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Art in the Netherlands East Indies

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Boston University
ART IN THE NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES

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Japanese Buddhist Design from Metal Stamps.
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INTRODUCTION

The arts of the colorful islands which include Java, Bali, Borneo, Netherlands New Guinea, Sumatra, Celebes, and the other smaller islands in the Malay Archipelago deserve a much higher appreciation than we have previously accorded them. True, at this time when the bonds of conflict and chaos have tended to bring nations and powers closer together, we have given greater meaning to such terms as 'world understanding', 'improving foreign relations', and 'being good neighbors'. It is imperative that as educators, citizens and home-makers, we thoroughly understand, and lend an appreciative, sympathetic ear to these terms.

However, for the most part, emphasis in the public schools has been placed on the study of art in such countries as Mexico, South America, China, Russia, and perhaps India. This is true, not only in regular art courses, but in integrated courses which include art, as well. We tend to take for granted an understanding of such countries as Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, but the remaining countries which have not been as fortunate or as progressive in their cultural development and growth, we seem to ignore, think of them merely as lands of dreams and unreality, and give no real meaning to their art and culture, which in truth, is pregnant with quality, a quality with which students should be more familiar.
I. THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this thesis is to act as a stepping stone in an effort to grasp an understanding of one of the group of islands which constitutes a significant portion of our vast universe. These islands are located in the South-west Pacific. In this study an attempt is made to specify the highlights of the art of the Netherlands East Indies; to point out the impetus which is to be found in the living architecture of Bali, the subtle quality of the brasswork of Borneo, or the grandeur of the Borobudoor in Java. An outline of reference material which is an index to the arts of each country studies in this group is included. The present writer hopes that this outline will make it possible for the teacher who is interested in building a program, unit or series of lectures on the art of these islands to have at her disposal the most helpful books which are available, particularly in this area, publishers, dates of publication, and the pages listed which are pertinent to the topic with which the instructor might be concerned.

II. THE METHOD OF PROCEDURE

After selecting desirable subject matter, the writer then accumulated a bibliography from every possible source. That meant a thorough investigation of all available literature in the form of text-books, reference books, periodicals, travel
guides, and encyclopedias which are especially concerned with the art and culture of the Dutch East Indies. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Fine Arts Department of the Boston Public Library have in their collections an adequate amount of material with which to work. Pamphlets which were obtained from the Netherlands Council in Boston enriched the writer's knowledge of the economic, social and political conditions of the islands today. Browsing around in tiny bookshops proved most helpful, for here were found in some publications a paragraph or perhaps even a sentence which was of value. There is a surprisingly small amount of material published on the Netherlands East Indies in the English dialect. But this writer feels secure in saying that that which has been written is excellent, and afforded many pleasant hours of research.

In reading this study, perhaps you shall feel that there is an attempt to enhance the beauty which lies in the mystic isles of the Southwest Pacific. But for those who have even a minute knowledge of their importance, their beauty needs not to be magnified, but rather, brought to the consciousness of the masses. One of the most important ways in which this can be done is through the efforts of the teacher, and in a subject such as this, particularly the art teacher.
CHAPTER I

A GLIMPSE OF THE NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES

Geographically, the islands form an interesting pattern, for they reveal an almost perfect land bridge between southern Asia and Australia, and they are the largest group of islands in the world. The islands are known by several names, among them East Indies, Insulinde, Indonesia, and Island India. However, the official name is Nederlandische Indie, which name was bestowed upon them by those who govern them, the Dutch. A complete classification of the islands is as follows: The Greater Sundas, which include Celebes, Sumatra, Java, and Borneo; the Lesser Sundas, including Bali, Lombok, Flores, and Timor; the Moluccas or Spice Islands; and Netherlands New Guinea. If all of this suggests to you a complexity of pattern in race, religion, custom, and language, it is a legitimate suggestion, and one which is rich in its complexity.

The islands extend more than three thousand miles, and if the entire group were superimposed upon the United States, it would obviously reach from California to New York. If the western tip of Sumatra were placed on the West coast of England, the borders of Dutch New Guinea would rest in the Caspian Sea, almost at the edge of Turkistan.

Sixty million people are to be found within the bound-
aries of the empire, but this is not to include the transition since Pearl Harbor. According to Embres, Mumford and Simon, 1/ two things stand out clearly, even to the casual observer: the thoroughness, ingenuity and calmness with which the Dutch have penetrated every possible phase of the life of this island empire; and the great diversity of the archipelago with respect to the natural scene, the people, the religion, and the daily life.

Art in the East is not the profession of a few, but an expression of many. Weaving, the making of Tapa or Batik, the carving of temple ornaments or of simple utensils for the home are matters not only of utilitarian labor, but also of creative joy. Dancing and singing are not merely diversions, but accomplishments of high prestige. The rice fields are tended with devotion for the purpose of a maximum crop, and the fields themselves become items of loveliness in a beautiful landscape.

True, the Indonesian civilization has often been idealized, and implications suggest that it comprised nothing but shadow plays, the dance, and batik. But the Indonesians were not mere savages. They excelled in the use of metals: iron, copper, gold, and bronze. They had an understanding of navigation and astronomy, for they traveled beyond their personal realms on long voyages. They believed in life after death, which is suggested in the stone monuments, some of which indicate a high

degree of artistic sensibility, which they erected in memory of their loved ones who departed from this earth.

Though the basis of the language of these people is Malayo-Polynesian, it is composed of as many diverse units as make up the people themselves. For in Java alone, three distinct languages are in existence, Sudanese in the west, Javanese in the central sector, and Madurese in the east. The separate islands have languages of their own. A kind of 'lingua franca', called Malay running through the entire archipelago is used to facilitate speech between Dutch and native, and between members of different Malayan groups. This in contrast to the pure native languages is simple and considerable easy to learn.2/

ART AS AN EXPRESSION IN THE ISLANDS

JAVA

The art of Java recovers to us one of the last pages of Indian art and helps us to reconstruct the continuous development of the history of Indian art. The art and civilization of Java formed an integral part of the art and civilization of the Indian continent. Gangoly admiringly expresses Javanese culture when he says that it is 'one of the outlying frontiers of the civilization of a Greater India stretching itself into the shores beyond the moving seas.' He further states that the key to this development can be found by regarding the continental


p. 53
and the colonial products as one continuous unfolding of the same fabric woven by Indian craftsmen of identical ideals and traditions, pursuing their continental art in a new environment. At later periods of Javanese history, the continental Indian art tends to shade off, degenerates into a naturalized local style in which the classic stamp of India one misses with deep regret. Indian art in the Archipelago is a continuation and a logical development by Indian hands of the principles and symbols of Indian creation applied under colonial conditions.

A national renaissance in art and literature is noted in the area of the tenth century. It is described by Gangoly as 'Indonesian in essence and idiomatic in expression'. There is no evidence of the remains of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The characteristic form of architecture is revealed in pyramidal towers and almost square finials on top. Sculpture at this time reveals skill and refinement. The obvious design is of the lion with two bodies and a common head, which is repeated in South Indian temples.

**BALI**

"The very business of life is expression, in Bali; grace and beauty are ends in themselves.......

Intrigue, fascination, mystery, even reverence and admiration are but few of the descriptive terms which mean to many who know anything at all of her culture, the isles of Bali. Maidens of beauty with their copper complexions and silky black hair; the

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\textsuperscript{4} O. C. Gangoly, \textit{The Art of Java} (Calcutta: Clive Press) pp.36,37
dance, costume and drama, each with a piquant Oriental flavor; lavishly decorated temples, all this, too, is a delineation of Balinese enlightenment.

It seems to be an obvious fact that everybody in Bali is an artist, be it coolie, prince; priest, peasant; man or woman. Each can play a musical instrument, dance, paint, or carve in wood and stone. Covarrubias reveals that by tradition these are reserved to men. The main artistic activity of the women goes into the making of beautiful offerings for the gods.

The people as a whole are portraits of felicity and contentment, a race who have escaped the degrading work which has brought tremendous masses of peoples to slavery. Religion goes hand in hand with their work and play, and the arts of dancing, sculpture, architecture, and music have attained a perfection which is unusual considering their mode of life as primitive peoples. It is obvious that an anthropologist would have great difficulty in classifying the innumerable types which are the results of continued migrations. According to Hiss, it is on the borderline between Asian and Australasian worlds. Faces range from Papuan to delicate and finely chiseled British-Indian type. Many older people bear marked resemblance to common European types. Physically, the people are beautifully modeled, mentally, they are precocious children with all the child's joy.

6/Philip Hanson Hiss, Bali (New York: Riverside Museum Press, 1941) Introduction
in life and gaiety of manner, yet they are possessed of a unique heritage of artistic achievement and a mature philosophy.

And what can be said of the life of the Balinese? Upon what is it based? All authorities on Balinese civilization agree that there is one religious concept, one fundamental pattern upon which is built the conduct of village life. It is one of doing for a common good. All efforts are directed towards this end. Cooperation among the villagers is superb, and if any one person thinks or acts contrary to this fact, he is excluded from that village. An admirable concept, is this; simple, yet dynamic and meaningful in this expression of government.

Nothing in Bali is made for posterity. Strange, when few other artistic works are produced for any other purpose. But the reason in this instance is quite easily explained. Because of the constitutency of the materials, the pests of nature, everything is constantly being renewed. All sorts of influences from outside have left their mark on Balinese art. But the people have been clever enough to translate these expressions into their own manner, and consequently they became strongly Balinese in the process. Thus, the lively Balinese art is in constant flux. What becomes the rage for awhile may be most abruptly abandoned and forgotten when a new fashion is created, a new style is presented in music or in the theatre, or new ways of rendering sculpture or paintings are brought forth.

You are not to be led to believe that the art of Bali is 'great' in the class of Chinese or Indian artistic expression.
And yet, as Covarrubias\(^7\) aptly expresses it, 'it is too refined and too highly developed to fit into the class of peasant arts'. Neither is it one of the primitive arts. You see, the Balinese peasants took the flowery art of the ancient island of Java, itself an offshoot of the aristocratic art of India of the seventh and eighth centuries, brought it down to earth and made of it a popular property.

Although at the service of religion, Balinese art is not a religious art. Temples are filled with carved subjects, and ornaments for daily uses are embellished with religious symbols, but this is purely decorative, regardless of subject matter. These people carve and paint to tell the only story they know, those which were created and handed down by their intellectuals, in the person of religious teachers of former times.

**BORNEO**

The art of Borneo is of a different class than that of Bali and Java. Artistic achievements of this island are more closely related to the arts of New Guinea. We are dealing with a more or less primitive civilization, therefore we are not to expect the intricate delicacies of the ancient Indian heritage.

Some of the tribes of Borneo include the Kayans, who file their teeth, but are not too numerous; the Kanyahs, who number about 25,000; the Murangs; the Penyahbongs, of whom

there are only a few hundred remaining; and the Saputans who are commonly referred to as 'The Blowpipes', and several others of lesser importance in this study. You are not to misunderstand the artistic achievements of these peoples. For despite the primitive approach to their work, there is indeed grandeur and deep expression in their bamboo decorations, beadwork, artistically decorated blowpipes, pottery, shell work and ornamental war attire.

NEW GUINEA

Firth\(^8\) says that in recent years the cult of the primitive in art has received a new impetus. The extension of archaeological research has pushed it backwards in time, while an increase in our knowledge of contemporary native peoples has given it an equatorial inclination. The savage has begun to come into his own. Objects of his handiwork are no longer labeled as 'curios' and art collectors have started to vie with the ethnographical galleries of museums to acquire them.

Firth\(^9\) is fully aware of the difficulty in formulating an understanding of primitive art. When the primitive artist carves in a certain style, he does so unconsciously, for that is the way he was taught, that is all he concerns himself with. He works for utilitarian reasons only; be it production of food, for personal ornament, dancing, recreation or warfare. "Art for

\(^8\) Raymond Firth, Art and Life in New Guinea (London: The Studio, Ltd., 1936), p. 14
\(^9\) Ibid., p. 10
"art's sake" is of little or no meaning to the primitive artist.

**CELEBES**

The shores of Celebes are deeply indented by the sea. The aboriginal tribes of this island which is southeast of Borneo, produce art which is similar to that of the natives of New Guinea or of Borneo. There is no available material on the art of this island, therefore it is impossible to include it in this study.

**SUMATRA**

Scarcely anything remains of ancient Sumatran art, according to Coomaraswami. Yet the great kingdom of Srivijaya, which has its capitol at Palembong, cannot or should not be omitted in any discussion of the Indonesian art. Sumatra shall always be remembered for the linear form of the roof which curves upward to the sky. According to legend, these roofs came to be result of a battle between a tiger and a water buffalo. The tiger was defending the men of Java, and the buffalo was fighting for the men of Sumatra. It was agreed that the men whose beast lost should thereafter wear the dresses of women. The buffalo won, so the Javanese men have worn sarongs ever since. The victorious Sumatrans wore trousers, and from that time on they have built their roofs like the horns of buffalo who helped them prove their superiority.

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CHAPTER II

ARCHITECTURE

The achievements of building, the variations of architecture and its design are unique in Island India. Let us get a transient view of the monumental constructions of each of the islands.

JAVA

Geographically, the ancient monuments of Java are divided into three groups: a western one which is rather scanty and confined to a comparatively small area; a central one which is rich in Sivaite and Buddhist temples of the highest elegance; and an eastern one, which is illustrative of the island's Hindu art in its decadence. Scheltema\(^{11}\) gives an excellent detailed description of architecture in Java. He says that the Javanese lived and meditated and wrought, impressing their mentality upon the material world given for their use; and so they created marvels of beauty, developed an architecture which belongs preeminently to their luxuriant soil under the clear blue of their sky, in the brilliant light of their sun.

In further breaking down into territorial divisions the architectural contributions of Java, the luminous description of

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Scheltema should be included here. For example, with regard to West Java, he says, "The story of the development of architecture in the island from the immaturity identified with 'Pajajaran' to the luxurious 'grandeur of the temple of Prambanan, the Mendoot, and the Borobudoor, hides a riddle no less strange than that of the bursting forth of Arabic poetry, full blown in all its subtleness of thought, exuberance of imagination, perfection of language."

The temples in the region of the Dieng (Javanese - 'adi aeng', meaning 'marvelously beautiful') belong to the oldest, finest and perhaps the largest of Java. How culture rose, declined, and fell here is not known. Its memory lived only as a fantastic tale for four centuries. Meanwhile the Dieng remained utterly deserted, a wilderness of mountains and forests, inhabited by devils and demons. Since 1880, it has been resettled and its villages have increased in size and in number. Two examples of temples in the Dieng plateau are 'Chendi Arjuno' which means Arjuno Temple, which possesses majestic beauty, and Chandi Wergodoro, the largest remaining one, and the most beautiful temple on the Dieng.

The vast plain of Prambanan which extends southward from the foot of the Merapi, one of Java's most active volcanoes, was studded with Sivaite and Buddhist temples. They were named aft-

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13/ Ibid., p. 59
er gods, demi-gods and heroes of romance, after villages or their general position. Examples in this area are the Siva Temple, Chandi Loro Jonggrang being the largest of this group. The material used in construction was a kind of trachyite which originally yellowish and hard to chisel into shape, has assumed a dark gray color. It is extremely beautiful, and reminds one of a series of square blocks, placed at random, resulting in a delightful structure with an Oriental flavor.

The most notable example in Central Java is the watercastle at Jogjakarta which conveys some notion of the manner in which royal personages sought recreation, amusing themselves in their parks of delight, and toying with their women in and around the crystalline fluid. The building of the water castle, whose pavilions, artificial lakes, tanks, and gardens spread over an area of about twenty-five acres, was begun in 1758 by a Burginese architect.

About 928 A. D., East Java awakened and entered on an era of artistic activity in every direction, which lasted until six centuries later. Here Hindu civilization made greatest progress, no more in the vigorous enthusiasm of a young faith eager to proselyte, but modified by and finally succumbing to the influence of the soil, the climate, the idiosyncrasies of the aborigines. Examples include the Chandi Papoh, Chandi Singasari,

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15/ Ibid., pp. 99-140
and Chandi Fanataron, which is the most beautiful of the group, and with the exception of Borobudour, the largest on the entire island. It was discovered by an American, Thomas Hosefield.\(^{16/}\)

The most comsummate achievement of Buddhist architecture in the whole world is that of the Borobudour! It is a commensurate introduction to the holiest in gradation of majestic beauty. Poortenaar,\(^{17/}\) an artist who ventured into the tropics, describes the Borobudour as follows:

"Rich beyond power of description in ornament, yet highly monumental; baroque and classical; exuberant and restrained; fragile and massive; severe, yet full of mystery; it is the incarnation of the inevitable and eternal, beyond earthly understanding. It is the universe itself symbolized in carven stone. Obscure is its origin, like the ages which brought it forth. The Javanese regime which fell in the eighth century of our era is lost in the mists of antiquity; but here in this phantasmagoria of breathing stone, the spiritual life of those dark powers lives on, and hears its inscrutable witness to their passing. Since the 8th century when it was built, the temple has borne that witness."\(^{18/}\)

The Buddhas' are set throughout the temple like jewels, several hundreds of them. Tempests and earthquakes of a thousand years


\(^{17/}\) Jan Poortenaar, *An Artist in the Tropics* (London: Low, Marston & Co., Ltd., 1928)

\(^{18/}\) Ibid., p. 54
have damaged some, but left the beauty of many others seemingly unimpaired. No temple for men, no abode of gods is this stupa. Every Buddha is a beam of the eternal light radiating across the earthly land. Borobudour is a beacon for all things that are. 'Like a tree which fulfills itself with the falling of ripened fruit, Old Java left this richest treasure on the earth. Reverence and care have recently reconstructed it. For the greater part of a thousand years time and neglect have had their way at the hill of Borobudour. And far away in the valley the laborer working in his field may throw up or bury again one of the ancient, exquisite treasures of the sacred hill.'

Two examples from Buddhist Java which deserve mention here are Chandi Kalasan which once was one of the finest and most elaborately wrought in the island, though now it has deteriorated pitifully; and Chandi Sari. The latter is termed as a 'rare gem of architectural workmanship.'

The Majapahit Period of Javanese Culture has two worthy gifts for civilization. They are as follows: The Early Majapahit - 1300-01 A. D. - Chandi Papoh. It's elegance is in the squat, cubical form. The Later Majapahit - 1359 A. D. - Chandi Jaboeng, which attests the vitality of Javanese architecture even at such a late period. There is a transition from a square

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base to a circular body.21/

BALI

'It's very impermanence has preserved Balinese architecture as a living art.'

First of all, just what is meant by the 'living' architecture of Bali? Hiss22/gives an excellent description in answer to that question. He states that the materials employed generally are soft-stone or equally impermanent brick, the only other available material is coral which is seen on a few beach temples. Therefore, there is ever present a spirit of growth, rebuilding, thus making the art live! The renewal of temples goes on indefinitely. Consequently, there are no ruins in Bali to awe the traveler with memories of her glorious past, as does the Borobudoor in Java, despite the fact that many ancient forms have been carried over into the new. Hiss states that Bali possesses a living culture, but few tangible evidences of a forgotten age. The size of a temple gives little indication of its holiness, but rather it acts as an index to the wealth of a community. Figures in temples are generally decorative and are not worshipped. Most shrines are empty, and serve as resting places for the gods. No temple is ever without its offerings. The


22/ Philip Hanson Hiss, Bali (New York: Riverside Museum Press, 1941)
Balinese are faithful to their gods, and have been richly rewarded.

The architect is more anonymous than the dancer. In reality, he is a master builder, but he is also the peasant working in 'sawahs' and the musician in the 'gamelan.' His work is a contribution to his village. It is also his recreation and the outlet for his artistic expression and abilities.

Northern Balinese architecture is more extreme, not redundant, and having had longer contact with Europeans, used only European subjects in some of its temple reliefs, but regretably employed corrugated iron roofs as well.

The layout of a town is determined primarily by tradition. The same rule applies to the plan of a house and an orientation of a temple. Both houses and temples are a series of buildings enclosed by a high wall rather than a single roofed structure, and the most noticeable thing about a Balinese village is its walled streets with high gates. One may not look into a house from a road for these gates are backed by screens to prevent the passage of demons. Houses are usually without ornament, and are hardly the source of much material for the student of architecture, but temples are lavishly decorated and are often extremely intricate in design.

SUMATRA

The most important architectural contributions of Sumatra are sacred and ceremonial structures that were formerly characteristic of the Batak region of this island. They are
the temple of Asahan and Simeloengoem, the grave shrine of Taba, and the grave house of Simeloengoen. The 'parsoeroan' or temple at Asahan is a small rectangular structure, so small in fact, that it holds only six or eight adults. It is a sacred enclosure that made up the equivalent of a temple. It was entered only to place offerings therein. They were removed when the spirits were supposed to have consumed the 'tandi', soul stuff of the offerings. The little temple rests on poles or boards which are equally as tall as the structure itself. A platform under the temple acts as a resting place for spirits. The lower jaw and horns of the water buffalo remain from the initial sacrifices at the dedication of the temple.23/

The 'andjapan' or altar has three essential features. They are a lower offering place which is set off by a fringe of shredded palm leaves; the platform for the main offering; the tall posts at the front corners, where hangs fruit of the betel nut; and two banboos split at the top and splayed into conical receptacles for containing special offerings.24/

The 'djoro'25/or spirit house is a place where the ancestral spirits are worshipped, and where offerings were made.


24/ Ibid., p. 3, Pl. IV

25/ Ibid., p. 6, Pl. IX
The curious structure on the roof suggests a bird or a boat of some sort. Each wall has crude pictures painted thereon. At the front there is a human figure; at the center, a bird. Some of the paintings are purely magical, while others apparently are used in substitution for offerings.

The 'pendawanen' is a burial enclosure. Ordinarily a body is buried, and the burial place is surrounded by bamboo fences, within which are grown many kinds of sacred plants. The grave is covered by a very neatly made little house, with a single lengthwise gable. For a chief, crossed gables with umbrella or steeple like structure through the center is used. This makes it resemble the 'roemah tersek', which is the most elaborate house type of the village.26/

You are not to forget the linear form of the curved roof which curved upward to the sky. This is a characteristic of the domestic architecture in this territory. They are constructed in such a way as to resemble the horns of a buffalo.

NEW GUINEA AND BORNEO

Architecture on these islands does not extend the gamut of elegance as it does in Java, Bali or Sumatra. But rather the architectural achievements here are found in the crude settlements, ceremonial houses and tree houses, particularly in New Guinea.

According to Firth,\(^{27}\) there is no uniformity of type of settlement. The compact aggre
tation of houses in a village is most usual, sometimes huddled around by a de
defensive stockade; sometimes straggling along the banks of a river; sometimes ar
ranged in a symmetrical pattern. The style of the village is related to the aesthetic life of its people. For instance, the presence of the dancing ground implies recreational and ceremonial events which call forth all the arts of personal ornament and ritual costume, while on the buildings the craft of the woodcarver and decorator is expended. Some tribes house their foodstuffs better than themselves, the motive here being to display his wealth of food. Firth\(^{28}\) says that the best store huts have decorated large boards on a Gothic-like gable, and the carving is done by a master craftsman, perhaps even the Chief himself. Streamers and shells are hung on the hut to enhance the effect. Domestic structures are much simpler. The posts which are characteristic of a club house bears designs which are primarily badges of the clan, and comprise such motifs as garfish jaws, a crab-slaw sail, a hornbill, a cockatoo, or a snake.

Most everyone is familiar with the tree houses of New Guinea.\(^{29}\) Such houses as these were used by tribes inland from Port Moresby as a refuge from hostile raids. However, nowadays,


\(^{28}\) Ibid., Illustration, p. 17
These dwellings are no longer required. In their construction the tops of trees were cut off, and a small rectangular hut-like house was built thereon. Crude bamboo ladders were made, and used as the means for getting to the top.

The ceremonial house\(^{30}\) is a huge structure that may be a hundred or so feet long and sixty feet tall. It is given a patterned thatch roof and walls, and is supported on enormous carved posts. Each gable is ornamented by a great carved face and surmounted by a finial in the form of a winged bird and men figures, an emblem of the men of the clan. Inside the house are all sorts of ceremonial paraphernalia, heavy slit-gongs, sacred bamboo flutes which no woman must see, masks and ritual stools, all carved and beautifully adorned.

Therewith is a summary of the most important architectural achievements in the Netherlands East Indies. It is by no means complete to every detail, but it does include those structures which are of greatest interest.

CHAPTER III

SCULPTURE AND PAINTING

"It is the crowning virtue of all great art, that however little is left of it by the injuries of time, that little will be lovely."

The largest amount of East Indian sculpture consists of temple decorations, expressing all its tropical nature, "with abundance and exuberance, and including in its conceptions all the cosmos." For further investigation, let us look at the contributions of each of the islands.

JAVA

Most of the ancient statuettes and ancient figurines are made of bronze and gold. They are representative of Ganeca, Durga, Mahadera, Vishnu, Buddha, Calsyamuni, and other religious figures of note. The figures are either standing or seated, with hands in their laps. They are richly decorated with arm and ankle rings, chains, high tiara, umbrella, halo, et cetera. For more accurate descriptions, for example, Ganeca, who is the God of Wisdom has an elephant head; Durga, the Goddess of Death has eight hands; Mahadera, the God and Lord of the


32/ C. M. Pleyte, Indonesian Art (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1901), In portfolio, pp. 13, 23, 29
Universe has four arms, and Vishnu, the God of Sun and Light is dressed as a warrior and armed with a club. The masterpiece of this group is Prajnaparmita, who is the Goddess of Nature. It was found in the woods near Malang, in 1819.\textsuperscript{33} The head-dress, ornaments and articles of dress are elaborately worked. This statue is made of volcanic stone.

Scheltema\textsuperscript{34} discusses sculpture in territorial sections in much the same fashion in which he has treated Javanese architecture. Examples of works of art of note in West Java are evident in the ruins of Fort Speelwijk and the minaret of Pangeron, Muhammad's mosque at Old Bantam. 'Kramati' or holy graves are a familiar sight. They consist, generally of pieces of wood or stone, standing upright at both ends, at the head and at the feet, differently shaped for men and women. The Parajaran type of sculpture is evident here. This is a primitive petrified group, which to be understood requires a great imagination on the part of the person who is beholding it.

From these crude attempts at a representation of animate creation sprang an art which in the hands of master-builders and sculptors of Central Java, who sought the beauty of truth that is verily without a rival, flowered out in prayers of stone, visible tokens of their yearning for heavenly reward, born of communion with the divine in deep reflection, only to descend

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{33} C. M. Pleyte, \textit{Indonesian Art} (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1901), In portfolio, p. 29
\item \textsuperscript{34} J. F. Scheltema, \textit{Monumental Java} (London: Macmillan & Co., 1912), pp. 23-39
\end{itemize}
again in the 'decadent conventionality of the later eastern Hindu empires.'

A notable example of sculpture of the Dieng territory would be in the busts found in niches on the Chandi Wergodoro. It would give one the impression of windows with people extending their heads to see just whom is disturbing their quiet. These curious persons look out only at the back of the temple, and at the sides. The niches of the roof in front, over the projecting porch are all empty.

The Prambanan reliefs which are found at the base of the temples is a magnificent piece of sculpture which is highly dramatic, and yet within the limits of plastic art. The human birds and other mythical animals under the trees, the prayer-bells and garlanded foliage, enhance the charm of this ingenious decoration. According to Scheltema, one of the salient features of the decoration here, indeed of all Javanese art is 'the representation of animal life as an important factor in human destiny'. On a whole, the reliefs depict active figures, portraying a gamut of emotional expressions, highly decorative and well done.

If you remember the discussion of the 'water-castle' of Central Java in the chapter on Architecture, perhaps you will be

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36/ Ibid., p. 60
37/ Ibid., pp. 69-98
concerned about the sculptural contributions to be found there. Hardly a trace remains of the delicately carved wood-work there, but some foliage and birds among flowers, executed in stucco, give evidence of good taste which knows how to make old motives subservient to new requirements.

It is generally an impossibility to divorce sculpture from architecture. For example, the whole of the basement moulding of Chandi Panataran is made up of eight great serpents, two on each face, whose upraised breasts in the center form the side pieces of the steps that lead to the central building. Other figures are evident, plus the 'raksasa', which is the guardian of the ruins of the principal structure. The skies in the scenery of the bas-relief are notable for their departure from smooth treatment, generally accorded Javanese sculpture. Angular and flat, they remind one of the Wayang puppets.\(^{38}\)

An excellent example of sculpture in Buddhist Java is the Chandi Plahosan, in so far as preserved are beautifully decorated with sculpture in bas-relief. The delicate tracery of the basement is divided by slender pilasters and the frieze beneath the symmetric cornice is richly festooned, parrots nesting in the foliage among the flowers.\(^{39}\) The scenes represented by the reliefs are those which are familiar to the observer of native life. The 'raksasa' of the Chandi Sewu in this area

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\(^{39}\) Ibid., pp. 186-206
is a huge Buddha, kneeling on one leg with a snake across his body. He is fat with eyes which seem to fairly pop from his head.

And, as usual when reference is made to Java, the Borobudur presents the world with an even greater degree of elegance and refinement in statuary than in any other sector. It is to be compared with anything in the best age of Indian sculpture. For example in the interior of the Chandi Mendoot, the statues of Buddha and other religious figures are superb! Many were destroyed by that pest of so many artistic valuables, in the person of the tourist. Many are headless, and a large portion of this might well be attributed to the crowned heads of many countries.

Painting in Java does not make the contribution which sculpture does, though the work on the panels are most exciting and one should be familiar with them. From the portfolio of Pleyte, are to be found reproductions of these panels. These were painted by Teka Vinangun from Surakarta. They represent scenes in sequence. There are many figures on each panel. Generally they tell the story of a play, and in this case, the play is 'The Lakon Sumantri Lelano'.

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41/ C. M. Pleyte, Indonesian Art (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1901), In portfolio, pp. 27, 49, 55 & Illustrations
BALI

Little Balinese statuettes are usually made of wood. The subject matter, which includes lions, apes, and various other types of animals are painted bright reds. The art motif is distinctly Chinese, despite the fact that they are made in Bali. When gods are used as subject matter, they are painted dark browns, greens, and yellows. Generally they are exquisitely attired, colorful sarongs, with elaborate ornamental decoration. Those in Pleyte's series\footnote{C. M. Pleyte, Indonesian Art (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1901), In portfolio, pp. 11, 39, 52} come from Buleleng.

The specific function of sculpture is to add beauty to construction and form of the Balinese public buildings in the community. Bali is obviously the land of many sculptors, for practically everything is carved, be it temple, palace walls, gates, towers, public baths, court house, et cetera.\footnote{Miguel Covarrubias, Island of Bali, (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1937), p. 181}

The sculptors are in charge of designing, directing and working themselves in the construction of a temple. They are assisted by a number of stone and brick workers. Unlike theatre, music and sculpture, painting was in little evidence as a living art earlier. Outside of painting artifacts of daily use and scant decorations for temples, the Balinese made only paintings of two sorts. These are carefully discussed by Covarrubias.\footnote{Ibid., p. 188} These two are 'ider-ider', strips

\footnote{42/ C. M. Pleyte, Indonesian Art (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1901), In portfolio, pp. 11, 39, 52}

\footnote{43/ Miguel Covarrubias, Island of Bali, (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1937), p. 181}

\footnote{44/ Ibid., p. 188}
of handmade cotton a foot wide and fifteen or twenty feet long, which were hung at festivals under the roofs, all around pavilions in houses and temples; and 'langse,' which involved wide pieces of painted cloth used as hangings or curtains. Often paintings represented scenes of mythology, episodes and battles from literary epics. Seldom if ever were scenes from daily life used, and never contemporary subjects. Only old paintings showed skill and taste, perhaps this is because of the invariable rules which had to be followed by painters of conservative style. These rules stated that all available space must be covered by the design; when there were many episodes to a story, each must be separated from the next by a conventional row of mountains or flames, with the heroes repeated in various attitudes. Battle scenes are crowded, bloody and desperate, a 'tangle of arms, legs, blood-spattered bodies, with all spaces filled by flying arrows and strange weapons!'

Everything is restricted for the painter, his subjects, types, composition and colors. For flesh tones, he must use light ochre for refined complexions, and dark ochre for evil ones. Jewelry is yellow, and costumes are red, blue, and on some occasions, yellow and green. Balinese painters have on their palette a Chinese vermillion red; blue from a vegetable indigo; yellow from clay; mineral ochre; black, which is soot with vegetable juices; and white from calcinated pigs' bones.

SUMATRA

Not only is sculpture a part of architecture, in the
land of Sumatra, but it must also be mentioned in terms of gravestones and sarcophagi as most outstanding contributions. In an attempt to analyze the sarcophagi illustrated in Bartlett's study, it is noted that the general form is the atypical houselike or boat like construction. (Upwardly curved ridge line). The sphinx-like Batak lion of these Samosir graves has nothing in common with the dog-like Chinese lion, the tradition of which reached China overland by way of Central Asia, whereas the Batak lion tradition must have reached Sumatra by way of the coast of India.

Perhaps the sacrificial stone should be mentioned at this point. It is hollow in its construction. Portions of liquid which were known as 'purifying liquids' were poured into the stone. In general fragrant, and strongly odorous offerings were used. When the stone was not in use, it was covered over with earth or with palm leaves or mats, and it could be uncovered only by the man who was placed in charge, known as the 'Datoe'.

There isn't much in the way of painting in Sumatra, but it is fitting that you become acquainted with the paintings which were done on the walls of structures. They are very crude. The subject matter consists of things which it is hoped that the spirit may be able to utilize. For example, flutes,


\[46\] Ibid., p. 26, Pl. 24
sugar palm trees, implements for collecting palm juice for wine, domestic forl, blunderbuss for defense, and nets for fishing. Others show fish and dogs. There are expected to represent food for the spirits.

BORNEO

Three pigments are used in painting in Borneo. They are red, black and white, made respectively from soot, iron oxides, and lime; the only native varieties. At present, sometimes these are supplemented with indigo and yellow pigments which are obtained from the bazaars. The pigment generally is applied with finger-tips, free hand, with a few guiding points being put in.

Wooden surfaces are often painted on the flat, for example, painting on the shields, and the outer surfaces of walls, of 'padi' huts and tombs, also grave huts and the gunwales of boats and decorative planks in the inner walls of the long gallery of the house.

The best examples of arts approaching sculpture in Borneo will be included in the chapter on 'Decorative Arts'.

NEW GUINEA

Carving in wood is a craft in which all the people of these islands excell. There is not too much important sculpture or painting as such, in New Guinea. There are to be found invaluable contributions primarily in arts, crafts, decoration, and in ornament.
CHAPTER IV

ARTS, CRAFTS AND ORNAMENT

Each of the so-called 'minor arts' of the Netherlands East Indies is extremely fascinating, and affords hours of pleasure to not only the foreigner, but also to the craftsman as well. Let us explore these art activities, and weigh their value according to our experience.

JAVA

The creation of the art of batik is credited by some authorities to the native Javanese. But it is known that ornamentation by means of a reserve process was practised by early Sumerians, Egyptians and later Peruvians, all of whom employed it for both potteries and weaves. However, if not created by the Javanese, surely they developed it to its highest perfection. For centuries, batik has been the local industry of the isle. However, at the present time the palaces of the sultans of central Java are the only places where this art is carried on in perfect accordance with traditional rules. They manufacture silk and cotton cloth which is worn by the natives, especially by the native women. Some of the work is fine, and the patterns are prettily fancied. (See Ill. Nos. 1, 2, 3.) The loom ap-

paratus for weaving is extremely defective and renders their progress tedious.

The women of Java are particularly talented, and they are experts at embroidery work using the gold and silver thread which is procured from China.

Scheltema\textsuperscript{48} says that the story of decline is written in the evolution of decorative design: the significance of motives based on the observation of the earth and her precious gifts, "evaporates gradually in nicely waving lines, elaborate scrolls, and insipid fineries. The kala-head changes into the roots of a tree, roots, trunks, foliage and all, with the sun rising over the forest, with mountains touching the sky, with rivers flowing into the sea, into conventional ornament."

The art of casting in metal is applied to a series of religious utensils, lamps, insense burners, and the like. They show magnificent power of design and execution.

The Javanese bronzes, though related to Indian prototypes, according to Gangoly,\textsuperscript{49} offer many unique qualities and are easily differentiated by their peculiar characteristics. They deserve a study by themselves. The art of casting in bronze probably carried from Southern India, was extensively practised in Java, and has left quite a group of masterpieces of great distinction in ideas and execution. It is possible that many


\textsuperscript{49} O. C. Gangoly, \textit{The Art of Java} (Calcutta: Clive Press) p. 35
were taken from South India to Java. Some outstanding examples are the Standing Siva; the Leiden Bronze Mahisasura, which is a masterpiece of Hindu sculpture contributed by artists of Java, Of which there are a few rivals; and the Seated Dhyani Bodhisattva, which is a distinct contribution.

Ancient and modern ceremonial utensils must be included at this point. Among them are prayer bells which are bronze, or brass with highly decorative handlea; incense burners in bronze, brass with an engraved pattern, usually in the form of a lotus, with a wooden handle. Illustrations is Pleyte's portfolio included a series of cups. These cups were either silver and pearl, bronze and pearl or plain silver with an engraved ornament. The bronze Zodiacal cups which date as far back as the 13th century, portray signs of the Zodiac.

BALI

In sharp contrast with their super-elaborated sculpture, painting and dramatic arts, are the purely functional objects of daily use found in every home. These include implements of labor, simple, but effective, made of bamboo, wood and iron, walls of split bamboo, cool mats for sleeping which are made of finely woven pandanus leaf, light and yet strong baskets and picket-books, and the clay bessels which are used to keep the water cool. Their love of display often goes to extremes, as in the

C. M. Pleyte, Indonesian Art (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1901) In portfolio, p. 41
cade of costly towers, biers, and other accessories for the cremation of their dead, which are destroyed in a few minutes after hundreds of guilders and months of labor are spent in producing them.

The most important examples of weapons are the krisses, which are the famous weapons of important Indonesian men, but currently, they are worn only as symbols and ornaments.

On Bali, as well as in Java, women still make the famous batik cloth that is used for the finest sarongs. The procedure which Carpenter gives is a detailed description of the process. They begin with a strip of white cotton cloth about six feet by three. With sure eyes and clever fingers, they make tracings with hot liquid wax that flows from a tiny brass cup, like ink from a pen. The wax follows the pattern that has been sketched on the cloth. When the cloth is dyed, the waxed parts do not take in the color; thus they make a design. For sarongs of more than one color, the process is repeated again and again. It may take months to produce the finest batik, but the finished sarong brings high prices. The dyes come from the native indigo, and the barks and juices of native plants.

Wood-carving in Bali has suffered a curious transformation. Previously they were made for utilitarian purposes, such as beams for houses, carved doors, musical instruments, masks

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52/ Miguel Covarrubias, Island of Bali (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1937) p. 195
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for dramatic shows, handles for implements, even little statues of deities, and other ritual accessories. The conventional Balinese style includes flowers, curlicues in high relief for flat surfaces, and for sculpture in the round. Further all wood carvings were meant to be covered with paint, lacquer or gold leaf and only in exceptional cases was the wood left in its raw state. There were unusual pieces, but they were freaks among the predominate styles. Tourists bought these, later developing mass production 'objet d'art'. The mercenary element entered and soon is to command.

The Balinese also excell in the art of working metals, from simple agricultural implements of iron, the parts of musical instruments, and the accessories of priests cast in brass, to the extravagant gold and silver platters, water-bottles and vases, the knives and scissors for cutting betel-nut of wrought iron inlaid in silver, and the rich and elaborate rings, bracelets, ear-plugs and flowers for the hair in hammered and chiseled gold set with rubies and star-sapphires.  

Some of the unusually beautiful examples of this sort of work in Bali, are a carved screen which is made of hard teakwood. The figure in the center of the screen is painted brown with a reddish tint. It represents 'Garuda' in war-dress, armed for battle. He is surrounded by lotus flowers. The ground is

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painted black, showing a tiger, peacock, boar, and deer. It is used to place on each side of the main entrance in the wall which is surrounding the courtyard of Balinese houses, to prevent passerbys from viewing the interiors.

Another example of this type of work is a carved wooden litter.\(^{54}\) The ornament on this consists chiefly of lotus pattern with combined stems. The shole is fastened by horizontal poles. It is supported on the shoulders of four bearers. It has a canopy resting on four pillars. It is used chiefly in the village processions. The litter is exquisitely decorated in rich allover patterns.

The pottery waterbottles have decorative stoppers with solid stems and wooden flowers fastened on brass wire spirals which if moved, vibrate. Illustrations are found in Pleyte's collection.\(^{55}\)

The ceremonial utensils are very much like those which are used in Java. They include a brass prayer bell with the thunderbolt design, which is used by priests; plain silver cups; a silver jar on a brass tripod, which is designed with lions and lotus; a brass lamp; and a silver sacrificial dish which is used in carrying the fruit in the procession accompanying the aforementioned carved litter.\(^{56}\)

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\(^{54}\) C. M. Pleyte, *Indonesian Art* (The Hague, Nijhoff, 1901) In portfolio, p. 9

\(^{55}\) Ibid., p. 54

\(^{56}\) Ibid.; p. 9
SUMATRA

One of the most outstanding features of crafts on this island is that of the larger than life-sized wooden dolls which have jointed limbs. They are made to dance at the feasts of the dead, in order to placate the spirits of the departed. They have moveable eyelids, and they even weep - but this is with the assistance of a moist sponge which is placed on the head-dress. They are dressed in costly costumes, with an elaborate head kerchief. Some wear masks and stick out their tongues. The Sumatran masks are lifelike and 20th century modern in their design and construction. Illustrations are found in Schnitger's volume.57/

Jewelry pieces which were most impressive to this writer are the gold earrings which are shaped like crescent moons, and finely chiseled bands of gold which are worn about the maiden's head.

Sumatran ceremonial utensils are very much like those of the Javanese and Balinese culture.58/

There has been no manufacture in any part of the world which is more admired and celebrated than the fine gold and silver filigree of Sumatra, according to Marsden.59/

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57/ F. M. Schnitger, Forgotten Kingdoms in Sumatra, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1939), Pls. IX, X, XII
58/ Ibid., Pls. XXXVII
59/ William Marsden, History of Sumatra (London: Marsden, 1811), p. 179
Decorative Designs from Romeo
The working tools are rudely formed from any old iron which the craftsman might be able to procure. He carefully discusses the procedure in his volume.

The household ornaments formerly could be applied only after the man of the house had hunted a human head. The interior of a chief's house in South Nias has long rows of pig's jaws strewn along the wall. These are supposed to keep in the house the soul of the slaughtered animals. Underneath are beautifully carved cunning hooks in the shape of birds, volutes, and phalli. Further in the room one sees bottles, flat baskets with plates.

Borneo

Woodcarving is the most important and the most generally practised decorative art in Borneo. Much is done on very hard wood. It is commonly painted with black and red paint prepared from soot and iron oxide mixed with sugar cane juice or lime. The moist pigment is applied with the finger on larger surfaces, and the finer lines and edges are marked out with the aid of a chiseled stick of wood. In carving both in wood and ivory, the designs are always grotesque and out of nature. (See Ill. No. 4)

In studying the woodcarving of these people, one must include the implements of war, of the home, and of protection. The

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F. M. Schnitger, Forgotten Kingdoms in Sumatra (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1939) Pl. XXVII
shield, as described by McDougall\textsuperscript{61}/ is an oblong plate cut from a single piece of wood. Its ends are pointed more or less acutely; the length between the points is about four feet. The inner surfaces form a flat hollow; the outer is formed by two flat surfaces form a flat hollow; the outer is formed by two flat surfaces meeting in a flat obtuse angle or ridge extending from point to point. The grain of wood runs longitudinally. The handle, carved of some solid block of wood as body of the shield, is in the middle of the concave surface; it is a simple vertical bar for the grasp of the left hand. The Kayan tribe shield is commonly stained red with iron oxide, and touched up with black pigment, but it is not otherwise decorated.

The portable cradles made of wood are supports for babies when they are carried on the backs. Two plaited bands pass under the armpits, so it is carried like a knap-sack. They are highly decorative, some with the figure of an angry warrior defending himself against dogs. This is a conventional design.\textsuperscript{62}/

The dishes used by the people of Borneo are made of carved wood. The inside is burnt black with a white star in the middle. The center is inlaid with round pieces of blued preserve tin in a conventional design. These are used only by the higher class women.\textsuperscript{63}/


\textsuperscript{62}/ C. M. Pleyte, Indonesian Art (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1901) p. 17

\textsuperscript{63}/ Ibid., p. 37
Other articles which should be mentioned include knife-handles, which are made of brown wood, and carved in the shapes of monstrous animals; and swords, which have iron blades and are made of brown wood or deer horn handles. Designs are placed on the upper part of the blade.

The native barkcloth is made from the bark of trees of several species, kumut, ipoh and wild fig. The material used according to Hose is the fibrous layer beneath the outer bark. A large sheet of it is laid on a wooden block and beaten with heavy wooden club until rendered soft and pliable. A piece of the required size and shape is cut from the sheet, and sewn across the direction of the fibres. Before European needles were introduced, the stitching was done by piercing holes with a small awl and pushing the thread through the hole after withdrawing the awl.

The use of iron claims first place with the Kayans because of its high importance to them and the skill and knowledge displayed by them in the difficult operations by which they produce their fine swords. They obtain their iron from Europe in the form of bars of iron and steel. The peculiarly shaped and

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finely tempered swordblade 'malat' is the highest product of the Kayan blacksmith. Many blades are elaborately decorated, with scroll designs along the posterior border and inlaid with brass. The inlaid brass commonly takes the form of a number of small discs let into the metal near the thick edge; small holes are punched through the hot metal and brass wires passed through each hole. The designs are placed on the cold metal with a chisel and hammer supplemented by a file, then polished and sharpened in several stages. Other implements fashioned by the smiths are the small knives, spearheads, hoes, small adzes, rods for boring the sumpitan, the anvil, and the various hammers, and chisels, and rough files used by the smiths.

The bamboo decorations are worked out very simply, but none the less effectively. Articles decorated are drinking cups, the tobacco boxes, tubes for carrying flint and steel, and various oddities. Varieties of the dog pattern and hook and circle are used almost exclusively. The design is left in low relief, and is of the natural color of the bamboo upon a black or dark red ground, or on a ground merely darkened by the parallel scratches.

Weaving of baskets, mats and caps is one of the most important handicrafts of the Kayans. It is practised chiefly by women, though the men assist in collecting and preparing the materials. Strips of rattan are chiefly used. The commonest arrangement is for two sets of strips to cross one another at right angles, each strip passing over and under two of the 'op-
posed set. The basketwork is very pliable, tough and durable. Standard shapes are worked out with great precision. According to Hose, dyeing of strips is effected by soaking them in dye which is obtained by beating out in water the soft stem and leaves of a plant known as tarum. The dark stain is rendered still blacker by subsequently burying the strips in the mud of the river for some ten days, or by washing them in lime. Dye is then jet black with a fine polished surface, and the dye is quite permanent.

Lashing with strips of rattan and with coarse fibres from the leaf stem of some of the palms and ferns is applied to a great variety of purposes, and largely takes the place of our nailing and screwing and riveting. It is carried out extremely neatly and commonly has a decorative effect. This effect is in some cases enhanced by combining blackened threads with those of the natural pale yellow color. The finest lashing is done by the Kalabits, who cover small bamboo boxes with a layer of close-set lashing, producing pleasing geometrical designs by the combination of yellow and black threads.

Old Beads are very much valued and every family possesses them. Formerly they were principal forms of currency, and they still constitute an important part of the wealth of

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many families. They are put to many decorative uses, women's head bands, center of the sun hat, sword sheaths, cigarette boxes, nape of the neck of the war coat, and in some instances they decorate jackets of women.

The most important article of the women is the heavy brass earring.\textsuperscript{69} The common form is a simple ring of solid metal interrupted at one point by a gap about an eighth of an inch wide, through which is pulled the thin band of skin formed by stretching the lobule of the ear. Brass corsets are made for Iban women, tweezers for pulling out the hair of the face, and various small articles. They make use of the larger brassware of Malay and Chinese origin as the source of their material.

The large flat circular hat worn by the Kayans for protection against sun and rain. They are made from large leaves of a palm. The large, fluted leaves are pressed flat and dried; when the flutes form ribs diverging from the stem. The center is generally finished with a disc of metal or strong cloth on the outer surface.\textsuperscript{70}

Shells are sometimes applied by women to decorate their woven coats, and more rarely by other tribes in the decoration of their baskets.

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., p. Vol 1.

\textsuperscript{70} McDougall Hose, Pagan Tribes of Borneo (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1912), p. 214
According to Hose,\textsuperscript{71} the forest offers the natives an abundant variety of timbers suitable for different types of boats used by them. The most ambitious efforts of this kind are devoted to the construction of the great war boats, fine specimens of which are as much as one hundred feet in length, and more. The foundation of every boat is a single piece of timber shaped and hollowed by fire and adze. The prow is often ornamented with the head of a crocodile or the conventional dog's head carved in hard wood and painted in red and black. In emergencies, Sea Dayaks can complete a boat in a course of two hours.

The finest product of native Bornean craftsmanship, according to Hose\textsuperscript{72} is the 'sumpitan' or blow-pipe. The best are made from the hard straight-grained wood of the jagang tree. The poison is prepared from the sap of the Ipoh tree, Antiaris Toxicaria. The milky sap runs out when the bark is incised, and collected into a bamboo cup. It is heated slowly over a fire in a trough made from the leaf stem of a palm until it becomes a thick paste of dark purple brown color. The poison, when applied to darts, is worked into a thinner paste on a palette with a spatula. The quiver for carrying darts is a section of bamboo about four inches in diameter and ten inches in length, fitted with a cap which fits over the shaved lip of the main piece.

\textsuperscript{71}Ibid., p. 199

Chinese Influence in Designs from Borneo
Masks are carved in wood. They portray enormous eyes and noses, elaborated carved ears which are painted black and white. The ones illustrated in Pleyte's collection were used for dancing.

The importation of earthenware and of cooking pots of brass and iron almost has put an end to the native manufacture of pottery. Those who made no pots boiled their rice and sago in bamboos. The earthenware cooking pot is a simple egg shaped vessel, one end of which is open and surrounded by a low everted lip or collar. (For evidences of the Chinese influence in design of Borneo see Ill. No. 3).

The battle attire of the people of Borneo is very interesting. The war coat is made of the skin of a bear or of the tiger-cat (for distinguished chiefs). The whole of the skin in one piece is used, except belly and lower fore limbs which are cut away. A large pearly shell usually adorns the lower end of the anterior flap. The warriors arms are left free, but unprotected. In the finest coats there is a patch of brightly colored beadwork at the nape of the neck, and the back flap is adorned with rows of loosely dangling hornbill feathers; but these again are considered appropriate only to the coats of warriors of proved valor.

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73/ C. M. Pleyte, Indonesian Art (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1901) p. 17
75/ Ibid., pp. 161-63
Decorative Designs from the Gorica
The war cap is a round closely fitting cap which is woven of stout rattans split in halves longitudinally. It affords good protection to the skull against the stroke of the sword. It is adorned with two of the long black and white barred feathers of the hornbill's tail in the case of any man who has earned this distinction by taking part in successful expeditions.

NEW GUINEA

Primitive tools such as an axe, adze with a blade of stone was used in woodcarving, and hollowing out of a canoe was sometimes assisted by fire. The teeth of animals was sometimes employed, or sharp shell and a fragment of quartz. Pumice or sharkskin was used as a rasp. The drill worked between the palms of the hand. One must marvel at the ingenuity and accuracy of the hand and eye which accomplished such results with such primitive tools. According to Firth, other than carving, works included clay modelling, pokerwork on gourds and bamboo tobacco pipes; setting seeds in patterns on a paste foundation, or sowing seeds or cowrie shells on to plaited bands; coloring surfaces with soot, lime, red ochre, and clays, and arranging feathers on them; tattooing the body, and cicatrizing it in patterns of scars.

The four principal categories of designs are as follows:
(a) Geometrical patterns of angular type where a succession of

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Raymond Firth, Art and Life in New Guinea (London: The Studio, Ltd., 1936), p. 32
Designs from lime Pokolos New Guinea.
triangles are running through linear bands is a frequent theme.

(b) Curvilinear Patterns - spieal, plait, and serial interlocking scrolls are most common. (See Ill. No. 5)

(c) Natural objects which are highly conventionalized and at times difficult to identify and separate from the geometrical group. These include birds, hornbills, cassowary, animals and snakes. (See Ill. No. 6)

(d) Representations of the human form - anthropomorphs which but for our vanity would be included in zoological heading.\footnote{Ibid., p. 33}

The art of woodcarving is varied even in New Guinea, for different areas show different types of workmanship and design. Areas where woodcarving is most highly developed in New Guinea are in the central-north coast, Huron Gulf and the Eastern end known as Massim district. Nearly all of the best work is done on the small isle of Tami, or in a single village on the mainland, Taminugatu, where Tami islanders have settled. Original geniuses are not unknown, according to Lewis\footnote{Albert Buell Lewis, Decorative Art of New Guinea (Chicago: Field Museum, 1925), 52 plates} and in one instance all the finest carvings of a certain type found in a large district were traced to a singly individual who originated that style of workmanship which perished with his death. The works include spears, designs, dancing sticks, bamboo boxes, clubs, paddles, spatulas, cups, bracelets, and other small necessities. (See Ill. No. 7)
Illustrations from Lewis\textsuperscript{79} show designs from the Papuan Gulf area. It portrays variations of the human face and figure. This includes also interiors, partitions, tablets, ornamented shields, masks, bark belts, charms, coconu	shell spoons, tobacco pipes, wooden head ornaments, bull-roarers, loin cloths, ornamented wooden hooks and food bowls.

Canoes are used in New Guinea for ordinary communication and fishing. Three principal types are most popular, says Firth.\textsuperscript{80} They are the (a) simple dug out hull, (b) hull, with or without raised sides, stabilised by an outrigger, and the (c) multiple canoe formed of two or more hulls fastened together. The craft is carved by the owner or by a professional for a fee, and a broad design is painted upon it with slaked lime. It is then charred over a fire of coconu	leaves and the design repainted so that a clear contrast of black and white is obtained, while the carving is picked out by touching it up with lime and red ochre.

Among the most picturesque of New Guinea craft, and the most interesting sociologically,\textsuperscript{81} are the outrigger sailing canoes of Tami, with built up sides and balance platform heavily

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{79} Albert Buell Lewis, Carved and Painted Designs from New Guinea (Chicago: Field Museum, 1931), Introduction 52 pls.
\item \textsuperscript{80} Raymond Firth, Art and Life in New Guinea (London: The Studio, Ltd., 1936), p. 19
\item \textsuperscript{81} Raymond Firth, Art and Life in New Guinea (London: The Studio, Ltd, 1936) p. 19, 20
\end{itemize}
decorated. These are used to engage in commercial voyages, and
the lakatoi of the Motu, with several hulls joined together by
a platform and equipped with their well known crab-claw sails,
the most picturesque and spectacular feat of which is the an-
nual trading expedition to the Papuan Gulf, carrying a load of
pots to exchange for sago and canoe trunks; and the masawa of
the Trobriand Archipelago, outrigger craft with planks built up
on a dug-out foundation and closed at both ends by transversal
prow-boards, and constructed especially in order to carry out
expeditions in which elaborate ceremonial exchange, rather than
commercial barter, is the prime motive. A study of canoes of
this kind reveals how deeply art, industry, personal ambition
and magic are interrelated in the life of a New Guinea sea-faring
community.

The canoe builder is an expert whose skill commands re-
spect, is paid handsomely for his services. He is given a quan-
tity of food as an earnest to begin with, and as long as he is
at work other presents of food are made to him, with special
deainties, including pork, coconuts, and areca nut. After the
craft is finished, some such gift as a few hundred baskets of
yams, a pig, a large stone adze blade or a blet of red shell
discs is also made. "Without the magic of the craft, it is be-
lieved not only would it be slow and unwieldy, but it would run

\[82/\text{Ibid., p. 20}\]
\[83/\text{Raymond Firth, Art and Life in New Guinea (London: The Studio, Ltd.), p. 20}\]
The risk of being unsuccessful in the aims of the expedition and would not be safe-guarded from shipwreck.\footnote{83}

The idols are made of bamboo. Examples of several include 'Laelnu Gosaosa' - prevents fatigue, is fastened to the letter when chiefs are carried through the village; 'Sanuo Ira-ona' - cares for new born children; and, 'Upulero' - symbolizes light, and is a male figure squatting on a pole with elaborately formed figure. These are seen in Pleyte's collection.\footnote{84}

Two magic staffs are 'Tunggal Panaluan' which produces rain and 'Tukkot Malehat' which is a deity on horseback, used in war. The former is comprised of seven male and female figures.

The drums expend across the top. That top is covered with the skin of a lizard and is played by hand. The handle shows the conventional serpent, the lower end, a band of scale pattern. These are seen in Pleyte.\footnote{85}

\section*{SUMBA}

The isle of Sumba is primitive in its artistic contributions also. The shawls made by the Sumbans are of elegant quality and should be mentioned. One example, as seen in Pleyte\footnote{86}/

\footnote{\textsuperscript{83}} Raymond Firth, \textit{Art and Life in New Guinea} (London: The Studio, Ltd., p. 20

\footnote{\textsuperscript{84}} C. M. Pleyte, \textit{Indonesian Art} (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1901) In portfolio, p. 59

\footnote{\textsuperscript{85}} C. M. Pleyte, \textit{Indonesian Art} (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1901) In portfolio, p. 59

\footnote{\textsuperscript{86}} Ibid., p. 25
is of white cotton and fringe. It has a broad band in the middle, and is ornamented with human figures in pink on a purple ground. Bird are of pink and blue. Another is similar to the aforementioned one with the cassowaries (bird-like design) in pink and yellow striped tails. The lower band has the conventional horses with yellow manes and tails.

**DAMAR**

The idols which are carved in wood from the isle of Dammar are of various shapes. One has the shape of the female figure in a grotesque treatment, squatting on a square pole, which is decorated with exciting, carved patterns. The male figure is similar to the female, only it has a cylindrical carved end. These may be seen in Pleyte's collection.87/

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87/ Ibid., p. 25
Court Dancer - 5/6
CHAPTER V

MUSIC, DANCE AND DRAMA

JAVA

The dramatic art of the isle of Java probably had its origin from pre-Hindu religious observances. Scheltema\(^{38}\) quotes Dr. G. A. J. Hazeu as saying that it formed part of the ritual of the ancient faith, and even now the 'hadat' requires a sacrifice, the burning of incense, and such, before the play commences. The art of drama is commonly known as the 'wayang'. It is from the wayang-poorwa that the Javanese derive their ideas of past events. "This type performance knows nothing of showy accessories devised by and for our historians to hide poverty of mentality and poorness of acting, futile attempts to make up in settings, properties, costumes and trappings, tailoring, millinery and disproportionate finery what they lack in essentials. The performer sits under his lamp behind a white, generally red-bordered piece of cloth stretched over a wooden frame on which he projects the figures. He speaks for them and intersperses explanations and descriptions, directing the musicians with his gavel of wood or horn, striking disks of copper or brass to imitate alarums, excursions, et cetera.\(^{39}\)


\(^{39}\) Ibid., p. 171
Scheltema states further that the 'wayang gedog' is much less popular than the 'wayang poorwa', which draws its repertory principally from Indian epics.

In the 'wayang kelitik' or 'karucil', of later invention and never of a religious character, the puppets themselves are shown, rather than the shadow. In the 'wayang topeng' living actors perform. In the 'wayang beber' we find scenes displayed in the form of pictures. "Everyone finds in the 'wayang' of whatever description an echo of his innermost self."90/

BALI

'In Bali, the very business of life is expression; grace and beauty are ends in themselves; music and dancing are occupations of high prestige.'

Here the dance has reached its fullest expression. The dance, developing in the Balinese at infancy, is a part of his life. We find children, beginning their lessons, and finished dancers, not much older, taking their places with the stars of the land. Every Balinese can dance, and knows the choreography of his village. The patterns and movements of Balinese dance are graceful, yet varied. (See Ill. No. 8) Snakelike turning of the arms, and slow twistings of the body make up the intricate patterns that follow the rhythm of the gongs, drums and pipes.

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Frances Carpenter says that these slow, gentle movements are better suited to a climate such as Bali, than a more vigorous type of bodily expression.

According to Philip Hanson Hiss the pattern of the dance in Bali is varied. Many stories have their basis in the 'Ramayana', and others reach back centuries into Bali's remote beginnings - yet new ideas are constantly tested. North Bali has led in innovation, with influence and stimulation from the outside world. South Bali has been the balancing and sobering influence. There many forms have been absorbed and developed, and many of the cruder elements have been sloughed off. A South Balinese dancer is more polished, one North of Bali is more exciting.

Recreation, as well as religious motives are expressed in the dance. Miss tells the story that when a village decides to use a particular dance form, a society is started to train the dancers, make or purchase the costumes, which then remains its property, and to arrange the performances. The length of life of these societies may be dictated by religious demands, or merely by the amount of interest taken by the community. Fashions in dances vary to a great extent.


92/ Philip Hanson Hiss, Bali (New York: Riverside Museum, 1941) Intro.

93/ Ibid.,
The dancers themselves remain more or less anonymous. He is not paid for performances within their own villages, but a society is paid when it performs in another town. The money which is earned is never divided among the dancers, but used for the upkeep of the group, for example in purchasing costumes and instruments.

The people are always willing to pay an orchestra or dance society outside of their village if it is better than their own. Hiss\(^{94/}\) says that the sound of the 'gamelan' - orchestra - and the intricate and indescribably lovely patterns of the Balinese dance remain one of the outstanding memories of any stay in Bali.

**Borneo**

Embres, Simon and Mumford\(^ {95/}\) have summed up the rhythmical expression of the natives of Borneo in the following paragraph: 'Beauty of tone does not depend on intricacy of mechanism: the wild men of Borneo have fashioned a pipe with a gourd and hollow stick which produces a single sound of such sweetness and depth that it can be compared only with the deep note of a pipe organ. The number and variety of these primitive instruments give proof of the musical-mindedness of the people; the ingenuity and artistry displayed in their construction are evi-

\(^{94/}\) Philip Hiss, *Bali* (New York: Riverside Museum, 1941)

idence of the creative impulse which these people carry into all their arts.'

NEW GUINEA

Another method by which the New Guinea native expresses his artistic ingenuity is by means of the organized recreation of dancing, which often has highly ritual associations. According to Firth\(^{96}\) dancing is usually made an occasion for formal display, and a wealth of ornament is seen at this time. Personal decoration includes feather plumes of an astonishing color range and size, wooden ear plugs, nose plugs, shell pendants, shell arm rings, dogs' teeth necklaces, plaited bracelets and anklets, leaf streamers - all these and others.

The natives also have various dance wands and shields, elaborately carved in sweeping curves of purity. The instruments are rhythmic accompaniment percussion, wind instruments, drums, gongs, and the like, all carved and decorated.

Firth\(^{97}\) states further that masked dances or ceremonial parades are a common institution in New Guinea and their meaning varies considerably in different areas. In many cases they are affiliated with the induction of the boys of the tribe into secrets held by its male members.

\(^{96}\) Raymond Firth, Art & Life in New Guinea (London: The Studio Ltd., 1936), p. 21

\(^{97}\) Raymond Firth, Art and Life in New Guinea (London: The Studio Ltd., 1936), p. 27
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The information which you have read is a survey of the highlights of the artistic contributions of the inhabitants of the Netherlands East Indies. Most of the information concerns Java, Bali, Sumatra, Borneo, and New Guinea. There are many smaller islands in the Archipelago, but there is no available information on their contributions. Suggestions for further research would surely include travel and notes as a result of this travel, into the islands of lesser prominence. Perhaps this is one of the things for which we shall look forward after drums of war have ceased, and mankind has resumed his natural place in a world of peace.

If the art teacher were to utilize the given information, she could plan many interesting projects in a unit on art in Island India. That could include topics for any grade level. A few suggestions would include the following:

1. Our Pacific friends, and how they live.
2. Batik dyeing cloth to make a useful garment.
3. Designing stationery using East Indian designs.
5. A study of the costume of the Bornesian.
7. Basket, bead and shell-work in the manner of the people of Borneo.
8. Wood-carving objects of daily use.
11. Present a shadow play written and directed by the students.
14. Pottery making in a manner after the original method of the natives of Borneo.
15. An analysis of the dance and music throughout the Archipelago.
17. Miniature canoes to be distributed among the boys in a children's hospital.
18. History of art throughout the Indies.
20. Picture study of the life of the Balinese from the photographs of Miss.98/

98/ Philip Hanson Miss, Bali (New York: Riverside Museum, 1941).
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COMPREHENSIVE ABSTRACT

Are you cognizant of the fact that art in the islands of the Netherlands East Indies is pregnant with an enriching quality? Are you also aware of the need for a greater emphasis which should have its beginnings in the public school systems in public school systems in our Nation? In our daily routines, we read in newspapers and periodicals, see in movies and in similar sources, a great deal with regard to 'world understanding', 'one world', and how best we might improve foreign relations. But what are we as citizens of the United States of America doing to broaden our horizons in an effort to know our neighbors better?

It has been the purpose of this thesis to act as a stepping stone in an effort to grasp an understanding of the group of islands in the South-west Pacific, commonly known as the Netherlands East Indies. This study is an attempt to delineate the highlights in the art of the Indies, that is, the impetus of the living architecture of Bali, the subtle quality of the brasswork of Borneo, or the grandeur of the Borobudoor in Java. Too, it presents itself as a handbook for one who is interested in data on Netherlands Indies art.

An initial step in preparing this study was the accumulation of bibliography from every possible source. A thorough investigation was made of all available literature on the artistic achievements of the Dutch East Indies. This included text books,
reference books, periodicals, travel guides, and encyclopedias. There is a surprisingly small amount of material in the English dialect available on the art of the Archipelago. However, the process of utilizing the data at hand resulted in many pleasant hours of research.

A glimpse into the isles reveals that they are the largest group in the world. They are classified as the Greater Sundas, which includes Celebes, Sumatra, Java and Borneo; the Lesser Sundas, including Bali, Lombok, Flores, and Timor; the Moluccas or Spice Islands; and Netherlands New Guinea. These, when considered as a whole should imply a complexity of pattern in race, religion, custom and language. The islands extend more than three thousand miles and if they were superimposed upon the United States, they would reach from San Francisco to New York. Sixty million people inhabit the island, and it is with ingenuity and calmness that the Dutch ably penetrate every possible phase of life in this island empire.

The basis of the language of the people is Malayo-Polynesian. It is composed of as many diverse units as constitute the people themselves. However, a kind of lingua franca which is called Malay runs through the entire Archipelago and is used to facilitate speech between Dutch and native, and between members of different Malayan groups.

And what is to be mentioned relative to art in the East? Is it divorced from daily life? Is it limited to the 'talented few'? On the contrary, it is an expression of the majority of
Woodcarving, weaving, the making of batik, are matters not only of utilitarian labor, but of creative joy as well. The Indonesians excel in the use of metals: iron, copper, bronze, and gold. The fact that they have traveled beyond their personal realms reveals their understanding of astronomy and navigation. Music and the dance are not merely diversions but activities which represent high prestige.

The art of Java recovers to us one of the last pages of Indian art. For in the Archipelago, Indian art is a continuation and a logical development by Indian hands of the principles and symbols of creation applied under colonial conditions. There is splendor in the ruins of all the temples, and the climax of that majestic splendor is reached in the majestic grandeur of the Borobudur with its hundreds of sculptural embellishments. Java must be remembered too, for the exciting painted panels, the art of the batik, wood and metal ornaments, and religious accessories, the 'wayang' - or the art of drama, and the island's dance and music.

In Balinese are, a variety of influences have left their mark, influences from the outside world. But like the art of ancient Greece, the people have been clever enough to translate these expressions into their own manner, and consequently they became strongly Balinese in the process. Although at the service of religion, the art of Bali is not a religious art. Religious symbols, carved subjects and ornaments for daily use embellish the temples purely for decorative purposes. The
people themselves carve and paint to tell the only story they know, those which were created and handed down by their religious teachers of former times.

Hardly anything remains of ancient Sumatran art, but the isle will always be remembered for the unusual pattern of the roof, the linear form which curves upward to the sky on either end. The tradition of the Sphinx-like Batak lion of the Samosir graves possibly reached Sumatra by way of the coast of India. The few crude wall paintings are expected to represent food for the spirits. Most outstanding of all Sumatran crafts is the larger than life-sized wooded dolls which have jointed limbs. They are made to dance at the feasts of the dead. Some wear masks which are life-like and abstract in their design and construction.

The art of Borneo is more closely related to that of New Guinea. Highly decorative, delicate qualities give way to crude primitive types in Borneo. You are not to misunderstand the artistic achievements of the people. For despite the primitive approach to their work, there is indeed grandeur and deep expression in their bamboo decorations, beadwork, artistically decorated blowpipes, pottery, shell work, and war attire.

In New Guinea, the native works for utilitarian motives only, whether it be for the production of food, for personal ornament, dancing, recreation or for warfare. 'Art for art's sake' has little or no meaning to the primitive artist. Yet the tree houses, ceremonial structures, the interiors of their
domestic architecture, canoes, magic staffs, idols, loin cloths, each represent a work of art of a nature which deserves special recognition.

And that is a glimpse of art in the Indies. Has your curiosity been aroused? Are you eager to know more of the snake-like dances, the majestic temples, the art of the batik, the 'wayang', and series of other artistic expressions? If so, then this study has not been in vain. And might this writer suggest that for an evening of superb entertainment, enjoy a volume pertinent to art in the Indies. Yours will be an enriching experience, the impact of which will remain with you for an indefinite period of time.