-1794) constructed the existence of the Indo-European or Aryan language cluster, arguing for Sanskrit’s affinity with classical European languages, Greek and Latin, as having common, noble origin for civilization. British quest for imperial hegemony was thus founded in this very

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150 Crowley, *Imperial Landscapes*, 177.
151 Ibid.
narrative: the British as saviors from Islam’s tyranny and protectors of classical Hindu-Buddhist cultures, a political argument for the colonization of India and, later, Java.

In India, the EIC began establishing formal structures for Orientalist studies. Hastings solicited funds to establish the Calcutta Madrasa for Islamic studies in 1780 which prompted Jonathan Duncan (1756-1811) to found a Sanskrit counterpart in Benares in 1791. In 1784, Hastings and Wilkins assisted William Jones, then a judge on the Supreme Court of Bengal, in founding the Asiatick Society in Calcutta, which became a center for European scholarship on the subcontinent. The Society was the first organization dedicated to the study of oriental sciences, arts, and history in the Anglophone empire. Another influential establishment was the College of Fort William. In 1802, Lord Wellesley (1760-1842) opened the College to teach British civil servants local languages prior to taking up their post. The institution fostered Orientalist scholarships from the likes of Henry Thomas Colebrooke (1756-1837), William Carey (1761-1834), and Horace Hayman Wilson (1786-1860) who were, again, 153 The Orientalist movement later found a challenge, beginning with Hasting’s contemporary, evangelist Charles Grant (1746-1823), which championed, instead of the Indian languages, English language and sciences. This Anglicist movement gained momentum in the 1830s, culminating in Lord Macaulay’s famous Minute on Indian Education (1835) (Macaulay, Minute on Indian Education, 2 February 1835 in William Cavendish Bentinck, The Correspondence of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck, ed. C.H. Philips, 2 vols., vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 1403-13) and Bentick’s Resolution on Education (1835) which concluded, “the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India and that all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone” (Bentinck’s Resolution on Education, Proclamation, 7 March 1835, in Frederick William Thomas, The History and Prospects of British Education in India (Cambridge: Deighton Bell and Co., 1891), Appendix D, 155-6). For the Anglicist-Orientalist debate, see Moir and Zastoupil, The Great Indian Education Debate.

154 Moir and Zastoupil, The Great Indian Education Debate, 3.

155 Ibid., 21.

156 Cohn, Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge, 26.
assisted in their research by the native pandits.\textsuperscript{158} In another important step, the Charter Act of 1813 set aside one hundred thousand rupees annually for “the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned Natives of India and for the introduction and promotion of the sciences among the inhabitants.”\textsuperscript{159} The statement, as some scholars have noted, bore the mark of the dialogic formulation of British colonialism: the support for traditional learning yet with the imposition of a European scientific paradigm.\textsuperscript{160}

In addition to the increased interest in language and manuscripts, there was another important development in imperial strategies that influenced British Orientalism in Asia: the science of landscape illustration, from amateur watercolors to commissioned military drawings. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, British imperial agents began developing techniques for topographical survey drawings.\textsuperscript{161} This impetus to view colonized territories through a pictorial medium including, as I will later examine, antiquarian descriptions framed Britain’s visualization of its empire through the work of its agents.\textsuperscript{162} Whereas philological Orientalism signaled the desire for information, the act of surveying and documenting the findings in statistical – for example, Raffles’s statistical inquiries on Java – and, more potently, visual forms – for example, Colin Mackenzie’s military surveys – enabled this imagined knowledge to be documented, systematized, and presented as reality. It was thus the combination of the three – philological interest, the

\begin{footnotesize}
158 Bayly, \textit{Empire and Information}, 82.
159 East India Company Charter Act of 1813, in Moir and Zastoupil, \textit{The Great Indian Education Debate}, 90.
160 Ibid., 7.
161 Crowley, \textit{Imperial Landscapes}, 1.
\end{footnotesize}
proliferation of visual and material representation, and that problematic imagination of
the Orient – that lent special salience to British representations of Java through its
antiquities when Orientalism was brought to the Java shores.

As was the case in India, the British in Java were interested in studying and
documenting classical Javanese languages and antiquities. However, this Orientalism in
Java carried a problematic element: a paradigm which saw Java as an extension of India
and thus British imperial dominion in the east, effectively diluting geographically specific
attributes in an effort to mentally integrate the island within the larger construct of the
Empire. To illustrate this, I point to a particularly distinct and revealing feature of the
Orientalist endeavor in Java: the valorization of the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese
history despite the island’s predominantly Muslim population. By the time of British
arrival, the overwhelming majority of the Javanese population had converted to Islam
through the major waves of trade with Arab merchants in the early fifteenth century.163
Yet the British imperial agents were critical of Muslims and Islamic traditions. John
Crawfurd, for one, expressed of the Javanese people, in a comment interestingly
grounded on antiquarian observations, “Since their conversion to Mohammedanism […]
they have not constructed a single building, that can be compared with even the rudest
of the Hindu temples, and their mosques of the earliest and latest periods, are mean and
paltry wooden fabrics, utterly unworthy of any notice.”164 Only a handful of accounts
and illustrations of mosques were published in the time period, in contrast to the

163 Raffles himself noted how “I amuse & interest myself for hours together with the Mahomedans here”
(Raffles to Thomas Raffles, Penang, 15 January 1807, THC, reproduced in Bastin, Letters and Books of Sir
Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles, 190).
164 John Crawfurd, “The Ruins of Prambanan in Java,” Asiatic Researches; or, Transactions of the Society Instituted
in Bengal for Enquiring into the History and Antiquities, the Arts, Sciences, and Literature of Asia 13(1820): 367.
copious notes and published articles on Hindu and Buddhist temples. There was also relatively little British interest in Islamic or Arabic manuscripts, despite the culture’s rich tradition of poetry, prose, and illuminated manuscripts. The British also paid significantly less attention to contemporary Javanese architecture, with the exception of Raffles’s few pages on the *keraton* and village structures in *The History of Java*. The Orientalist preference for Hindu-Buddhist traditions has historically significant and imperially motivated reasons. As I earlier discussed, the British adopted a worldview which antagonized the present Muslim rulers to justify their own colonizing mission, reaffirmed through the subjective imposition of Indo-Aryan affinities in language and thus civilization. In the east, it was motivated in the seventeenth century by the EIC’s political and military rival in India, the Mughals. We find a similar situation in Java where the EIC found their Islamic enemies in the native Muslim sultanates. In Java, Raffles and his peers who participated in Orientalist research then projected these assumptions and expectations onto Javanese culture, mapping it onto ancient traditions on the Indian subcontinent. This bias for Hindu-Buddhist, Indic cultures signals to how parts of Javanese history, as with other colonized histories, were effectively ignored, repressed, or otherwise selectively represented by the West, creating therefore the subalterned history, a critique I will return to throughout this thesis.

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165 Among the few was a printed image of a Malacca mosque by Justinian Gantz in Captain P.J. Begbie’s *The Malayan Peninsula* (1834) (Sarah Tiffin, “Java’s Ruined Candis and the British Picturesque Ideal,” *Bulletin of SOAS* 72, no. 3 (2009): 556).


167 Raffles did discuss some contemporary Javanese cultural production and artistry, from dance to *wayang* puppetry, yet even then contemporary Javanese arts were generally seen only as degenerated forms of earlier, more sophisticated accomplishments (see Raffles, *The History of Java*, 1).

168 It can be traced back to Christian Europe’s long competition for political and religious dominance with Islam and the great Muslim empires, including the medieval Crusades, the threat of the Ottoman Empire, and the battles with the Moors in Spain’s al-Andalus.
Let us thus turn now to British Orientalism as it manifested in Java and the individuals who pursued it. In his Orientalist activities, Raffles had with him a network of like-minded men. Company men were essential in transporting Orientalist ideas and methodologies from India to Java. Perhaps one of the more influential of these men was Colin Mackenzie (1754–1821).\(^\text{169}\) Mackenzie’s military survey work throughout Java was in many ways a continuation of his work in India. Prior to his arrival in Java, Mackenzie had begun a career in India as a reputed military surveyor.\(^\text{170}\) Born on the Island of Lewis in Scotland’s Outer Hebrides, Mackenzie left for India in 1783 as a volunteer in the 78th Seaforth Highlanders, promoted to engineer then Captain of the Madras Army in 1793.\(^\text{171}\) Between 1800 and 1810, Mackenzie surveyed regions of southern India.\(^\text{172}\) Along the way, he found an interest in the Oriental manuscripts and artifacts he encountered.\(^\text{173}\) In this, he was aided by his native assistants, Brahmans knowledgeable of the region’s history and culture.\(^\text{174}\) Through his chief assistants, the Kaveli brothers, Mackenzie professed to finally being able to take “the first step of my introduction into the portal of Indian knowledge.”\(^\text{175}\) Mackenzie’s experience in surveying territories, inquiring into local customs, and enlisting the help of natives, proved vital to his work in Java. Mackenzie became Raffles’s primary surveyor: Raffles appointed him as the head of a commission.

\(^{169}\) Fig. 7.


\(^{173}\) Mackenzie’s contemporary, Sir Alexander Johnston, noted, “Mr. Mackenzie […] became very desirous of prosecuting his Oriental researches in India” (Evidence to Commons Select Committee (1832), *Catalogue of Manuscripts in European Languages Belonging to the Library of the India Office. Vol. 1, Part 2: the Mackenzie General and Miscellaneous Collections*, 254).

\(^{174}\) Mackenzie met Kaveli Venkata Boria in 1796 and later his brother (Blake, “Introduction,” ibid., xii).

\(^{175}\) Mackenzie to Alexander Johnston, quoted in Blake, “Introduction,” ibid., xiii.
tasked with prosecuting “statistic inquiries” to better understand the island and its people. In tandem, Mackenzie continued his pastime in India, “to enquire into the History and Antiquities of the Island where I am told certain relics exist in buildings and inscriptions that I shall be glad to see.” In 1813, Mackenzie left Java and returned to India to prepare his reports on the Java expedition. In 1815, the Governor-General of India nominated him to the new post of Surveyor General of India. He was acknowledged for his contributions, elected as Fellow of the Royal Society of London in 1819. Mackenzie died in 1821 on a boat on the Hugli River at 69 years old. His widow sold his manuscript and antiquities collection to the East India Company for a modest sum unmeriting the lifelong work of the celebrated surveyor.

In addition to Mackenzie, in Java Raffles met another individual who later engaged with amateur antiquarianism: American doctor and naturalist Thomas Horsfield (1773-1859). Though primarily a medical man, Horsfield provided much of the antiquarian descriptions in Raffles’s *The History of Java*. Born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, after completing medical school in 1799 Horsfield entered service as a surgeon on the

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176 In his Proclamation on *Principles of the Intended Change of System*, 15 October 1813, Raffles noted that the “Committee, of which Lieutenant Colonel Colin Mackenzie was President […] obtained […] authentic statistical accounts of this island” (Raffles, *The History of Java*, 2, Appendix L).


178 Reginald Henry Phillimore, *Historical Records of the Survey of India*, vol. 3 (Dehra Dun: Survey of India, 1945), 300. Mackenzie initially planned to stay in Java for only a few months which extended to almost two years during which, on the happy date of 18 November 1812, Mackenzie married Petronella Jacomina Bartels, a Ceylon-born woman of Dutch origin, in Batavia (ibid., 474).

179 Ibid., 300.


182 Most of his manuscripts were handed to the Government Oriental Library in Madras and his drawings currently form the Mackenzie Collection in the British Library Asia, Pacific, and Africa Collection (Singh, *The Discovery of Ancient India*, 4).

183 Fig. 8.
China, a merchant vessel set to sail to Java. Horsfield worked as a surgeon for the VOC between 1799 and 1811, transferring to EIC employment in 1811 until he left Java for England in 1819. Under the Dutch, Horsfield investigated the island’s medical plants. Raffles, impressed by Horsfield’s work, employed him after the two met in Surakarta in 1811. A year later, Horsfield completed his first comprehensive report, titled *Narrative of a Journey thro’ the Island of Java, Addressed to the Honble Thomas Raffles Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Java and its dependencies*, an exhaustive account “concerning the climate, soil, mountains, rivers and productions of Java.” Under Raffles’s patronage, during his natural history researches, Horsfield also took the opportunity to examine what was then considered part of natural history: Oriental antiquities. Like the other gentlemen, Horsfield committed himself to his studies, collecting information and samples from across the island. Through Raffles, Horsfield also began a correspondence with Colin Mackenzie, again signifying the importance of professional networks in one’s imperial career. Horsfield’s specimens, drawings, and notes were later transferred to the East India Company’s Museum in London. From

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185 Mss. Eur. Photo 70, Raffles Papers, BL APAC.
186 Resolution of 12 January 1802, cited in Horsfield, *Zoological Researches*, 7-8. Horsfield’s first major report was a Linnean classification of trees and plants in the Bogor region in 1802 (ibid., 8).
187 Proclamation on 4 January 1812, cited in ibid., 34.
188 Horsfield, “Narrative of a Journey through’ the Island of Java, addressed to the Honble Thomas Raffles” (1812), Mss. Eur. F148/46, f. 58-58v, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
189 Ibid., f. 12v, 13v-14. In European museum and collecting practice in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, European antiquities were categorized as “classics,” while Oriental antiquities were catalogued as part of natural history collections; we will return to this issue in Chapter Three on “Artifact and Empire.”
190 Horsfield to Raffles, 30 January 1812, Mss. Eur. F148/46, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
191 The full extent of Horsfield’s research is unknown as his personal notes were destroyed upon his death in accordance to his will (Last Will and Testament of Thomas Horsfield, 23 November 1857, quoted in Horsfield, *Zoological Researches*, 4).
1820 to 1859, Horsfield himself became Keeper of the Museum. But in Java, as his biggest contribution to Orientalist studies, Horsfield accomplished under Raffles’s patronage an extensive survey of archaeological sites and temples, published in *The History of Java*.

This brings us to Raffles’s final major contributor to *The History of Java*: Lieutenant Colonel Godfrey Phipps Baker (1786-1850). Baker is perhaps the least known for his accomplishments in Oriental studies. Yet he provided Raffles with some of the most crucial archaeological observations in *The History of Java*. Baker, baptized on 12 April 1786 at the Church of Holy Trinity, Cork, Ireland, arrived in India as Cadet in 1802. Baker joined the British invasion of Java as part of the 11th Native Infantry, also fighting in the capture of Yogyakarta which earned him a medal for bravery. Throughout his stay, Baker conducted surveys for the army while also arranging for sketches of different sites, temples, and antiquities under Raffles’s direction. Between 1815 and 1816, Baker undertook extensive surveys of central and southern Java. During his travels, Baker visited several archaeological sites, including the Dieng plateau and Gunung Prao in September 1815 before surveying the object of this thesis, the Borobudur candi, in October 1815. Baker left Java in June 1816 for Calcutta. He returned to England on furlough in 1827 before coming back to India the following year.

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192 Ibid., 3.
193 He was promoted to Lieutenant in 1803, Captain in 1814, Major in 1824, and Lieutenant Colonel in 1827 (Raymond Head, *Catalogue of Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Busts in the Collection of the Royal Asiatic Society* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1991), 25).
194 Ibid.
195 Baker’s work took him across various parts of the island, including Yogyakarta where John Crawfurd enlisted him to advise on military plans and Surakarta where he was appointed superintendent of the buildings (ibid.)
196 Ibid.
until his retirement in 1831.\textsuperscript{198} His collection of notes, drawings, and journal now forms the Baker Collection at the Royal Asiatic Society in London.

Finally, there remains one other organ which facilitated research in the arts and sciences of ancient Java: the Batavia Society of Arts and Sciences (BSAS). The Society was established in 1778 by the Dutch administration.\textsuperscript{199} The Society’s mission was the “acquisitions and extension of the Knowledge of natural History, antiquities, manners & customs of the Indian nations and other curiosities in these countries” with “its principle object being to promote schemes of enquiry into such affairs as can tend to promote or improve Agriculture, Trade, the Special Welfare of this Colony.”\textsuperscript{200} In practice, however, there was little activity under the Dutch. The Society was revived through Raffles’s initiative. Raffles writes in January 1813, “The Literary Society of Batavia, which has been so long dormant, has been again revived […] and a spirit of inquiry and research is obvious among its members.”\textsuperscript{201} Beyond official assignments or the sporadic activities of the BSAS, however, the wealth of information on Java gathered during the British interregnum stemmed from the individual drives of our Orientalists. With EIC men like Baker, Horsfield, and Mackenzie, what we had was thus a group of individuals, each pursuing their distinct occupations, often in vastly distant parts of the island, who nevertheless collaborated with each other in their explorations both

\textsuperscript{198} Head, \textit{Catalogue of Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Busts in the Collection of the Royal Asiatic Society}, 25.
\textsuperscript{199} The Society received support from the Dutch Governor General on 24 April 1788 (Mss. Eur. E118, f. 14v, Mackenzie Papers, BL APAC). A regulation submitted in 1802 enumerated the Society’s visions and mission: “The Batavian Society on the 24th April 1778 shall be a Society of arts & sciences under the Motto, or the Public Utility & be composed of the most learned and experienced persons in this capital, without any consideration of rank or conditions” (Mss. Eur. E118, f. 10, Mackenzie Papers, BL APAC).
\textsuperscript{200} Mss. Eur. E118, f. 11v, f. 15v, Mackenzie Papers, BL APAC.
\textsuperscript{201} Quoted in S. Raffles, \textit{Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles}, 1, 192.
professional and intellectual. The amateur Orientalists often assisted each other as they prepared their reports or drawings. For example, by examining Baker’s drawings at the Royal Asiatic Society Library, we observe a wide network of collaborators, including artist William Daniell, Dutch engineer Hermanus Christiaan Cornelius, Dutch draftsman Jan Knops, Captain Delafosse of the Bengal Artillery, Captain Joseph Wetherall, Major Jeremiah Johnson of the 21st Bengal Native Infantry, Lieutenant Thomas William, engravers J. Swaine and J. Walker, and the little-known watercolor artist, Miss Fendall, who were constantly referring to each other’s sketches and notes, gradually amassing a more comprehensive knowledge, or rather, its representation, of Java.

202 We had, for example, Horsfield and Mackenzie, who began their correspondence through Raffles. Horsfield once wrote of Mackenzie, “The conversation of Colonel Mackenzie has both delighted and surprized me. The treasure of information which that gentleman has collected of Indian History and Antiquities is immense” (Horsfield, “Narrative of a Journey thro’ the Island of Java, addressed to the Honble Thomas Raffles” (1812), Mss. Eur. F148/46, f. 7-7v, BL APAC).

203 Daniell (1769–1837), of the famous Thomas and William Daniell duo, had extensive landscape illustration experience in India, most known for their Oriental Sceneries (1795–1808). In Java, William Daniell became Raffles’ principal illustrator for The History of Java. For more on the Daniells, see Mildred Archer, Early Views of India: Picturesque Journeys of Thomas and William Daniell, 1786-94 (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1980).

204 Mss. 08.063, “View of a Bramin Temple at Brambanang When in its Complete State. By Col. Cornelius’s draftsman No 2,” bound volume titled “Java Sketches,” Baker Collection, RAS.


206 Mss. 08.041, a proof engraving of the “The Raka of Bali Biling” and “A Regent of Java,” inscribed “Engraved by W. Daniell; Drawn by Capt Delafosse Bengal Artillery: 26,” bound volume titled “Java Sketches,” Baker Collection, RAS.

207 Mss. 08.050, “From the Ruins of Suku near Mountain Lanvu” inscribed “2, 4 & 10 by Capt Baker Nt Inf the rest by Capt Jos Wetherall of the Royals,” bound volume titled “Java Sketches,” Baker Collection, RAS.

208 Johnson later became the British Resident at Surakarta in 1813 and is credited to discovering Candi Suku (Head, Catalogue of Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Busts in the Collection of the Royal Asiatic Society, 39).

209 Williams wrote an “Account of Suku & Chettock Temples near Solo” (ibid.). Baker’s pencil drawings of Suku sculptures (Mss. 08.098-08.115) bear numbering systems which refer to Johnson’s and William’s collections of Suku drawings, suggesting that even if the three men had not been in physical communication, Baker was aware of their work (ibid.).

210 Mss. 08.038, engraving of two images from Loro Jonggrang, inscribed “Engraved by J. Swaine,” bound volume titled “Java Sketches,” Baker Collection, RAS.

211 Mss. 08.038, engraving of unpublished map of SE Asia by J. Walker, bound volume titled “Java Sketches,” Baker Collection, RAS.

212 Mss. 08.040, colored aquatint of Gunung Salak, inscribed “by Miss Fendall,” bound volume titled “Java Sketches,” Baker Collection, RAS.
4. Orientalism in Java: Explorers and Informants

An Orientalist circle was thus beginning to form in Java. Bayly and many others have noted the ability of the British imperial agents at tapping into native knowledge to source information crucial to their imperial policies and political supremacy over the colonized territories.\(^{213}\) Here I will illustrate how some of that interaction had taken place in Java, drawing from accounts provided by Raffles, Mackenzie, Horsfield, and Baker. I will highlight several key aspects of their methods: gaining background information, traveling for new inquiries, and engaging native informants in procuring this colonial knowledge. To contextualize these researches, their nature, and conduct, EIC expeditions in Java served mainly three purposes: military, administrative, and scientific. Military surveyors, the likes of Mackenzie and Baker, were charged with charting the terrain to inform military and political strategies. Another sector which called for travel was administration, as we see with Raffles’s diplomatic trips. Lastly, the men occupied themselves, in true nineteenth-century spirit, with scientific pursuits, for example, Horsfield’s work in botany. Yet in their distinct pursuits, our imperial agents were channeling that Orientalist spirit, a desire to learn, document, and represent native history. But how did they navigate Java’s forested landscapes in their quest for knowledge of the country’s geography, peoples, and customs?

Raffles himself made several trips across Java, leaving his residence at Buitenzorg to trek through dirt roads to destinations east. His widow, Sophia Raffles, wrote, “The moment he was able to attend to any business, he was recommended to make an

\(^{213}\) See Bayly, *Empire and Information.*
excursion over the Island.” Yet though Raffles’s mission mainly involved dining with Javanese aristocracy or Dutch bureaucrats, he took detours to visit another kind of audience: the dilapidated statuaries of ninth-century Hindu-Buddhist civilizations. Sophia wrote, in his journeys Raffles “found employment for his active mind in visiting all the remains of antiquity in the country and collecting information connected with its early history, with which Europeans were previously unacquainted.” A typical day on one of these jaunts would unfold as follows: Raffles rose early in the morning to attend to pressing business before breakfast. Then, Sophia writes, he devoted the rest of the morning and afternoon with the natives who lived with him. “With these last,” she continued, “he passed the greater part of every morning and evening in reading and translating, with the greatest rapidity and ease, the different legends with which they furnished him.” Raffles dined at four in the afternoon, took his evening walk, and retired to spend the rest of the evening reading, translating, compiling, and writing. Such was the workflow of one nineteenth-century, imperial Orientalist. However, much of the activities also took place beyond Raffles’s study. For these fieldwork research and informal methodology, Mackenzie describes his explorations.

As Raffles’s principal surveyor, Mackenzie’s researches sought information “of a curious nature [...] that will be interesting to the Historian, Antiquarian & Geographer.” “I have reason to think that if they assisted no other ways,” he added,

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214 S. Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, 1, 256.
215 Ibid.
216 Ibid., 256-7.
217 Ibid.
218 Ibid.
219 Mackenzie to Minto, Batavia 25 April 1813, Mss. Eur. F148/47, f. 8v, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
“they excited in some degree a spirit of enquiry.” Before embarking on any exciting adventures, however, the first step for Mackenzie was background research, that is, compiling documents obtained by the Dutch administration. This compendium ranged from more prosaic essays like *Ancient History of Java translated from the Javanese into Dutch* to administrative reports like the *Statistic Report on the Province of Sourabaya.* Upon examining the background information, Mackenzie set to expand the existing knowledge bank, “to obtain a more intimate knowledge of the country [...] than could be effected by the report of others.” With this, he rode off to the eastern parts of the island to commence the second part of the Orientalist pursuit: travel and data collection.

Mackenzie’s journey through the tropical forests may recall the kinds previously undertaken by expeditioners in other parts of the globe. In Java, Mackenzie outfitted a band of men, European and native, to assist him in his surveys, including Orientalist William Hunter (1755-1812), and Dutch gentlemen Lieutenant Colonel Nagel and Johan Knops who aided Mackenzie with knowledge of the language and geography. Additionally, Raffles issued instructions to the civil officers in the central and eastern

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220 Mackenzie to Minto, Batavia 25 April 1813, Mss. Eur. F148/47, f. 11, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.

221 The list of manuscripts, compiled as Reports, Memoirs &c relating to Java, Translated from the Dutch, at Serampoor for Lieutt Coll Mackenzie, dated 1813 is archived as Mss. Eur. E118, f. 3, Mackenzie Papers at the BL APAC.

222 Ibid.


224 Ibid.

225 For example, the more famed Captain James Cook in the Pacific Islands. See Bernard Smith, *Imagining the Pacific: In the Wake of the Cook Voyages* (Hong Kong: Kwong Fat Offset Printing Co. Ltd., 1992) and Bernard Smith and Rudiger Joppinen, *The Art of Captain Cook’s Voyages* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

226 Hunter, Superintending Surgeon of the EIC, was also a known Orientalist, having served as Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal between 1798 and 1802 then appointed Secretary of the Fort William College in 1805. Part of his library was transferred to the BSAS (Horsfield, *Zoological Researches*, 36, note 79).

districts, as Mackenzie reported, “to render me every assistance on my Journey to facilitate the object I had in view.”\textsuperscript{228} Mackenzie remarked on the immense help these connections, writing, “I derived considerable advantage from his [Raffles’s] acquaintance with the Dutch colonists & Native Javanese chiefs &c.”\textsuperscript{229} He then proceeded to offer a descriptive account of what he and his men encountered on the road.\textsuperscript{230} His narrative, however, I should emphasize, was laced with a laden romanticism, betraying Orientalist imaginings projected onto the experienced colonial reality, something which we will see rearticulated later in influencing antiquarian descriptions and ultimately British perceptions of Java.

Like Raffles, Mackenzie held a quixotic regard of Java, describing the island as a “gem [...] added to the British Crown.”\textsuperscript{231} An example of his journeys, Mackenzie described a route eastward. Mackenzie traveled by a “Post Road [...] which the Javan Horses travel [...] by regular relays; the whole thro’ a beautiful Country gently ascending, lived by plantations on either side & terminated in a valley formed by long branches of the mountains stretching out from their general Easterly & Westerly direction.”\textsuperscript{232}

Throughout his descriptions, Mackenzie’s account was rich in language that romanticized the horseback ride through the tropical island. Mackenzie thus portrayed,

\begin{quote}
The most magnificent & striking scenery, of low ridges & hills rising insensibly to great Mountains, whose Summits are enveloped in the Clouds [...] covered with luxuriant vegetation of the deepest verdure,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{228} Ibid., f. 63.
\textsuperscript{229} Ibid., f. 63.
\textsuperscript{230} His full account is recorded as \textit{Military Report \& Journal of Lieutenant Colonel C. Mackenzie of the Madras Engineer in Java from October 1811 to June 1813}, Mss. Eur. F148/47, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
\textsuperscript{231} Mackenzie to Minto, Batavia 25 April 1813, Mss. Eur. F148/47, f. 7, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
\textsuperscript{232} \textit{Military Report \& Journal of Lieutenant Colonel C. Mackenzie of the Madras Engineer in Java from October 1811 to June 1813}, Mss. Eur. F148/47, f. 57v, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
varied in shades [...] the Country runs out of sight on the horizon, in a rich cultivated waving landscape, varied in its color.233

Often, our explorers braved Java’s many rivers, having their native servants fashion makeshift bamboo bridges or relying on their horses’ lack of trepidity.234 As the troupe passed from one village to the next, they took refuge in the modest hospitality of the villages, a set-up established from past Dutch expeditions.235 Mackenzie wrote, “Bamboo Barracks are constructed in several places for the accommodation of Troops – Victuals ready dressed are exposed for sale at stalls on the side of the road, & frequent markets [...] are crowded with Natives resorting with articles of provision &c.”236 Meanwhile, Mackenzie enjoyed the mild tropical weather, admitting, “at the highest we experienced little inconvenience from cold at nights.”237

Mackenzie’s representation of the Javanese scenes was idyllic at best, if not fraught with Orientalist romanticism. Yet in reality that spell of tranquility was at times broken with reminders of the violence entailed in the British occupation. On one occasion, Raffles sent Mackenzie on a detour to Surakarta, anticipating potential military confrontation.238 The military conflict was avoided; the Raffles signed a treaty with the

233 Ibid., f. 61-61v, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
234 Fig. 9. An aquatint by William Daniell depicts a river crossing, showing a group, Her Majesty’s 22nd Light Dragoon Regiment, on horseback led by a red-coated officer, fording the Cidame river near Buitenzorg (William Daniell, H.M. 22nd Light Dragoon Regiment crossing the Cidame River near Buitenzorg, aquatint, in Peter Carey, ed., The British in Java 1811-1816: A Javanese Account (Oxford: 1992), pl. 16).
235 Ibid., f. 10.
237 Ibid., f. 59.
238 Mackenzie wrote, “It was not unlikely that the Troops might be called into the Field, the 14th Regiment, the Detachment of the 22nd Dragoons & 6th Battalion [sic] of Bengal volunteers under the command of Colonel Watson having actually proceeded up to Salatiga & other Detachments to Solo & Clatten; it was likely in a military capacity I might be called upon (ibid., f. 60v).
susuhunan of Surakarta on 23 December 1811. But as the incident exemplifies, despite sentimentalized accounts of adventure among the agricultural tranquil, even the most peacefully intellectual endeavors were embroiled in the British imperial project to stamp military and political power.

One last, crucial aspect of the Orientalist enterprise was the role of native informants. Raffles’s native assistants were indispensable to his Oriental studies. As Sophia remarked, Raffles had handpicked for himself a staff of Europeans and natives “whose good sense and intelligence had attracted his notice.” Horsfield, too, noted the help he received from the natives, writing that “a number of natives had been instructed for affording that assistance which […] was not only necessary, but greatly conduced to the enlargement of my investigations.” Here I will thus briefly discuss the natives’ role in translation and in offering strategic information to the British agents. The most obvious area where natives were valuable to the British, other than as servants or workers, was in language. Mackenzie once complained to Lord Minto, “the language […] presented obstacles of no common degree; from the Dutch it was difficult to find Translators to accompany me; in the interior the Malay was of little use; & the Javanese in its several Dialects has been studied by very few Dutch.” The British did, however, and commendably so, exert some effort to learn local languages. Adopting Hasting’s initiatives in India, Raffles's administration in Java began a similar project to document vernacular and classical languages. Raffles compiled, for example, *A Comparative

239 The Treaty, Mackenzie wrote, was “generally renewing the former engagements between the late Government & the Susuhunan & stipulating further concessions in favor of the British Government” (ibid., f. 62, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC).


242 Mackenzie to Minto, Batavia 25 April 1813, Mss. Eur. F148/47, f. 11v, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
Vocabulary of the Malayu, Javan, Madurese, Bali, and Lampung languages, which he reproduced in *The History of Java*. For the most part, however, the British were often forced to rely on their interpreters.

Additionally, the natives also offered important, strategic information for the European surveyors. For directions, Horsfield, for example, mentioned that “during various botanical excursions which I made through this province, I discovered (or rather was led to them by the natives) the chándi of Gedóg.” The network of informants, however, was not quite as structured and entrenched as in India. Mackenzie tellingly compared his experiences, “On this journey we had none of these aids that the Native Chiefs furnish in India to travellers employed on Public duty, & which the Javanese Chiefs had very recently been in habit to supply to the late Government.” “Here I was divested of the powerful aid of the Acute, the penetrating genius of the Bramins, which there was of such service to me,” he wrote. This is not to say, however, that Java was lacking in native expertise. What they lacked in Brahmins, the Javanese offered in their enlightened aristocracy. Here we thus touch upon a different kind of information, not simple translations or directions, but tapping into the specific proficiencies of the native

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243 The compendium included phrases indicative of common inquiries of the colonial enterprise, such as, “Don’t you know the place? Will you accompany me?” (Raffles, *The History of Java*, 2, Appendix E).

244 Horsfield, quoted in ibid.


246 Mackenzie to Minto, Batavia 25 April 1813, Mss. Eur. F148/47, f. 11v, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.

247 Indeed, the elite native assistants themselves make a fascinating subject of inquiry as products of empire. Take, for one, Raden Saleh, second son of Kiai Adipati Sura Adi Manggala, Resident of Semarang. In 1812, Raffles sent Raden Saleh along with his younger brother, Sukur, to Bengal in order “that they might there receive an education superior to what they could have at home,” studying mathematics, Greek, Roman, and European history in Calcutta for two years under Minto’s patronage (Raffles, *The History of Java*, 1, 273). Saleh then joined Raffles’s administration in Buitenzorg, working with him on the compilation and translation of the Javanese babads and the Brata Yudha in preparation for Raffles’s *The History of Java* (S. Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, 1, 235).
informants. An example of this is Raffles’s *A Comparative Vocabulary*. Raffles explicated the process of compiling the project which involved his educated assistants during those long evenings dedicated to Orientalist studies. Raffles explained,

Copies of the Vocabulary, in the Malayan character, arranged by the late Dr. Leyden, were circulated in different parts of Java, and completed in the different languages and dialects by the natives. After collections of these were made, several intelligent natives were […] assembled from different parts of the island, […] and the Vocabulary in each language was carefully revised in concert with them. 248

Raffles also noted, regarding his work on the *Brata Yudha*, how “availing myself of the literary acquirements of the Panambahan of Sumenáp […] and Ráden Saleh, the son of the regent of Semárang, I have it now in my power to lay the following analysis of this ancient poem before the public.” 249 Such rapports between the British and the elite natives certainly complicate the subaltern narrative and have invited interesting historical inquiries in the Indian context, a scope for much greater studies. 250 For the purpose of this thesis, the relations between the British and their informants reveal how Orientalism, far from being a simple British imposition, was rather a body of knowledge constructed both in the British psyche and in the colonial territory.

In this chapter, we begin to see the creation of an “Orient,” where Raffles, his EIC peers, and his native contemporaries negotiated the multivalent narratives they encountered in the Javanese ecumene. This competition for representation found particularly fertile battlegrounds in the realm of material culture. Moving to more closely analyze British Orientalism with regards to Javanese antiquities, we will examine how the

248 Raffles, *The History of Java*, 2, Appendix E.
249 Ibid., 1, 410.
aesthetics, perceived historical validity, and representative powers of the artifact constituted a mode of historiography. That Orientalist framework, one which displaces contemporary Javanese society into an imposed linear history in which a golden, Hindu-Buddhist era, linked to India and Indo-Aryan civilizations, fell to a despotic and degenerate Muslim populace, empowered the practice and expansion of the British Empire through the work of its individual agents, situated within trans-imperial vectors of ideas and methodologies. This we shall see in practice as our men embarked on their antiquarian adventures, encountering the wealth of ruined temples and ancient treasures, into the Orientalist imagination of Java and its material history. One archaeological treasure of note: the grand Borobudur, former home of Raffles’s prized Buddha head, which until British arrival lurked dormant amidst the Javanese countryside.  

251 Fig. 5.
II. A Foreign Country

“The whole of the country lying between Gúñung Dieng and Brambánan abounds with ruins of temples, dilapidated images, and traces of Hinduism,” Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles wrote.252 As the East India Company men set out to explore, observe, and document the island for military, administrative, and scientific purposes, they stumbled upon that wealth of Oriental treasure. In Java, ruined Hindu-Buddhist edifices lay fragmented underneath soil, rubble, and unbridled tropical vegetation.253 The British administration in Java pioneered excavations and more systematized studies of these remains, paving the way to later Dutch archaeological surveys. Though Europeans had long held a fascination with sites of antiquity, nineteenth-century antiquarianism acquired an imperial dimension, both in geographical scope and in its role in constructing narratives of the peoples that the artifacts and sites came to represent. Such was the case with the Borobudur Buddha head.

This chapter explores British Orientalist antiquarian activities in-situ, before the next chapter continues the discourse as the representations were relocated off site through colonial collecting. By antiquary I mean “lover, collector and student of ancient traditions and remains.”254 Here, I examine that Orientalist excavation, observation, interpretation, and documentation of sites in Java during EIC occupation. I will explicate the tradition of European antiquarianism, introducing the interpretive and representative power of the antiquary, then follow EIC fieldwork to examine methods and theories of

253 See, for example, Fig. 13, 14.
their antiquarian interpretations with the Borobudur as a case study. Finally, I analyze how colonial fieldwork advanced the enterprise itself as it informed imperial imaginations of the Javanese colonial reality through antiquarian description. In this, I examine, first, the silencing of Javanese narratives in favor of Indianist interpretations and, second, how the aesthetic of ruins constructed Java’s imagined state of decline, effectively legitimizing the British imperial endeavor.

1. European Antiquarianism

As Raffles, Colin Mackenzie, Godfrey Baker, and Thomas Horsfield crossed forests and rivers of the Javanese hillscapes on Company duty, they inadvertently brought attention to relatively neglected archaeological remains of early-modern, Hindu-Buddhist dynasties on the island. From around the fourth to the fifteenth centuries, the island saw the rise of Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms, most notably Tarumanegara (ca. 358-669 C.E.) in west Java, Syailendra (ca. 725-852) and Sanjaya (ca. 732-929) in central Java, and Majapahit (ca. 1293-1500) in east Java. These kingdoms built devotional and civil structures, or candis, around the island. The Syailendra dynasty, for one, commissioned the Borobudur, the largest surviving Buddhist structure in the world. With the decline of Hindu-Buddhist power and the rise of Islam, these dynasties were

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255 Raffles described these vestiges: “The antiquities of Java consist of ruins of edifices, and in particular of temples sacred to the former worship; images of deities found within them and scattered throughout the country, either sculptured in stone or cast in metal; inscriptions on stone and copper in ancient characters, and ancient coins” (Raffles, *The History of Java*, 2, 5).


257 Fig. 5.
defeated by the Muslim sultanates.258 Islam politically and culturally overtook Hinduism and Buddhism. Consequently, as Raffles remarked, “The antiquities of Java have not, till lately, excited much notice; nor have they been sufficiently explored.”259

Raffles’s inquiry into the Hindu-Buddhist materials, as with those of his contemporaries, can be best described by the term antiquarianism.260 To speak about antiquarianism during the period posits some difficulties due to the fluidity and hybridity of the endeavor before the professionalization of archaeology or even history.261 That said, the intellectual impetus behind antiquarianism was a long, European tradition.262 Since the Hellenistic era, systematic treatises in philology, geography, and chronology began to appear, striving towards a holistic knowledge of a particular subject.263 The idea of the modern antiquary came to formation in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as the early-modern humanists revived idealizations of Graeco-Roman philosophy and culture which to them were materialized in the antiquities.264 In eighteenth and nineteenth-century Britain, antiquarianism carried strong nationalistic motivations.

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258 They include the Sultanate of Demak (1475-1518) which conquered Majapahit in 1500, the Sultanate of Banten (1526-1813) and the Sultanate of Mataram (1575-1755). Many of these Muslim states fell to Dutch colonization, except for the two native courts, Yogyakarta and Surakarta. See Vlekke, Nusantara: A History of the East Indian Archipelago and Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1200.

259 Raffles, The History of Java, 2, 5.

260 One important factor for this branch of inquiry was the divide between political historiography and what became antiquarianism. Where official state historians wrote about the recent past, framed in the political, military context, antiquaries concerned themselves with traditions and culture, hence the attention to material artifact (Momigliano, “Ancient History and the Antiquarian,” 287-8).

261 Even in the latter half of the nineteenth century, scholarly Englishmen spoke interchangeably of the antiquary and the archaeologist. Figures like Egyptologist Samuel Birch (1813-1885), barrow-excavator Thomas Bateman (1821-1861) and classical scholar Churchill Babington (1821-1889) were referred to on different occasions as antiquarian and archaeologist. For a history of developments in archeological discipline and thought, see Bruce Trigger, A History of Archaeological Thought, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).


263 Momigliano noted, Roman erudite Varro first used the term “antiquitates” to refer to his survey of Roman life through observations in language, literature, and customs (ibid.). In the Middle Ages, Europeans began to notice and write about monuments and inscriptions as exemplified by works like St. Augustine’s Civitas Dei (ibid., 289).

264 Ibid., 290. In the sixteenth century, we thus had men like Sigonio, Fulvio Orsini, Augustinus who combined archaeological evidence with literary and epigraphical texts to piece together a Roman past (ibid., 291).
British antiquaries in the Regency Era focused on Roman, Celtic/Druidic, Nordic, and medieval histories in search for British material genealogies and narratives of national history, unity, and supremacy. William Stukeley (1687-1765) of Stonehenge and Avebury antiquarian fame, for example, boasted the nationalist “grandeur” he found in an archaeological lineage between Britain and ancient Rome. Stukeley writes, “The amazing scene of Roman grandeur in Britain which I beheld this journey […] it was in our own country; […] I hold myself obliged to preserve, as well as I can, the memory of such things as I saw; which […] will revive the Roman glory among us.” Meanwhile, in modern Europe, the interest became a lifestyle. Knowledge of antiquities became one way to exhibit one’s degree of education and taste. In a revealing example, James Boswell wrote in 1765 on his Italy tour, “I have viewed with enthusiasm classical sites, and the remains of the grandeur of the ancient Romans. I have made a thorough study of architecture, statues, and paintings; and I believe I have acquired taste to a certain degree.” By Boswell’s time, an estimated 40,000 elite Englishmen had taken the habit of traveling the continent, captivated by classical Greek and Roman ruins.

As we begin to see then, with the sixteenth-century humanists and the British nationalists, the most problematic aspect of the antiquarian pursuit is the antiquary’s power in description and classification: the narrativization of history through material culture. Antiquarianism is, in its essence and purpose, a descriptive endeavor. Description, meaning subjective perception and representation, was the primary task and

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266 William Stukeley, quoted in ibid., 51-2.
thus prerogative of the antiquary. Antiquarian Churchill Babington (1821-1889) had spoken on that note, proclaiming that the antiquary, facing disparate sites and objects, “puts them together, and considers what story they have to render up.”

269 Decades before Raffles, European antiquaries had begun to compile standardized iconographies of statues, reliefs, vases, following the practice in the fields of numismatics and epigraphy, including Jacques Spon’s Miscellanea Eruditae Antiquitatis (1679), Bernard de Montfaucon’s L’Antiquité expliquée (1718), and Johann Joachim Winckelmann’s Versuch einer Allegorie besonders für die Kunst (1766). 270 However, in such guises, the antiquary was relatively free to construct his own interpretations, categories, and arguments to represent the materials he examined. Meanwhile, expertise was a self-decided qualification. As Levin noted, “Few antiquaries before the advent of a specific archaeological method would have seen any need to treat exhumed burial remains differently than a town charter or a church font. They were as comfortable editing medieval poetry as they were inspecting Roman remains.”

271 This relative lack of information on the collected objects, however, only made the collector more influential. In lieu of verifiable information, he had greater liberty to impose his own claims on the objects he collected. With the expansion of the British Empire, the antiquarian interest acquired a more geopolitically potent dimension as it covered cultures in the far reaches of the globe. Knowing even littler of these faraway cultures, this did not deter antiquarians from attempting to reconstruct ancient pasts and places. In India and


270 Momigliano, "Ancient History and the Antiquarian," 304.

Southeast Asia, our amateur Orientalists became the authority on the Orient. This places significant power in the literal and figurative hands of the antiquary at work.

Antiquarianism was thus implicated in the imperial enterprise in two ways. First, imperial expansion and exploration provided by trade in far off islands like Java brought the antiquarian scope to the far shores of the globe. Second, antiquaries relied on excavations and the collection of material objects to construct from disparate sites and artifacts a compiled image of a past civilization which became the dominant representation. In the period, material evidence was seen as possibly the most authentic source for historical interpretation. Antiquities were seen as authentic to the time during which the objects were produced and, in their material permanence, that authenticity was preserved to clarify biases or confusions often pervasive in textual evidence. But the use of material artifacts as evidence for what would come to be perceived as historical fact was deeply problematic, as we will soon see in the case of Raffles and Java.

2. Javanese Antiquities

As Raffles noted, the temples and antiquities of Java had hitherto received little attention and care from the natives and the former Dutch administration. Though the Dutch established the Batavia Society of the Arts and Sciences, they pursued no concerted efforts to seek out the antiquities in any systematic fashion. The earliest

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272 French member of the l'Académie Royale des Inscriptions, De Pouilly, thus quoted l'Abbé Anselme, claiming, “qu’outre les Mémoires qui en on esté conservez, ce qu’il y a d’obscur et de confus a esté suppléé par des monuments authentiques, qui en ont fait foy” (M. De Pouilly, Nouveaux essais de critique sur la fidelité de l’histoire, quoted in Momigliano, ”Ancient History and the Antiquarian,” 297).

273 Raffles, The History of Java, 2, 5.

274 There was, however, some effort to proliferate scientific knowledge: before the VOC was formally established in 1602. The University of Leiden and the States of Holland petitioned for scientists to collect seeds, plants, and minerals to augment natural history collections in the Netherlands. At times, they encountered classical antiquities. In 1597, for example, a Leiden University librarian visited Java and came to a manuscript which he shipped back to the University, making him possibly one of the first Dutch collectors of ancient Javanese materials (Kees Van Dijk, “Gathering and Describing: Western
publication on archipelagic archaeology was VOC’s George Rumphius (1627-1702)’s *Herbarium Amboinese* (1705) with two chapters on prehistoric material in eastern Indonesia.²⁷⁵ In Java, the ninth-century Hindu *candi* Prambanan was first mentioned in 1773 by Dutch official C.A. Lons.²⁷⁶ With these early notices, the Dutch began discovering Hindu-Buddhist antiquities. This antiquarianism, however, depended less on governmental efforts and relied almost exclusively on the individual amateurs. For example, prior to British arrival in Java, perhaps the most prolific amateur antiquary was Nicolaus Engelhard (1761-1831), then Governor of Java’s Northeast Coast.²⁷⁷ Engelhard was the first recorded European to visit Candi Singasari in 1803.²⁷⁸ In 1805-1807, Engelhard ordered surveys of temples around Semarang to the Dutch engineer Hermanus Christiaan Cornelius (1774-1833), whom Raffles later employed. Yet beyond Engelhard’s few commissioned surveys, the ancient sites of Java remained largely unstudied in any formal sense. This changed with British arrival.

A more organized exploration, survey, and documentation of Javanese Hindu-Buddhist structures only veritably commenced during the British administration of...
Java. However, the cause for this shift was, again, not any systematic, imperial project. Rather, it was largely propelled by the actions of the imperial individuals. Raffles, since he was a young boy at the East India House, long cultivated a passion for literature and the sciences. Arriving in the archipelago, he discovered an interest in Oriental traditions: Malay history while he was in Penang, and, in Java, pre-Islamic, Hindu-Buddhist materials. Having revived the Batavia Society of Arts and Sciences while deploying Mackenzie, Baker, and Horsfield on further Oriental researches, Raffles was ecstatic to find the wealth of archaeological remains across the island. He began commissioning agents to survey the sites and document their findings. The extent of antiquarian participation among the EIC men varied. Mackenzie, for one, probably had the most training in surveying and interpreting information on sites, drawing from his previous survey experiences in India. Horsfield, meanwhile, had spent the years under the Dutch collecting natural history specimens, often bringing him to some of these ancient sites. Baker, too, was assigned to survey Java’s many candis for Raffles’s *The History of Java.* Together, these men under Raffles’s patronage commenced studies of sites and temples around the island.

In an 1815 address to the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences, Raffles spoke of the treasured Javanese ancient sites:

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279 Benedict Anderson wrote, “Thomas Stamford Raffles, ominous emissary from William Jones’ Calcutta, was the first prominent colonial official not merely to amass a large personal collection of local objets d’art, but systematically to study their history” (Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (New York: Verso, 1991), 179). “Thereafter,” Anderson claimed, “with increasing speed, the grandeurs of the Borobudur, of Angkor, of Pagan, and of other ancient sites were successively disinterred, unjungled, measured, photographed, reconstructed, fenced off, analysed, and displayed” (ibid.).

280 That said, they were of course influenced by imperial ideas transmitted through trans-imperial exchanges, as we will continue to examine throughout this thesis.


282 Raffles was perhaps the most armchair of the group. Although the Lieutenant-Governor was credited for the “discovery” of many of Java’s temples, most notably the Borobudur, he was barely present during the clearings and excavations.
The numerous and interesting remains or former art and grandeur, which exist in the ruins of temples and other edifices; the abundant treasures of sculpture and statuary with which some parts of the island are covered and the evidences of a former state of religious belief and national improvement, which are presented in images, devices, and inscriptions, either lay entirely buried under rubbish, or were but partially examined.\textsuperscript{283}

In that claim, Raffles gestured to that Orientalist imagination of an idealized past and the lamentable state of the dismantled present. This is what I refer to as “Orientalist antiquarianism”: Orientalist ideas, assumptions, and methodologies which framed the antiquarian descriptions of our EIC agents. Thus, the EIC surveyors-turned-antiquaries embarked on their mission to save and preserve these lost ideals and deliver that lost promise of Java under benevolent British rule. Their Orientalist expeditions may have been driven by intellectual curiosity, yet it was also informed by and reinforced the imperial endeavor. Before I examine further the fraught implications of this Orientalist antiquarianism to colonial historiography, let me first illustrate the state of Javanese antiquities and the methods of the EIC men in surveying and examining these so-called Oriental treasures.

Firstly, of course, there is the question of how the explorers found their way to the ruins. On several occasions, the surveyors quite literally stumbled upon these remains. Following the trail of stone remains at times took our EIC explorers to the site of the temple. Baker, for one, stumbled upon such a trail while en route from Prambanan to Yogyakarta. There at the junction, he recounted,

\begin{quote}
A very large statue is inconspicuous […] Searching about I found the broken scattered remains of five other images exactly similar to it. Twenty yards in the rear of the erect image, and just to the westward of
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{283} Raffles, \textit{The History of Java}, 2, 6.
the village, a very extensive heap of blocks of hewn stone [...] the site of what must once have been a spacious temple, long since prostrate.  

Moreover, as I began discussing in the previous chapter, the British were often indebted to native informants for their expeditions. Surveying a temple in Kali Bening, Baker writes, “as I had never before heard of any thing further in this quarter, I fancied my work was over. I was, however, most agreeably surprised, on being told by my Javan guides that there was something more to be seen directly south of the village behind us.”  

Baker and his company followed the Javanese informants and, indeed, “barely one hundred and fifty yards from the temple, in a high sugar-cane and palma christi plantation, we came suddenly on two pair of very magnificent gigantic porters.”  

Without these mentions the European explorers would likely have passed over these spots of dense forests or unidentifiable mounds of soil, unaware of the archaeological treasures beneath. Yet once the surveyors arrived on site, what they encountered was not quite the Indic ideal.  

Expecting to find evidence of grand civilizations, the British found instead indiscernible rubbles in ruin. Baker reported on the Candi Loro Jonggrang in the Prambanan complex: the temples “are visible, in the form of large hillocks of fallen masses of stone, surmounted, and in some instances covered, with a profusion of trees and herbage of all descriptions.”  

He remarked that “in the present dilapidated state of these venerable buildings, I found it very difficult to obtain a correct plan or description of their original disposition, extent, or even of their number and figure.”  

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284 Baker, quoted in ibid., 24.  
285 Ibid., 28.  
286 Ibid.  
287 Baker quoted in ibid., 11. See Fig. 13, 14.  
288 Baker quoted in ibid.
similarly reported of Candi Sajiwan, “no just idea of its original shape can be formed, […] nothing is seen at first but a confused hill of stones covered with bushes forming an awkward Pyramidal heap.”

In many cases, the edifices were nearly obliterated with fragments scattered about the island. Even when the candi’s structure was adequately visible, the EIC surveyors often met incomplete structural or decorative elements.

Horsfield, for one, found himself rather confused in front of bare pedestals, their former stone occupant missing. Baker observed upon entering one of the main chambers of Candi Sewu, “I imagined I should find the great and all-powerful Brahma seated here, in the glory and majesty proportionate to the surrounding splendour and magnificence of his abode. Not a single vestige, however, remains of Brahma, or of any other deity.”

Where the images were present, they suffered fractures or dismemberment. The candis, it appeared, fell victim to antiquarian collections or creative reappropriation. As a stroll through some towns would have revealed, locals used some candi parts for building or decorating new constructions. Raffles recounted,

> Many of the villagers between Blédran and Jétis have availed themselves of the extensive remains to form the walls of their buildings. In the enclosures to several of the villages […] are discovered large stones, some representing gorgon heads, others beautifully executed in relief, which had formed the friezes and cornices of temples.

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289 Mss. Eur. F148/47, f. 24, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
290 Horsfield observed in the Suku temples, “In the center of it we observed a part raised, of about a foot square, pierced by a small round hole. It had the appearance of being intended as a pedestal, or step, to some object which had been removed” (Raffles, *The History of Java*, 2, 47).
292 Baker noted that of all the images he saw in Candi Sewu, “only one was perfect: the others had lost their heads and received other damage in the fall of their habitations” (Baker, quoted in ibid., 22). Horsfield likewise reported from his own explorations, “Most of the images which are not in relief have been decapitated, and the heads are not to be found” (Horsfield, quoted in ibid., 51).
293 Ibid., 7.
294 Ibid., 32.
Elsewhere, Horsfield noticed in Madiun candi fragments used to decorate a public well and bath.\(^{295}\) Such observations would be valuable to our later analysis on the practice of antiquarian collecting and the transport of some of these artifacts into private collections, in Java and across the British Empire.

In the meantime, on site, upon encountering such ruined states, Raffles, Baker, Mackenzie, and Horsfield speculated possible causes for this dilapidation. Baker blamed it partly on intensified agriculture in the colonial era which encroached upon former temple grounds.\(^{296}\) The candis were also subject to other forces of nature, the most violent being the island’s volcanoes.\(^{297}\) Raffles stated of the Dieng ruins, “Time alone, indeed, cannot have so completely demolished a work […]. The greatest part of this wonderful memorial of human industry lies buried under huge masses of rock and lava.”\(^{298}\) Subject to these natural forces, the formerly grand structures had over the centuries been “covered with lava or ashes from volcanic eruptions, so that whatever may have formerly been the extent and grandeur of the edifices which once crowned these towering heights, they are at present either concealed or more frequently destroyed.”\(^{299}\) The most common grievance, however, was the neglect of the natives who allowed for such deplorable destruction. This opinion, as we shall see later in this chapter, was foundational to British antiquarian interpretation of the Javanese candis.

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\(^{295}\) He writes, “inscriptions; remains of buildings, pedestals, and réchas of different sizes, have also been collected from various parts of this province, and employed to decorate a well and bath near the capital” (Horsfield, quoted in ibid., 33).

\(^{296}\) In Candi Sewu, he observed, “fields of palma christi, sugar-cane, and tobacco, occupy the place and many detached spots on the site of the temples” (Baker, quoted in ibid., 22).

\(^{297}\) Java sits on subduction zones between the Eurasian and Indo-Australian tectonic plates, forming the island’s volcanoes.

\(^{298}\) Raffles, *The History of Java*, 2: 31. In addition to the volcanic blasts, the candis also suffered from earthquakes. Raffles noted of Dieng, “On its [crater] border are the remains of four temples of stone, greatly dilapidated, but manifestly by the effect of some violent shock or concussion of the earth” (ibid.).

\(^{299}\) Ibid., 52.
When the surveyors did find distinguishable architectural forms, they set to describe and document what they beheld. In this undertaking, as several sketches and watercolors illustrate, the amateur antiquaries would likely have been accompanied by a party of Javanese messengers, servants, and accompanying military personnel, British or sepoy. An illustration in the Mackenzie Collection depicted a likely typical scene.300 Gathered around a candi covered by soil and vegetation were several natives, two carrying sticks, one climbing the steps of the structure. Nearby at a makeshift table several European gentlemen admire the structure while a draftsman sketches under the shade of an umbrella. But what did our men see, sketch, and systematize? We will see the antiquarian observation in practice through the following case study on arguably Java’s greatest antiquarian treasure: the Borobudur.301

3. Borobudur Case Study

Borobudur lies in a valley at the heart of the Kedu region, 25 miles northwest of Yogyakarta and 53 miles west of Surakarta. The candi sits on an elevated hill in the middle of the verdure plains, under the auspices of two twin-volcanoes Sundoro-Sumbing and Merbabu-Merapi and graced by two nearby rivers, the Progo and the Elo. The natural landscape has largely remained unchanged from the time of British rule though the region saw a marked difference: the excavated presence of the Borobudur candi crowning the valley. The only surviving record in the Indonesian national archives of the Kedu region during British rule is John Crawfurd’s Report Upon the District of Cadoe, dated 15 November 1812 which provides us with a picture of the land and its inhabitants.

300 Fig. 12. Candis at Jabung in East Java, pencil and watercolor, 270x379mm, WD913, Mackenzie Collection, BL APAC. Or see a similar scene in Fig. 12, “South view” of candi, pencil and watercolor, 249x309 mm, WD929, Mackenzie Collection, BL APAC.
301 Fig. 5.
during the interregnum. Crawfurd reports, taking a road from Magelang to Yogyakarta, one arrived at the district which “appears to owe a fertility of soil and a happiness of climate to which no other portion of this Island can lay claim.” The site was surrounded by pockets of villages with agriculture-driven commerce. The villages were quite small and, as Crawfurd observed, “most of them save on the market days are nearly deserted.” A village named “Chandi,” for example, had a population of 27, while another listed as “Chandie” counted a meager 16. Crawfurd then went on to make observations on the life and manners of Kedu residents. “There are many who have no homes at all, and still more who have no stated meals and no comforts,” he noted. The people of Kedu, in Crawfurd’s eye, lived a modest life of the agricultural peasantry. “The farmer finds a vend for his productions at the daily and weekly market,” Crawfurd explained. The markets served as important site for commercial and social exchange. While the people of Kedu, according to Crawfurd’s observations, occupied

302 John Crawfurd, Report Upon the District of Cadoe, ANRI Kedu/24/A, f. 20, ANRI “The most material object of this report,” the document stated, was “the temporary plan adopted for organizing the land revenue” (ibid., f. 14-15).
303 Ibid., f. 2.
304 There are several villages catalogued in Crawfurd’s report as being named “Chandi”; it was unclear which particular village referred to the community at the foot of Borobudur.
305 Crawfurd, Report Upon the District of Cadoe, ANRI Kedu/24/A, f. 10, ANRI.
306 Ibid., f. 52.
307 Ibid., f. 67.
308 Ibid., f. 10. But those who could afford the luxury of comfortable life, Crawfurd observed a uniquely Indies scene. The natives were “far from looking with disgust upon the manners of Europe, but on the contrary mimic and adopt them. Events of dress and costume of Europeans, which one would imagine at such variance with their prejudices, they have no objections but wear some of the most singular parts of our dress.” Crawfurd could not help but comment on this colonial cultural hybridity that “one sees in the remotest parts of the country the most grotesque and extraordinary figures habited in shoes and stockings, small clothes, and cocked hats while the rest of their dress is after the costume of their own country” (ibid., f. 19-20).
309 Ibid., f. 9.
310 “These establishments for the convenience of exchange and traffic,” Crawfurd said, “are of the utmost importance in a country the industry of which is entirely agricultural, and where there are no towns to consume the superfluous produce of the country” (ibid., f. 10). “A market day presents a busy scene,” Crawfurd recounted, “in some situations they are so well attended, that I have occasionally seen a crowd of several thousands together” (ibid., f. 10-1).
their quiet lives with agriculture and small commerce, not too far from their bamboo-
walled homes, hidden beneath soil and overgrown trees, lay one of the most magnificent
vestiges of a Buddhist civilization in the eastern seas.

The Borobudur, remaining an archaeological mystery now, would have been only
more elusive then.\textsuperscript{311} Nothing is known for certain as to who commissioned or built the
monument. Archaeologist Willem Frederik Stutterheim proposes that the monument is
connected to the tantric Mahayana sect of Buddhism and situates its foundation around
the year 775 C.E. under the patronage of the second Syailendra ruler, Rake
Panangkaran.\textsuperscript{312} Architecturally, the candi consists of a base covered in reliefs followed by
six successively receding square platforms, then three circular platforms, and finally
crowned by a bell-shaped structure.\textsuperscript{313} The function of the structure remains to be
answered.\textsuperscript{314} In any case, the commanding feature of the architecture is the galleries
which wrap around each platform. To follow Buddhist tradition, the visitor would
circumambulate in a clockwise direction from the eastern gate, beginning at the base of
then following the corridors and gradually ascending onto the successive levels by way of
stairs on the four cardinal points.\textsuperscript{315} The journey would take the pilgrims through

\textsuperscript{311}Archaeologists and scholars continue to debate the origins and function of the structure. See, for
starters, the most recent survey work on the structure: Noerhadi Magetsari, Jan Fontein, Timbul Haryono, ed. \textit{Borobudur: Majestic Mysterious Magnificent} (Jakarta: BAB Publishing Indonesia, 2011).

\textsuperscript{312} Stutterheim, \textit{Studies in Indonesian Archaeology}, 7.

\textsuperscript{313} See Raffles’s commissioned reconstruction drawing, Fig. 17.

\textsuperscript{314} There are those who argue that the entire monument constitute a large stupa, while others still argue
that the monument at large merely serve as the pedestal for the crowning stupa (Stutterheim, \textit{Studies in
Indonesian Archaeology}). See, additionally, Hiram W. Woodward, Jr.’s “Barabudur as a Stupa” in Jr. Luis O.
Gómez and Hiram W. Woodward, ed. \textit{Barabudur: History and Significance of a Buddhist Monument} (Berkeley:
Asian Humanities Press, 1981). Others argue that the structure is a mandala, an argument first advanced
by Zimmer and Heine-Geldern; see Paul Mus, “Barabudur, les origines du stupa et la transmigracion,
essai d’archéologie religieuse comparée,” \textit{BEFEO} 32(1932) and a recent overview of the debate in John
Miksic, “Was Borobudur a Mandala?,” \textit{Borobudur} 4, no. 4 (Dec. 2010).

\textsuperscript{315} The monument’s levels represent the three levels in Buddhist cosmology, Kāmadhātu (the world of
desire), Rupadhatu (the world of forms) and Arupadhatu (the world of formlessness) while the
circumambulation replicates that climb to reach enlightenment.
corridors with 1,460 narrative relief panels describing both Buddhist narratives and scenes from Javanese daily life. From these galleries, one reaches the final three circular terraces, on which one finds latticed bell-shaped stupas, each encasing a seated statue of the Buddha. Finally, the entire structure is crowned by a massive central bell-shaped form. Decoratively, perhaps the most famous feature of the structure is the 120 bas-relief tableaux along the upper friezes on the inner wall narrating the life story of the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama.316 The other element integral to the monument structurally, aesthetically, and spiritually, is the Buddha statues.317 The candi hosts a total of 504 Buddha statues, with 432 Buddha statues at the lower levels and 72 on the circular platforms.318 On the lower levels, above each gallery is a series of niches each housing a seated Buddha statue carved to represent four different mudras or hand gestures.319 Finally, there are the slightly larger Buddha statues enclosed in the perforated stupas on the circular terraces.320 It was such a Buddha statue that captured the eye of our Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles.

Raffles first heard about the existence of the monument during an inspection tour to Semarang in 1814 where he was informed of a massive structure buried in the forested valley near Magelang.321 Raffles then assigned the Dutch civil engineer, Hermanus Christiaan Cornelius (1774-1833), who previously worked for Engelhard, and a team of some 200 men to clear the mound to discover just what exactly lay underneath.

316 Stutterheim, Studies in Indonesian Archaeology, 9.
317 Fig. 3, 4, 18.
319 The mudras are: the bhumisparsa mudra for Aksobhya (east), the vara mudra for Ratnasambhava (South), the dhyana mudra for Amitabha (west), and the abhaya mudra for Amoghasiddha (north). On the topmost series of niches, the Buddhas exhibit the same gestures on all four sides: vitarka mudra of Vairochana, the dhyanibuddha of the zenith (Stutterheim, Studies in Indonesian Archaeology, 10).
320 Fig. 18.
the soil and vegetation. The process of excavating Borobudur would not be unlike Cornelius’s clearing of Candi Sewu seven years earlier, immortalized in the watercolor subtitled “View of the Ruins of a Brahmī Temple at Brambanang as formd in the jaar 1807.” The scene depicts the temple, an imposing three-tiered stone edifice overgrown with unkempt bushes and trees whose roots crack and severe its structural integrity. In the foreground, as well as stationed at various spots on the candi, we witness a crowd of native workers with their Dutch supervisors. We see, then, gentlemen in their dark blue tailcoats and white pantaloons climbing ladders to scale the monument. One gentleman on the right hand side is seen graciously assisting his native helpers by holding a rope. The majority of the activities, however, was relegated to the cast of natives, bare-chested and porting loin-cloths. These lowly assistants are depicted carrying out much of the physical labor, from lifting blocks of stone, carrying the stones away on bamboo contraptions, to hacking at the interminable vegetation obstructing the structure. Meanwhile, a European gentleman sits on a pile of stones on the grass at the foot of the candi, sketching intently as his loyal servant waits with a parasol. The Borobudur would have presented a comparable challenge though, being much larger in scale than Candi Sewu, would likely have demanded an even more arduous undertaking.

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322 Indeed, though Raffles is commonly credited with the rediscovery of Borobudur, we owe its present existence largely to the labors of Cornelius. The engineer had arrived in the archipelago in 1791 as a seventeen-year-old naval cadet. He then trained as an engineer and was promoted to Ensign Engineer in 1789, Lieutenant in 1803, Captain in 1807, and Major in 1809 under the VOC (Horsfield, *Zoological Researches in Java*, 18, note 44). Between 1805 and 1807, he conducted surveys Prambanan under Engelhard’s direction. In 1807, he cleared Candi Sewu in the Prambanan complex, one of the more ambitious undertakings in scale only to be shadowed by the Borobudur. During the British interregnum, Cornelius served as Civil Surveyor and Superintendent of Buildings at Semarang. In 1812-13, he was again involved with survey work in Prambanan under the British before directing, in 1814, the excavation of Borobudur (N.J. Krom, *Inleiding tot de Hindoe-Javaansche Kunst* (The Hague: 1923) 1, 5, cited in ibid.).

323 By H.C. Cornelius, 1807. “View of the Ruins of a Brahmī Temple at Brambanang, As formd in the Jaar 1807,” watercolor, 350x470mm, WD957, f. 82, Horsfield Collection, BL APAC.
Raffles visited the Borobudur in May 1815, accompanied by Baker. During this brief visit, the Lieutenant-Governor “took a very ample survey,” Baker wrote, and “many detailed sketches were taken of the subjects which fill the compartments occupying the exterior & interior sides.” Baker additionally noted that “Mr. Cornelius too had been at work for a long period in drawing […]; his Draughtsmen have already spent many months on the spot, measuring & sketching every particular, in the most laborious manner.

In the case of Borobudur, as with other candi surveys under Raffles’s patronage, the attention to documentation, both written and visual, of the site reflects the antiquarian concern to not only excavate but also describe the findings in great detail. This pseudo-scientific bent will significantly influence how British antiquarian interpretations were received. The earliest known depiction of Borobudur was made in color ink circa 1807-1815 by Cornelius or one of his draftsmen. The first published representation of Borobudur to reach the British public was an engraving by William Home Lizars, titled Temple of Boro Budor in Java published in London in 1820 as the frontispiece to Crawfurd’s History of the Indian Archipelago. A couple of decades later finally came the aquatint by one of Raffles’s commissioned artists William Daniell, titled

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324 Mss. Baker, Java Antiquities, 4, f. 117, Baker Collection, RAS.
325 Ibid. Many of those drawings now form the Raffles Collection at the British Museum. The Museum holds six bound albums of drawings originally belonging to Raffles containing a total of 349 Indonesian archaeological drawings, many either by or commissioned by Cornelius and Baker: albums 1939.3-11.04 (24 drawings), 1939.3-11.05 (58 drawings), 1939.3-11.06 (56 drawings), 1939.3-11.07 (126 drawings), 1939.3-11.08 (60 drawings), 1939.3-11.09 (25 drawings). Baker is additionally responsible for the collection of approximately 85 Indonesian archaeological drawings in the Royal Asiatic Society Library (Annabel Teh Gallop, Early Views of Indonesia: Drawings from the British Library (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995), 24). Unfortunately, most of these drawings, which I was able to view, were reconstructions of the architecture and sculptures, and not depictions of the monument as found and excavated.
326 Mss. Baker, Java Antiquities, 4, f. 124, Baker Collection, RAS.
327 Fig. 15. Watercolor, pen, and ink, titled, View of the Very Remarkable Ruines Called by the Javanese Boro Boodor, drawing no. 11 in the album Original Drawings for the Engravings in the History of Java vol. 3: 65 Plans and Drawings of Boro Bodor, Brambanan, Gunung Prao, and Other Temples in Java when in a Non Perfect State, by M. Cornelius and his Draftsmen, 1807 (c. 1807–15), 1939.3–11.06, 1, BM.
Temple of Boro Bódor, in the District of Boro in Kedu, printed in 1844 as part of the accompanying illustrations to Raffles’s History of Java. However, in contrast to these more polished and edited renditions of the structure, a more raw and perhaps more historically useful representation is provided to us in Baker’s rough pencil sketch, drawn during his visit in 1815. The drawing shows the Borobudur in partial ruin under the mercy of tall, encroaching trees. For this Borobudur case study, to illustrate the antiquary at work, I have opted to use Baker’s written memoir as it can be cross-referenced to this visual description. Beyond providing a historical source of early British encounter with the candi, Baker’s account elucidates the methods of observation, measurement, documentation, and interpretation of Javanese ancient sites by the EIC agents. As we shall soon see, Baker’s comments combine the Orientalist, romantic sensibilities of the antiquary with the scientific concerns of a military or civil surveyor, making for the distinctly, imperially conditioned approach towards observing and representing antiquarian discoveries in the Orient.


330 Fig. 16, The temple of Borobudur from the NNE: c.1815, pencil, 464 x 590 mm, Mss. Baker 08.013, Baker Collection, RAS. Another Baker folio shows an engraving of The Temple of Boro Bodo in the district of Boro in Kedu depicting the partly reconstructed candi and several people admiring it (Mss. Baker 08.022, in a bound volume titled Java Sketches, Baker Collection, RAS). Baker’s collection also included more technical, architectural drawings including a proof engraving, Plan of the great Pyramidal Temple of Boro Bodor near Magelan in the Kedu District in Java, drawn by Baker and engraved by Daniell (Mss. Baker 08.017, in a bound volume titled Java Sketches, Baker Collection, RAS).

331 Raffles himself left us only with the brief paragraph in The History of Java. It has been said that Raffles had been planning a separate volume, Account of the Antiquities of Java, and perhaps a separate volume on the Borobudur but he never finished them and no notes survived in his manuscript collection in the British Library (Soekmono, Chandi Borobudur: A Monument of Mankind, 5).
Baker surveyed the candi in 1815, only months after Cornelius began his excavation. On Thursday, 19 October, Baker took the dirt path which branched off southwest from the main road to Magelang, “having a number of small round hills in our sight, partly wooded.” Baker finally came upon the grand edifice, “this remarkable monument of stone.” He described what he beheld: a massive mound “about ½ a mile” in diameter which “resembled a middling size hill […] covered with the ruins […] & commanded in the center […] the very summit by a huge round tower or citadel.” Beyond the apparent magnitude of the mysterious structure, Baker found it difficult to perceive its form, observing only “a dark confused mass of stone.” Baker observed that “the whole Building is throughout composed of this dark & coarse grained mountain or volcanic stone.” Impressed by what he saw, Baker deemed “the whole admirably hewn & squared, independent of the sculpture, which is delicate & finished to a degree I have never seen equaled with such materials.” Baker then dared to further investigate the structure. As he scaled the candi, he narrated, “You now find it is a Pyramid of a very wide base, rising by several successive & retiring stages or Terraces to a great cylindrical tower in the center.”

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332 He documented his observations as “memoirs made on the spot relative to the Collection of Antiquarian Drawings etc made by him in a tour thro’ the interior of Java in the years 1815/16” (Mss. Baker, Java Antiquities, RAS). Additionally, Baker had many drawings made of the antiquities. Some of the engravings would be published as the collection of plates, originally intended for another edition of The History of Java, published by Henry Bohn in 1844, titled “Antiquarian Architectural and Landscape Illustrations of the History of Java” (see Raymond Head, Catalogue of Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Busts in the Collection of the Royal Asiatic Society (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1991, 26-27).

333 Mss. Baker, Java Antiquities, 4, f. 116, Baker Collection, RAS.

334 Ibid., f. 116, Baker Collection, RAS.

335 Ibid.

336 Ibid.

337 Ibid., f. 124-5, Baker Collection.

338 Ibid., f. 125, Baker Collection.

Yet he quickly found his work obstructed by the ruins. His pencil drawing reflected that scene. The stairway depicted in the center of the façade resembled instead a stream of rubble running down the candi.\textsuperscript{340} As Baker attempted to ascend the monument by the stairway in the center of the northern face, he encountered a “mass of rubbish concealing the flight of stairs which formerly led from top to bottom.”\textsuperscript{341} Managing to arrive at the next terrace, Baker saw that the esplanades were “interrupted by occasional masses of ruin fallen from the 2\textsuperscript{nd} terrace.”\textsuperscript{342} Baker wrote, “several of these edifices had fallen in & broken the statues to pieces.”\textsuperscript{343} His sketch reveals that state of dilapidation affecting not only the structure’s integrity but also the decorative elements.\textsuperscript{344} Some of the niches on the outer galleries are shown as empty or having collapsed on itself.\textsuperscript{345} On the ground, surrounding the mound, are parts of statues or reliefs strewn among a pile of non-descript rubble.\textsuperscript{346} Nevertheless, Baker continued recording his observations, diligently measuring dimensions of the terraces, passageways, niches, or at least what was then discernible of them.

Baker proceeded to describe the architecture systematically, beginning from the base, with careful measurement. The detailed precision demonstrated the scientific pretense of the project, imbuing the interpretations with an artifice of objective fact. For example, he measured that “The lower terrace stands at a distance of 25 feet from the

\textsuperscript{340} Fig. 16, \textit{The temple of Borobudur from the NNE} c.1815, pencil, 464 x 590 mm, Mss. Baker 08.013, Baker Collection, RAS.

\textsuperscript{341} Mss. Baker, \textit{Java Antiquities}, 4, f. 119, Baker Collection, RAS.

\textsuperscript{342} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{343} Ibid., f. 122, Baker Collection, RAS.

\textsuperscript{344} See a headless statue, Fig. 4, Fig. 16, \textit{The temple of Borobudur from the NNE} c.1815, pencil, 464 x 590 mm, Mss. Baker 08.013, Baker Collection, RAS.

\textsuperscript{345} Fig. 16, \textit{The temple of Borobudur from the NNE} c.1815, pencil, 464 x 590 mm, Mss. Baker 08.013, Baker Collection, RAS.

\textsuperscript{346} Ibid.
rest of the structure.”347 “The next terrace,” Baker continued, “measured from angle to angle 285 feet, with [...] projection to the centre of 8-9 each.”348 The 1,300 relief panels, meanwhile, each measured about 10 feet in length and 3 ½ feet in height.349 Along with the structural observations, Baker also commented on the decorative arts. Of those which remained intact, Baker remarked on the sophistication of the artistry. Baker was first captivated by the bas-reliefs. “No two entablatures are like,” Baker wrote.350 Baker closely examined the reliefs, describing that “The human figures are generally very small, about 18 inches in length [...] beside Buildings, Temples, Palaces, pleasure homes & Gardens, Groves, Rivers, mountains, Boats, in short objects of every description.”351 Though he did quip that the designs were “not absolutely good or generally faultless” and “some [...] are bad,” in general he perceived “great art & ingenuity.”352

Though Baker did not seem to know exactly what the Borobudur statues and reliefs were, nor their exact cultural or religious significance, he nevertheless admitted sensing the spirituality that the experience evoked. One important element to that effect was the Buddha statues. Baker made several allusions to the Buddha statues, though not recognizing their particularly Buddhist religious imagery. He first described the niches atop the galleries. “Each of the small lofty temple,” he described, “contains a seated image on a pedestal & throne, by some supposed to be Budh, by others to represent [other] Devotions.”353 “Each statue is seated, cross legged, soles of the feet exposed & uppermost,” he wrote, “larger than life & so exactly alike in every respect of size,

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348 Ibid., f. 118-9.
349 Ibid., f. 117.
350 Ibid., f. 125.
351 Ibid., f. 126.
352 Ibid., f. 126.
353 Ibid., f. 119-20.
features, altitude, drapery & character."\textsuperscript{354} He then described the figures inside the stupas on the top circular terraces. “Each of these structures,” he wrote, contained a “statue, seated precisely in the same as those on the lower square terraces, except the position of the hands, which were brought across the body, the tips of 2 fingers touching.”\textsuperscript{355} Though he did not quite accurately decipher them, the Buddha statues nevertheless evoked for Baker a powerful, spiritual experience. Baker wrote, “their […] similarity to each other, almost forces one to believe in supernatural agency, or that they were cut in the same mould, though both equally incredible & impossible, but which a visit to Boro Bodor will unavoidably suggest to the minds of many.”\textsuperscript{356} Baker concluded, “No person has yet looked at this splendid monument of former times & of the laborious application of […] skill & science without astonishment & delight.”\textsuperscript{357} His remarks thus revealed that British language of Orientalist idealization which colored their purportedly objective representation.

Though Baker may appear to be describing his subjects matter-of-factly, his representation was embedded within Orientalist imaginings and expectations of the Hindu-Buddhist vestiges in Java, framed by an imposed link to the Sanskritist, Indic civilization of India. One feature that marked the problematic endeavor: interpretation. In their antiquarian description, our British observers fell to some misjudgments. For example, in these earliest surveys of the Borobudur, Baker, Raffles, Cornelius, and likely most others who visited the site misattributed the structure as Hindu and not

\textsuperscript{354} Ibid., f. 120, 117-8.  
\textsuperscript{355} Ibid., f. 122.  
\textsuperscript{356} Ibid., f. 118.  
\textsuperscript{357} Ibid., f. 118.
Buddhist. Baker made the same mistake throughout his observations of the Borobudur, citing, for example, finding along the galleries “carved in bas relief, alternate single Hindu figures & Deities […] in infinite variety.” At first glance, such remarks may seem to be innocent indications of the Indian references which these EIC observers transported from their collective experience on the subcontinent. Yet the flawed interpretive subjectivity in their Orientalist idealization, problematically coupled with the allegedly objective methods of in-situ British antiquarian observations form this particular, imperial narrative, one which exemplifies the interpretive power of the antiquary in constructing this narrativization of Javanese history through its antiquities.

4. Aesthetics of Ruins and Narrative of Decline

At cursory glance, remarks like Baker’s on the Borobudur may seem like straight observations of the archaeological site. However, in examining the imperial context of such antiquarianism, we find that these narratives were constructed within the British imagination of conquered territories like Java. This subchapter analyzes the potency of visually appreciating and representing Javanese candis in constructing Orientalist historiography through material culture. Although written literature – memoirs, travelogues, or works of fiction – was instrumental in informing British conceptions of colonized realities, the visual and material mediums were especially compelling for interpretation and representation. The nineteenth-century imagination of the British

358 An engraving in the Raffles Collection, dated Samarang, 5 October 1814, is titled “Plan of the flat ground of Borro Boodoor or the ruins of a number of small hindooos sacred buildings situate in the province Cadoe [Kedu?] on the island of Java” (Raffles Collection 1939, 3-11.06 (I-56) No. 11 “Original Drawings for the Engravings in the Hist of Java – Vol.3” f. 3). Similarly, another engraving bears the words, “the Bramin antiquities at Borro Boedoor” (Raffles Collection 1939, 3-11.06 (I-56) No. 11 “Original Drawings for the Engravings in the Hist of Java – Vol.3” f.15).

359 Mss. Baker, Java Antiquities, 4, f. 119, Baker Collection, RAS.

360 Baker further noted that the crowning stupa structure was “capped with what appeared to me to be the Yoni for the reception of an immense lingam, now no more” (ibid., f. 123).
Empire was informed through various visual forms, most seminally maps, landscapes or “views,” and, as in the case of Raffles and Java, antiquarian illustrations. British perception of Javanese antiquities was thus drawn, quite literally, from the visual experience of our Orientalists: descriptions of what they saw, perceived, and thus represented. Yet in this realm of visual experience, representation necessitated an abstraction of the reality into the imaginary. Though Raffles, Baker, Horsfield, or Mackenzie may find himself in front of a misconfigured pile of volcanic stone rubble, they saw, rather, an Orientalist imaginative construction. In the Java context, British antiquarianism carried troubling imperial resonances in two ways. One, it connected the island to the Indian subcontinent and thus the British Empire, which through flaws in their interpretive methods muted Javanese narratives in favor of imperially imposed Indianist interpretations. Two, it imposed an Orientalist, aesthecized perception of ruins to convey a narrative of decline of Javanese society, effectively legitimizing colonial rule.

First, however, let us examine how Orientalism found articulation in forming the aesthetic experience as Raffles and his surveyors beheld the island’s antiquities. Art historian Sarah Tiffin forwarded a fascinating analysis on the philosophy of aesthetics and British perceptions of Javanese candis. Tiffin pointed to the concept of the “pleasure of ruins,” a notion which began to emerge in eighteenth-century antiquarian discourse in Europe, situated within the philosophy of the sublime. Eighteenth-century critic William Marshall described the experience of the sublime in a 1795

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362 Tiffin, “Java’s Ruined Candis and the British Picturesque Ideal.”
363 As Sarah Tiffin noted, “Ruins had long held appeal for aesthetic reflection and representation in Western art and by the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when Europeans were first starting to take an interest in the South-East Asian remains, the ‘pleasure of ruins’ had become something of a mania” (ibid., 526).
publication: “the sublime seems to require that the higher degrees of astonishment should be roused, to demonstrate its presence […] to produce the more forcible emotions of the mind.” As the aptly titled 1795 article in the European Magazine, “On the Pleasure Arising from the Sight of Ruins or Ancient Structures,” thus remarked, upon viewing ruins the observer ought to expect the aesthetic experience where the “thick shroud of vegetation not only added a tonal interest and variety that enhanced a ruin’s formal picturesque qualities, but also prompted meditations on all the all-consuming power of nature” such that “a thousand ideas crowd upon his mind, and fill him with awful astonishment.” More importantly, this connection between the experience of the sublime and the “pleasure of ruins” had to do with how certain classes of British society had been conditioned to engage with the archaeological remains in those particular, philosophically meaningful ways. The proper aesthetic experience and sense of philosophical accomplishment became a state attainable only by those who possessed a honed sensibility and an educated taste. Pierre Bourdieu and Alain Darbel identified this socio-intellectually formative context which inculcates certain tastes:

Le bon gout, où l’on aime à voir parfois quelque chose comme un don inné, ne sont pas autre chose qu’une forme, plus ou moins radinée, de la familiarité qui s’acquiert par l’éducation […] Toute l’information préalable que le visiteur cultivé importe dans sa perception de l’œuvre n’est autre chose qu’une somme de savoirs typiques accrochés.

As actors in a broader socio-cultural constellation of ideas, Raffles, Baker, Horsfield, and Mackenzie, too, admitted to experiencing the sublime in their professed astonishment at

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the ruins, a perception informed by such expectations prevalent in Britain and the Empire. In Java, the towering remnants thus evoked a majestic grandeur, the dark chambers evoked mysterious forces, the bas-relief and inscriptions evoked ideal artistic beauties of a superior Hindu-Buddhist culture. But in addition to this socially conditioned psychology of aesthetics and the sublime, the antiquarian experience was both informed and reinforced by imperially situated Orientalist imaginations.

For Raffles and his fellow observers, the experience of the sublime was tied to Orientalist imaginings of a majestic Indic civilization. Yet that perception was not objectively observed reality but a constructed vision. This sentimental imagination had become a cultivated practice, having earlier been similarly constructed of India. In William Hodges’s commentary to his *Select Views in India* (1785-8), for example, he saw in the architecture on Agra’s river banks, “in their present desolated state what riches must have been possessed by their owners, and the luxury of their lives, remains of fountains and baths, curiously inlaid with different coloured marbles, representing ornaments and flowers in a beautiful style.”

368 The same Orientalist lens and visual perception of loss and nostalgia was then transported to Java along with the imperial agents. It is thus crucial to note that the romantic sentiments expressed by Raffles and his surveyors were not necessarily the experience of all those who visited these archaeological sites. Of the Borobudur, for example, Dutch archaeologist N.J. Krom (1883-1945) found it to be “a gloomy, depressing, rather squat building.” 369 Colonel Henry Yule (1819-1889) claimed in 1862 that the *candi* “seems little better than a vast and shapeless cairn of stones” while

in 1909 Alfred Foucher (1865-1952) thought it resembled “a badly risen pie.”\footnote{370} It was clear from these more cynical commenters that the ruins could very well be perceived as, simply, ruins or indeed failed culinary ambitions. Yet for Raffles, Baker, and their fellow amateur antiquaries, their experience, perception, and representation of the monument was colored by the imperially formulated Orientalism of the period.

The first imperial influence and, in turn, consequence of this aesthecization of ruins was the imposition of a colonial connection with India. Though the British observers were not incorrect in recognizing the Hindu and Buddhist elements of the Javanese structures, their interpretations were wrought by narrowly Indianist frames. Baker was right, for example, in observing at Candi Kobon Dalam a sculpture which “represents elephants completely caparisoned in the Hindu fashion.”\footnote{371} Yet on a different occasion, Raffles fell short of accurately identifying the classical Javanese script on an inscription, authoritatively claiming instead, “The Devanágrí characters on the inscription found at Brambánan are recognized by Mr. [Charles] Wilkins to be such as were in use on continental India eight or nine hundred years ago.”\footnote{372} Such flawed interpretations betray more entrenched attitudes towards the Javanese people, allowing Raffles and his peers to marginalize culturally complex and multivalent voices in favor of flawed Indianist interpretations.

We first see this in the British judgment of the Javanese people with regards to native knowledge of and engagement with the Hindu-Buddhist antiquities. Though Raffles and others hypothesized several causes for the candis’ ruin, by far the most

\footnote{370} Quoted in ibid. \footnote{371} Quoted in Raffles, \textit{The History of Java}, 2, 9. \footnote{372} Ibid., 62.
common grievance cited in their writings was the neglect on the part of the Javanese natives. Raffles and his peers frequently complained about the ignorance of contemporary Javanese locals of their own Hindu-Buddhist architectural history. True, there were times when the natives seemed unaware of *candi* ruins in the area. But though little written records were made of the individual sites, knowledge of these monuments’ existence and the myths and legends associated with them formed part of the local collective memory. It was from these tales that word would come to Raffles and the other Orientalists about some of these buried temples and objects. Yet thought of as mere superstitiousness, Raffles and his peers quickly dismissed these actually fertile narratives. As a result, Baker frequently expressed his frustration in attempting to gather valuable information from the natives. This frustration betrayed a British failure to fully engage with the complexities of the Javanese cultural reality.

To demonstrate, indeed the reluctance of the natives to speak on antiquities seemed at first contradictory to their relative willingness to assist with classical literature. Yet it should be unsurprising considering that the contemporary Javanese society, predominantly Muslim, were no longer as engaged with the Hindu-Buddhist structures. The disappointment of the British, however, spoke to the imperial particularities of Orientalism in Java: their prejudiced expectations drawn from Orientalist experience on

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373 Of the Suku complex, Baker wrote, “These ruins were not known to Europeans until a short time previous to my visit to the central districts, in May 1815. When I visited them, the native inhabitants of Súra-kéra were also ignorant of their existence” (ibid., 45).

374 For example, Baker wrote of a stone artifact he saw in Banyumas which was linked to a local folklore: the images resembled “the same identical images, which was already cast into the […] account of the death of the Tumungun’s son, 2 generations back” (Banyumas, 5 September 1815, Mss. Baker, *Java Antiquities*, 4, f. 2, Baker Collection, RAS).


376 He journalled, “I have observed the general unconquerable difficulty of getting […] intelligence from the Javanese, regarding the antiquities” (Banyumas, 5 September 1815, Mss. Baker, *Java Antiquities*, 4, f. 3, Baker Collection, RAS).
the Indian subcontinent. The Javanese reality vastly differed from British experience in India where the European observer encountered a Hinduism well alive in the culture of the contemporary natives, including Brahmins learned in the texts, rituals, and architectural representations and functions. The majority of Java, however, had converted to Islam. Horsfield even noted the literally destructive influence of Islam in abolishing connections to Hinduism or Buddhism, writing, “The environs of the capital of Kedíri abound with antiquities of every kind; but it is evident that here [...] great expense and labour has been bestowed to demolish the buildings and to mutilate the images.” With the monotheistic stamp of Islam, worship of images is strictly forbidden. Classical literary traditions, like the Kawi manuscripts, seen as less sacrilegious, were kept alive through court archives while epics like the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* were preserved through dance and *wayang* puppets. However, Hindu-Buddhist devotion and ritual was left behind under Muslim rule. That Raffles and the other EIC observers failed to acknowledge this multivalent reality, reducing it to wanton neglect evinced the contextual disengagement of their Orientalist expectations.

One evidence is the British inability to properly account for the complex religious and cultural syncretism in Javanese society. Beyond superstitions, the Javanese people continued to interact with the Hindu-Buddhist structures through religious-cultural appropriation. This was one distinct facet of contemporary Javanese society which our British observers noted in passing yet never recognized in its full complexity. Despite the advent of Islam, the Javanese people remained strongly bonded to many of

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their rituals which came to be understood more as cultural than strictly religious. At the Loro Jonggrang temple in Prambanan, for example, our British sources commented that the Javanese continued to perform rituals to the Hindu-Buddhist images like the Ganesha: “The Javans to this day continue to pay their devoirs to him and to Lóro Jóngran, as they are constantly covered with turmeric, flowers, ochre, &c.” Offerings also abounded in other temple complexes. At Suku, Horsfield observed that, “The natives who attended informed us that the peasantry of the neighbouring villages were still in the habit of burning incense and kindling fire in this temple, and that when they suffered under or dreaded any misfortune, they made an offering of this nature in the hope of averting it.” Signs of cultural appropriation were further reflected in the renaming of the Hindu-Buddhist deities. Raffles once noted that the local natives “distinguish Ganésa by the name of Raja Demáng, Singa Jáya, or Gana Singa Jáya.” But it was not clear, for example, that Raffles and peers recognized the meanings behind the Javanization of the deities as an effort to negotiate Islam’s monotheism through language, hence converting Ganesha into the more secular Raja Demang (Demang King) or Singa Jaya (Great Lion).

The comments by our British observers, however, made casually and accompanied with no further explication or complication, suggest our EIC surveyors’ failure in fully investigating and understanding Java’s syncretic reality in favor of Orientalist imaginings. Rather than inquire into how the Javanese natives interpreted and

378 Though many devoutly practiced Islam, traces of Hindu-Buddhist or animist traditions pervaded the society’s spiritual life, including praying to ancestors or belief in the spiritual powers stored in inanimate objects like the sacred keris.
379 Raffles, The History of Java, 2, 14.
380 Ibid., 48.
381 Ibid., 14.
understood these structures as part of their contemporary ecumene, the British antiquaries opted to tap into another source: the Indian sepoys. The sepoys who accompanied the British troops in the invasion became a de-facto “native” authority on all things Indic including, as it happened, Javanese candis. Baker introduced his sepoy assistant in his observations of Prambanan:

The sepoy who attended me, and who had resided two years among the bramins at Benares, and, of a corps of upwards eight hundred sepoys, was acknowledged to be the best acquainted with such subjects, informed me that similar figures were common guardians of the entrance to the temples of India, and seemed perfectly well acquainted with their history, purpose and distinctive accompaniments.  

In part this may be due to the EIC agents’ acquired familiarity of working with Indian natives, for example, Mackenzie and others enlisting pundits and Brahmins in their Orientalist researches. Yet the decision also revealed a mindset in which Java was naturally and unequivocally seen as an extension of the Indian cultural geography. This reliance on Indian references, however, proved faulty when analyzing culturally specific Javanese adaptations of Hindu and Buddhist architecture. Baker’s sepoy assistant, for example, imposed an Indian ritual onto the statuary in the Javanese temples: “he was only more convinced,” Baker wrote, “that they were all simple Hindu devotees in the act of making tupisya, […] that this was frequently the case in India.”

These flaws in interpretive methods evince how, to our Orientalists, antiquarian discoveries in Java were placed within the larger imaginary space of the broader, classical Indic and thus nineteenth-century British Empire.

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382 Ibid., 9. On another occasion, Baker reported of Candi Kali Bening, “occupying the niche to the right, my Cicerone recognized to be Krésna […] which he declared to be a decisive proof of the sense and devotional excellence of the founders of this superb temple” (ibid., 26–7).
383 Ibid., 10-11.
Java ceased to become an independent entity. Rather than being represented as a nation with independent history, the island was only to be comparatively placed against India and other territories of the British Empire. Our EIC observers’ comments on the Javanese ruins were accompanied by frequent comparisons to Indian counterparts. Artistic achievement was further attributed to Indian influence rather than a possible product of independent, Javanese genius. Crawfurd, for one, did not believe local natives were capable of such architectural and artistic skills, stating, “At the more splendid ruins, – the superiority of the workmanship, – the comparative beauty of the design, – the propriety of the ornaments, – the genuine Hinduism of these, – and the presence of Sanskrit inscriptions, entitle us to conclude that they are the work of foreign artists.” Raffles similarly concluded, “It should be made to appear, that, in very remote ages, these regions were civilized from Western India.” The Indian connection was a crucial link in this imperial historiography. First, this constituted a process in which certain subaltern histories were evidently erased or selectively presented to fit the imperial narrative. Moreover, not only were Java and India as physical geographies now united under British power, the two places served as sites from which thoughts, assumptions, and theories of Oriental cultures would emerge and become entwined in Britain’s image of its empire. The contemporary Javanese people, by contrast, were responsible only for neglect and destruction of these antiquities. Raffles tellingly claimed, the natives “had allowed a powerful vegetation, not only to cover the surface of the

387 Raffles, The History of Java, 1, 190.
buildings, but to dislocate and almost to overthrow them.” As such, “the indifference of the natives [...] had let them to neglect the works of their ancestors.” This became an argument for the Javanese people’s failure to guard their own historical treasures, calling for justified British intervention.

This thus brings us to the second effect of British antiquarian appreciation of Javanese ruins: the extrapolation of the image of ruin from the archaeology to the entire society, leading to the imposition of a narrative of societal decline. In the nineteenth-century imperial context, appraisals of architectural and artistic styles underwent a dangerous slippage: their confluence with evolutionary theories of civilizations. The early nineteenth century also saw developments in natural history and human biology, for example, the rise of craniology, a study founded on assumptions of essentialized primitivism and evolutionary development of the world’s different races. The educated European, especially those with interest in natural history as Raffles and Horsfield certainly were, would have been familiar with canonic treatises from Cuvier’s *Le Règne animal*, Gobineau’s *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*, or Robert Knox’s *The Races of Man*. Indeed, upon arriving in Java, Raffles and his contemporaries began hypothesizing essentialized, racial features of the Javanese people which were then associated with moral, intellectual, and political character. In *The History of Java*, Raffles thus cited Dr. Francis Buchanan’s observation of the Southeast Asian peoples, that “This nation may be distinguished by a short, squat, robust, fleshy stature, and by features

388 Ibid., 2, 6.
389 Ibid.
highly different from those of an European.”  

From such observations, the Europeans then attributed what they perceived as biologically determined behavioral and intellectual characteristics, from claims of the Javanese being “pliant and graceful” to “most shockingly lazy” to outright “degenerate.” With this paradigm of deterministic, racial hierarchy ingrained in their mental perception of the Javanese, a similar linear hierarchy of civilization was transposed onto the artistic and material articulations of those racial attributes.

Appraisals of Javanese antiquities thus linked artistic accomplishment with social, cultural, and political development. During the mid-eighteenth century, Europeans began viewing artistic endeavors as indicators of civilization, where aesthetic taste reflected mental, social, even governmental sophistication. For example, Joachim Winckelmann’s *The History of the Art of Antiquity* (1764) sought to recount Greek history through a stylistic chronology of the classical antiquities. In crafting this systematized narrative of evolution, Winckelmann successfully merged artistic taste and historical progress as though the two were natural and given. This is a form of what Said termed “latent Orientalism,” “an almost unconscious […] positivity,” where the mental links made between constructed assumptions, like art and progress, came to feel inartificial and natural. Consequently, Raffles himself wrote, “perfection of architecture is one of the most convincing proofs and striking illustrations of a high state of refinement.”

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394 Ibid., 60.
396 Ibid., 2, 6.
397 Tiffin, “Raffles and the Barometer of Civilisation,” 342.
399 Raffles, *The History of Java*, 1, 165.
Archaeological remains like Borobudur and other Javanese structures became sites for imposed cultural, social, and material determinism. In Raffles’s opinion, Java “had once attained a far higher degree of civilization than any other nation in the southern hemisphere.” That golden époque, however, epitomized in the grand architecture and artistry of Hindu-Buddhist dynasties fell to regrettable social and political decline. Through the written and visual language of loss and nostalgia in their antiquarian descriptions, the EIC agents succeeded in depicting a society’s narrative of decline. Baker thus wrote of the Prambanan temples,

Nothing can exceed the air of desolation which this spot presents; and the feelings of every visitor are attuned, by the scene of surrounding devastation, to reflect, that while these noble monuments of the ancient splendour of religion and the arts are submitting, with sullen slowness, to the destructive hand of time and nature, the art which raised them has perished before them, and the faith which they were to honour has now no other honour in the land.

This narrative of decline, however, served Raffles’s imperial itinerary to legitimize British rule as a civilizing force, a savior from societal decay. Firstly, Raffles had been facing constant Company and government criticism for Java’s lack of economic contribution to the Empire. The representation of Java in a state of temporary decline provided an apology. In proving the decrepit state of the present society, Raffles could show a potential for growth, and one achievable under British governance.

In another argument that promoted the British imperial agenda, Raffles blamed the lamentable state of Javanese society to the failure of the previous Dutch government. As we saw in the previous chapter, Minto had earlier expressed, “the abolition of Dutch

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400 Raffles, “A Discourse Delivered to the Literary...” (1816) quoted in Tiffin, “Raffles and the Barometer of Civilisation,” 349.
401 Baker quoted in Raffles, The History of Java, 2, 11.
402 Ibid., 1, 164.
power would alone afford a gratification of rooted passions, and a prospect of substantial relief and advantage.” 403 This seemed to be a popular notion among Britons. The *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Miscellany of the EIC*, too, commented, “It would seem, that with equal felicity of forecast and exertion of industry, they [Englishmen in Java] had anticipated and provided against the restoration for this interesting and valuable island into the hands of the incurious – phlegmatic – all-grasping – nothing returning […] – gin-drinking Dutchman.” 404 Raffles frequently cited the stagnation of the Batavia Society of the Arts and Sciences to argue for the Dutch failure to safeguard the island’s antiquarian treasures, writing of his predecessors, “The narrow policy of the Dutch denied to other nations facilities of research.” 405 Where the Dutch failed to promote intellectual, scientific, and industrial development, the British stood to guide Java into civilization. Raffles’s antiquarian endeavors thus substantiated his fundamental claim: “The refusal of their late Government to treat for their interests […] has rendered the consequent establishment of the British authority unconditional.” 406

Furthermore, in addition to British-Dutch rivalry, as I had begun explicating in the previous chapter, this narrative of decline became an argument for military aggression and colonial rule against the Muslim sultanates, deemed equally incompetent at protecting the island’s treasured heritage. Raffles claimed, “Nothing, therefore, of the ancient history of the people, of their institutions prior to the introduction of Mahometanism, of their magnificence and power before the distraction of internal war

403 Minto to Raffles, Calcutta, February 1811, quoted in S. Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, 1, 46-7. Raffles further justified, “The people of Java are exhorted to consider their new connection with England as founded in principles of mutual advantage, and to be conducted in a spirit of kindness and affection” (Raffles, *The History of Java*, 2, Appendix D).


406 Ibid., Appendix D.
and the division of the country into petty contending sovereignties [...] could be accurately known or fully relied on. There, Raffles attributed the cause of ruins to the petty wars and incompetent governance of the Muslim natives. Consequently, the antiquarian remains, and by extension, the Javanese people found themselves in a degenerated state. Raffles thus remarked,

Although the Javans do not, at present, possess or practice any considerable skill in this art, the extensive remains of edifices constructed in stone, and of idols carved from the same materials, afford abundant testimony that the arts of architecture, sculpture, and statuary in stone, at one period reached to a very high pitch on Java. As, however, these arts have long been lost to the Javans, the consideration of them rather falls within the department of antiquities.

Though Java had once been, Raffles claimed, “the seat of foreign commerce [...] and of all the improvements which these can occasion,” while having accomplished “advancement in the arts,” the current Javanese peoples were by contrast “almost entirely unacquainted with navigation and foreign trade, and little inclined to engage in either.” Raffles thus concludes, to the cringing of the contemporary reader, “the grandeur of their ancestors sounds like a fable in the mouth of the degenerate Java; and it is only when it can be traced in monuments, which cannot be falsified, that we are led to give credit to their traditions concerning it.”

Finally, British rule is further legitimized through selective visual depictions of the antiquarian discoveries. As Crowley noted of imperial art, “British topographic landscape art masked relations of power by privileging scenic representations over ones

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407 Ibid., 6.
408 Ibid., 1, 165.
409 Ibid., 442, 57.
410 Ibid., 2, 6.
showing social, economic, or political relations.” In illustrations of Javanese antiquarian surveys or excavations, we find that similar dilution of native complexities. Where Javanese subjects are present, they are often portrayed in static stance. In Cornelius’s depiction of the Candi Sewu clearing for example, the coated European officer calmly observed the undertakings while the native workers went about their duties – holding ropes, carrying stones – sapped of assertive dynamism. The result was a portraiture of Javanese people indifferent or disengaged from the violent realities of their colonization. The archaeological sites, suspended in temporal and geographic antiquity, became isolated from the rest of colonial experience. To further strengthen this perception, the written and visual descriptions by Raffles and his contemporaries benefited from the perceived veracity of military survey science and descriptive methods of nineteenth-century antiquarianism. We recall then Baker’s diligence in precisely measuring the length, width, and depth of Borobudur’s many galleries, arches, and reliefs. The subjective representation of the aesthetic sublime was thus rendered into quantified, scientific numbers and inches: 1,300 relief panels, 10 inch human figures, and so on. The use of scientific methodologies – or pretensions of it – in measuring, documenting, and describing artifacts imbued the antiquary’s interpretation with an air of scientific truth. As a result, these cultural constructions could be easily perceived as though they were factually true of Java, its inhabitants, and its centuries-worth of history: a society in decline in need of benevolent colonial rule.

The task thus fell to Raffles and the British administration to recover Java’s Hindu-Buddhist promise. British Orientalist antiquarianism was therefore a politically

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nuanced mission. This led to, as Said noted, the essential role of the men’s activities to the imperial enterprise:

To restore a region from its present barbarism to its former classical greatness; to instruct (for its own benefit) the Orient in the ways of the modern West; to subordinate or underplay military power in order to aggrandize the project of glorious knowledge acquired in the process of political domination of the Orient; to formulate the Orient, to give it shape, identity, definition with full recognition of its place in memory, its importance to imperial strategy, and its ‘natural’ role as an appendage to Europe; […]; to divide, deploy, schematize, tabulate, index, and record everything in sight (and out of sight); to make out of every observable detail a generalization and out of every generalization an immutable law about the Oriental nature, temperament, mentality, custom, or type; and, above all, to transmute living reality into the stuff of texts, to possess (or think one possesses) actuality.412

Influenced by aesthetic notions of cultural evolution, Raffles and his peers contributed to the construction of a Javanese cultural and societal historiography through their discovery, observation, documentation, and representation of Java’s Hindu-Buddhist antiquities. As I have shown, the intrinsic problem with antiquarian studies, however, was that interpretation lent the antiquaries power to derive what became dominant narratives by using iconographies as signifiers of societal qualities. In the nineteenth century, as the practice became more recognized in Britain and the Empire, antiquaries and their descriptions became increasingly influential in forming understandings of the colonized society.

As our narrative illustrates thus far, such Orientalist antiquarian endeavors could not have been accomplished nor reached such potent heights without its imperial context. These constructions were only made possible through the transfer of experiences from peripheral networks, whether from India to Java or later from Java to Singapore and so on, in the form of Mackenzie, Baker, Daniell, and Raffles himself who

412 Ibid., 86.
traversed the porous imperial borders. Through personal pursuits, whether in linguistics, in natural history, or in military surveys, our imperial agents brought Orientalist ideas and methodologies to Java. But colonized territories like Java were in no means merely passive vessels for European imposed narratives; they were in themselves grounds where those narratives burgeoned in their specific imperial settings. That said, in these spaces of competing narratives, the power structures of empire allowed colonists to ultimately derive the dominant historical narratives, often at the expense of lost native complexities. The antiquarian experience in Java thus reflects a discursive struggle where Orientalist notions of the colonized antiquities and peoples were both imposed onto and further developed in the overseas territories. As our next chapter explores, the process would be further complicated as our imperial actors dislocated the artifacts and discourse to the imperial metropole, where antiquarian collecting found heightened potentials to visually and materially inform Britain’s vision of the Empire and its collected territories. As Raffles left Java for London, he took with him his perception of Java, its antiquities, and its peoples, transmitting the knowledge and visual images to the British public. One image in particular: the Borobudur Buddha head.
III. Artifact and Empire

Raffles left Java on 25 March 1816. That morning, Raffles boarded the *Ganges* from the Batavia harbor, indeed a ship of the same name as the one which brought him from England to Penang over a decade earlier. His widow, Sophia Raffles, recounted, albeit with mild exaggeration:

> On the morning of Mr. Raffles’ embarkation, the Roads of Batavia were filled with boats, crowded with people of various nations, all anxious to pay the last tribute of respect […]. On reaching the vessel, he found the decks filled with offerings of every description – fruits, flowers, poultry, whatever they thought would promote his comfort on the voyage. It is impossible to describe the scene which took place when the order was given to weight anchor; the people felt that they had lost the greatest friend whom Java ever possessed.⁴¹³

After five years of governing, jungle treks, *candi* surveys, and the occasional bouts of tropical disease, the East India Company restored the island to the Dutch at the close of the Napoleonic Wars. As the British ships lifted anchor from Batavia, we also witnessed another transfer in movement: artifacts. On his voyage, Raffles brought with him wooden crates of Javanese manuscripts, drawings, and objects of antiquities. The Borobudur Buddha head likely arrived in London on this same shipment. Artifacts constituted visual and material evidence for argumentative narratives which, as my second chapter elucidates for the case of temples in-situ, can be projected onto entire societies, cultures, and civilizations. In this chapter, I continue to investigate how the dislocated artifacts served to construct a historiography of Java from its pre-Islamic, Hindu-Buddhist glory to its contemporary place in the British Empire.

⁴¹³ Sophia Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, vol. 1 (London: J. Duncan, 1835), 297. Granted, Sophia may have exaggerated the people’s devotion for Raffles, but the farewells from local administrators also expressed a respect for the Lieutenant-Governor, including 2 addresses in Mss. Eur. D742/4, Raffles Family Collection, BL APAC.
This final chapter follows the objects and thus the discourse as they left the colonized territory into the imperial metropole. After a brief historical background on the EIC’s departure from Java in 1816, I will examine three main aspects of the intersection of artifact and empire: Raffles and his private collection, the network of scholarly societies in London and their cross-empire collaborations, and finally how collections of colonial objects replicated and reinforced the larger project of empire. Through Raffles’s narrative, I aim to more critically inspect the relationship between the antiquary and his Oriental collections and how that relationship signified British conception of its collected, colonized terrains. We return thus to our initial question: how does an artifact construct a material historiography of imperial encounter?

1. Restitution and Return: From Java to London

In 1816, Britain restored Java to the Dutch. To the EIC, the invasion of Java was merely a strategic military move to extinguish French power, via the annexed Dutch, in Southeast Asia. When that objective was achieved, the Company and the Government-in-Council in Calcutta remained undecided as to the fate of the island’s long-term governance and integration into the empire. The same equivocality loomed over Raffles’s administration in Buitenzorg.\footnote{In 1813, Governor-General of India Lord Minto expressed his frustration at the uncertainty, writing to Raffles, “I cannot safely wait longer for authentic accounts of the resolution taken in England concerning Java” (Minto to Raffles, 22 February 1813, quoted in ibid., 195).} Two years into the administration, Raffles confessed of having to govern the island “without knowing whether it was to belong to the King or to the Company.”\footnote{Ibid., 190.} Raffles first became aware of the prospect of departure early that
year. Raffles remarked on the issue, “I confess that I should say farewell to Java with a heavy heart.” A staunch proponent of permanently taking the island for the Empire from the start, Raffles still hoped to reassure the EIC of the positive administrative, economic, and military progress in Java. This was in part driven by Raffles’s ambition to make a name for himself, having Java exemplify his imperial accomplishment. As one of the foundational claims this thesis forwards, empire was, after all, a structure composed of the individual pulses of its agents. Yet as the Napoleonic Wars more confidently secured British victory and as Java continued to fall short of proving its commercial value to the Company, Raffles faced imminent departure.

Official negotiations between Dutch and British authorities commenced in London in July 1814. However, the departure was delayed: on 20 March 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte unexpectedly returned from exile to Paris, shifting the political atmosphere in the continent and forcing the British to modify their initial plans. The

\[416\] In February 1813, Minto offered Raffles an office in Bencoolen or Fort Marlborough in the case of withdrawal (Minto to Raffles, 22 February 1813, quoted in ibid., 195).

\[417\] Raffles to W.B. Ramsay, Buitenzorg, June 1813, quoted in ibid., 200-1.

\[418\] Raffles pleaded to his colleague Marsden, “I entreat of you to advocate the cause of Java, if there is a possibility of its remaining under the British protection” (Raffles to Marsden, Buitenzorg, 6 August 1815, quoted in ibid., 285).

\[419\] Raffles writes to EIC Secretary W.B. Ramsay, “Everything is going on prosperously here […] My measures have been throughout successful. I shall come home, not laden with riches and spoils, but, I trust, with some little honour and credit” (Raffles to Ramsay, 15 September 1813, quoted in ibid., 202).

\[420\] Raffles admitted the island’s financial shortcomings to the Court of Directors, though attributing much of the discontent to the failures of the previous Dutch government (Raffles to Marsden, Buitenzorg, 6 August 1815, quoted in ibid., 291).

\[421\] John Bastin, “Raffles and British Policy in the Indian Archipelago, 1811-1816,” Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society XXVII (1), no. 165 (1954): 116. During the meetings, Britain demanded settlements in the West Indies and the Cape and agreed to transfer Java, the Moluccas, and Bangka to the Netherlands while keeping settlements on Sumatra and the Malacca Strait (ibid.).

\[422\] On 5 May 1815, a Company dispatch instructed that due to recent events in Europe, “until a more settled order of things shall be established, the Island of Java and its dependencies must remain in the custody of the British Government” (Dispatch, 5 May 1815, quoted in ibid., 117). Napoleon’s arrival marked the beginning of the Hundred Days imperial government in France until his defeat at the Battle of Waterloo on 18 June 1815, after which the ex-emperor was exiled to the faraway island Saint Helena until his death in 1821 (David Chandler, The Campaigns of Napoleon (New York: Macmillan, 1966), 1015).
date finally arrived a year later on 19 August 1816. Raffles penned, “On the 19th August, 1816, the flag of the Netherlands was again hoisted at Batavia.” As such, our British personnel set to leave the island. Colin Mackenzie had actually left Java a few years before the Dutch restoration, returning to India in 1813 to prepare his reports on the Java expedition. Thomas Horsfield, meanwhile, stayed on the island until his departure to London in 1819 to become librarian then the first Keeper of the EIC Museum in 1820. Godfrey Baker left Java for Calcutta a few months before the official Proclamation. For Raffles, meanwhile, leaving Java meant returning to England.

“I embarked on the 25th March last from Batavia and am now looking out for the English coast,” Raffles wrote to W.B. Ramsay on board the Ganges. His party consisted of his family and a few close acquaintances, including his native Malaccan assistant Lewis and one of his Javanese aides Raden Rana Dipura. The journey, it
turned out, was quite eventful. Landing briefly in Saint Helena, an island outpost in the South Atlantic, Raffles and the crew met the acquaintance of the great yet newly marooned Napoleon himself. During the visit, the embittered exile entertained Raffles and “seemed interested with his remarks on Java.” Aside from this detour, the Ganges, with Raffles and his family and friends on board, trawled on across the Atlantic towards Britain. Raffles arrived in London on 16 July 1816, announcing his arrival at the East India House the next morning before settling in his apartment at 23 Berners Street. Accompanying him was another group only now leaving Java for the first time in their long lives: Raffles’s collection of Hindu-Buddhist antiquities.

2. Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles: Antiquary and Intellectual

Where in Chapter Two we learned how the British antiquaries interacted with Javanese candis in-situ, we look now to a different part of the antiquarian endeavor: collecting. In the imperial territories, collecting specimens and artifacts could be a massive, chaotic, and exhausting affair involving numerous assistants, draftsmen, and vast networks of informants. Raffles began the habit with natural history specimens

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431 “On our arrival being announced,” Captain Travers, who traveled with Raffles, journalled, “we were quickly informed that the Emperor would receive us in the garden.” (Journal of Captain Travers, quoted in ibid., 304). Napoleon had, at first, refused to see the visitors yet, as Travers recorded, “on being told that it was Mr. Raffles, late Governor of Java, who wished the interview, he immediately consented to see us. On our approaching, Napoleon turned quickly round to receive us, and taking off his hat, put it under his arm” (ibid.). Travers was, however, critical of the Frenchman, noting “His reception was not only not dignified or graceful, but absolutely vulgar and authoritative” (ibid.).

432 Ibid., 317.

433 Ibid., 305.

434 Raffles’s Malay assistant, Abdullah, described his methods collecting natural history specimens while in Sumatra, showing how such an undertaking would have been pursued by British imperial agents in the Indies: “He kept four persons on wages, each in their peculiar departments; one to go to the forests in search of various kinds of leaves, flowers, fungi […]. Another he sent to collect all kinds of flies, grasshoppers, bees in all their varieties […] giving him needles as well as pins with a box to stick the creatures therein. Another he sent with a basket to seek for coral, shells, oysters, mussels, cockles and
during his stay in Malacca in 1810. I should note, here, that Raffles’s natural history background is significant. Those who pursue natural history conceptually and practically structured their collecting of specimens around the idea of taxonomies and classification as representative of a natural order. Yet that categorization was but an imposed construction. It is also worth noting that at the time the separation between natural history and Oriental antiquities was not so distinct. In European museum and collecting practice in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, European antiquities were categorized as “classics,” while Oriental antiquities were catalogued as part of natural history collections, signalling the troubling way the British perceived Oriental objects and, by extension, societies. We will return to this point as we see that become more explicitly problematic with the representation of colonized cultures.

In the meantime, Raffles continued to collect specimens in Java, though upon noticing the island’s Hindu-Buddhist vestiges, Raffles expanded his hitherto modest antiquities collection to include manuscripts and several hundred stone and metal figures either given to him or taken from his field excursions to many of the island’s ruins.

For a survey analysis on classificatory practices in the sciences, see Geoffrey Bowker and Susan Star, *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000). See also the works of post-colonial scholars on classification, including Bernard Cohn, Tim Barringer, Arjun Appadurai, and James Scott.

It may be worth mentioning, for the sake of amusement, that in addition to the manuscripts, antiquities, and natural history specimens, Raffles also collected other curiosities: he wrote to the Duchess of Somerset, for example, “I am forming a collection of skulls; some from bodies that have been eaten. Will your Grace allow them room among the curiosities?” (Raffles to the Duchess of Somerset, off Sumatra, 12 February 1820, quoted in S. Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, vol. 2 (London: J. Duncan, 1835), 82). Here, Raffles is referring to a tradition he observed in Tapanuli, north Sumatra, where for the “Batta” (Batak) people, “The law declares that for certain crimes, four in number, the criminal shall be eaten alive. The same law declares also, that in great wars...
Java, starting with the earliest Dutch collectors and expanded under the British, antiquarian collecting became an increasingly common colonial practice. Over time it became known that Oriental antiquity was of special curiosity to the British agents such that the natives reported, or were told to report, any interesting objects or sightings to European authorities. However, here I will again emphasize the Orientalist preference for Hindu-Buddhist artifacts in British collections. Islamic artifacts and manuscripts remained largely neglected. Compared to the volumes of Kawi and classical Hindu manuscripts, we only find a mere handful of texts related to Islam and even these were not in Arabic but translated to vernaculars. The more coveted Hindu-Buddhist antiquities, however, gradually found their way into personal collections.

Before the British interregnum, a few Europeans began collecting candi statues, bas-reliefs, and other ornaments for display in colonial residences and gardens. As I briefly discussed in the first chapter, Dutch officer Nicolaus Engelhard (1761-1831) was among these earliest European collectors. Engelhard decorated the walled gardens of

[...] it shall be lawful to eat the prisoners” (ibid., 79). He continues to describe the ceremony in great detail, but I shall refrain from reprinting it here.

438 On one occasion, for example, Raffles described his collection of metal figures he acquired through the Resident of Kedu, “brought in to him by the natives, on its being generally known that subjects of the kind were interesting to the British authorities” (Raffles, The History of Java, 2, 56).

439 There are no Qur’an manuscripts in Raffles’s or Mackenzie’s collections in the former India Office collection at the British Library. The only two Qur’ans which survived belonged to John Crawford. See M. C. Ricklefs and P. Voorhoeve, Indonesian Manuscripts in Great Britain: A Catalogue of Manuscripts in Indonesian Languages in British Public Collections (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

440 They are all in John Crawford’s collection, including Menak Jawi Nambar or the History of Hamza, son of Abd ul-Muttalib, and cousin of Mohammed; a legend from the Arabic, in modern Javanese and A legendary romance from the Arabic, in Malay: Add Ms. 12299 and Add Ms. 12388, Collection of Oriental Manuscripts purchased from John Crawford, Esq., BL Manuscripts Collection.


442 Raffles wrote, “The only collection which appears to have been made by Europeans of these interesting remains of antiquity, previously to the establishment of the British government in 1811, was by Mr. Engelhard” (Raffles, The History of Java, 2, 55).
his Semarang residence with statuaries taken from surrounding candis. However, though a handful of Dutch amateurs like Engelhard had begun to collect Hindu-Buddhist objects, the antiquarian inquiry was only conducted in a more systematic way with the advent of the British Company men, bringing paradigms of Indian-grown Orientalism and the growing interest in antiquarianism in British gentlemanly culture. Raffles himself became an avid collector of Javanese manuscripts and in his work was indebted to native and pre-British colonial structures as well as transported Indian methodologies. To obtain the materials, Raffles would send his subordinates to report any inscriptions or manuscripts and take them to Raffles’s team of native assistants and translators. Meanwhile, some of the other EIC men each collected for their own individual interest: Horsfield with his botanical specimens and Mackenzie augmenting his collection of Indian manuscripts. Mackenzie, for one, inquired into Java’s antiquities to develop the interest he found in India: “as was the case in India I found materials coming in to me beyond my first expectations,” he writes. Mackenzie reported, “Historical & other MS in Javanese […] have been communicated to me Originals or Copies & even sent after me; & Specimens of Ancient Coins, Sculptures, Metal

443 The antiquities would have graced gardens similar to the one in Fig. 11. In addition to collecting for himself, Engelhard also donated several images: Duga-Killing-the- Buffalo-Demon, Bhairava, Ganesha, the bull Nandi, and two guardian statues from Singosari, to King William I of the Netherlands to grace the garden of the Royal Academy of Sciences in Amsterdam (Pauline Scheurleer, “Collecting Javanese Antiquities: The Appropriation of a Newly Discovered Hindu-Buddhist Civilization,” in Colonial Collections Revisited, ed. Pieter ter Keurs (Leiden: CNWS, 2007), 86).

444 He was especially interested in classical Kawi inscription and manuscripts. His collection likely benefited greatly from the sacking of the Yogyakarta archives during the siege of 1811. “In the archives of the princes of Java are deposited histories of their country,” Raffles wrote (Raffles, The History of Java, 2, 64).

445 They include “the Panambáhan of Súmenap, the late Kiái Adipáti of Demak, and the secretary of the Pangéran Adipáti of Súra-kért, all distinguished among their countrymen for literary attainments” (ibid.).

446 Mackenzie to Minto, Batavia, 25 April 1813, Mss. Eur. F148/47, f. 11v, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
Mythological Figures, & other Specimens.” Horsfield likewise collected, though mostly keeping to natural history. Horsfield’s experience, however, is additionally helpful as it provides us with descriptions of how one would have stored and managed such a collection. Horsfield explained having established by 1811 a two-story house in Surakarta with a gallery and several outhouses “to have a secure depot for my collections.”

Although these objects, whether of botanical, zoological, or archaeological nature, would likely at some point in their lives find themselves in a depot or repository like Horsfield’s Surakarta home or Engelhard’s Semarang garden, they also traveled. One of the most famous Javanese objects which crossed oceans to the British isles is the colossal stone inscription referred to as the “Minto Stone” or, in Indonesia, “Prasasti Sanggurah.” The 6.6 feet tall stone tablet was found in Malang and came to Raffles’s attention in 1812. Raffles shipped the relic to Calcutta as a token of appreciation to Lord Minto. The prasasti remained in Minto’s possession and was later transferred to his

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447 Ibid., f. 11v-12, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC. After leaving Java, Mackenzie continued to expand his Oriental collection with Indian materials, including hundreds of drawings, copies of inscriptions, manuscripts, coins, and sculptures. Most of his manuscripts, for the first time catalogued by Horace Hayman Wilson, were handed to the Government Oriental Library in Madras while his drawings currently form the Mackenzie Collection in the British Library Asia, Pacific, and Africa Collection (Upinder Singh, *The Discovery of Ancient India: Early Archaeologists and the Beginnings of Archaeology* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004), 4).

448 Raffles noted that “Upwards of a thousand plants are already contained in the herbaria of Dr. Horsfield, of which a large proportion are new to the naturalist” (James McNair, “Thomas Horsfield: American Naturalist and Explorer,” *Torreya* 41, no. 1 (1942), 4).


450 As Richard Davis writes, it marks the beginning of a new life for these images “removed from their homelands as curiosities, souvenirs, or art objects, transported abroad to be sold or presented as gifts, maintained in private collections or placed on display in public institutions, viewed by Western audiences as variously bizarre, curious, heathenish, picturesque, spiritual, or beautiful” (Richard Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 145).

451 Inscribed on the stone: the date of 982 AD and the name of King Sri Maharaja Rakai Pangkaja Dyah Wawa Sri Wijayalokanamottungga who ruled the Malang region at the time.

452 Raffles to Minto, Batavia, 11 April 1813, Mss. Eur. F148/47, f. 3v, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
estate in Roxburghshire, Scotland where it remains today. In sending the stone to India, the Lieutenant-Governor hoped to promote studies in Oriental antiquities. Perhaps more importantly, in addition to the intended educational function, Raffles saw the stone as symbolic of the historical context. Raffles wrote to Minto, hoping “it might at some future day call to remembrance an Event that will always deemed interesting to the Nation at large, the incorporation of Java in the British Empire.”

Objects, like the Minto Stone, exhibit the interpretive power of the artifact and its collector in representing moments in imperial history. For Java, this was the role of the Borobudur Buddha head.

The Borobudur originally had a total of 504 Buddha statues. Of those statues, currently over 300 are fractured, mostly headless, while 43 are missing entirely. We saw a similar state of damage in 1815, after the candi was first excavated. Baker’s pencil sketch documents the Borobudur exterior in disrepair, depicting the Buddha statues in their niches, many without heads. Three heads, we know, entered the private collection of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles. Raffles’s Borobudur Buddha joined some hundreds of

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453 The Indonesian government has attempted to call for the stone’s repatriation since 2004 but intergovernmental negotiations failed since the artifact is technically under the private custodianship of the Minto estate. Most recently, an Indonesian art dealer, Hashim Djiojodikusumo, called for the stone’s return in 2008 though to no avail (“Indonesia demands historic stone back,” The Scotsman, 3 February 2008).
454 He stated to Minto, “I apprehend the preservation of this Ancient monument will be pleasing to the Oriental Literati […] & its preservation may afford an opportunity of recovering the knowledge of the more Ancient Character & language of the Nations that established themselves early in these Islands” (Raffles to Minto, Batavia, 11 April 1813, Mss. Eur. F148/47, f. 3, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC).
455 Raffles to Minto, Batavia, 11 April 1813, Mss. Eur. F148/47, f. 3v, Raffles-Minto Collection, BL APAC.
457 Ibid. Presently, the Buddha heads are scattered across museums and private collections around the world. The Borobudur Center for Heritage Preservation holds 58 heads not joined to the structure. Museum collections include, in the U.K., the British Museum owns three and exhibits two, all from Raffles’s private collection, while the Victoria & Albert Museum displays one. In the U.S., the Smithsonian Freer Gallery of Art owns three and displays one and the Metropolitan Museum in New York exhibits one.
458 One decapitated head is seen among the pile of rubble in the bottom left corner of the scene (Fig. 16, *The temple of Borobudur from the NNE* c.1815, pencil, 464 x 590 mm, Mss. Baker 08.013, Baker Collection, RAS).
other artifacts, ranging from small metal figurines to larger stone sculptures in his antiquities collection. The group of curiosities formed the precious cargo that accompanied Raffles and his family on their journey home to London on the Ganges.

These relics, along with Raffles’s natural history specimens, would have been packed into special wooden compartments. Horsfield provides an account of his own collection;

Raffles’s collections likely received similar treatment:

Boxes [...] were therefore provided, of more substantial materials than those employed in travelling [...] for the preservation of the collection during its transportation. [...] After having carefully packed the subjects every necessary precaution that suggested itself was used in securing the boxes against accidents during the voyage. They were individually painted and covered with oil-cloth. Each box was then placed in an outer case, made of the same substantial materials, and secured in the same manner. By these various precautions [...] I enjoy the satisfaction of having brought the whole in safety to England.\(^{459}\)

The Buddha head from Borobudur, too, was most probably packaged in a wooden crate, consigned to sit quietly in the dark, damp bowels of the Ganges as it crossed the Atlantic before coming ashore to what would become its new home, London.

Raffles’s Buddha head was by no means the first Oriental artifact to arrive in England though in the nineteenth century, it was still uncommon for Europeans to collect Indian, let alone Javanese, images. Among the earliest Indian religious artifacts brought to Britain was “an east Indian Idoll of black brasse [...] taken out of there [sic] Churches from there alter,” collected by William Feilding, Earl of Denbigh (1582-1643) and listed in the 1638 inventory of King Charles I’s collection.\(^{460}\) The first substantive collections appeared via the early Indian-based Orientalists, beginning with the Lucknow


generation and the likes of Sir William Jones and Charles “Hindoo” Stuart.\footnote{In the eighteenth century, virtually all collectors of Indian antiquities had lived in India themselves and were personally involved in their collection on the field. The men were clustered around hubs like the Asiatic Society in Calcutta (1784) or the Fort William College (1800). See Jasanoff, \textit{Edge of Empire}.} Later in the nineteenth century, we saw institutional collections like the India Museum and, later, the British Museum and Victoria and Albert Museum, becoming increasingly influential in disseminating Oriental images to the British public.\footnote{The East India House established their modest museum upstairs in 1799 when the Leadenhall house expanded, displaying some of Britain’s colonial acquisitions, including a “Babylonian Stone,” silks and rugs, birds and a tapir, and the infamous Tipu Sultan’s tiger (Davis, \textit{Lives of Indian Images}, 171). When the India Museum was dissolved in 1879, its collections were divided between the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum (Robert Knox, \textit{Amaravati: Buddhist Sculpture from the Great Stupa} (London: British Museum, 1992), 18). For an analysis on British reception of these Indian artifacts, see Partha Mitter, \textit{Much Maligned Monsters: A History of European Reactions to Indian Art} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).} In Raffles’s time, however, when collecting remained a largely a private affair, knowledge on eastern cultures still depended on the information provided by those who had traveled overseas and the objects they brought with them. Yet even this personal curiosity, as we witness in Raffles’s case, was embedded within imperial structures and politically informed ideologies, latent or consciously practiced.\footnote{See Said’s distinction between “latent” and “manifest” Orientalism in \textit{Orientalism}, 206.} As these men, their writings, drawings, and objects travelled across the empire, we begin to see then the formation of an Orientalist circle in the metropole, bringing information and imaginations of the colonized territories to the streets of London.

After weeks at sea, on 16 July 1816, Raffles and his Javanese treasures arrived in England.\footnote{S. Raffles, \textit{Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles}, 1, 317.} Raffles moved into his apartment on 23 Berners Street in London’s West End. Berners Street in the 1810s was a quiet street, inhabited by well-to-do families and characters of social importance, including the Bishops of Carlisle and of Chester and
Earl Stanhope. Raffles’s residence was one in a series of narrow, multistoried apartments of orange brick. As for his cargo and Javanese collection, Raffles reported soon after his arrival from Java, “My Baggage has all arrived safe and I hope in a day or two to have in Berners Street.” Thus Raffles and his collection of Javanese treasures settled in his abode, a few blocks away from the much trafficked Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road. There, objects in his collection filled the floors of the apartment: “Our back drawing room is now quite a Museum and I think you would be pleased to see it,” he remarked to his cousin. Though we have no written record of the Buddha head precise location during that time, one might safely assume that it sat in this drawing room as Raffles wandered about London society.

The town induced in Raffles a reformed identity in addition to that of the imperial agent: the learned British gentleman. Raffles colorfully reflected upon his return to England, “all is so new varied & important in the Metropolis of this great Empire, after so long an absence in the Woods & Wilds of the East, that like the Bee I wander from flower to flower and drink in delicious nutriment from the numerous intellectual &

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465 It was also the site of the infamous Berners Street Hoax of 1810: a young man, Theodore Edward Hook, had sent some four thousand letters on behalf of a Mrs. Tottenham, resident of 54 Berners Street. On the morning of November 26th, a mass of callers, sweepers, tradesmen, in short “crowds of sooty urchins and their masters” arrived on the street, resulting in the comical commotion of “the protestations of the repudiating housemaid, […] undertakers with coffins, draymen with beer-barrels […] medical men with instruments for the amputation of limbs, […] forty fishmongers” and “as many butchers” (R.H.D. Barham, The Life and Remains of Theodore Edward Hook, vol. 1 (London: Richard Bentley, 1849), 73-74.

466 Fig. 20.

467 Raffles to Thomas Raffles, London, 3 September 1816, THC, reproduced in Bastin, Letters and Books of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles, Ch. 3, Letter 4, 92.


469 Among his accomplishments while about town, Raffles married Sophia, daughter of J.W. Hull, Esquire, of the county of Down, Ireland in 1817. Raffles writes to his cousin dated 23 February 1817, “neither Rank fortune or beauty have had weight on the occasion, I think I may fairly anticipate your approval of my selection – The Lady, whose name is Sophia, is turned of Thirty, she is devotedly attached to me, and possesses every qualification of the heart and mind calculated to render me happy” (Letter to Thomas Raffles, London, 23 February 1817, THC, reproduced in Bastin 2009, Ch.3, Letter 11, p.108).
moral sources which surround me.”

Raffles navigated the fashionable gentlemanly circles of London. Raffles was enlisted in various scholarly societies in England. He was inducted into the Royal Society in 1817, within six months becoming a regular attendant to meetings and dinners with The Royal Society Club. He was further elected to the Royal Asiatic Society and Society of Antiquaries of London in 1825 and that same year founded and became the first president of the Zoological Society of London. As for his antiquarianism, in London, Sophia related, “Sir Stamford was incessantly occupied in scientific and literary inquiries, and formed his plans for still further contributing to the valuable and interesting collections he had sent home from the Eastern Islands.” She wrote, “The presence of Mr. Raffles in England created an interest in the subject as far as his personal influence extended.” Indeed, Raffles’s collections soon garnered the attention of several figures in London’s scholarly circles. Meanwhile, he published *The History of Java* in May 1817,

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470 Raffles to Thomas Raffles, London, 18 May 1825, THC, reproduced in ibid., Ch.3, letter 37, 170.


472 He often recounted his evenings at such “sitting of the Royal Society” or “the Club” to his cousin, the gatherings becoming an increasingly regular feature in his life (Raffles to Thomas Raffles, Piccadilly, 31 November 1824, THC, reproduced in Bastin, *Letters and Books of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles*, Ch. 3, Letter 34, 165).


475 Ibid., 319.

476 His natural history materials piqued the interest of Sir Joseph Banks (1743 - 1820). The baronet and renowned naturalist praised the quality of Raffles’s botanical collection, writing to Horsfield, “The collections are interesting in the extreme, and will, when published, make very valuable additions to the science of botany. Your industry, Sir, in collecting them is praiseworthy in the extreme; and the talent you have shewn in arranging them encourages a well-founded hope of much advantage to science being derived from your arrangement and observations on them” (Sir Joseph Banks to Horsfield, 1817, quoted in ibid., 2, 116-7).
earning him a reputation as antiquarian expert on Javanese history and material culture. In England, Raffles’s intellectual endeavors thus took on new trajectories. After field experience in the eastern islands, Raffles now found himself at the central nervous system of it all where information and artifacts converged in the imperial cranium and there found new ways of articulation and representation.

3. Society and Societies

To better appraise Raffles’s antiquarian activities and his collection in the imperial metropole, we must thus situate him within the network of societies in England whose intellectual and social spheres extended to the edges of the British Empire. As Raffles exemplifies, being an imperial agent, a student of the Orient, and a collector of antiquities was not only a consequence of empire in the strict sense of political power; it was also about status and image. In this sub-chapter, I will thus explore the intellectual spheres around Raffles, looking into scholarly societies including the Royal Society of London, the Royal Asiatic Society, and the Society of Antiquaries. Investigating those societies and their activities unravels both the professional and personal ties among British Orientalist antiquaries across British, Indian, and Javanese networks. It was through these social and intellectual interactions between actors of Orientalism, empire, and Britain’s antiquarian tradition that new ways of understanding and constructing narratives of foreign cultures emerged in the imperial metropole.

477 Ibid., 1, 319.
478 Again, this is not to especially emphasize the importance of the metropole. As we will soon see, these convergences continued to communicate across the different nexus of empire.
Integral to those discursive convergences was the social metropolitan sphere, influenced by London’s scholarly societies. The first decades of the nineteenth century saw the foundation of a number of new clubs and societies throughout England, though professional archaeological societies did not really emerge until the second half of the century. During Raffles’s time, scholarly activities pertinent to material culture revolved around the three major learned societies: the Royal Society of London, the Society of Antiquaries, and the Royal Asiatic Society. Antiquarian researches mainly coalesced around the Society of Antiquaries. The oldest national antiquarian society, the Society of Antiquaries was founded on November 5, 1707, when three men, Mr. Talman, Mr. Bagford, and Mr. Wanley, agreed to meet on Friday evenings at Bear Tavern in the Strand to discuss their shared interest in antiquities. Adding twenty more members, the Society then ratified their official constitution in 1718. Yet membership in the Society signified more than a simple interest in ancient cultures.


481 The earlier societies include the Yorkshire Philosophical Society (1822), the Numismatic Society (1838), the Oxford Architectural Society (1839), and the Cambridge Antiquarian Society (1840) (Richard Hingley, “The Society, Its Council, the Membership and Publications, 1820-50,” in Susan Pearce, ed. *Visions of Antiquity: the Society of Antiquaries of London 1707-2007*, Archaeologia (London: Society of Antiquaries, 2007), 177). With the professionalization of archaeology, the latter half of the nineteenth century saw the establishments of archaeological societies, the most prominent being the rivaling British Archaeological Association (1843) and the Archaeological Institute (1843) which split into two groups after an internal schism (Philippa Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional: Antiquarians, Historians and Archaeologists in Victorian England 1838-1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 48). By 1886, there were 49 county and local historical, antiquarian, and archaeological societies (ibid., 51). The Congress of Archaeological Societies first met in November 1888, organized by the Society of Antiquaries, marking the first nation-wide collaboration in archaeological studies (ibid., 53).

482 In 1807, the Royal Society had 531 Fellows while the Society of Antiquaries had, in 1803, 800 members (Rosemary Sweet, “The Incorporated Society and Its Public Role,” in Pearce, *Visions of Antiquity*, 91).

483 Susan Pearce, “Introduction,” in ibid., 2. A history of the Society can be traced through their *Register-Book of the Members of the Antiquary Society*, started in January 1718 until 1741 for administrative purposes, or through accounts of the lives of the Society and its Fellows, with the first full-length official history only appearing in 1956 (ibid., 4).

The antiquary was an identity. Here is where my argument that even the most violently imperial consequences of Orientalism were founded on private and personal affairs finds resonance. Antiquarianism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries signified social status: the collection and display of treasures exhibited wealth of both stuff and knowledge. The men – for they were mostly men – who collected thus came from a life of privilege. Collecting required leisurely time to dedicate to luxury reading of history or learning classical languages. Recall Raffles, who in Java, when not troubled by wars or petty administrative duties, spent major portions of his days immersed in Oriental studies. William Baker (1787-1853), Secretary to the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, recounted a similar schedule:

I get up before five o'clock, and read Ancient History till six, my time to go to work; at breakfast time I read the Spectator for a quarter of an hour; after dinner I have three-quarters of an hour, which I employ in reading Blair's Lectures; after work I read Ancient History from eight till nine o'clock; from nine till half-past ten or eleven, I study Euclid, and on Sundays before and after dinner, I practice drawing.

Moreover, in addition to leisure time, one also needed a source of idle wealth to finance travels or purchase objects. Wealth thus became a necessary component: one needed it to participate and, conversely, participation indicated wealth. In 1788, polemical antiquary John Pinkerton (1758-1826) critiqued the Society of Antiquaries for that reason in The Gentleman's Magazine, stating “The Society consists chiefly of men of

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485 By the late eighteenth century, women began taking up the interest. These were women from the same backgrounds as the male Fellows and who were connected to them (Susan Pearce, “Antiquaries and the Interpretation of Ancient Objects, 1770-1820,” in Pearce, Visions of Antiquity, 148). However, only two papers by women were published by the Society of Antiquaries between 1820 and 1850: a short note by lady Mantell in the appendix to vol. 25 of Archaeologia and an account by Frances Stackhouse Acton on the excavation of a Roman villa in Shropshire in vol. 31. The Society did not elect a female Fellow until the latter half of the nineteenth century (Richard Hingley, “The Society, Its Council, the Membership and Publications, 1820-50,” 178).

486 S. Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, 1, 256-7.

fortune, exists at the expense of its members […] merely for an innocent and laudable amusement to the members themselves.\footnote{John Pinkerton, \textit{Gentleman’s Magazine} (1788), quoted in Rosemary Sweet, “The Incorporated Society and Its Public Role,” 87.} Indeed, in 1770, about a third of the Society of Antiquaries Fellows were gentlemen of private means, including a number of landed squires such as Sir Phillip Rashleigh of Cornwall and Robert Riddell of Glenriddell.\footnote{Susan Pearce, “Antiquaries and the Interpretation of Ancient Objects, 1770-1820,” 147. There were also, of course, some members who had to work to earn a living, for example, author Thomas Pennant, clergymen such as Charles Lyttelton, Bishop of Carlisle, as well as a mix of army officers, medical men, lawyers, and tradesmen (ibid., 148).} The membership list in 1817 showed that around seventeen percent of Fellows were ‘titled.’\footnote{Richard Hingley, “The Society, Its Council, the Membership and Publications, 1820-50,” Table 3, 176. At times, name recognition or family connections often weighed more than aptitude, with members of the aristocracy inducted as Fellows irrespective of their accomplishments in antiquarian studies (Rosemary Sweet, “The Incorporated Society and Its Public Role,” 91).} This was a much higher percentage than other scholarly societies, indicating that the antiquarian pursuit in particular signified belonging to a certain social class.\footnote{Richard Hingley, “The Society, Its Council, the Membership and Publications, 1820-50,” Table 3, 176.} That said, the exclusivity of the societies was to an extent understandable and in fact illustrates the importance of network connections, especially in the British imperial world. The reason: scholarly achievement, measured in terms of the quality of one’s collections or publications, relied on personal and professional collaborations through letters, communications (letters sent and circulated through the society), or printed publications (transactions, journals, or general interest magazines).\footnote{Ibid., 177.} Circles thus began to materialize through network patronage.\footnote{One’s scholarly integrity depended on others’ support: with each letter sent or communication circulated, the letter’s recipient would vouch for the credibility of the sender when forwarding or presenting the letter to other members of the Society (Christopher Evans, “Delineating Objects: Nineteenth-Century Antiquarian Culture and the Project of Archaeology,” in ibid., 271.)} Raffles was one example. While his intellectual studies was driven by his professed thirst for knowledge, he benefitted from connections with the likes of the Duchess of Somerset and Sir Joseph Banks. Among his
supporters was his lifelong friend William Marsden (1754-1836) who had once written confidently to Raffles, “You will of course become, if you are not already, a Member of the Asiatic Society.” Throughout their imperial careers, men like Raffles, Marsden, and Horsfield thus sutured peripheral connections while stationed in the colonial territories, simultaneously maintaining ties to British society.

Yet the learned societies were significant to empire in another way. The societies were immensely influential as a space – physically and figuratively – where much of the imaginations and narratives of the Orient became constructed and then popularized in London’s intellectual circles. One instrumental element was the publications which disseminated ideas and images of eastern cultures. *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, for example, often published reports of antiquarian researches or discoveries.\(^\text{495}\) The Society of Antiquaries periodically print its official journal, *Archaeologia* (from 1770-present), the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries* (1843-1920) and the *Antiquaries Journal*.\(^\text{496}\) Moreover, drawings, sketches, engravings, and watercolors were a popular feature of these nineteenth-century academic and popular publications which corroborated textual descriptions with visual affirmation.\(^\text{497}\) In the time period, illustrations of collected antiquities were usually commissioned by the collector, for example William Stukeley’s *Abury, A Temple of the British Druids* (1793) or James Douglas’s *Nenia Britannica* (1793) and, of course, Raffles’s own *The History of Java* which included numerous drawings of

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\(^{494}\) Marsden to Raffles, quoted in Glendinning, *Raffles and the Golden Opportunity*, 181.

\(^{495}\) Richard Hingley, “The Society, Its Council, the Membership and Publications, 1820-50,” 177.

\(^{496}\) The papers in *Archaeologia*, selected from meeting minutes by a Fellow, reflected a primary interest in Anglo-Saxon and Roman manuscripts and monuments with some foreign archaeological materials, a trend which increased along the century (Susan Pearce, “Antiquaries and the Interpretation of Ancient Objects, 1770-1820,” in ibid., 152).

\(^{497}\) It remained so until photography replaced them as a primary method for representing objects.
artifacts and temples. As I briefly discussed in the previous chapter, however, these constructed images of other cultures were framed by imperial biases and paradigms. We find the same problematic subjective representations as the antiquaries engaged with the tangible artifacts as well.

Beyond publications, the crux of the antiquarian world was gatherings, during which they discussed, displayed, or exchanged objects. The Society of Antiquaries held weekly meetings at Somerset House. Their meeting hall was commanded by a large mahogany table, serving as exhibition space for artifacts, papers, and other objects of interest, while from the benches the attendants viewed the exhibited material. It was partly in these settings that artifacts were shown and narratives formed. Susan Pearce reconstructed a meeting which took place on 4 March 1802. Society Fellows and eight guests attended. The first part of the meeting saw the exchange and donation of books, followed by discussion. The “conversazione,” or open forum surrounding a display of plans, artifacts, or other material, was the central feature of the meetings. During the conversazione, “a curious head of stone” from Merton Abbey was donated to the Society by James Halfhide while other objects were brought in for show and discussion. Among them was a Buddha image sent by collector of Asian and Egyptian antiquities Thomas Coxe and sketches of antiquities by Mr. Edwards. All communications pertaining to the objects were read out, while the material or sketches were passed around so each person

498 This, in turn, promoted the training and work of draftsmen. For an analysis on how antiquarianism affected the field of visual arts in late Georgian and Victorian Britain, see Sam Smiles, “Art and Antiquity in the Long Nineteenth Century,” in Pearce, Visions of Antiquity, 124.
499 They are attended by the Director, Secretary, Fellows and their guests, every Thursday at the Society’s headquarters, excepting Christmas and summer holidays (Susan Pearce, “Antiquaries and the Interpretation of Ancient Objects, 1770-1820,” 150).
500 See a caricature of a Society meeting in Fig. 19.
501 Susan Pearce, “Antiquaries and the Interpretation of Ancient Objects, 1770-1820,” 150.
could handle the object. Yet the discourse did not end at these *conversazioni*. In addition to the official meetings and publications were the more informal yet nevertheless influential soirées. Some of these evenings were formally affiliated with a society, such as Raffles’s dinners with the Royal Society Club. Other times the dinner parties simply hosted attendants who were affiliated with London’s several learned societies. One exemplary evening: Lord and Lady Londo’s dinner party on the evening of Saturday, 24 April 1852 which Philippa Levine recounted. The guest list comprised of primarily fellows of the Society of Antiquaries and other scientific organizations, including J.Y, Akerman, Thomas Wright, and James Halliwell. But the evening was more than a multiple-course dinner. The lavish meal was followed by an exhibition of collected antiquities, some of them to show off the property of Lord Londo, others merely ones thought to strike curiosity. Here we see again the invaluable role of the private affair in national, even imperial endeavors. We were thus beginning to see in nineteenth-century London the formation of what Levine termed an ‘intellectual aristocracy’ wherein scientific and other intellectual pursuits was also a form of upward socio-economic mobility. In that, one’s artifact collection became commodity for intellectual and social status.

This leads us to the distinct feature of this historical world of artifacts, one which ties Raffles the imperialist agent of the East India Company and Raffles the antiquarian

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503 When the objects were not available, model displays, paper impressions of inscriptions, and casts of artifacts were shown instead (Susan Pearce, “Antiquaries and the Interpretation of Ancient Objects, 1770-1820,” 151).


505 Ibid., 19.

506 Ibid.

507 Ibid.

dandy. With the expanding reaches of the EIC and other overseas ambitions, British scholarship during Raffles's period took on an increasingly imperial frame. Sir Joseph Banks, for example, profited from his transoceanic voyage with James Cook, just as Raffles profited from his days in Sumatra and Java. To illustrate this, let us look to the Royal Society of London. As Roderick Home’s analysis of Royal Society Fellowship shows, we see reflected in the Society’s membership a perceptibly growing importance of India to Britain in the nineteenth century. Examining the list of Fellows and trends in the election of members and their interests, Home finds that the number of people with Indian connections who were elected rose in the 1810s. Among them were those first Orientalists – William Jones, William Marsden, Charles Wilkins, Samuel Davis – elected for their expertise in Oriental languages or literature. In many cases, such as Sir James Colebrooke (elected FRS 1821) and John Briggs (1838), certificate of membership at the Royal Society also included references to their membership at the Asiatick Society of Bengal and the Royal Asiatic Society respectively. Home correlates this increased interest in India with growing British military dominance in the subcontinent and parts of Southeast Asia. He notes, for example, the importance of new sciences like surveying as tools of the empire, which led to the Society’s recognition of the colonial surveyors’ contributions to greater learning. James Rennell (1742-1830), the EIC’s first Surveyor-General and author of maps of Bengal and the Ganges, was elected to the Society in 1781. Our Colin Mackenzie was likewise elected in 1819. Imperial men were thus

510 Ibid.
511 Later in the century, the focus shifted from philology to also include the natural sciences (ibid.).
512 Ibid.
513 Ibid.
instrumental to proliferating British knowledge on eastern antiquities. Later in the
nineteenth century, we do begin to see more “armchair” Orientalists and antiquarians,
those who collected Oriental materials or wrote about Oriental affairs without having
first-hand experience in the East themselves. Yet before the popularization of Oriental
images in public museums that would come with the Victorian era, representations of
eastern cultures still depended heavily on the experience of individual imperial agents like
Raffles who imparted their representations through collected colonial artifacts.

4. Collections and Empire

Here, we return to the artifact: the Borobudur Buddha head, or at least
allegorically so. What interests us, however, is not the artifact itself but its history and the
narratives derived thence. This sub-chapter examines how collections came to represent
views of colonized territories and its place in the greater narrative of the British Empire.
I mean, therefore, imperial in two senses: first, as a geographic and social network
structure which enabled collections to accumulate across oceans and, second, how the
collecting and categorization of artifacts conceptually replicated and reaffirmed the
collecting and categorizations of territories and peoples as possessions of the British
Empire. First, I will thus briefly sketch the geographical connections which nourished
transregional antiquarian collecting. As we began to see in the previous section, personal
connections are integral to scientific and antiquarian pursuits. Raffles had, from his

514 Others still included hydrographers e.g. James Horsburgh (FRS 1806) and Daniel Ross (FRS 1822)
(ibid.).
515 One example was collector of Mughal art, William Beckford (1760-1844). Though his estate profited
from West Indian fortunes, Beckford never left Europe (Jasanoff, Edge of Empire, 108).
516 Richard Davis explains this popularization in the latter half of the nineteenth century through the shift
in perception from Oriental “curiosity” to “art” (Davis, Lives of Indian Images, 158). For more, see also
earliest Indies days, collaborated with fellow imperial men, including Marsden, Leyden, Horsfield, Crawfurd, and many more in his correspondent list, assisting each other on translations or collections or publications. One illustrative example is the continued partnership between Raffles and Horsfield, even as the two men were distanced in two separate halves of the globe. Raffles left Java in 1816 while Horsfield stayed, then Horsfield sailed to London as Raffles returned to the Indies, first as Resident of Bencoolen then to found the Singapore colony. Despite distance, the two men maintained communication, aiding each other on their respective projects.517 Additionally, throughout his career, Horsfield maintained constant correspondence with other men in his field which often had an impressively global scope. For example, on his *Plantae Javanicae Rariores*, Horsfield was assisted by the renowned Robert Brown (1773-1858), botanist on Flinder’s voyage to Australia, librarian to Sir Joseph Banks, and first Keeper of the Botanical Department of the British Museum.518 In fact, these men’s publications, in which they often cited or credited each other, as well as the volumes of correspondence preserved from these concerted endeavors, reveal the vast geographical reaches of their research ventures. The same held true for collections as well.

517 On one occasion, Raffles commended Horsfield on the success of their researches, writing, “the Linnean Society has done full justice to our Eastern Researches & between Java and Sumatra a pretty good idea will be given of the natural history of the archipelago” (Raffles to Horsfield, Bencoolen, 29 January 1822, Mss. Eur. Photo 70, f. 43, BL APAC). In London, Horsfield made further significant progress in his scientific and scholarly career, including publishing in the *Linnean Transactions*, the *Proceedings of the Zoological Society*, as well as continuing to contribute to the *Transactions of the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences*. After coming to England, Horsfield published in 1821 his first independent work, the *Zoological Researches in Java and the Neighbouring Islands*. Other publications include: *Descriptive Catalogue of the Lepidopterous Insects contained in the Museum of the Honourable East-India Company* (1828) and *Plantae Javanicae Rariores* (1852). Simultaneously, Horsfield also maintained ties with America, being a corresponding member of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia and of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Horsfield, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Lepidopterous Insects contained in the Museum of the Honourable East-India Company*, Mss. Eur. F195/38, BL APAC).

With the growth of the British Empire, EIC servants were sent overseas, sent back to England, sent to travel to other nexus in the imperial network. Similarly, objects travel in these varied trajectories. One effect of this is the transfer of artifacts collected from imperial territories into the metropole. To illustrate, in the nineteenth century London’s auction houses saw a telling, increasing demand for Oriental manuscripts. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, major auction house Christie’s sold three large collections of Indian manuscripts, indicating a new fascination and demand for eastern materials.519 Unlike the imperial collectors or the Orientalists of Calcutta, however, these new London enthusiasts were detached from the geographical and cultural realities of the peoples they studied and hence relied on material and knowledge from imperial agents. Raffles’s Hindu-Buddhist, Javanese antiquities, was certainly exemplary.520 Mackenzie, Baker, and Horsfield, too, had collections which over the course of the empire traveled to the Britain.521 Additionally, we had notable collections from imperial agents like Warren Hastings, Sir William Jones, Charles Wilkins, or Charles “Hindoo” Stuart. Colonial objects from individual collections continued to filter into private British

519 Jasanoff, Edge of Empire, 108.
520 In addition to his Javanese materials, Raffles continued to collect natural history specimens when he returned to Bencoolen then Singapore which he sent back to England. For example, in April 1820, Raffles sent to England via the Mary “a very large Collection” of natural history specimens (Raffles to Thomas Raffles, Bengkulu, 16 April 1820, THC, reproduced in Bastin, Letters and Books of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles, Ch. 3, letter 23, 129). In June 1820, Raffles again sent home quadrupeds and birds preserved in salt, “numbered, named, and ticketed, so as to correspond with my catalogues” (Raffles to Marsden, Bencoolen, 27 June 1820, quoted in S. Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, 2, 125). He sent yet another case of animals and insects with the Borneo in 1822 (Raffles, Bencoolen, 28 February 1822, Mss. Eur. Photo 70, f. 52, BL APAC).
521 In addition to objects, these also included impressive collections of drawings and prints. Baker’s drawings came to England in 1816, remaining in the Raffles family collection. Baker’s drawings, contained in a volume titled Java Sketches as well as other loose miscellaneous drawings came to the Royal Asiatic Society in February 1850 (Head, Catalogue of Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Busts in the Collection of the Royal Asiatic Society, 27). Meanwhile, the Department of Oriental Antiquities of the British Museum presently holds six bound albums of drawings originally belonging to Raffles containing a total of 349 Indonesian archaeological drawings, many attributed to Baker (Annabel Teh Gallop, Early Views of Indonesia: Drawings from the British Library (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995), 24). Horsfield presented his drawing collection to the India Office Library when he joined staff in 1820 (ibid.). Mackenzie’s and Horsfield’s drawings now form the print collection at the BL APAC.
drawing rooms and, later, institutions. This movement of objects, facilitated by the network of scholars and antiquaries in Britain and around the Empire, illustrates the process of collecting and categorizing of objects in the imperial context.

Antiquarianism thus possessed that imperial dimension in that geographical sense. But it also interacted with the psychology of empire in the construction of imperial identities. As Maya Jasanoff wrote, “the history of collecting reveals the complexities of empire; it shows how power and culture intersected in tangled, contingent, sometimes self-contradictory ways.”

522 Raffles and other collectors of Oriental antiquities contributed to this intersection of power and culture in how the very act of collecting affected how one perceived and, consciously or not, sought to establish, precisely, power and order. Collecting in the nineteenth century grew out of a post-Enlightenment, scientifically driven desire to obtain and systematize knowledge of many sorts.

523 In 1854, John Bowen expressed that sentiment in writing on the antiquarian work of the late William Baker: “To assist in discovering, in classifying, in unveiling specific mysteries, in some of their countless varieties, is to labour in the construction of an alphabet of nature.”

524 This notion fell in line with developments in scientific thought of the recent decades. Following political liberation from monarchic and ecclesiastical authority, epitomized in the then-recent French Revolution (1789-1799), we saw in Europe the rise of secular science: a desire to arrive at the “nature of things” beyond Biblical explanations.

525 Natural historians and antiquaries thus looked for such

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523 Again, for a historical overview of classifications in the sciences, see Star, *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences*.
525 The same ideology also occupied political philosophy, as in the central assumption of Montesquieu’s *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748).
presumed natural order or, as Bowen put it, “the sublime region of demonstrative truth.”

To reach that “truth,” the scientific paradigm shifted towards the analytical: a method to understand a concept or natural phenomenon by breaking it into its parts. Scientists became interested in the particular, the microscopic, and they began collecting specimens. However, it was imperative to then put the particulars together to arrive at the comprehensive, “the construction of the alphabet of nature.” Thus was the project of collecting.

Some scholars have argued that collection in the colonial era was a systematic, imperial project. Yet I must emphasize that while it may be tempting to analyze, with a presentist, post-colonial lens, the collecting habit as a methodical attempt to gather, observe, and display the material objects and the cultures represented, as the experience of our EIC men illustrates, in the field, collecting was chaotic, with the discoverers often literally stumbling upon the ruins. Most of the time, the men did not even know exactly what they collected, leading to the interpretive flaws we began discussing in the previous chapter. That said, even for Raffles, collecting was motivated by a desire to better understand the “nature of things” and the linear order of Javanese history and its material manifestations. This is where the transfer of objects mattered to the imperial enterprise: although collecting may have been rather haphazard on the field, that changed once we relocate off-site and into the displaced collections.

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527 Not coincidentally, the period saw the popularization of the microscope.
528 For example, John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, ed. *Cultures of Collecting* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 1994) and Pearce, *Visions of Antiquity*.
Collecting and its desire for order contributed to the imaginative construction of empire. In that claim of order, colonial collecting communicated power. The most obvious expression of this is through claim of ownership. As I began expounding in the previous chapter, Raffles felt justified in taking and owning the artifacts, to rescue them from the degenerate natives. That psychology was also articulated politically, in Minto's argument, for example, that taking custody of Java would provide its peoples “relief and advantage” from the gin-drinking Dutchmen. In addition to this idea of ownership, however, was the emplacement of objects into subjective worldviews, whose historiographical effect became foundational to the success of the imperial enterprise. I will thus examine two characteristics of collecting – accumulation and organization – preluding to my final section on antiquarian interpretation and material historiography.

First, one necessary element of collecting is accumulation. The difference between simply owning things and collecting was that it was inadequate to collect merely one object of interest. Prominent nineteenth-century naturalist and archaeologist, Churchill Babington (1821-1889), spoke to that effect in 1865: “Like the naturalist, the antiquary must in the first place bring together a large number of facts and objects.”

Raffles's Borobudur Buddha head was thus only one object among the hundreds later donated to the British Museum through his nephew William Charles Raffles Flint (1819-1884). Raffles's efforts were relatively modest, however. Other collectors focused on volume, such as Thomas Layton (1819-1911), an antiquary whose collection included

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530 Minto to Raffles, Calcutta, February 1811, quoted in S. Raffles, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, 1, 46-7.
531 Churchill Babington, an introductory lecture on Archaeology delivered before the University of Cambridge (Cambridge, 1865, pp.63-6), quoted in Levine, The Amateur and the Professional, 91.
532 A search, performed on 7 January 2013, of the British Museum online catalogue of “Raffles Flint” as “provenance” returned 1047 objects.
11,000 books, 3,000 prints and maps, 3,000 coins, tokens and medals, 9,000 pottery and glass vessels and tiles, and 2,600 antiquities.\textsuperscript{533} Or see Sir Thomas Phillips (1792-1872) and his estimated 60,000 manuscripts, 50,000 printed books, enough to compel his acquaintance Mary Ann Everett Green to write, “That poor unfortunate drawing room. It ought to have elastic walls to meet all the demands made upon it!”\textsuperscript{534} But beyond volume, collecting called from these accumulated parts a notion of a complete, cohesive set, in other words, an understandable order of things. The Buddha head was therefore not just a random part of a group of objects: the artifacts needed to be arranged.

Here comes the second component of collecting: organization. Collecting was, as its conceived function, an attempt to arrive at a categorized view of the universal, which again recalled earlier practices of taxonomy and classification in natural history. Anthropologist Anthony Shelton aptly put it, “The most singular aspiration behind collections is the desire for completeness and graspable panoptical and universal gaze; to create ‘the great metaphor of the world,’ or a defined part of it.”\textsuperscript{535} In the context of the British Empire, that idea was quite literal: each object stood for a geographical place in the Empire. This taxonomy of the universal gaze can be achieved through the accumulation of objects. As John Elsner and Roger Cardinal wrote, “Empire is a collection of countries and of populations; a country is a collection of regions and peoples; each given people is a collection of individuals, divided into governed and governors - that is, collectables and collectors.”\textsuperscript{536}

\textsuperscript{533} Levine, \textit{The Amateur and the Professional}, 15.
\textsuperscript{534} Mary Ann Everett Green to Phillips, 28 February 1854, Mss. Phillips-Robinson d.160, ff. 96-7, Bodleian Collection, quoted in ibid.
\textsuperscript{536} Cardinal, \textit{Cultures of Collecting}, 2.
collection thus constructed a worldview in which the world was made up of pluralities to form a universal whole.\(^{537}\) Thus was Java’s relationship to Britain through Raffles and his collection of Oriental antiquities. The island became integrated into a series of other imperial possessions, along with Java, Penang, and other holdings in the east, a part of the bigger collection. We had earlier begun to see how such attempts were accomplished through British antiquarian interpretation of Javanese temples where our surveyors imposed, through relying on sepoy interpretations, an immutable link between Java and India. Such efforts to impose a systematized structure, one in which Java coexisted with India in the same imperial space, were further reinforced through the categorization of artifacts into an imagination of empire composed of its collected territories.

Artifacts were crucial to this image-making and expression of power. Nations have long used objects to signal power over other cultures, from Roman emperors hauling obelisks across the Mediterranean to modern French and British imperial archaeologists flaunting Egyptian and Mesopotamian antiquities.\(^{538}\) As many scholars of museology and heritage studies have observed, prestigious items and collections often became the object of rivalry between imperial powers who were also contesting each other’s territorial, political, and economic claims in Asia and Africa.\(^{539}\) The competition was then intensified later in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries on stages like the Colonial or World Exhibitions where European imperial powers showcased

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\(^{538}\) For more elaboration, see Chapter 2, “Antiquities and Political Prestige” and the section in Chapter 11 on the early search for a national past in Europe in Díaz-Andreu, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology*.

\(^{539}\) See, for starters, histories of repatriation debates as discussed in Annie Coombes’s analysis of Britain’s claims over sub-Saharan African artifacts in *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination in Late Victorian and Edwardian England* (1994).
industries, artifacts, monuments, and people from their colonial possessions.\footnote{The Dutch, for one, received acclaim for the East Indies antiquities exhibited in the 1900 International Colonial Exhibition in Paris (Diaz-Andreu, \textit{A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology}, 221).}

But where in those critical studies the relationships have been analyzed in terms of imperial nations and their public collections, in Raffles’s historical period, hence, before the World Exhibitions or the expansion of national museums like the Louvre or the British Museum, collecting remained a closely personal and individual venture. I mean that in the practical sense, as in individuals personally collecting the artifacts, as well as in the activity’s interpretive potency: the individual collector’s power to define his collection.

This brings us to Raffles and his collection. The majority of Raffles’s antiquities remained in his private family possession throughout his life. The Buddha head, and other Javanese antiquities, did not enter the British Museum until 1859, decades after Raffles’s death.\footnote{The statue’s present display: Fig. 21. The statue’s late entry to the Museum is partly due to the Museum’s late interest in South and Southeast Asian antiquities. Though the Museum had begun exhibiting antiquities from Egypt, Turkey, and eventually Mesopotamia, there was scarcity of eastern materials until after India fell under direct governance of the British crown in 1857 (ibid., 226).}

Previously, the head and its companions likely lived in the drawing rooms of Raffles’s various residences. These included 23 Berners Street.\footnote{Raffles to Thomas Raffles, London, 25 October 1816, THC, reproduced in Bastin, \textit{Letters and Books of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles}, Ch. 3, Letter 7, 99.}

When Raffles returned to England for the second and final time, the family moved from Berners Street to the much more fashionably expensive neighborhood of Mayfair – a real estate move made possible due to Raffles’s Singapore success.\footnote{In a letter to his sister, Raffles recounted, “In a former Letter I told you we were fixed in Piccadilly for a time next door to the Marquess of Hertford’s – but we have not room enough in the Lower Stories & I have therefore purchased another House in Grosvenor Street which suits us better – it is No 23” (Mss. Eur. D742/17, Raffles Family Collection, BL APAC).}

A few blocks from Oxford Circus, and only a walk from Hyde Park, Raffles, and likely our Buddha head, lived among London’s elite. It is also possible that our Buddha head once resided instead in the
Raffles country home in Highwood, which he bought nearing the summer of 1825. Of the property, surrounded by 112 acres of pastoral grass, Raffles described, “The House is small but compact & the grounds well laid out for appearance & economy.” Out in Middlesex County, Raffles, Lady Sophia Raffles, their daughter Ella and their nephew William Charles Raffles Flint shared a hill with the legendary and aging William Wilberforce (1759-1833), famous for his contribution to abolishing slavery in Britain. On 5 July 1826, just about a year of purchasing the Highwood home, Raffles passed away of apoplexy in the country residence. But the influence of Raffles's Javanese collection extended far beyond his death.

5. Material Historiography and Post-colonial Discourse

The Buddha sculpture, along with over 700 Oriental antiquities, rested in the Raffles family collection, later bequeathed to his nephew, William Charles Raffles Flint, who donated the set to the British Museum in 1859. As I argue, the narrative of Raffles and the Borobudur Buddha is, beyond innocent narrative, a process of historiography. In

544 Raffles wrote to his cousin, “We shall remove to our new dwelling at Highwood – This place I have just purchased & we are to have possession at midsummer – It is in the Parish of Hendon and on the borders of Hertfordshire but in Middlesex – 11 miles from London and 3 from Barnet” (Raffles to Thomas Raffles, London, 6 June 1825, THC, reproduced in Bastin, Letters and Books of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles, Ch. 3, Letter 39, 174).

545 Raffles to Thomas Raffles, London, 6 June 1825, THC, reproduced in ibid. Out in Highwood, Raffles and his wife took up quite the country life. He wrote, “I farm the ground 111 acres myself and Sophia takes charge of the Poultry and Pigs – We brew our own beer and bake our own bread, and lead an entire Country life. The change of air scene and interest have already worked an amendment in my health” (Raffles to Thomas Raffles, Highwood, 15 August 1825, THC, reproduced in ibid., Ch. 3, Letter 40, 178).

546 Charles was born to Mary Ann, Raffles's sister, in Cheltenham on 31 March 1819, arriving with his parents to Bencoolen when he was nearly a year old (John Bastin, Letters and Books of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles, Ch. 2, note 54, 74). Raffles and his second wife had lost all but one of their own children; they treated Charles as if he were their own. They took him along to England when they left Singapore in June 1823 (Raffles to Thomas Raffles, Bengkulu, 15 Nov 1823, THC, reproduced in ibid., Ch. 3, letter 30, 155). A few years later, Charles’s father died due to dysentery while on passage from Singapore to China in 1828, leaving no will, putting his widow and children in the care of the Raffles family (S. Raffles to Thomas Raffles, London, 21 March 1829, THC, reproduced in ibid., Ch. 6, letter 20, 324). Ella, Raffles's only surviving biological heir, passed away at the age of 19. When Sophia died in 1858, Charles became next in line to inherit the Raffles estate.

547 Raffles to Thomas Raffles, London, 6 June 1825, THC, reproduced in ibid., Ch. 3, Letter 39, 174.
this final section I will thus examine the relationship between Orientalist antiquarianism and the historiography of the British Empire. The nineteenth century marks the foundations of modern European historiography. This was driven by, as Georg Iggers, Benedict Anderson, and others have named as a factor, the rise of nationalism in Europe, both in terms of affirming internal unity and displaying comparative identities internationally, demanding narratives of national history. As Leopold von Ranke, credited by many as the founder of modern historiography, and his writings on the subject exhibit, the nineteenth-century historian, in this sense, thus served a public, nationalist purpose. However, the history which eventually became a basis of national or, indeed, imperial ideologies may not be what was necessarily preserved in popular memory. Rather, it had been “selected, written, pictured, popularized and institutionalized.” This invention of tradition, as Eric Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger put it, commanded the construction of historic continuity. Through the formation of certain narratives of continuity, of development, or of colonial relations, the nation, the empire, and all its integrated constituencies were, in effect, the Benedict Andersonian “imagined communities.” However, for the invented tradition to be perceived as “so ‘natural’ as to require no definition other than self-assertion” in popular memory and lived experiences, this process of historiography must be rooted in the perception of

549 Iggers, Historiography in the Twentieth Century, 23.
551 Ibid., 7.
552 Anderson, Imagined Communities, 6.
antiquity. This invented national and imperial identity must thus be narrated and experienced in textual, visual, or in our case, material form.

Artifacts are therefore instrumental if not essential to the historiography of imperial identities. Firstly, conceptually, the systematized perspective that collecting engendered is akin to certain positivist attitudes in historiography, an approach founded on the assumption that information derived from empirical sources conveys authoritative fact and thus proves generalized historical truths. Perhaps most obviously and yet all the more significantly, the universalist cohesion desired of a collection resonates deeply with von Ranke’s primacy of the universal. Ranke writes, historical understanding necessitates that “the particular had to be grasped as a part of universal history.” The universalism which Ranke thought was fundamental to the purpose and process of historiography believed that the particulars reveal an “objectively existing relatedness,” assuming and expecting unity and connectedness described in a language very similar to the thelos of collecting. The von Rankeian historian, like the nineteenth-century antiquarian, therefore “must keep his eye on the universal aspect of things.” Secondly, antiquarianism and historiography intersected in the tangible realm: objects were additionally used to constitute such positivist history. As I discussed earlier, in the nineteenth century, European antiquarians began compiling imagined histories of Europe through classical texts and the Bible, using objects to substantiate the historical

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554 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 204.
555 See Anderson’s section on museums and monuments in ibid.
556 For the background on philosophical positivism dating from August Comte, see Auguste Comte, *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte*, 3 vols. (Batoche: Kitchener, 2000).
558 Ibid., 59.
559 Ibid.
claims. However, in this flawed antiquarian approach, rather than use the objects to derive the narrative, the objects were instead integrated as subsidiary evidence to support a pre-existing and presumed prevailing history.\(^{560}\) This imposition of colonies-as-particulars into the empire-as-universal is, however, clearly problematic.

See Raffles and his Borobudur Buddha head. Raffles’s collected Javanese antiquities became material proof of his imperialist imagination of Java: an island in ruin yet at the same time an Oriental treasure of the British Empire. Brought to the metropole by imperial agents and proliferated through personal, social, and institutional networks like the Society of Antiquaries, the colonists’ representations of Oriental cultures became established “knowledge.” The artifacts then allowed Europeans to visualize and tangibly grasp that Orientalist imagination in its most material form. To Raffles and his EIC peers, the artifacts, as we saw with the candis on the island, signified a narrative of decline: “The grandeur of their ancestors” fallen to the destruction and neglect of “the degenerate Java.”\(^{561}\) The impulse to collect antiquities replicated the imperial mission to save the island through benevolent colonial rule. This patronizing sentiment persisted long after the British left Java. After the island was restored to the Dutch, the Batavia Society of the Arts and Sciences continued its researches into Oriental history, traditions, and the arts. Yet it was not until the twentieth century that the input of native scholars was integrated to the society.\(^{562}\) As late as 1927, Dutch archaeologist Nicolaas Johannes Krom (1883-1945) claimed, “not until quite recently has

\(^{560}\) Pearce, *Visions of Antiquity*, 157.


\(^{562}\) A few natives first became members during the second half of the nineteenth century (Díaz-Andreu, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology*, 216). For more on Dutch archaeological work in Java after the British interregnum, see ibid., 218-22.
the Javan learnt to raise his eyes to the memorial of his great past.”563 The belief that the
degenerate natives failed to safeguard their own archaeological history allowed Raffles
and his peers to place themselves as the noble guardian. Raffles thus conclusively wrote
to the Duke of Somerset, “The Eastern Islands […] It is here by colonization, by
European talents and Chinese labour alone, that the resources of the country can be
brought forward.”564 Furthermore, the Orientalist lens of the aesthetic sublime adopted
by Raffles and his peers fabricated imaginations which linked Java’s classical Hindu-
Buddhist past to India and thus to the revered Indo-Aryan culture. Baker thus saw in the
vestiges material evidence of a “laborious application of […] skill & science” exhibiting
“great art & ingenuity.”565 Lost in translation was the colonized actuality: Java’s rich
cultural heritage, religious acculturation and syncretism, the artistic accomplishments of
the ignored Muslim and local traditions, as well as the violent colonial altercations, all
muted in the romantic, Orientalist sentimentalization of the objects as well as the island’s
visual representations. 566 In favoring Orientalist interpretations, the British antiquaries
selectively represented indigenous narratives and their subaltern realities to fit the
imperial imagination.

Empire found its most successful victory not only as the military force that
conquered but as the narrative that prevailed. As the Buddha head’s narrative
exemplifies, physical force and violence find their symbolic and, through policies,

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564 Raffles to the Duke of Somerset, Bencoolen, 20 August 1820, quoted in S. Raffles, *Memoir of the Life and
Public Services of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles*, 2, 149.
566 As I mentioned in the previous chapter, the landscape tradition and perspective contributed to the
perception of a static and peaceful colonial reality. For greater analysis on the subject of landscape art
and empire, see Jeffrey Auerbach, “The Picturesque and the Homogenisation of Empire,” *The British Art
Journal* V, no. 1 (2004); John Crowley, *Imperial Landscapes: Britain’s Global Visual Culture 1745-1820* (Yale
realized expression in the cultural space in part through manipulation of cultural symbols. Gayatri Spivak posited, “Two senses of representation are being run together: representation as ‘speaking for’ [Marx: vertreten, tropology/figurative], as in politics, and representation as ‘re-presentation’ [darstellen/persuasion, substitution?], as in art or philosophy.” In presenting the object in conversazioni, displaying them in drawing room cabinets, or showing them off to guests at lavish dinner parties, Britain’s antiquaries took on the power to tell stories, represent, and speak for the object and the allegorized colonized peoples. Raffles also represented, in the second meaning, through his illustrations and written descriptions in The History of Java his own view of Javanese antiquities which then became the dominant representation and voice on the subject. The discursive struggle exemplified in the Borobudur Buddha’s narrative was, as Spivak put it, “how an explanation and narrative of reality was established as the normative one.” The colonial triumph comes, Homi Bhabha claims, in how the European imperial discourse “normalizes its own history of expansion and exploitation by inscribing the history of the other in a fixed hierarchy.” Such imagined hierarchies were then translated in the colonial mind as if they were part of the nature of the colonial landscape, while the ideological means which constructed them were rendered invisible.

567 The idea is a constellation of thought in different scholarships in history, anthropology, and cultural theory perhaps crystallized in Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of “symbolic violence,” which I will later explore. For a brief discussion, see Nicholas Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry Ortner, ed. (Culture/Power/History, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 5.


569 Ibid., 76.


571 Nicholas Dirks, Colonialism and Culture, 3.
The collection of colonial artifacts thus speaks to Said’s claim on Orientalism that “To have such knowledge of such a thing is to dominate it, to have authority over it.” With Raffles, we thus begin to witness a Foucauldian relationship of power and knowledge. As Foucault contends, knowledge is constructed in a discursive field in which constitutive orders emerged. In the case of Raffles’s Orientalist endeavors, the antiquarian authority gained the ability to establish hierarchized power relations in representing these “Other” cultures. The artifact, once dislocated from the colonial reality into the realm of the Orientalist imaginary, became an aesthecized object void of its cultural or historical agency. Displaced from their imperial geographies into a linear, Western system of science and order, in the cabinets of curiosities the artifacts ceased to become independent voices but silenced statues softly violated by the European gaze. The object became a vessel for European interpretations. This was, ultimately, the Javanese people for Raffles:

Susceptible of every impression that artifice may attempt to make upon them, and liable to every delusion propagated by the prejudiced or the designing, they not inaptly compare themselves to a piece of pure white cloth, on which any dye or shade of colour may be laid.

A blank canvas.

The consequence of an Orientalist discursive control over the colonized culture was thus a historiography of empire as articulated by the position of power: “the sovereign subject as author.” In writing The History of Java, Raffles essentially wrote the history of Java. British imperialist narrativization produced a history from those

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574 Raffles, The History of Java, 1, 245.
represents in which, as Spivak writes, “the object of representations […] becomes the reality.” With continued practice and affirmation, constructed notions like the Orientalistly imagined identities like Javanese natives and British colonial power became integrated into the colonial experience and eventually formed that very experience in themselves. In that way, British Orientalism in Java effectively enacted the Spivakian “epistemic violence” in which subjects of history can be constructed with no existence or reality outside of its representation. With the prerogative of the Orientalist antiquary to describe, catalogue, and organize their antiquities, the veritable colonial realities of Java became less and less relevant. What prevailed was the abstracted imagination of the island and its people as imposed onto the Buddha head’s volcanic stone visage. This was true for both the metropole and imperial territories. Raffles’s initiatives in Java, in establishing communication networks among natives regarding antiquities and in generating general interest in the subject, in turn influenced how the Javanese, too, came to understand their Hindu-Buddhist remains: as evidence of former societal accomplishments and source for nationalist pride. However, this transposing of the dominant narrative into the subaltern sphere is deeply problematic. As Spivak writes, in “obliging the native to cathect the space of the Other on his home ground” the colonizer “is worlding their own world.” As a result, Orientalism empowered an imperial power structure which, as Said wrote, “displaces […] Oriental history as a history possessing its

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577 Robert Young, White Mythologies: Writing History and the West (London: Routledge, 1990), 158.
578 Spivak, “The Rani of Sirmur”, 133. See also Homi Bhabha’s concept of mimicry and Ashis Nandy’s Intimate Enemy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983). Indeed, as first radically proposed by Albert Memmi in Portrait du colonisé, précédé du portrait du colonisateur (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1957), the distinction between colonizer and colonized is not so easily distinguishable and the two form part of the same colonial experience.
Orientalist antiquarianism thus enacted Bourdieu’s concept of “symbolic violence” of cultural or social domination. In the perpetuation and expansion of the British Empire, military power and economic forces were of course instrumental. But though imperialism was perpetrated through such physical force, its aggression was also imperceptible, perhaps even to its victims, exerted through symbolic channels of communication, cognition and communication.

Unfortunately, our historical narrative is by no means completed even by such Spivakian or Bourdieuan conclusions. The problem of Orientalist symbolic violence and consequent subaltern silence and inexistence in the sphere of political representation is, as the present thesis remarks, far more complex. Though I have criticized the problematic ways British imperialists attempted to represent the subaltern, I only face the same conundrum. For although I vouch for the historical agency of Java’s subaltern, this thesis only further reifies the silencing of the Buddha head to allow for Raffles’s antiquarian interpretations to take precedence. As such, our narrative can only invite more reflection into the construction of subaltern silence. On this, one could argue, as Spivak does, that there is no lost subaltern voice to be retrieved since that subject was constituted as silent. Or perhaps one ought to consider that their silence was not powerless but active: a mode of self-enacting in both natively created and colonially prescribed realities.

Critics of the subaltern perspective point to the problematic, common alternative to hegemonist historiography: a reverse ethnocentrism where the

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582 Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West*, 165.
583 Ibid., 168.
subaltern is favored but in emphasizing their silence, their historical inagency was only
further reaffirmed. Perhaps the key is to consider the very definition and conditions of
that silence, whether a true inability to speak or rather a choice, in an act of most
empowering defiance, to speak in a language indifferent to the dominant discourse.

As for Raffles, his discursive agency, too, is more complicated than a totalizing
power as may be implied through Bourdieu, Spivak, or Said’s claims. I contend,
therefore, that Raffles’s antiquarianism was not necessarily a consciously motivated
agenda for power driven by the imperialist project. There remained a potent, personal
dimension to Orientalism. His motivations which compelled him to study Javanese
antiquities were intellectual, even socio-economic. That said, even these seemingly
apolitical desires were enmeshed in the power structures of the British Empire. The
consequence was that the individual activities and studies became instrumental to the
advancement of empire, both in reaffirming imagined British conception of its imperial
endeavor and in informing real political strategies of the colonial enterprise. In lieu of
Said’s assumed ideological intentionality of Orientalism, I would like to thus emphasize a
historical relationship of reciprocity. Imperialism allowed for Orientalism which,
through the individual desires of our colonial agents, nevertheless enabled and
strengthened the imperial project. This slightly more nuanced historical understanding of
Orientalism and empire becomes evident through lending attention to the significance of
artifacts and antiquaries in imperial historiography.

Yet there remains one curious aspect to this whole narrative. In his
representation of Javanese identity, Raffles was also constructing his own identity as

584 See Bhabha’s critique of Said’s claim of imperialist intentionality in the gathering of colonial knowledge
Francis Baker et al. (Colchester: University of Essex Press, 1983), 200.
colonial administrator, imperial antiquary, and indeed, an intellectually refined dandy. We ought not forget that in representing the conquered Oriental cultures, Europeans were representing their own histories as voyaging, conquering, and colonizing nations. As Bourdieu writes, the dominant narrative “structure[s] not only the group’s representation of the world but the group itself, which orders itself in accordance with this representation.” Raffles was, of course, complicit in the perpetration of British colonization yet he also fell under the influence of these imperial currents of power, fashioning his imperial and metropolitan identity in accordance with, as Bourdieu claims, the same imperial influences which violated the subaltern.

Just as the collector described his collections which in turn came to describe him and his social, cultural, and economic wealth, Raffles defined Java yet Java, too, as a site where imperial identities were negotiated, defined him. Raffles began his imperial career as an almost impoverished son of a West Indies tradesman. Starting out as a young, scientifically inclined EIC clerk, his work brought him to a far Orient. In Java, Raffles encountered fascinating languages and captivating archaeological remains. Yet this personal curiosity became a powerful discursive tool for British imperial hegemony. Orientalist studies and antiquarianism in the nineteenth century must therefore be analyzed by positioning them within the personal, social, even aesthetic-philosophical discourses of culture and power. Raffles’s antiquarian pursuits enabled him to use his collected antiquities as the visual and material evidence for Orientalist narratives he constructed about Java, in both disenfranchising its cultural specificities by imaginatively

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585 Nicholas Dirks, *Colonialism and Culture*, 15.
587 See also Robert Young’s argument on how Orientalism was as much a dislocation of the West from itself in “Disorienting Orientalism,” in *White Mythologies*. 
integrating it with India and in using the artifacts as evidence for societal degeneration to justify Britain’s colonial rule. In bringing the Buddha head to Britain, Raffles could present an immediate and concrete proof of such states of the natives and the island. But it was not Java in its complex, colonial realities. Rather, it was an imperial narrative which sought to place Java within the collection of British possessions in the east. What may have started as an individual curiosity in Oriental cultures and as a social, intellectual drive to collect eastern antiquities became, through imperial processes, instrumental to discursive oppression. The Borobudur Buddha head came to represent a colonially constructed image of Java and Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles the principal author of this material historiography.
Conclusion

The Borobudur Buddha head, silent testament to Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles’s imperial endeavor in Java and the eastern archipelago, now sits silently in Room 33 of the Asian Department of the British Museum. After Raffles’s death, his nephew William Charles Raffles Flint (1819-1884) inherited the estate. In 1859, Charles relinquished Raffles’s Oriental antiquities collection to the British Museum. The Buddha head entered the Museum, forty-five years after its excavation under the British interregnum in Java. In those decades, as Java was passed from the Dutch to the British and back to the Dutch, the Borobudur Buddha head, too, crossed oceans and continents. But more than a transoceanic journey, its narrative speaks to the intricate relationship between Orientalism and material artifacts as instruments of the historiography of nineteenth-century British Empire. A discussion of culture is thus necessary in understanding the interlacing power domains and practice of British colonization. Advancing discussions in literatures on imperialism and material culture studies, my imperfect conclusions illustrates a more complicated understanding of Orientalism and the role of antiquaries and artifacts in displacing Java into a nineteenth-century, Western systemization of

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588 Burdened by having to support the extended family, the Raffles estate gradually faced with financial difficulties. Sophia Raffles lamented in 1833, “I have unfortunately just lost a considerable sum of money, & I am still unable to sell High Wood” (S. Raffles to Thomas Raffles, Geneva, 24 October 1833, THC, reproduced in John Bastin, Letters and Books of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles: The Tang Holdings Collection of Autograph Letters and Books of Sir Stamford Raffles and Lady Raffles (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2009), Ch. 6, Letter 38, 360) and again reporting, “my losses are very great” in 1835 (S. Raffles to Thomas Raffles, Highwood, 1835, THC, reproduced in ibid., Ch. 6, Letter 46, 376). It was not clear exactly how much of the estate Charles inherited, but by the time he did, perhaps pressed by financial burdens, just as Mackenzie’s widow had sold his collection to the Company in India for bare cash, Charles Raffles Flint surrendered Raffles’s wealth of Oriental antiquities to the growing collection of the British Museum.

589 Nicholas Dirks argued, even the very “anthropological concept of culture might never have been invented without a colonial theater that both necessitated the knowledge of culture [...] and provided a colonized constituency that was particularly amenable to ‘culture’” (Nicholas Dirks, Colonialism and Culture, 3).
civilization and evolutionary development, a paradigm which influenced imperial representations and realizations of knowledge and power.

The Buddha head, we know, entered the private collection of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles. Yet as this thesis has shown, perhaps more important than what he collected is what his collection represented. The Buddha head became so much more than an aptly incised volcanic stone, the aesthetic curls of the ushnisha, or the calm countenance of the Buddha’s silent gaze. The fragment came to represent Java: a once glorified nation now precisely that – dismembered, dilapidated, a ruinous fragment of what once had been in the Orientalist imagination. Through object-collcting, informed by Orientalist assumptions, the colonial administrative, military, and scientific work of Raffles and his EIC compatriots in Java demonstrates how even seemingly disassociated intellectual interests or socio-economic aspirations were entrenched within the power structures of the British Empire. As I have articulated, this included the concept of empire in the physical, geographical sense: Raffles’s collection and his representation of Java were a product of imperial travel as well as networks of intellectual collaborations which stretched across the borders of the British Empire. However, I also mean empire in the sense of the struggle of power, claims, and knowledge which emerged in imperial settings. Raffles’s antiquarianism, as seen through the narrative of the Borobudur Buddha head, evinces how archaeological artifacts was used as a historiographical tool to communicate imperial dominance and impose identity narratives on the colonized, Javanese people. Through the story of one man and his colonial collection, we gain an insight to a world of empire as not merely political or economic or military but as an intellectual enterprise, a discursive struggle for historical voice, agency, and existence.
In this thesis, I traced Raffles and his Buddha head’s journey from the British invasion of Java during the Napoleonic Wars (1811), the British interregnum in Java (1811-1816), and the sculpture’s life in Raffles’s collection (1816-1859). Throughout, I have shown how Orientalism was problematically configured in the Javanese context and thus affected the British imagination and experience of colonial Java. Furthermore, I explored the potency of antiquarian interpretation, vis-à-vis theories of racial and societal evolutionary paradigms, in constructing linkages and narratives of both geographical cohesion of empire and a narrative of native decline to justify colonial rule. Finally, using post-colonial critique and key works in contemporary historiography, I examined how the practice and ideology behind colonial collecting succeeded in displacing subaltern agency in favor of a von Rankeian imperialist historiography.

We learned, thus, the political realities of the British occupation of Java, situating the East India Company, as well as individual historical actors like Raffles, military surveyor Colin Mackenzie, American naturalist Thomas Horsfield, and EIC Captain Godfrey Baker within the broader spatial and political frame of EIC domination in the eastern isles. In my approach, I have opted to emphasize the personal narrative as the historical optic to understanding how vast-reaching colonial policies grew out of the lives of individual imperial careers. Additionally, I portrayed an imperial world of geographic and temporal connections between the various European imperial powers and the imperial territories of the British Empire. As Raffles rose in EIC ranks, sailed to the East Indies, and finally administered the new Javanese colony, we thus witnessed a Java under British rule where imperial influences from the Netherlands, England, and British India forged colonial narratives as molded by the imperial actors. I examined then the
historical development of British Orientalism as it began in the Indian context with the works of Warren Hastings, Sir William Jones’s Asiatick Society of Bengal, and similar scholars and institutions which sought to foster studies of the “Orient.” Thence, I showed how certain ideas and methodologies, for example, military surveys and the use of native informants and colonial information-gathering networks, were transposed onto the Javanese ecumene. However, there was also a transport of Orientalist assumptions and expectations. Influenced by the aesthetic of the sublime and the Orientalist reverence of the imagined classical Indic ideals of civilization, I depicted how in Java, too, we saw problematic imaginative constructions of the idealized “Orient”: a glorified Hindu-Buddhist past, fallen from civilization to the present degenerate and despotic Muslim natives.

That said, in this analysis of Orientalism, adopting Said’s argument and that of select post-colonial scholars that Orientalist studies had profound impacts on how Oriental cultures became represented in the Western-hegemonic power structure, I questioned the ideological intentionality of our British amateur Orientalists in their haphazard pursuits. Rather than understanding imperial Orientalism as a violently conceived and executed systematic project of subjugation by a singular, homogenous imperial mind, I favor a historical perspective which focuses on the individual endeavors, highlighting the diversity of impulses as well as the variant implications of those personal subjectivities in the construction of the imperial agents’ own, as well as Java’s, identities.

Raffles and his EIC peers were thus acting very much as in spirit of an intellectual

curiosity to study the Hindu-Buddhist antiquities. Yet their actions had, though perhaps not deliberately, historically significant consequences. This competition for representation, as I have shown, found particularly fertile battlegrounds in the realm of material culture.

When articulated through antiquarian description and interpretation, Orientalism in Java was thus fraught in two ways, first in that the Orientalist preference for Hindu-Buddhist traditions carried imperially motivated reasons for justifying military aggression against the Dutch and native Muslim rulers. Secondly, it was problematic in its effect to construct and reinforce a paradigm which saw Java as an extension of India and thus British imperial dominion in the east, diminishing political and cultural native agencies to conceptually integrate the island into the construct of the British Empire. I thus analyzed nineteenth-century antiquarianism as practiced in-situ by our amateur Orientalists. As Raffles, Colin Mackenzie, Godfrey Baker, and Thomas Horsfield explored the forests, rivers, and romantically scenic Javanese hillsapes on Company duty, they also unearthed many of the hitherto relatively neglected Hindu-Buddhist archaeological ruins scattered about the island. Through historical accounts by Mackenzie, Horsfield, and Baker, I examined how antiquarianism in the nineteenth century involved, first, the potency and prerogative of the antiquary in stating claims on the represented sites and objects, and, second, the post-Enlightenment concern for scientific accuracy which imbued the subjective narrative-construction with the pretense of objective fact. Here I emphasized what makes the antiquary distinct and profoundly influential to the imperial enterprise. As we can see from Raffles’s case, antiquaries relied on excavations and observations of Oriental antiquities to compile from these disaggregate sites a coherent imagination of a
past civilization. Yet imbued by what Said terms latent Orientalism, aesthetic philosophies of the sublime, as well as ingrained assumptions about racial theory and evolution of civilization, Raffles’s Orientalist antiquarianism saw not a Javanese archaeology in its actual state of ruins. Rather, it became material evidence for their nostalgic visions of a lost, Hindu-Buddhist pinnacle of civilization.

Using the Borobudur excavation as a focus case study, I examined the role of this antiquarian exploration, description, and measurement of Javanese candis as it achieved the problematic Orientalist imaginings in two ways. First, Raffles, Mackenzie, Baker, and similar imperial antiquaries on the field silenced complexly negotiated Javanese cultural syncretism in favor of Indianist explications. In highlighting the Hindu-Buddhist part of Javanese history, in contrast to the lamentable Muslim present, and further favoring the interpretations of Indian sepoys rather than Javanese locals, our amateur antiquaries imposed an imperial connection between Java and the Indian subcontinent and thus the British Empire. Second, we saw the Orientalist imposition of a narrative of societal decline which, in light of Raffles and Minto’s espoused concern for “native welfare,” served to legitimize the British colonizing mission. Appraisal and interpretation of the antiquities on site thus consequently benefited imperial motivations, in providing an apology for the lack of Java’s economic contribution to the Empire, in legitimizing aggression against the ignorant or incompetent Dutch and Muslim foes, and finally, in exhibiting the decrepit state of the present society, Raffles relayed a potential for growth, one achievable under British governance. Thus, the British imperial agents sought to enact their role to save, preserve, and deliver that lost promise of Java through benevolent British rule.
Finally, following the historical trajectory of Raffles and his Buddha head, as I have demonstrated, in the metropole colonial antiquarian interpretation and power found new potentials to visually and materially inform Britain’s vision of the Empire and its collected territories, relying on the representations brought to England by individual imperial agents. When Raffles left the island for London, he took his collected Javanese treasures and, with them, his perception of Java, its antiquities, and its peoples to the British populace. In London, I situated this antiquarian collecting within the broader currents of social motivations and intellectual aspirations of Orientalist scholars and other gentlemanly antiquaries in England and across the Empire. We followed Raffles, then, into London’s world of “scholarly” societies and antiquaries who, through their meetings, exhibitions, publications, as well as informal conversazioni and dinner parties interacted with these “curious” artifacts brought from the imperial Orient. As I have shown to Raffles’s example, imperial men were thus instrumental to constructing and then disseminating British knowledge on eastern antiquities.

My final chapter thus highlights how Orientalist antiquarianism and collecting of imperial artifacts carried great historiographical importance. It was imperial in its territorial scope, as evinced by the continued collaborations between characters like Raffles, Horsfield, and Sir Joseph Banks, who though often placed in distant parts of the globe were connected through the vectors of the British Empire. Furthermore, however, expounding on existing scholarship on collections and collectors, the very practice of colonial object-collecting constituted the intersection of power and culture in affecting how one could establish claims of ownership and order. Collecting and categorizing Oriental artifacts effectively constructed a systematized worldview of the imperial
universal as comprised by collected colonies. As I demonstrated through Raffles’s Javanese antiquities, the serialization of Javanese artifacts in the metropole revealed how the collection, classification, and representation of these materials microcosmically reinforced the collection, classification, and representation of colonized territories and people. In a von Rankeian impulse to construct a universal historiographical worldview, the objects were perceived as symbols for the colonized particulars as they formed, in the British imperialist imagination, a cohesive totality and universality of empire. Finally, building upon post-colonial critique, most notably Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and Homi Bhabha, as well as cultural theorists, primarily Pierre Bourdieu, I examined how the self-appointed prerogative of the antiquary to describe and represent his collection allowed for the power-dominant narratives to prevail through Bourdieuan “symbolic violence” over the subaltern now disenfranchised in its muted sculptural forms.

The Borobudur Buddha head fragment became the material embodiment for Raffles’s imagination of Java: an island in ruin in need of British salvation yet simultaneously an aesthetized Oriental treasure of the British Empire. The dislocated artifacts served to construct a historiography of Java from its pre-Islamic, Hindu-Buddhist glory to its contemporary colonized place in the Empire. In line of the neo-Marxist perspective of the subaltern school, the Buddha head’s provenance exhibits how empire was perpetrated not only through military force but as imperceptible, structural violence. However, complicating that analytical framing of the simplified colonized versus colonizer binary, in taking into account the complex personal motivations, desires, and activities of the individual agents in various parts of the Empire, I illustrated a more nuanced understanding of the imperial realities. Through the narrative of Raffles
and the Borobudur Buddha sculpture, this thesis therefore contributes to the broader literature with three primary arguments in light of the broader historical scholarship on Orientalism and the British Empire. First, I argue that empire was not a singular, homogenous, unilateral push from the metropole but was rather constructed in the imperial territories through ideological traffics across imperial peripheries. Secondly, I emphasize the role of individual colonial actors like Raffles as opposed to some impersonal impetus in the creation of the British Empire, in the real and imagined senses. Finally, I show that to gain that more textured understanding of the ways power was transmitted in the British Empire, we ought to recognize the salience of material artifacts in crafting imperial imaginations.

In conclusion, this thesis illustrates an imagery of the British Empire as a network of multivalent imperial processes. Far from a one-directional imposition of British ideologies onto the Javanese territory, constructions of imperial identities were only made possible through the transfer of ideas and experiences in and across geographically specific locales, from India to Java, and later from Java to Singapore, and so on. In my thesis, we saw this in the form of Mackenzie, Baker, Thomas Daniell, and Raffles himself who traversed the porous imperial borders in their imperial careering. As Tony Ballantyne defined it, empire instead was formed by “cultural traffic, the ways of imperial institutions and structures connected disparate points in space into a complex mesh of networks.”591 Departing from traditional viewpoints of an empire as a center-and-periphery dichotomy, my historical analysis shows that colonized territories like Java were in themselves sites where identitary conceptions like “metropole,” “periphery,” or

even “imperial” emerged and were constantly reconfigured in their multidimensional settings. As Benedict Anderson writes of the imagined nation, as it applies to the imagined empire,

The creation of these artefacts […] was the spontaneous distillation of a complex ‘crossing’ of discrete historical forces; but that, once created, they became ‘modular,’ capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations.592

In lieu of championing a single colonial discourse, our historical narrative revealed assemblages of colonial imaginations and practices in which those formations were contested with each individual encounter.

Secondly, in refocusing imperial history on the narrative of the individual, this thesis demonstrates how even the most violent colonial consequences found motivations from personal actions and ambitions. Intellectual pursuits like Orientalist scholarship was complicit in the establishment and empowerment of colonial institutions of power, yet it was only so as embodied and enacted by the individual, imperially careering men. It was crucial, then, to understand men like Raffles not as homogenized pawns of the British Empire but as characters possessing their own intellectual, economic, and social aspirations throughout their imperial careers. While ours is a story of the British Empire, it is before all else a story of one man, his peers, and their intellectual pursuits. In each imperial setting, the individual found place to fashion and re-fashion their self-image and their role as agents of the British Empire. Hall’s analysis of the relationship between Britain and, in her case, Jamaica through the life of one man, Edward John Eyre, thus applies very aptly to Raffles:

His ‘imperial identity,’ his individual history, can be mapped across these different sites of empire. The theatres of empire constructed different possibilities. Metropolitan society, white settler societies, sugar colonies, each provided a site for the articulation of different relations of power, different subject positions, different cultural identities.\textsuperscript{593}

That said, each individual pulse was embedded within imperial structures and policies. From the intersecting personal narratives of the EIC men, we gained a glimpse into the structural networks of intellectual collaborations and patronage which facilitated the exchange of ideologies and strategies for domination. By emphasizing the personal perspective, we can understand the British Empire not merely as military or economic conquests but as intellectual construction of the ideas and images through which colonized territories and peoples come to be understood. Bhabha, in his critique of Said, contends therefore that we are engaging with a “repertoire of conflictual positions that constitute the subject in colonial discourse.”\textsuperscript{594}

This is further tied to my stance on Orientalism and imperialism, questioning Said’s thesis that Orientalism was an ideologically compelled project to subjugate and colonize, and positing rather how our individual agents found varied intellectual, social, and, yes, at times political impulses for their participation and thus wrestled with these variances in their experienced realities.

Finally, by tracing the provenance of one artifact and the life of its collector, I critically examined a larger process at work in imperial historiography: a disregard of Javanese modes of history in imposing them into the space of Western epistemology in which subaltern modes of representation forcibly cannot exist with independent agency. By recognizing the importance of material culture as extratextual instruments of


historiography, my analysis demonstrated the ways in which objects became a potent medium to illustrate and create histories, precisely in the illusion of their tangible authenticity and historic antiquity. Collecting, classifying, and describing objects became an almost inseparable part of the imperial endeavor. Raffles’s Orientalist antiquarianism thus provides an insight into how collecting not only allowed for the collector’s self-fashioning: it served to structure Western imperial perspectives around the gathering, description, and classification of territories, peoples, and knowledges. In Benedict Anderson’s words, objects aided in constructing a visual and material grammar of empire. As Young concluded in a sentiment that echoes Bourdieu, “colonialism […] was not simply a marginal activity on the edges of English civilization, but fundamental in its own cultural self-representation.” The history of the British Empire thus lives on in objects, in collections, and – as in the case of our Buddha head – in museum étalages, and in how their material tangibility informed abstracted imaginings of imperial identities.

Naturally, this thesis does not pretend to offer a conclusive critique of the discourse on Orientalism or imperialism. As Said himself acknowledged, the critical discourse only invites more questions. Confronting the contradiction which lies at the heart of subaltern historiography, Said asks, as this thesis does now, “how knowledge that is non-dominative and non-coercive can be produced in a setting that is deeply inscribed with the politics, the considerations, the positions, and the strategies of

595 In which, as Benedict Anderson elucidated, “The ‘warp’ of this thinking was a totalizing classificatory grid, which could be applied with endless flexibility to anything under the state’s real or contemplated control: peoples, regions, religions, languages, products, monuments” (Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 184).

power.” This thesis is, after all, an attempted intellectual project created within academic and political structures of power. I also acknowledge that in my own work I am forwarding the historical voice of Raffles and the British elites, leaving the voices of the Javanese peasantry unarticulated. I therefore seek not to speak on the behalf of the Buddha head nor for the Javanese subaltern, whatever that subaltern class may have been defined and redefined to be. The problem of responsibly allowing for subaltern historiography to independently exist in light of its historically imposed silence will thus continue to plague post-colonial historiographical endeavors. What I can confidently espouse, however, is this: the British Empire, as much as the Borobudur Buddha head, was an artifact crafted into its form through encounters of both imperial colonists and the colonized subaltern, Javanese and Indian alike.

The Borobudur monument now stands in Java as the Buddha head sits in the wooden cabinet in London. Yet their geographical disparity instead tells a rich history of imperial encounters, ones which continue to affect our post-colonial present. Raffles was once a young man striving to become a gentlemanly intellectual. Like others, he sailed to the eastern archipelago for economic possibilities, for intellectual curiosity, for a sense of adventure. Influenced by Orientalist ideas which percolated in the territories of the British Empire and engaging with networks of knowledge banks and methodologies, Raffles and his EIC men embarked on their forays to discover Java’s lost Hindu-Buddhist past. Yet it was also a narrative of power in which objects played a constitutive part. The historiographical role of the Buddha head will continue to be contested, rethought, and restructured as we further complicate our theoretical and historical

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understanding of the British Empire in Southeast Asia. But Raffles’s story, I hope, has provided at the very least an amusing if inconclusive insight. For now, as I leave the Borobudur in Java and the Buddha head in London, I shall now leave the reader in hir chair with that initial musing: that ultimately it was not the materiality of the artifact that mattered but the narratives thence created in the imaginary and rendered, precisely in its intangibility, beyond physical destruction, imperishable, and infinite.
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**Secondary Materials**


