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The Architecture of Empire in Modern Europe

Space, Place, and the Construction of an Imperial Environment, 1860-1960

Miel Groten

Amsterdam
University
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LHS

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Abbreviations

Organisations

AGC	Agence générale des colonies
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
CGT	Compagnie générale transatlantique
CMS	Church Mission Society
EMB	Empire Marketing Board
HAPAG	Hamburg-Amerikanische Packetfahrt Actiengesellschaft
LMS	London Missionary Society
KPM	Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij
NHM	Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij
NZG	Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap
NZV	Nederlandsche Zendingsvereeniging
SMN	Stoomvaartmaatschappij Nederland
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel

Archives and institutes

Used when archive is referred to more than once

ANP	Archives nationales, Paris
BMA	Mission21, Basel Mission Archives, Basel
BNF	Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris
BHM	Bezirksamt Hamburg-Mitte
GAZ	Gemeentearchief Zaanstad, Zaandam
GCA	Glasgow City Archives
HVW	Historische Vereniging Wormerveer
MQB	Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, Paris
NAH	Nationaal Archief, The Hague
SAA	Stadsarchief Amsterdam
SAB	Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt
SAH	Staatsarchiv Hamburg

Introduction: The places of empire

Abstract
The built environment of Western Europe became entangled with overseas imperialism in the period 1860–1960, when colonial empires were at their largest. Europeans at home experienced the vast imperial spaces, formed by networks between colonies and metropoles, by encountering the local imperial 'places' that sustained such networks: mission houses, government buildings, factories, offices, museums. Such sites contributed to the development of an imperial culture in European societies, which legitimised colonial rule by stressing the necessity and righteousness of imperial power relations. As architecture of this kind could be found in different colonial powers, as well as in countries without colonies but with ties to the empires of others, it allows us to scrutinise the transnational, European nature of imperial culture.

Keywords: Architecture; imperialism; colonialism; imperial culture; space; transnational history

Empires are large. It is one of their signature qualities. As assemblages of different peoples and polities, empires link distant territories to each other by their very definition: they are 'large political units, expansionist or with a memory of power extended over space'; consequently, when studying empires, '[s]pace matters, size matters, and so does the character of space and size'.[1] Yet empires are also small. Or rather, their effects are also felt in local and small-scale places, right down to the level of towns, streets, and even individual buildings. Such buildings are the subject of this study: pieces of architecture whose appearance, meaning, and very existence were based on their role in wider imperial frameworks. Imperial places, as such buildings are termed here, encourage us to think not only about the *space*, but also about the *place* of empire.

1 Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in world history*; Schlögel, 'Commentary', p. 138.

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The principal question for this book is how imperial places contributed to the development of a transnational imperial culture in Europe, during modern imperialism between 1860 and 1960. Although architecture that functioned as an imperial place could be found anywhere within an empire, this study investigates architecture that created physical and imagined links to the empire specifically in Western Europe. It is guided by a number of questions about the relation between architecture, imperialism, and European history. What imperial networks did buildings like factories, government buildings, or mission houses in Europe maintain? How did such buildings mediate these connections to Europeans, and thereby construct an imperial culture that legitimised European imperialism? And to what extent was this culture a transnational European phenomenon? Working through these questions in this introduction and in the chapters to come, allows us to understand if and how contemporary Europeans perceived their living environment as part of a wider imperial space, and what role conceptions of Europe and a European identity played in this awareness and imagination of imperialism.

The place of empire in history

What imperial networks did buildings in Europe maintain? Imperial places are conceived in this study as the nodes that created networks between European 'mother countries', or metropoles, and their overseas colonies. These could be networks of people, such as merchants, sailors, or missionaries; of objects, like tropical commodities or manufactures; and of ideas, including political identities or notions of racial kinship. Such networks stood at the basis of empires and drew together far-flung regions into an imperial space: an integrated, interconnected entity made up by the various territories of the empire. This study examines the role of the European built environment in the creation and imagination of such imperial spaces.

Thinking through the concept of imperial space envisages an empire as a whole, rather than as a fragmented collection of circumscribed, self-evident entities as the traditional conception of empires would have it.[2] Rooted in the colonial era itself, this conception simplified empires as one-way movements, directed away from a nation-state in Europe and towards

2 E.g. Lester, *Imperial networks*; Lambert and Lester, *Colonial lives*; Cooper, *Colonialism in question*, pp. 22–26, 29; Blais, Deprest and Singaravélou, *Territoires impériaux*; Drieënhuizen, *Koloniale collecties*.

'peripheral' overseas colonies. However, as the relationships *between* places determine their nature just as much as their internal characteristics, both metropoles and colonies were shaped by their relation to each other within an imperial space: in the words of Nicholas Dirks, imperialism was 'less a process that began in the European metropole and expanded outward than it was a moment when new encounters with the world facilitated the formation of categories of metropole and colony in the first place'.[3]

This study covers the century between 1860 and 1960, a periodisation that is explained further below but in which imperial spaces, and the connectivity that characterised them, were at their height. At the heart of that time span sits the transformative period between 1870 and 1914, which saw colonial empires reaching their zenith and which, more generally, saw the provisional highlight of a globalisation process characterised as a worldwide 'great acceleration'.[4] Steam ships, railways, canals, and telegraphs (and later, radios, airships, and aeroplanes) connected more and more regions of the world and allowed for radically faster transport and communication. In this frenzied crucible of imperialist and nationalist ideologies, technological innovation, and global capitalism, territorial and commercial expansion came to be seen as crucial to a country's survival, transforming the European understanding of time and space.[5] For Europeans, living in an imperial space became a fact of life.

Or did it? Although the idea of imperial space hinges on connections between colonies and metropole, there has been much more research on how colonial territories were made part of imperial space – with the naming and mapping of 'uncharted' territory as the classic tools – than on metropolitan areas.[6] Nonetheless, outfitting public buildings in Europe with personifications of foreign continents or naming streets after colonial territories were equally acts of appropriation and displays of power. If empires had to instil 'awe as well as a sense of belonging' in their subjects, this could not only focus on the courts and capitals of the centre, but also had to be used to make Europeans identify with 'their' colonial territories one way or the other.[7] Furthermore, although the notion of imperial space is helpful to trace the connections running through empires and the things transmitted through them, it does not necessarily allow us to understand how present this vast and rather abstract space was for contemporary Europeans.

3 Lester, 'Spatial concepts', p. 125; Massey, *Space, place and gender*, pp. 154–156; Dirks, *Colonialism and culture*, p. 6.

4 Bayly, *The birth of the modern world*, pp. 451–487.

5 Kern, *The culture of time and space*.

6 E.g. Carter, *The road to Botany Bay*; Clayton, 'The creation of imperial space'.

7 Cooper, *Colonialism in question*, p. 30.

This study aims to contribute to the understanding of how Europeans experienced and imagined imperial spaces. Imperial spaces were not only produced by sailors crossing oceans or colonial governors holding office overseas, but were also co-created and experienced by metropolitan European populaces who had more mundane interests and understandings of empire. The imperial spaces as metropolitan Europeans imagined them, were much less multi-faceted and much more dichotomous, strongly coloured by the imperial metropole-colony scheme.[8] After all, as will be explained below, the imperial culture of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe was based on the idea of the superiority of white European civilisation. It thus held that imperial exchanges happened on European, metropolitan terms. As a result, contemporary Europeans might have been unwilling or unable to 'take imperial space seriously': the connectivity and interdependence that the idea of an imperial space implied, endangered the distinction between colonisers and colonised that legitimised their rule.[9] The dominant idea of the metropole that exerted influence on the colonies instead of the other way round, might well have obscured the effects that the integration into an empire actually had for the metropole.[10]

To tie the concept of imperial space back to contemporary visions of empire, we should study imperial spaces not only from a bird's-eye view as networks. Imperial spaces were also imaginative geographies, 'representations of place, space and landscape that structure people's understandings of the world', according to a standard definition.[11] And to study empires as imaginative geographies, it is useful to examine imperial *places*, which this book conceptualises as the nodes between which imperial networks developed. From the perspective of metropolitan Europeans, such places worked as imperial spaces' concrete starting points, the sites where imperial space 'touched ground'. Hitherto, such nodes have received little attention in studies of imperial space in comparison to the connections between them. But surely there were more and other kinds of nodes than the ports and ships that have been identified so far.[12] As the following chapters will reveal, factories, offices, mission houses, museums, warehouses, and other sites in Europe all functioned as nodes in imperial networks.

8 As noted by Elizabeth Baigent in her review of Lambert and Lester, *Colonial lives*.

9 Cooper, *Colonialism in question*, p. 29.

10 A point made by Kuipers, *Fragmented empire*.

11 Driver, 'Imaginative geographies', p. 246.

12 E.g. Lester, *Imperial networks*, p. 6.

'Imperial place' is a play on the idea of imperial space. Place and space form an inseparable duo. Generally, space is large while place is smaller; places are found within space. And space is something undetermined, ambiguous, while a place is specific. The most basic and elegant definition of a place is that it is space given meaning, and this is essentially how imperial places are approached here.[13] The focus of the investigation thus becomes the processes of meaning-making by which Europeans constructed – both literally and figuratively – certain locations as imperial, ranging from visual representations or performances to architectural style. Following the argument that places derive their meaning from their links to others, imperial places are taken to have derived their meaning from their links to colonies or, more generally, places subject to a power relation with European countries. These could be physical links such as trade networks, but also imagined links of political belonging or religious fraternity. Studying imperial places thus connects local experiences in Europe with global empires. This approach resonates with concerns in the field of imperial history, but also with current developments in global history where efforts at a 'global microhistory' have been making waves, which enables the comprehension of how seemingly static places were immersed in wider circulations.[14] The analysis used in this study, however, examines the cultural and societal significance of certain sites in relation to the power relations at the heart of empire and is therefore tailored for the imperial context.

How did imperial places mediate their connections to Europeans, or what repertoires of meaning-making developed in Europe to acquaint and involve Europeans with the imperial connections of certain places? The various ways in which imperial places 'meant' something to Europeans are discussed below; however, in general, the main objective of this book is to investigate how they became meaningful locations that helped construct an imperial culture in Europe. Broadly, imperial culture denotes the cultural effects of imperialism on Europe, where the term 'culture' is to be understood less as Culture with a capital 'C' than as a worldview, belief system, or frame of reference that is sustained by the 'production and exchange of meanings'.[15] At the heart of this meaning-making process sat the idea of the unassailable superiority of European civilisation, perceived as culturally and racially distinct, which normalised and legitimised the projection of European power over the globe. In this sense, the concept of imperial culture not only

13 Cresswell, *Place*, p. 12.

14 E.g. De Vito and Gerritsen, 'Micro-spatial histories of labour'; A Ghobrial, 'Introduction'.

15 Hall, 'Introduction', p. 11.

includes the basic awareness of empire in European societies, but also their more implicit but equally normative ideas of civilisation, race, or modernity. This culture or worldview was 'imperial' rather than 'colonial' as it originated in the metropole and did not necessarily need its own colonies to develop.[16] After all, methods of informal empire, where European powers exerted influence without formal political rule, also belonged to the 'repertoires of rule' of empires.[17] 'Imperial' is therefore also distinct from 'imperialist'. 'Imperialist' denotes political rule and influence, while 'imperial' denotes the cultural 'rules that govern the societies concerned': rules that claimed white Europeans were at the apex of human civilisation and were therefore destined to guide other people politically, economically, and morally.[18] Power thus resided in politics, but also in the cultural power to privilege Eurocentric understandings of the world and impose these on other regions.

Close attention to imperial cultures in Europe has been the main result of efforts to study metropoles and their overseas colonies more jointly, 'in a single analytic field'.[19] Edward Said laid the groundwork for the idea that European cultures legitimised imperialism by stereotyping and othering colonised populations.[20] Heeding the call of Said and much of the postcolonial scholarship that followed him, historians have worked to uncover the manifold ways in which imperial cultures developed in European countries, especially during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[21] With this 'imperial turn', empire is no longer merely something that is ruled and exploited but also something that is thought and imagined. European metropoles are no longer seen as the 'unmoved movers' of empire, generating imperialism while remaining untouched by it. Instead, they are approached as being shaped or even constituted by imperialism as it interacted with crucial processes of state-formation and nation-building. Past research has traced imperial themes to phenomena as diverse as exhibitions, museums, literature, missionary work, education, and advertising and shown how an imperial worldview interacted with notions of citizenship, national identity, race, class, gender, and religion. Current calls from the public and

16 Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, p. 12.

17 Brown, 'Introduction'; Burbank and Cooper, *Empires*, pp. 3–8.

18 Based on Minder, *La Suisse coloniale*, p. 11.

19 Stoler and Cooper, 'Between metropole and colony', p. 4.

20 Said, *Orientalism*; Said, *Culture and imperialism*.

21 Overviews for respective countries include Hall and Rose, *At home with the empire*; Blanchard, Lemaire and Bancel, *Culture coloniale en France*; Viaene, Van Reybrouck and Ceuppens, *Congo in België*; Short, *Magic lantern empire*; *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 128 no. 2 [special issue on 'A new Dutch imperial history'], (2013).

academia to move beyond the continued coloniality of the contemporary world by 'decolonising' society are only making research into these topics more necessary.

The exact articulation of imperial culture depended on the specific domain in which it was produced, and on place, time, medium, and actors' intentions. Some of the domains examined under the umbrella of imperial culture, including in this study, are more obviously cultural than others. But all spoke to the imagination of contemporary Europeans and are subjected in this study to what Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger has called a 'culturalist' reading of what these domains meant and signified.[22] Low-key, implicit normalisations of imperial rule formed what has been called a 'banal imperialism', akin to the banal nationalism of unspoken and everyday markers of nationalist ideology.[23] Subtle signs were equally important articulations of imperial attitudes as the grand gestures of colonial expositions or jingoist outbursts.

The place of empire in architecture

The scale on which imperial places are identified in this study is that of architecture or the built environment. In itself, the above definition of place does not say anything about what can constitute a place – a room can be as meaningful as a province, yet what differs is the scale on which they are meaningful. The usual 'places' studied in relation to empires and networks are countries and, to a much lesser extent, regions and cities.

However, as this book deals with how Europeans encountered and imagined the space of empire in concrete ways, it focuses on buildings: literal and intuitive 'places' that were recognisable and relatable to many Europeans. Buildings – tangible, durable, and often immensely symbolic – fit more specific definitions of 'place': they have a location, consist of settings where activities of daily life take place, and generate a 'sense of place', an identification with it or belonging to it.[24] Therefore architecture, the material environment that human societies construct for themselves, is the main subject of this book.

Architectural historians have noted that the so-called spatial turn has drawn historians and other scholars to the large-scale level of networks but rarely to the level of buildings, not unlike the abovementioned focus

22 Stollberg-Rilinger, 'State and political history'.

23 Kumar, *The idea of Englishness*, p. 135; referring to Billig, *Banal nationalism*.

24 Agnew, 'Space and place', pp. 326–327.

on 'connections' at the cost of 'nodes'.[25] However, as a 'social act' and the 'medium' of social relations, architecture is central to any human activity.[26] Rather than 'expressing' these relations, Heike Delitz argues, architecture constitutes them through its 'presence, its inescapability, its materiality and not in the least its affectivity'.[27] Following this understanding of space, place, and architecture, this book investigates how architecture turns a wider space into a place, making and marking the networks that created imperial spaces.[28]

This approach deviates somewhat from the usual conception in architectural history, where architecture is taken as forming (interior) 'spaces' itself.[29] The book certainly discusses floorplans and interiors; however, it is primarily concerned with how architecture translated the imperial spaces, whose operation they facilitated, into understandable terms for metropolitan Europeans. While the book does identify recurring strategies of imperial meaning-making, the exact elements that it investigates differ between buildings, as various different elements were used by Europeans to construct 'imperial' architecture. For one building, its imperial link might be found in its floorplans (such as with colonial museums with their exhibition galleries); for another, it might be mediated in their decorations; for yet another; it might be descriptions and depictions in other media. Rather than studying buildings in themselves, in all their detail, the book uses them as a lens through which to understand the imperial culture that developed, transnationally, in Europe. In doing so it prioritises zooming out, connecting and contrasting the perceptions of particular buildings with the imperial networks of which they were part, over zooming in.

To understand how imperial places emerged, functioned, and were in the public eye, they need to be placed in the context of the transformation of the architectural landscape that the nineteenth century witnessed. Industrialisation and population growth left their mark on European cities, related to the many 'globalising' trends mentioned above. The built environment became the stage for both the legitimisation of the new political orders that were established in the wake of reform and revolution, and for engineers and their technological innovations. The issue of style became salient, as universal classicism lost its monopoly over the way buildings

25 E.g. Schmidt, *Passion and control*, p. 2.

26 Kostof, *A history of architecture*; p. 7; Stieber, 'Space, time, and architectural history', p. 139.

27 Delitz, *Gebaute Gesellschaft*, p. 13.

28 Harries, *The ethical function of architecture*, pp. 174–175; Holdsworth, 'Geography'.

29 Forty, *Words and buildings*, pp. 256–275.

looked and architects reached back into the past to freely use a range of other historicist styles with their own associations and references.[30] In the second half of the nineteenth century, this development presented architects with more experimental and eclectic design choices, perhaps embodied best by the hugely influential French *École des Beaux-Arts* that, by the 1870s, had developed a coherent 'system' of design referencing classical architecture.[31] Beaux-Arts architecture also exemplified the trend of integrating ornamental sculpture and murals with a strong didactic purpose into the design.[32] Later commentators have long derided these styles for their perceived superficiality. Nevertheless, they were charged with meaning and ideology, sometimes more implicit and associational, sometimes, especially when national identity was felt to be at stake, explicit.

The century also saw the emergence of new kinds of buildings to accommodate technological and societal changes, from railway stations and factories to offices, public parks, and museums. Existing buildings such as town halls and dwellings were now constructed on a much larger scale, and an increasingly standardised repertoire of diversified, recognisable building types arose.[33] Furthermore, new building materials were introduced such as iron, glass, steel, and reinforced concrete. Mass-produced and assembled in industrial fashion, these enabled the construction of larger and different buildings. In the early twentieth century, new materials and new visions saw the rise of varieties of reformist and modernist architecture that proposed radically new architectural forms for contemporary life.

What are the links between these architectural developments and imperialism? Imperial architecture is commonly seen as European architecture in the colonies.[34] However, recently there have been calls for more nuanced and transnational understandings of 'colonial' architecture.[35] With a more transnational approach, studies have connected the built environment in Europe to that of other continents, investigating, for instance, colonial

30 Bergdoll, *European architecture*, pp. 140–142.

31 Kostof, *A history of architecture*, pp. 571–573, 635–647; Van Zanten, 'Architectural composition', pp. 111–112.

32 Wintle, *The image of Europe*, pp. 56–57; Droth, Edwards and Hatt, *Sculpture victorious*, pp. 16–17.

33 Pevsner, *A history*, p. 289.

34 E.g. AlSayyad, *Forms of dominance*; Scriver, *The scaffolding of empire*; Çelik, *Empire, architecture, and the city*; Passchier, *Bouwen in Indonesië*; MacKenzie, *The British empire through buildings*.

35 Volait, 'Provincializing colonial architecture'; Lagae, 'Architectural history in a "transformed world"'.

returnees or religious networks.[36] The body of work on architecture in Europe with various imperial functions is highly fragmented but growing. A handful of case studies exist on notable buildings like colonial ministries, monuments, and museums, although these tend to be the usual suspects.[37] Other relevant themes are architectural exoticism and the use of colonial materials such as tropical hardwoods.[38] Finally, there is a growing literature in heritage studies on buildings related to overseas empire in a number of European cities.[39]

More so than to individual buildings, imperialism's influence has been traced to a range of European cities – although again, overseas 'colonial cities' have received much more attention than metropolitan 'imperial cities'.[40] London looms large here, as the inimitable 'heart of the empire' that was political capital, financial centre, and global port at the same time.[41] However, Paris, Amsterdam, Marseille, Liverpool, Rotterdam, and other major urban centres have also been interpreted as imperial cities in one way or the other, usually for their economic links to overseas colonies – shipping, trade, industry.[42] The approach followed in this book draws inspiration equally from architectural history as from this topic within urban history, which takes into account a wide range of relevant factors including town planning, local economic life, and civic pride.

Certainly, the focus on cities is not to say imperialism had no impact on more rural regions, as studies on the land-locked Limousin and the Scottish Highlands have shown.[43] However, urbanisation and industrialisation transformed Europe's cities into centres of trade, industry, and services, connected to other cities in increasingly global networks – in one century alone, the number of European cities with a population of more than 100,000

36 King, *The bungalow*; Bremner, *Imperial gothic*; Lagae, 'Aller/retour?'.

37 For overviews see Thompson, *The empire strikes back?*, pp. 181–186; Aldrich, *Vestiges*; Bremner, 'The metropolis'.

38 E.g. Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*; Crinson, *Empire building*, pp. 65–70; Silverman, 'Art nouveau, art of darkness [part I]'; Nelson, *Architecture and empire in Jamaica*, pp. 236, 240–242.

39 E.g. Giles and Hawkins, *Storehouses of empire*; Catherine, *Wandelen naar Kongo*; Van der Heyden and Zeller, *Kolonialismus hierzulande*; Kroon and Wagtberg Hansen, *Sporen van smaragd*; Hondius et al., *Amsterdam slavery heritage guide; Guide de Paris colonial et des banlieus*.

40 Castryck, 'Disentangling the colonial city, pp. 183–184.

41 Driver and Gilbert, 'Heart of empire?'; Schneer, *London 1900*; Arnold, *The metropolis and its image*.

42 Driver and Gilbert, *Imperial cities*; Hunt, *Ten cities that made an empire*; Legêne and Ver Loren van Themaat, 'Cause célèbre'; Oostindie, *Het koloniale verleden van Rotterdam*.

43 Grondin, *L'empire en province*; Thomas, *Cultures of empire in the Scottish Highlands*.

increased from 21 in 1801 to 147 in 1901.[44] Larger cities, and especially port cities, were thus the most obvious cornerstones of imperial spaces and the most important habitats for imperial places.

The place of empire in Europe

To what extent did the imperial culture, to which the buildings and sites under discussion contributed, develop transnationally as a European phenomenon? Approaching imperial culture as a European culture allows us to go beyond a methodological nationalism in which imperial cultures have been studied mainly in the plural and confined to the respective nation-states.[45] Understandable as this may be, this approach risks missing insightful similarities and differences and leading to a collection of 'add-on' national histories.[46] After all, imperialism was a European project, and not just in the obvious sense in that it involved many European nations. In their seminal 1997 essay, Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper conceived of imperialism as a comprehensive process that went beyond the formal metropole-colony axis and instead was based on much wider circulations between different metropoles and colonies.[47] Recent research demonstrates that trans- and international links between European countries characterised imperialism just as much as rivalry and competition. Already in the early modern period, the trade networks of European states and companies were entangled with each other.[48] In the modern era, imperial powers observed and imitated each other's policies and legitimised their rule with the same racial ideologies, while science and religious missions were decidedly transnational fields to which Europeans of different nationalities contributed.[49] This meant that imperial spaces, especially those produced by non-state actors, also overlapped each other and transgressed formal imperial boundaries.

In this context, 'transnational' refers to both the historic phenomenon under review, which transcends national boundaries, and the research

44 Briggs, *Victorian cities*, p. 79.

45 On methodological nationalism: Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 'Methodological nationalism and beyond'.

46 Göttsche and Dunker, 'Introduction', p. 7; Legêne, 'The European character', pp. 114–116.

47 Stoler and Cooper, 'Between metropole and colony', pp. 28–29.

48 See the contributions in Antunes and Polónia, *Beyond empires*.

49 Grant, Levine and Trentmann, 'Introduction'; Barth and Cvetkovski, 'Encounters of empires'; Arnold, 'Globalization and contingent colonialism'; Sèbe, 'Towards cosmopolitan perspectives'; Kamissek and Kreienbaum, 'An imperial cloud?'.

perspective employed to analyse it, which focuses on interconnections and circulations. 'International' is taken to refer to processes taking place literally between nation-states.[50] For the purposes of this book, a missionary congregation with branches in several European countries is considered a transnational organisation; a colonial exposition where several governments erected pavilions is considered an international event. Still, even transnational organisations such as congregations could be internally organised along national lines, which means their transnationality was not necessarily as obvious to contemporaries as to historians.

Most important for the purposes of this study is the assumption that imperialism's European nature also played out in the formation of a European imperial culture in the combined metropoles. Colonial knowledge was produced transnationally and comparative studies of imperial cultures of multiple European countries have highlighted many similarities.[51] The 'strikingly similar' means and messages of official pro-colonial propaganda in several European countries have led Matthew Stanard to conclude 'there were not several colonial cultures that developed [...] but rather a common European colonial culture among all states that engaged in the 'New Imperialism' in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[52]

But if an imperial culture cannot easily be contained within the boundaries of single states, it cannot be contained within the boundaries of a clearly delineated group of states, either. Bernhard Schär warns against using too narrow an understanding of imperialism, a 'methodological imperialism' that limits itself to formal empires.[53] In fact, the openness of empires also offered opportunities to nationals of non-imperial powers. Recent research shows that countries not usually associated with colonies, such as Switzerland, Norway, and Sweden also had stakes in imperialism, which have been labelled a 'colonial complicity' or 'colonialism without colonies'.[54] Catholic missionaries from Poland and Slovenia ended up in African colonies; in Latvia, the seventeenth-century colonial pursuits of the duchy of Courland are nowadays appropriated to argue that Latvia was part of Western European modernity.[55] Austrians worked as 'explor-

50 Patel, 'An emperor without clothes?', pp. 3–6.

51 Stoler and Cooper, 'Between metropole and colony', p. 13; see for instance MacKenzie, *European empires and the people*; Buettner, *Europe after empire*.

52 Stanard, 'Interwar pro-empire propaganda', p. 31.

53 Schär, *Tropenliebe*, p. 17.

54 Zangger, *Koloniale Schweiz*; Naum and Nordin, *Scandinavian colonialism*; Schär, 'Introduction'.

55 Wendt, 'Central European missionaries';Dzenovska, 'Historical agency and the coloniality of power'.

ers' and geographers for colonial powers; the Austro-Hungarian empire participated in multi-lateral imperial conferences and embarked on its own mission to civilise racialised 'Oriental' populations in the Balkans.[56] These transnational connections allowed individuals and organisations from non-colonial powers to partake in that common imperial culture. German culture, for instance, teemed with themes of European conquest and racial difference even before the acquisition of German colonies; Swiss missionary publications and ethnographic expositions shared in the stereotypical depictions of non-Western people.[57]

However, this raises questions as to exactly what this transnational dimension entailed and what activities or networks enabled it to develop. Transnational links might not always be acknowledged in the actual contents of imperial culture – in the manner of Karl Marx, one can ask whether the imperial culture was European 'in itself' or 'for itself'. It is still unclear what role a sense of European commonality – or even identity – played that was more than the sum of its national-constituent parts.

The inclusion of one Swiss case study in the book, as explained below, serves to explore the transnationality of imperial culture in practice. Presupposing the existence of a European imperial culture is not to say imaginations and experiences of empire were identical all over Europe and in states with and without colonial empires. The heartlands of modern imperialism can still be located in maritime Western Europe. Yet this study attempts to paint a complete and accurate picture by reckoning with how far its different branches stretched into the continent.

In general, the very idea of continents with distinct identities is a meta-geographical fiction influenced by ideological assumptions.[58] Since the eighteenth century, 'Europe' had become the overarching concept which the inhabitants of that part of the world used to distinguish themselves from people from other regions, who were usually constructed as uncivilised and of a different racial makeup.[59] Imperialism reinforced this process and lent it real political meaning. Frantz Fanon famously held that 'Europe is literally the creation of the Third World', and historically, Europeans defined Europe and themselves in opposition to colonial others.[60] Throughout the colonial era, theorists portrayed imperialism as part of a wider European

56 Sauer, 'Habsburg colonial'; Judson, *The Habsburg empire*, pp. 327–331.

57 Zantop, *Colonial fantasies*; Minder, *La Suisse* coloniale, p. 23.

58 Lewis and Wigen, *The myth of continents*.

59 Stuurman, 'Grenzen trekken', pp. 291–308.

60 Fanon, *The wretched of the earth*, p. 58; Kiernan, 'Europe in the colonial mirror'; Delanty, *Inventing Europe*, p. 99; Hansen, 'European integration'.

effort. They rooted it in a common antiquity and discussed it in technocratic terms in the International Colonial Institute founded in 1893.[61] Key concepts to legitimise colonial rule were the qualities of civilisation and whiteness, which inherently went beyond the borders between European nations. In the colonies, these categories marked individuals' 'European' status and identity, which were often more salient than nationality.[62]

Therefore, in this study the nation is not treated as a fixed frame of reference, but as one level among many, among which are the continental, imperial, or even global scale.[63] Another such level is the local sphere, which this study's focus on local contexts and individual buildings brings to the equation. Many of the specific case studies in the next chapters describe complex and layered constellations of imagined communities and frames of reference, including local, national, European, imperial, and global.

The sense of imperialism as a common European project was context-dependent, clearer at certain moments and places and in certain domains than in others: clearer in the colonial hill station or mission compound than in the office or mission college in Europe, perhaps. It was also clearer at some moments than others as the layered constellation of local, national, and imperial understandings of empire fluctuated throughout time. Stoler and Cooper argue that a pan-European awareness was particularly strong during the antislavery movement of the early nineteenth century and the debates over the aggressive 'new imperialism' late in the century.[64] The imperialist conflict of World War I shook up these relations. The idea of a European imperial project did not disappear: after 1918, both the repudiation of German colonial rule and the new League of Nations with its 'mandate territories' presupposed the existence of some kind of international standard to which imperial powers should adhere.[65] However, new research also suggests that metropolitan understandings of empire 'nationalised' more in the twentieth century, in what has been called an imperialist Eurocentrism 'portrayed in national rather than continental form'.[66] Furthermore, the idea of the empire as a national economic asset became stronger and more exclusive in the interwar period. Finally, the formal possession of colonies never ceased to matter. The nation-state that possessed them might well have been the clearest channel

61 Wagner, 'The pitfalls of teaching a common colonial past'.

62 E.g. Stoler, *Race and the education of desire*, pp. 11–12, 102–106; Buettner, 'Problematic spaces, problematic races; Locher-Scholten, *Women and the colonial state*, p. 31.

63 Schär, *Tropenliebe*, pp. 18–20.

64 Stoler and Cooper, 'Between metropole and colony', pp. 29–32.

65 Shipway, *Decolonization and its impact*, p. 11.

66 Wintle, *The image of Europe*, pp. 399–400.

through which imperial culture could be articulated. After all, empire-building abroad was entangled with nation-building at home, and many references to Europe might also have been lip service.[67] The starting point for this book is that a European imperial culture did not erase nationality, but rather gave 'new and related meanings and significance to what it meant to be British, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Italian, Belgian or Dutch'.[68]

Lastly, besides avoiding methodological nationalism and imperialism, an analysis of imperial culture as a European phenomenon also has to steer away from Eurocentrism. Critiques of normative, Eurocentric understandings of history and calls to 'provincialise' Europe have been at the heart of decolonial and postcolonial thought, to which the abovementioned research on European identity and imperialism, and therefore also this investigation, is indebted.[69] However, it has been noted that this kind of research into the imagination of empire also risks inadvertently relegating colonised populations to figuring as generalised 'Others' yet again.[70]

Although research on imperial culture indeed focuses on Europe rather than decentring it, it does this to achieve a detailed and contextualised understanding of how exclusive, Eurocentric representations of the world were constructed in the first place. It is precisely the study of empires 'at home' that allows us to place European history in its global context by scrutinising tensions and entanglements with other areas of the world.[71] As noted above, buildings implicated in imperialism were, obviously, as present and as numerous – if not more so – in the colonies, their existence enabled or contested by indigenous people as much as by Europeans. Yet studying imperial architecture in Europe is a deliberate effort to go beyond the obvious and to make imperialism part of the cultural history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe, from which it has long been excluded. Methodologically speaking that is a metropolitan perspective, but one that serves to investigate how Europeans actually developed a 'metropolitan' way of looking at the world. Moreover, this kind of study offers the possibility to better contextualise the ways in which actors from outside Europe challenged imperial ideology and the European dominance that it legitimised.

One prerequisite for studying the construction and contestation of European dominance is to provincialise or demythologise the separate

67 Wagner, 'Von der kolonialpraktischen Kooperation zum "europäischen Ideal"?', p. 47.
68 Thompson, 'Introduction', p. 8.
69 E.g. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*; Mignolo, 'Delinking'.
70 Price, 'One big thing', p. 626; 'Forum', p. 259; Raben, 'A new Dutch imperial history?', p. 30.
71 Leonhard, 'Comparison, transfer and entanglement', pp. 160–161.

national histories of European states.[72] Another is to use a critical perspective that considers how imperial power relations led to silences and misrepresentations in the historical record, especially where it concerns the agency of non-Europeans in those tensions and entanglements.[73] The imperial spaces linked to most buildings discussed in this book were also shaped and used by actors outside of Europe – not in the least when they themselves travelled to and from Europe, a movement that recurs in each chapter. However, the architecture of those sites was often used to limit their room for manoeuvre and to set them apart from society around them; in the ways in which the architecture was made to symbolise imperial spaces, the contributions of the colonised were usually overshadowed or silenced altogether. Rather than claiming all agency for Europeans, the analyses of European buildings below include the agency of the colonised in (often involuntarily) shaping the built environment of Europe, but also show how Europeans covered up their contribution. In this respect, the study of architecture allows us to contrast the practical production of imperial spaces, including the contributions of the colonised, with the ways in which these imperial spaces were subsequently presented.

Method, organisation, and periodisation

To operationalise the above theoretical considerations into a systematic investigation of how Europe's built environment contributed to the development of an imperial culture, this study surveys buildings from five distinct domains. These domains are missionary activity, political identities, trade and industry, shipping, and collecting and exhibiting. These topics were selected as relevant areas based on the existing literature on imperial culture.[74] The organisation of this book into these five topics is also informed by the concern in architectural history for the development of architecture in the modern era, as all chapters describe the rise of new types of buildings and their relations to imperialism. Every chapter translates to a specific kind or group of buildings: mission houses trained missionaries for service overseas; political buildings such as ministries, monuments, and town halls accommodated bureaucracies and articulated political identities; factories

72 Ibid., p. 156.

73 On silences see Trouillot, *Silencing the past*.

74 Particularly helpful have been the distinct themes identified in Gissibl, 'Imagination and beyond'.

processed colonial commodities or produced for imperial markets; shipping firms' offices and docks facilitated imperial transport and migration; and ethnographic and colonial museums exhibited colonial people and cultures. Not every chapter corresponds neatly to a separate 'building type', but most buildings under discussion could not have existed a century earlier and if they did, would have been more modest in scale and effect.

The chapters first survey essential contexts: this background forms Part I of each chapter. They chart comparable buildings within one domain, highlighting examples from multiple European countries. They also facilitate the observation of some general trends and cast a wide net in search of relevant buildings and sites, in order to present a European cross-section of similar buildings. Some categories of buildings have been relatively well described. But most have not, and very few studies have brought together specific kinds of buildings with the same function but from different European countries. The surveys are, therefore, exploratory undertakings and the result of investigations into the existing literature and selected primary sources. They are also meant to invite the reader to think about certain buildings and building types strewn across Europe as having a role in the history of imperialism.

At the heart of every chapter is an in-depth case study of a specific building within each of the domains above, a case study that corresponds to Part II of each chapter. Respectively, these are the Missionshaus of the Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft in Basel (built 1858–1860), the City Chambers of Glasgow (1883–1889), the rice mills of the Zaan region (mostly built between 1870 and 1914), the HAPAG shipping company's head office in Hamburg (1899–1903 and 1912–1920), and finally the Musée des Colonies in Paris (1928–1930). These buildings were selected from the existing literature to provide a complete and multinational group of buildings to serve as sources; another criterion was that they are all still standing in the present day. The case-study approach suggests comparison and, in a way, to compare is inevitable when putting different buildings side by side. However, most comparisons will be made within each chapter: between the examples mentioned in the introductory surveys (Part I of each chapter) and the in-depth case studies that follow them (Part II). As such, this book is less a literal comparative study than a series of in-depth analyses of variants of the common theme of the mediation of empire by architecture in Europe, in order to answer the question of how an imperial culture was constructed across national borders.

The case studies pick up on the groundwork laid down by the surveys to give detailed attention to specific imperial networks, individual actors and organisations, design considerations, and the wider influence and image of certain imperial places. They also enable us to unpick fascinating local contexts that are rarely connected to imperialism. Save for the Musée des Colonies in Paris, none of the case studies has been the subject of dedicated academic research – indeed, another motive for selecting them has been to go beyond the more familiar imperial capitals like London or Amsterdam and beyond the most obviously 'imperial' buildings like the former's Colonial Office and the latter's Koloniaal Instituut. But the primary reason for selecting these case studies was that they were the central nodes of strong, widespread imperial networks. As will be explained in later chapters, most of the cities and organisations discussed were leaders in their field. For instance, Glasgow (Chapter 2) was possibly Europe's most self-consciously 'imperial' city in the late nineteenth century, while HAPAG (Chapter 4) became the world's largest shipping company when it constructed its office. The chapters are ordered by the chronology of the case studies. Simultaneously, their order creates a movement from the most implicit imperial places (mission houses) to the most explicit (colonial museums), which is also, as turns out, a movement that reflects the growing role of nation-states in constructing these places.

Although each chapter also contains examples from other countries, they focus on the five examined in the case studies, that is, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Germany, and Switzerland. These countries were among the pre-eminent imperial powers of the day and their empires varied in size and age, with Switzerland obviously figuring as a nation without an empire that was nonetheless involved in the imperialism of other nations. These north-western European countries also saw themselves as being at the forefront of modern civilisation, as indicated by aspects such as industrial development, technological progress, and scientific advancement. This is also the main reason why the two Iberian colonial empires, those of Portugal and Spain, have been left out, and why the 'continental' Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman empires are excluded. Recent studies have justly corrected an older view of the continental empires as ossified behemoths, unable to follow the modern lead of the Western European imperial powers.[75] Yet a number of crucial differences remain. Industrialisation and technological innovation driven by bourgeois interests gave Western European powers a material and economic edge, while at the same time they came to rely on race and nation as the two central modes of classification in their empire to a much greater degree than their continental counterparts.[76]

75 E.g. Burbank, Von Hagen and Remnev, *Russian empire*; Judson, *The Habsburg empire*.

76 Burbank and Cooper, *Empires*, pp. 6–7, 287–290; Burbank and Von Hagen, 'Coming into the territory', pp. 24–25.

The book analyses a varied collection of sources to create an interdisciplinary approach between history and architectural history and between imperial and urban or local history. Contemporary descriptions, floorplans and sections, and large amounts of secondary literature shed light on the use of a particular building in relation to particular imperial networks and their development through time. However, the main emphasis is on the sources that allow us to understand the ways in which architecture was meaningful to contemporaries. Generally these were diverse and changed as they progressed from the planning phase to the construction phase, and again when they were put in use.[77] Top-down and deliberate 'placemaking' efforts might be undermined by more mundane and implicit appropriations of or even contestations over buildings' meanings. Therefore, the book includes a wide array of relevant forms of meaning-making and analyses a variety of sources.

The source material can be grouped according to the ways in which places were invested with certain meanings and made 'imperial'. The architecture itself is the most obvious of these ways, and in the chapters that follow much attention will be paid to analyses of why buildings looked the way they did, in order to find out how they accommodated and symbolised their imperial links. Architecture facilitated the activities tied to empire and housed the clerks, missionaries, workers, but also the machines, archives, and desks involved. Furthermore, architectural style, general appearance, size, decorations, and nomenclature could all convey a building's imperial significance. For instance, as will be demonstrated repeatedly, updated versions of the old language of classicism were consistently associated with imperial grandeur. More implicitly, ground plans, routing, and location framed users' experience of buildings and contained more subdued messages of power, status, or (lack of) agency.[78]

Of course, not all forms of meaning-making were to be found in the actual architecture: the functions of buildings as imperial places were also signified and reinforced by all kinds of representations, whether sanctioned by architects and clients or not. The broad category of written representations of imperial places is of central importance here and includes newspapers, guidebooks, travelogues, architecture journals, brochures, and memoirs. Praise and critique, attention or the lack of it, references to the empire and expressions of nationalism all contributed to how buildings were understood. Visual representations, such as photographs and drawings,

77 Gieryn, 'What buildings do'; Whyte, 'How do buildings mean?'.

78 Markus, *Buildings and power*.

portrayed buildings in a certain way and disseminated their image, while maps depicted them in a certain context and related them to other places. Furthermore, these are used to understand the position and visibility of the sites in their urban environment. Finally, speeches gave the owners and users of newly erected buildings the opportunity to portray them in certain ways. In a world of print capitalism and mechanical reproductions, all these representations had a wide reach and professed the imperial qualities of buildings to different publics: newspaper readers, professional architects, tourists, businessmen.

In addition, the meaning of buildings was also performative.[79] Simply working in one might make one familiar with its imperial ties, and organising inauguration ceremonies – where the abovementioned speeches were delivered – was an opportunity to express a building's important function to a wider audience. That function could also be a reason for the public to target it, however, and two of the main case studies were actually stormed and occupied as symbols of the establishment at some point. The book includes examples of such contestations over imperial sites and balances out the top-down rhetoric with the more mundane perceptions that Europeans had of particular buildings. For this purpose, it uses contemporary photographs, maps, personal accounts, and, in one case, an interview.

Most of these sources were collected in numerous archives and collections accessed during a number of research stays in Glasgow, Hamburg, Paris, and Basel and in research in the Netherlands carried out from Amsterdam, which functioned as the 'home base' of the project. However, the transnational approach of this research project has also been facilitated by the availability of digitised primary sources. These enable the reader to consult specific contemporary publications that are otherwise very hard to come by without visits to countless foreign archives and libraries. Of course, digital collections have their own limitations. But they also bring within reach valuable ways of doing transnational history.

In terms of periodisation, the scope of this investigation is decided by the time when empires (and thus imperial cultures) reached their high point. Its focus is the period between 1860 and 1960, with particular attention to the pre-1914 period. This time span straddles the conventional 'long nineteenth' and 'short twentieth' centuries, but has a logic of its own that is based on the general continuity of imperial culture in this period. The 1870s are usually taken as the starting point for the late nineteenth-century 'age of empire', characterised by rapid territorial expansion. The decades that

79 Leach, 'Belonging'.

followed also saw the rise of mass politics and more widespread education in the Western European imperial powers, which meant that imperialism started to matter more to more people.[80] However, it is worth pushing the starting point of this study back to 1860 as the 1850s and 1860s in many ways formed the preamble to this era. David Livingstone had been roaming across Eastern Africa since 1851 and although the Suez Canal was opened in 1869, construction had started in 1858. In the same year, the British government also took over control of India from the East India Company while Western powers definitively opened up the Chinese empire, after having done the same to Japan; France would take a hold over what was to become Indochina in the following years. In the context of this study, 1858 marks the start of the construction of the Basel mission house.

As for the end date of 1960, research into various countries has illustrated that an imperial culture continued to flourish until the 1960s.[81] The end of World War II in 1945 was a watershed moment for formal decolonisation but this process itself, likened to a 'sequence of implosions', took multiple decades and went on until at least the 1970s.[82] The years around 1960 were the most important within that period, when the Suez crisis had exposed Britain's and France relative weakness in a post-war world, the independence of many African colonies represented a 'wind of change', and France admitted defeat in Algeria. Furthermore, the Treaty of Rome was signed in 1957, and although initially the new European Economic Community was supposed to be wedded somehow to the remaining African colonies, this signalled the direction of a more exclusively 'European' integration that Western Europe would take in the decades to come.[83] In this investigation, this period is indicated by the revamping of the colonial museum in Paris into an art museum in 1960, but also by such events as the closing of several remaining rice mills in the Netherlands and the demolition of the Imperial Institute in London.

A final word on language. Despite the valuable sensation of reading texts expressing similar ideas about empire in different European languages, for the sake of streamlining and legibility, citations in languages other than English have been translated. Names of cities are also translated, but historical names for cities and colonies (e.g. Batavia, Indochina) are retained.

80 MacKenzie, 'Introduction', p. 2.

81 MacKenzie, 'The persistence of empire'; Blanchard, Lemaire and Bancel, 'Introduction générale', pp. 15–16; Viaene, Van Reybrouck and Ceuppens, 'Koloniale cultuur', pp. 23–24; Kuitenbrouwer, 'Songs of an imperial underdog', pp. 109–119.

82 MacKenzie, 'The persistence of empire', p. 21.

83 Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*.

To refer to the people and cultures of these areas in a way not defined by the colonial domination of the time, generally the modern names for nationalities or ethnicities are used (e.g. Indonesian). All translations into English, including any mistakes, are the author's.

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1 Gates to the 'heathen world'

Abstract
Missionary organisations became a major channel between European societies and the colonial world. The multi-functional mission houses in Europe where missionaries were headquartered became the symbols of these religious networks. In written and visual representations, mission houses were portrayed as sites of Christian civilisation, predicated on a pitiful 'heathen world' to be converted and brought into a civilised condition, and often contained museums with objects from that world. The mission house of the Basel Mission in Basel, Switzerland (1858–1860) offers a case in point. Furthermore, investigating the building and the ways in which it was made into a meaningful site shows how countries without colonies, such as Switzerland, could share in the images and ideas of imperial culture.

Keywords: Missionaries; religious history; Switzerland; propaganda; exhibiting; transnational connections

Missionary organisations, and the connections they forged between Europe and other areas of the world, were some of the oldest and most influential channels through which ideas of overseas empire reached metropolitan audiences. They are therefore the subject of this first chapter. Missionaries were not imperialist agents. They worked for a kingdom of heaven instead of earthly empires, at least according to their own belief, and their work usually transcended formal imperial boundaries. Yet with their public outreach and fundraising activities, missionaries continuously emphasised what they saw as Europeans' responsibilities for non-Christian populations in other continents and disseminated a constant flow of images and ideas about these people being desperate for Christian guidance. Missionaries addressed Europeans as Christians, obliged to uplift the world's non-Christian populations into salvation and a civilised condition.

This chapter starts by discussing the rise of European mission work in the nineteenth century and how missionaries contributed to the formation

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of an imperial culture in Europe. Their imaginative geography of 'heathendom' and civilisation gained a real and concrete meaning in the form of the countless mission houses and seminaries that sprang up in Europe. A virtually unexplored subject in historiography, mission houses were hives of activity from where wide-ranging missionary networks between Europe and other continents were maintained.[1] Part I of this chapter will therefore chart general trends and traits of mission houses in Europe and explain how these religious institutions became imperial places.

Part II offers a case study of one such religious institution, the Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft's headquarters in the Swiss city of Basel. This section is, first, a detailed investigation of the factors at play in the construction of mission houses in Europe, ranging from practical needs to theological considerations. It also provides a valuable illustration of the symbolic meaning of such places as bulwarks of Christian civilisation, and the different ways this meaning was constructed. Second, the inclusion of this Swiss-German missionary society enables a better understanding of the transnational nature of imperial culture to the extent that it also flourished in European countries *without* their own empires. However, this understanding also implies a critical scrutiny of the limits of imperial culture, both geographically and in substance.

Part I. Mission houses, religion, and the civilising mission

The nineteenth-century mission boom

Spreading the Christian faith was an inextricable part of the earliest European expansions in the Americas, where it effectively formed part of the Spanish and Portuguese state churches.[2] The modern figure of the missionary developed in the sixteenth century, when Portuguese Jesuits working in Asia formed a new kind of religious agent who, unable to coerce local populations into conversion, lived among and adapted to them in order to propagate the gospel.[3] Another defining characteristic of missionaries and their organisations originated in this period as well: the way in which they shored up their overseas activities with consistent promotion and publicity efforts on the home front to create support among their fellow

1 But see Cleys, De Maeyer, De Meulder and Howard, *Missionary places*.
2 González and González, *Christianity in Latin America*, pp. 53–54, 66–73, 94.
3 Walls, 'The eighteenth-century', pp. 27–28.

Europeans.[4] From the beginning, missionary writings reduced the complex situation in the corners of the world where they worked to a more rosy legitimisation of European rule and contained what Ananya Chakravarti calls a 'blueprint' for imperial thinking, in which people were hierarchically classified with European civilisation at the apex.[5]

The first dedicated mission organisations surfaced in this period, such as the papal Propaganda Fide (Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith; 1622), the Société des missions étrangères de Paris (around 1660), and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG; 1701). These institutions were closely linked to the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England. In the eighteenth century, newly emerging Protestant missions chose a different path. German Protestant communities such as the Moravians (1727) started as religious communities but soon developed a practice of overseas missionary work. At the end of the century, Protestant missionary enterprises sprang up in Britain, the most powerful and expansive European state of the period. These were rooted in the more general Anglo-American Evangelical revival of the period that, in turn, was influenced by continental Lutheran Pietism. Both were Protestant religious revivals that stressed individual devotion and personal salvation. In short order, the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS; 1792), the London Missionary Society (LMS; 1795) and the Church Missionary Society (CMS; 1799) were established. Subsequently, in other European countries, Protestants of different denominations founded similar societies such as the Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap (NZG; 1797) and the Rheinische Missionsgesellschaft (1828). In total, some 560 Protestant mission societies were formed in Europe in the century up to 1900.[6]

Meanwhile, Catholic missionary efforts intensified too, this time under the auspices of 'missionary pope' Gregory XVI (1831–1846) and 'oldest daughter' France. All in all, 29 new orders and congregations and 39 new female mission orders were founded between 1800 and 1914, which joined the older orders to be appointed directly to mission areas by the Holy See.[7] Examples are the Marists congregation (1816) and the Société des missions africaines (1856), both in Lyon. They were sustained by dozens of new support societies, such as the influential Oeuvre de la propagation de la foi (1822; Lyon).[8]

4 Daughton, *An empire divided*, pp. 28–33.

5 Chakravarti, *The empire of apostles*, p. 20.

6 Faschingeder, 'Missionsgeschichte als Beziehungsgeschichte', p. 15.

7 Ibid., p. 17.

8 Sievernich, *Die christliche Mission*, pp. 91–97, 103–104.

These new organisations fuelled the large growth of Western European missionary efforts in the nineteenth century. It is estimated as many as 25,000 European missionaries were active in 1908.[9]

This expanding mission activity meant the expansion of religious connections between Europe and the outside world. Missionaries travelled from their headquarters or seminaries in Britain, Germany, France, and other countries to both colonies and non-colonised regions in Asia, Africa, Australia, or the Americas. They journeyed to their 'mission fields' overseas and would travel back to Europe to recuperate, promote their cause, and consult their superiors and colleagues. And when they remained at their stations, missionaries regularly sent reports and letters to Europe that formed extensive paper trails. Mission activity formed dense networks between locations in Europa and the wider world, both real and imagined.[10]

Missionaries are taken here as a broad transnational category of actors, irrespective of nationality or denomination. Of course, differences existed between countries and creeds. For instance, while Protestant mission societies originated in civil society and were the result of cooperation between laymen and clergy, Catholic orders and congregations were more clerical organisations and thus part of the church hierarchy. Yet in general, the parallels outweighed the differences.[11] All European missionaries had ambivalent relations with colonial governments, ranging from cooperation to conflict. All worked in healthcare or education in the colonies, studied local languages and cultures, and relied on the work of indigenous converts, catechists and clergy.[12] Furthermore, missionary organisations usually worked not just within their 'own' empire but also in the empires of other nations and in non-colonised regions, and often employed multinational workforces. In addition, missionary organisations maintained relationships with each other across national boundaries, at least within the Catholic and Protestant camps. Catholic missions were almost inherently transnational as, in principle, the allegiance of the orders and congregations lay more with Rome than with the secular government in whose territory they were located – although most were still organised into national 'provinces'. Protestant missions regularly met in the Continental Missions Conference established in Bremen in 1866, and international Protestant missionary conferences took

9 Faschingeder, 'Missionsgeschichte', p. 16.

10 Habermas, 'Mission im 19. Jahrhundert'.

11 Etherington, 'Afterword', p. 280.

12 Ibid., pp. 280–297; Sievernich, *Die christliche Mission*, pp. 103–104.

place in 1888 (London), 1900 (New York) and 1910 (Edinburgh).[13] Especially after World War I, missionary organisations made clear moves towards more transnationalism and ecumenicism. Protestants formed the World Missionary Council in 1921; to the Catholics, Pope Benedict XV directed his *Maximum illud* apostolic letter in 1919, which urged the missions to disavow nationalism and imperialism.[14]

Missionaries and imperial culture

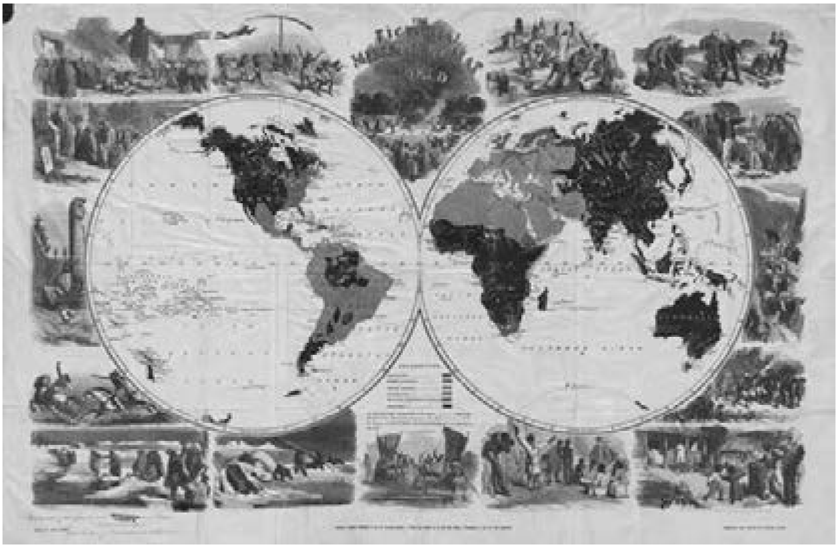
The narrative that missionaries presented to European audiences regarding their work amongst non-European people in faraway regions of the globe made them part of Europe's imperial culture. A testament to how prolific missionaries were in imperial contexts, they have been the subject of heated debates: as Jean and John Comaroff noted in their classic study, missionaries have long been interpreted as either imperialist agents or benign philanthropists.[15] The more nuanced interpretations of the Comaroffs and others have since problematised the coloniser–colonised dichotomy on which such uncompromising interpretations rest and rightfully questioned whether missionaries were imperialist 'agents'.[16]

Yet at the same time, recent research demonstrates that missionaries did play an important role in imperialism, if we view imperialism not only as a political process but as a broad phenomenon with far-reaching cultural dimensions and repercussions, and if we take missionaries' metropolitan activities into account too. In fact, missionaries have become a prominent theme in the historiography on imperial cultures.[17] It is now acknowledged that they had a large role in spreading European cultural hegemony and were part of the general trend of globalisation on Western terms.[18] Even if missionaries supported relatively liberal politics, rarely did they question the desirability of European imperial rule in itself.[19]

Most importantly for the purposes of this study, the cultural impact of missionaries was not only felt in their mission areas, but also in the European societies from which they came, in which they sojourned, and to which they reported. Missionaries and their networks were a highly influential, perhaps

13 Best, 'Godly, international, and independent', pp. 598–608.
14 Hastings, 'The clash of nationalism and universalism', pp. 15, 19–22.
15 Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution*, p. 7.
16 Porter, 'Religion, missionary enthusiasm, and empire', pp. 238–240, 242.
17 Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution*, pp. 7–9.
18 Etherington, 'Introduction', pp. 3–4.
19 Thorne, *Congregational missions*, pp. 155–157.

Figure 1 British missionary world map from 1860, representing the spread of various religions, including Protestantism, Catholicism, and Islam over the world, with remaining 'heathen' regions in black. The map is surrounded by images depicting shocking cultural practices and depicting the supposedly beneficial results of missionary influence.



even the most influential, channel through which images and information of the non-European world reached metropolitan audiences, whether in Britain, France, Belgium, Germany, or the Netherlands.[20] In magazines, books, lectures, sermons, exhibitions, and fundraising events, missionaries of all stripes informed local audiences in Europe and asked them to support their work. Rather than unworldly eccentrics, missionaries were media-savvy professionals who put all kinds of new means of communication to good use, employing visual materials such as posters, magic-lantern slides, and photographs. Missionary publications were written to be accessible texts, combining ethnography, geography and descriptions of local religious customs, rather than being theological essays.[21] The archetypical missionary – devout, determined, male, living in isolation amongst 'uncivilised' heathens – was established as a trope in the collective imagination, of which

20 Thorne, 'Religion and empire at home', pp. 144–145; Stuchtey, 'One big imperial family?', pp. 317, 333; Daughton, *An empire divided*, pp. 17–19, 48; Gissibl, 'Imagination and beyond', pp. 173–175; Cleys et al., 'België in Congo, Congo in België', pp. 155–158.
21 Johnston, *Missionary writing and empire*, p. 32.

the near-mythical figure of David Livingstone is merely the most famous example.[22] The result of all these 'propaganda' activities was a religiously inspired imaginative geography that charted the world in terms of Christian versus non-Christian, civilised versus uncivilised. Mission maps, on which the progress of Christian civilisation was plotted, such as Figure 1, were a much-loved genre.[23]

The influence of missionaries in Europe ran deep. In the early nineteenth century the NZG was one of the Netherlands' largest civil associations, and when Dutch mission work peaked a century later, hundreds of thousands of Dutch citizens visited missionary exhibitions held throughout the country.[24] In *fin de siècle* France, the readership of the above-mentioned Oeuvre's magazine was on par with that of the country's most popular daily newspaper.[25] In Germany in 1919, Catholic mission associations alone had over a million members.[26] Clearly the 'missionary public', as Catherine Hall termed it, was very large.[27]

Religion was an integral part of peoples' lives in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe and many ordinary people were apparently touched by the religious arguments for the conversion of non-Christians. Behind every missionary enterprise stood a multitude of men and women who paid and prayed for the mission at a grassroots level, organised in countless local support groups up to the level of towns and villages so that 'the global divide between Christians and pagans was inscribed into the routines of individual religiosity'.[28] Collection boxes in the stereotypical shapes of African and Asian converts made the act of donating a physical performance inscribed in the practice of church services, underlining their otherness as much as their neediness.[29] Typically, many of the donations to missionary societies consisted of small contributions from less well-off supporters, which indicates mission support was widespread.[30]

Missionaries contributed to the development of an imperial culture in Europe because they legitimised colonial rule for their European public

22 Etherington, 'Introduction', p. 4; Reinhard, 'Der Missionar'.

23 Vasquez, *La carthographie missionaire*; Thomas, 'Horizonte der "Missionskartographie"'.

24 Kolle, 'Van eensgezindheid naar reveil'; Groten, 'Difference'.

25 Daughton, *An empire divided*, pp. 38–40.

26 Habermas, 'Mission im 19. Jahrhundert', p. 645.

27 Hall, *Civilising subjects*, pp. 292–295.

28 Gissibl, 'Imagination and beyond', p. 174.

29 Nederveen Pieterse, *White on black*, p. 71.

30 Daughton, *An empire divided*, p. 12; Murray, *Proclaim the good news*, p. 14; Miller, *The social control*, pp. 39–40.

by emphasising the dire situation of non-European populations and the necessity of Christian guidance. Missionary publications, lectures, and exhibitions were far more simplistic than missionaries' actual conduct outside of Europe, where they were ambivalent towards both the local population and European encroachment. The core message was an ever-present othering process that distinguished 'Christian' from 'heathen', glossing over distinctions between different cultures and lumping different people from all over the globe under the heading of 'heathen'.[31]

Notwithstanding their universalist ideals, missionaries associated being Christian with civilisation and whiteness, whereas to be a heathen coincided with an uncivilised condition and blackness. Therefore, missionaries represented conversion as being just as much about culture and civilisation as about theology and spirituality – in promoting their cause, they underlined that they brought not only faith, but also civilisation to people who supposedly had none.[32] Furthermore, to emphasise the urgency and necessity of mission work, missionary propaganda exaggerated the perceived negative traits of target populations by using stereotypes and sensationalised accounts. For example, missionary propaganda characterised practices that shocked the public, such as cannibalism and headhunting, as synecdochic of entire cultures.[33] Although ideas of racial difference were no impediment to conversion, they always informed missionaries' thinking, especially in the late nineteenth century.[34] In Europe, this reinforced the construction of missionaries' metropolitan audiences as 'white' communities.

Due to the transnational nature of mission work and the importance attached to Christianity as a cornerstone of European civilisation, the contributions of missionaries to the development of an imperial culture clearly spoke to the idea of a common European identity. Of course, the lofty idea of a divine missionary effort could be compromised in practice by 'missionary nationalism', which subscribed to more national understandings of mission work. For example, French Catholic missionaries enthusiastically associated themselves with the French empire and virtually monopolised work in French West Africa and Indochina. Dutch Protestant missionaries worked in their own colonies, while a national outlook coloured even the exhibitions of their Catholic compatriots, despite the fact that they

31 Groten, 'Difference', p. 500; see also Daughton, *An empire divided*, p. 41.

32 Cleall, *Missionary discourses*, pp. 1–4.

33 Cox, 'From the empire of Christ to the Third World', p. 94; Cox, *The British missionary enterprise*, pp. 115–144.

34 Cleall, *Missionary discourses*, pp. 4–7.

worked in transnational congregations and orders. In Britain, Christian missions were already part of a 'bible and flag' national identity in the early nineteenth century, and the Anglican Church in particular conceived of its mission work in national terms.[35] As for denominational differences, the Protestant–Catholic divide never ceased to matter and fed into such national divisions. French Catholic missionaries were especially wary of anglophone Protestants, for instance; in turn, at the 1910 Edinburgh conference mentioned above, those anglophone Protestants bickered over the question of whether or not to categorise their missions among Catholic Christians as 'foreign' missions.[36]

Yet it was typical that the conferees decided against it – ultimately, neither nation nor denomination challenged the fundamental assumption of a civilised, European Christianity. Missionaries of all backgrounds worked from the same convictions and incentives, heeding the precept from Mark 16:15, 'go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel', and placed themselves in the same narrative of a centuries-old expansion of Christianity. The central motivation of mission work thus transcended the worldly, political boundaries of nation-states and empires; European missionaries of all kinds operated under the same imaginative geography of a Christian world that emanated from Europe and a non-Christian heathen world. The importance of concepts such as civilisation and race to differentiate and substantiate these worlds meant fellow white Christians were in the same camp, at least nominally, which tended to sideline internal animosity. This is confirmed by the focus of missionary publications and exhibitions on Africans (including those enslaved in the Americas and, later, their descendants), Asians, and native Americans as the obvious targets for mission work, rather than on white Christians of other denominations.

Still, we must assume the transnational conception of mission work became most visible in specific contexts. Perhaps the missionaries who could live up to it most were those for whom a national understanding of their work made little sense. Some missionaries were, to an extent, excluded from the national narrative for historical reasons, such as Protestant missionaries in France.[37] Many others were citizens of countries without colonies or worked in organisations from such countries. In the absence of German colonies, nineteenth-century German missionaries developed a particularly

35 Hastings, 'The clash'; De Graaf, 'De spiegel van de zending', p. 46; Groten, 'Difference'; Porter, 'An overview', p. 50.

36 Daughton, *An empire divided*, pp. 43–44; Stanley, 'Defining the boundaries of Christendom'.

37 Zorn, 'When French Protestants'.

transnational outlook and were generally sceptical of German colonialism when it eventually came.[38] To the same category belong the missionaries from countries that would never govern colonies, such as Scandinavian and Finnish Lutherans, Polish Catholics, or the Swiss Calvinists discussed below.[39] These groups exemplify the transnational nature of missionary work in the imperialist era. The content of missionary publicity in their home countries seems not to have differed markedly from those of missionaries in imperial powers. The ways of thinking and frames of reference at the heart of imperial culture were exchanged and shared by European missionaries across national and imperial boundaries.

At home with the missions

In many ways, missionaries' main activities were – by definition – located outside Europe. Like the trope of the heroic missionary, the image arose of the lone mission station with its flock of converts as a stronghold of civilisation in uncivilised, inhospitable lands.[40] However, for missionaries, their headquarters, offices, and seminaries in Europe also held deep significance as their most visible and permanent public presence. These buildings were the nourishing roots and central nodes in missionaries' networks, which enabled the smooth operation of their organisation. Therefore, they were understood and represented as sites directly predicated upon the 'heathen world'.

In 1877, the Dutch edition of the Oeuvre's monthly magazine published an article on a new mission house being built in the village of Steyl in Limburg, the predominantly Roman Catholic province in the south of the Netherlands. The building would have three main goals, according to the magazine: take in candidates for mission work and train them; support missionaries with funding, advice, and prayer; and encourage believers to support the mission with money, prayers, and their sons.[41] Inadvertently the magazine summarised the main goals of every mission organisation's home department in Europe: to manage the organisation's affairs, to train new missionaries, and to sustain a public outreach programme to encourage (financial) support among the faithful. At a basic level these activities needed to be located and housed somewhere, and as missionary organisations grew and their

38 Best, 'Godly, international, and independent'; Besier, 'Mission and colonialism', p. 92.

39 E.g. Nielssen, Okkenburg and Hestad Skeie, *Protestant missions*.

40 Altena, *'Ein Häuflein Christen'*; Gaitskell, 'Dora Earthy's Mozambique research', p. 195.

41 'Missie-Huis'.

bureaucracies expanded, there was an increasing need to create suitable accommodations from which they could be administrated.

Steyl actually makes for an illustrative case that carried into the extreme more general trends in mission houses. It belonged to the Society of the Divine Word, a missionary congregation founded there in 1875 by the priest Arnold Janssen, who was unable to achieve this feat in his native Germany because of the anti-Catholic measures of the *Kulturkampf*. The congregation's first accommodation was a renovated tavern. Even these provisional premises were soon joined by a second-hand printing press in the old brewhouse, testament to the importance that missionaries attached to the use of print media. In 1876, construction was begun on the building which the magazine reported on, followed by near-constant construction in the 1880s as the number of students quickly rose. Wings were added around the old structure, together with a Gothic church and separate buildings for the printing press, the bookbinding workshop, and a photography laboratory. In 1887, the building complex housed some 600 people (by the society's own account), who in the 1890s would be joined by the sisters and nuns of two new orders Janssen founded, housed in two separate convents.[42] The final result, wrote a Catholic newspaper in 1912, was 'a city of convents and monastic gardens, tower spires and chimneys [...] one big convent'.[43]

Even if the rapidly developing complex at Steyl was a mission house on steroids, it also showcases some general trends that can also be discerned in other mission buildings in Europe: the combination of practical and theological concerns, the multiple uses that all had to be combined in one complex or even under one roof. If mission houses were a new kind of structure in nineteenth-century Europe, they did not form a coherent building type; instead, they amalgamated the functions of existing buildings such as seminaries, convents, office buildings and orphanages.

The three main British missionary societies (BMS, LMS, CMS) each had their mission houses in or near the City of London. These representative buildings were purposely constructed as headquarters and offices rather than as educational institutes.[44] Only the CMS briefly housed pupils in its mission house, but in 1825 established a separate college in the suburb of Islington to train pupils without university education and provide a

42 Auf der Heide, *Die Missionsgenossenschaft von Steyl*, pp. 41, 49, 55–56, 61–64, 68, 84–91.

43 R., 'Steyl. Het Missiehuis'.

44 Brown Myers, *The centenary celebration*, p. 280; Lovett, *The history*, p. 672; Stock, *The history*, vol. I, p. 111; vol. II, pp. 369–372, 390; vol. III, pp. 311–312.

'finishing touch' to those who did.[45] The BMS and LMS employed men who had studied theology elsewhere and therefore did not require their own schools.[46] A different case was St Augustine's College founded in 1848 on the ruins of an old Canterbury abbey, which the Anglican Church used for the training of SPG missionaries. St Augustine's also differed from the societies' mission houses in terms of external appearance: its Gothic looks, befitting the historical site, stood in contrast to the more secular architecture of the other houses and the Islington college that referred to Renaissance classicism, adapted to the London streets.[47]

Nevertheless, even without an educational purpose, these mission houses were multifunctional buildings. The CMS mission house had been located in Salisbury Square, London since 1813, on premises that were continuously rebuilt and expanded and which included offices, living quarters, a committee room and the publishing house.[48] Likewise, the BMS mission house in Furnival Street contained offices, a library which could hold 300 people, the society's committee room, a 'ladies' room', and several bedrooms.[49]

Catholic mission congregations and orders could build on the time-honoured example of the convent for their seminaries; sometimes literally, when they established themselves in existing buildings. The Missions Étrangères continued operating from their purpose-built church and seminary in Paris that dated back to the seventeenth century.[50] The Marists occupied an old convent in the town of Belley and in the 1830s moved their main office to a Lyon mansion.[51] The Missions Africaines also established themselves in Lyon in 1856, moving to a purpose-built seminary in 1870.[52] These moves contributed to Lyon's development into a particularly important city for French Catholic mission activity, home also to the Oeuvre's main office. In Paris, the old missionary congregation of the Lazarists expanded its headquarters between 1827 and 1869.[53] These 'motherhouses' functioned as seminaries and headquarters, and were large multi-storey buildings, usually in combination with a chapel that seems to have been publicly accessible.

45 Stock, *The history,* vol. I, pp. 264–266.

46 Lovett, *The history*, pp. 668–670.

47 Bremner, *Imperial gothic*, pp. 327–340.

48 Stock, *The history*, vol. I, p. 111

49 'The new Mission House'.

50 Launay, *Histoire générale*, pp. 269–273.

51 *Le très révérend Père Colin*, pp. 111–113, 155–160, 175; 'Les missions de la Société de Marie', p. 333.

52 'La Société des Missions Africaines', p. 201; Échallier, 'Augustin Planque', note 16.

53 M., 'Notice historique'.

If the French examples were set in a rather dense urban landscape, the Catholic complex at Steyl was located in a more rural setting. A subdued Gothic seems to have been a style of choice for Catholic mission buildings, but many were also relatively neutral.

Continental Protestant societies form a third trend in mission houses. Unlike their British counterparts, they were both college and headquarters; unlike the Catholic motherhouses, they were quite reclusive and home to staff and teachers' families. In their tendency to house different functions literally under one roof, the German societies bear a resemblance to the older, convent-like houses of Pietist communities where men and women lived in communitarian fashion.[54] The Rheinische Mission's Missionshaus in Barmen erected in 1861–1862 contained living quarters and teaching facilities, offices and meeting spaces, and a central praying room. The fact that it was inhabited by the director and his family, the students, their teachers, and a varying number of missionaries, was seen as beneficial to students' discipline and development.[55] Very similar arguments were used for the 'firmly established order' in the mission houses of Berlin and, as we will see below, Basel.[56] The emphasis on reclusion, order, and dedication also manifested itself in these houses' sober appearance, with some subtle references to ecclesial architecture.

Dutch Protestant societies were generally of a more modest size but had similar accommodations. The NZG and the more orthodox Nederlandsche Zendingsvereeniging (NZV) both operated houses in Rotterdam. The NZV purchased a house of its own in 1861 and in 1890 moved to a country house on the outskirts of the city, donated by two affluent supporters.[57] The NZG had used a refurbished town house since 1852, that by 1915 had become much too small. Therefore, together with another society the NZG built a dedicated new mission college in the village of Oegstgeest that housed the staff and 50 to 70 students.[58]

Mission houses as meaningful places

Missionaries carefully curated the significance of these European homes. In at least one case – Barmen – the 'stimulating impression' that a grand new

54 Schmidt-Funke, 'Erweckte Interieurs', pp. 343–348.
55 Von Rhoden, *Geschichte*, pp. 102–107.
56 Richter, *Geschichte*, pp. 194–196.
57 Rooseboom, *Na vijftig jaren*, pp. 14–16.
58 Kruijf, *Geschiedenis*, p. 452; Van Nes, *De Nederlandsche Zendingsschool 1905–1915*, pp. 26–28; Van Nes, *De Nederlandsche Zendingsschool 1915–1925*, pp. 5–6.

mission house would make on potential supporters was actually given as an argument for construction.[59] But in many different ways, mission houses formed part of the promotion efforts as they were portrayed in text, speech, or visual representation as sites of faith and spirituality with a hint of the exotic; places in direct relation to 'heathen' and decidedly 'other' areas of the world. It was these acts of meaning-making that made mission houses into imperial places as they became the anchor points of the imaginative geographies that the mission propaganda sketched. It underlined that the religious civilising mission began in European cities and villages; in fact, many organisations were named after the place in Europe where they started, as in the case of the missionaries of Steyl, Scheut, Berlin, Mill Hill, and the LMS.[60]

The functions of a mission house's various interior spaces were all predicated on overseas missionary work; in some cases, the spatial layout of overseas mission stations deliberately mirrored that of the metropolitan mission house, as in the case of the Moravians.[61] Linked to the mission fields even more explicitly, almost invariably mission houses contained exhibition spaces with man-made and natural objects that missionaries had acquired overseas. The oldest missionary museum probably belonged to the LMS, which had already been included in its first premises in 1814 and later in its purpose-built mission houses. This museum contained a mix of natural history specimens, manufactured objects, and 'idols' that had – allegedly – voluntarily been given up by the converts overseas. Although idols only formed a minority of the objects exhibited, missionaries constantly singled them out in catalogues and descriptions as they were appealing signs of both the 'deluded' condition of the non-Christian target populations and the missionaries' success in liberating them from that condition.[62]

Very similar contents filled the showcases of other missionary museums, and so-called idols were of central importance everywhere. The Rheinische Mission's museum collection started with a gift from the LMS of translated bibles and idols, when its first house was inaugurated in 1832.[63] St Augustine's College established a museum in 1883, and a room within the NZG's Rotterdam home served as museum until 1885.[64] In Lyon, the Missions Africaines exhibited objects from 1861, and in their new seminary from

59 Von Rhoden, *Geschichte*, p. 103.
60 Wingfield, "Scarcely more", pp. 110–111.
61 Ludewig, 'Mapoon mission station'.
62 Wingfield, "Scarcely more".
63 Von Rhoden, *Geschichte*, p. 28; *Gedenkbuch*, p. 24.
64 Boggis, *A history*, pp. 140–162; Kruijf, *Geschiedenis*, p. 462.

the 1920s included a museum where household objects, photographs of missionaries, natural history specimens, and idols were on display. The Oeuvre's museum contrasted 'relics' from killed missionaries with 'barbaric' ethnographic objects.[65] The inclusion of objects related to those who were called 'martyred' missionaries was a peculiar Catholic habit, also exemplified by the Missions Étrangères' 'Martyrs' Room', where bloody clothes, weapons, and shackles related to dozens of killed missionaries and converts were exhibited.[66] In the Netherlands, four Catholic mission museums existed, among which the Missiemuseum in Steyl, unsurprisingly, was the most extensive.[67] The missionary museums were generally of a rather modest size and might have appealed most to Europeans with an above-average interest in religious matters due to personal convictions or because they were already supporting mission efforts. However, they were certainly seen as part of a city's cultural landscape. The LMS museum was included in all major guidebooks to London, for instance, and travel guides described the Oeuvre's museum in Lyon as 'not to be missed'.[68]

Besides the mission houses' interior spaces, their appearance could signal these connections too. In the chapel of the Missions Africaines motherhouse, murals behind the altar illustrated a brief narrative of mission work: a white missionary frees a black boy from slavery, provides healthcare, preaches, and then baptises the child.[69] Similarly, on the altar of the Leipzig mission society's house, a crucified Christ was flanked by a Polynesian woman with child and a black African man.[70] The Bisschop Hamerhuis in Nijmegen, constructed in 1924 as a branch of the Scheut missionaries, to this day still carries a two-storey Chinese pagoda on its roof, referring to the namesake bishop murdered in Mongolia.[71]

But apart from the architecture itself, missionaries also invested their mission houses with meaning in text. When construction of a mission house started or was finished, missionaries delivered inaugural speeches to proclaim the house's connection to faraway 'heathen' lands, which were

65 Zerbini, 'La construction du discours patrimonial'.

66 Launay, *La Salle des Martyrs*.

67 Börger and Kerkhoff, *Kunst met een missie*.

68 Seton, 'Reconstructing the museum', p. 100; Groffier, 'L'oeuvre géographique', p. 548.

69 Inventaire général du patrimoine culturel – Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Lyon, image library, inv.no. IVR82_20056901931NUCB, photograph of the SMA seminary's choir (1933), available at https://patrimoine.auvergnerhonealpes.fr/illustration/ivr8220056901931nucb/a69ad122-0d69-483e-8927-05d4ba447516 (accessed 19 January 2022).

70 Altena, *'Ein Häuflein Christen'*, p. 522.

71 Stenvert et al., *Monumenten in Nederland*, p. 249.

subsequently printed and disseminated in magazines and books. In 1838, a description of the Berlin mission house declared it would not close down 'before the last heathen would have come to Christ's grace'.[72] St Augustine's College was described as a place where 'the energies of European, African, Hindoo, Esquimeaux, and Australian' came together.[73] And in praise of the new NZV house of 1861, a Dutch missionary called it a sacred 'testimony to the heathen world'.[74] In 1913, the CMS had Daudi Chwa II, the sixteen-year-old king of Buganda whose father had been deposed by the British because he had resisted missionary influence, lay the foundation stone of the society's new house.[75]

Finally, visual representations that connected the mission house in Europe to the 'heathen lands' where its emissaries were working were common and can be seen as part of missionaries' adaptation of print media to their own means. Cards and postcards published by missionaries portrayed their mission houses in Europe surrounded by superficial scenes from the overseas mission fields.[76] A poster for the Rheinische Mission, for instance, illustrated its mission house in Barmen between its posts in German South West Africa (modern-day Namibia), the Dutch Indies, and China, with men in traditional or European dress symbolising those regions' inhabitants.[77]

Part II. The Missionshaus in Basel

The following case study allows us to gain an understanding of how a mission house, as an institution and a landmark, became a meaningful location that derived its significance from its relations to the extra-European 'heathen world' and therefore contributed to an imperial culture. This case study is the mission house of the Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft in Basel, Switzerland.

The mission house did not derive its meaning from grand architecture or explicit sculpture. Instead, it will be analysed for the publications, visual

72 Richter, *Geschichte*, p. 42.

73 Cited in: Bremner, *Imperial gothic*, p. 339.

74 'Feestnummer', pp. 64–69.

75 Stock, *The history*, vol. IV, p. 448.

76 Brown Myers, *The centenary celebration*, p. 266; Regionaal Archief Tilburg, image bank, inv. no. 000144, anniversary postcard (1907), available at https://hdl.handle.net/21.12103/a6486309-0af6-4ff5-b40b-d27f1bce94db (accessed 19 January 2022).

77 RELíGIO, Telgte, online collections, inv.no. 10-001, commemorative poster (1887), available at https://westfalen.museum-digital.de/?t=objekt&oges=10156 (accessed 19 January 2022).

representations, and speeches that turned it into a significant location in direct relation to foreign and 'heathen' parts of the world. The one exception where the building itself communicated its imperial meaning, however, was to be found in its museum space, which specifically confronted missionaries and visitors with a large collection of items that came directly from those parts.

If the relationship between missionaries and imperial cultures has been expounded above, the choice for a Swiss organisation in this context begs further explanation. As discussed in the Introduction, even if Switzerland was a landlocked Alpine country without any colonies, Swiss merchants, soldiers, scientists, and planters partook in other nations' empires. For German-speaking Swiss citizens, *Kolonialwaren* was as common a concept to denote coffee, tobacco, and spices as it was in Germany and the Netherlands.[78] In geographical journals and societies, Swiss and foreign authors invited Swiss merchants to profit from colonial riches and contribute to the multinational 'army' bent on 'the civilisation of Africa'.[79] In more critical circles, colonialism was also discussed by organisations such as the International Organisation for the Defence of Natives, which (after 1918) was followed by international organisations that settled in the famously neutral country, such as the League of Nations and the International Labour Organisation.[80]

Through such trajectories and its connections to other European states, Switzerland shared in the wider imperial culture. A 'colonial imagination' arose in Swiss society, exemplified by stereotypical, racialised depictions of Asians and, in particular, black Africans in popular literature or advertisements, and ethnographic exhibitions that paraded non-Western people, of which fifteen were held in Basel alone between 1879 and 1935.[81] In the chapters below, more specific examples of Swiss participation in European imperial culture will surface.

Using the concepts of 'colonial' or 'imperial' to study Swiss history does not occlude the fact it had no colonial empire and does not mean the Swiss understanding of the colonial subjects of other nations was identical to how they were imagined in imperial powers. However, as explained before, imperial culture was not limited to the attraction of and pride in one's own

78 Schär, 'Introduction'; Zangger, *Koloniale Schweiz*; Purtschert and Fischer-Tiné, *Colonial Switzerland*.

79 'La part des Suisses'; Sauter, 'Das Leben am Kongo', pp. 111, 126.

80 Harries, *Butterflies and barbarians*, p. 58; Pedersen, *The guardians*; Maul, 'The International Labour Organization'.

81 Minder, *La Suisse coloniale*; Staehelin, *Völkerschauen*, p. 35.

colonial possessions; rather, imperial culture conceived of imperialism as a desirable and legitimate way of ruling certain people because of their perceived inferior status. The Swiss could be assured they fell safely in the category of ruling Europeans. Even in the remote Swiss town where he stayed, wrote James Baldwin in the 1950s, the townsfolk felt the same disconnection towards him as in the United States because their position as white Europeans made them part of Western civilisation in a way that he could never be. One of the ways in which the townspeople expressed this 'superior' position was their support for missionary work: money was collected in a caricatural collection box or by children dressed up like Africans with blackened faces and wigs.[82] In fact, just as in other countries, missionaries were a prime channel through which Swiss citizens came to know representations of non-European people and cultures.[83]

Basel and the Basel Mission

Basel was especially relevant in the context of missions. An old city-state and Swiss canton on the crossroads of Switzerland, France, and the German lands, it had an important Rhine port and a venerable university that was home to such luminaries as Jacob Burckhardt and Friedrich Nietzsche. Its silk ribbon and cotton industries, trade, investments, and emigration agencies had long linked it to European imperial expansion.[84] Nicknamed *frommes Basel*, 'pious Basel', the city was also a centre for German Pietism because of its strategic location, relative political freedom, and affluent middle classes who were strongly influenced by this religious revival.[85]

In this city, in 1815, members of the Deutsche Christentumsgesellschaft, an interdenominational religious organisation of clergy and laymen from the German states, Switzerland, and several other European countries, founded a mission seminary. Part of 'the International' of revivalist and missionary Protestant societies, the new Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft was strongly linked to British societies, mainly the CMS, and to a lesser extent the Dutch NZG.[86] Although originally envisioned as a training institution for such foreign societies, by 1821, the society was sending out missionaries of its own and rapidly grew to become the largest German mission institution. By

82 Baldwin, 'Stranger in the village'.

83 Harries, *Butterflies and barbarians*, pp. 35–44.

84 Schär, *Tropenliebe*, pp. 61–66; Haenger, 'Basel and the slave trade'; Seiler-Baldinger, 'Basels Beitrag zur Kenntnis Lateinamerikas', p. 171.

85 Herppich, *Pitfalls*, pp. 46–47, 122–125.

86 Jenkins, 'The Church Missionary Society', p. 52.

1887, the Missionsgesellschaft had sent out more than 800 missionaries, of whom some initially went to other societies but most eventually worked at its own stations.[87] Its main mission areas were in the region known as the Gold Coast, present-day Ghana, from 1828, and south-western India from 1834, immediately after foreign missionaries were admitted there. Both were under British rule, although parts of the Gold Coast were also Danish (until 1850) and Dutch (1872). These were followed by missions to Hong Kong and southern China (from 1847), the German colony of Cameroon (from 1886) and, much later, southern Borneo in the Dutch East Indies (1922).

If the Basel Mission maintained relations with British, Dutch, and German Protestant mission circles, its internal organisational framework stretched deep into the German states. The society was non-denominational, but strongly coloured by the Lutheran Pietism from nearby Württemberg, which emphasised personal discipline and devotion and spiritual 'rebirth'.[88] Most of the society's supporters were from Württemberg, as were all its directors and almost half of the entrants in its seminary in the nineteenth century.[89] Additionally, the Basel mission society was often seen (and saw itself) as a 'German' organisation, even if this referred more to a cultural than to a political Germanness: when the society sent out its very first missionaries to the so-called Gold Coast in 1827, its director Christian Gottlieb Blumhardt told them they would work for 'a *German* mission on *this* negro coast' (emphasis in original).[90] In the society's leadership, South German theologians and clergymen cooperated with ministers in Basel and representatives of the city's civic elite who shared their Pietist philanthropic outlook. Members of the city's old patrician *Daig* families, the affluent aristocrats from the upper middle class, were very active as patrons and board members.

As was the case with other German missionary societies for which no German colonies were available until the 1880s, the Basel society's German-Swiss background meant it generally worked in colonies controlled by other European states. This automatically put it at some distance from more explicitly nationalist and 'imperialist' conceptions of its work, although this did not take away from its belief in the superiority of Christian civilisation. Yet, the fact that this attitude was not necessarily a deliberate choice is epitomised by the society's activities in the German colony of Cameroon.

87 Ziegler, *Katalog*, pp. 17–133.

88 Miller, *The social control*, pp. 12–13

89 Sill, *Encounters*, pp. 37–38; Mission21, Basel, Basel Mission Archives (BMA), inv.no. N-58.2, booklet *Die Evangelische Missionsanstalt zu Basel* (Basel [1882]) pp. 2–3.

90 Cited in: Rennstich, 'Die Basler Mission', p. 181.

When the German imperial government requested the Missionsgesellschaft to begin working in this new, first German colony, tensions in the society ran high between those who opposed coupling the mission to colonialism and those who endorsed it. The former faction included the society's Swiss board members, while among the latter were its many German supporters who even threatened to start their own society. Ultimately the society gave in, and in 1886 the Basel mission in Cameroon began.[91]

With the Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft's growth into a full-blown missionary society, its internal organisation and its housing situation changed over time. When the seminary was established, the students received their lessons in a house owned and used by the Christentumsgesellschaft while living in other parts of the town. Soon, this arrangement proved to be at odds with the society's ideas on proper education. In 1816, to facilitate 'uniform and thorough educational efforts', the mission bought a house where Blumhardt would be housed with some 20 students. Within a few years, this property already proved to be too small and, in 1820, the society relocated to a new site in the Leonhardstrasse which it had bought and restructured.[92] This mission house would contain the society's headquarters and teaching facilities for decades to come. It was shared by teachers, director, staff, and the students, and contained dormitories, classrooms, a prayer room, apartments, guestrooms, and the committee room.[93]

As the Basel society became an established and well-known organisation, so too did the name of its mission house become established. It would lend its name to the street it was located in, named Missionsgasse or 'Mission Alley'.[94] In turn, this would have led to the name of 'Mission Gate' for one of the new city gates planned in 1859, if the mission house had not moved location by then.[95] In mid-century histories and descriptions of the city the house merited at least a mention, often with reference to a 'heathen world' that was its target.[96] Baedeker guides from the 1850s indicated the house on their city map and described it as a famous, successful institution where missionaries were educated 'for the spread of

91 Rennstich, 'The understanding of mission', pp. 98–101.

92 Schlatter, *Geschichte*, vol. I, pp. 24–25, 34–35, 69–72.

93 Herppich, *Pitfalls*, pp. 62–63.

94 Siegfried, *Basels Straßennamen*, p. 24.

95 Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt, Basel (SAB), Älteres Hauptarchiv, Bau, inv.no H4, notes on street names for urban expansion plans (25 April 1859) 1.

96 Lutz, *Geschichte*, pp. 316–318; Lutz, *Kuerzer Ueberblick*, pp. 25–26; Burckhardt, *Der Kanton Basel*, p. 283; Streuber, *Die Stadt Basel*, pp. 354–355.

Christianity among the heathens'.[97] One Otto Wehrhan, a German minister, gave an extensive description of his visit to the mission house in a 1840 travelogue. Students were working diligently before being sent out to the five continents, and in the committee room, portraits of the departed missionaries were exhibited next to dozens of 'idols' and diverse objects from 'all heathen lands'.[98]

What appealed to Wehrhan in his travelogue most, though, was meeting Georg Taso, a 'young negro [...] from the Gold Coast', who was to 'return at some point, to preach the gospel to his own people in their language'.[99] Taso must have been one of the first Ghanaians who, together with converts from the society's Indian mission stations, was allowed to travel to Basel for further education. They were a small group; by the society's own records, 22 missionaries from India, the Gold Coast, and China were trained and sent out before 1882.[100] The best known of them was David Asante from the Gold Coast, who would become the society's first indigenous clergyman and whose aristocratic status placed him on something resembling equal footing with the missionaries.[101] For the readers of the city histories and guidebooks, it was the publications that acquainted them with the Missionshaus and its relations with the heathen world overseas. But for inhabitants of Basel, the non-European pupils at the house whom they could meet in the streets would have provided a much more direct testimony of these relations.

The society's particular organisational and educational culture was patriarchal and hierarchic: strict, if not stifling. The board was all-powerful and both pupils and missionaries were expected to obey it at all times.[102] To a large extent, this culture originated in Pietism's emphasis on total devotion. But it also reflected a conservative religious reaction to the political upheavals of the time and the class difference between the young men from humble backgrounds (and without much formal education) who entered the seminary, and the bourgeois ministers and Basel aristocrats on the board.[103] This attitude thus puts the scheme to house students and teachers under one roof in a different light, as it strengthened the leadership's grip on the students.

97 *Die Schweiz. Handbuch für Reisende*, p. 6 (map after p. xl).

98 Wehrhan, *Umschau*, pp. 327–328.

99 Ibid., p. 328.

100 Ziegler, *Katalog*, pp. 117–133.

101 Abun-Nasr, *Afrikaner und Missionar*, pp. 106–118.

102 Herppich, *Pitfalls*.

103 Ibid., pp. 62–63, 118–119, 158; Vogelsanger, *Pietismus*, pp. 46–47; Miller, *The social control*, pp. 89–90.

A new home: the mission compound

Continuing growth led the Missionsgesellschaft to come up with more ambitious and far-reaching accommodations for its office, seminary, and other departments. In 1858, the then director, Joseph Josenhans, wrote in the annual report that the mission house had become increasingly unsuitable due to the society's growth and the increasing traffic in the Missionsgasse.[104] A number of external factors had then forced the decision on the board. At different locations in the city, the society maintained a preparatory school, intended to prepare entrants for the missionary training proper, and a children's home for the missionaries' children. However, in early 1857, it became apparent both had to make way for Basel's new railway station. Second, later that year, the board had also learnt that the city authorities planned a new city gate at the end of the Missionsgasse (the one that was supposed to be named Mission Gate, mentioned above), which would turn it into an even busier thoroughfare.[105]

In August, the board purchased land for a new children's home to the north-west of the city centre in front of the Spalen Gate. But board member (and town councillor) Karl Sarasin suggested it would be more efficient to unite all the different departments in one new 'compound', using the English word. Anticipating this, he had already bought the adjoining terrain himself; together, the two plots formed a strip of land along the road leading out of the Spalen Gate. The board briefly considered another site for the 'mission colony', but ultimately decided it would purchase the Sarasin's grounds to cluster the mission society's different departments together. Figure 2 shows the location of the compound, to the west of the traditional city centre of Basel.

Josenhans had already drawn up a detailed programme for the compound.[106] He was a visionary with a strong will – allegedly nicknamed 'little Bismarck' – and the building bore his mark. A stern and demanding teacher, Josenhans was also responsible for establishing the society's organ that oversaw the industries that missionaries had set up in their areas to employ and 'civilise' their converts by the virtues of labour.[107]

104 *Dreiundvierzigster Jahresbericht*, p. 26.

105 BMA, inv.no. KP28, board meeting minutes (17 December 1857); board meeting minutes (19 August 1857).

106 BMA, board meeting minutes (22 August 1857); archive, inv.no. Q-29.1,1, programme by Joseph Josenhans for new establishment (25 August 1857) 2–5; Schlatter, *Geschichte*, vol. I, p. 257.

107 Rennstich, 'The understanding of mission', pp. 96–97.

Figure 2 Detail of an 1862 plan of Basel, showing the old city centre along the Rhine and the layout of the new quarters to the west. The new mission house can be made out clearly as the large, free-standing building to the north-west (the two other structures are the boys' home and a shed-like outbuilding).

The use of the words *colony* and *compound*, an English loanword with military associations that was itself derived from the Malay *kampung*, is meaningful.[108] Both echoed the mission houses erected in the mission fields, which constituted the mission's achievements practically and symbolically. Colonisation was the missionaries' term for establishing settlements of converts, and compound denoted the collection of mission house, school, chapel, and other buildings that formed the core of such settlements.[109] Josenhans had made an inspection trip to India only a few years earlier and would have had first-hand knowledge about the mission stations. These two-storey houses combined multiple functions and physically set apart the missionaries and their Christian communities from the local population. This was more the theory than the practice – naturally, all kinds of connections between the 'heathen' and the 'Christian' places remained

108 Entry for 'compound' in the Oxford English Dictionary Online, https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/37832 (accessed 3 May 2022).
109 *Vierundvierzigster Jahresbericht*, pp. 67–72.

and developed.[110] But the symbolic value of the society's mission houses was great. Its publications never tired of celebrating how missionary Andreas Riis had managed to construct the society's first ever mission house on the Gold Coast, and the title of 'house builder' that the local population allegedly bestowed upon him.[111] An 1857 article in the *Heidenbote* told readers that whereas the committee had always been keen to send missionaries and construct buildings overseas, it had always been reluctant to spend money on the home front. But as the branches abroad grew, so the trunk of the tree had to be expanded, and now the time had come to erect a new, large home in Basel. The concepts of mission compound and mission colony, developed in the mission field context in colonial Ghana and India, now came home to Switzerland.[112] The house would form the central node in the Basel missionary network, an ideal pious community akin to those overseas: 'Together with our stations in Africa, India and China, the Missionshaus in Basel also forms such a community, such a colony'.[113] And the new mission compound before the city gates would stand out just as deliberately as the overseas stations; no longer quiet and reclusive, it would confidently reveal itself to the public.[114] Concerns were voiced on the board questioning whether the plans were not too ambitious, but Sarasin's and Josenhans's arguments carried the day.[115]

Josenhans's programme called for several interesting points. In general, the compound was to be practically self-sufficient, with room for everything from kitchens, dining halls, and an infirmary to a library, committee room, classrooms, and offices. The preparatory classes and the actual missionary training would be housed in a single building together with the in-house teachers and their families, to ensure strict and disciplined education. But two requirements in particular draw attention. First, Josenhans noted 'some rooms for black brothers' were to be included, where 'black' referred simply to non-white, including both Indians and Ghanaians.[116] Apparently the society intended to continue the education of converts and teachers from the mission areas in Basel but felt they needed rooms apart from the regular students. Second, a museum space should be included, large enough

110 Damptey, 'Traditional planning', p. 467; Sill, *Encounters*, pp. 22, 129.

111 Jenkins, 'The continuing scandal', pp. 68–69.

112 'Wie der Baum der Mission wächst'.

113 'Hier darf keener müssig sein', p. 4.

114 BMA, board meeting minutes (19 August 1857).

115 BMA, programme by Josenhans; inv.no. Q-29.1,1, letter by Alfred Ostertag and Karl Sarasin (February 1858).

116 BMA, programme by Josenhans, 3.

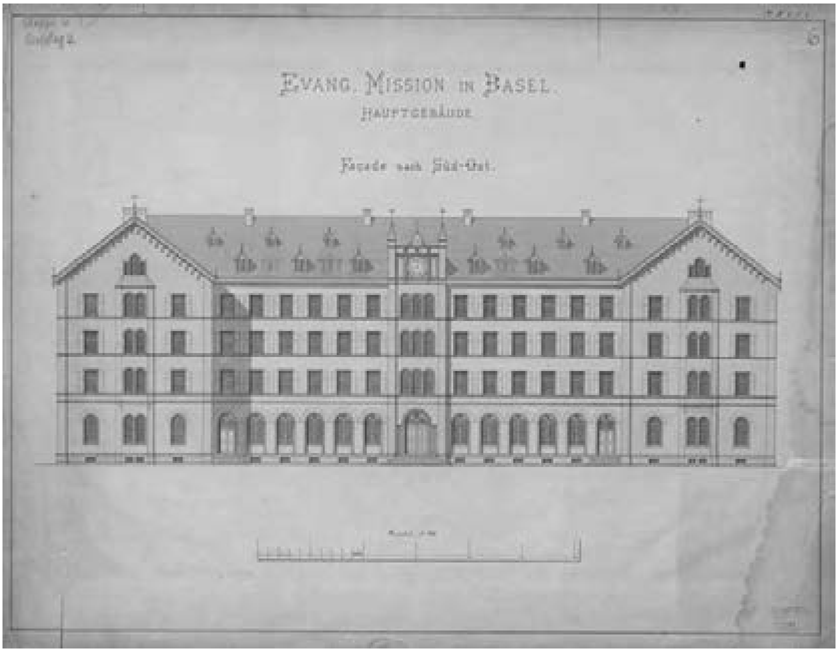
to take in the collection of Christian Gottlob Barth.[117] Barth was a German theologian, publisher, and friend of the Basel society.[118] Over the years he had created a sizeable collection of objects from all over the world which he had offered to donate to the society, and it was included as an integral part of the new mission house.[119]

In January 1858, the committee discussed a first set of drawings for the new mission house. By that time, construction of the new boys' home was probably already underway as it would open in March 1859 as the compound's first building.[120] Although Josenhans had envisioned such separate buildings for all departments, this would have been too costly; instead, the architect who was given the commission designed a single building.[121] This architect was Johann Jacob Stehlin der Jüngere. Stehlin, whose father of the same name was an architect and influential citizen of Basel, had trained with Henri Labrouste at the École des Beaux-Arts and in Berlin and was described at his death in 1894 as 'in earlier times, the most sought-after and most-commissioned architect of his home town'.[122] He would design the city's most important public buildings, including its art museum, theatre, and music hall. He was helped by his relationship to his uncle (by marriage), the abovementioned Karl Sarasin, who became the head of the city's *Baukollegium* in 1858: together, the two men would dominate the architectural scene.[123] The Missionshaus was one of Stehlin's early projects. The mission society had already hired him for an aborted extension in the old house's garden, and he was undoubtedly commissioned for the new building due to Sarasin's influence.[124]

The building Stehlin designed had a wide, symmetrical 'palace' façade with a central entrance and corner pavilions (Figure 3). It was a practical layout that profited from natural light, which was also used for hospitals, schools, and mission houses in Islington, Barmen, and Oegstgeest. As can be judged from the map in Figure 1, the building was somewhat isolated from the city of Basel proper, which meant that the large, four-storey building stood out from the surrounding farms and houses. This visibility was reinforced as the building proudly faced the city rather than the road it was located on, due

117 Ibid., 3, 4,
118 Schlatter, *Geschichte*, vol. I, p. 134.
119 'Das Museum', pp. 18–19.
120 'Chronik vom März', p. 44.
121 Stehlin, *Architectonische Mittheilungen*, p. 45.
122 'Nekrologie', p. 79.
123 Germann, 'Die Basler Hauptpost'.
124 BMA, board meeting minutes (10 December 1856).

Figure 3 Elevation of the Missionshaus, showing the main (south-east) façade that faced the city. Note the large window surface, the dormers that contained the prayer chapels in the attic, and the crosses on the roof.

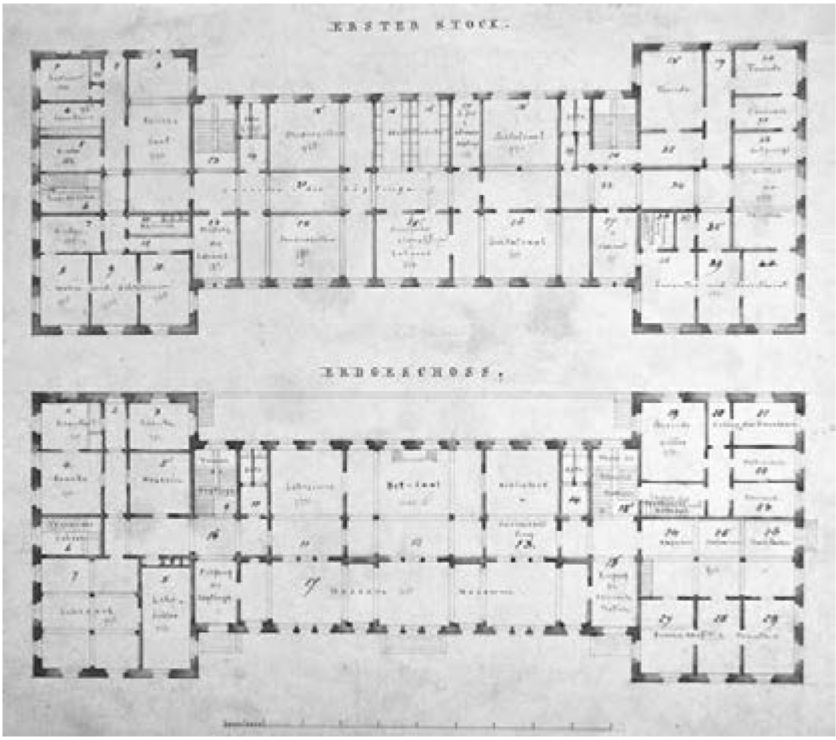


to its narrow plot of land, perpendicular to the road. Stehlin had given the façade a simple *Rundbogenstil* appearance, the style that had become popular, especially for public buildings, in the German lands in the nineteenth century. The row of arched windows of the ground floor, and the crenelations under the roof were typical features; the clocktower-like entrance and the crosses of the roof specifically evoked religious architecture, however.[125]

It was in the interior that the society's real considerations played out, as students, teachers, and other staff lived and worked in the building as a family. The first, second, and third floor were each home to two classes of sixteen students each (all-male), which brought the hypothetical total to 96. They were confined to part of the central wing, their dormitories and classrooms centred around a corridor (Figure 4). Essentially, the students were surrounded by the apartments for teachers and their families in the building's south-west corner pavilion, and the directors' apartments and offices in the north-east corner pavilion that faced the street. The fourth-floor

125 Bergdoll, *European architecture*, pp. 184–189.

Figure 4 Two floorplans of the Missionshaus: on the ground floor (bottom) the museum and the praying hall take up most of the central wing, while the plan of the second storey (top) shows the students' quarters in the centre surrounded by the teachers' apartments, offices, and the meeting room in the corner pavilions.



attic contained a series of small chapels recognisable from outside by the small dormers. The main prayer hall on the ground floor was the building's most important room; however, the museum that lay between it and the main entrance was actually the largest and was the first (and presumably the only) room visitors would enter. Further facilities included kitchens and washrooms, the publishing department, and rooms for the house staff.[126] All in all, some 160 persons called the building home.[127]

The interior arrangements facilitated the students' surrender to the faith and the mission that its leaders demanded. Students lived collectively, obliged

126 SAB, Stehlin family archive (PA513a), inv.no. I C 5, file on the Missionshaus, various elevations and floorplans.
127 BMA, inv.no. N.t-03, Josef Haller, *Das Leben im Basler Missionshaus* (Basel 1897) 5.

to rise early and spend most of their day studying in a strict *Hausordnung* that, by 1888, ran to 60 pages and covered every aspect of daily life on the compound.[128] Every day started and ended with individual prayer, taking turns in the small chapels, and a communal service in the main hall, with most of the students' daily life taking place in the dormitory, classrooms and dining room on their own floor.[129] Meals were frugal; every Sunday, there was curry for dinner as '[w]hoever does not like currie [sic] and rice cannot become a missionary in India'.[130] The students' room for manoeuvre was literally limited as most of their rooms were linked together in a series so that they constantly moved back and forth through the same rooms, whereas the teachers and directors could move around freely and use their own staircases and entrances. In many ways the students were constrained to the secluded atmosphere of the compound, which was fenced and gated with a doorman posted day and night. On the grounds, they also worked in the gardens and learned crafts in the sheds.[131] Even when the students had become missionaries, they remained subject to the will of the board, which matched them to specific mission fields based on its appraisal of the students' capabilities and on racist and stereotypical ideas of the mission fields. Students that the board thought patient enough to handle 'child-like negroes', were called 'Africans'; if they were not discouraged by Chinese chauvinism, they would become 'Chinese'.[132] In fact, the classifications of Chinese and Indians as more 'advanced' people than black Africans meant missionaries deemed less intelligent by the board were often sent to Africa.[133]

The compound was also a heavily gendered environment, meant for 'men' and not 'youths', according to Josenhans.[134] The new girls' home for missionaries' children, constructed in 1862 to complement the boy's home, was located at some distance from the new mission compound.[135] This was probably considered necessary because of sentiments already expressed by the board when discussing the new location in 1857: it would be 'totally inappropriate' for the missionaries' adolescent daughters to have to pass the mission house.[136] On a related note, the male students grew a full beard as

128 *Haus-Ordnung*, p. 1.

129 BMA, Haller, *Das Leben*; inv.no. QS-10.4.2, memoirs of F. Heinecken (s.d.) 90–94.

130 BMA, Heinecken memoirs, 90–94.

131 Ibid., 106–111.

132 BMA, Haller, *Das Leben*, 33.

133 Altena, *'Ein Häuflein Christen'*, pp. 304–305.

134 'Aus der Festwoche', p. 62.

135 Schlatter, *Geschichte*, vol. I, p. 241.

136 BMA, board meeting minutes (19 August 1857).

soon as they could, to cultivate an image of venerable masculinity.[137] This is not to say women had no place in the Basel mission society, as missionary wives took up crucial teaching positions in the mission areas and were assisted by unmarried women employed by the society.[138] However, the compound itself was a predominantly male place. Prospective 'mission brides' selected to marry overseas missionaries stayed in the guestrooms only temporarily, and while male missionaries departed after ceremonies in the museum and main hall, female missionaries took their leave in the smaller committee room.[139]

The meaning of the mission house

The strict and secluded atmosphere on the compound was similar to that of comparable institutions such as orphanages, boarding schools, and convents. What distinguished the mission house from these categories was that this atmosphere and culture were predicated on its relationships to places in 'heathen' environments in other corners of the world, to which it was thought to spread the virtues of Christian civilisation. The building in Basel was thus made the centre of a global missionary space constructed by the travels of Basel missionaries, their children, and certain converts, back and forth, and by their writings and imaginations.

Turning the building into a meaningful place because of its relationships with the mission areas had already begun in the first inauguration ceremonies in July 1859, when the structure had reached its highest point. The parish minister praised it before an audience of supporters and missionaries, some of whom were seated on the stones and bricks of the construction site, and promised the builders present that their work would be spoken about in all parts and languages of the world.[140] Similarly, three days later the carpenters' foreman recited the traditional *Zimmerspruch* at the topping-out ceremony. The poem presented the house as a gate through which envoys would travel to all 'heathen peoples', envoys who would spread the house's blessings 'in India and in Africa, Australia and America'.[141] When the finished building was inaugurated on 4 July 1860, Josenhans proposed that two of the crosses on the building's roof symbolised 'the white and the black brothers' who would live there and stated the building would let missionaries travel

137 BMA, Heinecken memoirs, 106.

138 Sill, *Encounters*, pp. 35–73.

139 Konrad, 'Missionsbräute'.

140 'Die Woche', p. 254.

141 Ibid., pp. 255–256; SAB, Stehlin archive, file on Missionshaus, printed Zimmerspruch (2 July 1859).

Figure 5 Poster by the Basel Mission (date unknown), with French captions over a German-language original. The Missionshaus is portrayed as seen from the street. It is surrounded by depictions of the society's main mission fields, with an emphasis on gruesome scenes and on the mission stations and schools. Josenhans is portrayed between the house and the bible.

to India, Africa, and China. This inauguration attracted an international audience of mission supporters of over 2,000 people.[142]

Like other mission houses, the Basel missionaries also related their motherhouse to the overseas heathen world in visual representations. When Josenhans celebrated the 25th anniversary of his service in 1874, the students presented him with a collage of prints in which the house in Basel was surrounded by dozens of mission houses in the mission fields, confirming its position as the central node of the Basel missionary space.[143] For the wider public, the mission house started to figure as the centre of the maps that the society sold, where it was surrounded by scenes from the mission fields.[144] One poster (Figure 5) left out the map altogether and

142 Josenhans and Gutbrod, *Ausgewählte Reden*, p. 26.

143 BMA, inv.no. QS-30.018.0028, collage for Josenhans (17 March 1874), available at https://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/81937 (accessed 19 January 2022).

144 BMA, inv.no. 97856, German-language missionary world map (s.d.), available at https://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/100202833 (accessed 19 January 2022); inv.no. 97908, French-language

centred the mission house (with some edelweiss flowers alluding to its Swiss setting) as a centre of Christian civilisation amid scenes of lush vegetation and portrayals of the main mission fields of China, India, the Gold Coast, and Cameroon. These different and unrelated places were uniformly classified as 'mission fields' to make the society's imaginative geography legible for the audience. Even more than the maps, the poster singled out what were seen as barbaric and sinful aspects of local religious life, such as child sacrifice, mortification, and beheadings, while it also included images of the preaching missionaries and schools supposed to end these practices.

The clearest way in which the mission house derived its meaning from its relationships to these other places, and the main exception to the separation of mission house and city, was the museum that explicitly invited visitors to enter. In it, the society exhibited over 2,000 ethnographic items from 'the heathen nations', ranging from household and religious objects to weapons and images, and some 275 objects from its natural history collection. These objects came from the Missionsgesellschaft's own collection and the newly acquired Barth collection. The 'African' and 'Indian' sections each accounted for about a third and focused on the mission's own mission areas, while China and Japan together accounted for a fifth. The remainder was made up by South-East Asia, Australia and the Pacific, the Americas, the Middle East and some miscellaneous sections. Small portraits of the hundreds of missionaries trained in Basel adorned several walls, held up as examples for students, staff, and visitors.[145]

The catalogue shows an extensive knowledge of the different cultures and religions and told its readers how the indigenous inhabitants of Australia, the Americas, and South Africa had been treated disgracefully by the white settlers.[146] Nevertheless, it also makes clear the underlying assumptions of a European Christianity versus a generic heathen world. Statues of gods were 'idols' and many African objects were simply labelled 'negro'. Tellingly, the American section only contained items from Native and Afro-Americans, who fell more readily in the category of 'heathens' than the white, European-descended settler population.[147]

The discourse surrounding the museum as a repository of things heathen and exotic often took a militant tone. At his inauguration speech in 1860,

missionary world map (s.d.), available at https://www.bmarchives.org/items/show/100202861 (accessed 19 January 2022).

145 Ziegler, *Katalog*, pp. 4–106, 117–133; 'Das Museum', p. 19.

146 Ziegler, *Katalog*, pp. 6, 12, 26.

147 Ibid., pp. 4–106.

Josenhans dwelt upon the importance of the museum as a yardstick for the mission's success. He proposed to fill it with idols, of which so many were already present in the old house:

> On top stand the Chinese [idols], gilded gentlemen, useless fellows! Below are the East Indies [idols] with their ten to twelve arms, entirely pointless; below them, there are the African logs with their horrible faces. Now, with such fellows we want to fill the house; but not with those one can buy in Europe from English manufacturers, but with those that our Christians have delivered us, as evidence that they do not serve them anymore [...] that is why we gladly take from our black brothers these idols, that will not help them, and show them in this house as triumphs.[148]

The museum would later become the location where missionaries and students gathered to say goodbye to missionaries leaving for their stations, singing a song titled 'Joyfully set out to the holy war' surrounded by the material culture of the foreign peoples against whom this war was being waged.[149] One leaflet described a life-size Cameroonian statue as 'a victory of the gospel that the Basel missionaries are bringing the blacks' and a piece of 'booty' that had come to Basel 'in captivity'.[150] This militancy went hand in hand with paternalist compassion. In 1943, the daughter of one missionary reminisced that when she first entered the museum she pointed to an image of a black African and, in tears, exclaimed 'poor man!'. Her father had then calmed her by explaining the entire house was built to help such men, and that its students would be sent out to 'India, China, to Africa and the remotest islands'.[151] Although the story seems apocryphal, the instinctive 'poor man' reaction was precisely what the missionaries' representation of their work among the 'heathen nations' was meant to achieve.

It was the constant defamations of non-Christian people outside of Europe that made these utterances and images part of an imperial culture, which the Missionsgesellschaft spread among the Germans, Swiss, and other Europeans who joined, supported, or encountered it. As explained in the Introduction, this imperial culture was not necessarily also an 'imperialist' culture. For the Basel missionaries, colonial politics were less relevant to include in

148 Josenhans and Gutbrod, *Ausgewählte Reden*, p. 22.
149 BMA, Haller, *Das Leben*, p. 36.
150 BMA, inv.no. E.Sch-1.19, booklet *Der Riesengötze Dikoki aus Kamerun. Masken und Stäbe* (Basel [1910]).
151 Frohnmeyer, 'Erinnerung', p. 49.

their publications than representations of the native societies in which they worked. Mostly this was because their religious interest, like that of other missionaries, transcended formal political boundaries. Yet it was reinforced by the society's transnational German-Swiss background that complicated any intimate relationship with one's 'own' colonies – although the society's mission to Cameroon shows this attitude was also context-dependent.

Still, in the context of the rapidly increasing projection of European power over the world, thinking in terms of a European Christianity versus an inferior 'heathen world' was in itself an imperial attitude. The Basel mission society's representations of its target populations were 'categorical' images in an othering process, intended less to accurately describe persons and populations than to legitimise and define the society's own identity. Stereotypes of 'arrogant Indians', 'child-like negroes', 'poor heathens' and the classification of societies into different levels of civilisation shaped the outlook of missionaries and of their European public. Although religious conversion was fundamental, this was supposed to go hand in hand with a transition to a European, civilised religiosity, in a discourse that was in dialogue with contemporary scientific ideas on human culture, development, and race.[152] The exact outcome of this dialogue depended on the context and on missionaries' individual preferences. But the coupling of mission to civilisation and culture was especially noticeable during the Josenhans years in which the house was constructed.[153] In the speeches, posters, and in the museum, the mission house in Basel was imagined as a centre for spreading this Christian civilisation to societies in a helpless, misguided condition in other continents. Conversion could overcome their condition, yet for the time being they remained in a condition of inferiority in the face of white European Christianity.

Standing of the mission house in Basel

In September 1860, the Basel mission society presented its supporters with an image of the new building on the cover of the *Heidenbote*, the society's monthly magazine. For supporters, the building was to confirm their money had been well spent; for the society itself the building marked the transition to a more structured phase in its existence.[154] If, on average, about nine new

152 Mack, *Menschenbilder*, pp. 201–211.
153 Rennstich, 'The understanding of mission', pp. 96–97.
154 SAB, Hoch-Stehlin family archive (PA 770), inv.no. 5.4.4, speech by missionary Wilhelm Hoch (26 December 1862) p. 1; 'Chronik vom Monat März 1871', p. 43.

Basel missionaries were sent out annually in the 1840s and twelve in the 1850s, with the new building this number rose to some fifteen in the 1860s to 1880s.[155] Although this is far from an explosive growth, the new mission house allowed the society to develop itself further.

Despite this growth, the Basel mission house remained somewhat of an outlier in the city. The inhabitants of Basel called the compound the 'Swabian barracks', after the German region where many students hailed from.[156] Of the almost 800 missionaries sent out until 1887, only eleven came from the city itself.[157] To a large extent, this was because of the society's German background and its transnational orientation, but it was also due to its strongly conservative and Pietist character. In political terms, influential board members like Karl Sarasin were conservatives who abominated the liberal politics that increasingly shaped Europe, Switzerland, and Basel, where liberals outnumbered conservatives on the town council definitively in 1881. As an institution, the Basel Missionsgesellschaft was part of the charity organisations associated with the traditional patricians.[158] In religious terms, there was a related contest in the city between a liberal Protestantism and a more orthodox Pietist Protestantism, the latter remaining dominant in the parishes and churches longer than its political counterpart did in the political institutions.[159] The Basel society and its mission house clearly fell into the conservative camp. Even if the society's foreign background and activities placed it at some distance from local (church) politics, its association with 'pious Basel' seems to have limited its attraction for the citizens with different or simply less strong views on religion.

This attitude seems to have been applied to the mission house as well. While the *Christlicher Volksbote*, a conservative Christian newspaper that functioned as the mouthpiece for 'pious Basel', gave detailed accounts of the festivities surrounding the building's inauguration, more mainstream papers seemed to have ignored them.[160] A review of Stehlin's memoirs glossed over the mission house as simply a 'utilitarian building', while the satirical Swiss *Nebelspalter* magazine ridiculed the mission house for teaching students to beat the truth into 'the *Andersfarbig'n*' (which translates to 'those with

155 Based on the data in Ziegler, *Katalog*, pp. 117–133.

156 Abun-Nasr, *Afrikaner und Missionar*, pp. 110–111; Mack, *Menschenbilder*, p. 71.

157 Ziegler, *Katalog*, pp. 117–133.

158 Sarasin, *Stadt der Bürger*, p. 144.

159 Hofmann, 'Antisemitismus in Basel', pp. 94–97.

160 Referring to the *Tagblatt der Stadt Basel* and the *Basler Nachrichten*. On the *Christlicher Volksbote*, see Hofmann, 'Antisemitismus in Basel', p. 98; see footnote 140 for the *Volksbote* article referred to.

a different (skin) colour').[161] And if earlier publications on Basel and its history had mentioned the previous house located within the city walls, early-twentieth-century histories of the city paid little to no attention to the younger mission house outside of the old centre, usually focusing on Basel's medieval and Renaissance history as represented by the cathedral and town hall.[162] If these books included nineteenth-century Basel, it was represented more typically by Burckhardt and Nietzsche than by the mission society.[163] The Basel mission society's most important hinterland was not the city where it was located, although it was a familiar presence there, but rather the extensive transnational support networks across the German states and Swiss cantons.

Still, with some of Basel's most powerful aristocrats on its board, connected to the local clergy and university and an unmistakable if specific part of local civil society, the mission society was not isolated. Symbolically, like the old mission house, the new compound lent its name to the street it was located in. While the building was being constructed along the road leading out of the Spalen gate, the city expanded beyond its old fortifications and started absorbing this area. To honour 'one of the largest and most well-known educational institutes of Basel', the city authorities named the street Missionsstrasse in 1861.[164] Practically, the city offered the mission society provisions, staff, and other commercial connections – like the overseas mission compounds, the Basel mission compound would always maintain all kinds of relations with the inhabitants of the city.

The mission house also formed part of the image of the city for outside visitors, especially in the nascent tourism industry. In 1859, one entrepreneurial spirit started the sale of lithograph pictures of the building as it neared completion, selling them to the visitors to the society's annual festivities.[165] A late-nineteenth-century print titled 'Souvenir von Basel' depicted the city's sights such as the town hall, the train station, and the cathedral, but also the mission house; an 1894 book with photographs of the city included it as well.[166] Importantly, the museum of the mission house also figured in travel

161 'Architectonische Mitteilungen'; 'Auf die Basler Studentenkeilerein', p. 2; see also 'Basiliensia', p. 2.

162 E.g. Wackernagel, *Basel*; Wackernagel, *Geschichte*; Blum and Nüesch, *Basel einst und jetzt*, p. 11; Heusler, *Geschichte*, p. 160.

163 Streicher, *Basel*, pp. 117–120.

164 SAB, Älteres Hauptarchiv, Bau, inv.no H4, letter on street names (27 May 1861) pp. 6–7.

165 BMA, board meeting minutes (6 July 1859); advertisement 'Ansicht des neuen Missionshauses'.

166 SAB, Falkeisen collection, inv.no. A-147, engraving of sights of Basel (s.d.), available at http://query.staatsarchiv.bs.ch/query/detail.aspx?ID=582183 accessed 19 January 2022); *Basel. 45 Kunstblätter*.

guides from the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, like its predecessor in the old house. The 1862 Baedeker on Switzerland already showed the new mission house on its map, noting this 'famous' institution that trained missionaries for work 'among the heathens'.[167] Local hoteliers praised the museum in 1884 as 'an interesting ethnographic collection of items, instruments, idols and the like collected by missionaries from Borneo, China, Japan, the East- and West-Indies, Africa and America etc', while an 1898 guide from the Basel tourism association gave a detailed account of the museum in its chapter on the city's ethnographic collections.[168] While guidebooks as a genre were rather artificial and filled with clichés, with the rise of the tourism industry in the late nineteenth century, they became important sources of information that helped construct popular perceptions of cities and countries.[169] For their authors, Basel's religious and political divisions were irrelevant as they strove to give an ostensibly complete account of all its sights and attractions. Although it might be unexpected that the 'vulgar' activity of tourism met with the 'divine duty' of missionary work, this genre also shows the mundane ways in which ideas of 'idols' and 'heathens' reproduced by the guidebooks were disseminated and received. Nevertheless, tourists and other visitors could, by definition, only have a temporary engagement with the Missionsgesellschaft. Its most ardent supporters were not to be found among the tourists or even the inhabitants of Basel, but in the Württemberg countryside, receiving updates on the proceedings of the society and the mission house through the monthly *Heidenbote*.

In the decades after construction of the Missionshaus, the society erected more buildings on the compound. In 1892 a gymnasium was built, followed in 1900 by a separate building for the society's publishing house and book shop. On the corner of the terrain, accessible from the street, it was the only building on the complex with an explicit bible reference, applied to its lateral façade: 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit' (Zecharias 4:6), the society's officious motto. In 1913, the director and teachers moved to new premises in the west corner of the compound.[170] Around 1910 plans were even drawn up to move the museum to a new building of its own, too, but none were realised.[171] By that time, the compound had been surrounded by the expanding urban fabric of the city, losing some of its visibility.

167 *Die Schweiz, nebst den benachbarten Ober-Italischen Seen*, p. 6.

168 *Führer durch Basel*, p. 32; *Die Stadt Basel*, p. 214.

169 Gilbert, "London in all its glory".

170 BMA, Haller, *Das Leben*, 5; Schlatter, *Geschichte*, vol. I, 241, 336.

171 BMA, inv.no. QS-31.106, plan showing proposed museum building (21 June 1912); inv.no. QS-31.112, elevation, plan, and section for proposed museum building.

Figure 6 The mission house in its current condition, as seen from the garden.

The Basel mission society continued its activities throughout the twentieth century, although World War I, the rise of National Socialism, and World War II drastically challenged its transnational character. After 1945, the society cooperated closer with other Swiss and foreign mission organisations and with Swiss churches. In 1955, the training programme in the Missionshaus became a more scholarly, theological education. The former 'mission fields' were now independent partner churches, which cooperated with the society on a more equal footing. In 2000, the society entered a partnership with other Swiss mission societies, named 'Mission21' after the new century and after the mission house address (Figure 6).[172] In its central synod, churches and organisations from Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Europe are represented.

Conclusion

The function and the meaning of the Basel Missionshaus did not differ markedly from those of mission houses in European metropoles that ruled overseas colonies. The Basel missionaries' portrayal of their work made the same assumptions of Christian civilisation versus heathen misery as that of missionaries from colonising nations, and was likewise infused

172 Sallmann, 'Herausforderungen'.

with ideas of racial difference. And just as it had in other countries, this representation put the mission's supporters in a superior position, where they chose to help misguided or unfortunate people in other continents by donating or praying. Although the mission's objective was to deliver these people from their situation by spreading the Christian faith and European social norms among them, the Christian–heathen dichotomy that was in effect until that objective would be realised also implied a power relation between the missionaries and the target population. The mission house was therefore not only a seat of faith, but also a seat of power from which the missionaries and the central board exerted their influence.

This was reinforced by the missionaries' public outreach efforts, which obscured the fact that they always relied on indigenous players, whether individuals who accepted conversion or rulers with whom they had to negotiate. Yet in the ways in which the missionaries depicted their work and their house – in writing, visual media, rhetoric, and in the mission-house museum – they chose to diminish that interaction, instead portraying indigenous populations in superficial, stereotypical fashion and claiming agency only for themselves. This imagination of mission work, analysed in this chapter in relation to Basel building, contributed to the development of an imperial culture by perpetuating the idea that non-European populations were unfit to reach a sufficient level of 'civilisation' without European, Christian guidance. And so the compound was turned into an imperial place, thought to export Christian civilisation to hapless overseas mission fields, notwithstanding the fact that the very concept of a missionary compound had been 'imported' to Basel from those mission fields, where such compounds had taken shape in an interplay between indigenous people and missionaries.

The Missionsgesellschaft's imagination of mission work was aimed at the society's (potential) supporters in mainly the German states and Switzerland, at fellow missionary societies and supporters in other European countries, and at inhabitants and visitors of Basel. This transnational outlook shows the ways in which imperial culture was created in exchanges between Europeans of different nationalities including those from non-imperial powers. As missionaries constructed the image of a benevolent Christian Europe to legitimise their mission work among overseas 'heathens', they also softened the national differences between them and lent religious credibility to the idea of a shared European civilisation. In the representation of the work that the Basel missionaries performed, this process was especially notable since their work was characterised less by missionary nationalism, which often tainted or problematised the transnational dimension, than by missionaries from imperial powers. In its early days the Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft was a true 'European' organisation that linked German, Swiss, British, and Dutch missionary circles. The German nationality of the Basel missionaries always played a role but Germany did not exist before 1871 and was no colonial power before 1884, limiting the missionaries' engagement with the German nation-state and its overseas empire. After that date, more national understandings of the Basel society's work emerged but they never became completely dominant. Furthermore, the fact that it was located in Switzerland and an important part of its board was formed by powerful Swiss patricians made the national German allegiance even less clear.

The lack of clarity of a national allegiance also had repercussions for the position and understanding of the Basel mission society in Swiss and German society, however. The society's transnational nature better fulfilled the universal promise of missionary work, as there was less need for national political appropriation of this religious activity. But this transnational nature meant the mission society was less able to ally itself to the national German cause – let alone the Swiss cause – to attract support. Whereas French, British, or Dutch missionaries could highlight their role in their respective colonies – as will be discussed in Chapter 5, colonial museums and expositions even honoured a nation's own missionaries – the Basel missionaries could do so only in a limited way. This would at least partly explain the somewhat detached position of the society in Basel: not being able to claim a national use meant it remained a 'purer' religious organisation. Certainly this does not say anything about the heartfelt support that the mission did receive. However, it suggests that the national frame of reference helped to articulate an imperial culture. In the chapters to come, such national ways of thinking emerge more strongly.

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2 Imperial cities, imperial citizens

Abstract
The political architecture of government buildings and official monuments clearly formed an empire-related layer in the built environment of Europe. However, outside of the capitals, port- and industrial cities developed their own attachments to imperialism, mediated through exchanges, offices, or public buildings. In Victorian Glasgow, self-proclaimed 'Second City of the Empire', even the new town hall (1877–1889) was to be made part of the city's imperial vocation. Façades referring to Rome and Venice and sculpture symbolising the British empire turned this municipal office into an imperial palace. However, this project by the civic elite rested on a hierarchic vision of the city and could not prevent doubts about Glasgow's and Scotland's position in the empire the from arising.

Keywords: Political history; capital cities; civic culture; British imperialism; Scotland; Glasgow

If the previous chapter was about mission houses that were reclusive places with ambivalent relations to the city around them, then this chapter is its counterpoint. Here, we find government buildings and public buildings that came to represent cities and nations. This is a heterogeneous group that includes national and local government offices, monuments, and more economic, semi-public sites such as exchanges. Their common denominator is that they all claimed public relevance and appealed to a certain political community, which in practice meant either the nation or the city. If mission houses interacted with Europeans by appealing to them as Christians, the buildings in this chapter interacted with them by appealing to them as citizens.

In Part I, this chapter discusses capital cities and their government buildings and official monuments, sites of imperial rule and spectacle. These are the kinds of buildings most recognisable as 'imperial architecture' in Europe, and as such are relatively well-researched. The chapter then shifts

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attention to provincial cities and their public buildings that claimed an imperial function in more implicit ways. In capital cities, empire encountered the nation; in provincial cities, empire encountered a local civic pride of the kind usually overshadowed in capitals. 'Provincial' is used here not to diminish these cities' status but simply to distinguish them from political capitals, and often refers to some of Europe's largest and most well-known cities. Part II is dedicated to a case study of one such place, and arguably Europe's most self-conscious 'imperial' city: Glasgow, self-proclaimed 'Second City of the Empire', and its new town hall from the 1880s.[1]

Part I. Imperial identities in government and public buildings

Building imperial capital cities

The most obvious of Europe's 'imperial cities' mentioned in the Introduction were capital cities. Here, state institutions, royal palaces, and grand monuments bore witness to overseas imperial rule; this display of power and belonging linked imperialism to nationalism. The political buildings in Europe most directly related to colonial rule were the ministries from which empires were administered. The government office as such was not necessarily a new building type, as demonstrated by eighteenth-century constructions like Somerset House in London, purposely built to house a large number of official institutions. Nonetheless, as government bureaucracies grew in the nineteenth century, larger, more, and more dedicated buildings were needed.[2]

Colonial ministries can reveal much about both the inner workings of colonial bureaucracies in Europe and the representation and signification of imperial rule by the state. Generally, European states established specialised colonial ministries relatively late. Before then, colonial territories were administered from colonial departments within larger bodies, typically the ministries of the navy or of foreign affairs. To illustrate, France only established a permanent Ministère des Colonies in 1894 (although a short-lived Ministry of Algeria and the Colonies had existed from 1858 to 1860), Germany its Reichskolonialamt in 1907, Belgium a Ministerie van Koloniën in 1908, and Portugal its Ministério das Colónias in 1911. That also meant that

1 An earlier version of Part II of this chapter was published previously as a journal article: Groten, 'Glasgow's new town hall'.
2 Pevsner, *A history*, pp. 47–50.

in terms of architecture, for a long time there were no physical focal points specifically associated with colonial rule in European cities. In comparison, the Netherlands' and Britain's colonial ministries of 1842 and 1854 (with a separate India Office since 1858), respectively, were forerunners. In a way, both institutions were also preceded by the trade company headquarters, the East and West Indies Houses in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, and the East India House in London, which had existed since the early modern period. East India House (1798–1828) was an imposing neoclassical structure, with sculpted personifications of Europe and Asia and a ceiling painting entitled 'The East offering its riches to Britannia'.[3]

Both the Dutch and British ministry buildings became the subject of debates over the desirable architectural style in the laten 1850s. In London, the new Foreign Office building in London would also include, it was decided after the 1857 rebellion, the India Office. Moving the seat of the Indian administration from the East India Company House in the City to the government atmosphere of Whitehall was to facilitate orderly rule over the colony, as were the new building's office spaces and communication systems. After George Gilbert Scott delivered a Gothic design in 1858, an infamous 'battle of the styles' erupted between the proponents of Gothic and those of classicism. Ultimately, Scott was forced to rework his design into a classical style because of the dominant associations of classicism with civic government and national and imperial greatness.[4] The India Office's relevance, as a new landmark of British state governance of the colony after Company rule, was communicated by sculptures representing Indian cities and rivers, the 'races' of India, and those princes who had fought on the British side.[5] Some years later, the project was expanded to also include the Colonial Office, its impressive Whitehall façade decorated with representations of the continents and of British imperial figures, including Francis Drake, William Wilberforce, and Queen Victoria.[6]

In the Netherlands, both the debates about the new building and its appearance were less explicit. Well-known architect and *rijksbouwmeester* Willem Nicolaas Rose had realised a new Ministry of Colonies building in 1858–1860 – the first purpose-built ministry of the country. His combination of a modern, sober classicism with the use of cast iron and brick was

3 Bremner, 'The metropolis', pp. 129–132; Ray, 'All that glitters', pp. 27–29.

4 Bremner, 'Nation and empire'.

5 Toplis, *The Foreign Office*, p. 169.

6 Bremner, 'The metropolis', pp. 148–149.

condemned as not being representative enough.[7] Yet this criticism was more concerned with the general appearance of The Hague's renovated government centre than about specific anxieties over the Netherlands' imperial standing. Similarly, no explicit decorations were used on the plain exterior of the Dutch ministry. Inside, however, the minister's meeting room was outfitted with the coats of arms of several Indonesian cities and the portraits of all Dutch governors-general of the East Indies. The building was extended in 1916–1917, and the resulting new entrance was marked by a small frieze of the first Dutchmen in Indonesia surrounded by Javanese-inspired motifs.[8] This relatively simple scheme was comparable to that of the French ministry established in 1894, housed in an eighteenth-century *hôtel* in 1905.[9] There seem to have been few explicit signs of the building's function; representations of black Africans were included in some of the iron fencing and, at some point in time, busts of French colonial figures were placed in the building.[10] The Belgian colonial ministry was located in an existing townhouse as well; in the 1950s, plans to give Congo 'a presence on Belgian soil' by constructing a new, modernist office block came to nothing.[11]

A unique kind of government building related to the empire could also be found in London in the form of the embassies for the dominions and India. Australia House (1913–1918) and India House (1928–1930) were located in the central thoroughfare of the Strand while Canada House (1925–1931) and South Africa House (1931–1933) were located close by in Trafalgar Square. The square was already a representative place with its monuments to admirals and generals. But the imperial embassies and the square's position at the end of the new Mall (see below) definitively shaped it into an 'emblem of empire'.[12] While a modern classicism was chosen for the exterior of the three white dominions, the façade of India House made plenty of references to the British Raj with sculpted elephants, lions, and flower motifs. The interiors of South Africa and India House were decorated with colourful mural paintings depicting scenes from those countries' histories, executed by South African, Indian, and British artists.[13]

7 Smit, *Het belang van het Binnenhof*, pp. 121–124.

8 Kroon and Wagtberg Hansen, *Sporen van smaragd*, pp. 31–34, 43–45.

9 Declèty, 'Le ministère des colonies'.

10 Aldrich, *Vestiges*, pp. 30–32.

11 Van de Maele and Johan Lagae, "The Congo".

12 Bremner, 'The metropolis', p. 153; Cherry, 'Statues in the square', pp. 675–676; Mace, *Trafalgar Square*.

13 Willsdon, *Mural painting in Britain*, pp. 164–168.

Imperial monuments that honoured military and political leaders or notable events are another relevant type of construction to consider here. Usually, they took the form of statues, fountains, and heavily sculpted and decorated pieces of architecture in prominent sites such as squares, parks, waterfronts, and other busy thoroughfares. Although usually taken to be a category of their own, strictly speaking, monuments are 'public' buildings as well – out of necessity, one could argue – as their function is to glorify an event or person in public space. The collection of monuments and memorials in Europe to imperial heroes, monarchs, and events is far too large and diverse to allow a comprehensive discussion here: for Belgium alone, Matthew Stanard has identified over 250 monuments that commemorated Belgian imperialism in one way or the other.[14] Monuments inscribed imperial ideology in the public space, but citizens also engaged with them through the donations they made or the unveiling ceremonies they participated in.

One area in which monuments have been studied in a more structured way is their role in the development of the 'imperial cities' that were discussed in the Introduction. In London, for instance, following the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, the Mall was redesigned as ceremonial avenue between an imposing Victoria Memorial in front of Buckingham Palace and the new Admiralty Arch near Trafalgar Square. This was also supposed to address the repeated complaints that the city lacked the grandiose monumentality of continental European capitals – the Berlin of the Hohenzollerns, the Paris of Napoleon III, the Vienna of the Habsburgs, the St Petersburg of the Romanovs and perhaps also the Istanbul of the sultans.[15] In Paris, the development of a new French colonial empire in the late nineteenth century was followed in the 1920s and 1930s by the installation of tall bronze statues of colonial explorers and soldiers such as Joseph Gallieni and Hubert Lyautey (who will return in Chapter 5); in Amsterdam, a large monument to general and governor, Jo van Heutsz, was unveiled in 1935.[16] Brussels was home to, among others, an equestrian statue of Leopold II 'donated by the *Union Minière du Haut-Katanga*' near the royal palace, and the large Congo Monument that memorialised the contributions of explorers, soldiers, missionaries, and administrators of Congo 'in the interest of civilisation and the welfare of Belgium' (both 1921). In Lisbon, monuments to the Portuguese 'discoveries' were erected as late as 1960.[17] Finally, street names were another and more

14 Stanard, *The leopard*, online appendix at https://lup.be/leopard (accessed 4 January 2021).

15 Smith, "A grand work".

16 Aldrich, *Vestiges*, pp. 159–164; Bloembergen, 'Amsterdam. Het Van Heutszmonument'.

17 Catherine, *Wandelen naar Kongo*, pp. 17–78; Peralta and Domingos, 'Lisbon'.

mundane form of commemorating persons and events associated with one's empire. Again, the number was very large: for Rotterdam alone, for instance, 181 colonial street names have been identified.[18]

Although the lack of systematic surveys of colonial monuments means that any overall interpretation of them is tentative, it must be noted that explicitly 'imperial' or 'colonial' monuments in Europe's capitals were part of the much wider *statuomanie* in which national histories and heroes were literally put on a pedestal, especially in the nineteenth century.[19] Imperial monuments, too, virtually always honoured national events and persons. However, imperial monuments were a later phenomenon than their national counterpart: most of the examples above were erected in the first half of the twentieth century and particularly after World War I. Stanard's Belgian survey confirms this, as only some 15 per cent of all monuments he was able to accurately date were erected pre-1914.[20] This points to World War I as a transition towards a phase of increasing state-sponsored imperial propaganda that extolled the empires of the respective European nations, as noted by other scholars.[21] Monuments and statues were not necessarily state-sponsored, but they did hail national heroes and events and were thus part of that 'nationalising' tendency in Europe's imperial culture in the interwar period. This theme will also return in the following chapters, and in fact was the main change that European imperial culture underwent in the period 1860–1960 under review in this study.

A type of semi-public building with occasional imperial associations were financial institutions such as stock and commodity exchanges and central banks. As the nodes of international networks of capital and commerce, many of these were inevitably bound up with colonial goods and trades in some way. And as important institutions and iconic buildings, they also laid claim to public and political relevance.

The Royal Exchange in London, the city at the heart of the international financial system and of the imperialist 'gentlemanly capitalism', was rebuilt in the 1840s as an Italianate classical building with offices, trading rooms, and shops. Its Pantheon-like entrance was crowned by a large pediment, on which was portrayed a personification of Commerce surrounded by, among other figures, 'two Asiatics, natives of our East Indian possessions, the one a Hindoo, the other a Mahomedan, each being readily distinguished

18 Van Roosmalen, 'Een ander Rotterdam'.

19 Petterson, 'The monumental landscape', p. 727.

20 Appendix to Stanard, *The leopard*.

21 MacKenzie, 'Introduction', p. 14.

in person as well as costume [...] a Persian is showing some woven fabric. To him succeeds a group of Chinese, a sailor of the Levant, and a Negro, succeeded by a British sailor cording a bale of cotton'.[22] It was a familiar motif to give stately public buildings a clear imperial character, based on early modern examples like Amsterdam's town hall (1648–1665) and, subsequently, buildings from antiquity, and will return in the chapters to come. Formal and informal empire were intertwined in the pediment and the whole expressed assumptions about Britain's economic and political power. Something similar was true for the adjacent Bank of England. Not an exchange but a state institution, it also came to represent British influence and stability when, in the early twentieth century, this part of London was portrayed as 'the heart of the empire'. In the 1920s, the prolific 'imperial' architect Herbert Baker (he would also design India House, for example) oversaw a major overhaul of the building, which deliberately projected an image of the Bank as the stable foundation of the empire.[23]

In Amsterdam, Hendrik Petrus Berlage's landmark exchange (1898–1903) referenced Dutch colonial history with a statue of Jan Pieterszoon Coen, founder of the Dutch empire in Indonesia, on its façade. The building's interior was a collaborative piece of 'community art', a sort of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, by several designers, where a subtle Javanese influence ran through the contributions by Eurasian artist Jan Toorop.[24] More prosaic and explicit, the Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij's (NHM, Netherlands' Trading Society) new head office contained allegorical sculpture of such things as Shipping and Trade, personifications of Asia and Europe, and of Coen, Van Heutsz, and Herman Daendels, another prominent historic governor of the Dutch East Indies. The NHM was essentially a state company active in trade, banking, and shipping related to the colony since 1824 – a 'great body', according to the Minister of Colonies at the official opening of the office in 1926, that 'has done so very much for the Indies, as the Indies have done so very much for the NHM'.[25]

Empire and provincial cities

'Provincial' cities – used here not in a derogatory sense but to distinguish them from capital cities – also associated themselves with imperialism.

22 Mogg, *Mogg's new picture of London*, pp. 134–135.
23 Black, 'Rebuilding "the heart of the empire"'.
24 Legêne, 'Metamorfose'.
25 'Het nieuwe gebouw'.

Although capitals have received more attention, provincial cities often were the industrial powerhouses and great port cities, risen to prominence due to urbanisation and industrialisation. Local celebrations, monuments, associations, and exhibitions were all ways for civic elites to claim an imperial position based on such economic distinctions.[26]

This was not simply an adoption of national imperial messaging, but the integration of imperial ideology into local civic identities. Virtually all research into the relation between political identities in Europe and imperialism has focused on the nation as the relevant imagined community. However, public and semi-public buildings in provincial cities erected with municipal money attest that there was also room for local identifications with empire. After all, urban civic cultures flourished in the nineteenth century, enabled by the bourgeois middle classes' rise to economic influence and political power. These civic cultures were facilitated by newly built public buildings such as municipal museums, libraries, town halls, music halls, theatres, and monuments. They were informed by alluring civic narratives that gave each city a distinct identity, coupling illustrious history to modern progress.[27] This was a Europe-wide phenomenon, as municipal authorities generally had a relatively high degree of autonomy in taking care of local affairs and were often responsible for implementing national policy.[28]

Such local identities were not in opposition to national identities. Rather, the two interacted with each other in a set of layered political allegiances, where national issues were increasingly understood in local terms and vice versa.[29] Imperial ideology became another layer in this interplay of allegiances, one that impacted on the built environment of European cities in similar ways as the nationalist ideology with which it was entangled.

Provincial cities erected their own imperial monuments, which often predated the official, state-sponsored ones. Many were generic war memorials or monuments to monarchs, but plenty also had a specific local edge. In the French cities of Colmar, Grenoble, and Lille stood memorials of locals who had become famous admirals, explorers, and governors, respectively, dating from 1864, 1894 and 1896; Reims was home to a 1924 monument to the colonial soldiers who had defended it in World War I, twinned to an identical monument in Bamako, Mali.[30] In 1893, a monument to the ubiquitous Coen

26 Beaven, *Visions of empire*.
27 Lenger, *European cities*, pp. 190–195.
28 Ibid., pp. 130–146; Wollmann, 'Local government systems'.
29 Bickford-Smith, 'Introduction'; see also the contributions in Whyte and Zimmer, *Nationalism*.
30 Aldrich, *Vestiges*, pp. 165–167; Legêne, 'Impressed images/expressed experiences', pp. 301–303.

was unveiled in the Dutch town of Hoorn, his birthplace.[31] Chatham had a monument to Charles Gordon (1890) and Liverpool to William Earle (1887), the general who had been born in the city and who had died trying to relieve Gordon.[32] In Bremen, Hamburg, and Hannover monuments to the 'lost' German colonies were erected in the interwar period, often in the context of National Socialist colonial revanchism.[33] Provincial cities had their own colonial street names too. The most far-reaching examples are the dozens of 'Indies quarters' that arose in Dutch cities and towns in the twentieth century (and in some cases, still arise in the twenty-first), where people lived in Java, Sumatra, or Borneo Streets.

If monuments were symbolic, other parts of the urban landscape were practically engaged in the imperial enterprise. Factories, warehouses, and docks are all examples of this and will be discussed in the next two chapters. Exchanges where merchants met and goods were traded could be found outside capitals too. Liverpool's cotton exchange became the most important in the world, and the major French port cities of Bordeaux and Nantes had their own exchanges. Le Havre's Chamber of Commerce and municipal authorities constructed its magnificent Palais de la Bourse in the 1870s, its south façade a stone's throw away from the docks, its north façade outfitted with sculpture representing the city of Le Havre trading with all parts of the world.[34] In Hamburg, the exchange building of 1839–1841 was expanded several times, with allegorical personifications of Africa, America, Asia, and Australia added to its rear elevation. When the new town hall was erected next to it between 1886 and 1897, two wings were built that visually joined the two structures and created a courtyard between them.[35]

More specifically, French cities such as Lyon, Bordeaux, Marseille, and Le Havre also founded their own colonial institutes and sometimes museums, as will be discussed in Chapter 5. It was local chambers of commerce and geographic societies, in cooperation with the city authorities, that were behind this assertive 'municipal imperialism'.[36] In Germany, merchants from the old Hanseatic ports of Bremen and Hamburg formed the vanguard of formal German colonialism. In 1889, Bismarck had even entertained the

31 Enthoven, 'Jan Pietersz. Coen'.

32 Sèbe, 'From the penny press to the plinth', p. 105.

33 Zeller, 'Heldenmale'.

34 *Le Havre. La ville*, p. 12.

35 *Hamburg und seine Bauten* (1890) pp. 168–171; *Hamburg und seine Bauten*, vol. I (1914) pp. 102–117.

36 Laffey, 'Municipal imperialism'; Morando, 'Les instituts coloniaux'.

idea of making the empire's new colonial department part of Hamburg's state government rather than the imperial government.[37]

Local elites also appropriated imperial rhetoric in their urban narratives. Throughout the nineteenth century, Liverpool and Glasgow competed for the title of 'second city of the British empire'.[38] Hamburg was called the 'heart for the German colonies' (1905), Portsmouth the 'gateway of the empire' (1926), and Nantes France's 'great industrial and colonial port' (1932).[39] Where imperial connections were particularly strong and long-standing, and empire-related trades and industries particularly important, provincial city ties with empire shaped local political identities.

Liverpool offers one example of the connection between imperial trade and the city's identity. Formerly Europe's most important slaving port, Liverpool's imperial significance only increased in the nineteenth century, as the city's merchants switched their West-African trade from enslaved humans to 'legitimate' commodities such as palm oil, and developed new trade relations with India.[40] The Norman port city of Le Havre provides another. Founded in 1517 at the mouth of the Seine, and later functioning as another main slaving port, in the twentieth century it developed into France's most important port for colonial cacao and logwood and Europe's main coffee market. Its older confidence and standing, alluded to by the nineteenth-century town hall and exchange, were now directed towards what has been called a 'colonial identity'. The business elite stressed the necessity of economic relations with the empire for the city, particularly in the context of the interwar economic hardships. To reinforce these relations they established an École pratique coloniale and a colonial institute in 1908 and 1929, respectively.[41]

More French cities have been studied for their local imperial cultures. Merchants from Bordeaux were so active in the French annexation of Senegal that it was boasted to be a Bordelais colony, and they presented their city as France's 'colonial capital'.[42] Yet no French city associated itself as much with the colonial enterprise as Marseille. Whether it was its origin

37 Washausen, *Hamburg*, pp. 127–134.

38 Haggerty, Webster and White, 'Introduction'.

39 Cited in: Coppius, *Hamburgs Bedeutung*, p. 176; Beaven, *Visions of empire*, p. 29; Aldrich, 'Colonialism and nation-building', p. 183.

40 Haggerty, Webster and White, 'Introduction'.

41 Malon, *Le Havre colonial*, chapter 7, paragraphs 31–35, 47–64, chapter 8, paragraphs 19–26, 30–43.

42 Laffey, 'Municipal imperialism', p. 90; Christelle Lozère, *Bordeaux colonial. 1850–1940* (Bordeaux 2007).

as a Greek colony, its long history of migration and trade, or its location on the Mediterranean Sea, relatively close to North- and West Africa and the Near East, its business elite was most vocal in its identification with the French empire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The city's large flour, vegetable oil, and sugar industries came to rely on colonial wheat, palm oil, and molasses, and shipping lines maintained connections with North- and West Africa.[43] Known as the 'gateway to the Orient' (*porte de l'Orient*), the city was thought of as liminal space between France and its colonies, a microcosm of the Mediterranean world. Marseille confirmed its status as France's colonial capital with two sizable colonial exhibitions in 1906 and 1922.[44] But as Chapter 4 will show, Europeans often perceived the blurring of boundaries that the multi-ethnic populations of port cities like Marseille entailed as a dangerous thing.

Colonial trade did not need to be all-dominant for ports like Le Havre and Marseille to become such self-conscious 'imperial' cities. In the record year of 1937, colonial trade accounted for 28 per cent of Le Havre's imports (in terms of value) and only 15 per cent of its exports.[45] In Marseille before the 1930s, colonial trade made up less than 25 per cent of total commerce (in terms of weight). Only in the context of protectionism during the 1930s crisis years did its colonial trade increase, with colonial imports growing to 32 per cent of total imports and colonial exports to 63 per cent of all exports in 1938. The most important observation is that, compared to other French cities, this amount of colonial trade still made Marseille (and Le Havre) exceptional – even if trade with French colonies accounted for less than a quarter of Marseille's trade before 1931, that was still half of France's total imperial trade.[46]

Marseille's civic and business elite also adapted its urban landscape to mediate its imperial prominence. The exchange of 1852-1860 was erected close to the old port. The ceiling coffers of its richly decorated main hall depicted the French conquest of Algeria as one of the important events in the city's history, while panels of the city's trading partners included Algiers, Indochina, the 'African coasts', Polynesia, and India next to European trade partners. On the building's main façade, a twenty-metre-wide frieze depicted a personification of the city receiving goods such as Caribbean

43 Roncayolo, *L'imaginaire*, pp. 232–235; Durand, 'Marseille colonial', pp. 310–312.

44 Fletcher, '"Capital of the colonies"'; Crane, 'Architecture at the ends of empire', pp. 99–100.

45 Malon, *Le Havre colonial*, conclusion, paragraph 2.

46 Roncayolo, *L'imaginaire*, pp. 237–238; Durand, 'Marseille colonial', p. 311.

Figure 7 Sculpture symbolising the French colonies in Asia, on the monumental staircase (1923-1924) to Marseille's Saint Charles railway station. A reclining woman, modelled after Khmer statues, stares into the distance while two children offer gifts.

sugar and tobacco, African ivory, and Chinese tea, offered by figures from the respective regions.[47]

The theme of Marseille as an imperial city was continued in other notable public buildings. The foundation stone of the city's new cathedral was laid down on the same day as that of the exchange. Léon Vaudoyer's fascinating design for the church purposely referenced Marseille's title of 'gateway to the Orient' by combining a Byzantine architectural style with all kinds of other Mediterranean references to Roman, Italian, and Islamic architecture. Intended as an addition to the city's 'port panorama' as visible from the sea, it bordered the new Joliette dock and was designed together with the arcaded quays on top on which it sat.[48] In the Palais Longchamps, the city's new fine art museum of 1869, murals depicted Marseille as a Greek colony and as the 'gateway to the Orient'.[49] Half a century later in the 1920s, the monumental new staircase to the Saint Charles railway station repeated this dual slogan but also mediated Marseille's imperial position much more explicitly. Again there were statues symbolising Marseille's identity as Greek colony and gateway to the Orient, but these were joined by two reclining female figures symbolising the 'colonies of Asia' and the 'colonies of Africa' (Figure 7).[50]

That Marseille's imperial vocation surfaced in all of these major public buildings, whether they were of economic, religious, cultural, or infrastructural nature, shows it was a common thread running through local civic pride. It also made Marseille quite unique. In fact, probably the only other city in Europe whose image was bound up with empire to the same extent was Glasgow, the subject of Part II of this chapter. Yet the triumphant rhetoric spouted by buildings like Marseille's exchange, local colonial exhibitions, and publications on cities' colonial standing must be approached critically. Generally, these were dreamt up by members of the business elite intent on promoting a certain image of their city.

The Scottish city of Glasgow is a case in point. Its town hall, erected between 1883 and 1889, was the most far-reaching example of the trends outlined above; however, here, it was not an exchange or museum which communicated the city's claims to imperial significance, but the very seat of local government itself. Glasgow shows the extent, but also the ambiguities of this connection between civic pride and imperialism.

47 Rebuffat, 'Le Palais de la Bourse'; Roncayolo, *L'imaginaire*, p. 104.

48 Bergdoll, *Léon Vaudoyer*.

49 Aldrich, *Vestiges*, pp. 209–210.

50 Marand-Fouquet, 'Le genre des colonies'.

Part II. The City Chambers in Glasgow

If Switzerland figures in this book as a non-imperial country that shared in a transnational imperial culture, the United Kingdom is at the other end of the scale. As the most influential imperial power of the modern era, it has become the main subject of the postcolonial and 'new imperial' history writing discussed in the Introduction. Yet within the United Kingdom, at first sight, Glasgow might be a less obvious choice. Notions of Scotland as an underdog within the United Kingdom dominated by the English centre are as influential as ever in our day and age; moreover, in the popular imagination, Glasgow might be best known as a typical case of Europe's twentieth-century 'deindustrialisation' and its social woes. Yet as this analysis of its new town hall (1883–1889), named City Chambers after completion, reveals, in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Glasgow was arguably the most confidently imperial city of Western Europe, exemplified by its officious motto of 'second city of the empire'. And although the position of Scotland in the kingdom and the empire played into this imperial civic pride, in many ways nineteenth-century Glasgow wanted to reinforce this position, not weaken it. The town hall serves here as the clearest mediation of Glaswegian civic pride and, as this chapter's main case study, provides an in-depth analysis into how provincial cities could develop an imperial identity.

Second city of the British empire

In other European states, to be the country's second city might be an awkward distinction.[51] But to be the British *empire's* second city was an enviable supranational position, claimed with different arguments and at different moments also by the likes of Edinburgh, Dublin, Liverpool, and Manchester.[52] Britain's strong imperial culture clearly provided a fertile soil for such local identifications with empire. Yet nowhere was the claim as influential as in Glasgow. Glaswegians and outside observers used the 'second city' claim consistently for about a century, starting in the 1820s.[53] It referred first to Glasgow's population size, which stood at 511,415 people in 1881, 761,709 in 1901 and, after the incorporation of various neighbouring communities, well

51 Umbach, 'A tale of second cities'.

52 Finlay, 'National identity', p. 294, note 48; Wildman, *Urban redevelopment and modernity*, pp. 54–55.

53 MacKenzie, '"The second city"', pp. 215–216.

over one million in 1912.[54] Within Britain, only Birmingham and Manchester could rival these numbers, while in Europe, it put Glasgow in the same league as continental imperial capitals: 'in all Europe it ranks seventh', an 1888 guidebook read, 'the only continental cities ahead of it being Paris, Berlin, St Petersburg, Vienna, and Constantinople'.[55]

Yet this demographic distinction was inherently connected to the city's economic development and often referred to in the same breath.[56] Feeding Glasgow's identification with the empire was an immense economic entanglement with it, beginning with the eighteenth-century American and Caribbean trade that made Glasgow with its 'tobacco lords' into a prosperous merchant city.[57] After American independence, Scotland's and Glasgow's imperial trade shifted east and intensified as the industrial revolution took off.[58] With it, Glasgow's development gathered pace, and in the Victorian era it became an industrial powerhouse and first-rank port with exceptionally strong trade and shipping links with the empire, particularly India. Best known for its engineering, shipbuilding, and other heavy industries, but also home to important textile and chemical industries, Glasgow and its neighbouring communities along the river Clyde produced machinery, engines, locomotives and – most famously – ships, much of this destined for imperial and overseas markets.[59] Sandip Hazareesingh describes Glasgow's links to Bombay as a case of 'interconnected synchronicity', and it has been argued the industries and shipping lines of the Glasgow and Liverpool regions formed a counterweight to London's financial 'gentlemanly capitalism' in the imperial economy.[60] Christopher Harvie connects Glasgow not only to Liverpool, but also to similar (and similarly 'Celtic') places like Belfast and Cardiff, forming a British Atlantic littoral linked by trade and engineering, a zone of innovative and often empire-oriented heavy industries.[61] In a cultural sense, shipbuilding, which will figure often below, especially appealed to the Victorian imagination as its products both enabled and symbolised Britain's imperial might.[62] Ships were described as 'pioneers of civilisation', and the stout Scottish engineer became a literary

54 Withers, 'The demographic history', p. 142.
55 Baddeley, *A guide to Glasgow*, p. 17.
56 E.g. *Macaulay's popular illustrated guide*, p. 10; *Municipal Glasgow*, p. 2.
57 Pacione, *Glasgow*, p. 41.
58 Devine and MacKenzie, 'Scots in the imperial economy', pp. 227–231.
59 Moss and Hume, *Workshop of the British empire*; Devine, 'A Scottish empire', pp. 36–39.
60 Hazareesingh, 'Interconnected synchronicities'; Munro, *Maritime enterprise*, pp. 506–508.
61 Harvie, *A floating commonwealth*, pp. 57–85.
62 Burgess, *Engines of empire*.

archetype, praised by, among others, Rudyard Kipling in his 'McAndrew's Hymn' (1894).[63]

It was exports rather than imports that produced the imperial space in which Glasgow functioned. In terms of tonnage, the world's colonial regions of Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and the British settler colonies of Australia and Canada received more than half of Glasgow's exports in the 1860s through the 1880s. On average the 'East Indies' were the single most important destination for ships clearing from Glasgow, with an interlude around 1880 when Australia and New Zealand took that position. In the same period, imports were usually dominated by the United States.[64] This export-oriented economic reality distinguished Glasgow from places that depended on colonial imports and added a dose of chauvinism to the Glaswegian imagination of empire, which was as much about the 'self' as it was about foreign 'others' – overlooking the fact that selling to colonial markets still implied a two-way dependency.

The Glaswegian imagination of empire transcended the economic domain and was translated into political terms, concerning Glasgow as a political community as even its municipal policy was coupled to the 'second city' image. Since about 1850, the municipal government had taken it upon itself to construct public parks, supply water, gas, and (later) electricity, and to improve its police and public health organisation.[65] The resulting self-image of being a 'model' municipality was framed in imperial terms: by 1900, local publications claimed that Glasgow was 'the first municipality in the world and the second city in the British empire' and the 'exemplar of the cities of the Empire'.[66] A carefully constructed image of responsible harmony among town councillors and civil servants underlay this claim, as did the dominance of Liberals on the council.[67] Of course Glasgow was not alone in expanding its municipal services, being particularly influenced by Birmingham and its 'civic gospel' which similarly determined its image under Joseph Chamberlain's mayoralty in the 1870s.[68] Nevertheless, the claim to imperial fame was typically Glaswegian and unique in Europe.

However, this civic culture did not simply celebrate local government and economy. As in any other city, it was also a way of social control for the

63 Maver, *Glasgow*, p. 116; MacKenzie, 'Essay and reflection', p. 724.
64 Jackson and Munn, 'Trade, commerce and finance', pp. 67–68.
65 Maver, 'Glasgow's civic government', pp. 453–468.
66 McDowell, *The people's history*, preface; Harper, *Glasgow to-day*, p. 5.
67 Maver, 'The role and influence', pp. 69–71.
68 Maver, 'Politics and power', p. 121.

city's elite and helped construct a city identity against rival cities.[69] Within Glasgow, a civic culture was constructed by the city's elite, centred around the town council and drawn mainly from the city's merchants, industrialists, and professionals. Beyond Glasgow, the city competed with other major cities in the United Kingdom for prestige, including the title for 'second city'. Beyond Britain, at the close of the century it was mainly the emerging German empire that was seen as a competitor, next to the United States and perhaps tsarist Russia: the 1884 novel *How Glasgow ceased to flourish* described a devastating surprise attack on the Clyde by the Russians, 'our old rival for dominion in Asia'.[70]

To understand Glaswegian civic pride, it is necessary to investigate how an imperial outlook interacted with such national competition and local divisions, or in other words, how local, national, and imperial identities related to each other. Glasgow's civic pride exemplifies the interplay of layered identities described in Part I, as the most imperialist exaltations of the new town hall and of the city actually bore a strong nationalist stamp, often linked to the monarchy. Furthermore, distinctions have to be made between different groups or classes within Glaswegian society if we are to comprehend this type of civic pride thoroughly.

The addition of nationalism is complicated by Glasgow's position in Scotland, one of the United Kingdom's constituent 'four nations'. Nineteenth-century Scottish nationalism has been characterised as a 'unionist nationalism' that cherished Scotland's partnership with England, formalised in the 1707 Act of Union, rather than striving for more autonomy. Lacking a state of its own, Scottish nationalism was formed mainly in the local civil society of associations and municipalities.[71] Multiple Scottish cities could imagine themselves to be imperial, from political centre Edinburgh to industrial 'juteopolis' Dundee or 'sugaropolis' Greenock. Yet Glasgow exemplified the imperial advantages of the Scottish-English union like no other. 'Glasgow was among the very first of the Scottish towns to practically take advantage of the benefits of the Union; and right worthy has she proved of her share in the Imperial *prestige*' (emphasis in original), one (English) publication held; 'the Union so bitterly opposed immediately opened up this promising and rapidly expanding field to the mercantile enterprise of Scotland', a Glasgow Lord Provost wrote in 1896, 'and soon colonial produce, sugar and tobacco, figured prominently on the

69 Stobart, 'Building an urban identity'.

70 *How Glasgow ceased to flourish*, p. 9.

71 Morton, *Unionist nationalism*, pp. 10–17, 43–48.

trade lists of Glasgow'.[72] Thus the Scottish imagination of the empire in the nineteenth century long remained rather modest, Scotland being subsumed simply under an imperial 'England' or even called 'North Britain'.[73] As will be shown below, Glasgow's town hall became part of this crossroads of political allegiances precisely when the Irish Home Rule crisis of 1887 threw into question Scotland's position in the United Kingdom and the British empire.

As discussed in the Introduction, and as some of the above examples showed, architectural style and decorative sculptural and pictorial programmes were the main and the most explicit declarations of a building's imperial significance. The first two sections below will deal with the appearance of the City Chambers in terms of style and sculpture, which provided the clearest articulations of the 'imperial' civic pride that characterised Glasgow. The third section investigates the more accessible events and performances that were another form of meaning-making. Although they allowed large numbers of people to participate, they were not necessarily more inclusive. They do, however, allow some light to be shed on the ambiguities of the relationship between empire and civic identity and the societal divisions this rested on.

A new town hall: requirements and architectural style

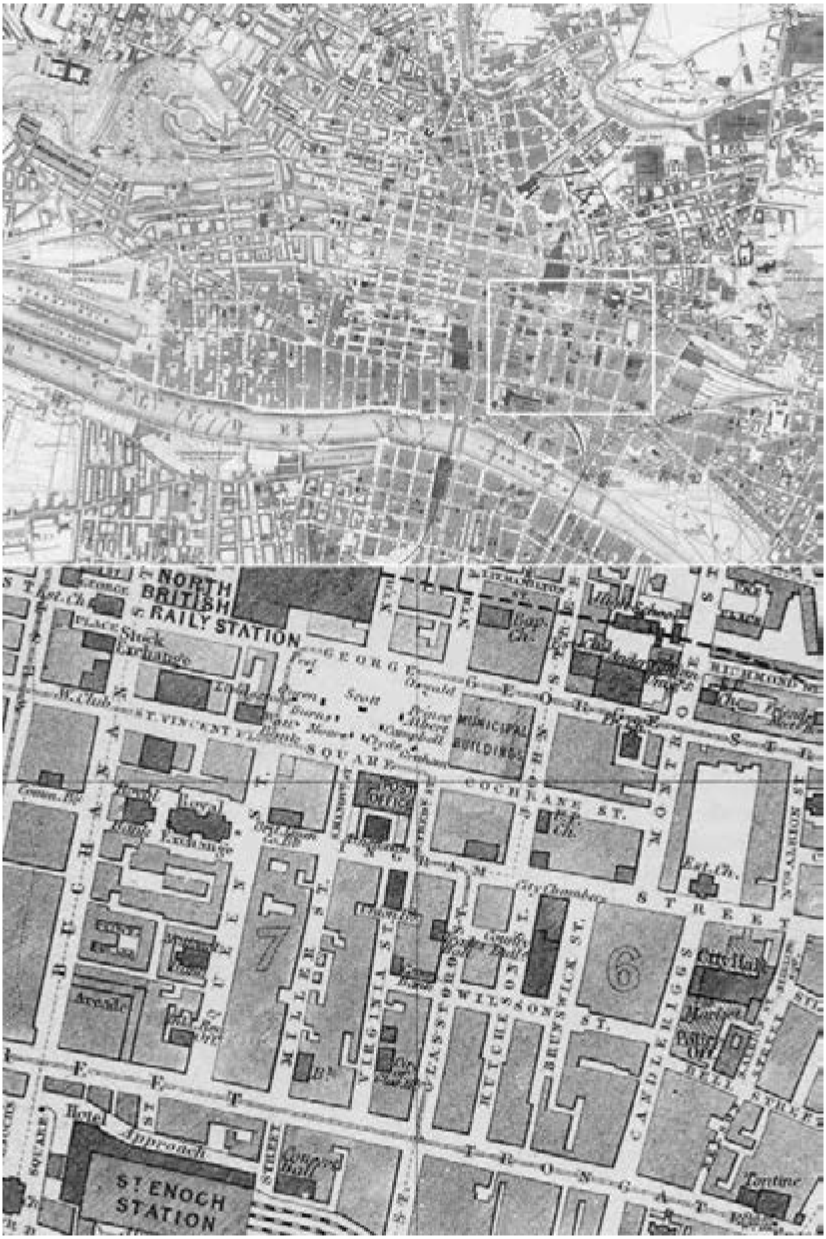
A proud city needed a proud town hall. Ever since the days of the medieval and early modern urban republics of Italy and the Low Countries, and perhaps exemplified best by Amsterdam's seventeenth-century town hall, European town halls were not merely offices but also symbols of urban autonomy and political identity. Although in the nineteenth century, cities would be increasingly integrated into nation-states and their bureaucracies, as mentioned above they usually maintained a relatively high degree of autonomy over local affairs. Representative town halls with imposing façades, richly decorated interiors, and the obligatory towers signalled this powerful position. Some of the greatest of the era were those of Manchester (1867–1877), Birmingham (1874–1879), Paris (1874–1882), Hamburg (1884–1897), and Hannover (1899–1913).[74]

72 *Glasgow of to-day*, p. 34; Bell and Paton, *Glasgow*, p. 6.

73 Finlay, 'National identity', pp. 284–301; McLean and McMillan, *State of the Union*, pp. 10–11, 94–98.

74 Cunningham, *Victorian and Edwardian town halls*, pp. 47, 85; Gloc-Dechezleprêtre, 'Hôtels de ville'; Kranz-Michaelis, *Rathäuser*, p. 111.

Figure 8 Map of Glasgow in 1888. The City Chambers on George Square are captioned 'Municipal Buildings'. The map shows the City Chambers' proximity to the city's commercial centre with its banks, exchanges, civic buildings, railway stations, and shopping streets such as Buchanan Street to the west.



The expansion of Glasgow's municipal services and the continuous population growth meant the municipality's responsibilities constantly grew. To accommodate these, new municipal buildings had been built thrice already in the nineteenth century, most recently in 1870–1874. Immediately, however, it was clear that this complex was too small.[75] Therefore, in 1877 the town council appointed a committee to investigate the options for a completely new town hall 'in which the various departments of the city's service, under the administration of the magistrates and town council, may be carried on with efficiency and economy'.[76]

City architect John Carrick, who also led the city's slum-clearing urban renewal projects, identified the eastern side of George Square as the best location. Figure 8 shows that the location was on the edge of the city's busy commercial centre, where Glasgow's banks, offices, and exchanges were located, as well as multiple railway stations and busy shopping streets, and the existing town hall in Ingram Street. George Square had only been opened to the public in 1876 and quickly became the city's main (and arguably only) representative and civic space, home to the new post office (completed in 1876) and Merchants' House (1877).[77] Adding to its 'civic' air were the many statues of local, Scottish, and royal luminaries placed there over time, from engineer James Watt and poet Walter Scott to Queen Victoria and Lord Clyde, a son of the city who had quelled the 1857 uprising in India.[78] Generally Glasgow, with its almost American grid-like street pattern and commercial frenzy, felt very much like a business city. '[A]s little as Manchester or Liverpool does it look the "Second City of the Empire",' one local author wrote; '"[b]usiness-like" – this to your true Glasgow man is the sum of all the virtues'.[79]

Therefore, besides providing office space, Carrick wrote that the town hall would also need to be 'handsome' and 'worthy', and include representative rooms for collective gatherings and festivities, which were needed for 'cultivating a spirit of good feeling between all classes and their civic rulers in the proper government of the city'.[80] This was necessary if Glasgow was to maintain its position vis-à-vis 'the other important municipalities of the kingdom', which had all erected new municipal buildings recently: Leeds,

75 Bell and Paton, *Glasgow*, p. 84.

76 Mitchell Library, Glasgow, Glasgow City Archives (GCA), inv.no. MP7/DTC 14.1.7, report by committee appointed 13 July 1877 (17 September 1877) p. 177.

77 Somerville, *George Square*, pp. 21, 34; Morley, *Examples of provincial civic design*, pp. 106–107.

78 McKenzie, *Public sculpture*, pp. 114–118, 122–131, 134–139.

79 Hamilton Muir, *Glasgow in 1901*, pp. 28–29.

80 GCA, inv.no. MP7/DTC 14.1.7, report by John Carrick (14 September 1877) p. 177V.

Liverpool, Bradford, Birmingham.[81] But the most direct comparison was provided by Manchester, where Alfred Waterhouse's town hall had just been completed. According to *The Building News*, Glasgow was 'about to follow the excellent example set her by her southern manufacturing rival', while the *Glasgow Herald* warned that Manchester's fine building need not be copied to 'obtain municipal buildings worthy the second city of the empire'.[82]

Two competitions were required to choose a design. For the first, in 1880, the London architect Charles Barry (Jr) was hired as an arbiter and a design by the Leeds architect Geo Corson was selected. Corson described it as 'Palladian', and it drew inspiration from Italian and French classical architecture.[83] However, Barry felt the competition brief's requirements had been impossible to meet with the budget stipulated, which had forced him to exclude better designs just to stay within budget. This led to heated debates in the architecture journals, and an embarrassed town council ultimately decided on a second competition.[84]

The second competition brief was similar to the first and Barry again functioned as arbiter. For both competitions, participating architects were mainly relegated to designing elevations and interiors as they had to adhere to floorplans drawn up by Carrick.[85] Therefore, the building's appearance and 'style' became virtually the only criteria for judging the entries, made even harder as the classical style had been compulsory in the first competition and preferable in the second.[86] The preference for classical architecture was unsurprising, since it had long been the architectural style of choice in 'this classical city'.[87] Rather than antiquarian this was an innovative and commercial taste, where classical forms were used eclectically to suit contemporary functions and were associated with republican virtues.[88] Indeed, the Gothic style of Manchester's town hall was 'a rock to be shunned' according to Lord Provost William Collins.[89] Like the equally historicist but 'national' Scots Baronial style, Gothic was used in commercial buildings in

81 Ibid., p. 177.

82 'New municipal buildings for Glasgow'; 'The proposed new municipal buildings'.

83 National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, inv.no. ABS-7.77.2, brochure by Corson, *Report explanatory of designs for proposed municipal offices, Glasgow. Submitted under the motto: "Carton"* (1880) p. 3; Walker, *The Glasgow municipal buildings*, pp. 35–36.

84 Walker, *The Glasgow municipal buildings*, pp. 31–35, 47–61.

85 Ibid., p. 14.

86 GCA, inv.no. DTC-6.31, outline of conditions for the second competition (24 May 1881) p. 193.

87 'Glasgow municipal buildings competition', p. 315.

88 Schmiechen, 'Glasgow of the imagination'.

89 'Glasgow town council. The new municipal buildings scheme'.

Glasgow and for its university (designed by George Gilbert Scott), but both styles were not considered serious candidates for its town hall.

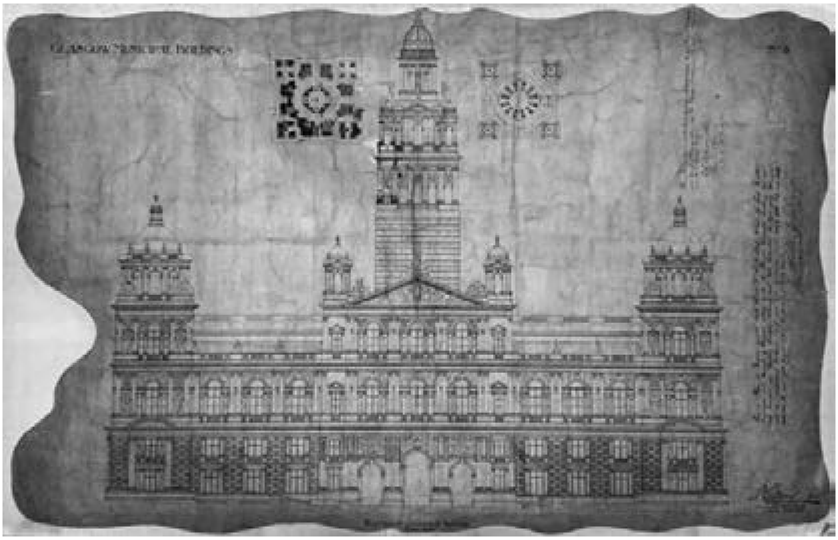
A further suggestion was given by the requirement that the building's inner courtyard be accessible through 'a spacious opening similar to the entrance to Somerset House from the Strand, or to the Foreign Offices'.[90] Both buildings were significant government buildings from the imperial metropolis, London, and that these examples were on the authorities' mind reveals their pretensions and perspective. Eighteenth-century Somerset House was seen as British classical government architecture at its best, associated with Roman antiquity and civic values, while the recent Foreign and India Offices symbolised Britain's political power overseas. As noted in Part I, they had been the subject of a fierce and public debate on architectural style, in which the classical style prevailed as it was felt to better represent dignified public values.[91]

The two-tiered second competition attracted even more designs than the first (125 against 96), judged by Barry and Carrick, and was handled by town clerk James D. Marwick, who, as the municipality's most powerful magistrate, would also have the strongest opinion on its needs.[92] In June 1882, the two architects announced to the council they had selected the design with the motto *Viola*, which combined 'artistic excellence' with sensible practical arrangements.[93]

The selected design was produced by William Young (1843–1900), who had named it after his wife. Young, born in nearby Paisley but working from London since 1865, was unknown in the field of public buildings. Instead, he had designed and remodelled mansions all over Britain for a profitable network of aristocratic clients and published several books. Upon his death in 1900, he would be remembered for the 'grandeur of the scale' and 'stately halls and staircases' that he used.[94] Glasgow's municipal building was no exception to this qualification. Its classical façades consisted of rusticated lower storeys, windows set between pediments and columns, corner pavilions with cupolas, an imposing central entrance underneath a pediment, and a tall tower crowned by turrets and a lantern (Figure 9). Inside, the classical opulence continued with sumptuous staircases of colourful marble and alabaster and mosaic-clad corridors.

90 GCA, inv.no. MP7/TC 14.1.7, report by John Carrick, 28 April 1881, p. 189.
91 Bremner, 'Nation and empire'.
92 GCA, inv.no. D-TC6/31, award by assessors in competition (7 January 1882) p. 204.
93 GCA, inv.no. D-TC6/31, report by assessors on competition (26 June 1882) p. 209.
94 Brydon, 'The late William Young', p. 45.

Figure 9 The City Chamber's main elevation towards George Square. The many domes and Renaissance elements were supposed to evoke Venice, while the abundant sculpture that was to be part of the design can be discerned from this drawing already.



In the building's style, however, there were also specific Glaswegian concerns. Given that records of Barry's and Carrick's (and probably Marwick's) considerations have not survived, their exact appraisal of the designs submitted in the competition is unknown. The three runners-up they selected clearly had the general classical style, the clear corner pavilions, the tower, and the extensive use of sculpture in common with Young's design.[95] What seems to have set apart the latter were the more pronounced corner pavilions, the more monumental entrance, and the clearer Italian inspiration.[96] Young, who had recently studied the architecture of Rome, Florence, and Venice in person, described the building's style as 'a free and dignified treatment of Italian Renaissance' inspired by these ancient cities.[97] In his mind, the stern Greek and Roman revival architecture of the early nineteenth century had resulted in 'replicas', while contemporary

95 These were designs by Henry Hall and Andrew Taylor (second place), the Belfast architect William Henry Lynn (third) and the Manchester architects Thomas Worthington and John Elgood (fourth). Perspective drawings of their designs can be found in, respectively: *The Building News* (17 November 1882); *The Building News* (6 October 1882); *The British Architect* (13 October 1882).
96 Many competition entries are discussed in Walker, *The Glasgow municipal buildings*.
97 Brydon, 'The late William Young', p. 46; Young, *The municipal buildings*, pp. 13–14, 17, 20–21.

architecture required a more playful, creative touch by architects who mastered several architectural idioms.[98] He modelled the second-storey Corinthian columns on those of the Jupiter Stator temple and the main George Square entrance on the Arch of Constantine, both in Rome. The Venetian windows and rusticated lower storeys were in 'the manner often adopted in the notable buildings of Venice', while the ground-floor lobby referenced 'a Roman Church of the Renaissance period' with 'brilliant Venetian mosaic' covering its vaulted ceiling.[99]

It was a typical case of nineteenth-century invention of tradition, as the illustrious republics of Venice and Rome were held up as examples for many a European city and its public buildings.[100] Yet the title of 'Venice of the North' was perhaps carried farthest by Glasgow, where the Royal Exchange was nicknamed 'Glasgow's Rialto' and the later tramways 'gondolas of the people'.[101] Many Italianate buildings in the cityscape articulated this claim, such as the aforementioned post office and Merchants' House, the Venetian Gothic Stock Exchange (1877), and the baroque offices of the Clyde Navigation Trust (1882–1886), the body that oversaw the port.[102] Corson, the winner of the first competition, had also specifically referred to Venice for his cancelled design.[103] And in 1894, a municipal committee that had travelled to England, France, and Italy to find inspiration for the murals of the new town hall's banqueting hall, specifically held up Venice as an example again. Even if its heyday was over, they wrote, its monuments remained 'fitting memorials of the greatness of the people and of the liberal intelligence which accompanied their commercial and maritime predominance'.[104] The comparison to Glasgow's 'liberal intelligence' and 'commercial and maritime predominance' was hard to miss.

Furthermore, the municipal committee's choice for Young's monumental, Renaissance classicism also had wider significance. Glasgow City Chambers was the first British town hall to employ this style and stylistically formed the turning point towards the Edwardian Baroque in British architecture, in vogue between 1895 and 1920. Well suited for communicating political

98 Young, *Town and country mansions*, pp. 5–7.

99 Young, *The municipal buildings*, pp. 13, 17, 19, 20–21.

100 Cannadine, 'The context', p. 138; Briggs, *Victorian cities*, pp. 160–162; Hunt, *Building Jerusalem*, pp. 227–243.

101 Maver, *Glasgow*, pp. 124–125, 132.

102 Ibid., pp. 124–125; McKenzie, *Public sculpture*, pp. 331–336.

103 'Proposed municipal buildings', p. 361.

104 GCA, inv.no. MP26.102, report by sub-committee on banqueting hall decorations (30 August 1894).

power, this pompous style was associated with the early modern 'national' English architecture of Christopher Wren and Inigo Jones.[105] Because of these associations, it was 'perhaps the closest that Britain ever came to formulating an expressly 'imperial' style of architecture', widely used in government and commercial buildings in Britain and the colonies, from Young's own War Office in Whitehall (1900–1906) and Liverpool's Cotton Exchange (1906) to Durban's town hall (1905–1910) and the Hong Kong Supreme Court (1899–1912).[106] Tellingly, the town halls of Cardiff and Belfast (which opened in 1904 and 1906, respectively), the cities with similar imperial-industrial outlooks to Glasgow, would both be erected in this 'imperial' style as well.[107] Like the Edwardian Baroque buildings it foreshadowed, the City Chambers used Renaissance architecture's imperial associations to profess not only the city's power and affluence but also its loyalty to the United Kingdom and empire to which it owed its prominence. The Glasgow town hall was associated with Italian republicanism instead of English government, but the values it and the Edwardian Baroque conveyed were similar: loyalty, power, wealth, order.

The town hall became an imperial backdrop to the city's commercial life. Due to the city's grid-pattern streets and densely built nature, the building was not necessarily visible from afar. Once one approached George Square, however, it was hard to miss: Figure 10 shows how the new building with its towering silhouette dominated the square and the surrounding architecture. While this confirmed the square's status as Glasgow's main representative space, the square was also integrated seamlessly into the business centre as its western and southern ends opened up to the offices, railway stations, and shops of central Glasgow. The town hall's presence there explicitly claimed the inner city as part of an imperial space.

Of course, technically speaking, the imperial appearance of the town hall was a mismatch with the very *local* activities employed within its interior spaces: offices for municipal bureaucrats, desks for citizens, staterooms for events, and the council's and Lord Provost's chambers. For the majority of citizens, who would never be part of lavish receptions or official business in the town hall, if they directly engaged with the building at all, it was simply as a government office – and not necessarily that of a popular government, as described near the end of this chapter. In fact, as noted above, the architects who partook in the design competitions were not even

105 Cunningham, *Victorian and Edwardian town halls*, pp. 152–154.

106 Bremner, 'The metropolis', pp. 150–151; Bremner, 'Stones of empire', pp. 98–100.

107 Whyte, 'Building the nation', pp. 224–225.

Figure 10 George Square with its monuments and the City Chambers in the background, circa 1910. The building to the right is the post office. The crowdedness of the square suggests its location near railway stations and the city's commercial centre.

to consider the building's more functional aspects as they had to adhere to floorplans drawn up by Carrick, which meant that they basically had to limit themselves to designing elevations and interiors that spoke to the city's image somehow. Yet as shown above, by the 1880s, Glasgow's imperial self-image had become so strong that even the municipal administration, no matter how mundane it was in practice, came to be understood or at least presented in imperial terms. In this way, the town hall integrated the municipality into the imperial space that it was supposed to symbolise.

Sculpture and politics

Building activities commenced in March 1883 and continued until early 1890, when the building was put in use.[108] Part of the construction process was the design and creation of large amounts of statuary, particularly for the exterior. The large pediment over the main entrance would become the building's most explicitly imperial reference. Young had originally conceived it to portray 'Glasgow with the Clyde at her feet, sending her

108 Nicol, *Vital, social and economic statistics*, p. 98.

manufactures and arts to all the world'.[109] Referring to the city and its commercial prowess, this proposed pediment would have made the city's ambitions clear enough and is reminiscent of Marseille's and Le Havre's exchanges. It would have been more obviously imperial in nature than, for instance, Birmingham Council House's pediment, which portrayed Britannia rewarding the city's manufacturers, and certainly more than Manchester's more local and Radical statues.[110] However, the final design would become imperial in a different sense by its explicit support for the monarchy, the Union, and the empire, exemplifying how a local civic identity was bound up with an imperial British identity.

In November 1886, when the time came to agree upon a final design for the pediment, Young proposed to turn the pediment instead into 'a most important imperial memorial' of Queen Victoria's golden jubilee that would be celebrated the next year.[111] In his proposal, the pediment would depict the queen surrounded by her 'subjects from the four quarters of the world coming to pay her homage', first England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, and then Britain's colonies.[112] According to Young, the building provided the country's and perhaps the world's only opportunity to construct such a unique and 'truly imperial' monument.[113] The municipal building committee agreed, and in January 1887 approved a clay model Young had produced.[114] Cities all over the empire were falling over each other to erect monuments to Victoria in 1887.[115] But Young was right in predicting that none had the opportunity now open to the Glasgow elite: to associate their city government with the monarchy so explicitly and to transform their monument to municipal rule into a monument to imperial rule at the same time.

The Glaswegian elite's convictions about Glasgow's and Scotland's place in Britain and the empire became more salient with the Irish Home Rule controversy. In early 1886, Liberal prime minister, William Gladstone, had unexpectedly introduced a 'home rule' bill to give Ireland its own parliament. The Conservatives and dissenting Liberals of his own party defeated the bill in parliament, which led not only to new elections that brought to power the Conservatives, but also to a split in Gladstone's Liberal Party. Liberals who disapproved of Home Rule formed a loose grouping of 'Liberal Unionists'

109 'The new municipal buildings. Description of the structure'.
110 Wyke, *Public sculpture*, pp. 24–32.
111 GCA, inv.no. MP16, minutes of municipal buildings committee (22 November 1886) p. 433.
112 'Glasgow municipal buildings. Proposed queen's jubilee memorial'.
113 Ibid.
114 GCA, inv.no. MP16, minutes of municipal buildings committee (19 January 1887) p. 434V.
115 Droth, Edwards and Hatt, *Sculpture victorious*, pp. 102–113.

under the leadership of Joseph Chamberlain.[116] The issue was consistently understood in imperial terms, Scottish commentators writing about 'unity or disintegration of the Empire' and how Gladstone's defeat had 'saved the Empire'.[117]

The issue was to have repercussions in Glasgow, too. The local Liberals split, weakening the party's dominance on the town council. For those Liberals who already disagreed with the dominant 'Gladstonian' standpoints on topics such as temperance and Church disestablishment, but who had closed ranks up to then, the party's conversion to Home Rule now caused definite alienation.[118] There was a clear dimension of social background, if not class, to the issue. Many local industrialists feared Irish Home Rule would negatively impact the city's economy, and a number of affluent Liberals joined the Unionists.[119] Conversely, amongst the city's more working-class population, Irish Home Rule and Gladstone enjoyed considerably more support.[120]

Furthermore, the Home Rule issue coincided with debates on the annexation of communities neighbouring Glasgow. Those local politicians who supported annexation and centralised city government, mostly admirers of Chamberlain and his policies, now also supported centralised imperial government. The most vocal supporters of annexation also became the most ardent local Unionists, which included the powerful town clerk Marwick. Pairing ideas on imperial and local government, they were committed to what they identified as 'effective' administration on both levels. One supporter of annexation derided opponents as 'Home Rulers' who could not govern effectively, and others were ridiculed for putting local interests before the British interest or called 'Parnellites', after the Irish Home Rule leader, Charles Parnell. Extending the municipal boundaries was also thought to give Glasgow the parliamentary representation it deserved as the second city of the empire, with more MPs than allocated in Gladstone's 'unfair' 1884 reform act.[121]

In this context the pediment, intended to crown the seat of municipal government as an explicit monument to United Kingdom and empire, hit a nerve. It symbolised the harmony so essential to the 'second city' image – Glasgow in the empire, the empire in Glasgow. Conservative

116 McLean and McMillan, *State of the Union*, pp. 105–11.

117 Cited in: Lloyd-Jones, 'Liberalism, Scottish nationalism', p. 870.

118 Sweeney, *The municipal administration*, pp. 632, 773.

119 Howell, *British workers*, p. 139.

120 Ibid., pp. 139–141; Smyth, *Labour in Glasgow*, p. 21.

121 Sweeney, *The municipal administration*, pp. 167–182.

councillor James MacLennan reacted to Young's proposal, saying that 'in these days of Home Rule it was very important that such a memorial [...] should be erected on the Municipal Buildings of one of the greatest corporations in the Empire'.[122] When the time came for the town council to vote on the pediment, all Conservatives voted in favour, as did most Liberal Unionists. In contrast, ten of the council's fifteen 'Gladstonian' Liberals voted against, mainly the evangelical, pro-temperance middle-class councillors.[123] They cited practical objections, such as the costs and bad visibility of the pediment, and denied their preference had anything to do with 'loyalty'.[124] Yet for their opponents the pediment's political symbolism outweighed such disadvantages: the final tally was 22 in favour, 13 against.[125] In fact this seems to have been one of the few moments that there was debate over the costs, which might indicate those opposing the pediment indeed had some ulterior motive. Against the £520,000 the building would eventually cost, the £1,500 budgeted for the pediment sculpture hardly seems extravagant.[126]

In its final form (Figure 11), the pediment depicted Victoria accompanied by representations of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, surrounded by

> [o]n one side Canada [...] an American Indian being introduced; Australia is shown by a gold digger; New Zealand by a female figure suggesting agriculture, with sheep and cattle about her, and there are numerous other carvings representing the other colonies of the empire, to the west of Great Britain. At the other side of the pediment are sculptures of East Indians, a native chief being one of the subjects, with the head and front of an elephant shown behind. After India comes Africa, symbolized by a white man having his arm round the neck of a negro. Further on, and extending out to the end of the pediment, our Mongolian and other dependencies to the east of Europe are indicated.[127]

This explicitly imperialist image centred around Queen Victoria, crowned empress a decade before, was very contemporary, although the general

122 'Glasgow Town Council', *The Glasgow Herald* (3 December 1886).
123 GCA, inv.no. MP16, council meeting minute (22 November 1886) p. 434V. Political allegiances were taken from councillors' biographies in Sweeney, *The municipal administration*.
124 'Glasgow town council', *The Evening News and Star* (3 February 1887); 'Glasgow town council', *The Glasgow Herald* (4 February 1887).
125 GCA, council meeting minutes (22 November 1886).
126 Nicol, *Vital, social and economic statistics*, pp. 106–107.
127 Ibid., p. 397.

Figure 11 The Jubilee Pediment as seen from the square, close to the building. Queen Victoria is portrayed centrally, seated on a throne. The four figures closest to her stood for Scotland, England, Ireland, and Wales. At Victoria's right hand side were allegorical representations of the British empire's settler colonies (Canada, Australia, New Zealand); to her left, the colonies in Africa and Asia.

scheme of allegorical representations of exotic regions had a long pedigree in European art. The pediment exemplifies Victoria's increased popularity as 'mother' of the empire and the growing popular imperial culture in this period. It was far more pretentious than the original scheme, as similar pediments were relatively rare and more typical of great public institutions such as the abovementioned Royal Exchange or the British Museum. Closest to the Glasgow pediment was the mosaic in the pediment over the original main entrance to the South Kensington Museum (1864–1869), where Victoria was surrounded by the contributing nations to the Great Exhibition.[128] The way the 'Indian' and 'negro' were physically guided towards the figure of Victoria in the Glasgow pediment clearly alluded to the idea of a civilising mission, and the grouping of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand on one side, and Indian, African, and 'Mongolian' subjects on the other, emphasised a white British kinship within the larger empire.

128 Bryant, '"The progress of civilisation"'; Trench, *The Victoria and Albert Museum*, pp. 10–11.

Finally, the pediment underlined that the rightful place of Scotland and Ireland was firmly within the British empire.

The pediment was far from the only sculpture that reinforced the town hall's monumental appearance, as an extensive sculptural programme added to the message that the building communicated. There were generic classical motifs, and many allegories of bourgeois civic values that were more or less standard for public buildings: Faith, History, Harmony, Peace.[129] But the spandrels over the second storey Venetian windows on the George Square façade were home to sculpture 'representative of the trades carried on in the city and neighbourhood', executed by Glasgow's most prominent sculptor, John Mossman.[130] The mostly female figures around the main entrance allegorically depicted chemistry, navigation, municipal government, commerce and shipping. On the other spandrels, male figures with attributes typical of certain professions depicted different trades associated with Glasgow.

Unlike the generic allegories, these reliefs depicted actual professions. Sculpture like this was purposely moralistic, part of a wider trend of employing sculpture to educate a mass urban audience.[131] If the exact associations of the building's architectural style would have been 'legible' mostly only to the initiated, these reliefs sent a more explicit message. As such, they reveal something about what social groups the civic elite included in their vision of Glasgow. If this was the empire's second city, whose was it?

Ostensibly the sculpture represented Glasgow's industries, but the sculpture referred as much to the city establishment as to the working class. Mossman seems to have based his spandrels on the city's fourteen 'incorporated trades'. These historic associations constituted the Trades' House, the craftsmen's equivalent of the Merchants' House mentioned above. The two guilds had governed the city before 1833 and since then had become sociable and philanthropic institutions of a still very elite nature: their heads functioned as town councillors and membership was a prerequisite to becoming a city official.[132] All incorporations were included in the sculpture, including for instance the Cordiners (leather shoemakers), Bakers, Masons, and Barbers. Two spandrels that symbolised engineering and shipbuilding together accounted for the Hammermen or metalworkers, testament to these industries' importance. Only the printing industry

129 McKenzie, *Public sculpture*, pp. 153, 155, 157.
130 Ibid., pp. 154–155, 493; 'Glasgow municipal buildings'.
131 Schmiechen, 'Glasgow of the imagination', pp. 490–499.
132 Maver, 'Glasgow's civic government', pp. 443–444.

depicted in one spandrel did not correspond to an incorporation. On the corner pavilions, sixteen small panels with sculpted tools repeated the representation of the incorporated trades.[133]

This scheme selectively represented the city and its economy. Young stated the sculpture simply represented Glasgow's 'various trades and industries'.[134] And certain workers, such as bakers or masons, or those in the engine- or shipbuilding industries, could indeed identify with 'their' spandrel. Yet some of the other depicted trades, such as gardening and hairdressing, were of marginal importance and were included only by virtue of belonging to the incorporated Gardeners and Barbers, respectively. Furthermore, those of important but unskilled professions – porters, the tens of thousands of mainly female workers in the textile industry, not to mention the city's 10,000 'general labourers' – were excluded.[135]

The sculpture reinforced the blurred but important line between 'skilled' and 'unskilled' work that ran through the city's workforce, especially when one realises that precisely the shipbuilding and engineering industries were dominated by a small group of proud skilled workers.[136] This was more than an economic division. Skilled workers formed a 'labour aristocracy' that usually voted Liberal and their organisations had long focused on 'respectable' workers. Additionally, religion, ethnicity, and freemasonry contributed to their distinctive position: freemasonry was common among the skilled workers in the shipbuilding trade and Catholics were excluded from some professions, while a large proportion of unskilled workers were Irish.[137]

The architectural style of the building represented Glasgow as a centre of commercial and maritime power, while the Jubilee Pediment underlined the city's imperial loyalty and outlook. The George Square spandrels explicated what *kind* of city it was that was such a centre and had such an outlook: a city of just local government and dutiful skilled workers, hierarchically linked by traditional craft associations. This portrayal shows how Glasgow's civic elite constructed the 'second city' image in top-down fashion and only included certain social groups in this image.

133 'Glasgow municipal buildings. Proposed queen's jubilee memorial'.

134 Young, *The municipal buildings*, p. 17.

135 *Ninth decennial census*, pp. 707–714.

136 Hamish Fraser, 'The working class', pp. 319–321.

137 Kenefick, *Red Scotland!*, pp. 13, 56; Smyth, *Labour in Glasgow*, pp. 3–4, 19–21; Maver, *Glasgow*, p. 134.

Ritual and performance

Civic ritual was a final way in which the building was invested with certain meanings, one in which the ordinary population of Glasgow could align themselves with the new building more autonomously. Civic ritual shared with historicist architecture and sculpture its 'invented' nature, but allowed for much more participation. Workers' processions were commonly incorporated as signs of order and loyalty, and through its recreational value, civic ritual turned even the audience into active participants.[138]

In Glasgow, the two main civic rituals surrounding the new town hall were the laying of the foundation stone in 1883 and the official opening by Queen Victoria in 1888. These events more or less repeated in performance what the spandrel reliefs and the Jubilee Pediment represented in stone: respectively, a representation of the city's social and economic life that stressed its harmonious nature, and an expression of loyalty to the monarch. As with the pediment sculpture, the nationalist meaning of the latter gave rise to much more explicit invocations of the empire and Glasgow's place in it.

The laying of the foundation stone in October 1883 was accompanied by a 'civic and masonic' procession of the city's magistrates and dozens of Scottish masonic lodges, but also by a 'monster procession of the trades' of some 30,000 strong.[139] Leaving, respectively, from the cathedral and from Glasgow Green, the traditional working-class gathering place, both processions marched to George Square before an audience of allegedly some 500,000 spectators. At the square, Lord Provost John Ure ceremonially laid the foundation stone.[140]

The 'trades of the city and district' had initiated their participation in the proceedings themselves, though it is unclear how exactly – the fact their representatives met with the municipal committee overseeing the proceedings indicates close cooperation.[141] The popularity of the event suggests widespread interest, and the procession was undoubtedly an expression of working-class pride. All groups carried attributes associated with their trade and union flags with mottoes, along with other objects including a portrait of the Radical reformer, John Bright, and an old Reform flag. However, such expressions of class consciousness were combined with symbols of

138 Roberts, 'Entertaining the community'; Gunn, 'Ritual and civic culture', pp. 229–233.

139 *Description of ceremonial*, pp. 2–3.

140 Ibid., pp. 2, 4.

141 GCA, inv.no MP9-DTC/14.1.9, report by committee on foundation stone arrangements (4 March 1884) p. 2; inv.no. MP12, invitation by Lord Provost for meeting with municipal committee (30 August 1883) p. 713.

nationalism and loyalty such as numerous Union Jacks and the no fewer than nine bands from the middle-class Rifle Volunteers that took part.[142]

Furthermore, the image of Glasgow presented by the trades' procession did not differ that much from the message conveyed by the spandrel sculpture. There were similar lines of exclusion and a similar emphasis on the orderly organisation of labour. As usual the procession was an all-male affair, again drawing boundaries in the city's workforce along gender lines. Women with industrial occupations were allocated part of the platform on George Square, to include every 'section and class' in the festivities, but this meant that those women who managed to gain a seat could only watch the procession instead of partake in it.[143] The delegations represented their union (or in some cases, firm) more than their profession as such.[144] Since trade unions were still mainly for skilled workers at this point, this again prioritised skilled and organised over unskilled labour.[145] Second, like the sculpture, the procession contained little explicit imperial rhetoric. Shipbuilders were present in force, thousands of them forming some of the parade's largest groups. One float in the procession displayed textiles for the Indian market, and of one flag-bearer it was remarked he had been in the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, Egypt, the year before.[146] Yet the procession was mainly a local affair, representing local trades more than a clearly defined image of the city.

In contrast, the inaugural ceremonial of 1888, five years later, contained more imperial messages. Like the Jubilee Pediment, its relation to the monarchy made this a markedly more nationalist and imperialist event. In the summer of 1888 Glasgow organised a large international exhibition where hundreds of British and international firms presented their wares, with Glaswegian companies, notably the Clydeside shipbuilders, taking centre stage. Many colonial firms contributed to the exhibition, particularly those connected to India due to Glasgow's strong trade relations with the region.[147] Objects from Scottish history were also exhibited, but the atmosphere evoked by the exposition was mostly 'Oriental'.[148]

142 *Description of ceremonial*, pp. 19–41; on the Rifle Volunteers as expression of middle-class loyalty, see Finlay, 'Queen Victoria', p. 220.

143 GCA, inv.no. MP9, report on foundation stone ceremonies by George Jackson and John Laing (4 March 1884) p. 180.

144 *Description of ceremonial*, pp. 19–41; Gunn, *The public culture*, p. 174.

145 Hamish Fraser, *Trade unions and society*, pp. 208–210.

146 *Description of ceremonial*, pp. 23, 29, 41.

147 Kinchin and Kinchin, *Glasgow's great exhibitions*, pp. 17–53.

148 Spooner, 'Day-tripping'.

Victoria would visit the exhibition in August and accepted the municipality's request to officially open the new town hall nearing completion for the occasion. As city chamberlain James Nicol put it, Victoria's jubilee and visit together formed 'an epoch-making term' for Glasgow, celebrating a reign 'unexampled for the expansion and development in material greatness of our Empire, and in the […] means and appliances for drawing all parts of the Empire and the entire world closely together'.[149] It was well understood that Glasgow had contributed its fair share to the production of these means and appliances. Furthermore, as with the pediment, the visit was an occasion for the town council to associate its city and new town hall with the queen, who had become an almost larger-than-life symbol of the empire at this point in time.[150]

The queen arrived in Glasgow on 22 August and travelled to the courtyard of the municipal buildings. Here, town clerk Marwick read an address to her in which he drew attention to the Jubilee Pediment.[151] In fact, she had already seen it in photographs that the municipality had sent along with its official felicitations earlier that summer.[152] Victoria gave a brief reply in which she officially opened the building, and the party then moved to the exhibition grounds. Attendance was again very high, as reportedly over 700,000 people had gathered to witness the queen.[153] Near the exhibition, Victoria was met by 'Lascars from vessels that run between London & Glasgow, all dressed in white, with scarlet sashes and turbans'.[154] They were employees of the Clan and Anchor shipping lines that had their head office in the city.[155] Asian sailors working on British and other European ships were very common (as will be discussed in Chapter 4). Yet, they were a relatively new 'imperial' presence in Glasgow, as the Clyde had long been too narrow for large steamships. Mobilising them to welcome the queen-empress was thus both a way to add colonial lustre to her visit and a reminder of the city's recent economic development.[156]

For the main Glasgow newspapers, the queen's visit was a grand occasion that they widely reported on. For the *Evening Times*, the city was honoured

149 Nicol, *Vital, social, and economic statistics*, pp. 388–389.

150 Cannadine, 'The context', pp. 124–125.

151 Nicol, *Vital, social, and economic statistics*, p. 427.

152 GCA, inv.no. MP16, council meeting minutes, copy of letter by town clerk Marwick to private secretary Ponsonby (1 June 1887) pp. 342–344; copy of letter by Ponsonby to Marwick (4 June 1887) p. 347.

153 Nicol, *Vital, social, and economic statistics*, p. 426.

154 Queen Victoria's Journals, http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org, diary entry (22 August 1888) p. 47.

155 'The ceremony'.

156 McFarland, 'Clyde opinion'.

that for a moment, the queen had laid 'aside the greatness and the cares that yokes with empire'; the *Glasgow Herald* stated that the queen visited as 'rightful head of a mighty empire, among whose cities the one which is now honoured holds and eminent place'.[157] If Glasgow was 'essentially Radical in its political sentiments', the newspaper continued, the gathered crowds illustrated that this did not preclude loyalty.[158] The *Glasgow Weekly Citizen* saw the new town hall that the queen opened as heralding a new era for 'this second city':

> Liverpool attempts to compete, but Liverpool suffers under a delusion, and cannot take from our grasp the palm of industrial progress. Within forty years, too, we have demolished our dingy slums and made the city in every part truly habitable. Then huge private warehouses have taken the place of obscure tenements, and crumpling Municipal and other fabrics have been superseded by splendid modern architectural structures.[159]

The newspapers were moderately positive about the building itself, and this predicted the general reception the new building would enjoy in the years after. Artistically speaking, it was often felt to be not entirely pleasing.[160] Yet as an impressive seat of local government it fit the bill and was praised as a 'massive and well-proportioned pile' with an 'inherent beauty of design', or a 'magnificent building'; according to the *Illustrated London News* it had 'one of the most superb interiors among the modern public palaces of city Corporations'.[161]

In many respects, the 1888 celebrations and the press panegyrics formed a successful initiation for the new building. In September 1889, it was opened to the citizens of Glasgow, 400,000 of whom passed through it; at the official opening one month later, Lord Provost James King expressed the hope the building would allow the city to 'promote with zeal and perseverance the highest and best interests of this great community and of the empire to which it belongs'.[162]

Retrospectively however, the 1888 celebrations were not only the high point, but also the beginning of the end of the idealised 'second city' image

157 'Thursday morning'; 'Wednesday morning'; 'The royal visit'.

158 'The royal visit'.

159 'Saturday morning'.

160 'The new City Chambers'; 'The new Glasgow municipal buildings'; Hamilton Muir, *Glasgow in 1901*, pp. 143–14; Geddes, *On national and municipal encouragement*, p. 8.

161 'The ceremony'; 'Opening of the City Chambers'; 'Glasgow new municipal buildings'.

162 Nicol, *Vital, social and economic statistics*, p. 101; 'Opening of the City Chambers'.

that the building embodied. For despite the enthusiastic crowds and the jubilant newspapers, and unlike the rather compliant show of 1883, in 1888 some very small but significant dents were being made for the first time in the civic elite's image of Glasgow as a harmonious, confident city. Crowds jeered at the Yeomanry Cavalry, part-time 'fireside soldiers' drawn from the upper and middle classes, who were escorting the queen.[163] And at Glasgow Green, a counter-demonstration was organised by Robert Cunninghame Graham, a Liberal-turned-socialist MP who would co-found the Scottish Labour Party only days later.[164] It was a Home Rule demonstration presided by John Ferguson, Glasgow's pro-labour Irish leader, where Cunninghame Graham also protested against the monarchy and Glasgow's town councillors.

The demonstration was relatively small, attracting a few hundred people.[165] Yet by contesting the elite's idealised vision of Glasgow as a prosperous urban republic loyal to Union and empire, it pointed in the direction local politics would take in the decades to come. Only months earlier, Cunninghame Graham's fellow co-founder, James Keir Hardie, had for the first time directly (but unsuccessfully) contested the Liberal dominance in an election for the Mid Lanarkshire constituency, just south of Glasgow. Behind the veneer of wealth, Glasgow had always been a low-wage region whose export industries were vulnerable to market slumps. Its crowded, unhygienic tenements were infamously known as some of the worst in Europe. From the late 1880s, an independent political labour movement steadily developed in the city that contested the Liberal dominance. Aimed at both skilled and unskilled labour, it was part of the more militant New Unionism movement.[166] In the early twentieth century, in the context of economic uncertainty and labour conflicts, the rise of the labour movement would coincide with a waning of municipal confidence in Glasgow, a more pessimistic vision on Union and empire in Scotland, and a general decline of urban civic cultures in Britain.[167]

These changes also impacted on the City Chambers. The aforementioned murals, for which the committee toured mainland Europe, were realised around 1900; instead of imperial rhetoric, some did refer to Scotland by

163 'The new municipal buildings'; Hay, *The Yeomanry Cavalry*, pp. 92–93.

164 Howe, 'Anti-colonialism', pp. 113–114.

165 'Glasgow, Thursday'; 'Our London correspondence'; Smyth, *Labour in Glasgow*, pp. 133–134.

166 Kenefick, *Red Scotland*, pp. 11–12, 18–19; Smyth, *Labour in Glasgow*, p. 5.

167 Maver, *Glasgow*, pp. 116–119, 134–138; Hart, 'Urban growth', pp. 210–213; Finlay, 'National identity', pp. 301–315; Gunn, *The public culture*, pp. 187–199.

Figure 12 The City Chambers as they stand today, seen from George Square.

portraying personifications of Scottish rivers.[168] More importantly, the changing meaning of the town hall came from the working population for whom it became a symbol of the political establishment in times of hardship. In 1908, hundreds of unemployed persons invaded the building and, allegedly singing the song 'The Red Flag', tried to enter the council chamber.[169] When in 1914, King George V and Queen Mary laid the foundation stone of the building's extension, the Labour councillors refused to attend and leading socialist newspaper *Forward* ridiculed the 'Royal Hypnotist and Amateur Bricklayer'.[170] Finally, the 'Battle for George Square' of 31 January 1919 saw a strikers' demonstration escalate into a violent riot, to which the British government reacted by sending in the military. These events heralded an image of Glasgow radically different from that of 'second city of the empire'. Now, it was seen as the heart of a militant 'Red Clydeside' fallen victim to socialism, which South African journalist William Bolitho called the 'cancer of empire' that plagued Glasgow's tenements.[171]

168 Willsdon, *Mural painting*, pp. 184–185.
169 'Glasgow unemployed'.
170 'Labor men decline'; 'The royal hypnotist'.
171 Bolitho, *Cancer of empire*.

Conclusion

Glasgow City Chambers, which still stands today (Figure 12) formed the most conspicuous manifestation of Glaswegian civic pride in the late nineteenth century. More by its appearance than its actual use it articulated the city's self-image as the 'second city' of the British empire. The building's architecture signalled this identity as one that was powerful, loyal, large, and prosperous. The city's civic elite, consisting of councillors, officials, and the business community they were largely drawn from, understood and represented these local qualities as part of, and enabled by, a larger imperial world.

One issue that surfaced in the history of Glasgow City Chambers, with wider relevance to other imperial buildings analysed in this study, are the intentions behind imperial placemaking. The bombastic rhetoric about Glasgow as an imperial city was purposely produced by its civic elite. But naturally, it was a one-sided image that ignored urban poverty and the plight of the working class – the *Weekly Citizen*'s wish for 'private warehouses' to replace 'obscure tenements' only boded well for the affluent citizens who profited from such capitalist developments.

The labour movement and Labour Party contested this image of Glasgow. Their rise was slow, however, as they only established themselves permanently in the interwar period.[172] And their opposition was not necessarily anti-imperial in nature, a theme that will return in the next chapter. Local unions had connections to Australian unions, for instance, and the *Forward* newspaper's circulation extended into the white dominions.[173] Only days before the 'battle' at George Square in 1919, white sailors in Glasgow had violently rioted against the presence of black West Indian and West African sailors. A long way from the symbolic importance attached to the South Asian sailors in 1888, this event sparked deadly violence against non-white sailors in a host of British port cities.[174] Finally, in 1938 the city organised the Empire Exhibition, the last of the European imperial expositions, which – with its modernist architecture – celebrated the empire's and particularly Scotland's industrial progress. Only the Independent Labour Party, founded in 1893 by Keir Hardie, criticised the exposition, spurred on by anti-colonial activists like George Padmore and C.L.R. James (who chaired one local party

172 Smyth, *Labour in Glasgow*, p. 2.
173 Kenefick, *Red Scotland*, pp. 35–36, 210.
174 >Jenkinson, 'Black sailors'.

branch).[175] Imitating the counter-exhibition to the 1931 Paris Exposition (Chapter 5), the ILP organised a counter-exhibition in which it disclosed the ‘truth’ about the empire as an exploitative and violent force.[176]

Part of this redirection of Glaswegian politics, which started in the 1880s, was the re-evaluation of Scottish national identity, made salient by the Irish Home Rule controversy. Scottish Home Rule was supported by the radical left: Cunninghame Grahame was an early member and later president of the Scottish Home Rule Association established in 1886, and the association had supported Keir Hardie’s unsuccessful 1888 bid.[177] But again, Scottish nationalism, or support for some form of Scottish autonomy, still mostly took place within the imperial framework. Local ties to the empire, such as those in Glasgow, were after the 1880s framed in national Scottish terms and the empire became a ‘conduit’ for Scottish nationalism, exalted for the opportunities it provided.[178] The personified Scottish rivers in the banqueting hall showed the increased interest in Scottishness, as did the increased attention for Scottish history and society at the 1938 exposition and an earlier 1911 exposition, which clearly placed Scotland within the empire.[179] The Home Rule debate thus marked a change in which Scottish identity or even nationality became salient. Only after World War II, however, would the emerging welfare state and formal decolonisation slowly supplant the empire as a dominant frame of reference.[180]

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3 The cultural effects of economic entanglements

Abstract
Commerce was a driving force behind colonialism. As empires expanded and developed, they fuelled the skyrocketing of world trade. In the flows of goods and capital that this entailed, European industry – processing colonial commodities or producing manufactures for colonial markets – played a crucial role. Factories, such as the rice mills of the Dutch Zaan region that processed and re-exported rice from colonial Burma and Java in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, thus became the focal points for such trade relations. In the mills' nomenclature and public relations efforts, the new, eye-catching factories were constructed as the high-tech centres of imperial trade relations, linked to traditional colonial agriculture in what was portrayed as a productive, harmonious whole.

Keywords: Economic history; globalisation; factories; advertising; Dutch imperialism; rice

When it comes to the different ways in which Europeans came into contact with their various colonial empires, the economic impetus is strikingly ubiquitous. In this study, the only group of actors for whom economic motivations were not dominant are the missionaries covered in Chapter 1. In contrast, in the previous chapter we saw how empire-related economic activities shaped cities' appearance and self-image; the next chapter concerns the specific economic activity of shipping, and the museums of Chapter 5 – to a large extent – were intended to disseminate knowledge about the profits and promises of empire. Of all the chapters in this book, however, this one has economic relations with empire most explicitly at its core. It investigates industries in Europe directly linked to overseas colonies and the commodity trade that enabled them. Factories where products were processed or manufactured appealed to Europeans as workers and as

Groten, Miel, *The Architecture of Empire in Modern Europe*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022
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consumers. Although factories were primarily utilitarian buildings, they also became meaningful focal points for imperial spaces produced by trade and industrial activities.

The chapter starts out with a discussion of the development of global and imperial trade in the nineteenth century and the expansion of links between metropoles and colonies that this engendered. The chapter then moves on to explore ways in which specific factories in Europe that processed colonial resources became known for their imperial links, addressing factory architecture, advertising practices, and workers' perceptions (Part I). These topics return in the detailed discussion of the rice milling industry in the Dutch Zaan region, examined in Part II of this chapter.[1]

Part I. Factories and industries in imperial culture

Industry, trade and imperialism

Imperialism and industrialisation were intimately related historical developments, although the exact nature of this relationship is still under debate.[2] In this chapter, the focus is on the links between particular industries or factories in Europe and colonial territories. What formed these links was the nineteenth-century upswing in world trade. Older commodities such as sugar, coffee, spices, and tobacco had been at the heart of early modern plantation slavery and trade colonialism; in German and Dutch, these became collectively known as *Kolonialwaren* or *koloniale waren*: 'colonial goods'. But in the nineteenth century, all over the world, foreign trade came to exert a much more decisive influence on local situations. Transport costs and customs barriers fell, increasingly integrating regional markets. Instead of high-value products, now the commodities shipped were mostly raw resources destined for the emerging industries of Europe and the United States, which led to changing transport chains and trade relations.[3] Well into the century, trade still included enslaved human beings, as the Atlantic slave trade was abolished only piecemeal and the 'illegitimate' trade continued for even longer, as did the domestic slave trade in the Americas.[4]

1 An earlier version of Part II of this chapter was published previously as a journal article (in Dutch): Groten, 'Een koloniale cultuur'.

2 Eric Williams's *Capitalism and Slavery* started the debate; for a useful overview see Mullen, 'A Glasgow-West India merchant house'.

3 Osterhammel, *The transformation of the world*, pp. 724–729.

4 Mason, 'Keeping up appearances'.

Imperialism was one factor among others in this process, interacting with industrialisation, capitalism, and technological advances. Not all intensifying trade relations were necessarily 'imperial' in the sense that they developed within empires – in 1913, as much as 40 per cent of the world's international trade was intra-European. In some respects the possession of a colonial empire was less important than political power in general, which allowed European powers and the United States to enforce free trade with treaties and gunboat diplomacy.[5] Yet imperialism did become a driving force of global trade. Perhaps it is more important to view this relation conversely: global trade became very much part of imperialism, as colonies were gradually integrated into a capitalist world economy. Global trade was an incentive to intensify commercial relations between metropoles and colonies – or to start them from scratch, as the German empire did – and extract new or more resources. The motivation for these interactions could be to profit from global trade or, conversely, to shield the national economy from it by stimulating 'safe' trade within one's own empire. In its logical conclusion, this intensification of economic imperial relations followed the general division being established between Western industry and 'Global South' raw materials, which was translated into metropolitan industry and colonial raw materials. As is well known, this pattern, in which colonies were both suppliers and markets for an industrial Europe, became almost synonymous with imperialism for both proponents and critics.

With Western capital, European governments and entrepreneurs actively introduced and extracted commodities in their colonies to be sold internationally. Sugarcane had been central to early modern colonialism and continued to be a principal colonial commodity. Its production on American plantations had driven the slave trade, and its consumption in Europe changed diets, social relations, and cultures.[6] In the early nineteenth century, the Dutch brought tea from China to Java and the British brought it to the newly seized Indian province of Assam to grow it for export.[7] Rubber was another booming commodity in the late nineteenth century, most prolific in Malaysia; when global demand rose in the 1870s, rubber trees were taken from the Amazon rainforest to South-East Asia to be grown on plantations.[8] The Sumatran Deli region was transformed into a profitable 'plantation belt' for coffee and tobacco plants, oil palms, and

5 Kenwood and Lougheed, *The growth*, p. 214.

6 Mintz, *Sweetness and power*.

7 Rappaport, *A thirst for empire*, pp. 85–119.

8 Harp, *A world history of rubber*, pp. 14–21.

rubber trees by a throng of European and American firms after 1870.[9] In West Africa, from Senegal to Cameroon, British, French, and German conquest beginning in the 1880s started a 'cash crop revolution' focused on the production of groundnuts, palm oil, and cacao.[10] Burma, modern-day Myanmar, was another region transformed by international capital under the imperial umbrella, we will see below.

The 'imperial division of labour' empire did hold up in practice if we look at the basic level of imports and exports of the three traditional colonial powers in the period under review in this study. British exports to the empire hovered between 30 and 40 per cent of total exports (all data given here are in terms of value) between 1850 and 1940.[11] The French empire absorbed only around 10 per cent of France's exports in 1906, which climbed to a third in the 1930s.[12] The share of the Dutch East Indies in total Dutch exports was rather small, at only some 10 per cent in the 1870s, 3 per cent around 1900, and 13 percent in the 1920s.[13] However, for specific industrial sectors, empires were much more important markets. British, French, and Dutch textile industries generally relied on their respective colonial markets, as did British and French producers of locomotives and iron products, British producers of motor vehicles and copper and brass manufactures, and French producers of candles, soap, and beer.[14] Furthermore, such dependent industries tended to be clustered in specific places: Marseille, Glasgow, textile towns in Lancashire, or in Twente in the eastern Netherlands.[15]

For imports, the picture is similar. The British empire provided approximately a quarter of Britain's total imports before 1913, which had become some 40 per cent in 1938. But it provided most of its tea, rubber, and wool, and all of its jute.[16] The empire's share in French imports was about 10 per cent before 1910 but grew to more than 25 per cent in the 1930s. However, it dominated France's supply of rice, sugar, phosphates, and groundnuts, and from the 1930s also that of coffee, cacao, oilseeds, and fruits.[17] For the

9 Stoler, *Capitalism and confrontation*, pp. 15–22.

10 Austin, 'Cash crops and freedom'.

11 Cain, 'Economics and empire', p. 44; Fieldhouse, 'The metropolitan economies', pp. 98–101.

12 Marseille, *Empire colonial*, pp. 42–45, 50–55.

13 Lindblad, 'De handel tussen Nederland en Nederlands-Indië', p. 258.

14 Fieldhouse, 'The metropolitan economies', pp. 99–101; Marseille, *Empire colonial*, pp. 51–55; Korsten and Van Londen, 'Opkomst en neergang', p. 80. For the Dutch textile industry this was true for the nineteenth century.

15 Thompson, *The empire strikes back*, p. 75; Lindblad, 'De handel in katoentjes'.

16 Cain, 'Economics and empire', pp. 34–35, 42–44; Fieldhouse, 'The metropolitan economies', pp. 99–101.

17 Marseille, *Empire colonial*, pp. 47–48, 52, 55.

Netherlands, the shares were again modest: 15 per cent of total imports came from the Indies in the 1870s, 5 per cent around 1900, and some 10 per cent in the 1920s and 1930s. The Indies' share in specific products would have been highest for coffee, tobacco, tin, and copra.[18]

In this outline some commodities – fruits – might seem rather marginal, and the very major commodity of cotton does not appear as 'imperial'. Imperial trade between metropoles and colonies was never dominant, but still represented a substantial part of total trade and, in absolute terms, massive revenues. Furthermore, the relative share of imperial trade between metropole and colonies clearly increased in the interwar period.

The role of such trade relations – and the industries that sustained them – in the development of an imperial culture in Europe is complicated. Put simply and narrowed down to the economic domain, imperial culture held that the imperial division of labour was natural and desirable – colonies were relegated to functioning as suppliers and markets for European industry because they were not 'developed' enough to be anything else. Europe had the factory, site of technology and modern machinery, while colonies had the plantation, site of physical labour and agriculture. Although things were rarely so binary in reality, as will be repeatedly shown below, this was the general framework in which European industry was understood.

However, the meaning that specific commodities and factories gained might not always include their relationship to the empire. When it came to the category of European industrial production for colonial markets, the imperial element could remain ill-defined. Products made specifically for colonial markets, such as Dutch *katoentjes* or Glaswegian sugar-crushing machines, would have readily gained a recognisable 'imperial' significance for metropolitan society. But generic candles or cars that happened to be exported to the colonies might not. With regard to colonial commodities, the imperial associations might have been clearer: as products that originated from the colonies and physically moved to the metropole, these would have been more recognisable as products resulting from imperial connections. However, a number of important colonial commodities, such as cane sugar, tobacco, and tea, had been common in Western Europe since the eighteenth century and might, therefore, have already been 'domesticated' in diets and daily life.

Furthermore, trade with regions outside of one's own empire often fit the same economic pattern and might have been experienced by metropolitan Europeans in very similar ways to trade with the colonies. After all, as did

18 Lindblad, 'De handel tussen Nederland en Nederlands-Indië', pp. 259, 294–295, note 51.

missionary networks, trade networks fanned out over the globe and were not limited to formal empires. First, trade routes also crossed trans-imperially as colonies traded not only with 'their' metropole but also with other metropoles. Trade 'within' the empire was sometimes stimulated by tariffs and, even without those, might develop readily because it followed cultural ties.[19] Intra-imperial trade was usually the desirable pattern for national advocates for empire. In general, it was adhered to most in the French, Portuguese and, later, Italian colonies, which were relatively protected.[20] Protected did not mean shut off, however, and there were exceptions, such as when France agreed with Britain to abolish import and export duties for their African colonies in 1898.[21]

Trans-imperial trade was enabled by the other strand of thinking: liberal free trade, which was championed particularly by Britain and that left its mark on European empires, especially in the late nineteenth century. In general, relatively free trade rules characterised the British, Dutch, and Belgian colonial possessions.[22] The Dutch East Indies are a well-known example: 'closed' during the so-called Cultivation System that obliged the Indonesian population to grow cash crops to be shipped and sold by the NHM, 'opened' after 1870 when the system was gradually abolished. Soon, the majority of its most important commodity, sugar, was shipped to Britain instead of the Netherlands.[23] And free trade affected metropolitan exports just as much as imports; for example, in the early twentieth century, British India increasingly imported American, German, Austrian, and Belgian manufactures, which started to displace British imports.[24]

Second, the importance of lucrative free trade and the assertion of European power to open up regions to this trade went beyond formally colonised territories. Numerous agricultural products came not only from colonial settings but also from regions like the Latin American states (coffee, cacao) and China (tea). Their political relationship to Western Europe differed from that of actual colonies, but is commonly described as one of informal empire because of the unequal power balance that characterised it. Furthermore, from the European perspective, the position of these regions in the emerging world economy as suppliers of resources and markets for manufactures was

19 Magee and Thompson, *Empire and globalisation*, pp. 118–119.

20 Findlay and O'Rourke, *Power and plenty*, pp. 401–402.

21 Roncayolo, *L'imaginaire*, p. 230.

22 Findlay and O'Rourke, *Power and plenty*, pp. 400–402.

23 Lindblad, 'De handel tussen Nederland en Nederlands-Indië', p. 259.

24 Arnold, 'Globalization and contingent colonialism'.

similar to that of colonies. Additionally, their inhabitants were subjected to the same stereotypical and racist representations as colonial subjects.

The important issue is what these nuances meant for Europeans' experience of metropolitan industries predicated on imperial trade and therefore for their understanding of European factories as producing an imperial space. On the one hand, trade with colonies of other nations and with territories of informal empire was so similar to trade with one's own colonies that it might all have been understood in similar terms. All these trade relations were predicated on European political power, used Global South regions as suppliers and markets for European industry, and among Europeans fit the idea that these regions were not developed enough to play another role. In that sense, it was very likely that Europeans saw virtually all trade with non-Western countries in the terms of a Eurocentric vision that highlighted Europe's economic and technological progress.

On the other hand, the political ties between metropoles and colonies remained a crucial difference that set intra-imperial trade apart. Colonial governments could be counted on to have the national interests of the metropole in mind against foreign competitors. And in a more cultural sense, one's own colonies would be more familiar and possibly seen as preferable. For example, Anandi Ramamurthy describes the advertising images of tea in Britain. Before 1838, all tea was imported from China and was marketed with stereotypical images of pagodas and 'Chinese' persons with braided hair and conical headwear. Tea from the British Raj replaced the Chinese tea in the following decades, however, and with it came new advertising images of lush, European-led tea plantations in India and Ceylon (modern-day Sri Lanka). Both regions were thus associated with delivering commodities and both were portrayed in superficial, stereotypical terms. But the political economy behind the trade flows was different. As British influence in India ran much deeper than in China, and as British consumers were related more directly to India, advertisements for Indian tea also legitimised British colonial rule.[25]

Detailed analyses are needed to understand how the image and meaning of empire-related industries were constructed in Europe, taking into account what was emphasised and what was left out. Such analyses offer a culturalist (re)reading of what was primarily an economic activity, and should cover not only government propaganda, but also advertising messages about commodities' origins, the consumption of these commodities, the workers on the factory floor, and industrialists' representations of their activities. The

25 Ramamurthy, *Imperial persuaders*, pp. 93–128.

case study into the rice milling industry in the Dutch Zaan region provides such an analysis and suggests that one's own, formal empire remained a dominant factor in how meaning was given to empire-related industries.

Representing factories' colonial connections

Industrial facilities in Europe are approached here as meaningful locations within both imperial trade networks and imperial frames of reference regarding industry and the economic role of colonies. The main challenge is to reconstruct how they were invested with certain meanings. For unlike the government buildings, museums, monuments, mission houses, and offices discussed in the other chapters of this book, factories usually had little to no representative function. However, there are other ways in which they became significant places that connected Europeans to empire.

As a general category, factories were dramatically new buildings in both form and scale when they first emerged in the eighteenth century.[26] By the late nineteenth century, they might have lost that novelty, although that was less true where industrialisation occurred late, such as in the Netherlands. Furthermore, the application of new construction materials and methods allowed factories to grow in size and remain large and notable building complexes. Engineering firms worked from spacious, multi-storey halls that accommodated workshops and cranes, while textile production took place on extensive floors filled with machines. Support structures surrounded the factories, including warehouses, silos, water towers, railway tracks, or loading installations. In Dundee, an 85-metre-tall chimney that towered over the town signified the location of the Camperdown Works jute mill; in Clermont-Ferrand, the massive Michelin complex that turned tropical rubber into tyres became a city within the city, with 19,000 workers in 1926.[27] Some industrial processing of tropical commodities, most notably coffee and cacao roasting, made itself known through scent as well.

There were myriad but mundane and often implicit ways in which Europeans could tie the presence of specific factories to imperial trade. In general, a basic awareness among city dwellers that certain local industries relied on colonial products, and that other local industries exported to colonial markets, can be assumed, even if this awareness could be rife with generalisations and misunderstandings. Such general, commonplace

26 Thompson, *The making of*, p. 192.

27 McKean, Whatley and Baxter, *Lost Dundee* [no page numbers]; Bordessoule, 'Michelin et Clermont-Ferrand', p. 39.

knowledge left its mark in the record in various though often inconspicuous ways. In sources such as local newspapers, guidebooks, city descriptions, and histories, factories seem to have been typically understood in domestic terms: as important employers and crucial parts of the local economy, they were often sources of pride and seen as characteristic of the city. Yet such sources could still reference the imperial trade on which specific local industries thrived. For instance, a 1869 French book on major industries explained that the 'vast refineries' of Marseille processed the large amounts of colonial sugar received by the city.[28] The 1903 Murray guide to Scotland explained that Dundee's 'great steam-loom mills' relied on jute 'imported directly from Calcutta'.[29] And firms also propagated such connections themselves. The Dutch engineering firm of Stork explained in a commemorative volume that the Dutch East Indies were the main market for its sugar production machinery, as illustrated by a photograph of a festive celebration of the cane harvest on Java.[30]

As buildings, factories could also explicitly express their imperial associations themselves. Only an extensive multi-country survey can reveal the extent of naming firms and buildings after colonial territories, but examples are not hard to come by. In 1867, the India Mill cotton factory opened in the Lancashire town of Darwen, which had the colony as its main market, while in 1894 the African Oil Mills were established in Liverpool to process West African palm kernels.[31] The Surinamese cacao plantation Kwatta lent its name to the Kwatta chocolate and cocoa factory in Breda (founded 1883) that it supplied, whose 'Kwatta bars' became the generic term for chocolate bars in the Netherlands.[32] The residential blocks of the Heveadorp company town (1916), itself named after the rubber tree, were named after Indonesian islands; an Amsterdam coffee mill was named Insulinde.[33] More explicit were the Huilerie franco-coloniale established in 1910 in Bordeaux or the Colonial Rubber factory in Ghent (1898), part of Belgium's flourishing tyre industry that relied on rubber

28 Turgan, *Les grandes usines*, p. 80.

29 *Handbook for travellers*, p. 276.

30 *Machinefabriek Gebr. Stork & Co.*, pp. 23–24.

31 Pearson, *Victorian and Edwardian British industrial architecture*, pp. 31–33; Sherwood, 'Elder Dempster and West Africa', p. 256.

32 Schrover, *Het vette, het zoete*, p. 183.

33 Stadsarchief Amsterdam (SAA), image library, inv.no. BMAB00007000051_006, Han van Gool, photograph of the Insulinde's demolition (1989), https://archief.amsterdam/beeldbank/detail/35740336-b50d-86f7-573b-8d6f05a6c571 (accessed 4 January 2021).

from the Congo Free State.[34] Such names figured conspicuously on the factory buildings and circulated widely in brochures, letter heads, and advertisements.

In some cases, the otherwise utilitarian factory architecture was diversified by decorative elements that signified the industry housed there. Especially in the late nineteenth century, the design of factories was increasingly incorporated into firms' advertising strategies. For example, the Dundee chimney mentioned above mimicked an Italian *campanile*, while the Templeton carpet factory in Glasgow (1889–1892) was clad in a colourful brick shell that imitated Venetian architecture, in line with the image of Glasgow as a new Venice.[35] In some cases, the exoticism which also characterised firm's advertising practices was even used in explicit sculpture or murals. For instance, in Amsterdam, the entrance to the office of the Korff chocolate factory was marked by tile panels depicting an Indonesian woman and man carrying cacao pods, shown in Figure 13.[36] They were designed to commemorate the firm's anniversary in 1911.[37] Perhaps the panels were inspired by the statue of a black woman holding a basket with cacao pods on the exterior of the Bensdorp chocolate factory in the same city, designed in 1898.[38] Chocolate was associated with blackness again in the Cadbury factory in the Bournville company town near Birmingham, where the female workers took their lunches in a mess hall with a painting of eighteenth-century Londoners enjoying hot chocolate, a black boy seated on the floor.[39]

Advertising was another way to invest industries with meaning. Advertising took off in Europe in the late nineteenth century, as branding products for consumers became important. Advertisements appeared in print media, but European audiences also encountered them in public space in the form of posters and murals. In Liège, a sgrafitto panel for the Lambert Sevart arms factory (1897) showed a white man explaining to a dark-skinned man the

34 Marnot and Bonin, 'The international scope of Bordeaux port', p. 16; Ameye, Gils and Delheye, 'Daredevils and early birds', p. 221; Gimblet, *Wegwijzer der stad Gent*, p. 422.

35 Bergdoll, *European architecture*, pp. 275–276.

36 SAA, image library, inv.no. BMAB00002000025_005 (1981), https://archief.amsterdam/beeldbank/detail/70842fda-8527-11e4-a257-0f5f6533d250; inv.no. BMAB00002000025_006 (1981), https://archief.amsterdam/beeldbank/detail/708430b6-8527-11e4-a258-a36e9ddd6108 (accessed 4 January 2021).

37 'Een jubileum'.

38 SAA, photography collection, inv.no OSIM00009000041, photograph of Bensdorp factory (1971), available at https://beeldbank.amsterdam.nl/afbeelding/OSIM00009000041 (accessed 19 January 2022).

39 Ramamurthy, *Imperial persuaders*, p. 64.

Figure 13 The entrance to the office of the Amsterdam Korff factory, which produced cocoa and chocolate, was marked by life-sized panels of a Javanese woman and man carrying cacao pods. The photograph was made when the building was slated for demolition in 1981.

use of a rifle that has just emerged from a crate labelled 'Exportation'.[40] In Basel, in 1915–1918 the Fischer shop for 'colonial goods' was outfitted with sgraffito representations of tropical commodities like sugar, coffee, and bananas, presented by stereotypical figures.[41]

Advertisements helped to invest the consumption of goods with certain social values, and thus influenced the use and meaning of the goods on which certain factories ran.[42] One advertising strategy was to use a 'commodity racism', that employed images of non-white people to promote goods as the products of modern, white civilisation, or to stress their somehow 'exotic' nature.[43] In doing so, such advertisements asserted the whiteness of its European audience. Following patterns set in early modern media, commodities based on tropical agriculture such as cocoa or chocolate, coffee, rum, and tobacco were often marketed with images of non-white people. But the

40 Silverman, 'Art Nouveau, art of darkness [part III]', p. 11.

41 Keller, 'Die Lebensmittelversorgung', pp. 8–13.

42 De Groot, 'Metropolitan desires', pp. 166–169, 188–189.

43 McClintock, *Imperial leather*, pp. 33–34, 207–213; Iskin, '"Savages" into spectators/consumers'.

most standardised and widespread motif was used for advertisements where soap 'whitewashed' black Africans (or failed to do so).[44] This commodity racism reinforced a sense of racial distinction that supported European dominance in a generic way. In Switzerland, too, chocolate producers used the image of black Africans to market their wares.[45]

Nevertheless, at the same time it was but one marketing strategy among many; more often than not, the people depicted on the products had little to do with the origin or the production of the commodity in question.[46] Furthermore, the associations of certain products were never fixed. For example, cocoa advertisements with images of white children and women, symbolising the homely and domestic, seem to have been more common than images of black people associated with the cocoa's origin.

Advertising could also legitimise imperial rule more directly when it referred to the political economy of colonial production, as Ramamurthy emphasises. Advertisements with scenes of colonial agriculture revealed ideas of what was 'desirable' colonial production in European eyes. In the case of advertisements for Cadbury's cocoa, the recurring images of cheerful African peasants reflected the indirect government of Britain's West African colonies and their reliance on the population's own efforts.[47] Furthermore, another advertising strategy was to depict the European factory (where the product was made) alongside tropical landscapes in the colonies (where the product originated). This type of representation explicitly linked the European industrial environment with the colonies, and will figure prominently in Part II on the Dutch rice mills.

Finally, a factory's relationship to colonial production and colonial markets could also be expressed in activities or deliberate performances. Dutch firms in Twente, home to textile and engineering industries known for their ties to the Indies, provide a number of examples. Thousands of workers collectively visited the 1879 Exhibition of Dutch and Colonial Industry in Arnhem to witness the latest advances in industrial production in the empire.[48] In 1906 in Hengelo, the staff association of the aforementioned Stork firm organised a lecture on sugar production on Java, for which the

44 McClintock, *Imperial leather*, pp. 207–213; Minder, *Suisse coloniale*, p. 389; Ciarlo, *Advertising empire*, pp. 259–266.

45 Museum für Gestaltung Zürich, poster collection, inv.no. 02-0880, poster for Maestrani 'Choco-Boy' chocolate (1937), available at https://www.emuseum.ch/objects/199324/maestrani--chocoboy (accessed 19 January 2022).

46 Ciarlo, *Advertising empire*, pp. 9–10.

47 Ramamurthy, *Imperial persuaders*, pp. 63–111.

48 Eliëns, *Kunst, nijverheid, kunstnijverheid*, pp. 120–121.

machinery it produced was so important.[49] In 1913, the personnel of the H.P. Gelderman & Zonen textile factory in nearby Oldenzaal celebrated the Kingdom of the Netherlands' centennial with a procession in which they represented various steps in the production process. Its sizable sales in the Dutch East Indies were symbolised by a group dressed up as Javanese men and women, with sarongs and darkened faces, around a float loaded with textiles destined for 'Soerabaya'.[50]

This category is particularly relevant as it reveals something of workers' knowledge of, and even attitude to, the imperial connections of their workplace. John MacKenzie assumes that workers in the British arms, machine, and textile industries were well aware of the imperial trade on which their profession depended.[51] This would make sense; yet, as per usual, workers have left little traces in the archival records which makes it difficult to gauge exactly what their perceptions were. Part II below suggests that awareness of products' colonial origins among workers was widespread yet simultaneously quite superficial.

Factories processing colonial commodities or producing for colonial markets provided a concrete and clear link between local livelihoods and empire. Yet the perceptions of empire of workers involved in such industries were ambivalent. On the one hand, workers had limited room for manoeuvre: in a time of company towns, hierarchic social relations, and census suffrage, employers had a wide reach. They oversaw the most important ways in which factories' imperial connections were deliberately showcased, such as the publication of company histories, the production of advertisements, and the celebration of anniversaries – the workers from Twente who travelled to the Arnhem exposition in 1879 were provided with a special train by their employers.[52] On the other hand, by 1900, the working class had long 'made' itself, in Edward Thompson's words, with its own trade unions, associations, and often media.[53] In political terms, this assertiveness could result not only in conflicts over labour conditions, but also in a socialist or communist anti-imperialism. This attitude surfaces in this study on multiple occasions, most notably in Glasgow as discussed in the previous chapter and in interwar Paris (Chapter 5).

49 *Vereeniging tot behartiging van de belangen*, p. 246.
50 Fischer, Van Gerwen and Winkelman, *Bestemming Semarang*, pp. 126–127.
51 MacKenzie, 'Empire and the global gaze', p. 259.
52 Eliëns, *Kunst, nijverheid*, pp. 120–121.
53 Thompson, *The making of.*

But even in these cases, left-wing anti-imperialism remained a marginal phenomenon, which Lenin alluded to in his conception of European (skilled) workers as a 'labour aristocracy' profiting from imperialism as the 'highest stage' of capitalism.[54] Social democrats' attitudes to empire were ambivalent; they mainly sought more progressive colonial policies and rarely questioned the desirability of imperial rule, with the possible exception of the German SDP.[55] A more typical working-class response might be the ideology of 'white labourism', which combined 'racism and xenophobia with worker militancy and anti-capitalism' and was shared by white workers throughout the British empire.[56] Similar sentiments are visible in other European countries: racist attitudes prevailed among the working class, too, and surfaced most clearly when non-European workers were seen as unfair competitors. This played out at the local and national level, but also gained transnational dimensions: in the interwar period, for instance, European unions in the International Transport Workers' Federation showcased racist prejudice against non-white dockers and sailors with their rhetoric of a 'yellow peril'.[57] How such attitudes among the rank and file also affected factory workers' perception of their workplace in relation to imperialism merits further research.

Part II. The rice mills in the Zaan region

The rice milling industry of the Dutch Zaan region that reached its high point around 1900 serves here as a case study to elaborate on the above topics. Instead of a single building, the subject here concerns a number of similar rice mills located in the same area. If Glasgow's heavy industries and many European textile manufacturers used the colonies as markets, this rice industry represents the industrial sectors in Europe which the colonies supplied.

The humble rice grain was a peculiar commodity. In a time when 'cotton was king', as was often held, at least one contemporary called the whimsical international rice trade 'the devil's business'.[58] Rice might be an inconspicuous staple food first cultivated in East Asia and typically

54 Brewer, *Marxist theories*, pp. 123–128.

55 Claeys, *Imperial sceptics*, pp. 180–218; Thomas, *The French empire*, pp. 8–10; Wubben, *'Chineezen'*, pp. 24–26; Guettel, 'The myth'.

56 Hyslop, 'The world voyage of James Hardie', p. 343.

57 Reinalda, *The International Transportworkers Federation*, pp. 124–125.

58 Latham, 'From competition to constraint', p. 91.

associated with Asian diets; yet already in the eighteenth century, it had become a global commodity grown and consumed in West Africa and, on the back of European expansion, also in the Americas.[59] In the nineteenth century, a world market for rice emerged with the United States, West Africa, and Bengal serving as important production zones that supplied regions of South-East Asia, the Caribbean, and Europe and sustained their economies.[60]

As for the effects of colonial commodities on Europe, rice has received scant attention compared to, for instance, sugar or cotton.[61] For one, rice was not as novel for Europeans, having been cultivated around the Mediterranean for centuries; moreover, its appeal seems to have been relatively limited and it did not become a mainstream foodstuff in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Yet this relative dietary marginality did not preclude industries that processed rice, imported from other continents, from emerging in nineteenth-century Europe.

One of these industries was located in the Zaan region, located just north-west of Amsterdam in the Dutch province of North Holland. Figure 14 shows that the watery region was made up of a number of small towns and villages, strung mostly along the west bank the Zaan waterway over a distance of circa 10 kilometres, with the southernmost town of Zaandam functioning as its unofficial capital. Already in the early modern period, the region was a commercial, industrial centre with important shipbuilding and whaling industries and hundreds of windmills producing timber, foodstuffs, paper, and pigments. From the late nineteenth century, these activities underwent a period of intensification and upscaling as steam power was introduced and international trade increased. It was in this period that rice milling developed as one of the region's mainstay industries.

As factories were utilitarian buildings, the ways in which the rice mills were constructed as meaningful imperial places were not particularly architectural in nature. Instead, their relationships to overseas colonies were emphasised through a variety of visual media, such as packaging, brochures and commemorative panels, in events such as staff association meetings and the celebration of anniversaries, and in a range of miscellaneous features such as expositions and building names.

59 Bray, 'Introduction'.

60 Morrison and Hauser, 'Risky business'.

61 The classic work on sugar is Mintz, *Sweetness and power*; attention to cotton is exemplified by the bestseller by Sven Beckert, *Empire of cotton*.

Origins of the mills and the rice

Rice was but one of the many commodities that flowed through the Zaan region in the late nineteenth century. The liberalisation of world trade reinvigorated the region's industry, permitting local entrepreneurs to import commodities themselves rather than having to work through the Amsterdam staple market, dominated by the NHM. Cacao, tropical woods, and oilseeds all passed through the Zaan factories to be processed and exported again, in addition to the region's long-standing industries that processed timber and grains.[62]

As opposed to traditional colonial goods like spices, coffee, or tobacco, rice only started to be imported and processed in earnest in the Netherlands in the nineteenth century. With the renewal of trade after the establishment of the kingdom in 1815, small cargoes of Javanese rice came to the Netherlands to be milled in both Amsterdam, the dominant port for colonial produce, and the Zaan region.[63] While in Amsterdam, steam husking mills had already been established by 1830, the Zaan rice milling industry initially worked with windmills.[64] In the production process, the husk, bran layers, and the germ were removed from the grains and the resulting product was polished, ideally into the desired 'white rice'.[65] Rice grains broken in the process could be used in industry, and the waste product of 'rice flour' to produce fodder.[66]

The so-called 'Java rice' that arrived in the Netherlands seems to have been one of the most expensive rice varieties on the world rice market until well into the twentieth century, thanks to its hard grain that could be husked well.[67] It was grown commercially mainly on specific *particuliere landerijen*, or 'private domains', of West Java, in the Indramajoe regency (modern-day Indramayu) and around Batavia.[68] These estates had been established in the era of the VOC and during the Napoleonic interlude and increasingly became a source of controversy and embarrassment for the colonial government in

62 Arnoldus, 'Van stapelmarkt naar poort', pp. 225–230.

63 Kaptein, *Nijverheid op windkracht*, pp. 447–450.

64 Griffiths, *Industrial retardation*; Kingma, 'De Zaanse stoomrijstpellerij', pp. 56–58.

65 Cheng, *The rice industry*, pp. 8–10.

66 Everwijn, *Beschrijving van handel en nijverheid*, pp. 698–699.

67 As indicated by prices listed in: 'Rijst-pelmolen'; Proctor, *Rice*, pp. 35–36; collection of the Historische Vereniging Wormerveer (HVW), inv.no. W12023, price list 'Handelsmaatschappij 'Saenden' voorheen Bloemendaal & Laan NV' (1935).

68 Fernando, 'Famine in a land of plenty', p. 313; Blink, *Nederlandsch Oost- en West-Indië*, pp. 93–94; Blink, 'Nederlandsch Oost-Indië', pp. 237–238.

the nineteenth century. The domains were not plantations; nonetheless, the inhabitants had to perform corvée duties and yield part of their harvest (up to 20 to 30 per cent) as a land rent to their landlords, who tried to stimulate the growth of lucrative rice varieties.[69] Generally these landlords were European individuals or firms or those belonging to the legal category of 'Foreign Orientals', mostly ethnic Chinese.[70] Chinese-Indonesian and European traders bought this rice from the landlords and directly from the peasants, and usually this rice came into the possession of the Zaan millers through the Amsterdam corn exchange.[71] Ships directly from the Dutch East Indies rarely called at Zaandam, which had its own port; instead, Java rice was unloaded at Amsterdam or Rotterdam and then transported to the Zaan region by railways or waterways.

Three quarters of the exported Java rice ended up in the Netherlands.[72] However, it was not so much this rice that enabled the Zaan mills to develop. In the colonial context of the Dutch East Indies, rice was mainly seen as staple food for the Indonesian population and played only a minimal role in the total exports to Europe.[73] Aside from a failed experiment in the 1840s, rice was not a part of the Cultivation System to which the cash crops of sugarcane, coffee, and indigo were central – in fact, the system has become known for diverting farmers' energies away from rice to grow cash crops, causing or aggravating famines.[74] Throughout the nineteenth century, a recurring Dutch complaint was that conservative colonial policies and a lack of incentives for the Javanese population limited the development of commercial rice growing and thus hindered what was seen as a more efficient exploitation of the land and treatment of the produce.[75] To process the rice for a first time, there were plenty of water- and steam-powered rice mills on Java and, apparently, a number of European entrepreneurs had taken to milling high-quality export rice themselves. But the valuable export rice from the estate of Indramajoe was husked only in water mills or even by hand.[76]

69 Fernando, 'Famine in a land of plenty', pp. 313–314.

70 Van den Berg, *Over de economische belangen*, pp. 52–53.

71 Fernando, 'The worst of both worlds', p. 425; Blink, 'Nederlandsch Oost-Indië', pp. 237–238; Laan, *Wessanen's Koninklijke Fabrieken*, p. 95.

72 Everwijn, *Beschrijving van handel en nijverheid*, p. 696.

73 Fernando, 'The worst of both worlds', p. 423.

74 Fasseur, *Kultuurstelsel*, pp. 52–54; Fernando, 'The worst of both worlds', pp. 421–422, 446–448.

75 E.g. *Bijdragen tot de kennis*, pp. 23–30; Van Gorkom, *De Oost-Indische cultures*, pp. 144–145; Van den Berg, *Over de economische belangen*, pp. 13–22.

76 Van den Berg, *Over de economische belangen*, pp. 20; Homan van der Heide, *Economische studiën*, pp. 76–79.

Meanwhile, in the first half of the nineteenth century, other European port cities had developed into the dominant processing centres for other varieties of rice. In London, Liverpool, Bremen, and Hamburg, steam mills processed increasing amounts of rice from Bengal and Madras and from the southern United States. However, the imports of Indian and American rice stopped with the Indian rebellion of 1857 and the American Civil War in 1861. This forced factory owners to turn to a recent new rice producer: Burma, which we now know as Myanmar.[77] In the Second Anglo-Burmese War of 1852–1853, the British had added the Burmese delta region to their Indian empire, followed by a third war and general annexation in 1886. British rule turned the country almost literally inside out. Traditionally, the country had been oriented towards inland Upper Burma and the city of Mandalay; it was characterised by subsistence farming and exported little rice. After conquest, Rangoon in Lower Burma was turned into an important port city and the colony's capital, and the country itself was converted into the world's most important exporter of rice. The British stimulated the cultivation of new land and constructed waterworks and railways.[78] As forests were cleared and the 'rice frontier' moved over the land, the acreage of rice fields grew rapidly from 66,000 acres in 1830 to 6,823,000 acres in the period 1900–1904, and subsequently to 9,932,000 acres in 1940.[79] After the harvest season every December and January, hundreds of boats and trains carrying rice would descend on the coastal ports of Rangoon, Akyab (modern-day Sittwe), or Bassein (Pathein) where the rice would be milled for a first time and then shipped overseas.[80] The rivers on whose banks the mills stood would be covered in a thick sludge of discarded rice husks.[81]

That the rice was already husked in Burma meant the colony's role was more complex than just supplying raw materials. In contrast to Java, by 1910 there were some 120 rice mills in Rangoon alone.[82] It is a good example of the 'export processing industries' that developed in colonial territories, or more generally speaking, the Global South, and that challenge ideas of colonies' 'deindustrialisation' and dependency.[83] Only in the early stage of the Burma rice boom did European-owned mills form a majority: soon, they were outnumbered by Burmese-, Indian-, and Chinese-owned mills in the

77 Cheng, *The rice industry*, pp. 8–9.
78 Ibid., pp. 1–8; Adas, *The Burma delta*, pp. 3–30; Coclanis, 'Metamorphosis', pp. 38–41.
79 Cheng, *The rice industry*, p. 25.
80 McKerral, 'Agriculture', pp. 201–203.
81 Watt, *A dictionary*, pp. 653–654; Talbot Kelly, *Burma*, p. 6.
82 McKerral, 'Agriculture', p. 203; Cheng, *The rice industry*, pp. 83, 85.
83 Clarence-Smith, 'The industrialization'.

twentieth century. Nonetheless, the European mills remained the largest in terms of employment and probably also productivity.[84]

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 had a related and similarly unexpected effect. Its influence was not as decisive as would seem, as Burma's rice exports were already increasing rapidly before the canal was constructed. These exports were mainly a mixture of milled rice and unmilled *paddy*, a manner of transporting the rice that was a compromise between cost and shelf life. It was necessary for this mixture to be remilled and polished in Europe to make it fit for consumption. However, the shortened voyage that the Suez Canal enabled, also allowed for the export of fully milled and polished white rice to Europe and, by 1905, most mills in Burma were able to produce this. This limited the role of metropolitan mills to the final polishing and refining of the rice, and packing it in sacks or, later, individual consumer packages.[85] Even before the Zaan rice industry took off in the 1870s, therefore, its position was shaky.

For Burma, the metamorphosis into a 'rice bowl' had mixed effects. It was mainly small farmers and tenants who grew the rice, and as long as there was more land to cultivate, they profited financially from high demand as they negotiated with millers and brokers about the price for their produce. Western manufactures and products could be found in Burmese houses, including curiosa like portraits of Victoria or Wilhelm II, from the top two rice-importing countries in Europe.[86] The demand for labour also drew hundreds of thousands of (seasonal) migrants from India, and the demand for capital brought Indian moneylenders. However, turning dense forests into rice paddies was both a process of environmental destruction and backbreaking work that, together with deteriorating nutrition and increasing flooding and malaria outbreaks, affected the population's health.[87] Furthermore, when after 1900, little uncultivated land remained to put in use and the rice 'frontier' closed, the economic opportunities deteriorated. In the interwar period, the economic crisis led to ethnic violence – over half of Rangoon's population came from British India by that time – and increasing nationalist agitation.[88] The Rohingya population who are persecuted in Myanmar today are one group of descendants of these Indian migrants.

84 Cheng, *The rice industry*, pp. 77–95.

85 Ibid., pp. 13–14.

86 Adas, *The Burma delta*, pp. 74–82; Braund, *Calling to mind*, pp. 35–36.

87 Coclanis, 'Metamorphosis', pp. 46–55.

88 Ibid., p. 49; Adas, *The Burma delta*, pp. 127–128, 143–145, 192–200.

Although the commercial rice production in Burma offered opportunities for the Zaan millers, as they did not have to rely on the sluggish NHM that dominated trade with Java, tapping into this trade was not without risks. The colonial government in the Dutch East Indies could be expected to show at least some concern for the interests of the metropolitan economy, but for the British Raj this was not the case. The rice trade was open to non-British businesses but there was little room for European solidarity. It was dominated by British and German firms that milled, shipped, and traded rice and thus controlled much of the commodity chain themselves, such as Joseph Heap & Sons, Steel Brothers, or the Rickmers firm from Bremen. Burma was home to five large British-owned mills and four German-owned, against one short-lived Dutch mill that seems to have had no relation to the Zaan entrepreneurs.[89] Instead, the Zaan millers relied on rice brokers located in the London City and virtually all 'rice ships' that entered Zaandam were British.

The rise of a rice milling industry

For as long as it lasted, the Zaan mills reaped the rewards of the expansion of the Burmese rice production. Already in the 1860s, most Burmese rice was destined for Europe. At first most went to the United Kingdom, but the share heading to Germany and the Netherlands grew and they overtook the United Kingdom as destination in the 1890s and the 1900s, respectively.[90] In the Netherlands, the cheaper Burmese rice quickly surpassed the Javanese rice: already in 1865, more Burmese than Javanese rice was imported into the country; after this point, the margin only became greater. In 1913, imported British Indian rice amounted to more than 277,000 tons in the Netherlands, while the imports of Dutch East Indies rice amounted to 'only' 42,000 tons.[91] Even then, as Java rice was more valuable, the differences in value must have been markedly smaller.[92]

The Zaan region developed into the Netherlands' main rice milling centre. As early as 1862, a vessel arrived in Zaandam harbour directly from Bassein, carrying 9,000 bales of rice (100 kilograms each).[93] The rice trade grew

89 McKerral, 'Agriculture', pp. 203–206; Braund, *Calling to mind*, pp. 34–45; Dannhauer, *Deutscher Reishandel*.

90 Cheng, *The rice industry*, p. 203.

91 *Statistiek van den in-, uit- en doorvoer over het jaar 1913*, p. 14.

92 See footnote 67 for sources indicating the price differences.

93 Gemeentearchief Zaanstad (GAZ), library collection, inv.no. GV006/OA-0059, *Verslag van den toestand der gemeente Zaandam, over het jaar 1862* (1863) pp 32–33.

especially quickly in the 1880s and 1890s, and in the record year of 1908 included 1,266,979 bales and 21 ships. Most were from Burma, but some also from Saigon and Bangkok, as Thailand and Indochina had also taken to growing export rice in the late nineteenth century.[94] These figures do not include Javanese rice, which was transported to the Zaan indirectly through Amsterdam – large shipments of Java rice were often stored in Amsterdam's new entrepôt dock after 1900.[95] Although it is therefore unclear what exactly the proportion of Javanese and Burmese rice in the Zaan region was, in all likelihood it was similar to the national figures given above.

Besides improvements in transport, the new application of steam was a driving force for the development of the Zaan mills. 'Under construction is a very important factory[,] a steam-powered rice mill', read Zaandam's 1852 municipal report.[96] At that moment, steam power was used in the region and, indeed, the country only sparsely. However, from 1870 the application of steam was on the rise, allowing larger quantities of rice to be milled in shorter amounts of time.[97]

From the 1870s, two clusters of rice mills formed along of the Zaan, part of a wider developing industrial landscape – Figure 14 serves to show their location. To the north, opposite the village of Wormerveer, the firm of Wessanen & Laan replaced its windmills with a steam rice mill, the Unie, in 1872, located on the east bank. Right next to it, the Hollandia factory was erected in 1877 by the company of Bloemendaal & Laan. Most founders and directors of these firms were part of the Laan family from Wormerveer. In Wormerveer itself, on the other side of the river, the windmill of the firm Albert Vis was located, replaced in 1909 by a brick factory named Java. To the south, the cluster consisted of the large Phenix factory of the firm C. Kamphuijs, that replaced an earlier mill that had burned down; and the steam factory Birma, built just north of the Phenix by entrepreneur Klaas Blans in 1878 to complement his windmills.[98]

That most of these firms started trading in the 1870s can be attributed to several factors. The directors might have hoped to profit from the opening of the Indies for private capital in 1870 – indeed, the Indramajoe landlords began to extract more of the rice production from their estates in this

94 GAZ, *Verslag van den toestand der gemeente Zaandam, over het jaar 1908* (1909) appendix N, pp. 10–15; Johnston, 'Rice cultivation in Thailand'.

95 Westermann, *Kamer van Koophandel en Fabrieken*, p. 393.

96 GAZ, *Verslag van den toestand der gemeente Zaandam, over het jaar 1852* (1853) [no page numbers].

97 Schipper and Huig, *Van wind naar stoom*, pp. 24–25.

98 Kingma, *Vernuftelingen en kooplieden*, pp. 163–174.

Figure 14 Map of the Zaan region and two detailed maps with the locations of the rice mills, from the late 1950s. The Unie and Hollandia mills stood on both sides of the bridge over the Zaan, on the east bank. The Java mill was located in the village of Wormerveer, on the opposite side. In Zaandam, the Birma and Phenix mills were located on the east bank, just above the word 'Zaan' on the map.

period.[99] Still, the Burmese rice was already dominant in the Netherlands at that moment. The millers probably reacted also to the opening of the Suez Canal and, closer to home, the North Sea Canal (1876) that improved Amsterdam's and Zaandam's access to the sea. But the timing was also a matter of imitation: Wessanen & Laan had experience with steam engines in other factories and was the first to switch to a steam-powered rice mill.[100] When that innovation was successful, other entrepreneurs would have followed their example. Besides, the example of Wessanen's other factories reminds us that rice milling was not the only line of business for most of these firms. In a sense, these entrepreneurs were less classic industrialists than flexible merchants, for whom rice milling was a *veredelingsindustrie*, a 'refining industry' to make the product they sold to clients more valuable than the product they bought from suppliers.

99 Fernando, 'Famine in a land of plenty', p. 317.
100 Laan, *Wessanen's Koninklijke Fabrieken*, pp. 74–79, 94–96.

The rice mills quickly grew into real factory complexes as part of the general upscaling and intensification of industry in the Zaan region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Usually, they consisted of a factory building, where the actual milling and polishing of the rice took place, and multiple warehouses, where bags of rice were stored on several floors. Generally each floor had its own loading doors through which teams of workers brought bags into or outside of the building, using chutes that delivered the rice right up to waiting ships. In a brochure from 1912, Bloemendaal & Laan showed clients how their complex had grown from a factory with two low warehouses to a larger factory with four multi-storey brick warehouses equipped with loading towers.[101] The complex, still largely intact up to the present day, remains an impressive industrial landscape, but the tall, new buildings on the waterside already caught the eyes of contemporaries.[102] 'Giant factories slowly displace the many windmills', a 1910 travel guide read; according to another description of the region, 'only the stone cubes of the Wessanen & Laan factories retain something of their size' in the flat polder landscape.[103]

The buildings' architecture was rather utilitarian, yet the factories and warehouses along the Zaan had a representative design with historicist elements like arcades and gables. Bloemendaal & Laan's Hollandia complex was the most explicit example, with two detailed warehouse gables in eclectic style (1894 and 1896) and a factory (1902) equipped with an elegant clock tower that conspicuously claimed a public function (Figures 15 and 16).[104] Behind the 'front' formed by the warehouses and their elevations sat an array of smaller buildings that were essential to the functioning of the factory complexes: boiler rooms, forges, workshops, coal stores, changing rooms, and of course engine rooms, where large steam engines provided power to the factory. The firms' offices could be located on the factory grounds, such as with Kamphuijs, or in a separate (and more representative) site in the vicinity. This was the case for the Bloemendaal & Laan and the Wessanen & Laan offices, which were located next to each other on the Zaan in Wormerveer, across from the factories.

Save for Wormerveer's Java mill, the rice mills and their warehouses were located directly on the Zaan and clearly oriented towards the river. On the riverside, the loading and unloading took place and the factories'

101 HVW, inv.no. W12023, brochure Bloemendaal & Laan (circa 1912).

102 De Jong and Schipper, *Gebouwd in de Zaanstreek*, p. 179.

103 *Geïllustreerde herinnering*, p. 7; Netscher, *Ons eigen land*, p. 14.

104 Schipper and Huig, *Van wind naar stoom*, pp. 193–197, 213–216.

Figure 15 A crew of workers pausing to pose while unloading rice bales from a ship in front of the Hollandia mill and its warehouse Java. The photograph shows the mills' dependency on the water, the design of the warehouses, and the large signs with the warehouse names.

elevations were most representative, as can be judged from Figure 15. This was reinforced by the fact that they were located on the east bank of the Zaan, less built-up than the west bank where most villages were located. Behind the two mills in Zaandam, only some working-class residential streets were located, while directly behind the Unie and Hollandia mills, across from Wormerveer, the green pastures of the Wormer polder started (see Figure 16.) The tall buildings were thus very much in view – in the case

Figure 16 This aerial photograph from 1923 shows how behind the warehouses of the Hollandia and Unie mills (only a portion of the Unie's De Hoop and Siam warehouses is visible to the left), smaller structures were located while beyond the factory complexes, the agricultural polder landscape started.

of Wormerveer, one might even say, on display – for the region's inhabitants and those sailing on the river.

Cultural meaning of an economic activity

The cultural significance of the rice milling industry was formed by the colonial associations and meanings of rice and less by the changes in consumption patterns that it wrought. Rice did not become a popular food in the Netherlands, where it had long been used exclusively in sweet dishes; in the early twentieth century, it started to be consumed as part of a full meal but still did not become mainstream.[105] Analogous with its perception in the colony as essential and typical for the Indonesian population, rice continued to be seen as a decidedly exotic food – even Eurasians who migrated to the Netherlands after Indonesian independence in 1949 were told to switch from rice to 'Dutch' potatoes.[106]

105 Kuipers, '"Makanlah nasi!"', p. 12.
106 Buettner, *Europe after empire*, pp. 220–221.

The unpopularity of rice seems to have been common in Western Europe, testimony to the intimate and cultural nature of food. Rice was, after all, a staple food, not a luxury or stimulant like sugar or coffee when these first arrived in Europe. In the United Kingdom, small domestic demand might have been a reason why the English mills lost ground to continental competitors, whereas in interwar France, government efforts to get the population to consume rice from Indochina failed.[107] The centrality of bread, porridge, and potatoes in Western European diets, and a general suspicion of rice as a foreign food, precluded its acceptance as it remained associated with army kitchens, orphanages, prisons, and war rations.[108] This was notwithstanding the scientific arguments in favour of rice brought forward by the new discipline of nutrition. The studies of Christiaan Eijckman in the Dutch East Indies, which showed that exclusively consuming white rice led to the deficiency disease beriberi, won him a Nobel prize, but also led to popular misconceptions that rice caused the disease.[109]

Such an adverse attitude towards rice meant that a large part of the rice milled in Europe was used for industry and fodder instead of human consumption. More importantly, it meant most rice milled along the Zaan was re-exported, in line with the role of the mill owners as merchants. In the record year of 1908, for instance, major destinations for rice exported from the Netherlands (again, local figures are unavailable) were Prussia, the United Kingdom, Belgium, and Hamburg, a pattern that generally holds up for other years. A whole range of other countries in South America, the Caribbean, West Africa, and the Mediterranean were regular recipients too, however, and much of the rice exported to the neighbouring European countries was probably re-exported again.[110] The rice cultivated in Burma and Java, and milled on the Zaan, thus fed Europeans, Americans, and Africans, even if some of it had been transformed into beer or pork along the way. While not, strictly speaking, a case of two-way traffic between metropole and colonies, the rice mills clearly operated between different colonial empires and other zones of European economic incursion.

Processing and, albeit in small amounts, consuming rice came to derive its meaning from the associations with the far colonial production areas where it was grown. The names of these new, striking factories and warehouses

107 Cheng, *The rice industry*, p. 203; Janes, *Colonial food*, pp. 69–94.

108 Janes, *Colonial food*, pp. 81–84; Coclanis, 'Metamorphosis', p. 42; Petterson, 'Aardappelnood', pp. 21–22.

109 Janes, *Colonial food*, pp. 81–82.

110 *Statistiek van den in-, uit- en doorvoer over het jaar 1908*, pp. 249–250.

expressed the millers' pretentions by referring to the commodity's Asian origins. Like the factories Java in Wormerveer and Birma in Zaandam, mentioned above, most of the warehouses were named after the areas where the rice originated, many of which also lent their name to certain rice varieties. Birma's warehouses were named Java, Rangoon, Rijsthalm (Rice Culm) and Bassein; the Unie's were named Indië (Indies), Burmah, Siam and De Hoop, and Hollandia's Java, Bassein, Saigon and Batavia. Some rice warehouses had other names and naming buildings after foreign regions was certainly not unique along the Zaan, (other warehouses along the river were named after Trinidad (cacao), the Danube (barley), Bombay, and River Plate (both for linseed), for instance) but the consistency and number are striking.[111] With such names, the factory owners placed their factories in a direct relationship with relevant rice ports in South-East Asia. In the process, as these names were placed prominently on the buildings, they made locals and passers-by aware of the trade network outlined above. The Hollandia complex even seems a microcosm of global economic interdependence during imperialism's heyday. The 'Dutch' factory Hollandia, where machines worked and technology reigned supreme, was surrounded by warehouses named after colonial Java, Burma, and Indochina, of secondary importance and meant to supply raw materials. It is a representation central to the image of the factories that the millers cherished and will return below.

The workers were well aware of the Asian origins of the rice. Some 300 of them worked in the mills, but other professions were indirectly involved too, such as boat captains, stevedores, and bag producers.[112] They all worked with rice varieties named after Burmese cities or Java, in warehouses carrying the same names, and were exposed to the advertisements discussed below. Two brothers who had worked in the Hollandia factory around 1960, who were interviewed for this research in 2017, remembered occasionally finding Indian coins between the rice grains. Similar direct correlations between the product and its origins would also have been the case for earlier periods. In the 1950s, the canteen of the factory where the brothers worked had even been decorated with a mural of an Indonesian paddy field, made by an employee who had served there in the revolution of 1945–1949.[113]

Another clue is provided by the *Javaansche Kunstavond* ('Javanese Art Night') that Wessanen's staff association organised in the 1930s. The

111 I thank Jur Kingma for providing me with these examples.
112 Everwijn, *Beschrijving van handel en nijverheid*, p. 698; Van Horssen et al., *Wessanen & Laan*, pp. 23–25.
113 Interview with Jan and Cees Dierdorp (16 November 2017).

Indonesian 'artists' trio' of Raden S. Hardjodiringgo, Raden Iskandar, and Raden Mas Walojo performed a wayang play and several dances, and recited the story of Saïdjah and Adinda, published by colonial official and critic Eduard Douwes Dekker as a chapter in his classic *Max Havelaar* in 1860. The three Javanese men had come to the Netherlands to study and in 1932 formed a group that performed all over Europe.[114] For them, the performance was one of many. Yet at Wessanen, for their audience, their show gained a deeper meaning because of the associations of rice with Asia and the Dutch East Indies. The exotic attraction of Javanese culture was coupled to rice milling by the inclusion of an essay on rice as a crop in the night's programme booklet. With photographs of the Unie factory, rice fields, and a sea vessel in the Zaan, the essay told a story of how rice became 'the final product [...] as we all know and appreciate it'.[115] It also addressed rice's nutritional value, stating that even though polished rice lacked vitamin B1, 'For us Europeans this is not serious, first because beriberi never occurs in Europe and also, because we, through our variety of dishes, still ingest enough vitamins to keep us healthy'.[116]

The last sentence betrays a sense of European commonality. This commonality was also expressed in the warehouse names, some of which acknowledged the origins of the rice in the British empire (and in the case of the warehouse Saigon, the French empire). Subsequently, this naming practice also impacted on Zaandam street names. In a rare trans-imperial 'borrowing' of street names, there was a Birmastraat behind the factory of the same name, and streets named after the important rice ports of Rangoon, Bassein, and Bangkok in the so-called Port Quarter, a working-class residential neighbourhood constructed after 1910.[117] In addition, the fact that the rice ships that called at Zaandam port were invariably British was another reminder of the trans-imperial entanglements of the rice trade, as were their dark-skinned South Asian crews (see also the next chapter). Local newspapers reported occasionally on these sailors, identifying them as 'negroes'; they inspired one local poet to reflect on their fate and on how he himself was 'of the blond, of the hard, of the ruling race'.[118] The 'lascar'

114 Cohen, 'Indonesian performing arts', p. 252.

115 GAZ, Wessanen & Laan archives (PA-0144) inv.no. 104, booklet *Javaansche Kunstavond* (no date) p. 18.

116 Ibid., p. 17.

117 GAZ, archives of Zaandam municipality (OA-0054) inv.no. 259, council meeting minutes (9 December 1909) pp. 459–460; cartographic documents, inv.no. 53.00419, map of Zaandam (1903); inv.no. 50.1544, map of Zaandam (1934).

118 Groten, 'Een koloniale cultuur', pp. 387–388.

sailors could enter Zaandam and interact with the population, for instance by selling trinkets like peacock feathers (in 1913, one of them was even interred in Zaandam after he died of illness while in port). But as it was local shippers who took the rice from the seagoing rice ships to the mills, it is unlikely the South Asian sailors ever saw the factories themselves.[119]

Although the industrial Zaan region would later become known also as the *Rode Zaan* for its support of socialist or communist politics, there is no evidence that workers in the rice mills understood the connection of their workplace to Asian colonies in terms of a structure of imperialist-capitalist exploitation. Workers' pamphlets and newspapers published in times of strikes and conflicts in the rice mills made no mention of grievances other than wages, labour conditions, and layoffs.[120]

Marketing media

The millers also used the colonial associations of rice milling deliberately in their marketing activities. When the rice mills were at their most successful, from around 1900, they underlined the entanglement with Java particularly in advertisements and anniversary celebrations that propagated the role of the Zaan rice mills in the Dutch colonial empire.

Only advertisements for C. Kamphuijs, which recommended its Java rice regularly around 1900, could be found in the National Library of the Netherlands' newspaper database. The advertisements seemed to have been extraordinary, as most millers sold to (overseas) merchants and wholesalers rather than to individual consumers. Yet Kamphuijs set the standard for how the rice mills would present themselves with packaging targeted at consumers. Its 'Java Extra rice' with the brand name *Czaar Peter*, after Peter the Great who had stayed in Zaandam for a while, was sold 'in beautiful lithographed tins'.[121] The czar was depicted on the front of the tin; on the sides were information on rice's nutritional value and some recipes. Yet on the back, Kamphuijs's factory and warehouses were depicted, with a generic tropical landscape with rice fields and farmers underneath.[122] Depicting one's own factories in advertisements was a widespread strategy in

119 Ibid.

120 GAZ, library collection, inv.no. A-2.36, manifests concerning strike at the Unie (November–December 1900); International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, archive of the Communist Party Holland (ARCH00321) inv.no. 30-6, newspaper *De Peller* for the Unie and Hollandia mills, no. 1 (March 1930).

121 'De beste rijst ter wereld'.

122 See Groten, 'Een koloniale cultuur', p. 390.

nineteenth-century marketing that Kamphuijs followed in letterheads and business cards as well. However, it was a somewhat dated way of advertising focused more on the industrialist – for whom the factory signalled modern technology and economic progress – than on consumers' perceptions and needs.[123]

Introducing the green rice field in advertising can be interpreted as an attempt to market rice in a new way that exploited the exotic, faraway origins of the commodity, even though images of the factories remained prominent. In the mills' heydays, the combination of factory and rice field became the standard representation that illustrated the dependence of this Zaan industry on agricultural production on the other side of the globe. As this was constantly retraced to specific, named locations along the Zaan, this was literally a representation of the imperial space in which rice came to the Zaan region as a colonial commodity.

Kamphuijs illustrated these relations in the 1900 Paris Exposition. In a glass showcase, the firm presented dozens of rice samples in different stages of processing. The cabinet had been designed by Eduard Cuypers, a Catholic like Kamphuijs. As architect and interior designer, Cuypers is known as the godfather of the *Amsterdamse School* architecture movement, and would later also start a design firm in the Dutch East Indies because of his interest in Indonesian art forms. The cabinet was outfitted with 'decorative paintings on the top, in which planting and harvesting rice, packing and shipping on Java are represented in a series, while a second series shows the arrival in Holland, husking and polishing, and bagging the flour', the colonial *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* wrote.[124] A photograph of the showcase was included in English- and German-language booklets that Kamphuijs handed out at the exhibition with an essay on the history and culture of rice.[125]

Other factory owners adopted this way of representation. Around 1913, Bloemendaal & Laan published a small brochure with a cover image of a farmer working in a rice field. The illustration had been made with some attention to detail, but confused different Indonesian regions: the buildings that were visible suggested a Minangkabau village on Sumatra, while the man's *batik* clothes seemed Javanese. Inside the brochure were depicted the factories in Wormer; the back cover was adorned with an idealised landscape

123 Walker Laird, *Advertising progress*, pp. 94–131, 269–273.

124 Gabriël, 'Parisiana', p. 9.

125 Proctor, *Der Reis*.

with windmills.[126] A later poster by Louis Raemaekers for the Akyab rice mill in Amsterdam, named after the Burmese city, likewise portrayed what seems to be a bare-breasted Balinese woman harvesting rice in a golden paddy field, with the mill in the background.[127]

Wessanen & Laan placed its factory in a direct relation with the Dutch East Indies, too, when it celebrated its 150th anniversary in 1915. As was common, this was marked by installing a commemorative tile panel, 1.3 metres tall and 3.6 metres wide, offered by 'office personnel, factory bosses, factory workers, captains and some former employees' to their employers on March 22.[128] Surrounded by art nouveau motifs and the firm's historic windmills, in the centre the Vlijt (steam) flour mill was portrayed above a North American wheat field, to the right oil mill Tijd with a South American flax field, and to the left (Figure 17), rice mill Unie, above 'a field in the Indies [...], where the young rice plants are being planted'.[129] The image of the rice field was based on an existing photograph, attributed to Ohannes Kurkdjian, a prolific photographer whose pictures of the Dutch East Indies were known for their idealised portrayal of the colony as peaceful paradise.[130] The occasion was also celebrated with a luxurious album, of which the decorative title page included what seemed to be an Indian woman crushing rice.[131]

The same year, Kamphuijs had the same faience workshop produce a comparable panel for its 50th anniversary (Figure 18). Equally large but more luxurious than Wessanen & Laan's, it used a spectacular visual idiom inspired by Indonesian motifs. The Phenix factory was depicted centrally, flanked by an old-fashioned and a modern steamship. The images were framed by rice culms, lotuses, wayang figures, and motifs from Javanese temples. At the top, the Buddhist *bodhisattva* Prajnaparamita, painted after an iconic Javanese temple statue (which was on display in the ethnographic

126 HVW, Bloemendaal & Laan brochure; I thank Pim Westerkamp for pointing out the discrepancy.

127 International Advertising and Design Database, ReclameArsenaal collection, inv.no. RA/00285, poster for Hekker & Co. rice mills 'Akyab' by Louis Raemaekers (s.d.), available at https://iaddb.org/collections/posters-advertisements/detail/7b868a53-db68-1f76-a1e1-612a655645fe/media/6124b946-2d8e-e73f-1c0e-86105e52136f (accessed 19 January 2022).

128 GAZ, Wessanen & Laan archive, inv.no. 3, album (1915).

129 GAZ, Wessanen & Laan archive, inv.no. 4, typescript explanation of the tile panel (22 March 1915) p. 2.

130 Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, online collections, inv.no. RP-F-00-5346-20, photograph of Indonesian rice field attributed to Ohannes Kurkdjian, available at http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.439161 (accessed 19 January 2022).

131 GAZ, Wessanen & Laan archive, inv.no. 3, album (1915).

Figure 17 Detail of the Wessanen tile panel showing the Unie rice mill as seen from Wormerveer and a Javanese rice field where people are planting rice. Although both images were very detailed, the panel clearly sited the specific, individually named buildings on the Zaan while the rice field was a generic, unspecified image. The panel is on display in the Zaans Museum, Zaandam.

museum in Leiden), looked down at the viewer. The coats of arms of Zaandam and Batavia were also included.

Again, the overarching message was the relationship between the Phenix along the Zaan and agrarian production areas in Asia, represented by four smaller depictions of rice production in different phases – ploughing with a water buffalo, planting, harvesting, bringing to port. The planting scene is based on the same photograph as in the Wessanen panel. These portrayals of rice production also included Burma: the harvesting scene on the lower right seemingly depicted people from India, while the small boat on the lower right was a Burmese 'paddy boat', after an 1895 photograph.[132] Kamphuijs also commissioned an album, which depicted another Javanese temple statue and two wayang

132 British Library, London, online collections, photo 88/1(25), inv.no. 88125, photograph of Burmese paddy boat by Philip Adolphe Klier (1895), available at http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/apac/photocoll/b/019ph000000088s1u00025000.html (accessed 19 January 2022).

Figure 18 The Kamphuijs panel, still located *in situ* in the former office. Various images of rice cultivation in South-East Asia, ships, and coats of arms are framed by colourful and lavish forms inspired by Javanese art. The visual spectacle was firmly centred on the Phenix mill and its warehouses in Zaandam, proclaiming the factory's importance in the imperial trade network.

figures named 'Oetari' and 'Abimandjoe', after two characters from an ancient Sanskrit epic.[133]

The faience producers and album decorators had done their best to deliver accurate depictions, especially in the case of Kamphuijs's panel. This quality exemplifies the professionalisation of Dutch advertising from 1900, which strove towards a more artistic design.[134] In addition, it coincided with the increasing use of Indonesian, mostly Javanese, motifs and forms in Dutch applied arts in the early twentieth century.[135] It might have been something of a specialty of the faience workshop in question, the Plateelbakkerij Delft in Hilversum, as it produced panels with very similar motifs for other colonial firms.[136]

Both tile panels had an important symbolic meaning. They were financed and donated by the entire staff, which means these opportunities were yet another way in which ordinary employees shared in knowing and propagating their work's connections to colonial production. Like the factory names,

133 For information on the statue and the figures, I thank Hedi Hinzler. GAZ, C. Kamphuijs archive (PA-0297), inv.no. 4, album (1915).

134 Schreurs, *Geschiedenis van de reclame*, pp. 45–61.

135 Waaldijk and Legêne, 'Oktober 1901'.

136 Schenk, 'Een 'Indisch' tableau'.

the panels were supposed to convey the global activities of the firms and, in doing so, their confidence and success in both space (from Asian rice field to the Zaan) and time (from historic windmills to steam factories). However, precisely in 1915 this positive image was also wishful thinking: because of the world war, the import of rice in the Netherlands had come to a standstill.

And the panels contained more inaccuracies. There was a clear emphasis on Java – and even some unfounded references to Sumatra and Bali – at the cost of representations of Burma, which can be explained by the facts that the trans-imperial commodity chain of the Burmese rice was relatively complex and that the Java rice was more precious. Most of all, in the Dutch context Java would have been a source of national pride, and the image of the Javanese peasant, toiling with his buffalo in his *sawah*, was sort of a topos in Dutch colonial imagery used in everything from schoolbooks to economic treatises to book covers. Consequently, the millers' 'own' colony of Java, or the Dutch East Indies in general, prevailed in the different ways in which the firms marketed their product and themselves. The result was a simplification and nationalisation of the imperial space formed by the trade relations on which the mills rested. The ways in which they were turned into imperial places reduced the complex intra-imperial entanglements of the Dutch and British empires as rice sources, of neighbouring metropoles as customers and competitors, and of Caribbean and African colonies as destinations, to a relatively one-sided relationship between the Dutch metropole and its Indonesian colony.

This was no isolated phenomenon, as a similar mechanism can be seen in the marketing efforts of Dutch cocoa producers. The aforementioned Korff factory was decorated with depictions of a Javanese couple even though, at the time it was installed, only a few per cent of the cacao imported in the Netherlands came from the Dutch East Indies.[137] In 1936, another Amsterdam producer started selling chocolate under the *Tjoklat* brand name, after the Malay word for chocolate, with the image of a kneeling Javanese woman offering a basket of cacao pods as its trademark. However, it chose this name, as it explained in a 1941 advertisement, because the cane sugar in the product originated from the Indies, not the cocoa.[138]

Moreover, this 'nationalisation' of commodities was also visible in other imperial powers. The German colonial movement stressed the importance of consuming commodities from the own German colonies as early as the

137 *Statistiek van den in-, uit- en doorvoer over het jaar 1910*, p. 66.
138 'Twee soorten rechtspraak'.

1880s, distinguishing between generic and trans-imperial 'colonial goods' and national 'products from the German colonies', as they labelled them.[139] In Britain and France, state bodies were established in the 1920s and 1930s to officially promote consumption of imperial products in the metropole. Using a wide range of media, the Empire Marketing Board (EMB) in Britain and the Agence générale des colonies (AGC) in France launched state-sanctioned advertisement campaigns to 'buy imperial' and 'eat colonial'.[140] These campaigns imbued the consumption and, by association, also the processing of colonial commodities with a strictly national meaning, in contrast to the more generic messages of attraction and exoticism found in private advertising. When these campaigns focused on rice, tellingly, they show that each colonial power developed their own version of the stereotypical Asian rice farmer. For the Netherlands, it was the abovementioned trope of the Javanese farmer with a buffalo; for France, it was the Vietnamese farmer with his conical headwear, which appeared in cartoon form in the Indochinese rice campaign; for Britain, it was Indian or Burmese farmers, and the paddy boats as could be found on EMB posters.[141]

The nuances of the panels, with different regions being represented in artful ways, would probably have gone unnoticed to the average employee, client, or guest of the company. What remained highly visible, however, was the contrast between the detailed, explicitly named factories and warehouses along the Zaan and the generic, traditional and agrarian rice fields in a far East. These representations celebrated the rice mills' entanglements with Asian rice production selectively. They left out how the rice was pre-milled mechanically in Burma and parts of Java and ignored the contribution of local traders and the South Asian sailors. They depicted the rice production on which the Zaan depended as romantic and timeless, instead of a commercial agricultural sector that produced a cash crop for the world market – in the case of Java, by labour that was not quite free. This representation tapped into all kinds of stereotypical images of east–west dichotomies and of rice cultivation as a typical Indies scene.

Yet following Ramamurthy, the cultural presentation in the advertising materials cannot be separated from the specific economic and political situation that the milling industry was part of. The emphasis on contrast

139 Ciarlo, *Advertising empire*, p. 173; Ciarlo, 'Mass-marketing the empire', pp. 190–191.

140 Ramamurthy, *Imperial persuaders*, pp. 131–151; Lemaire, 'Propager', Lemaire, 'Manipuler'.

141 The Indochinese figure is described in Collins, '"Le Riz d'Indochine"'; an example of the Burmese image is provided by an EMB poster: Manchester Art Gallery, fine art collection, inv. no. 1935.773, Ba Nyan, poster titled 'A paddy field' (1935), available at https://manchesterartgallery.org/collections/title/?mag-object-4343 (accessed 19 January 2022).

and difference told a story of complementary cooperation, in which Dutch industrial processing and indigenous, mainly Javanese, agricultural production together formed a natural, well-oiled machine. Including intermediate steps like packing and shipping reinforced this portrayal, as evinced by Kamphuijs's panel and showcase and in the booklet for Wessanen's Javanese art night. However, this ostensibly harmonious cooperation could only exist by virtue of European colonial rule – it depended on the emergence of a specific political economy that made it possible to acquire and ship large amounts of rice, whether it were the private domains on Java or the British integration of Burma in world trade.[142] It was this political background that set this imagination apart from other romanticised stereotypes in advertisements, such as the flax and wheat fields on Wessanen's panel.

The political context was most relevant in the case of the portrayals of Javanese rice cultivation on Bloemendaal & Laan's brochure (ca. 1913) and the tile panels (1915). These were produced just after the boom of Western investments in the Dutch East Indies and during the paternalistic Ethical Policy, which was aimed at 'uplifting' the Indonesian population.[143] In this context, the private domains so crucial to the trade in Java rice were particularly criticised: some specifically for their foreign ownership, but all for their corvée duties and land rents, which were deemed 'medieval circumstances' that prohibited the 'progression of the native'.[144] Under the 'ethical' Minister of Colonies Alexander Idenburg, in 1910 the colonial government had bought the private domain of Kandanghauer (Kandangaur), part of rice-producing Indramajoe. And none other than Jan Adriaan Laan, co-founder of Bloemendaal & Laan and member of the Dutch Senate from 1905 until his death in 1915, had come out in favour of purchasing the private domains: to prevent 'serfdom' and because the 'capital of the entire world' flowing to Java had to work 'in accordance with the laws and ordonnances of the land'.[145] 'Developing' the indigenous population, after all, also meant better exploitation: Kandanghauer had also been purchased to stimulate 'the production for the European market of superior rice'.[146] Because of this paternalistic-liberal attitude, in which Dutch exploitation and indigenous agricultural production would go hand in hand, the image of the productive Javanese peasant, cultivating rice traditionally for modern factories in the

142 This interpretation is inspired by Ramamurthy, *Imperial persuaders*, pp. 9–11, 66–77.

143 Lindblad, 'Ondernemen in Indië', pp. 700–702; Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in fragmenten*, pp. 200–206.

144 Z., 'De particuliere landerijen in Indië', pp. 182; 'Parlementaire kroniek'.

145 Minutes of the Senate of the Estates-General of the Netherlands (4 November 1910) pp. 64–65.

146 'Terugkoop van het particuliere land'.

Netherlands, gained a topical and concrete meaning. Representing the network between rice-producing places in Asia and the steam factories of the Zaan was not only a form of cultural stereotyping, it was also the representation of a desirable political economy in one's own colony, which stimulated rice production for commercial exports.

Conclusion

The confident and consistent portrayal of the rice mills in relation to Javanese agriculture belonged very much to the time period 1900–1914, when the mills flourished. However, the international trade on which they had relied collapsed with World War I and its aftermath. Rice imports to Zaandam stopped and were resumed only in 1922. But international competition remained intense and former markets in Europe, the Caribbean, and South America increasingly took to tariffs and to importing or growing rice themselves.[147] And the problems were not only to be found on the demand side: in 1925, two directors of Bloemendaal & Laan took the unusual step of travelling to the East Indies, Indochina, Thailand and Burma in person because the quality of the rice imports from the Indies was so disappointing. The government purchase of some of the estates did not have the desired outcome.[148]

The millers did not seem to have redefined their role and reinforced their threatened positions with renewed marketing efforts. As the millers suspended marketing efforts, at least for the domestic Dutch market, it was retailers that stepped in. Consumer-oriented rice packages, such as those from the Zaandam grocery stores Albert Heijn and C. Keg, used similarly stereotypical and racialised depictions of Indonesian people as before, although these were more cartoonish.[149] However, images of the factories had disappeared as the obvious points of reference for consumers.

147 *Verslag van de Zaanlandsche Kamer van Koophandel* (1923), p. 62; *Verslag van de Zaanlandsche Kamer van Koophandel* (1926), pp. 57–58; *Verslag van de Zaanlandsche Kamer van Koophandel* (1927), pp. 28–29; *Verslag van de Zaanlandsche Kamer van Koophandel* (1928), pp. 26–28, 30–32.

148 'De rijstcultuur van Indramajoe'; 'Europeesche en inlandse landbouw'.

149 Albert Heijn Erfgoed, Zaandam, packaging collection, inv.no. 0000785, package for Java rice (1937), available at https://albertheijnerfgoed.nl/beelden/detail/9a004558-df2b-229c-442c-86c3f90b18bc/media/06a68627-54c0-cacc-a133-6914c2ff82e8 (accessed 19 January 2022); Zaans Museum, Zaandam, inv.no. ZM-10165, packaging for Keg's Bassein rice (s.d.), available at http://zaansweb.adlibhosting.com/Details/collect/5193 (accessed 19 January 2022).<

The rice milling industry along the Zaan continues up to the present day, but is much slimmed down. The Birma mill closed down in 1919, followed in 1928 by the Java mill and in 1932 by the Phenix mill. Other firms saw opportunities, however. The Rickmers rice milling and trading firm, mentioned above, established a short-lived factory in Zaandam in 1921 to regain a foothold in the trade after being cut off from Asian markets.[150] And the firm Gebroeders Laan diversified into rice milling in 1923.[151] But these newcomers were exceptional and the decades to come saw a further deterioration of the rice mills' position as World War II brought German occupation and, at its end, the violent path to Indonesian independence. 'Given the pre-war and current development on the international rice market, it is unlikely that the Zaandam rice milling industry will be able to recover', a sober 1949 report read.[152]

For a while it seemed the other corner of the Dutch colonial empire could provide some solace, while turmoil broke out in Indonesia. In 1946, Wessanen conceived of a plan to erect a new rice mill on Curaçao to process Surinamese rice with government assistance.[153] The firm had already been involved in some promising experiments with Surinamese rice production for export in the 1900s.[154] After World War II, the Dutch government set up an ambitious project to introduce large-scale mechanical rice production in Suriname in the hope of exporting the commodity to Western Europe. The project envisioned a shift of the imperial space produced by the rice trade from the East towards the West Indies, and a shift from indigenous initiative to state-led agriculture.[155] Although the rice cultivation project was successful, the Wessanen mill on Curaçao closed down after only three years because of the intense Caribbean competition for the rice supply.[156]

In 1952, the Unie in Wormer stopped milling. In the in-house company newspaper, Wessanen told its employees the closure was the final outcome of a long process that had started with World War I. The recent independence of Indonesia was felt as well: now, the Dutch government could not negate other nations' protectionist measures anymore by threatening to

150 Dannhauer, *Deutscher Reishandel*, p. 242.

151 Kingma, *Rijst aan de Zaan*, pp. 57–58.

152 *Een eeuw Zaandam 1870–1970*, pp. 45–46.

153 Brons, 'Brief gouverneur'.

154 Wessanen tested samples of experimental rice varieties grown in Suriname: Boonacker and Drost, *Inspectie van den landbouw*, p. 33.

155 Hoefte, *Suriname*, pp. 95–96.

156 Waller, 'Rijst en rijstpolitiek'; 'Wessanen liquideert rijstpellerij Curaçao'.

Figure 19 The former Hollandia factory complex in the present day, as seen from Wormerveer (from left to right: warehouse Java, the Hollandia mill, and the warehouses Bassein, Saigon, and Batavia). Some elements have disappeared, such as the chimney and the top of the water tower (compare with Figure 16), but in general the appearance and visibility of the buildings are similar to the early 1900s.

not export colonial tin, rubber, or kina.[157] The last of the five large mills, the Hollandia, ceased activity in 1966, although its buildings still stand (Figure 19).[158] Only Gebroeders Laan with its Mercurius mill remained, and it still does today, under what has become the household brand name of Lassie, which helped the Dutch to finally warm to rice in the second half of the twentieth century.[159]

In hindsight, many of the actions undertaken by the millers after 1918 seem like the final convulsions of a doomed industry, although the positive example of Lassie nuances such a dramatic understanding. The rice mills were already languishing as a result of World War I, when free trade was disturbed but imperialism was still in place: what ended the mills' success seems to have been less a lack of supply from colonial territories than

157 HVW, *WKF Nieuws. Bedrijfsorgaan Wessanen's Koninklijke Fabrieken* (9 March 1952) pp. 1–2.
158 GAZ, archive of the Vereniging tot Behoud van Monumenten van Bedrijf en Techniek Zaanstreek (PA-0274) addition AWAR/11/18, letter by Hollandia rice mill (9 May 1966).
159 Kingma, *Rijst aan de Zaan*, pp. 77–89.

the decreasing demand when European, South American, and Caribbean markets became increasingly hard to serve. Yet imperialism had enabled free trade, since it was the approach the British rulers of Burma took to exploiting this colony that enabled the Zaan rice milling industry to thrive. This was less true of Java, as the valuable export rice was produced on the unfree private estates and as the large majority of exports were destined for the Dutch metropole.

The Zaan millers profited from both, however: whether in the Irrawaddy delta of Burma or the Indramajoe domain on Java, European rule had created the circumstances by which massive amounts of rice were delivered to their mills. It is striking how persistent the imperial 'reflex' remained post-1945, whether to develop the colony of Suriname into a new source of rice or to use other colonial commodities as leverage against other countries.

The imperial significance of the rice mills was underlined in all media available to the rice millers, as the warehouse names, rice tins, brochures, and tile panels consistently related the rice mills to colonial Java and Burma. For millers, workers, inhabitants and passers-by, but also for business relations, clients, and finally consumers, these expressions constructed the mills as imperial places. However, most also formed a misrepresentation of the imperial space of which the mills stood at the centre, or so they liked to think. Not only did they privilege European agency, they also privileged their own colony of Java over the arguably more important rice source that was British Burma.

This nationalisation illustrates the importance of the Indies in Dutch society of the period. But such nationalisation was also a more obvious 'imperialisation' than references to Burma could have been, playing into the position of millers, clients, and consumers as part of a Dutch imperial nation more clearly. Instead of referring to a generic tropical territory, which might have been portrayed in similar stereotypical terms, this nationalisation evoked colonial territories and even policies to which the millers and their Dutch customers were directly related. The Burmese rice trade was no less imperial than the Javanese. But for contemporary Dutch citizens, it would seem it was.

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4 Business palaces to rule the waves

Abstract
Shipping enabled imperialism like no other domain, enabling trade, communication, and migration between metropoles and colonies as technological innovations cut travel times, especially the harnessing of steam power. In European port cities, the infrastructure of docks and warehouses and the offices of shipping lines formed the tangible reminders of imperial shipping. Shipping lines used their offices not only for the management of their operations but also to underline the luxury and reliability of their services to prospective passengers. The first office of the German shipping line HAPAG in Hamburg (1899–1903) exemplified this pattern. Soon, however, a major overhaul (1912–1920), necessitated by the line's rapid growth, transformed the building into an imposing office that mediated HAPAG's status as an 'imperial' firm.

Keywords: Economic history; shipping; steam; German imperialism; business; Hamburg

At a fundamental level, imperial spaces were produced by seafaring. Virtually all networks between metropole and colony were made by ships. They carried soldiers and officials to colonial territories and transported raw materials and manufactures from metropole to colony and the other way round. Shipping brought missionaries to their stations overseas, was crucial to imperial migration, enabled European individuals and institutes to build up collections of non-Western objects, and carried letters and reports back and forth. Encounters with imperial shipping spoke to Europeans in different ways: as travellers, migrants, or workers.

Because of their importance, ships themselves have been singled out as the nodes of imperial networks in existing scholarship.[1] However, rather than naval architecture, this chapter scrutinises the onshore architecture

1 Lester, *Imperial networks*, p. 6.

Groten, Miel, *The Architecture of Empire in Modern Europe*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022
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in Europe that enabled shipping to take place. It starts out by outlining the general importance of shipping in relation to imperialism, paying special attention to migration and the ways in which the relationship between maritime shipping and empire was imagined and represented. The chapter then turns to the local nodes in port cities that produced shipping networks and were therefore imperial places. Docks and warehouses, cranes and shipyards were the functional infrastructure of global shipping in port cities. Significantly, they also formed easily recognisable and characteristic landscapes shaped by technology, labour, and contact with 'overseas'.

Finally, the main emphasis of this chapter is on the buildings that were the official face of the world of shipping: the head offices of shipping lines. As will be shown in Part I, although large shipping lines had numerous branch offices in ports all over the world, their headquarters remained the nerve centres of these networks, where directors and boards were seated and the central administration was carried out. The head offices in city centres were representative 'business palaces' that provided a link to the port, the ocean, and what lay beyond, underlining that global shipping companies always remained tied to their home port. As such, offices became recognisable, high-profile sites that reminded urban communities that the firms they accommodated drew Europe closer to the rest of the world. Part II will bring these elements together in a case study of one of the world's largest shipping lines, HAPAG, and its offices in Hamburg built in the early twentieth century.

Part I. Maritime ambitions in shipping line offices

Steam, shipping, and the sea

The upswing in global trade described in the previous chapter was necessarily also an upswing in global transport. The construction of inland canals played one role in this; the introduction of railways played another.[2] But if railways are especially associated with the expansion of great land-based empires – Russia's Trans-Siberian railway (1891–1916), the Ottoman-German Berlin–Baghdad railway (started in 1903 but finished only in 1940), and perhaps also the United States on its westward expansion – no means of transport was as central to the workings of colonial empires as maritime

2 Headrick, *The tools of empire*, pp. 197–198.

shipping.[3] The boom in world trade was enabled through a 'transport revolution' in which transportation costs dropped and more intense shipping networks developed. From the 1830s onwards, iron and (later) steel steam ships increasingly joined and eventually displaced sailing ships. Steam ships enabled regular intercontinental services, first between Europe and the United States but soon also between Europe and Africa and then the rest of the world. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 was a watershed moment, providing a much shorter route between Europe and the Indian Ocean. By 1900, two thirds of the world's shipping tonnage consisted of steam ships, which now not only carried passengers and high-value goods, as they did before, but also cheap bulk goods such as grains and textile fibres, including the jute destined for Dundee, the oilseeds destined for Liverpool or Marseille, and the rice destined for the Zaan, from the previous chapter.[4] Besides continuous innovations in marine engineering, the construction of networks of bunker depots further facilitated the rise of shipping, as did the laying of a global telegraph cable network that allowed for up-to-date communication with ships in foreign ports.[5]

Britain dominated global shipping: in 1890, the United Kingdom's share of global shipping tonnage was almost half.[6] This dominance was true of the regular liners, but especially for the so-called tramp trade, shipping without fixed schedules.[7] Such dominance was the civilian equivalent of Britain's military supremacy at sea and led to boasts of the Suez Canal being the 'Imperial Piccadilly'.[8] In addition, other countries' shipping depended on British coaling stations and often relied on British shipbuilding capacity, such as the output of the Scottish shipbuilders on the Clyde.[9] At the same time, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were a period of intense competition in international shipping as other European and American companies established their own routes and networks. By 1913, the United Kingdom's share had dropped to about 40 per cent of global tonnage.[10] At that point, somewhat surprisingly, as it did not have the reputation of being a

3 For a fascinating account of the role of railway infrastructure in (informal) imperialism, see Christensen, *Germany and the Ottoman railways*.

4 Kenwood and Lougheed, *Growth of the international economy*, pp. 14–15; Findlay and O'Rourke, *Power and plenty*, pp. 379–383.

5 Fayle, *A short history*, pp. 263–264.

6 Rübner, *Konzentration und Krise*, p. 442

7 Fayle, *A short history*, pp. 242, 269, 275.

8 Quoted in: Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*, p. 232.

9 Fichter, 'Imperial interdependence'.

10 Rübner, *Konzentration und Krise*, p. 442.

'maritime nation'; it was German shipping that came in second place, having rapidly developed in the late nineteenth century (as will be discussed in Part II below). American, Norwegian, French, Japanese, Dutch, and Italian shipping followed some distance behind.[11]

Besides freight, ships also transported people, as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw unprecedented levels of migration. Of course, the formation of settler colonies in the Americas and Australia in the early modern era predated these movements. Furthermore, the forced migration of 12.5 million enslaved Africans to the Americas that had started in the sixteenth century only stopped in 1866.[12] Yet in scale and speed, the worldwide migration movements of the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century were unparalleled as emigration agencies, railway and shipping companies, and charity organisations formed a veritable migration industry. It was a global phenomenon: among the most significant migration movements were the transoceanic emigration of 29 million people from the Indian sub-continent to regions, many of them colonies, in South-East Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean, and the emigration of 19 million people from China to South-East Asia, Australasia, and Latin America in the period 1846–1940. Many of these migrations took place under some form of debt-bondage and under colonial auspices.[13] Emigration from Europe, most relevant for the purposes of this study, was dominated by transatlantic migration to the United States, which attracted about 36 million European emigrants between 1846 and 1940, or half of total European emigration. However, the other half went to more or less 'imperial' destinations in Latin America, the Caribbean, Russia east of the Urals, and the settler colonies of Canada, Australia, South Africa, and North Africa.[14] Among them were farmers and workers, but also soldiers, convicts, and thousands of missionaries.

However, the extent of imperial emigration differed between colonial powers. Emigration from Britain to its colonies, chiefly Canada, was relatively large at 2.5 million people between 1853 and 1920, as was French and other European emigration to Algeria, which numbered almost one million Europeans in the 1930s.[15] The number of French emigrants to other parts of

11 Fayle, *A short history*, pp. 271–281.

12 The illegal slave trade continued after the official abolitions in the early nineteenth century; the last recorded voyage took place in 1866: 'Estimates'.

13 McKeown, 'Global migration'.

14 Bosma, 'Beyond the Atlantic', pp. 119–120.

15 Magee and Thompson, *Empire and globalisation*, pp. 64–116; Heffernan, 'French colonial migration'.

the French empire was much smaller, as was the number of Dutch emigrants to the East Indies, although in fact, they represented a relatively large part of the Dutch population.[16]

Yet, even when their numbers were small, these imperial migrants left their mark on metropolitan society in many ways. For one, many returned home at some point: English nabobs or Dutch *Indischgasten* brought their colonial experiences and capital back to English and Dutch society and were instrumental in the development of private and public collections of colonial objects. They tended to settle in certain cities and neighbourhoods, such as The Hague and Arnhem in the Netherlands, or the London district of Bayswater, which had been nicknamed 'Asia Minor' in the 1860s.[17] Colonial returnees could also be found in countries without colonies – in Switzerland, they bore nicknames like 'Borneo Louis' or 'Morocco Müller'.[18]

European migration to the colonies helped an imperial culture to flourish and a sense of shared whiteness to develop. Migrated relatives provided a personal link to the empire, and recruitment campaigns provided a reminder of the opportunities emigration provided to those who stayed at home. Through bonds of family, language, race, and culture, migrants and their descendants formed diasporas that created new connections between metropoles and colonies. The 'memory of power extended over space' that characterised empires, as noted in the introduction, was not only the remembrance of things past but also the remembrance of one's acquaintances, relatives, or compatriots living abroad in the present. Most extensive was the British world of communities 'tied by ancestry and language, common systems of government, family and civil society'.[19] But similar worlds existed for other colonising countries. German emigrant communities were constructed as outposts of the German nation (discussed in Part II of this chapter) and 'Greater Britain' had its equivalent in *la plus grande France* (discussed in the next chapter). Such 'worlds' were inherently transnational and usually transcended the political boundaries of the own empire. For instance, migration connected Portugal not only to its African colonies but also to Brazil, even when that country had long reached independence, and the Dutch remained attached to their 'cousins' in South Africa long after it had become British.[20] Swiss migrants ventured to Australia or Brazil, too.[21]

16 Raben, 'A new Dutch imperial history', pp. 17–19, 22.

17 Buettner, *Empire families*, pp. 211–216.

18 Schär, 'Introduction', p. 9; Stamm, *Marokko-Müller*.

19 Darian-Smith, Grimshaw and Macintyre, 'Introduction', p. 6.

20 Morier-Genoud and Cahen, 'Introduction'.

21 Templeton, 'From an Italian Swiss'; Seiler-Baldinger, 'Basels Beitrag'.

If migration to the colonies was in line with how empires were 'supposed' to function from the European point of view, the reverse movement of colonised people to Europe inherently contradicted the convenient metropole–colony dichotomy. Metropolitan governments, anxious as they were about an influx of what were seen as racial 'others', for a long time deliberately hindered any large-scale migration of colonial subjects with legal measures.[22] Yet this did not stop small African and Afro-Caribbean communities from emerging in major trading hubs such as London and Amsterdam even as early as the early modern period. In the nineteenth century they were joined by other colonial subjects, especially in Britain where some 112,000 of them lived by 1891.[23] But it was in the twentieth century especially that colonised people arrived in the metropole en masse, stimulated by World War I when they were recruited as soldiers and workers. The many non-European sailors working on European vessels were another colonial presence in Europe's streets. As will be shown below, they also left their ship for the mainland and established communities in a number of European port cities.

Flagships of empire

Like industrial capitalism, the rise of shipping was a global and not just an imperial phenomenon. Numerically, until the second half of the twentieth century most global shipping took place between north-western Europe and North America, outside of the imperial orbit: in 1913, this stretch accounted for over three quarters of all sea traffic.[24]

Nonetheless, shipping was bound up with imperialism in important ways. Shipping was inherently part of the influence imperial powers projected outwards and of the economic relations of empire discussed before.[25] Although some of the most well-known firms, such as Cunard and White Star Line (of *Titanic* infamy) focused on the Atlantic, other important lines had close ties to imperial expansion and sustained the existence of imperial spaces. Mail contracts that governments awarded to shipping firms were a well-known way in which they were tied to colonial empires. In 1837, the British Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P&O) was granted the mail contract between London and Gibraltar. This was then extended

22 Hondius, *Blackness in Western Europe*, pp. 211–238.

23 Tabili, 'A homogeneous society?', pp. 56, 68–70; Ponte, '"Al de swarten die hier ter stede"'.

24 Rübner, *Konzentration und Krise*, p. 37; Miller, *Europe and the maritime world*, p. 73.

25 Miller, *Europe and the maritime world*, pp. 13–16.

with a contract to Alexandria which, through the Suez Canal, would quickly expand to India and China; by 1850, P&O had started a mail service to Australia. Thus, the demands of the British state shaped P&O's shipping networks, and the company came to be seen as a national asset to the extent that its vessels have been interpreted as 'flagships of imperialism'.[26] Its French equivalent was the Messageries Maritimes, which developed around mail contracts to Algeria and later the South Atlantic, Indochina, China, Japan, Madagascar, and after that, Australia and New Caledonia.[27] The Dutch Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij (KPM) was awarded its operations in the Dutch East Indies by the government and its ships were therefore the 'engines of empire'. Closely aligned with the colonial state, the KPM provided surveillance and transport duties, linked the islands of the archipelago together, and helped bring the colony into the world economy. It worked as a feeder line for the intercontinental lines of the Dutch Stoomvaartmaatschappij Nederland (SMN) and Rotterdamsche Lloyd, its parent companies.[28] The Deutsche Ost-Afrika Linie was started with a government subsidy, while its West African equivalent Woermann Linie profited from troop transports to German South West Africa during the infamous wars of 1904–1907.[29] In general, strong personal relations existed between shipping directors and chairmen and their respective governments, as in the case of the British Cunard and White Star lines and the German HAPAG discussed below.[30] Demonstrating the importance attached to shipping in contemporary thought in a different way, the short-lived Black Star Line founded by Marcus Garvey in 1919 challenged the dominance of these European lines by providing trade and travel possibilities between black diasporic communities along the Atlantic.[31]

Shipping also became symbolic of the connecting of empires and the spread of European 'civilisation' over the globe, of peaceful trade and interaction. These were part of the wider discourse of classical liberalism that was so influential in this period, rooted in Enlightenment-era political-economic theories about the civilising and pacifying influence of commerce.[32] The importance attached to shipbuilding in Glasgow and the inclusion of ships

26 Harcourt, *Flagships of imperialism*, pp. 1–17.

27 Berneron-Couvenhes, 'La concession des services maritimes'.

28 À Campo, *Engines of empire*, pp. 577–579.

29 Rübner, *Konzentration und Krise*, pp. 33–34.

30 Burgess, *Engines of empire*, p. 266.

31 Bandele, 'Understanding African diaspora'.

32 Hirschman, *The passions and the interests*, pp. 56–63; Smith, *Adam Smith's political philosophy*, pp. 74–75.

in the Kamphuijs tile panel or the Basel mission poster attests to this, as do the ships' prows and allegorical representations of 'navigation' that appeared in sculpted form. These could be found not only on shipping line offices, as discussed below, but on many public buildings in Europe, such as Marseille's exchange, the Royal Exchange pediment, the Glasgow City Chambers, and the Parisian Musée des Colonies that is the subject of Chapter 5. Shipping firms themselves were also vocal about their imperial importance. If industry was a radically new phenomenon, the representatives of modern shipping portrayed their business as part of a long line of historic achievements of early modern 'explorers' and trade companies. Rhetoric about the encounters with different cultures, that shipping companies propagated in advertisements and posters, often included stereotypical representations of non-European populations. But as with the other domains discussed in this study, such invocations of shipping ranged from casting it as part of a general, European civilising influence to more nationalist portrayals where shipping was coupled to national prestige.

The large shipping lines were most important in this respect. The irregular tramp trade was crucial to international transport; additionally, many firms existed that straddled the line between shipping, trade, and industry. But it was the great shipping lines that appealed to Europeans' imagination most, and in the early twentieth century the names of lines such as 'Cunard, White Star, Anchor, P.& O., Royal Mail, Hamburg-Amerika, Norddeutscher Lloyd, Messageries Maritimes' had become 'household words'.[33]

Shipping lines were not shy about acknowledging their imperial significance. A long list of European lines specialised in colonial traffic, often as subsidiaries of the larger firms. Many revealed their destinations simply through their names: British India Steam Navigation Company, African Steamship Company, British and Africa Steamship Company, Société Maritime du Congo, Hamburg-Bremer Afrika Linie, Holland-Afrika Lijn, Svenska Ostasiatiska Kompaniet. P&O told passengers in 1893 that its services were performed 'with advantage to the State, and to the commerce of the Empire' and that the line 'fulfilled a not unimportant part in the commercial and political system which unites Great Britain with her vast possessions in Asia'.[34] The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company titled a commemorative volume from 1909 *A Link of Empire*, while the KPM called itself 'an indispensable tool for governing and ruling the expansive island world, that

33 Fayle, *A short history*, pp. 242–243.

34 *Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company's guide book*, pp. 37, 46.

our ancestors' energies have left us'.[35] For the Hamburg-based Woermann Linie, the acquisition of German colonies was described as 'destined'.[36]

Ships' names were another means of communicating imperial ambitions, most obviously when they referred to colonial cities or regions. British lines with colonial destinations operated vessels named *Hindustan, Rangoon, Calcutta*, or even *Kaiser-i-Hind*; the Roman provinces that Cunard used for its evoked imperial aspirations more subtly.[37] The Rotterdamsche Lloyd came to name their passenger liners after Indonesian volcanoes and their freighters after Indonesian and Dutch regions, while the SMN's freighters were named after Indonesian islands.[38] Messageries Maritimes ships were named after a variety of cities and regions, but also included a *Congo*, *Laos*, *Niger*, and a *Yang-Tse*.[39]

Ships' interiors were supposed to look the part, too. Although ships could never be as luxurious and exclusive as the hotels their most affluent passengers were used to, their interiors could at least equal them in their lavish appearance. Until the 1880s, liners had relatively similar interior designs that represented a generic luxury, but after the Norddeutsche Lloyd first hired prestigious interior designers, interiors became infused with more particular nationalist styles and images. Allegorical representations of royals and historicist styles evoked national greatness; the large German liners were especially imposing, representing the rise of the German empire on the world stage and the corresponding nationalist feeling. The interiors of P&O liners became 'almost caricatures of Britishness abroad' with wooden panels and brick fireplaces in historicist styles, and in the nineteenth century with hand-operated *pukkah* fans such as those in use in India and Burma.[40] Even more explicit were a series of interiors produced for Dutch liners after 1906 by designer Carel Adolph Lion Cachet, who considered a mail liner a 'monument that cruises our world and connects the old Netherlands to the Indies'.[41] In a similar vein to the rice mill tile panels from previous chapter, Lion Cachet combined Javanese forms and tropical motifs with Dutch colonial pride in carpets, reliefs, and mosaics.[42]

35 *A link of empire*; De Boer, *De Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij*, p. 1.

36 Brackmann, *Fünfzig Jahre deutscher Afrikaschiffahrt*, p. 8.

37 Burgess, *Engines of empire*, pp. 259–260.

38 Thanks to Hans Renes for pointing out these practices.

39 Names were taken from The Ships List, http://www.theshipslist.com/ (accessed 4 January 2021).

40 Burgess, *Engines of empire*, pp. 142–143, 235–236, 256–257; Wealleans, *Designing liners*, pp. 42–43.

41 Cited in: Waaldijk and Legêne, 'Oktober 1901', p. 36.

42 Ibid., pp. 36–37.

Advertisements such as posters were a final medium for shipping lines to market their services and present a certain image of themselves. They were aimed at those whose professions brought them to the colonies, such as officials, businessmen, and missionaries, but also at prospective settlers. At a basic level, posters and advertisements disseminated the practical information about the shipping linkages between European ports and the colonial world to a wider public. Symbolically, the imagery they used also spoke of internationalism and the reach of civilisation and technology. Globes, maps, personifications of continents, and especially the ships themselves were recurring images, as were flags and other emblems of the nations in whose name liners crossed these areas.[43] Even government bodies such as the EMB weighed in on promoting shipping connections to the colonies, terming sea routes the 'empire's highways'.[44]

Finally, the EMB's posters came at a time when colonies had also become places of tourism and leisure, at least for the happy few. Already by the second half of the nineteenth century, the guidebooks on Basel, Glasgow, and the Zaan had their equivalents in guides on the sights of colonial Africa and Asia. Shipping lines contributed to the production of tourist literature and advertisements.[45] As tourism to the colonies increased in the early twentieth century, their posters also started to depict exotic colonial destinations. Tourism advertisements had always portrayed foreign countries in romanticised and picturesque ways and colonial destinations were subject to similar portrayals. Natural beauty, traditional architecture, and the indigenous population figured heavily in the posters, but always seen from the self-assured European perspective, which effectively reduced these elements to an attractive, exotic scenery.[46] If the reality of European presence was indicated, it was usually in the form of the modern steam ship towering over small local craft or sailing into some pristine bay, ensuring the audience the encounter took place on European terms.

The onshore presence of shipping: docks and offices

The briny deep may have been the natural habitat of shipping lines, but they also had an extensive onshore presence. Most directly, this presence was

43 Clampin and White, '"Is it essential?"'; Matthes, *Hamburg und die HAPAG*.

44 Cusack, 'Looking over the ship railings'.

45 MacKenzie, 'Empires of travel'; DeWald, 'The development of tourism'.

46 Walker and Achmadi, 'Advertising "the East"'; Brister, 'Tourism in the age of mechanical reproduction'; Gladden, 'Marketing ocean travel', p. 59.

located in the docks and on the wharves of the port. In the period under review here, ports had outgrown the city centres because of their size but were still 'within reach'. It has already been noted Le Havre's exchange building and Marseille's cathedral bordered these cities' docks. In Glasgow, the most inland stretch of the Clyde port was most important in terms of volume.[47] Hamburg's port might have rapidly expanded away from the city to the south side of the Elbe around 1900 but it was still in full view from the north bank *Wasserkante*, where city and river met; in addition, its free-port warehouses remained located next to the city centre.[48]

Still, the very size of the ports meant they were among the largest and most striking feats of engineering of the day. The fact the Clyde had been made navigable by dynamiting it into submission was proudly repeated in almost every publication on Glasgow, while Liverpool's miles-long dock landscape was likewise a source of local pride and Marseille's and Nantes's tall, steel-frame transporter bridges dwarfed the surrounding structures. The naming of docks reflected their importance. Royals were a particularly popular choice, but a fair number also referred to overseas colonies, from London's West and East India Docks and Liverpool's Canada Dock to Amsterdam's Java-, Sumatra- and Surinamekade, Hamburg's India-Hafen and Afrikakai, Marseille's Place de l'Afrique and Rotterdam's Kratonkade. Warehouses might also bear names that made their colonial ties overt and explicitly turned them into imperial locations, such as Liverpool's Colonial Warehouse and Rotterdam's Celebes, Borneo, Java, and Sumatra warehouses.[49]

The ports functioned as the 'back office' of shipping lines. With their wharves, shipyards, passenger terminals, warehouses, workshops, and offices – private and governmental, such as Amsterdam's Koloniaal Etablissement (1913) – and sometimes factories, migration stations, and medical facilities, ports were not only places of transit for people and goods but also of warehousing, maintenance, shipbuilding, and industry. Before the onset of containerisation in the 1950s, most of these activities and especially the loading and unloading of ships remained labour-intensive, requiring stevedores, dockworkers, crane operators, and lorry drivers who maintained direct, hands-on experience with goods and ships.

The coming and going of ocean liners contributed to docks' reputation of being places of frantic activity, of sounds, smells, and sights – impressive and unnerving at the same time. An 1891 treatise on port cities depicted

47 Kenefick, *Rebellious and contrary*, p. 65.

48 Amenda, '"Welthafenstadt" und "Tor zur Welt"', p. 138.

49 Giles and Hawkins, *Storehouses*, p. 21; Van Roosmalen, 'Een ander Rotterdam', p. 226.

Hamburg's 'grandiose port with its noisy activity, its restless movement, with its entire expansive infrastructure of built and mechanic tools', while in 1907, British historian and politician Ramsay Muir described Liverpool's quays as

> a vast sea wall as solid and enduring as the Pyramids [...] Huge warehouses of every type, designed for the storage of every kind of commodity, front the docks, and giant-armed cranes and other appliances make disembarkation swift and easy [...] few spectacles present a more entrancing interest than that of these busy docks, crowded with the shipping of every nation, echoing to every tongue that is spoken on the seas, their wharves littered with strange commodities brought from all the shores of the oceans.[50]

The hustle and bustle of machines and men made port cities sites of not only economic importance, but also of cultural exchange, with unique local atmospheres. The power and wealth that came with commerce were mediated in architecture, as firms, port authorities, and shipping magnates erected magnificent offices, warehouses, and homes; international contacts brought architectural innovations.[51] Furthermore, sailors who transferred to land (either temporarily or permanently) contributed to ports' ethnic diversity. Ships had always been manned by multi-ethnic crews; but, from the late nineteenth century, these increasingly included sailors from outside Europe in general (above all, from China) and from colonial territories in particular. South Asian sailors on the British fleet, the 'lascars' who welcomed Victoria to Glasgow in 1888, numbered 52,000 in 1914, forming a fifth of the total personnel. African and Asian sailors formed some 12 per cent of the German merchant fleet in 1912, while they were a sizable minority on Dutch intercontinental shipping, too.[52]

Along with the ships and their cargoes, thousands of these sailors called at European ports. Asian sailors passed through the Glasgow Sailors' Home and through the port of Zaandam, where they would sell overseas trinkets to the local population.[53] Chinese quarters emerged from sailors' communities in London and Liverpool in the 1880s, in Rotterdam in the 1910s, and in Hamburg in the 1920s.[54] Attitudes to these transient communities were generally quite negative and suspicious but ranged from complacency, as in the case of

50 Von Dorn, *Die Seehäfen*, p. 738; Muir, *A history of Liverpool*, p. 301.

51 Lee, 'The social life of port architecture'.

52 Balachandran, *Globalizing labour?*, pp. 26–37; Van Rossum, *Werkers van de wereld*, pp. 76–77.

53 McFarland, 'Clyde opinion', pp. 498–500; Groten, 'Een koloniale cultuur', pp. 387–388.

54 Amenda, '"Chinese quarters"'.

Zaandam, to outright hostility, as in Glasgow and other British ports in 1919 (see Chapter 2).[55] In general, there was considerable resistance among white European sailors to the employment of the Asian and African sailors, whom they often portrayed as unfair competitors because they were paid less. The ethnic diversity in ports to which they contributed was seen as potentially threatening: Liverpool harboured, to quote Muir again, an 'amazing polyglot and cosmopolitan population, consisting to a considerable extent of races which are backward in many ways, and maintaining itself largely by unskilled labour, [which] vastly increases the difficulty of securing and maintaining the decencies of life'.[56] Muir's uneasiness with the threat to 'decency' posed by this multiracial workforce, which would have included Irish just as much as Chinese, Indian, West Indian, and other workers from outside of Europe, reveals that the cosmopolitan nature of European ports was often not judged positively. In the early twentieth century, Marseille was likewise portrayed as a 'dangerously' cosmopolitan city, close to Algiers both literally and figuratively.[57]

Because of the racist prejudices against non-white sailors, shipowners and these sailors themselves established separate facilities for when they were in port. In Le Havre, colonial sailors formed their own union in 1920 after being rejected by the existing association.[58] The Elder Dempster line operated its own 'African Hostel' in Liverpool.[59] Near Antwerp's docks, the Compagnie Maritime Belge constructed the Ndako Ya Biso ('Our House'), for Congolese sailors in 1928, followed by a second and larger sailors' home in the 1950s. Although they provided a gathering place for the sailors, the establishments were also meant to impose some kind of supervision over them.[60] Sailor missions and homes had long existed in European ports, competing with the infamous establishments of seedy sailor towns for seamen's patronage. As philanthropic initiatives that often had religious motivations, they were part of the domestic missionary efforts aimed at Europe's poor underclass. In the case of the homes for 'black' sailors, generally deemed an inconvenient presence, there were clear additional intentions to surveil and separate them.

While the port area can be regarded as the back office of shipping firms, their actual head office in the city centre represented them more

55 Ibid., p. 54; McFarland, 'Clyde opinion', pp. 500–513; Malon, *Le Havre colonial*, chapter 9, paragraph 109.

56 Muir, *A history of Liverpool*, pp. 305–306.

57 Crane, 'Architecture at the ends of empire', p. 99.

58 Malon, *Le Havre colonial*, chapter 9, paragraph 109.

59 Frost, 'Racism, work and unemployment', p. 27.

60 Lagae, De Palmenaer and Sabakinu Kivilu, 'Koloniale haven', pp. 112–113.

purposefully. Offices were workplaces first and foremost. But unlike factories and docks, they had important representational functions. In general, office buildings were essentially a modern building type that emerged in the nineteenth century to house growing company administrations.[61]

Offices belonging to firms with strong colonial connections provided another way in which these connections were mediated in Europe's built environment. For instance, in the twentieth century The Hague, which attracted many colonial firms because it was the seat of government, was home to banks, trade societies, insurance companies, and industrial firms that celebrated their Indies' business in sculpture, stained glass windows, and murals.[62] In Amsterdam, the office of the Lindeteves-Stokvis trading house was outfitted with a statue of a Javanese man holding one of the engines the firm traded; Liverpool was home to offices named India Buildings, African Chambers, and New Zealand House, among others.[63] In Le Havre, the meeting room of the Charles trading house was decorated with a frescoed map that depicted the felling of trees in French West Africa, Indochina, and other regions of the world.[64]

Within the category of office buildings, shipping company offices were a separate group. They housed the firm's directors, managers, and staff but, not unlike banks, were also open to the public with spacious main halls where the ticketing offices were located. In a similar fashion to railway stations, they might have provisions for baggage that passengers dropped off and often there was some kind of spatial separation for different groups of clients: the Compagnie générale transatlantique (CGT) office in Paris (1907) had separate ticketing offices for regular passengers and migrants; in the HAPAG office (analysed below), merchants and migrants went through the back entrance while wealthier passengers used the grand main entrance.[65] The terminals where passengers boarded and disembarked might have been relatively sober, but the offices where they could purchase their tickets certainly were not.[66]

Shipping line offices matched the splendour of their ships. In doing so, especially before 1918, they adhered to a set of loose international conventions, more so than any other category of buildings in this study. In general,

61 Pevsner, *A history*, pp. 213–214.

62 Kroon and Wagtberg Hansen, *Sporen van smaragd*, pp. 52–96.

63 Koopmans, 'Koloniale expansie', p. 397; Sharples and Stonard, *Built on commerce*, pp. 34, 61, 67, 86; Pollard and Pevsner, *Lancashire*, pp. 341–343.

64 Malon, *Le Havre colonial*, 'Regards sur les colonies', figures 2–9.

65 Aldrich, *Vestiges*, p. 72.

66 Burgess, *Engines of empire*, pp. 250–253.

historicist architecture, extensive decorative programmes, and the use of valuable materials for the interior gave all firms an air of luxury and worldliness, but also of reliability and safety. In terms of style, variants of renaissance- or baroque historicism were dominant, in line with the international popularity of these styles for related commercial buildings such as hotels and department stores. What set the offices of shipping lines apart, however, was the array of nautical imagery in the decorations which gave visitors and passers-by the proverbial whiff of sea spray: from sea gods and ropes to shells and seahorses. For instance, the P&O office in London (1859), strategically located in Leadenhall Street opposite East India House (which would, however, be demolished soon after), was crowned by a statue of Neptune with his trident, while the subdued renaissance accommodations of the Anchor Line in Glasgow (1906–1908) exhibited sculpted shells and seaweed and hid a luxurious ticketing office.[67] The Messageries Maritimes head office in Paris (1916) combined a graceful Parisian classicism with nautical imagery of oars and shells, not unlike the Koninklijke Hollandsche Lloyd's 1917–1921 Amsterdam office with its ships' prows.[68] Furthermore, ship models on display and paintings of maritime scenes gave passengers an idealised preview and banners and posters advertised the line's services: 'Spend the winter in Algeria', read a sign atop the CGT office in Paris in 1908.[69]

Other decorative elements referred to the overseas destinations of shipping and the commerce it facilitated. A rather spectacular example was Norddeutsche Lloyd's massive 1901–1909 office in Bremen, for which house architect and ship interior designer Johann Poppe had conceived a heavy German Renaissance guise. The building contained a ticketing office, various work spaces and meeting rooms, and even a museum of the line's history. The building's eye-catching gables, clock tower, and richly decorated bay windows contained not only all kinds of nautical imagery, but also allegorical representations of commerce, shipping, the five continents, and generic foreign lands. Neptune was present as well, as was a 'peace goddess'; a large frieze depicted the firm's different activities (migration, Bremen's port, shipbuilding) under the motto 'Commerce and shipping unite all nations'.[70]

67 'The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company's offices'; photographs of the Anchor Line building are accessible through Historic Environment Scotland: Historic Environment Scotland, Edinburgh, Canmore database, photographs of the Anchor Line building (1909), available at https://canmore.org.uk/site/147055 (accessed 19 January 2022).

68 'Lloyd-gebouw in Amsterdam'.

69 Marsden and Smith, *Engineering empires*, p. 245; A.L.R., 'Hotel de la Compagnie Générale Transatlantique'.

70 *Die Entwickelung des Norddeutschen Lloyd*, pp. 145–157.

Figure 20 **After passing through the gate of the Afrikahaus, guarded by the statue of a Tanzanian warrior, one entered a small courtyard at the far end of which sits this main entrance. Two large cast-iron statues of African elephants and a tile panel with more wildlife referred to Woermann's links to western and southern Africa. They formed a marked contrast with the office's otherwise business-like appearance and plain glazed bricks.**

The emphasis on internationalism and peaceful contact was typical, as mentioned before, and was reinforced by the fact that all shipping lines reverted to nautical and classical imagery. Marseille's exchange building even honoured a canon of European seafarers including Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Abel Tasman and Thomas Cook in its metopes.

World War I complicated the conventions, as the Cunard office in Liverpool shows. Finished in 1916, its overhanging cornice and rectangular shape evoked the Farnese palace in Rome. Together with the office of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board and the Royal Liver Building, it formed the 'Three Graces' marking the Liverpool pierhead. The Cunard office's exterior façade contained sculptured representations of zodiac signs, Neptune, and 'typical faces from distant lands, such as the negro, the American Indian, the Australia[n] aborigine, and others'.[71] However, instead of the common coats of arms of other shipping nations, only those of the Allied powers were included.[72]

Explicit colonial references were less common. The Afrikahaus constructed in 1899 in Hamburg for the C. Woermann merchant house, allied to the shipping line of the same name, contained a statue of a Tanzanian warrior and two cast-iron elephants in its entrance and court (Figure 20).[73] In the building's conference room hung a painting of a ship set for Congo, and a plaque commemorating the employees killed in Germany and its colonies in World War I.[74] The India Buildings in Liverpool, built in the 1920s by the Blue Funnel Line, were named after the line's main destination and replaced an older office carrying the same name.[75]

More explicit were the decorative programmes of two Dutch offices. Most famous is the Scheepvaarthuis, or 'Shipping House', built as the office of five Amsterdam shipping lines in 1913–1916. Jo van der Mey, a pupil of Ed Cuypers (see Chapter 3), led a consortium of Dutch artists. As a number of them became prominent members of the aforementioned Amsterdamse School, the building is often interpreted as the first building originating from this movement. The Scheepvaarthuis was an example of 'brick expressionism', evocative and with much space for detailed decorations. A brochure positioned the building in the Dutch maritime history of the seventeenth-century 'Golden Age', presenting it as the modern rebirth of

71 'The Cunard new offices'.

72 Ibid.

73 Möhle, 'Mit Branntwein und Gewehr', p. 39.

74 Brackmann, *Fünfzig Jahre*, pp. 64–65, 120–121.

75 Falkus, *The Blue Funnel legend*, pp. 165, 248.

the 'trading, seafaring Netherlands'.[76] Between them, the five firms housed in the building covered much of the globe; however, in its architectural sculpture, the building combined generic nautical imagery with a strong emphasis on the Dutch colonial enterprise. The façades were outfitted with statues of historic figures from Dutch maritime and colonial history and, in the main meeting room, wooden panels depicted the old offices of the Dutch East and West India Companies and the coats of arms of Batavia and Paramaribo, the two colonial capitals of the Dutch empire.[77] Meanwhile, in The Hague, the Rotterdamsche Lloyd's branch office (1932) referenced the Dutch East Indies even more explicitly. Its façades were outfitted with sculptural personifications of the Indies and the main ports on the Rotterdam–Batavia line. Inside, a large mosaic depicted the line's staff: a panel representing the 'loading' of ships contained Indonesian servants and porters while the 'unloading' was represented by Dutch personnel such as a mechanic, inspector, and carpenter.[78]

Thanks to their nautical and maritime decorations and their function of ticketing office, the offices of shipping lines shared many characteristics and would have been readily recognisable in any European street. The language of steam and global shipping was inherently linked to some idea of modernity and civilisation. At the same time, timing and national context did exert their influence. It was no coincidence that in both Dutch ships and in Dutch offices, colonial themes were articulated as explicitly as they were: seafaring and the nationalist conception of the Dutch 'Golden Age' were inextricably linked.

This particularity is true as well for the office to be discussed in Part II: the German line HAPAG's office in Hamburg. It was erected between 1899 and 1903 and subsequently doubled in size after 1912. Overseas colonialism had its place there as well, but the building mainly constituted the more generic ideology of the German empire's 'place under the sun' as envisioned by Emperor Wilhelm II.

Part II. The HAPAG head office in Hamburg

On the eve of World War I, the world's biggest shipping line was neither British, nor was it American or French. It was German and operated from Hamburg

76 Hirsch Rzn., *Het Scheepvaarthuis* [no page numbers].
77 Ibid.
78 Kroon and Wagtberg Hansen, *Sporen van smaragd*, pp. 88–91.

under the name HAPAG, short for Hamburg-Amerikanische Packetfahrt Actiengesellschaft, or Hamburg-Amerika Linie. Although Hamburg was a quintessential port city, this dominance might be unexpected as Germany was a latecomer on the colonial stage and came into existence as a result of wars with its neighbours rather than expansion overseas. However, it was precisely as an important player in the globalisation of the world that the German empire developed, and shipping was an integral part of its economic influence.

Because of the important representational function of offices, the analysis of HAPAG's head office focuses on the architectural concerns behind its erection as the main way in which this building came to represent imperial Germany. The building arose at a time when ideas about the desirable architectural style were changing, but was also influenced by the official architecture from the imperial capital, Berlin. As one of Hamburg's eye-catching buildings, the office also figured in guidebooks and the local press as a proud 'Hanseatic' emblem.

The German imperial 'gate to the world'

With regard to Germany, 'empire' has long denoted the land-based empire founded in 1871 rather than the colonial empire it acquired soon after, leaving aside the association of the term with the Third Reich. However, recent research has tied metropolitan German 'imperial' history firmly to its overseas 'colonial' history by showing that the German colonial enterprise was inseparable from the political, cultural, and social developments within the German empire in Europe.[79] Sebastian Conrad has explicitly ascribed the making of Germany as a nation-state in the late nineteenth century to the globalisation of the period: transnational connections to global politics, the German colonies, and overseas German migrant communities all contributed to the formation of German nationhood.[80] The integration of Germany in the world economy was heavily politicised.[81] Moreover, as discussed in many other instances in this study, there were plenty of transnational channels through which Germans participated in imperialism before and beside the formal German colonies: trade, industry, science, missions. For instance, the millions of German emigrants and their descendants in Brazil, the United States, Russia, and Australia were seen as *Auslanddeutsche* ('Germans abroad') who lived in German 'colonies' that were linked to the

79 Gissibl, 'Imagination and beyond', pp. 160–161.
80 Conrad, *Globalisation and the nation*, pp. 1–26.
81 Petersson, 'Das Kaiserreich', pp. 61–65.

fatherland not only through culture and descent but also by the teachers and ministers sent out by the German (church) authorities.[82]

The most useful conception of all these different 'imperial' German endeavours in the period 1880–1914 is to consider a broad German expansionism in which colonialism was as important as the build-up of naval capabilities, trading policies, and the competitive German economy. The *Weltpolitik* that Emperor Wilhelm II announced in 1896 is the most familiar expression of this expansionist drive, conceived as a competition against the dominant British, American, and Russian empires.

As a result of German expansionism, German society circa 1900 was 'saturated with the citations of colonialism overseas'.[83] German nationhood was constructed in racial terms by distinguishing ethnic Germans as much from black Africans as from Slavs and Jews; while in Germany similar forms of colonial propaganda as found in other countries flourished, produced by pro-colonial lobby associations often linked to the state.[84] Even before the German nation-state was formed and German colonies were acquired, colonial 'fantasies' that circulated in culture, allowed the contours of a German nationhood to be defined.[85]

Within the German empire, ports like Bremen and Hamburg played an important role. On the back of Germany's industrial development – and understood as the assertion of German economic might – German shipping quickly grew in the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1913, it stood at almost 11 per cent of global tonnage, second only to the United Kingdom.[86] By the late nineteenth century, Hamburg, an old Hanseatic trade city, had developed into a port of global significance with especially strong connections to the United Kingdom and the Americas. Canals, rivers, and railways connected it to a hinterland stretching deep into Central and Eastern Europe and beyond – the projected Berlin–Baghdad railway is more accurately described as a Hamburg–Basra railway – and Hamburg was one of Europe's main emigration ports, although it came behind Bremen in that respect.[87]

With its specialised trading houses and shipping firms, Hamburg became Germany's prime colonial port.[88] Industries developed to process the many

82 Naranch, 'Inventing the *Auslanddeutsche*'; Manz, 'Diaspora and Weltpolitik'.

83 Eley, 'Empire by land or by sea?', pp. 19–27.

84 Sweeney, 'The racial economy of Weltpolitik'; Short, *Magic lantern empire*, pp. 1–21; Ciarlo, 'Mass-marketing the empire', p. 190.

85 Zantop, *Colonial fantasies*, pp. 1–8.

86 Rübner, *Konzentration und Krise*, pp. 25–28, 443.

87 McMeekin, *The Berlin–Baghdad Express*, p. 47.

88 Ruppenthal, *Kolonialismus*, pp. 72–81.

overseas imports, from ores and timber to rice, oilseeds, and coffee.[89] When Hamburg's shipbuilding and chemical industries and its population size (which tripled to over one million between 1871 and 1910) are added to these distinctions, it is easy to understand why the city government compared Hamburg to Venice and why historians have likened the city to Glasgow as the German empire's 'second city'.[90]

Despite this comparison, Hamburg came nowhere near Glasgow's integration in the imperial economy, as the share of the German colonies in the city's imports was minimal.[91] Hamburg was more important to German colonialism than German colonialism was to Hamburg. Rather, the city was the stepping-stone for a broad imperial expansionism of which formal colonialism was but one aspect. Consequently, Hamburg called itself the *Welthafenstadt*, 'world port city'.[92] Indeed, Emperor Wilhelm II favoured the city, which he often visited, and was conversely received with full honours by the city elite who enthusiastically supported his plans for expanding the German navy, at least initially.[93]

Hamburg's position as the German empire's most important port heavily influenced the built environment of the city. It was a republican 'free city' that joined the German empire in 1871 and remained outside of the *Zollverein* customs area until 1888, negotiating a hefty price for its admission: the construction, with government aid, of a new free port zone with a high-tech warehousing district, the *Speicherstadt*. The use of a brick architecture inspired by North German Gothic architecture and Hamburg's Hanseatic past gave the district a relatively coherent appearance.[94] In the early twentieth century this style was echoed by the works of city architect Fritz Schumacher and, in a more chauvinist form, the oeuvre of architect Fritz Höger, both of whom were involved in the HAPAG office discussed below.

Many more buildings reminded the Hamburg public of the city's trade relations. The town hall and exchange mentioned in Chapter 2 were outfitted with architectural sculpture and murals depicting the continents and cities that Hamburg traded with. The city centre was dotted with offices of merchant houses, shipping lines, and banks, many named after the territory with which business was conducted: besides the Afrikahaus, there was

89 Jerchow, 'Handel, Schiffahrt und Gewerbe'.

90 Postel, 'Deutsche Seehandels- und Flottenpolitik'; Lange, *Architekturführer Hamburg*, p. 14; Ruppenthal, *Kolonialismus*, pp. 81–83.

91 Möhle, 'Paläste des Wohlbefindens', p. 34.

92 Amenda, 'Welthafenstadt', pp. 138–139.

93 Von Elsner, *Kaisertage*, pp. 416–498.

94 Schütte, 'Die Speicherstadt'; Lange, 'Die Hamburger Speicherstadt'.

also a Sudanhaus, a Levantehaus, and an Asia-Haus, among others.[95] An ersatz pagoda crowned the so-called Ostasiahaus, an emporium of East Asian products.[96]

The overseas world was also on display in various places. Hamburg is connected with the name of Carl Hagenbeck, the animal trader and zoo founder who was one of Europe's foremost organisers of touring ethnological exhibitions of 'foreign' people from 1874 onwards.[97] In several offices and warehouses, companies exhibited samples of overseas products and ethnographic objects.[98] These complemented the city's ethnographic museum founded in 1878.[99] One of the museum's corner pavilions was decorated with relief sculpture of five 'human types' of non-European people whose culture was on display within.[100]

Finally, other notable, modern buildings in the cityscape underlined Hamburg's attachment to the German empire rather than its connections to overseas. The town hall, for instance, also contained sculpture of notable German emperors. Another example was the new building for the Hanseatic High Court, which represented Hamburg in the imperial government in legal matters, with its baroque appearance purposely referencing official imperial architecture in Berlin.[101] Recent railway stations connected Hamburg to the rest of Germany both in reality and symbolically; the 1901–1903 Dammtor station was conceived as the city's *Kaiserbahnhof* to receive the emperor and foreign dignitaries.[102] In addition, large monuments to Emperor Wilhelm I at the foot of the town hall (1902–1903) and to Bismarck on a hill visible from the Elbe (1905) commemorated these men and the foundation of the empire.[103]

HAPAG, Albert Ballin, and the emperor

It was in Hamburg that, in 1847, a number of shipowners founded the HAPAG or Hamburg-Amerikanische Packetfahrt Actiengesellschaft. As its full name suggests, it was conceived as a line between Hamburg and the United States.

95 Lange, *Das Hamburger Kontorhaus*, p. 45.
96 Bertram, *Mein Hamburg*, pp. 97–98.
97 Honold, 'Der Exot und sein Publikum', p. 358.
98 Maak, 'Museen in Kontoren und Speicher'.
99 Penny, *Objects of culture*, pp. 43–46.
100 Thilenius, *Das Hamburgische Museum*, p. 92.
101 Umbach, 'A tale of second cities', pp. 679–683.
102 Dehio, *Handbuch*, p. 46.
103 *Hamburg und seine Bauten*, vol. I (1914) pp. 594–601.

From the start, it was seen as a national 'German' undertaking, supposed to carve out a position in the British-dominated trans-Atlantic routes (until the 1840s, British ships were still dominant in the Hamburg harbour) and especially the emigration business from which Bremen and other cities such as Le Havre and Antwerp profited.[104] HAPAG slowly grew in the following decades, switching to steam ships in the 1850s and opening new lines to cities in the United States and the Caribbean. But its development really took off in 1886 with the tenure of energetic manager and, later, general director Albert Ballin (1857–1918). At that time, HAPAG was relatively small compared to the great British and French lines, smaller even than its Bremen competitor the Norddeutsche Lloyd. Under Ballin, the son of a Jewish emigrant from Denmark, HAPAG opened new lines and put into use ever-larger ships (many of them Clyde-built) to transport passengers and freight. In some cases, this growth was enabled by compromise and deliberation with other firms; but in many others, a range of aggressive expansion and acquisition strategies was used. By 1900, HAPAG had become the world's largest shipping company in terms of tonnage.[105]

Development was especially rapid between 1897 and 1914 when, having initially been an Atlantic line, the firm warped into a massive global shipping company offering passenger services, cargo transport, and cruises. The Atlantic ocean and its emigration business remained HAPAG's core territory, in which new lines to Central and South America were opened; however, in short order East Asia (mainly China), the Middle East and Persian Gulf, and ports in Africa were added to HAPAG's destinations.[106] HAPAG thus certainly had links to German colonialism; besides the shipping lines, it was also involved with colonial activities at home, as can be seen in Ballin's membership of the German Colonial Society, a lobby association, and the fact HAPAG was supposed to give lectures on shipping in Hamburg's colonial institute.[107]

However, like Hamburg itself, HAPAG's ambitions were larger and older than German colonialism. In fact, HAPAG and the almost equally sized Lloyd were unique in that they became self-proclaimed *Universalreedereien*, 'universal shipping lines' with connections to almost every continent, out of economic motivations. Usually, lines focused on certain regions of the globe, and those that did develop global shipping networks similar to HAPAG did

104 Cecil, *Albert Ballin*, pp. 7–14, 20–21; Schram, *Hamburg*, p. 225.
105 Cecil, *Albert Ballin*, pp. 22–26; Broeze, 'Albert Ballin', p. 137.
106 Pelc, 'Von Hamburg um die Welt'; Cecil, *Albert Ballin*, p. 67
107 Cecil, *Albert Ballin*, p. 133; Ruppenthal, *Kolonialismus*, pp. 133–135.

so because of political incentives rather than commercial ambitions like HAPAG and Lloyd.[108] HAPAG's slogan *Mein Feld ist die Welt* – 'The world is my oyster' – echoed both Wilhelm's Weltpolitik and Hamburg's image as a Welthafenstadt.

HAPAG is thus best understood as an exponent of Germany's broad imperial expansion: it operated in an imperial space formed by commercial impact and spheres of influence. The line's rapid growth sprouted from the force of German economic development and the global projection of influence this enabled, not unlike other high-profile German firms such as steel and arms manufacturer Krupp.[109] Therefore, HAPAG was widely seen as a national asset. In 1901, HAPAG's in-house magazine proudly reported that an imperial report had included the firm as one of ten 'giant companies' that intimately connected 'private and public interests'; a company history stated that HAPAG benefited the 'entire German economic life'.[110] Under protection of the imperial eagle, a 1911 newspaper article read, HAPAG had made 'peaceful conquests', and in line with great men such as Bismarck, Ballin invariably had the national interest at heart; for example, when HAPAG transported the German troops in the military campaign that quelled the Boxer uprising in China.[111] The following quote from a 1911 publication on Hamburg's share in international shipping is exemplary:

> The fiction, that this [the competition in international shipping] was just about private economic contests, was never allowed to be breached. Yet they were struggles for being or not-being – not of the firms themselves, but of the well-being of nations. […] The walls of the Middle Kingdom, that had separated it from the rest of the world, opened, the streets of Nippon were now visited by strangers from the old and the new world, and in the temples on the Ganges the languages of the *Abendland* [Europe] could be heard. The world has become ours. Mein Feld ist die Welt. That is not only the will to power, that is the word of domination of lands and seas, which opened to the ships, when they brought people and goods.[112]

108 Broeze, 'Albert Ballin', pp. 145–147.

109 On Krupp (which also produced propeller shafts for HAPAG), see Harold, *Krupp*, pp. 27, 38, 51–54, 91–92, 108–110.

110 Staatsarchiv Hamburg (SAH), library, inv.no. Z341/0001, 'Was verdient Hamburg durch die Hamburg-Amerika Linie?', *Zeitschrift der Hamburg-Amerika Linie* (20 September 1901) p. 21; Himer, *Geschichte* (1905) pp. 43, 45.

111 'Albert Ballin'.

112 Goetz, *25 Jahre*, pp. 5, 317.

The uncompromising, Nietzschean terms in which international shipping was described in the citation were typical of late imperial rhetoric in Germany, as were the references to the opening-up of non-European societies to an unstoppable integration into a global economy. This aggressive public discourse on expansion and political economy seems hyperbolic. But HAPAG's expansion did arouse considerable suspicion abroad – the British Admiralty felt very threatened by the possible use of HAPAG steamers as auxiliary cruisers in wartime, and during the Russo-Japanese war (1904–1905), Britain limited the coal supplies for HAPAG ships as it suspected Germany of siding with Russia.[113] At the same time, the treatise quoted above remains ambivalent about what exactly 'ours' means, as it alternated references to the (German) nation, European civilisation, and HAPAG itself. Another company history likewise attributed HAPAG's rapid growth in East Asia to both the German emperor's 'deliberate policies' and the general unlocking of China for 'European trade'.[114]

The connection between HAPAG and the empire was reinforced by Ballin's relationship with Wilhelm II. Ballin was one of a small number of prominent bourgeois businessmen with whom the emperor was personally acquainted. Wilhelm's fascination with the sea is well known, expressed in statements declaring that Germany's future was 'on the water'. Although his military ambitions were most striking, they were matched by his interest in the merchant shipping of HAPAG and Lloyd and its contribution to German power: 'Just bring our compatriots to sea', he allegedly told Ballin, 'this will bring the nation and your firm rich rewards'.[115] At times, the emperor would intervene in HAPAG's dealings with other firms and provide Ballin with unsolicited advice, and although some contemporaries argued the relationship with the ambitious emperor mainly harmed HAPAG in the end, it was an immense source of prestige for the firm and Ballin. HAPAG regularly hosted the emperor and his retinue and the emperor occasionally even visited Ballin at home.[116] Since 1909, Ballin's house was a magnificent villa in the Rotherbaum district north-west of the old city, just behind the ethnographic museum. It was designed by the architectural firm of Werner Lundt and Georg Kallmorgen, who had also designed the High Court mentioned above.[117] Like the courthouse, the villa stood out with its classicist

113 Grimmer-Solem, *Learning empire*, pp. 265, 322.
114 Himer, *Die Hamburg-Amerika Linie*, p. 101.
115 Goetz, *25 Jahre*, p. 319.
116 Cecil, *Albert Ballin*, pp. 99–109; Wiborg, *Albert Ballin*, p. 77.
117 *Hamburg und seine Bauten*, vol. I (1914) p. 155.

sandstone façades, and at least one contemporary newspaper recognised its connections to Berlin and the court when it described it as 'Little Potsdam'.[118] For the emperor, Ballin exemplified the regard in which he held Hamburg and its mythic 'Hanseatic' history. In seeking the company and advice of Ballin, who was Jewish, he went against the dominant antisemitism among the conservative Prussian nobility, although his own attitude towards Jews remained highly ambivalent.[119]

HAPAG returned the favour. As mentioned above, from the 1880s the large German liners became symbols of newfound national destiny and the claim to a German 'place under the sun'. Flagships named *Deutschland* or *Kaiserin Auguste Victoria* and busts of the emperor in the interior made this position clear.[120] Ships became 'floating ambassadors', distinguished by their speed and technological innovations; nevertheless, fast did not necessarily equal comfortable, and HAPAG instead decided to focus on size and luxury. This resulted in the construction of the *Imperator* class of ships in 1910, three of the largest passenger liners ever, named *Imperator* (1912), *Vaterland* (1913), and *Bismarck* (planned; 1914), that would almost double HAPAG's total capacity on the Atlantic. The construction and launch of the Hamburg-built vessels were accompanied by sophisticated public-relations campaigns, and the *Imperator* sported the figurehead of an imperial eagle holding the globe in its talons and bearing the 'Mein Feld ist die Welt' motto.[121]

'Business palace': HAPAG's first Alsterdamm office

HAPAG's presence in Hamburg was hard to miss. In the ever-growing port south of the Elbe, on the eve of World War I HAPAG's largest vessels were berthed at the Kaiser Wilhelm and Ellerholz docks. Yet HAPAG also operated in other locations in the port and in Cuxhaven, a hundred kilometres downstream at the mouth of the Elbe. Furthermore, between 1900 and 1907 HAPAG developed the *Auswandererhallen* emigrant station south of the city. Here, up to 5,000 prospective emigrants, mainly from Central and Eastern Europe, could be quarantined and await their departure. The station was equipped with its own churches and synagogue, kitchens, and all kinds of sober but pleasant amenities including gardens and recreational

118 Wiborg, *Albert Ballin*, p. 77; Cecil, *Albert Ballin*, p. 107.
119 Cecil, *Albert Ballin*, pp. 99–102.
120 Burgess, *Engines of empire*, pp. 249, 254–256.
121 Russell, 'Picturing the *Imperator*'.

facilities.[122] The station made the journey safer and more comfortable, but its construction was also motivated by the authorities' concerns for public hygiene in the city, which had experienced a disastrous cholera epidemic as late as 1892.[123]

HAPAG's offices were located in the city itself, away from the restless port. It moved to an office of its own for the first time in 1870, in the Deichstraße close to the old port.[124] A more symbolic milestone was the construction of its first purpose-built office in 1889–1890 in the Dovenfleet, on the canal that separated the city from the Speicherstadt warehousing district.[125]

The office was designed by Martin Haller (1835–1925), the city's most prominent architect. Haller was a citizen of Hamburg but had trained at the Berlin academy and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, at the time of Haussmann's urban interventions of the Second Empire.[126] Haller's international education, liberal political orientation, and preference for what he called 'luxury architecture' gave his architectural output a cosmopolitan, European outlook that translated into a Renaissance-inspired style heavily influenced by Italy and France.[127] His most prestigious achievement was the Hamburg town hall which would be finished in 1897, for which he led a consortium of architects, but his large oeuvre included dozens of villas, banks, public buildings such as the music hall, temporary pavilions, and many offices. In fact, Haller led the way in designing Hamburg's typical offices or *Kontorhäuser*, including the Afrikahaus. These office buildings with flexible interior layouts, modern amenities, and central stairwells were adopted from American examples. Together with British cities such as Liverpool, Hamburg was the first European city where they were implemented.[128]

Although the choice for Haller and the location thus made sense, the office already proved to be too small even before HAPAG moved into it and thus, a new building had to be found.[129] On Haller's suggestion, HAPAG decided on a new location on the Binnenalster lake.[130] The Binnenalster lay in the heart of the city, connected to the larger Außenalster to the north

122 *Hamburg und seine Bauten*, vol. II (1914) p. 49; *Die Auswanderer-Hallen*, pp. 12, 14–24.

123 Gelberg, *Auswanderung nach Übersee*, pp. 18–28.

124 Wiborg and Wiborg, *1847–1997*, p. 71.

125 Klemm, 'Einleitung', p. 11.

126 Klemm, '"… er gedenkt Architektonik zu studieren"'; Grolle, 'Martin Haller in Paris'.

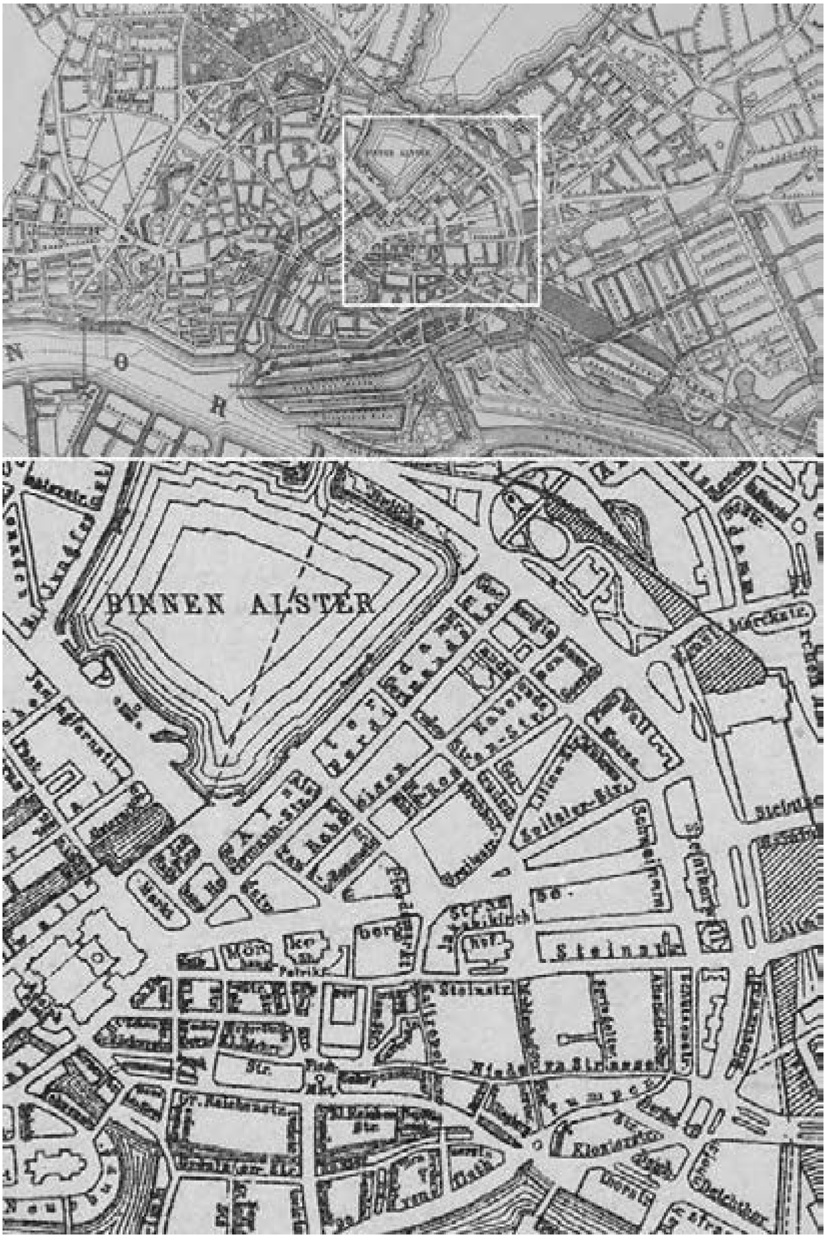
127 Von Behr, 'Belle Epoque an der Alster', p. 39; Mühlfried, *Baukunst*, pp. 143–150.

128 Lange, *Das Hamburger Kontorhaus*, pp. 12–13.

129 SAH, library, inv.no. Z341/0001, 'Das neue Verwaltungsgebäude der Hamburg-Amerika Linie', *Zeitschrift der Hamburg-Amerika Linie* (20 June 1903) 94–96, p. 94.

130 SAH, Haller family archive (622-1/33), inv.no. 49, memoirs of Martin Haller, vol. X, p. 87; HAPAG archive, inv.no. 163, board meeting minutes, vol. 12, (20 December 1899) pp. 323–324.

Figure 21 **Map of Hamburg from 1909. In the bottom view, the HAPAG office was located in the second of the three blocks along the Binnenalster. The town hall and exchange can be made out to the south-west, the railway station to the east. The previous office was located on the canal just visible to the south, that separated the city from the warehousing district.**



and the smaller Kleine Alster to the south, which bordered the town hall square. Surrounded by tree-lined boulevards and the scene for recreation and festivities such as fireworks, concerts, and visits by the emperor, it was praised as 'Hamburg's greatest attraction' and an 'exemplary' example of urban greenery.[131] In late 1899, HAPAG purchased five properties in the Ferdinandstraße, whose gardens bordered the lake. The firm would turn them into one large plot with a building that was not faced away from, but towards the Binnenalster (Figure 21).[132]

Even if the site was only some 750 metres removed from the old office, it was a wholly different location: away from the warehouses and the port, and in the convivial atmosphere of the city centre and the Alster. The site was close to the central railway station and to the town hall, and to the shops and hotels of the centre. Indeed, initially the management had reservations about moving away from the docks, but the new site's low price, size, and representative location proved decisive.[133] Haller would have pushed for the location, as he had long been fascinated by the possibilities of the Binnenalster as the setting for grand projects, having proposed earlier in his career to build the city's art museum on an island in the lake or to locate the new town hall on its banks, evoking Venice.[134] According to one of HAPAG's directors in his memoirs, the critical Johannes Merck, the building was supposed to be 'above all, an imposing *Reklamegebäude* [literally 'advertisement building'] and, with its beautiful location on the Alster basin, 'draw the eye of all strangers'.[135] Haller produced and presented multiple designs between July 1900 and July 1901; by then, construction had already started and in early 1903, the office was put in use.[136]

The building's appearance was essential to its representative nature. Haller gave it an H-shaped plan, with one leg along the Alster, a connecting wing, and one leg in the Ferdinandstraße. The sandstone Ferdinandstraße elevation had a restrained, modern renaissance appearance with a relatively sober cornice. Between the second and third storeys, sculpted emblems

131 Konerding, 'Natürlicher Schmuck; *Richter's guide-books*, p. 22; Stübben, *Handbuch der Architektur*, p. 238.

132 *Jahresbericht der Hamburg-Amerikanischen Packetfahrt-Actien-Gesellschaft*, pp. 4–5.

133 SAH, Haller memoirs, vol. X, p. 87.

134 Krieger, 'Die Kunst', pp. 66–68.

135 SAH, Merck family archive (622-1/62), inv.no. II 8 Konv. 2, memoirs of Johannes Merck, vol. I (1920) p. 45.

136 SAH, Plankammer (720-1), inv.no. 1388-26 33, drawings by Haller and Geißler, sketch for Alsterdamm elevation (10 July 1900); various plans and sections (1 July 1901); HAPAG archive, inv.no. 163, board meeting minutes, vol. XIII (6 January 1903) p. 127.

represented what were called 'the most important seafaring nations'.[137] From left to right and grouped by geographic region and international political status, these were: China and Japan; Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico; Britain, France and Russia; the United States, Germany and Hamburg; Prussia, Austria-Hungary and Italy; the Netherlands, Belgium, and Norway-Sweden; and Spain and Portugal.[138] At first sight, this scheme seemed to promote some cosmopolitan vision, and the addition of American and Asian countries next to European states was relatively inclusive. However, in light of the earlier citation on international shipping, the sculpture also expressed the German empire's ambitions – especially given the fact that the two alliances that would go to war just over a decade after the building was finished were already grouped here as two opposing camps. The Ferdinandstraße entrance gave access to HAPAG's freight division and to the ticketing office for steerage passengers and was, therefore, meant to be used by merchants and lower-class migrants.[139]

The main entrance and main façade were those on the Alster (Figure 22). Here, the addition of corner pavilions and an attic made the building taller and more palatial, while sculpted ornaments, pediments, and rusticated lower storeys added relief to the façade. The large statues and the mansard roof betray the Beaux-Arts influence on Haller's work and gave the building an international, luxurious appearance. On the roof, a raised platform carried a top-heavy statue of Neptune. Equally striking were the four caryatids flanking the entrance, which carried the second-storey balcony and which represented 'by facial type, clothes and symbols, the continents of Africa, Asia, America and Australia, the destinations for German overseas shipping'.[140] As a later guidebook would have it, Africa was symbolised by 'a negro with an elephant's tusk; Asia; a Chinese female with a fan and a tea leaf; America: an Indian with a war axe; Australia: an *Australnegerin* [literally, 'Australian negress'] with a paddle and fruits' (Figure 23).[141] The implicit civilisational hierarchy put the almost nude Australia at the bottom and America, personified by a fully clothed and armed male figure, on top; but more significant is the fact that the African and Australasian figures seem to refer specifically to the German colonies in these continents. If Australasia was usually depicted as an Indigenous Australian or white

137 SAH, 'Das neue Verwaltungsgebäude', p. 96.

138 SAH, Plankammer, inv.no. 1388-26 33, drawings by Haller and Geißler, Ferdinandstraße elevation with hand-written legend (1 July 1901).

139 *Hamburg und seine Bauten*, vol. I (1914) p. 472.

140 SAH, 'Das neue Verwaltungsgebäude', p. 95.

141 Bertram, *Mein Hamburg*, pp. 93–94.

Figure 22 Elevation of the main façade of the office, on the Alster. The classical ornamentation and the large statuary added depth and detail to the otherwise even façade to exploit the office's visibility and underline the luxury and reliability that HAPAG offered its wealthiest passengers.

settler, here it was represented by a Polynesian woman who could be found in one of Germany's Pacific colonies, whereas the dress of the black woman suggested German East Africa.

Through a corridor, the main entrance led to the domed ticketing office for the affluent cabin passengers, the central room of the entire building. The dome's skylight was decorated with zodiac signs in stained glass, and the wall facing the clients as they entered contained a large mural of a Mercator world map on which HAPAG's lines were indicated. In general, for the interior furnishings, costly marble, maiolica, and mahogany were used; the plaster casts for the caryatids were apparently included in the main meeting room.[142]

The building conveyed the same atmosphere of fashionable, cosmopolitan luxury as HAPAG's ships, for whom the house architect was French designer Charles Mewès, who had also designed several Ritz hotels and the interiors

142 *Hamburg und seine Bauten*, vol. I (1914) p. 472; 'Das neue Verwaltungsgebäude der Hamburg-Amerika-Linie', *Hamburger Nachrichten*.

Figure 23 Photograph of the main entrance with the caryatids, representing from left to right Africa, Asia, America, and Australia. Encapsulated in the façade, they reminded clients and passers-by of the faraway worlds to which the office was connected in a globalised system of shipping and trade. The barefoot, bare-breasted statues of Africa and Australia contrasted with those of Asia and America, wearing shoes and clothes, following the conventions of portraying perceived differences in the level of civilisation.

for Ballin's villa.[143] Likewise, the new building set the standard for important HAPAG offices in other cities. Its New York office on Broadway, opened in 1908, had an opulent French Renaissance interior, and its London office (1908) in Cockspur Street at Trafalgar Square was outfitted with marble, wood-panelled interiors, and figurative sculpture portraying Germany, the United States, and different continents.[144] As discussed in Part I, similarly stately renaissance office buildings were very conventional in Western Europe and could also be found in Liverpool, Paris, or Amsterdam.

HAPAG extolled the virtues of the new building in its own publications. According to its in-house staff magazine, it was destined 'to play a large role

143 Russell, 'Picturing the *Imperator*', pp. 236–237; Wealleans, *Designing liners*, pp. 38–42, 65–66; SAH, Merck memoirs, vol. I, pp. 66–67.
144 'New offices'; 'The Hamburg-Amerika Linie building'.

in German traffic and economic life'.[145] In company histories, the building was hailed as 'a metropolitan business palace, a sandstone Renaissance structure'.[146] The local press echoed these sentiments. The *Hamburger Nachrichten* called it a monumental building, in which the many references to overseas countries underlined HAPAG's role in global shipping. 'How many globe-spanning threads converge at this spot of Hamburg soil! [...] The Packetfahrt's new home is a monument, that expresses its global significance in imposing ways; more generally it is also a powerful sign for the meaning of Hamburg as a trade emporium'.[147]

The building also influenced the urban landscape. Setting a trend, it drew other office buildings, which had previously been clustered close to the old port, to the surroundings of the Alster and thus contributed to the formation of a business-oriented 'City' in Hamburg.[148] With its office, HAPAG also inserted itself in the leisure atmosphere of the Alster. As the building could only be appreciated fully from the lake, in almost all images it is shown with the water in the foreground, small rowing or sailing boats cruising before it. The building and its oversized decorations were henceforth integrated in the cityscape as portrayed in guidebooks and city descriptions. The 1907 guidebook by Hamburg's tourist office included the building in its first walking route, drawing attention to the 'statues of natives of the four extra-European continents with their main products'; the 1912 edition also added the office on its map.[149] A later local history reminisced about the claims to global significance the building made with its inscription of 'Mein Feld ist die Welt', its Neptune statue, and its caryatids.[150]

The second Alsterdamm office

Despite the positive reception of the new building, it was soon outdated. Although it accommodated a staff of almost 500 in 1907 (against the approximately 150 of the old building), HAPAG outgrew the building almost immediately.[151] According to Merck, the emphasis on appearance had come at the cost of more practical requirements.[152] Haller admitted the building was

145 SAH, 'Das neue Verwaltungsgebäude', p. 95.
146 Himer, *Geschichte* (1905) pp. 9, 44; Himer, *Die Hamburg-Amerika Linie*, pp. 5, 119.
147 'Das neue Verwaltungsgebäude', *Hamburger Nachrichten*.
148 Lange, *Das Hamburger Kontorhaus*, pp. 12–13, 159–160.
149 *Führer durch Hamburg* (1907) pp. 9, 25; *Führer durch Hamburg* (1912) p. 38.
150 Bertram, *Mein Hamburg*, pp. 93–94.
151 Himer, *Die Hamburg-Amerika*, p. 119.
152 SAH, Merck memoirs, vol. I, p. 45.

too small but blamed HAPAG, remembering the entire construction process as difficult in his memoirs.[153] In 1905, HAPAG added an extra storey to the central wing, and in 1905 and 1906 purchased the adjacent properties up to the Gertrudenstraße for an extension.[154] Despite his apparent misgivings Haller was selected for the job of designing the extension and, in July 1907, he submitted a new plan to the municipal building authorities.[155] The design would more than double the building in size by extending it all the way to the Gertrudenstraße, the new façades mirroring the existing ones to form one symmetrical elevation. The Alsterdamm façade kept its caryatids, but they were now dwarfed by a protruding central entrance and a large dome that rose above it.

Although the municipality approved the design, it was never realised as 1907 saw an economic recession that required HAPAG to cut costs.[156] Only in 1912 did Ballin raise the issue again. But at that point, architectural and stylistic preferences were changing both internationally and in Germany. Since the 1890s, art nouveau had challenged the dominance of historicism in architecture, while the 1900s and 1910s saw the onset of what was to become the modernist movement, which did away with historicism and decorative elements. The desire to generously apply ornaments to objects, wrote the Viennese architect Adolf Loos polemically in 1908, was fit for 'primitive' peoples, but unsuitable for modern society.[157] In Hamburg, Fritz Schumacher was appointed city architect in 1909. A founding member of the Deutsche Werkbund, the influential association of designers and artists striving to improve German industrial design, Schumacher rejected outright historicism and instead sought to update local forms and materials, most of all brick, to modern society's needs.[158] Around the same time, Fritz Höger, an architect who had worked in Lundt & Kallmorgen's practice, was setting a related reformist trend with his office buildings in the city centre and his publications on the value of a *Heimat*-oriented architecture for which he drew on Hamburg's history and traditional building materials, especially the bricks rooted in the North German soil.[159]

153 SAH, Haller memoirs, vol. X, p. 88.

154 Mühlfried, *Baukunst*, p. 574; Herschel, *HAPAG. Entwicklung und Bedeutung*, p. 29; SAH, HAPAG archive, inv.no. 163, board meeting minutes, vol. 13 (26 November 1906) p. 325.

155 Bezirksamt Hamburg-Mitte (BHM), Fachamt Bauprüfung, inv.no. 16272, file on Ferdinandstraße 56, vol. I, appendix 99, existing and proposed elevations (2 July 1907).

156 Fischer, *Fritz Schumacher*, pp. 39–40; Kurt Himer, *Geschichte* (1927) pp. 104–105.

157 Loos, *Sämtliche Schriften*, pp. 276–288.

158 Jenkins, *Provincial modernity*, pp. 261–291.

159 Turtenwald, *Fritz Höger*, pp. 69–72.

HAPAG did not jump on the avant-garde bandwagon, but could not ignore it either. Although the 1903 office had been received well, its striking statuary had also been ridiculed as tasteless; the Neptune statue was mocked as 'Ballin with his oyster fork' and had been criticised in the city parliament.[160] Mewès's historicist interiors for the *Imperator* and the *Vaterland* (launched in 1913 and 1914) came under criticism too – some critics, such as Schumacher, objected to the fact that the interiors were produced outside of Germany. In response, Ballin contacted Schumacher but also the notable architect (and Prussian government official) Hermann Muthesius, who was involved with the Werkbund, about possible German designers and firms to fit future ships.[161] The nationalist element is important here, as the Werkbund with its government connections had a clear national goal of improving the competitiveness of the German economy.[162]

Similar considerations were in play when it came to the extension of the office in 1912. The previous architect, the aging Haller, was not even considered for the extension, much to his regret.[163] Instead, in July 1912, the abovementioned Lundt & Kallmorgen submitted a design for a new extension that would entirely absorb the old office.[164] HAPAG approved of the scheme, but sought the advice of renowned architect Gabriel von Seidl for its façades. Von Seidl was famous for his picturesque museums and mansions in Munich and other South German cities. However, at the time he was also working on Bremen's new town hall, switching South for North German historicism of a sterner, brick appearance.[165] In August 1912, Von Seidl produced a façade for HAPAG, called true North German 'Heimatkunst' with corner turrets by (aforementioned) director Merck; city architect Schumacher likewise recalled it as a 'charming brick building'.[166] But, apparently at Ballin's request, the reformer Fritz Höger also submitted a design for a 'brick building with an enormous tower'.[167]

160 SAH, Merck memoirs vol. I, p. 44; 'Burgerschaft 29. Sitzung'.

161 Schumacher, *Stufen des Lebens*, pp. 320–321; Wealleans, *Designing liners*, p. 66.

162 Maciuika, 'The Prussian commerce ministry'.

163 SAH, Haller memoirs, vol. X, p. 91.

164 SAH, HAPAG archive, inv.no. 163, board meeting minutes, vol. XIV (2 July 1912) pp. 114–115.

165 Schickel, 'Seidl, Gabriel Ritter von'.

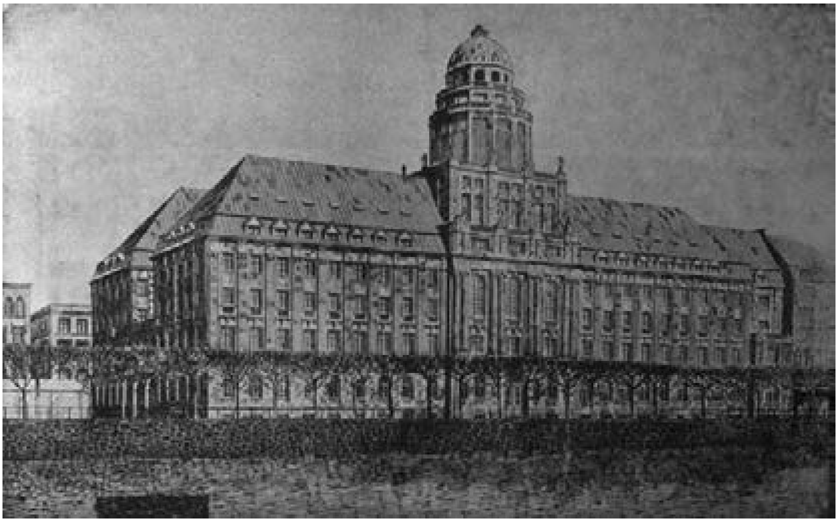
166 SAH, Merck memoirs, vol. I, p. 45; Schumacher, *Stufen des Lebens*, p. 403. Merck's private memoirs are the most complete account of the events but have to be used with caution, as he detested both Ballin, partly out of antisemitism, and the eventual architect, Fritz Höger. Still, the memoirs provide a valuable insider's perspective and are corroborated on important points by other sources such as Schumacher. In using Merck's memoirs I follow Lamar Cecil in his biography on Ballin: Cecil, *Albert Ballin*, p. 359.

167 SAH, Merck memoirs, vol. I, pp. 45–46; Schumacher, *Stufen*, p. 403.

Figure 24 Drawing of a design for the HAPAG office by Höger. The brick surfaces and decorations and 'Hanseatic' gables were characteristic of Höger's work. Given the building's large size, it would have stood out from the other, more traditional architecture on the Alster.

As Höger championed a proudly localised 'Hanseatic' architecture, for him the opportunity to design the seat of the city's most important company must have been irresistible; meanwhile, for HAPAG it would have provided a way to engage with the stylistic and nationalist concerns of the period. It is unsure if any of the drawings Höger later published without commentary were of this design, but in all likelihood it was along the lines of an undated

Figure 25 **Drawing of the new design published in January 1913 in an architecture journal, which attributed it to Höger. The general layout is the same as Höger's undated drawing (Figure 24), but the appearance is very different: brick was replaced by stone, piers by pilasters, and instead of 'Hanseatic' gables, the tower is topped by statues and a dome.**



drawing where which he proposed a rhythmic façade of brick piers and used oversized, historicising gables to close off the various gable roofs (Figure 24).[168]

Initially HAPAG selected Von Seidl's design. However, not wanting to keep a young architect from the assignment, Von Seidl proposed to cooperate with Höger by entrusting him with the execution.[169] By December, opinion pieces in the press confirmed this arrangement. Yet they also focused on the chosen materials, describing the design as stone instead of brick architecture.[170] Apparently, the plans had been adjusted in the meantime. This was due to an intervention by the municipal building authorities under Schumacher, who prohibited the use of exposed bricks on the conspicuous site on the Alster where plaster and stone dominated.[171]

However, on 20 December, HAPAG announced that, after long deliberation, they had to reject Von Seidl and his 'brick façade' altogether and award

168 Höger, *Bauwerke und Entwürfe*, p. 37.
169 Schumacher, *Stufen des Lebens*, p. 403.
170 Bröcker, 'Zu den Neubauten'; Rambatz, 'Ein Wort zu der Stellung'.
171 Schumacher, *Hamburg*, p. 15.

Höger the commission.[172] On the 28th, the municipal building authorities indeed received HAPAG's request for a building permit with drawings for a 'preliminary plan' by Höger, of which some originated already from early November.[173]

The submitted plans, illustrations of which surfaced in the press in January 1913 (Figure 25), projected a more austere building with colossal pilasters and a great dome-topped tower, which dominated the roof and, in the process, the entire Alster. It was twice as wide and significantly taller than the old building; Haller's Ferdinandstraße elevation would remain intact, but the Alsterdamm elevation would be subsumed by the extension. The design reads as an updated version of Höger's first proposal, but it was a very different building from his trademark brick architecture that had characterised that design. Furthermore, HAPAG's justification for rejecting Von Seidl's design was unfair, since it was already past the stage of a brick appearance.

Merck explained the discrepancy by stating that the capricious Ballin had become enamoured by a design by Höger after all, and that he slandered Von Seidl and 'his *verrückten* brick building!'.[174] Indeed, Ballin would also entrust Höger with designing a house on his country estate – but as this happened only a year later, it seems to have been a consequence rather than a cause for the assignment.[175] The more important explanation for the change of heart is provided in Alfred Kamphausen's biography of Höger: the 'overpowering pillar decoration' was a suggestion of Emperor Wilhelm.[176] Seeing himself as the patron of German culture, Wilhelm often intervened in architectural matters of state buildings according to his staunchly conservative preferences.[177] The emperor would have had no reservations about providing Ballin with such 'improvements' and had visited the old office soon after its completion.[178] On his part, Ballin would have no reservations about following the emperor's suggestions: in 1903, he had refrained from an art nouveau ship interior because Wilhelm objected.[179] The two men

172 'Der Neubau'.

173 BHM, file on Ferdinandstraße 56, vol. II, request for building permission by HAPAG (28 December 1912); floor plans for preliminary plan (6 November 1912).

174 SAH, Merck memoirs, vol. I, pp. 45–46.

175 Amtsarchiv Trittau, inv.no. A1-186, request for building permit by Höger (23 July 1913).

176 Kamphausen, *Der Baumeister Fritz Höger*, p. 22. Kamphausen does not provide a reference, but he drew on interviews with former employees of Höger's for his book.

177 Cecil, *Wilhelm II*, pp. 35–44; see Seidel, *Der Kaiser und die Kunst*.

178 'Der Kaiser bei der Hamburg-Amerika Linie'.

179 Russell, 'Picturing the *Imperator*', p. 237.

had one of their regular meetings in mid-December, during which the building design might have come up.[180] Possibly the emperor exerted his influence partially through Berlin city architect Ludwig Hoffmann, one of his favourites who, Merck and Schumacher concur, also contributed to Höger's design.[181] In all likelihood, Höger's design underwent this Berlin influence even before it was officially chosen over that of Von Seidl, who appears to have become the scapegoat, undeservedly associated with brick designs. As the drawings that Höger submitted to the municipality dated from November, Ballin seems to have been in deliberation with him behind the scenes and received the feedback of the emperor and Hoffmann behind Von Seidl's back.

An imperial office

More important than the Byzantine design process were its implications. Stylistically, the projected new building moved away from both the international renaissance luxury of the old building and many other offices in European cities, and from the localist brick architecture of Höger. Instead, it offered an imperial 'Wilhelmine' classicism. Its monumental, imposing appearance went far beyond representing its function as the office building for a shipping firm, and instead claimed HAPAG's importance in the political economy of the German empire. If Haller's building represented HAPAG's bread and butter – shipping networks, international contacts, and exotic cultures – the new building represented the outcome of these activities: power, wealth, and influence.

The appearance of the new office was more in line with the High Court building in Hamburg or even Peter Behrens' well-known German embassy in St Petersburg (1911–1913).[182] The office that Behrens designed for the German industrial giant of Mannesmann in Düsseldorf (1911–1912), with its stern and overbearing monumentalism, also comes to mind; contemporaries referred to the two buildings in the same breath.[183] Importantly, the HAPAG office also betrays the influence of Ludwig Hoffmann and his work in Berlin, where similar colossal pilasters helped fit municipal offices and schools into the city's imperial landscape, of which the Reichstag (1884–1894) and the new cathedral

180 HAPAG-Lloyd, Hamburg, company records, diary 'Zu Gast bei Albert Ballin', entry for 17 December 1912.

181 Cecil, *Wilhelm II*, p. 44; SAH, Merck memoirs, vol. I, p. 46; Schumacher, *Stufen des Lebens*, p. 403.

182 As noted by Kamphausen, *Der Baumeister*, p. 22.

183 St., 'Mannheim'.

Figure 26 The office building as seen from the Jungfernstieg boulevard, in its current-day condition in use by HAPAG-Lloyd. It is still one of the largest buildings on the Binnenalster.

(1894–1905) were the most explicit focal points.[184] In particular, the tower dreamt up for the HAPAG office is suspiciously reminiscent of the tower of Hoffmann's municipal office in Berlin (1902–1911).[185] Höger rarely mentioned the HAPAG office in his later writings even though it seems like a prestigious commission, which reinforces the conclusion that his hand was not the only one involved.

According to the concept Höger submitted to the municipality, the central entrance would lead to a much-enlarged ticketing office. The first storey was dedicated to all kinds of offices, with those of the directors lined along the Alsterdamm façade of which the central office would be Ballin's. However, the building was too large even for HAPAG to fill: Höger marked part of the second storey as simply 'available space' and almost the entire third and fourth storeys would be let to other firms as office space.[186]

Reacting to the changing stylistic preferences, in publications HAPAG framed the building as efficient and modern, free from 'symbolic

184 On 'imperial' Berlin, see Taylor, *Hohenzollern Berlin*, pp. 137–186; examples of Hoffmann's work can be found in Stahl, *Ludwig Hoffmann*, pp. 24–25, 27–29, 43, 55, 64–65, 74–75, 78.

185 Paeslack, *Constructing imperial Berlin*, pp. 58–65.

186 BHM, Fachamt Bauprüfung, file on Ferdinandstraße 56, vol. II, floorplans for preliminary project no. 108-111 (28 December 1912).

ingredients'.[187] Although the office was more sober than the old office, the first plans still had included rows of statues on the tower and along the entrance; as late as June 1914, HAPAG considered reusing the old caryatids somehow.[188] And even in its final form, the building still contained five small panels with faces of men symbolising the five continents: personifications of Asia, Africa, America, and Australia surrounded a bearded Europe with a laurel wreath. The press generally adopted HAPAG's jubilant statements about the great 'size and importance' of the 'artful monumental building'.[189] The large tower attracted criticism, however, and although construction of the building began in 1913, when HAPAG submitted the final design to the municipality in January 1914, the tower had disappeared (Figure 26).[190] According to Merck, it turned out to be far too expensive and impractical.[191]

Then came the war. Naturally, it hampered the construction process. But as the war ruined HAPAG and led to the fall of the German empire, it had a more far-reaching consequence: in both practical and symbolic terms, the new office was a grotesque mismatch with HAPAG's post-war condition. Losing men, money, and ships first to hostilities and confiscations, and then to the Allied powers as war reparations (Britain and the United States requisitioned the three *Imperator*-class giants), the conflict decimated HAPAG.[192] But it also destroyed the assertive imperial power of which HAPAG had been an integral part. After defeat and revolution, the German economy lay in shambles and the German empire had disappeared, and with it the German emperor and the colonies.

Ballin, who personified HAPAG at its height, was gone, too. When the socialist revolution that broke out in Germany reached Hamburg, on 8 November 1918 workers and soldiers occupied HAPAG's office and the Soldiers' and Workers' Council held its sessions in the meeting room. Although it soon moved its seat to the town hall, the fact that the revolutionaries targeted what was a private office signals how strongly the firm was associated with

187 SAH, library, inv.no. Z341/0001, 'Umbau des Verwaltungsgebäudes der HAL', *Zeitschrift der Hamburg-Amerika Linie* (5 January 1913) 4–5, p. 5.

188 See: BHM, file on Ferdinandstraße 56, vol. II, elevation drawings no. 112, 133, 153; SAH, HAPAG archive, inv.no. 1470, building committee meeting minutes (10 June 1914).

189 'Erweiterung des Verwaltungsgebäudes'; 'Der Erweiterungsbau'; 'Das neue Verwaltungsgebäude der Hamburg-Amerika-Linie', *Bau-Rundschau*.

190 'Der Neubau'; SAH, library, inv.no. Z341/0001, 'Sonstige Nachrichten von Land und von Bord', *Zeitschrift der Hamburg-Amerika Linie* (5 December 1913) p. 183; Fischer, *Fritz Schumacher*, pp. 39–40.

191 SAH, Merck memoirs, vol. I, p. 46.

192 Wealleans, *Designing liners*, p. 73.

the civic and imperial establishment.[193] In the process, Ballin also received personal threats. There had never been any love lost between Ballin and the socialists, or for that matter Hamburg's civic elite and the socialists, despite the image of the city as 'liberal'.[194] Hamburg's working classes consistently voted social democratic in the national Reichstag elections, but the electorate for the local town council remained highly restrictive and the town hall symbolised privileged political power.[195] In the chaos of the revolution, Ballin broke down in response to the threats and overdosed on sleeping pills, on purpose or accidentally, at 61 years of age.[196]

And thus the HAPAG that moved into the new office in 1920 and completed it in 1921 was very different and much humbler than in its pre-war pomp.[197] A native of Hamburg grimly observed that the Neptune statue of the old office had been 'melted down, the proud ships [...] have been handed to our enemies, the German flag has disappeared from the seas. The hearts of us Germans, and especially us Hamburgers, bleed, when we remember the proud ships, the flourishing trade, the busy port and – our current poverty and weakness'.[198]

In a booklet, HAPAG had to legitimise the imposing new building anew. The 'palatial' old office had introduced an element of internationalism in the city centre, the booklet read, and it reminded one of the 'roaring organ sound of world transport of the happy pre-war years'.[199] Nevertheless, the booklet also admitted the old office was outdated and 'Wilhelmine', with its caryatids and ornamentations. The booklet then framed the new office as a stately rebirth with large dimensions that spoke for themselves, ignoring the fact that its design was, indeed, much more closely connected to the former emperor than the old building.[200] These statements were elaborated upon by Höger in a separate contribution in the booklet, seemingly the only instance where he commented on the building. According to Höger, modern society's lack of stylistic consensus in architecture led to 'exaggerated monumentality' and the examples of antiquity were no longer valid

193 Cecil, *Albert Ballin*, pp. 343–344; Holtz and Prehn-Dewitz, *Die Hamburgische Revolution*, p. 28; Neumann, *Hamburg unter der Regierung*, pp. 21, 24, 26–27.

194 Cecil, *Albert Ballin*, pp. 31–36, 112–116, 127, 329–338, 343–344.

195 Hipp and Meyer-Veden, *Hamburg*, pp 10–14; Evans, 'Family and class in the Hamburg grand bourgeoisie', pp. 131–132.

196 Cecil, *Albert Ballin*, pp. 345–346.

197 'Das HAPAG-Gebäude'; Hasselmann, *Das Hapaghaus*, p. 15.

198 Bertram, *Mein Hamburg*, p. 94.

199 Hasselmann, *Das Hapaghaus*, p. 14.

200 Ibid., pp. 14–15.

references. Glossing over the fact that the HAPAG office seemed guilty of both, he argued the building's great size embodied Hamburg's inner 'Hanseatic' strength. As a piece of organic *Heimatkunst*, the building did not use petty 'ornamental accessories' and 'symbolistic puzzles', but confidently proclaimed its importance with its size.[201]

These were Höger's habitual talking points and were in line with the earlier presentation of the building when it was announced in 1912–1913. But, as an explanation of the building's appearance they remained unconvincing. In fact, as early as 1913, the design had been criticised for using 'lifeless' historicist forms.[202] Yet the guide's framing of the building does show HAPAG's and Höger's need to somehow divest themselves of the imperial associations of the office and portray it in a new light as part of HAPAG's reconstruction in the interwar period. HAPAG regained strength in the 1920s, under the new leadership of former imperial official Wilhelm Cuno. It rebuilt its ships – an *Albert Ballin* was launched in 1923 – and reconstructed its international network, while venturing into cooperative ventures with industrial firms, into air travel by plane and airship, and even into cooperation with its rival Norddeutsche Lloyd.[203] In 1928, HAPAG refurbished the new office's entrance lobby after having been limited to the old structure for years, outfitting it again with the 'Mein Feld ist die Welt' slogan.[204] City guides could again draw visitors' attention to the 'towering' HAPAG office and indicate it on their maps in the 1920s.[205]

Although HAPAG proclaimed pride in the building, it never became the symbol of the city that it had been intended to be. That honour fell to what would become Höger's best-known work, the dark-brick Chilehaus built between 1922 and 1924. Its dramatic ship-like façade was compared with HAPAG's old *Imperator*-class ships, even by Höger himself, and turned the building into the symbol of Hamburg's new-found confidence and reconstruction.[206] The building set a new and more contemporary standard: by 1937, even HAPAG itself qualified its own office as 'a work by Chilehaus builder Fritz Höger'.[207]

By that time HAPAG had been integrated into the National Socialist economy, most of its management having been replaced, some because

201 Ibid., pp. 16–19.
202 Röhrborn, 'Das Problem der Kulturform', p. 286.
203 Wiborg and Wiborg, *1847–1997*, pp. 210–253.
204 Hipp and Meyer-Veden, *Hamburg*, p. 152.
205 *Hamburg. Führer durch die Freie und Hansestadt*, p. 35; *Hamburg. Wegweiser mit Plan*, pp. 21, 68–69.
206 Fuchs-Belhamri and Scholz, *Der Architekt Fritz Höger*, pp. 40–41.
207 Lohmann, *Die Hamburg-Amerika Linie*, p. 14.

they were Jews, and the *Albert Ballin* renamed *Hansa*.[208] Notably, Höger had already become a member of the NSDAP by 1931, as his vision of a modern but local architecture, originating in the German soil, fit National Socialist cultural ideology well.[209]

Conclusion

The office on the Alster survived World War II relatively intact (Figure 26), unlike much of Hamburg. Although it remains a striking building, it has not become an icon of the city. Rather, it is simply a very large office building that is still in use: up to the present day, the building not only houses HAPAG but the new firm HAPAG-Lloyd, established in 1970 when the two former rivals merged. Just as the brick-modern Chilehaus became a much better sign of Hamburg's post-war recovery in the 1920s than the outdated HAPAG office, the Chilehaus was, subsequently, a much better candidate in 2015 to form the centre point of a UNESCO world heritage site that includes the surrounding 'Kontorhaus quarter' and the adjacent Speicherstadt.

The two-in-one HAPAG office seems almost a textbook example of the two minds German imperialism was in when it came to its standing in Europe. In that reading, the first office represents the yearning to belatedly join European imperial 'normality', with the international appeal of its architecture, the inclusion of foreign seafaring nations, and the enormous caryatids exaggerating an established motif. The second office represents the more nationalist and domineering side of German ambitions, the 'will to power' of the 1911 publication on shipping, with its imposing architecture. The transformation from the one into the other is a comparable but distinct form of nationalisation of imperial culture as in the (contemporaneous) case of the Zaan rice mills, where the mills were connected mainly to Java while they mostly processed rice from Burma. That both cases took place before World War I reveals that even before the war, the layered attachments to nation and Europe were shifting in favour of the former.

The monumental second office also entailed a shift towards meaning-making processes. Both the architecture and the textual or written representations of it referred primarily to HAPAG's own position and size, rather than deriving the building's meaning from its relation to continental peers-cum-rivals and colonial territories. Aside from the minuscule panels

208 Wiborg and Wiborg, *1847–1997*, pp. 263–269.
209 Turtenwald, *Fritz Höger*, pp. 21–38.

of the continents, and much more so than in the case of mission houses, factories, and museums, the emphasis was on the power and grandeur of HAPAG itself and, by association, the German empire. Instead of mediating the firm's shipping networks with nautical imagery, maps, and sculpture of racial others, the office mediated the power and ambitions that were the result of these networks.

One reason for this difference was the more general nature of German expansionism, not limited to formal colonialism but aimed at global influence sustained by tremendous economic production at home. But the main reason was the building's orientation towards the emperor and Berlin. This influence overruled Von Seidl's and Höger's attempts at a localised 'Hanseatic' architecture, in favour of an overbearing, monumental classicism informed by personal input by the emperor and consultation by court architect Hoffmann. If Hamburg has been compared to Glasgow, the HAPAG office can also be compared to Glasgow City Chambers in the way that both buildings turned to the capitals Berlin and London and the monarchs Wilhelm and Victoria to profess their imperial loyalty. However, if such a declaration of political allegiance came naturally to the City Chambers, which housed political institutions, it was remarkable in the case of the private HAPAG office. Although this underlines the extent to which imperial Germany's economic expansion was politicised, it also points to the more structural question of which groups contributed to the development of an imperial culture and with what motives. HAPAG, part of the business elite, gained prestige through the choice for their new building. But conversely, the design choices were also an appropriation of HAPAG's private, economic activity by the imperial state. In that sense, in the overarching narrative of the book, the HAPAG office symbolically marks the definitive entry of the state as an actor that contributed to the development of an imperial culture. As noted in previous chapter, after 1918, European states embarked on propaganda campaigns for the empire. No method was more typical of this trend, however, than the institutions that are the topic of the next chapter: colonial museums.

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5 Propaganda and science in imperial museums

Abstract
European museums formed clear connections to the empire as they collected objects from the colonies for research and education purposes. In ethnographic museums, anthropologists produced knowledge about cultural and racial others, while governments used colonial museums to exhibit colonial objects and commodities to increase the public's enthusiasm for the imperial enterprise within a nationalist context. The Musée des Colonies in Paris (1928–1930) was the latest of these colonial museums. It was off to a good start, with plenty of attention during the 1930 International Colonial Exposition and a modern, efficient museum building whose rich decorations glorified French imperialism. However, the museum's peripheral location and the advent of decolonisation, soon after its completion, meant that fulfilling its mission proved to be difficult.

Keywords: Museums; exhibiting; racism; French imperialism; Paris; decolonisation

The practice of exhibiting has appeared in almost every chapter so far: displays in the mission houses, the international exhibitions of Glasgow, the museum in the Norddeutsche Lloyd's office, or the tropical products exhibited by Hamburg trade houses. In this chapter, the main topic is the practice of collecting and exhibiting objects that represented the imperial project in institutions designed as museums, per se. These museums invited Europeans to look at the world in terms of human 'development' or human races, and thus appealed to Europeans based on their supposedly cultured condition and their whiteness.

Ethnographic museums are one relevant type of 'imperial' museum. Spread out over a myriad of institutions and sites, in the nineteenth century Europeans developed the practice of exhibiting the objects, environments,

Groten, Miel, *The Architecture of Empire in Modern Europe*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022
DOI: 10.5117/9789463721479_CH05

and bodies of people deemed fundamentally different from the European cultural and physical norm. The scientific discipline of anthropology emerged, and its insights were disseminated to the population at large through ethnographic showcases and museums.

The focus of this chapter is, however, on another but related category: colonial museums. Such museums, which developed from the late nineteenth century onwards and were usually instigated by European governments, represented the people and cultures of the colonial empire in a narrower sense. But they did so explicitly to disseminate knowledge about the empire to the public at large and represented every conceivable activity with some relation to the colonial empire. Colonial museums therefore also represented every domain encountered in this study: trade, industry, shipping, missions, and more. Their totalising overview of imperialism allow us to delve back into the previous themes and makes them the ideal subject for this study's last chapter – colonial museums complete the movement from implicit to explicit that started with Chapter 1's mission houses.

However, colonial museums' propagandistic nature must also make for a more complex image. Their efficacy can be questioned, their establishment read as a sign of weakness of imperial ideology (apparently, not enough people had embraced it yet) rather than of strength. More importantly, by presenting a coherent imperial narrative of various phenomena and domains, colonial museums attempted to give direction to very different activities – trade, shipping, missions – that in fact had their own particularities and agendas. The whole imperial space was on display in colonial museums, sometimes literally in the form of giant globes and massive maps. Yet the narrative created by colonial museums was not only a popularised but also a nationalised narrative, which overlooked or silenced the more complicated transnational entanglements that many of these activities formed in practice.

These mechanisms will figure below in this chapter's case study of the national colonial museum of France, established in 1931 in Paris. The latest of Europe's colonial museums, it clearly fit a European pattern. Its creators were very aware of this and utilised similar sites in Britain, Belgium, and the Netherlands as a frame of reference. The museums' contents, however, were strictly national. Moreover, although the museum was housed in a splendid building for which the French colonial lobby had high hopes, it proved hard to fulfil its ambitions. In fact, the museum even raises the question of whether a top-down state museum was really a better ambassador for the colonial empire than the factories, mission colleges, or shipping companies linked to the empire in more practical and organic ways.

Part I. Ethnographic and colonial museums

Museums as a modern building type

Europeans encountered representations of colonised territories and their inhabitants in all kinds of museums. Even to the examples mentioned above others can be added: art museums with orientalist paintings, museums of natural history, botanical gardens. The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam displayed the 'Lombok treasure' looted from the namesake Indonesian island after Dutch conquest in 1894; the Royal Army Museum in Brussels still displays life-size puppets of armed Congolese warriors.[1] Individuals and families in the colonies built sizable private collections that subsequently worked to reinforce their elite position back home.[2] Numerous museums in modern Europe thus had strong imperial dimensions.

All museums were part of a wider museum landscape that developed in Europe in the nineteenth century. Museums were perhaps the most archetypical new building type of the nineteenth century, inseparable from the development of the modern city to such an extent that Lewis Mumford called them 'the most typical institution of the metropolis'.[3] Mumford used the word *metropolis* in the sense of the large modern city. But his statement rings true just as much for the European 'metropole' that was connected to overseas colonies, seen as the seat of a superior European civilisation and dotted with national, municipal, and other museums in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[4] From the second half of the century, which saw a global proliferation of museums, the focus of museums, especially those founded by governments, was increasingly on the education and edification of the population at large.[5] Ethnographic museums were part of this development from the start, although many emerged late in the nineteenth century; colonial museums were a decidedly later addition, being established in the decades around 1900.

The mushrooming museums were accompanied by an international movement of large expositions and world fairs. Here, starting with London's Great Exhibition of 1851, national industry, art, and technology were put on display for citizens and foreign visitors. From the late nineteenth century,

1 Vanvugt, *De schatten van Lombok*; the Brussels museum was visited for this research project in January 2017.

2 Drieënhuizen, *Koloniale collecties*, pp. 293–320.

3 Mumford, *The culture of cities*, p. 639.

4 Shelton, 'Museum ethnography', p. 159.

5 Rijnders, 'Kabinetten, galerijen en musea', pp. 17–21.

international expositions often contained separate colonial pavilions and were even joined by specific colonial expositions. The example set by Amsterdam's International Colonial and Exports Exhibition of 1883 was followed by other cities, including London (1886 and 1924–1925), Lyon (1894), Marseille (1906 and 1922), Porto (1934), and Glasgow (1938). Some of these were national in scope, highlighting one's own empire, others were international events. The colonial expositions were smaller than the great world's fairs but were nonetheless highly popular events with large visitor numbers. To illustrate: 1.5 million people visited the exhibitions in Amsterdam and Porto; the London exhibitions drew 5.5 million visitors in 1886 and 27 million in 1924–1925, while 12 million visited Glasgow's exhibition in 1938.[6] Even if these numbers represent tickets sold rather than 'unique visitors', they still amount to very large audiences.

In contrast to some other building types examined in this study, museums in general and colonial or ethnographic museums in particular have received extensive scholarly attention as sites purposed to disseminate knowledge about the colonial world and Europe's relations with it.[7] In general, museums were a central means by which nineteenth-century nation-building was achieved, as they institutionalised the 'cultivation of culture' for political means.[8] Together with the innumerable mission museums, trade displays, zoos, and local exhibitions, museums and expositions formed an intricate and dense 'exhibitionary complex'. As the other chapters have shown, many buildings led European populations to see the world in 'imperial' ways. But nowhere was this purpose so explicit as in museums, which not only proposed certain viewpoints but attempted to discipline visitors into accepting them. Museums invited Europeans into stately public buildings and spectacular expositions where the world was on display, and where recent technology and art symbolised the latest in human development and ethnographic artefacts the most primal.[9]

Museum architecture enabled this process. To signal the function of museums as the repositories of culture and civilisation, they were designed as large and monumental 'temples' in historicist styles. They were usually placed in prominent locations in city centres or part of new urban developments; sometimes they were clustered together, like on Berlin's

6 Bloembergen, *De koloniale vertoning*, p. 60; Vargaftig, 'Les expositions coloniales', p. 43; MacKenzie, *Propaganda*, p. 101; Geppert, *Fleeting cities*, p. 183.

7 E.g. Taffin, *Du musée colonial*; Couttenier, *Congo tentoongesteld*; Conklin, *In the museum of man*; MacKenzie, *Museums and empire*.

8 Leerssen, 'Nationalism'.

9 Bennett, 'The exhibitionary complex'.

Museuminsel or in London's South Kensington.[10] Squares or green spaces helped to make them visible locations and made them into focal points of the urban landscape.[11]

As museums opened to the public, issues of accessibility became important in their design. Museums used various forms of circulation systems to receive and guide hundreds, if not thousands, of visitors, such as circuits, series of rooms linked by corridors, or central halls connected to different wings. But besides the exhibition spaces and storage facilities for their collections, museums also accommodated many other functions: offices, apartments for curators, libraries, and laboratories all contributed to their functioning.[12]

To receive large numbers of visitors, architects increasingly combined the venerable appearances of museums with new technologies and materials that had proved their worth in the ephemeral architecture of the expositions, as exemplified by the 1851 Crystal Palace. Windows and roof lights flooded exhibition spaces with daylight, or opened up onto bright courtyards to provide light to galleries or balconies. Glass showcases exhibited the objects according to the dominant classificatory schedules, dioramas of models and human figures gave a 'lifelike' impression of other cultures, and artificial lighting allowed for longer opening hours.[13] Again following the example set by world fairs, the very plans of museums became instructive to their ends.[14] The Liverpool Museum had separate galleries for the 'Melanian', 'Mongolian', and 'Caucasian' races; while anthropologists envisioned museums made up of concentric circles that represented different stages, or ordered in a grid pattern to create a comparative 'matrix' of human cultures.[15]

Exhibiting empire

The two most important and specialised museums in terms of imperial placemaking were ethnographic museums and colonial museums. As for the first, Europeans had collected objects from outside the continent for centuries. The idea of 'ethnography', the study of human societies and cultures, had emerged in the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. But in the early nineteenth century, alongside the development of the scientific discipline of anthropology,

10 Giebelhausen, 'Museum architecture'.
11 Çelik, *About antiquities*, pp. 26–33.
12 Forgan, 'The architecture of display', pp. 142–144.
13 Bouquet, 'Het negentiende-eeuwse', pp. 231–239; Swinney, 'Gas lighting in British museums'.
14 On fair architecture, see Van Wesemael, *Architectuur van instructie en vermaak*.
15 Tythacott, 'Race on display'; Stocking, 'The spaces of cultural representation', p. 176.

the first public ethnographic museums opened as specialised institutions that exhibited artworks, antiquities, and household objects of non-European cultures. The first ethnographic collections accessible to the public were that of the Habsburg natural history cabinet in Vienna (1806) and the Danish Kunstmuseet (1825); the Dutch Rijks Ethnographisch Museum in Leiden (1837) was arguably the first dedicated ethnographic museum of its kind.[16]

Like missionaries, anthropologists and ethnographers had different motives from and more transnational orientations than colonial administrators. Yet in practice their work was bound up with imperialism, too. Many of the objects they collected came from colonised areas, often those under control of their own nation, and were donated or sold to them by collectors, soldiers, or missionaries who may well have procured them in less than lawful ways. Most relevant here, ethnographic museums underpinned the ideological legitimisation of empires. In the museum context, collected objects came to represent and exemplify cultures or peoples and thus gained new connotations, disconnected from their original meanings. Objects were believed to 'objectively' render some deeper truth or pattern about the history of mankind, along the lines of certain scientific theories. Anthropology thus became a master narrative that not just researched and ordered the world's societies but ranked them on scales of 'development' or 'civilisation', which justified European rule over supposedly less-developed people.[17] Therefore, the museums where ethnographic objects were exhibited and such classifications were communicated to the public, created imagined imperial spaces that connected Europeans to the colonial world. Meanwhile, the traditional material culture and folklore of Europe's own peoples were demarcated as the object of study for a related but separate specialisation of what in German was called *Volkskunde*, as opposed to *Völkerkunde* or ethnography.[18]

The ranking of societies and cultures was rooted in old ideas of European superiority. Now, however, it was reinvigorated by new 'evolutionist' theories, inspired for instance by the work of Charles Darwin, and found its most literal form in the field of physical anthropology. Seeking to map the world's different 'races', physical anthropology peaked around 1900 when ideas on racial classification based on bodily traits were firmly established in both science and popular opinion.[19]

16 Bouquet, 'Het negentiende-eeuwse', pp. 220–226.

17 Shelton, 'Museum ethnography'.

18 Schär, *Tropenliebe*, pp. 318–319, 331.

19 Bouquet, 'Het negentiende-eeuwse', pp. 227–236; Eriksen and Nielsen, *A history of anthropology*, pp. 21–23; Stepan, *The idea of race in science*, pp. 83–139.

Ethnographic museums became numerous in the late nineteenth century. Since science was an international enterprise, they were not limited to the colonial powers but were just as much at home in Vienna, Copenhagen, Oslo (1857), Basel (1893), or Stockholm (1900). As this diversity suggests, there were too many to list here, but among the largest were the aforementioned museum in Leiden, Berlin's ethnographic museum (1873), the ethnographic museum of the Trocadéro Palace in Paris (1878), the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford (1884), and the Horniman Museum in London (1901). Yet all over Europe, many smaller, local museums also exhibited ethnographic objects. In the interwar Netherlands, for instance, besides the Leiden museum and the Amsterdam zoo, ethnographic collections were also on display in Delft (1911), in connection to the local school for colonial officials; Deventer (1915), connected to its colonial agricultural college; and Breda (1923), connected to the military academy.[20] Furthermore, the more or less 'official' museums were complemented by commercial exhibitions of people from outside or from the margins of Europe, the travelling *Völkerschauen* such as those in Basel. These offered spectacle without scientific pretensions and became widespread attractions that put popular racism into practice.[21]

In terms of placing and housing, ethnographic museums were usually somewhat set apart from the most prestigious museums. For instance, the Berlin ethnographic museum was housed in a grand structure of its own but was located near Potsdammer Platz rather than in the centre, while the Pitt Rivers Museum was a sort of annex to Oxford's existing museum of natural history. The ethnographic museum of Paris was housed in the Trocadéro Palace which, although on a prominent location overlooking the Eiffel Tower, had been built for the 1878 international exposition; meanwhile, Leiden's museum lacked adequate housing until 1937 when it moved into a former hospital.

In comparison to ethnographic collections or museums, explicit 'colonial museums' were rarer. Usually colonial museums contained ethnographic departments, representing the cultures and 'races' of the different colonies. But as tools for the dissemination of knowledge about the colonial enterprise overseas, they mostly focused on exhibiting the valuable products extracted from the colonies. And as cultivating or mining these products required the application of sciences such as agronomy or chemistry, a number of colonial museums also became research institutions and repositories of knowledge for prospective entrepreneurs and emigrants, publishing bulletins and

20 *De Nederlandsche musea*, pp. 91–92, 96–97, 102–104.

21 Bancel et al., *Zoos humains*; Qureshi, *Peoples on parade*.

offering well-stocked libraries. Their small number makes it possible to discuss several of them in some detail below.

Colonial museums: Haarlem and Amsterdam as a case in point

Colonial museums were a peculiar museum genre. What set them apart from other museums was that they had the clear propagandistic objective to stimulate colonial interests among the public. If the other sites investigated in this study thrived as part of imperial networks of commodities, missionaries, and ships, or as symbols of imperial politics, colonial museums were more about highlighting these connections than about creating their own. Certainly, colonial museums maintained their own networks between metropoles and colonies by physically collecting ethnographic objects and commodity samples, and by conducting research in the metropole and the colonies. However, this was primarily a means to an end; as such, collections and investigations were supposed to convince the public of imperialism's positive effects on both colonisers and colonised. As we have seen, the other sites and domains in this book contributed to an imperial culture as a consequence of certain activities; for museums, contribution to an imperial culture *was* their core activity.

When the first 'colonial museum' in Europe was established is up for interpretation. One candidate would be the India Museum, founded by the East India Company in 1801.[22] Another would be the museum that an association for improving the local economy established in the Dutch town of Zwolle, which had already called itself 'colonial' as early as 1852.[23] Generally, Europe's first 'colonial museum' to go by that name is taken to be the museum that opened in 1871 in the Dutch city of Haarlem. The museum was founded a few years before by the Maatschappij ter bevordering van Nijverheid, an association established at the end of the eighteenth century to stimulate national industry and welfare. Although the new institution was a private venture, the Dutch government recognised its importance by providing a mansion on the edge of town for its housing. In the following paragraphs, the museum serves as a case study to highlight some general trends.

As one might expect from the museum's background, it had a strong economic focus. In a 1900 guide, it was described as 'mainly a "products museum"' that exhibited 'raw materials, natural resources, and crafts' from

22 Ratcliff, 'The East India Company'.
23 Legêne, *Nu of nooit*, pp. 20, 34.

the Dutch colonies. But it was also home to a library, collections from other empires to provide comparisons, and a laboratory to test samples.[24] This made for a diverse collection that included mineral and timber samples, Indonesian artefacts and animals, batik textiles, and samples of the most important crops harvested in the Indies. An annex was home to a West Indian collection, where valuable resources such as gold, cacao, and sugarcane were likewise displayed but where there was more space for Surinamese ethnographic artefacts.[25]

After a few decades in Haarlem, the museum would change location. The 1900 guide did not mention that by the time it was published, the museum was suffering from severe shortages of space and funds; in particular, its ethnographic collection was growing substantially.[26] The entrance of the cramped, dark building was for visitors already a 'deception, that in this basement now, the Colonial Museum of a colonial power like the Netherlands is housed'.[27] In 1910, to give the country a worthy colonial museum, colonial politicians and businessmen initiated the foundation of a society that strove to establish a full-fledged colonial 'institute' in Amsterdam. Probably with the British Imperial Institute in mind (see below), the society aimed to turn its museum into an institution that would 'collect and spread knowledge about our overseas territories; especially to represent the commercial, agricultural, industrial and other interests that emerge out of the Netherlands' colonial possessions for both the motherland and the colonies'.[28] At the same time, in line with the Ethical Policy of colonial administration (see Chapter 3), the new institute would also promote 'the economic and intellectual development of the oriental peoples for whose welfare the Dutch state carries responsibility'.[29] The new society received funds from the Amsterdam municipality and the national government, but most were donated by affluent individuals with business interests and by colonial firms, ranging from banks, railway companies, oil companies, and sugar producers to former governor-general Van Heutsz and Jan Adriaan Laan, the senator and owner of the Bloemendaal & Laan rice mill.[30]

24 *Gids voor de bezoekers,* introduction [no page numbers].
25 Ibid., pp. 5–6, 69–76; Van Duuren, *125 jaar*, pp. 13–19.
26 Van Duuren, *125 jaar*, pp. 19–23.
27 *Memorie over de wording*, pp. 3–4.
28 Jans and Van den Brink, *Tropen in Amsterdam*, pp. 36–41; *Vereeniging 'Koloniaal Instituut', Amsterdam. Eerste jaarverslag 1910/1911*, pp. 4–5.
29 *Memorie over de wording*, pp. 7–14
30 *Vereeniging 'Koloniaal Instituut'*, pp. 6, 9–11, 28–29.

The society's primary objective was the erection of a new museum and research building in Amsterdam. Despite suggestions that the building should be given a prominent location in Berlage's southward expansion plans, or turned into a more general 'Overseas Institute' located at the Damrak in the heart of Amsterdam, it was planned in a less commanding location in the new eastern suburbs.[31] In 1912, three established Dutch architects were invited to provide designs. The new museum was to be a prestigious institute with accommodations that befit its status, although the emphasis in the selection process seems to have been on practical and technical issues – in the official requirements for and judgment of the designs, and in journeys by staff members to other museums in Europe, almost all attention was given to practical concerns.[32] Still, the design by Joseph Cuypers, for instance (son of the well-known Rijksmuseum architect Pierre Cuypers, who was the uncle of Ed Cuypers), envisioned the building in more symbolic terms as 'an intellectual centre […] for developing and shaping the Dutch colonising work […] that our nation started in the XVIst century and in the XVIIst century brought to such great heights in the common interest of the entire nation'.[33] As was appropriate for what – according to Cuypers – 'must' be a national building, it should combine historic references with modern arrangements, and references to the Dutch colonial past with colonial woods and decorative patterns inspired by 'East Indies native art'.[34]

Although the society valued Cuypers's design, it preferred that of Johannes van Nieukerken who had built a repertoire of offices for corporate clients with colonial ties.[35] The design's brick façades, gables, and classical forms evoked the celebrated 'Golden Age' as a revival of seventeenth-century Dutch Renaissance architecture. This was combined with an abundance of colonial imagery, realised under the auspices of a separate 'symbolism committee'. Rich sculpture of colonial crops and religions, figures like Coen, and intricate carvings of Indonesian fables connected the building to the Dutch East Indies, references to which eclipsed those to the West Indian colonies. The Dutch Renaissance style drew sharp criticism from the municipal aesthetics committee and more modern-minded architects

31 Berlage, 'Amerikaanse reisherinneringen', pp. 278–279; Kamerlingh Onnes, *Het Overzee-Instituut te Amsterdam*.

32 Nationaal Archief, The Hague (NAH), archive of the Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen (KIT), inv.no. 1396, invitation and requirements for producing a design (s.d.); inv.no. 1405, report on submitted designs (s.d.) p. 3; inv.no. 1404, report on travels to other museums (11 September 1913).

33 NAH, KIT archive, inv.no. 1411, design concept titled 'Waar 'n wil is, is 'n weg' (s.d.) p. 22.

34 Ibid., pp. 21–23.

35 NAH, KIT archive, inv.no. 1405, report on designs, p. 1.

Figure 27 Amsterdam's Koloniaal Instituut seen from the north. The main entrance to the right gave access to an opulent marble rotunda, behind which the auditorium was located. The central part of the building visible here was home to offices, classrooms, laboratories, and storerooms, while a small part of the museum wing is just visible to the left. Note the references to Dutch Renaissance architecture, for instance in the shape of the gable.

for being outdated and heavy-handed, and therefore unsuitable for this contemporary institute.[36]

What emerged from the design and building process that, hampered by the world war, lasted until 1926, was the Koloniaal Instituut (Figure 27), allegedly the largest building in Amsterdam with auditoriums, a research laboratory, reception halls, offices, reading and teaching rooms, and two museums (trade and ethnography) grouped around a monumental light hall. The museums were furnished according to the latest international standards, based on the investigative trips to the other museums.[37] The museum also contained up-to-date presentation technologies, such as dioramas and a large wall map of the Dutch East Indies where dozens of

36 Bossenbroek, *Holland op zijn breedst*, pp. 282–286; S[taal]., 'De gebouwen'; Hamers, 'Koloniaal Museum'.

37 Rijksmuseum Research Library, Amsterdam, inv.no. 871 E 16, booklet by J.C. van Eerde, *Inrichting en bouw van het museum van het Koloniaal Instituut* (Amsterdam 1913) pp. 8–59.

topics could be highlighted with electrical lights by pressing buttons, such as the production of various commodities, the colony's administrative structure, or missionary activity.[38]

The founders' ambitions for the new building were high. The 'education of a civilised Dutchman may not be considered completed if he has not visited the Koloniaal Instituut several times', one board member wrote in a brochure, noting that the institute expressed the new idea of the colony as 'equal part of a coherent whole'.[39] Newspapers and magazines exalted the building as 'a great work, of which all of the Netherlands is proud', 'a mighty edifice and […] a brilliant organisation'.[40] For the Minister of Colonies, it was 'the centre of a web of lines, that connects Motherland, East and West with each other'.[41] Here, he literally sketched the formal Dutch imperial space and confirmed the institute's position as its undisputed centre. The only protest against the museum came from the Dutch communists, who criticised the social democratic town councillors for supporting it and argued that it whitewashed a bloody colonial exploitation.[42]

Other colonial museums

The panegyrics notwithstanding, by the time of its opening the Amsterdam institute followed trends rather than set them. While it had still been located in its cramped quarters in Haarlem, the British, Belgian, and German governments had erected colonial institutes of their own. These functioned in a European 'nebula' of associations, committees, journals, expositions, and congresses where colonial knowledge was shared and produced; in 1894 an International Colonial Institute had even been established in Brussels.[43]

The Imperial Institute in London was the earliest and largest of these. It was supposed to capitalise on the successful 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition but came into being as another monument to Queen Victoria's jubilee, to which individuals and governments all over the empire contributed – in Glasgow, the city chamberlain proudly stated the city had donated more than any other British city.[44] In more general terms, it was hoped that the institute would give new direction to an empire that increasingly found

38 'De museum-galerijen'; Boissevain, 'Jaarverslag van den Zendingsstudie-Raad', p. 64.
39 Hasselman, *Het Koninklijk Koloniaal Instituut te Amsterdam*, pp. 49, 52.
40 'De opening van het Kol. Instituut'; 'Het Koloniaal Instituut' (1926).
41 *Artikelen en beschouwingen*, p. 3.
42 V., 'Een geschenk van de SDAP'; Van der Ster, 'Koloniaal Instituut'.
43 Singaravélou, 'Les strategies d'internationalisation', p. 137.
44 Nicol, *Vital, social, and economic statistics*, p. 396.

itself under economic competition from continental and American rivals.[45] As in Amsterdam, there was discussion about the ideal location: the more commercially inclined favoured a site in the City, while those who conceived of the building in more political terms wanted it to be located in or near Whitehall. The queen's preference and financial concerns meant that the building was eventually planned and built (1887–1893) in the cultural setting of the South Kensington 'Albertopolis', next to the South Kensington and Natural History museums.[46]

The institute's eclectic Renaissance appearance and explicit imperial imagery were to symbolise the empire's dynamism and the building's connections with it. Symbolically, the foundation stone that Victoria laid down was South African granite placed on British and Indian bricks. For the building's interior, various British and colonial materials (woods, stone, marble, mosaics) were used.[47] The institute was to function as research centre, exhibition space, and club for businessmen to gather information and to network, and therefore contained laboratories, storage space, exhibition galleries, and social facilities. As an institute of the empire rather than just the colonies, half of the exhibition space was to be dedicated to the United Kingdom and the other half to the colonies. The location of the exhibition galleries in the building roughly corresponded to the position of the areas they represented, at least from a Eurocentric map projection: the United Kingdom was given the northern and central spaces while India was allocated the eastern gallery, Australian and African territories the southern, and the American colonies the western. In the galleries were exhibited the commodities that the different parts of the empire provided, with the separate rooms serving as an 'index' to large amounts of commercial samples stored on the ground floor. Under a new director in the 1920s, the institute's research function was downplayed and its overly detailed and 'dry' presentation replaced by more narrative exhibitions with dioramas of the empire's economic activities, such as the petroleum industry of Burma, mining in Canada, or the production of palm oil in Nigeria.[48]

A museum with similarly grand ambitions and housing was the Musée du Congo belge in Tervuren, just outside Brussels, built between 1904 and 1910. As with the entire Congo colony before 1908, it was a venture of King Leopold II. It was supposed to succeed an exhibition palace that Leopold

45 Bremner, '"Some Imperial Institute"', p. 52.

46 'Imperial Institute'.

47 Bremner, '"Some Imperial Institute"', pp. 61–67; Crinson, 'Imperial story-lands', pp. 99–123.

48 Crinson, 'Imperial story-lands', pp. 109–113; Cox, 'The Commonwealth Institute', p. 522.

had built for the 1897 international exposition in Brussels, which had functioned as a museum since. Both buildings were 'palatial', in multiple senses of the word. The 1897 palace actually mimicked historic palaces, although its interior was designed in the new art nouveau style, also known as the 'Congo style' at the time. The 1910 museum with its heavy Beaux-Arts idiom was reminiscent of the exhibition buildings its architect Charles Girault had designed for the 1900 Paris Exposition, especially the Petit Palais.[49] It housed sections on ethnography, geology and biology, history, and colonial commodities such as rubber and ivory. In the ethnographic section, Congolese statues that were thought 'repugnant' because of their nudity were covered, while the history section highlighted how Belgian rule had 'civilised' the colony and contained a separate room on missionaries who had 'tamed' (the museum's director wrote) 'a hundred and fifty thousand cannibals'.[50] Even though the establishment and exploitation of Congo were enabled through the contributions of Europeans from various nationalities, the museum portrayed the development of the colony solely as a Belgian undertaking.[51]

The German Empire also had its colonial institute. The Kolonialinstitut was a sort of middle way between national and local, established in Hamburg with local funds, but in coordination with the imperial government and with the addition of *Deutsche* to its name. Hamburg had long lacked a university, but in 1908 convinced the imperial government to allow the foundation of the new colonial institute in the city. It was neither a museum nor a research centre, but an educational institution where academic staff lectured and taught courses: at first on the German colonial empire, but soon with a much more general scope. Housed in a new lecture building near Dammtor station, it welcomed its first students in 1908.[52] Meanwhile in Berlin, a Kolonialmuseum had existed since 1899 but, founded by private colonial enthusiasts with little academic pretensions, it was a quite different institution from its British, Belgian, and Dutch counterparts. It was conceived as an educational attraction that combined dioramas, panoramas, commodity exhibits and artificial landscapes to teach Germans about their African, Pacific, and Chinese colonies.[53] Even though it may have taken the attempts at providing an attractive presentation to the extreme, one may

49 Couttenier, 'De impact van Congo', pp. 116–121.

50 Cornelis, 'Le musée du Congo belge', pp. 74–75.

51 Stanard, *Selling the Congo*, pp. 104–107.

52 Ruppenthal, *Kolonialismus*, pp. 110–138, 209.

53 Short, *Magic lantern empire*, pp. 101–107; Bowersox, *Raising Germans*, pp. 98–101.

note that its goals and its means did not differ altogether from the scientific government institutes in other countries.

Other institutes originated completely in 'municipal imperialism', without state intervention. In France, several local colonial institutes were established in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to provide information and samples to merchants or industrialists and encourage closer links between the urban and regional public and the French colonies. Marseille led the way in 1893 and was followed by Bordeaux (1901), Nice (1927), and Le Havre (1929). The Nice institute was relatively small and mainly organised activities, but the others had their own museums and libraries, greenhouses supplied by botanical gardens in France and the colonies (Bordeaux), and laboratories to perform research on colonial produce (Marseille). The institutes were initiated, supported, and staffed by the local business elite, chambers of commerce, professors, and sometimes the municipality and local colonial returnees, and although they were specialist institutes, they presented themselves as contributing to the public and civic interest.[54]

Finally, the case of institutes such as those at Hamburg, but also Nice and, mentioned earlier in the chapter, Deventer, is a reminder that besides museums, a multitude of other educational and scientific institutions existed in Europe that were also 'colonial institutes' in one way or the other. The East India Company, for instance, operated its own college in Hertfordshire between 1806 and 1858.[55] Not long after this had closed, the Royal Colonial (later Empire) Society was founded in 1868, a learned society and club housed in London's Northumberland Avenue in a building redesigned in 1936 by the 'imperial' Herbert Baker mentioned in Chapter 2.[56] In Paris, the École coloniale was established in 1889 to train future colonial officials. It was housed in a 'Moorish' building (1895–1898), its interior decorated with paintings of French colonies and murals representing how France offered 'civilisation' to its colonial subjects.[57] A number of regional colonial educational institutes and courses to prepare those who fancied a career in the colonies also existed in France, not only in Marseille, Bordeaux, and Le Havre, but also in Lyon, Nancy, and Montpellier.[58] Dutch prospective officials were trained at institutions in Delft, Leiden, or Utrecht, and scholarship on the colonies gained a place at Delft's Koninklijk Instituut

54 Morando, 'Les instituts coloniaux'.
55 Wilkinson, 'The East India College debate'.
56 Craggs, 'Situating the imperial archive', pp. 49–50.
57 Aldrich, *Vestiges*, pp. 33–35.
58 Morando, 'Les instituts coloniaux'.

voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde in 1851.[59] The Portuguese government established an Escola Colonial in 1906, the Belgian government an Université Coloniale in Antwerp in 1920. Its students lived together in a residential building with covered galleries that evoked colonial architecture.[60] Furthermore, a range of international institutes and forums existed where jurists, geographers, scholars, and officials debated how to administer and exploit their colonies.[61]

Part II. The Musée des Colonies in Paris

France had its local colonial institutes. But it had lacked a central, national colonial museum or institute – in 1916 the local institutes actually blocked a proposal to unite them into a federation headquartered in Paris.[62] Therefore, the French state developed other ways of promoting the colonial cause. The Paris world fairs of 1878, 1889, and 1900 contained separate colonial pavilions. And as a follow-up to the 1855 world fair, the Ministry of Colonies had established a permanent colonial exhibition in a former exposition hall on the Champs-Élysées.[63] Its closure in 1896 was soon followed by the foundation of a new Office Colonial to institutionalise official propaganda efforts; in 1920, this was turned into the AGC mentioned in Chapter 3. World War I had introduced European governments to large-scale publicity campaigns and had placed the colonial empire more firmly in the French imagination: colonial troops had contributed considerably to the war, the empire reached its largest size with the addition of the 'mandate territories', former German colonies, in the Middle East and West Africa, and the colonies were thought crucial for economic recovery. The French equivalent of the EMB, the AGC was aided by additional 'economic agencies' of the various colonies and of the mandate territories.[64] Through exhibitions and a wide array of modern media such as atlases, posters, games, radio broadcasts, and cinema, these agencies attempted to disseminate knowledge about the empire to the French public.[65]

59 Fasseur, *De indologen*.

60 De Clerck, 'L'administration coloniale belge', pp. 191–192; for the university building see 'Koloniale Hogeschool'.

61 Singaravélou, 'Les stratégies'.

62 Morando, 'Les instituts coloniaux'.

63 Lozère, 'Expositions provincials et identités colonials'.

64 *Larousse commercial*, p. 55.

65 Lemaire, 'Propager'; Sudreau, 'L'image des colonies', pp. 334–335.

These state-sanctioned propaganda offensives targeted a society where an older and more general imperial culture was already in place. Throughout the nineteenth century, and like in other European countries, French novelists, orientalist painters, journalists, geographers, and scientists had been constructing the cultural manifestations of the empire in metropolitan France. Furthermore, as discussed in the previous chapter, French missionaries, shipping magnates, industrialists, and civic elites reminded the population of its links to the colonial world through religion, trade, consumption, employment, and travel.

The late-nineteenth century expansion of the empire inserted new topics and settings into French culture. For although France had been titled 'empire' under both Napoleons, paradoxically its colonial empire expanded most rapidly under the Third Republic between 1870 and 1940.[66] The fact that the Third Republic was a young political constellation that had to legitimise itself resulted in an explicit connection between imperial rule and domestic political ideology that in other countries remained more implicit. In Republican ideology, French imperialism was to endow France with economic advantages and national grandeur while at the same time bring progress and civilisation to colonised populations. Progress was understood in terms of the liberal achievements of the Revolution; 'civilisation', although used to legitimise imperialism in all European countries, came to be used more explicitly in France. The phrase *mise en valeur*, to 'develop' or 'improve' indigenous populations by providing infrastructure, healthcare, and economic opportunities, became of central importance, and the concept of Francophonie arose, tying together populations 'destined' to share the French language.[67] In metropolitan France this political, state-linked dimension of French imperial culture became most visible in the interwar period when the government doubled down on its propaganda efforts at home, with a strong emphasis on the economic benefits of the empire.[68]

A colonial museum for France

The eventual French colonial museum that was to be the centrepiece of these developments was initiated by both the government and private colonial interests. From the late nineteenth century and with more success in the

66 Aldrich, *Greater France*, pp. 97–106, 234–260.

67 Conklin, *A mission*, pp. 1–8; Blanchard, Lemaire and Bancel, 'Introduction générale', pp. 12–14; Parker, 'Francophonie et universalité', p. 695.

68 Conklin, *A mission*, pp. 7–8; Blanchard, Lemaire and Bancel, 'Introduction générale', pp. 12–14.

early twentieth, a lobby of politicians, businessmen, and representatives from French port cities and the overseas colonies pushed to further the development of the empire.[69] It was these circles that, in 1906, established the Comité national des expositions colonials to make sure Marseille's colonial exposition of that year would be followed by worthy successors in France and abroad.[70] In 1913, the club proposed that the next colonial exposition, planned for Paris in 1916, would also contain a 'permanent national museum of the colonies' like the London and Tervuren institutes.[71] This planted the seed for what would become the official French colonial museum.

The resulting International Colonial Exposition has gone down in history as the epitome of the European colonial expositions, combining colonial spectacle, exoticism, and entertainment in a six-month event that was promoted as allowing visitors to travel 'around the world in one day'. Due to competition between Paris and Marseille and the world war, the exposition would only be realised in 1931. The organisers could adhere to the standard its precursors had set, such as the great world fairs and the 1924 British Empire Exhibition in London.[72] They sought to make the event didactic and informative; for example, by using 'authentic' colonial architecture for the various pavilions. Also included were a documentation centre with data and statistics and detailed metropolitan sections where France's contributions to 'new and far lands for which it is responsible and which it decided to call to civilisation' were exhibited.[73] However, in practice the emphasis on education was combined with more prosaic attractions such a zoo and a funfair, restaurants, shops, shows, and boat rentals. Visitors could acquaint themselves with the technical specificities of empire, but also partake in such adventurous activities as riding dromedaries and savouring exotic foods, or generally immersing themselves in the exposition's dreamy atmosphere of 'one thousand and one nights'.[74]

From the start the exposition was conceived of as an international event. Belgium, Portugal, the Netherlands, Italy, the United States, and Denmark erected pavilions next to those of France's colonies; the United Kingdom participated only indirectly because of the many delays and because it feared being overshadowed by France. As a result, a wide variety

69 Aldrich, *Greater France*, pp. 100–106.

70 Hodeir and Pierre, *L'Exposition Coloniale*, p. 19.

71 *Comité national des expositions coloniales*, pp. 19–20.

72 Geppert, *Fleeting cities*, pp. 179–183.

73 Olivier, *Rapport général*, vol. VI, p. i.

74 Morton, *Hybrid modernities*, pp. 65–81.

of regions was present at the exposition. Marketed through advertisements and billboards in European cities and newspapers, the exposition was presented as a representation of the entire globe" and more specifically, of the efforts of the civilised world on that globe.[75] The international dimension was common for this kind of exposition. But in the interwar period, when the European powers emerged from the war weakened and having lost prestige, and when the League of Nations mandate territories were under some form of international surveillance already, various influential authors and politicians also propagated pan-European cooperation, including in the colonial domain. The 1931 exposition was to be a high point in this movement, and the exposition's commissioner-general, Hubert Lyautey, was one of its figureheads.[76]

Lyautey (1854–1934) was also a strong proponent of the museum. As Maréchal de France and a high-profile colonial administrator, his career had taken him across the empire from Indochina to Madagascar to Morocco, where he had functioned as governor since 1912. From the start of his appointment as head of the exposition, he confirmed the plan to establish a permanent colonial museum out of the temporary exposition. The museum would, he stated, be an introduction to the exposition that presented 'on the one hand, the action undertaken by France overseas in all domains of human activity and, on the other, all that our distant possessions contribute or could contribute to the metropole in exchange'.[77] The Ministry of Colonies elaborated on the museum's goal in detail: it was to provide an 'inventory' of the exposition and acquaint the French public with the realities of *la plus grande France*, which were still unknown to many.[78] The lamentation about the lack of knowledge about the empire among the French public was a recurring one and justified the establishment of a permanent museum.[79] The extensive report on the exposition, written afterwards by Lyautey's second-in-command, former governor of Madagascar Marcel Olivier, held that in France (compared to in Britain), 'the colonial idea remains too much the prerogative of an elite'; a 'certain taste for exoticism, based on choreography and music of negro origin' did not make the development of

75 Geppert, *Fleeting cities*, pp. 181–183, 194.

76 Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, pp. 17–69.

77 Cited in: Olivier, *Rapport général*, vol. I, p. 111.

78 Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF), inv.no. MFILM 4-LK9-1424, report *Exposition Coloniale Internationale de Paris en 1931. Section du Ministère des Colonies. But et organisation* (Paris 1930) pp. 6–7, 11.

79 Morton, *Hybrid modernities*, pp. 74–75.

an 'esprit colonial' any less necessary.[80] According to an exposition guide, the new museum would give 'our country a museum worthy of our overseas empire, worthy of its illustrious past and its innumerable but little-known riches'.[81]

In this context, the location of the exposition and thus the museum within Paris was important. As in London and Amsterdam, the site of the museum was hotly debated but the outcome was that it would be located away from the city centre. The Second Empire had turned Paris into an 'imperial' capital with its boulevards and grand public buildings. But sites explicitly related to the colonial empire were less common and of relatively recent date – such as the colonial college (1898), ministry (1905), and monuments described on the previous pages. After many deliberations throughout the 1920s, it was decided to hold the exposition in the Bois de Vincennes, to the east of the city centre and located among working-class quarters. Just outside the old fortifications, which had recently been torn down, this area had long been a dilapidated fringe of the city and was, above all, a practical choice. New metro lines to the site would be opened to facilitate the accessibility and, in fact, it was common that these kinds of expositions in European cities were located away from the city centres.[82] But as the location for the museum that was to remain after the exposition had ended, the site was not ideal – it would be surrounded by working-class residential quarters, without any other monumental, representative building in sight. Indeed, on city maps, the site was dangerously close to the edge (Figure 28). Proponents of the museum felt the site lacked prestige; on one occasion, Lyautey called the Bois de Vincennes 'a deserted park'.[83] The 'intellectual, industrial and commercial' life of the city moved towards the west of the centre, wrote the explorer Paul Bourdarie, founder of the Academie des Sciences Coloniales and involved in the museum's exhibition, to Lyautey, and the projected museum in the east was at risk of being forgotten after the exposition.[84] Bourdarie proposed to place the museum instead in a western arrondissement, possibly in the Bois de Boulogne's Jardin d'Acclimatisation, a zoological garden and exposition ground where

80 Olivier, *Rapport général*, vol. V, pp. 4–5.

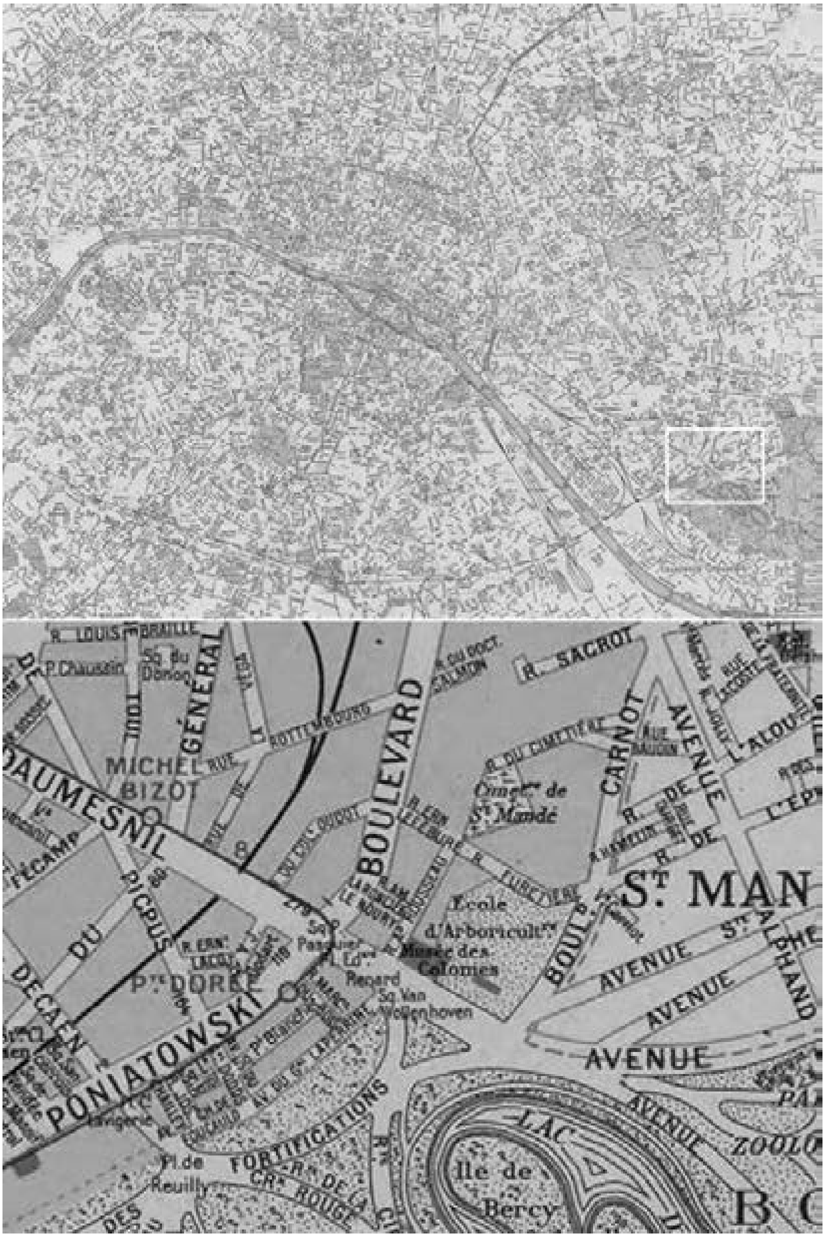
81 *Le Livre d'Or*, p. 19.

82 Morton, *Hybrid modernities*, pp. 12, 133–140; Geppert, *Fleeting cities*, pp. 183–186.

83 Cited in: Culot and Lambrichs, *Albert Laprade*, p. 213.

84 Archives nationales, Paris (ANP), fonds Laprade (475 AP 208), dossier 1, report by Bourdarie to Lyautey (31 October 1927) p. 13. 'Sciences coloniales' were social sciences tailored to the colonial context; see Singaravélou, *Professer l'empire*.

Figure 28 **Map of Paris in 1937, showing the museum's location on the edge of the city, between the blocks of buildings and the Bois de Vincennes. It also shows the lack of other representative buildings in the vicinity and the streets and squares named after colonial figures such as Van Vollenhoven, Renard, and Laperrine.**



human ethnographic exhibitions were organised.[85] But this was also hardly a central location; another report cautioned that any other peripheral site was no improvement. Better locations could be found in the centre around the Champ de Mars or on the Seine near the Eiffel Tower, but none were practical in terms of efforts, cost, and time.[86] Therefore, the museum would remain at Vincennes as planned. The ambitions of Lyautey, Bourdarie, and other colonial enthusiasts ran into the interests of the government and the city of Paris, which had already agreed in May 1927 upon the museum's location at the entrance of the exhibition grounds.[87]

The location did not deter Lyautey. When the first stone of the eventual building was laid down in November 1928, he simply turned the reasoning around and framed the exposition and museum as a way to improve the surrounding quarters. Perhaps they could even, in his words, lead to a continuing 'Hausmannisation' of the eastern districts.[88] His ambitions untempered, Lyautey held that the building was to be more than a museum and argued the institute should become a 'working office', an informative 'House of the Colonies' akin to the exposition's documentation centre.[89] In doing so, he was inspired by none other than the modernist architect, Le Corbusier, who was embroiled in a polemic about his rejected design for the new League of Nations palace in Geneva – in fact, in a conversation with the museum's eventual architect, Albert Laprade, Lyautey proclaimed himself an admirer of Le Corbusier's love of radical solutions.[90] In line with the concerns about the museum's location, the ideal of creating a living, vibrant museum was a recurring motif in the discourse surrounding the museum. Bourdarie, for example, wanted the museum to be not only a place for 'library and museum rats', but a living institution for men with colonial experience, while Lyautey, calling the designation of *museum* 'horrible', wanted to avoid a 'necropole' and instead sought to create a 'lively information organism'.[91] During the exposition, the new institute's success would become obvious, but the issue of its location was to resurface as soon as the crowds had left Vincennes.

85 ANP, report by Bourdarie, pp. 15–16; on the Jardin, see: Aldrich, *Vestiges*, pp. 59–61.

86 ANP, fonds Lyautey, dossier 1, note on the museum's location (December 1927).

87 Olivier, *Rapport général*, vol. I, pp. 88–91.

88 BNF, inv.no. GE F-2986, speech by Lyautey at the laying of the museum's foundation stone (s.d.) p. 3.

89 Ibid., p. 4.

90 Culot and Lambrichs, *Albert Laprade*, p. 217; La Palette, 'Lyautey, protecteur des arts'.

91 ANP, report by Bourdarie, pp. 14–15; Culot and Lambrichs, *Albert Laprade*, p. 213; Maigrot, 'Le futur Musée permanent', p. 23.

The museum building

Although the museum would remain after the exposition had gone, its location and appearance were shaped by it. Initially it was planned in the centre of the exposition grounds, where it would be surrounded by colonial pavilions and was supposed to house offices for the commissioners from the North African colonies. Subsequently, the exposition's head architect Léon Jaussely gave it an eclectic North African appearance with pastiche minarets and arcades. The exposition's architectural committee objected to this choice, as the building was not to represent any particular colony but instead embody the entire empire, including the metropole. Jaussely, whose health was deteriorating, then proposed to request assistance from Albert Laprade (1883–1978). Laprade worked on the exposition's Moroccan pavilion, having worked as an architect in Morocco, where he had been an associate of Lyautey.[92] A second, this time Indochinese-inspired, design was again turned down in May 1927, at which point Laprade presented some of his own designs, which the committee valued. At this point, the location of the museum also been moved to the edge of the exposition grounds, surrounded by the other 'metropolitan' pavilions of the event.[93]

Laprade's design would be realised with minor adjustments. The main challenge proved to be his old boss, Lyautey, after he became commissioner of the exposition. At that point, Lyautey still considered a 'museum' unfit and thought a monumental building at Vincennes would be a waste of money and time. If the building was to be realised, it would only be as a branch of his House of the Colonies pet project. Laprade defended the design by pointing to its possibilities for expansion – the building could, he argued, also house the museum of the Navy, a redesign for which he had already published plans – and even went as far as to suggest a temporary steel structure that could be transplanted to the city centre after the exposition.[94] Lyautey finally caved when it became clear his plans would not be realised any time soon.[95]

Relatively simple in terms of plan and volume, the design's most striking features were the screen of slender columns underneath the overhanging cornice and the enormous frieze that covered the entire main

92 Morton, *Hybrid modernities*, pp. 274–281.

93 Ibid., pp. 274–275; Culot and Lambrichs, *Albert Laprade*, pp. 208–211.

94 A floor plan for expanding the building with the navy museum was already published in Maigrot, 'Le futur Musée', p. 24.

95 Culot and Lambrichs, *Albert Laprade*, pp. 213–222.

façade, behind the column screen (see Figure 31). The museum sat on a basement and its central entrance was reached via a wide staircase, which also gave access to the gallery between the columns and the outer wall. Once inside, a foyer-like corridor led to separate salons in the corners, to the central banqueting hall, and to the exhibition galleries located on both sides of the hall. It also led to the stairwells, from where one could descend into the lower ground floor with the aquarium, or ascend to the two floors with more exhibition galleries and mezzanines around the banqueting hall. In general, the exposition rooms were light, modern, and spacious, using electrical lighting and, on the top floor, a system of skylights.

With its columns, the building was a stylised form of classicism meant to fit in with Paris's urban landscape. But inevitably, it was also influenced by architectural modernism. The reformist architecture that people like Schumacher and Höger were concerned with in Hamburg had, by 1930, grown to become an increasingly influential modernist movement. Avant-garde movements in art, design, and architecture set new trends; the first of the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne was held in 1928. Alongside, for instance, Auguste Perret, Laprade was a 'moderate modernist' who shared the basic functionalist tenets of modernism but not its radical erasure of historicising forms and ornaments.[96] Reverting to a form of classicism for the complex commission of the museum might have been inevitable for a Beaux-Arts-trained architect like Laprade, but was also a fairly typical response in the 1920s and 1930s, especially for monumental public buildings. In employing an abstracted but monumental classicism, Laprade's innovative design also set the standard for future exposition 'palaces', such as the Palais Chaillot on the site of the old Trocadéro museum (see below) and the Palais de Tokyo.[97]

But Laprade also built on his Moroccan experiences. While there, he had worked to realise governor Lyautey's vision of separate urban zones for Europeans and Moroccans and designed a number of public buildings, including the governor's residency. Lyautey's vision was in line with the colonial policy of *association*, in which the French were to 'develop' indigenous populations who would retain their own culture and social structures, which stood against the earlier *assimilation* in which colonial

96 Ibid., pp. 199–200, 211.

97 Ibid., p. 212; Culot, 'Un musée', pp. 67–68; Loyer, *Histoire de l'architecture française*, pp. 260–265.

subjects would be integrated into the French nation.[98] Facilitating this association, Laprade sought to combine supposedly 'traditional' and Islamic architectural elements with more modernist forms and principles.[99] The French colonial building style in North Africa has been described as consisting of *arabisances*, hybrid architectural forms, and became a recognisable 'imperial' government style.[100]

Laprade took a similar approach to the museum, although the colonial influences on it were more abstract and stylised. Sculpted line patterns and column capitals were inspired by 'primitive civilisations' or 'certain Moroccan buildings', according to the official report.[101] With its simple box-like profile and column screen, the building also echoed modern French architecture in Morocco, starker and more plan-focused than the Algerian *arabisances*.[102] Examples are Rabat's Palais de Justice (1927–1930), which also used a screen of colossal but thin columns, or the Port Lyautey (Kenitra) town hall (finished 1933).[103] As early as 1917, Laprade had argued that Moroccan culture could stimulate French art. He cited as a particular candidate for adoption to the Parisian context the 'enormous' corniches of historic *madrasa* schools, a recommendation that he seemingly put into practice himself with the museum.[104] The references to North Africa in the building were too stylised to count as real *arabisances*, perhaps. But Laprade's experience in combining the modern and the traditional in the Moroccan context that he could then apply to the Paris museum underlines how the colonies could work as 'laboratories of modernity' where technocratic policies could be put into practice before being transported back to the metropole.[105]

A rich colonial palace

The building's extensive decorative programme referred to the colonial world more literally. It was particularly influenced by art deco, the design style that had become internationally popular in the 1920s and that eagerly adopted 'exotic' themes and inspirations.[106] On the museum's exterior

98 Morton, *Hybrid modernities*, pp. 184–190.
99 Culot and Lambrichs, *Albert Laprade*, pp. 75–135.
100 Béguin, *Arabisances*, pp. 1–2.
101 Olivier, *Rapport général*, vol. II, pp. 66–67.
102 Béguin, *Arabisances*, pp. 61–67.
103 'Le Palais de Justice'; 'La construction au Maroc'.
104 Laprade, 'Les influences possible du Maroc'.
105 Rabinow, *French modern*.
106 Wood, 'The exotic'; Benton, 'The International Exhibition'.

staircase, a tall, gilded statue of 'colonial France' was placed while on the north-west elevation, the names of 150 'sons who covered the empire' with France's genius were inscribed. The list implied a long historic continuity of French expansion, from crusader king Godfrey of Bouillon to a recent head of the École coloniale.[107] But the most striking element on the museum's exterior was the gigantic frieze that covered the entire main façade and the first part of both lateral façades. This 'stone tapestry', or alternatively 'stone poem' or 'great book of the colonies', was designed and executed by sculptor Jean-Alfred Janniot and measured some 90 by 10 metres, being described as the largest frieze in the world.[108]

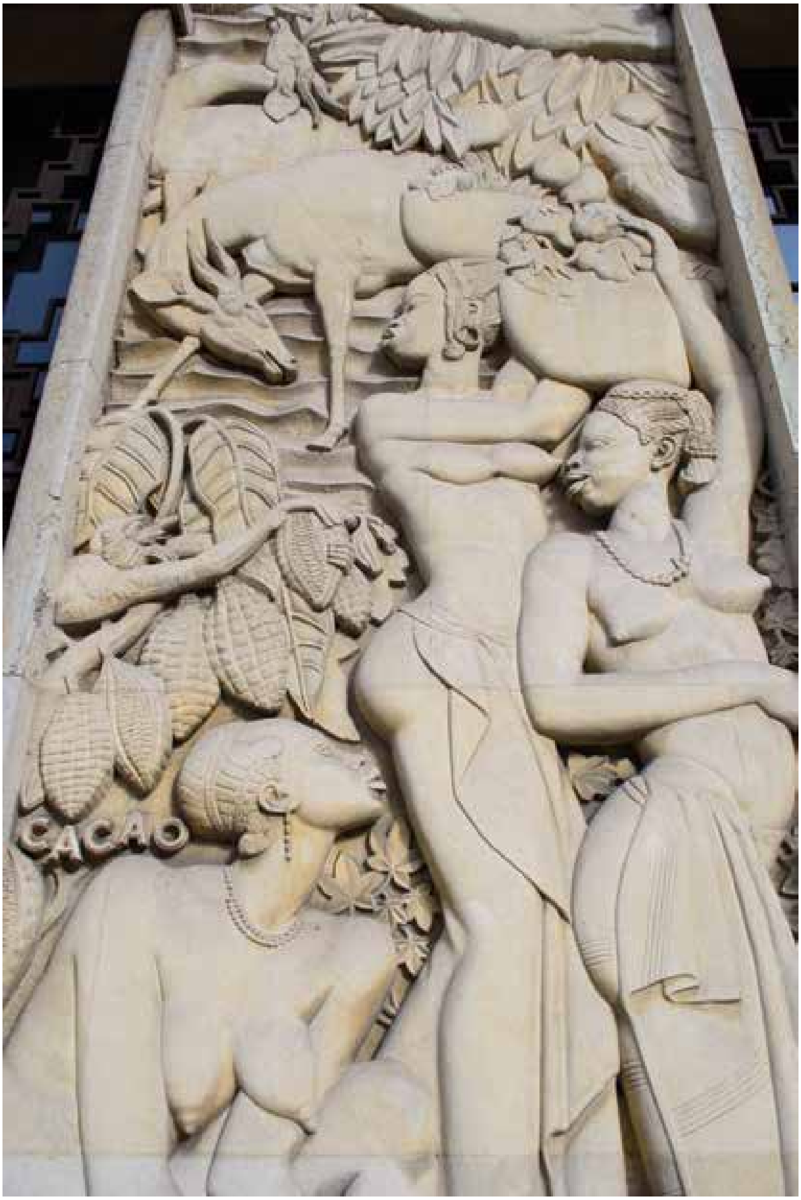
A bustling tangle of sculpted plants, animals, and people, the frieze depicted the economic contributions of the colonies to the metropole. Above the central entrance sat a personification of what was described as Mother Earth. The presence of a bull alluded to the myth of Europa, however, and since the figure was surrounded by representations of the great French ports, such as Marseille and Le Havre, and of Paris's airfield, through which colonial materials entered the metropole, she was simultaneously a stand-in for France. Around this personification, the colonies of the empire were portrayed by men and women labouring to produce its riches amid tropical vegetation and animals. To the left were the African colonies and, around the corner, those in the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean; to the right were the colonies that made up Indochina and those in the Pacific. All were labelled with sculpted captions, as were the dozens of natural, agricultural, and mineral resources they provided, which turned the sculpture into a didactic exercise. Dahomey was represented by women carrying palm oil, Ivory Coast by men felling and sawing trees, and Réunion by the harvest of sugarcane. On the other side, the inhabitants of Cochinchina delivered rice and corn, Cambodians silk and cotton, and New Caledonians coffee, lead, and coal (Figure 29). The imperial space centred on the museum became one of production and exploitation.

This representation confirmed the role of the colonies as suppliers of raw materials for France's economy; the only man-made commodities on the frieze were the 'arts' of Laos. The frieze also made it seem as though the colonial riches were the result of natural abundance, there for the taking, instead of being reliant on commercial plantations and mines, capitalist

107 Jarrassé, 'Le décor du Palais des Colonies', p. 88; Aldrich, *Vestiges*, pp. 41–42.

108 *Le Livre d'Or*, p. 19; BNF, inv.no. IFN-7200361, booklet *Le bas-relief du Musée des Colonies* (Paris 1931) [no page numbers].

Figure 29 **Detail of the frieze as seen up close from the gallery. This segment of the frieze's western half shows the harvesting of cacao in Ivory Coast by several women with heavily racialised appearances. The inclusion of the deer and the monkey, handing the women a cacao pod, portrays the colony as a kind of lush paradise where tropical commodities were there for the taking.**



investment, and competition on the world market.[109] The juxtaposition of colonial subjects with all kinds of animals and lush vegetation reinforced the romantic image of natural abundance. The frieze thus provided a sanitised framing of imperialism as an elaborate and harmonious system of production by people close to the natural world. Even by contemporary European standards this was against better judgement, given the political resistance against French rule that made itself felt in the 1920s and 1930s throughout the empire (see below).

According to a booklet Janniot published, the frieze was 'not a triumphal ode, but the familiar and grandiose epos of human activity and the fertility of nature'.[110] 'The muscles of the Africans, Indochinese and Malagasies', the official exposition guide read, 'are not the muscles of slaves that build necropoles or temples, but the muscles of well-fed people that demand from the earth, under our aegis of peace, the riches she produces on the surface or which are hidden in her depths'.[111] The mention of slavery and the denigrating insinuation that, without French intervention, colonial subjects would construct useless 'necropoles' and 'temples' legitimised French rule, while the reduction of 'Africans, Indochinese and Malagasies' to their muscles portrayed them first and foremost as bodies to perform physical labour. In general the sculpture heavily racialised these colonial subjects, with coarse facial features and exaggeratedly thick lips.

The romanticised representation of harmonious imperial production was typical for the exposition, but also for similar portrayals of empire in other European countries. The theme was continued inside the museum by a series of paintings, where colonial subjects from the corners of the empire presented agricultural and other products in rich fantasy landscapes.[112] But the frieze was also a more monumental version of the representations of rice cultivation surrounding Chapter 3's rice mills, the reliefs depicting colonial agriculture on Amsterdam's Koloniaal Instituut, or the EMB posters that celebrated the abundance of 'the empire's gardens' and the toiling of colonial subjects.[113] Laprade associated the frieze's flat, almost perspective-less composition with medieval tapestries, although he also noted this scheme was simply required for the sculpture in the tall frieze to be as visible as possible.[114] Several years before, the Welsh artist Frank Brangwyn had

109 Janes, *Colonial food*, pp. 130–133.
110 BNF, *Le bas-relief.*
111 Demaison, *Exposition coloniale internationale*, p. 154.
112 Prudhomme, 'Une leçon de choses'.
113 Horton, *Empire Marketing Board posters*.
114 BNF, *Le bas-relief.*

resorted to a strikingly similar strategy for a comparable commission: a series of murals of the British empire for the House of Lords, for which he likewise used a composition of a dense mass of human bodies, products, plants, and animals to symbolise the empire's abundance and vivacity.[115]

The building's interior furnishings were luxurious. Laprade invited a range of leading art deco designers, sculptors, and painters to provide frescoes, statuary, mosaics, furniture, ironwork, and lacquer panels; a number of these artists also worked on the famous *Normandie* liner which would be launched a year after the exposition. For the building's flooring, colonial mahogany, iroko, and other woods were used.[116] The two round salons in the corners of the building were filled with custom furniture by prominent designers, much of which was made out of tropical palm and ebony wood.[117] For the eastern Salon Lyautey, the couple Ivanna and André-Hubert Lemaître also provided a dreamy fresco dedicated to the 'spiritual contributions' of Asia to France. In soft tones, landscapes and arts were portrayed, while Buddha, Confucius, and Krishna represented the great Asian religions. The western Salon du Ministre was covered in frescoes that represented the cultural and intellectual contributions of Africa to France, produced by Louis Bouquet, an acquaintance of Laprade who had sojourned in Tunisia for some time.[118] The frescoes focused on North Africa and the 'arts and sciences cultivated by the Muslim world', but one depicted a red adobe building and black Africans, 'in a forest full of strange mysteries' and 'disturbing seductions'.[119] The almost mannerist depiction of them again illustrates the general fascination for the black body in interwar French society, racialised and often sexualised, that also came to the fore in more popular media.[120] As a 'souvenir', Louis Bouquet even produced a painting where he, Laprade, Janniot, and Laprade's assistant stood before the completed museum, joined by a nude black woman making eye contact with the viewer.[121] It is as if she represented the colonial world as another 'creator' of the museum. But like the figures on the frieze,

115 Willsdon, *Mural painting*, pp. 145–164. Digital reproductions of the panels can be found at Art UK, London, inv.no. GV 1934.646, Frank Brangwyn, empire panels (c.1930), available at https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/search/venue:brangwyn-hall-7566 (accessed 19 January 2022).

116 Olivier, *Rapport général*, vol. II, p. 72.

117 Brunhammer, 'Le décor du Palais des Colonies'.

118 Bouché, 'Le décor peint du musée'.

119 Varenne, 'La decoration murale'.

120 Berliner, *Ambivalent desire*, pp. 118–139.

121 Musée du quai Branly, Paris, museum collection, inv.no. PP0133812, photograph of painting 'Souvenir du Musée des Colonies' by Louis Bouquet, available at http://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/855064-souvenir-du-musee-des-colonies/ (accessed 19 January 2022).

her only contribution was bodily, and if the male designers figured as proud craftsmen, she was a nameless type.

The most important decorations were found in the central banqueting hall: the location for official ceremonies and receptions. There, frescoes by Pierre Ducos de la Haille, another artist who had lived in North Africa, complemented the exterior frieze by focusing on what the French were thought to bring to the colonies in return. Agriculture, forestry, and mining were present again, but the abolition of slavery, healthcare, governance, science, and shipping and railway technology were included as well. Throughout the fresco, white missionaries were shown working (the Catholic and the Protestant missions had their pavilions at the exposition too), but references to Islam or Buddhism were not included. The centre of the fresco was formed by the familiar theme of a representation of the five continents, with white sails in the background and at its centre a royal Europe holding a white dove.[122] As the United States had by this point become a world power in its own right – the country had its own pavilion on the exposition – America was no longer symbolised by a native chief but by a female figure with a modern skyscraper.

The museum at the exposition

The building's first stone was laid down ceremonially in November 1928; it was finished in early 1931.[123] The museum was supposed to function as 'a preface and a conclusion' to the exposition, which lasted from May to November 1931.[124] The museum was an integral part of it, the location for the official opening and closing ceremonies and dozens of other events. On average it saw a massive 25,000–30,000 entries daily, roughly 16 per cent of the exposition's average daily entries of some 170,000 (the exposition's total number of entries sat at some 33 million, but as many tickets allowed multiple entries, the total number of visitors was closer to 8 million, 1 million of whom were foreign).[125]

The museum provided a varied collection of objects and displays. It contained a 'retrospective' section that explicated the history of French colonialism up to the Second Empire, and a 'synthetic' section that continued from there and presented the manifold links between France and the colonies.

122 Bouché, 'Le décor', p. 406.
123 Olivier, *Rapport général*, vol. II, p. 66.
124 Olivier, *Rapport général*, vol. V, p. 9.
125 Olivier, *Rapport général*, vol. III, p. 402; Hodeir and Pierre, *L'Exposition Coloniale*, p. 101.

Together, they painted a glorious picture of what was called 'Greater France', legitimised by the claims that the empire had ended slavery, quelled North African piracy, liberated the Indochinese people from oppression, and in sub-Saharan Africa, 'literally saved an entire race that was doomed to extinction [...] the rifle is muted, the bow dismantled and the torch extinguished. If any proof was needed, what a justification for Europe!'[126] The synthetic section was divided over the first-storey piano nobile, which was the first floor that one entered, the ground floor, and the galleries of the second and third storeys, while the historic section was housed in the galleries of the first storey.[127]

The historic section started with the French involvement in the Crusades and continued with the seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century French expansion in North America, the Caribbean, North Africa, India, and South-East Asia. Rather than shying away from the ultimately unsuccessful French colonising efforts in North America and India (although several French enclaves remained in India until 1954), the exhibition cherished this 'first colonial empire' that proved the long history and broad geographical scope of French colonialism. Among the exhibits were paintings, portraits of generals, statesmen, and explorers (mostly French, but some of 'noble' adversaries like Toussaint Louverture), uniforms, historic documents, and works of applied art such as porcelain, furniture, and jewellery.[128]

The synthetic section was diverse and detailed. It started with colonial anthropology, presenting the 'races' of the empire and what were called their different evolutionary stages, and exhibiting archaeological finds and 'indigenous arts'. This category followed the interest in so-called *art nègre* that museum curators had developed in the 1920s, after artists and collectors had made it fashionable.[129] The objects from various territories were thought to allow visitors to compare the 'artistic faculties' of the different 'races', but also to illustrate 'European influence on the manifestations of local art'.[130]

Attention then shifted to the Third Republic's conquest of the different colonies and its colonial policies. Rooms with photographs, models, statistics, and dioramas of French buildings from the empire represented French achievements in healthcare, education, infrastructure, industry, and other fields. Conquest was thus followed by administration. Administration was followed by exploitation: the third department represented the commodities

126 BNF, *Exposition Coloniale Internationale*, pp. 12–15.
127 Olivier, *Rapport général*, vol. V, pp. 35, 43–44
128 Ibid., 147–155.
129 Conklin, *In the museum*, pp. 116–117, 130–132.
130 Olivier, *Rapport général*, vol. V, pp. 55–56.

the empire delivered, from raw material to final product. Next came rooms on the empire's military aspects, colonial tourism and merchant shipping, and the 'colonial influence' on the French arts. Finally, the section concluded with a large planisphere on which the growth of the French empire was indicated by lights, which ran synchronous to an explanatory film, and an aquarium. The aquarium might seem to fall in the same category as the exposition zoo, but was conceived as another demonstration of the economic benefits of the empire and focused on the oceans as source of food, guano, and other commodities.[131]

The museum was well received. Architecture journals valued its modern design and subtle references to the exotic.[132] Exposition guides praised the building's appearance, but also its well-lit and well-ventilated galleries and the use of modern means of presentation such as the planisphere and the film.[133] However, for some it was too serious to be a real 'attraction'. One guide named only the museum's aquarium as one of the exposition's top sights, an assessment which would become a recurring problem – from the organisers' point of view – in the museum's later life.[134]

Some guides also noted that France now finally had its colonial museum.[135] The advantage of the relative lateness of the museum's establishment was that its organisers could visit and assess the existing institutes in other Western European countries. In 1929, the head of the synthetic section visited the Imperial Institute, the Musée du Congo belge and the Koloniaal Instituut; Lyautey visited the Imperial Institute in 1930. They praised the Belgian and Dutch museums for their modes of presentation and admired the Imperial Institute's focus on documentation and technical expertise. But the organisers argued that their Paris museum had to be larger in scope than the Dutch and Belgian institutes and more accessible to the general public than the British institute, at least during the exposition.[136]

These ideas resulted in a different approach than in the museum's equivalent institutes in London, Tervuren, and Amsterdam. First, the Paris museum was not a research institute or collection of samples and products, lacking laboratories for the natural sciences and extensive ethnographic collections

131 Ibid., pp. 51–113.

132 E.g. Boudot-Lamotte, 'La métropole à l'Exposition coloniale'; Goissaud, 'Le Musée permanent des Colonies'; Hegelbacher, 'L'Exposition coloniale internationale'.

133 Demaison, *Exposition coloniale*, pp. 153–156; *Le Livre d'Or*, pp. 19–24; Nicoll, *À travers l'Exposition coloniale*, pp. 113–119; BNF, inv.no. SR91/437, booklet *Ce qu'il faut voir à l'Exposition coloniale* (1931) pp. 23–26.

134 BNF, *Ce qu'il faut voir*, p. 19.

135 Demaison, *Exposition coloniale*, p. 153; *Le Livre d'Or*, p. 19.

136 Olivier, *Rapport*, vol. V, pp. 35–37; MacKenzie, *Propaganda*, p. 133.

for anthropological research. In other words, although the museum building so obviously represented the French imperial space, it did not create physical imperial networks of objects and research expeditions. This made it into a more dedicated, but also 'shallower' museum for disseminating knowledge about the French empire, which was habitually called propaganda or 'vulgarisation'. In this respect, the museum's function was also complicated by the existing institutional landscape in France, as Paris was already home to the Trocadéro ethnography museum, the Guimet museum of Asian art, and the anthropological collections of the natural history museum.

Second, in its efforts to convince the public of the merits of the French empire, the museum paid more attention to the empire's effects on metropolitan France than the other institutes. Certainly, a 'what's in it for me' kind of attitude always informed these museums, as they were supposed to convince the public of the benefits of empire for the metropole. They all focused on valuable colonial commodities that metropolitan firms could exploit, trade, and process; the Imperial Institute even included empire-related economic activity in Britain. But the integral approach of the Paris museum, which included economic links but also the military, tourism, shipping, and, uniquely, French art, as fields shaped by the empire, emphasised the interconnectedness of the empire even more. Then again, this inclusion was limited in scope and focused on exchanges on French terms. It was therefore far from an admission that not all agency in the empire lay with France. Even the section on colonial influences on French art did not focus on colonial artists or techniques, but on colonial or exotic topics in French literature, painting, and music.

Post-exposition: a new direction

The exposition had provided the museum with a steady stream of visitors, but after it closed down in November 1931, the museum would have to learn to stand on its own feet. In many respects, the 1930s were the moment to push for more colonial propaganda in France. The successful exposition heralded a new phase in French imperial culture, in which the empire was truly established in the French national self-image and enjoyed almost unanimous support among the political parties. It was thought to help ease economic difficulties and provide a counterweight to the general feeling that France was in decline.[137]

137 Blanchard, Lemaire and Bancel, 'Introduction générale', pp. 34–36; Blanchard, 'L'union nationale'.

Furthermore, the growing movement contesting imperialism only increased the need to paint a favourable picture of it. Internationally, anti-colonial, communist, and nationalist movements led to strikes and revolts in a number of colonies and mandate territories, including Syria, French West Africa, Madagascar, Morocco, and Indochina. In France, World War I had brought tens of thousands of colonial subjects to the metropole who had contributed to the Allied victory. Paris, home to over 100,000 people born outside of Europe in 1930, drew a motley crew of anti-imperialist activists, pan-Africanist intellectuals, and would-be revolutionaries from Africa, Asia, the Americas, and the Caribbean.[138] Maintaining networks with like-minded activists in the colonies and the anglophone world, they established a range of anti-imperial organisations and challenged French imperialism. Already during the 1931 exposition, together with French communists and surrealist artists they had famously organised a counter-exhibition that told 'the truth about the colonies'. Furthermore, these anticolonial activists used the occasion to contact and recruit persons from the colonies who worked at the exposition.[139] Colonial subjects living in Paris had their own relationship to the colonial museum at Vincennes. Some had modelled for Janniot's sculpture; others had worked as street vendors at the exposition and, if they did so without permit, might have been held in the museum building's two courts, which the police used as makeshift prisons during the event.[140]

For the French government, maintaining the momentum of imperial propaganda was harder than it seemed. In fact, pro-colonial lobbyists found that interest for the empire ebbed away rather quickly after 1931, and the number of colonial publications decreased.[141] As for the museum, the building – with its explicitly imperialist message – was in place. But the institution that was to inhabit it lacked both a clear organisational framework and objects to exhibit, for many displayed items had only been temporary loans. The two 'sections' during the exposition had been headed by civil servants of the Ministry of Colonies supported by unwieldy committees of officials,

138 Goebel, *Anti-imperial metropolis*, pp. 1–29.

139 Boittin, *Colonial metropolis*, pp. 77–110.

140 A photograph showing Janniot and a black model working on the frieze is displayed on the website of the Porte Dorée palace, as the museum building has been baptised: Palais de la Porte Dorée, Paris, website, photograph of a model and Janniot (s.d.), available at https://monument.palais-portedoree.fr/les-decors/le-bas-relief-d-alfred-janniot (accessed 19 January 2022); Murphy, 'Le CNHI', p. 52.

141 Fournier, *Marius-Ary Leblond*, p. 337.

scholars, authors, officers, lobbyists, curators, and politicians.[142] As publicist André Demaison, author of the official exposition guide, had already warned before the exposition, a real curator was lacking.[143]

In January 1932, the young civil servant Gaston Palewski was appointed as the museum's manager. He was another former associate of Lyautey and of the new Minister of Colonies, Paul Reynaud, and had been an attaché to the Guimet museum. His first action was to close down the museum, with the exception of the aquarium, and refurbish it. The intensive use during the exposition would have worn the building down considerably and many of the galleries had to be filled with objects again.[144] The process was complicated by uncertainty over the museum's exact scope and goal, as competitors had appeared on the horizon. Lyautey, for one, continued to push for his House of the Colonies.[145] But despite support from Minister Reynaud, it never materialised.[146] The project must have seemed very similar to the existing Agences économiques, while the economic crisis that had arrived in France and the Third Republic's political instability did not help either: the centre-right Reynaud was no longer a minister since the electoral victory of the leftist parties in May 1932. Furthermore, the concept was just too closely wed to Lyautey, and it died with him in 1934.

But even with the House of the Colonies idea gone, other institutes threatened to poach on the museum's territory. Since the late 1920s, the anthropologists of the Trocadéro museum had been looking to establish a new national ethnographic museum. The museum's assistant director, Georges Rivière, was a friend of Palewski and would even replace him temporarily when Palewski travelled to Indochina. But he also feared that the colonial museum would become a competitor and tried to get sympathisers of his own museum to be appointed to the colonial museum.[147] His own Trocadéro museum was renovated in the early 1930s and would be renamed Musée de l'Homme in 1937, as part of that year's international exposition, and housed in the new Palais Chaillot for which Laprade's museum building had paved the way architecturally. Ultimately, Palewski agreed to a division of labour, in which the colonial museum would focus on the changes that

142 Olivier, *Rapport*, vol. V, pp. 24–29, 122.
143 Demaison, 'Au Musée des Colonies', p. 290
144 Cornilliet-Watelet, 'Le Musée des Colonies', p. 86.
145 ANP, fonds Lyautey, dossier 1, inv.no. 178, newspaper clipping on council meeting of 10 July 1931; inv.no 179, letter by Édouard Renard to Lyautey (11 July 1931).
146 ANP, fonds Lyautey, dossier 1, inv.no. 210, letter by Reynaud to Lyautey (10 September 1931) p. 2.
147 Conklin, *In the museum*, pp. 118–119.

French civilisation wrought on colonial populations and the ethnographic museum on traditional and 'authentic' indigenous life.[148]

When he was interim director, Rivière visited the large Belgian and Dutch institutes to acquaint himself with their best practices and returned impressed, finding it 'humiliating' that France had not been able to match them.[149] To make the colonial museum more than only a place for the popularisation of imperial knowledge, and to avoid competition with the other ethnographic museums in Paris, Rivière advised the Minister of Colonies that the building be enlarged to add a documentation centre with a library, offices, sample collections, and its own journal.[150] Laprade again delivered designs for the extension.[151] As with Lyautey's House of the Colonies, the suggestion came to nothing, and the building would remain as it was. But concerning the museum project, Palewski, after his return, was roughly on the same page as Rivière. 'Historic' and 'synthetic' sections would make a reappearance, and the aquarium would form a 'natural history' section. Separate rooms would form an 'economic' section, exhibiting colonial commodities. The biggest change was the inclusion of a section on 'colonial life' that offered 'a picturesque voyage through the French universe', with dioramas and what was called 'indigenous art'.[152]

With the debate on which niche the museum would have to fill still in the air, it partly reopened in November 1933, showcasing the new historic section and the section on indigenous art. Palewski had worked hard to find objects to put on display from French museums and from the exposition's former colonial pavilions.[153] In the press, the reception of the new exhibitions was positive, but journalists also noted that Palewski's means had been limited and progress slow. The many photographic reproductions could not compensate for the lack of original documents, and the presentation of the recent nineteenth century was comparatively lacklustre.[154] The cultural

148 Ibid., p. 119, note 55; Taffin, Blind and Martin, 'Pour une sociologie du musée colonial'.

149 MQB, archive of the Musée de la France d'outre-mer (MFO), série XI, inv.no. DA000603/59708, report on travels to Tervuren and Amsterdam (s.d.) p. 6. NB The report is unsigned, but Alice Conklin attributes an identical copy dated 23 October 1931 to Rivière: *In the museum*, p. 120, note 57.

150 MQB, MFO archive, série XI, inv.no. DA000603/59710, report to the minister of Colonies (s.d.) p. 4.

151 MQB, MFO archive, série XI, inv.no. DA000610/59693, extension plans (s.d.).

152 MQB, MFO archive, série XI, inv.no. DA000603/59711, report on museum organisation by Palewski (s.d.).

153 Cornilliet-Watelet, 'Le Musée des Colonies', pp. 86–87.

154 E.g. Grandidier, 'Feuilleton du Journal des debats'; 'Les nouvelles salles du Musée des Colonies'; Boulanger, 'Le Musée permanent des Colonies'; Richard, 'Un véritable institut colonial'.

daily *Comoedia* even published a scathing review, ridiculing the museum's many photographic reproductions, its 'mediocre' paintings, and its 'hideous' dioramas.[155]

In any case, Palewski's tenure did not last long. From January 1934, the museum was placed under the AGC and Palewski was fired.[156] He had been a political appointee of Reynaud, who no longer held a cabinet post. His appointment had raised eyebrows from the start as he had little colonial credentials and was more like a manager than a curator.[157] As a result of the organisational transfer, the museum closed again. Only the aquarium, which had turned out to be exceedingly popular, remained open, and was outfitted with a new terrarium in place of the old planisphere in May 1934.[158]

Museum of Overseas France

Again, it took time for the museum to find its footing. 'Nothing has yet been done in terms of the realisation' of the museum, one colonial lobby club complained in early 1934, making France 'the only of the great colonial powers' without a colonial museum.[159] In the summer of 1934, the museum was transferred again, this time to the national institute of colonial agronomy. But in October, the conditions for a new curator were laid out by the Minister of Colonies and the next month, it was announced that the author and art critic Ary Leblond had been selected.[160]

Ary Leblond (1877–1958) was the pseudonym of Aimé Merlo, best known for forming the prolific writers' duo Marius-Ary Leblond with his cousin, George Athénas. Hailing from one of France's oldest colonies, Réunion in the Indian Ocean, the Leblonds were proponents of a strong *créole* identity. Against the uses of the contested term 'Creole' to designate the inhabitants of colonies in general or mixed-race people in particular, in the Leblonds' exclusive and racialist conception, Creoles were the white colonials of European descent, loyal to France and its civilisation. Ary Leblond had been a member of the 1931 exposition's arts committee, and in the museum's synthetic section, the cousins had organised a room dedicated

155 Poulain, 'Le musée des colonies'.

156 *Bulletin officiel* (1933) pp. 1798–1801.

157 'Le conservateur du Musée des Colonies'; 'Pourquoi y a-t-il au Musée des Colonies un "conservateur"'.

158 'L'inauguration du terrarium'.

159 'Actes de la Société', p. 62.

160 *Bulletin officiel* (1934) pp. 801–802, 870–872, 898.

Figure 30 Photographs of various rooms in the Musée de la France d'Outre-mer, probably from the 1930s. The top left image seems to be the central corridor where French art with 'colonial' influences was exposed; the top right image shows the murals and furniture of the Salon Lyautey. The bottom images show various exhibition galleries. Besides the kind of objects exhibited, they illustrate the light, spacious nature of the rooms, which used a series of skylights to achieve this effect.

to artworks inspired by the 1788 colonial novel *Paul et Virginie*.[161] The support of influential colonial lobbyists had ensured the appointment went Leblond's way, and response in the press to his appointment was overwhelmingly positive.[162]

Leblond wrote that the museum ought to be simultaneously an art gallery, a history museum, and a 'hotbed for the future', when it reopened again in January 1935; in a later publication, he called a museum 'a never-ending fairy-tale'.[163] In a guide, he explained what this meant in practice. The corridor that visitors entered first was now named Gallery of the Races, after the statues of 'indigenous types of our colonies' placed there, and dedicated to historic and modern French art with imagery inspired by colonial contact.[164] It was followed by a historic gallery on the development

161 Warren, *Creole medievalism*, pp. vi–xix, 59–60; Olivier, *Rapport*, vol. I, p. 212.
162 Fournier, *Marius-Ary Leblond*, pp. 336–337.
163 Leblond, 'Un musée de gloire nationale'; Leblond, *Belles et fières Antilles*, p. 181.
164 Leblond, 'Le Musée de la France d'Outre-Mer'.

of the French empire from the Crusades to Lyautey, and by a section on artworks with both 'black art' and objects produced by local craftsmen 'under the direction of our Schools for Applied Art'.[165] A section on the present state of the empire contained salons on each colony, portrayed by both art from the colonies and French paintings, and an economic section on colonial commodities. The aquarium, finally, made up the last section.[166] It has been noted that Leblond moved away from Palewski's more technocratic attitude and towards a more art-focused approach, even if propagandistic considerations prevailed over artistic ones when it came to acquisition and exhibitions.[167] Nevertheless, some sort of pathway dependency seems to also have been at play, as Palewski had already introduced the idea of using artworks to illustrate colonial societies and both Leblond's and Palewski's use of a historic and a 'modern' section harked back to the museum during the 1931 exposition.

With Leblond and his new organisation, the museum could finally function as it had been intended to. In 1935, its name was changed to Musée de la France d'Outre-Mer, following the renaming of the colonial ministry to that name. Under this title, it became a centre of colonial propaganda with temporary exhibitions of French colonial art on the colonies and of colonial commodities, and the site of official commemorations, collective (compulsory) visits by school children and soldiers, and, from 1939, a library and reading room.[168] The museum collections were sustained by a steady flow of donations and it became a thriving instrument in the dissemination of an imperial culture in France, or at least in Paris. Leblond's efforts were rewarded by a record number of visitors, over 200,000 in 1935 (second only to the Louvre), and annual averages of some 120,000–150,000 in the years to come.[169] However, up to a fifth of these were school children and, even discounting those, Leblond's biographer has come to decidedly lower numbers of some 11,000–19,000 in the same period.[170] The most likely explanation for this difference is the aquarium which, all sources hold, was especially popular and would therefore have distorted the visitor numbers. In fact, the same problem occurred in London's Imperial Institute: there, it was the

165 Ibid.
166 Ibid.
167 Cornilliet-Watelet, 'Le Musée des Colonies', pp. 87–90; Fournier, *Marius-Ary Leblond*, pp. 350–353.
168 Fournier, *Marius-Ary Leblond*, pp. 363–376.
169 Taffin, Blind and Martin, 'Pour une sociologie', pp. 51–52. The Louvre received 280,000: 'Les entrées au Louvre ont augmenté'.
170 Fournier, *Marius-Ary Leblond*, p. 380. She does not offer sources for these figures.

cinema that proved so popular that the institute's staff had to admonish the public that they were not supposed to visit only for the cinema.[171]

If the low figures are correct, it would have made the Paris museum the least-visited of the European colonial museums, although it is hard to compare the patchy data. The private colonial museum in Berlin managed to attract schoolchildren but fewer visitors among the general public, attracting on average some 40,000 visitors every year.[172] In Belgium, visitor numbers in the Tervuren museum – freely accessible – fluctuated wildly between over 180,000 in successful years and some 22,000 in the aftermath of World War I.[173] The museums of Amsterdam's institute drew about 60,000 visitors in 1927, when they were still in development, and between 50,000 and 40,000 in the 1930s, including schoolchildren.[174] These numbers were dwarfed by those of London's Imperial Institute, which managed an attendance of well over a million in 1932 and between 300,000 and 700,000 in other pre-war years. But here, the cinema was a considerable part of these numbers and, again, many of these visitors were schoolchildren who visited involuntarily.[175] The somewhat remote location of the museum would have been at least one cause for the lower visitor numbers, just as Lyautey had feared. There were some efforts to make the imperial pretensions of the location clearer: in the 1930s, the Paris town council named several new streets and squares in the vicinity of the museum after colonial figures, and in 1949, opposite the museum, a monument to the famous 1898 Marchand mission in current-day South Sudan was unveiled.[176] Apart from their symbolic value, however, these gestures did not bring more visitors.

The visitors that did come were presented a French narrative. The 1931 exposition, with its foreign pavilions and foreign visitors, had been surrounded by a discourse of imperialism as a common European undertaking. Paris city councillors had spoken of the 'the colonisation of the world by Europe, and particularly by France' when discussing the exposition.[177] Lyautey, when the museum's first stone was laid down, held

171 MacKenzie, *Propaganda*, p. 134.

172 Ruppenthal, *Kolonialismus*, pp. 218–242; Bowersox, *Raising Germans*, pp. 102–107; Short, *Magic lantern empire*, pp. 101, 105–106.

173 Couttenier, *Congo tentoongesteld*, pp. 304, 434, note 1450.

174 'Het Koloniaal Instituut' (1928); 'Kon. Vereen. "Koloniaal Instituut"'.

175 MacKenzie, *Propaganda*, p. 135.

176 'Dénomination de sept voies nouvelles'; 'Inauguration du square Van-Vollenhoven'; 'L'hommage à Marchand'.

177 Olivier, *Rapport*, vol. I, p. 10

up the colonial domain as a prime area for cooperation among European powers after World War I, and as cited above, the Ministry of Colonies called the story of French imperialism as told in the museum a 'justification for Europe'.[178] Furthermore, the many references and comparisons to the other European colonial institutes showed that those commenting clearly considered the colonial museum a European institute, too. Most of these references were made behind closed doors in internal documents, like those concerning the trips the museum organisers made to other institutes. But as noted above, they could also be found in publications. 'It took the example of foreign nations' to initiate the French museum, wrote André Demaison in an article which he illustrated with photographs of the galleries of Stockholm's museum of Asian art and Amsterdam's Koloniaal Instituut.[179]

However, this European dimension functioned more as a background than that it was the subject of the exhibitions, which were about France's own empire. Partly, this was true for the museum during the exposition: that it was an international event implied commonality, but also meant that national governments each staked their carefully guarded claim. It was particularly true, however, for the period in which the museum gained traction under Leblond. With the novelty of the museum wearing off, there was less need to remark that France now 'finally' had the museum that other countries already had.

Nevertheless, the national focus of the museum in service of colonial France could also be subverted. Léopold Senghor, future president of Senegal and founding theorist of the *négritude* movement, who had come to France in 1928, would later credit the ethnographic museums of Paris with enabling a generation of black students from Africa and the Caribbean to 'discover' themselves: when addressing the Paris town council in 1961, he described Paris as 'the largest museum of *art negro-africain*', one that had revealed to him his 'ancestral civilisation'.[180] Senghor politely sidestepped, for his metropolitan, white audience, the issue of how this museum had actually come to be filled with African art. His statement nonetheless demonstrates how the museum's imperial ideology could be overturned as for him, the ethnographic displays of Paris helped him to forge connections between black communities in and beyond the French empire.

178 BNF, speech by Lyautey, p. 2.
179 Demaison, 'Au Musée des Colonies', p. 286.
180 Senghor, *Liberté*, pp. 312–314.

A colonial museum in a decolonising world

The museum maintained its position until after World War II. The war had destroyed the Third Republic and in its place emerged Vichy France, which clung to the empire while it was a puppet state at home. The war also set in motion various decolonisation processes, which erupted in 1944–1946 in the form of protests among colonial troops, nationalist agitation, revolt and reprisals in Algeria, and the outbreak of the First Indochina War. But at the same time, and akin to the British and Dutch, the French saw their empire as necessary for both France's post-war reconstruction and its international standing in the emerging Cold War. Therefore, in 1946 the empire was formally replaced by the 'French Union' in which France and its colonies, now called 'overseas departments' or 'territories', constitutionally formed a single polity.[181] French presence and influence in many colonies only increased in what has been called a 'second colonial occupation' by officials and technocratic experts.[182]

The museum in Paris changed even less than the French Union, which continued to distribute real political power unequally in favour of metropolitan French citizens and white settlers. In fact, the exhibition galleries were only completely finished in 1951.[183] Initially Leblond retained his position, seeking, as Laprade and Rivière had before him, to enlarge the museum building – and like his predecessors, failing to do so.[184] For Leblond, if anything, World War II had proven the superiority of French imperialism: the French had always assumed the brotherhood of all races, he wrote in 1946, in contrast to the Germans who had 'vividly proclaimed their racism'.[185] In 1950, however, Leblond was dismissed due to his age, and replaced by the journalist Marcel Lucain who had little in the way of museum experience.[186]

Post-war museum guides show that under both Leblond and Lucain, the overarching narrative did not change markedly. One guide emphasised the timeless antiquity of the various 'civilisations' in the French colonial territories, but also highlighted that French art schools now permitted the 'slow evolution' of what they called Islamic art and allowed the 'renovation'

181 Buettner, *Europe after empire*, pp. 119–128.
182 White, 'Reconstructing Europe', pp. 211–236.
183 'National news', p. 25.
184 Fournier, *Marius-Ary Leblond*, pp. 378–379.
185 Delamarre, *La France dans le Monde*, pp. 7–11.
186 Fournier, *Marius-Ary Leblond*, p. 379; Sherman, *French primitivism*, p. 89.

of Indochina's craftsmen.[187] The 1956 guide still maintained that the historical gallery 'celebrate[d] the French expansion in Black Africa' and praised 'the gigantic effort of France in the domain of modernisation' in its overseas territories.[188] The civilising influence that was thought to have emanated from the French empire was now transferred to the French Union: the catalogue of a 1952 exhibition on Pierre de Brazza held that the event confirmed 'the long tradition of human generosity that is the origin of the French Union'.[189] Additionally, the museum was still thought to be very necessary: at a 1951 gala, one speaker discussed a recent survey among French citizens that revealed a notable lack of knowledge about the Union, some respondents thinking Canada and China were French overseas possessions.[190]

However, as large colonies such as British India and the Dutch East Indies gained their independence, as the French war in Indochina was lost and the war in Algeria broke out, and as France and Britain found out the hard way that they had become second-rate powers during the 1956 Suez crisis, the museum became increasingly anachronistic. Already in the 1940s, there had been calls that the museum was outdated, 'unfortunately jam-packed with sculptures' and a 'hoard of tasteless items', and visitor numbers apparently dwindled after 1945.[191] With the French empire on the wane, the museum exhibitions lost coherence and legitimacy.[192] Its 'sister' institutes in London and Amsterdam were demolished or changed their names (see below). In 1958, under the threat of a military coup against the French state orchestrated from Algeria, Charles de Gaulle was brought in to become president and establish the Fifth Republic. Part of the transfer was a new constitution, heavily negotiated between French and colonial elites, creating the 'French Community', which left domestic policies to the constituent states. Following rising tensions, the former colonies soon declared full independence, however, either within or outside of the now mostly defunct Community.[193]

187 BNF, inv.no. NUMM-6289737, guide *Petit guide du Musée de la France d'Outre-Mer* (Paris s.d.) pp. 8, 11.

188 BNF, inv.no. NUMM-1417699, guide *Le Musée de la France d'Outre-mer. Guide du Musée* (Paris [1956]) pp. 12, 18.

189 *Brazza et ses compagnons*, p. 3.

190 'À la France d'outre-mer'.

191 Raval, *Histoire de Paris*, p. 113; Alcandre, 'Cette IVe République', p. 2; Fournier, *Marius-Ary Leblond*, p. 380.

192 Sherman, *French primitivism*, p. 89.

193 Cooper, *Citizenship between empire and nation*, pp. 279–325; 372–430.

In 1960, the new Minister of Cultural Affairs André Malraux transferred the museum to the national museum body that fell under his own ministry. The author of the essay *Le musée imaginaire* (1947) on the nature of art and museums, he personally oversaw the museum's transition to a new designation: it would become the Musée des Arts africains et océaniens. The institute thus became a museum of non-Western art, with a broader scope than just the (former) colonial empire. Suggestions to turn it into a museum of the French Community or of the Francophonie were floated, but reeked too much of (neo-)colonialism to be accepted – the museum could not continue to function within the remnants of French imperial space.[194]

Although the new course was a marked change, it was also clearly part of a longer trajectory since art, from both France and its colonies, had been exhibited in the building since 1931. And what was conceived of as 'art' was also subject to interpretation: in some cases, items that had in the 1930s figured as 'indigenous crafts' now became 'artworks'.[195] Such ambiguity continued to plague the museum. In a repetition of events from the 1930s, the museum prioritised attractive and striking artworks, as under Leblond, and was supposed to leave ethnographic objects to the Musée de l'Homme, as under Palewski. The distinction between the two museums remained vague, however, as the curators of the Musée des Arts africains et océaniens collected applied arts from North Africa but remained focused on ethnographic objects for sub-Saharan Africa; from the Pacific, few objects were acquired at all. Although the museum organised several exhibitions, permanent galleries of sub-Saharan African and of Pacific art were installed no earlier than 1975. Even more belated was the closure of the old-fashioned historic section, which took place only in 1976.[196] All the while, the aquarium in the basement continued, its imperialist origins easily masked by the focus on animals rather than people.

The architecture of the museum was another central concern, and not only because the building developed leaks and electrical problems or because the new Boulevard Périphérique ran right past it. The frieze and frescoes continued to glorify French imperialism even if the museum's goal now was to value art from former European colonies on its own terms. In the 1970s, several frescoes were covered and the banqueting hall and one of the salons were closed to the public.[197] However, in the 1980s and 1990s, a re-evaluation

194 Sherman, *French primitivism*, pp. 90–100; Aldrich, *Vestiges*, p. 46.

195 Monjaret and Roustan, 'A palace as legacy', p. 221.

196 Sherman, *French primitivism*, pp. 94–105.

197 Aldrich, *Vestiges*, pp. 46–49.

of art-deco design enabled the monumental building with its decorations and furnishings to also be seen as heritage worth restoring and valuing.[198] Just like the move to an art museum was supposed to help 'forget' the colonial origins of the institution, however, this re-evaluation of the architecture risked – and still risks – whitewashing its ideological dimensions. This is exemplified by a recent reference work on art deco sculpture, which naïvely reproduces the 1931 rhetoric about Janniot's frieze.[199]

Throughout the 1990s, there was debate over which direction to take with the museum and its collections. With the exception of the aquarium, the museum closed in 2002, its collections transferred to the new Musée du quai Branly that would become Paris's main museum of 'world cultures' – conspicuously located near the Eiffel Tower, in line with the sites that Lyautey, ironically, had been eyeing in the 1930s. For the building at Vincennes, there were calls to turn it into a museum of French colonialism or of 1930s design. In the end, partly as a deliberate challenge to the building and its history, it was made into the Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration, which opened in 2007, the title 'Cité' being replaced by 'Musée' in 2013.[200]

Conclusion

Every colonial museum in Europe followed its own path after formal decolonisation. They changed their names: the Imperial Institute became the Commonwealth Institute, the Dutch 'Colonial Institute' briefly became the 'Indies Institute' before being renamed 'Institute for the Tropics' in 1950. Of more consequence were their new trajectories, which could not suddenly deviate from the institutional course that had already been set decades ago. The artworks included in the Paris museum in 1931 meant that it could live another day as an art museum, while for the Dutch institute, its function as a research centre allowed it to become active in development cooperation. The Belgian museum also continues its research up to the present day, but became infamous for doing very little in terms of updating its exhibits until recently.[201]

198 Monjaret and Roustan, 'A palace', pp. 223–226.

199 Duncan, *Art deco sculpture*, pp. 334–335.

200 Monjaret and Roustan, 'A palace', pp. 229–224; Labadi, 'The National Museum of Immigration History'.

201 Rahier, 'The ghost of Leopold II'.

Figure 31 The museum building in its current state as seen from the street, housing the immigration museum and a presentation on the building's history. The columns allowed an almost unhindered view of the frieze, brimming with people, animals, vegetation, buildings, and ships, representing the French imperial space under one roof.

The architecture of these places also exerted agency and continued to make them imperial. The Dutch and Belgian museums were housed in grand structures that might make modern-day visitors feel uneasy, yet none appear to have been haunted by their architecture and decorations as much as the Paris museum, where the entire main façade and the surfaces of several rooms were inescapable remnants of imperialist ideology. Although the current museum is one of the smaller and quieter museums of Paris, both the frieze and the frescoes still draw the attention from visitors and passers-by (Figure 31).

The Imperial Institute demonstrates the importance of architecture best. Having lost its research function in 1949, the institute was demolished in the 1950s and replaced by the Commonwealth Institute at a different location in London. The Commonwealth Institute's building proclaimed its conception as a site of modern, experimental internationalism with aluminium-faced walls and a high-tech roof structure. It could not totally part with its precursor: a model of the old Institute adorned the entrance hall, and some of its marble and statues were used in the new building.[202] Yet in

202 Wintle, 'Decolonising the museum', p. 188; Crinson, 'Imperial story-lands', pp. 116, 118.

general, the new institute contained representations *by* the Commonwealth nations rather than of them.[203]

In general, colonial museums such as the one in Paris were the clearest contributors to imperial culture imaginable. However, they were also the clearest national appropriations of imperialism as a wider process. First, as institutions the museums might have functioned within a European framework, taking each other as reference and being seen as necessary for any self-respecting imperial power. But to their audience, they focused on their own national overseas exploits. Second, colonial museums were also a national appropriation of private activities such as trade, industry, shipping, mission work, and science – activities that more often than not, ran along transnational networks. Colonial museums brought together the entire imperial space under one roof, but nationalised it in the process.

Paradoxically, the fact that colonial museums were supposed and designed to acquaint audiences with the empire can make them seem, in a sense, superficial. Rather than contributing to public knowledge about the empire because they accommodated activities like trade and mission work, the dissemination of knowledge was the colonial museum's core activity. For the London, Tervuren, and Amsterdam institutes, this was offset by the fact that they were also research institutes, which was an objective in itself and which created lively imperial networks of expertise or ethnographic objects of its own. In Paris, however, the promotion of imperialist ideology held sway.

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203 Wintle, 'Decolonising the museum', pp. 188, 190–196.

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Conclusion

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, empire came to Europeans in tangible and everyday ways through architecture. As the networks between metropoles and colonies formed intricate imperial spaces, the buildings that facilitated and symbolised these networks formed imperial places: the meaningful nodes within these networks that confronted and involved Europeans with modern imperialism. Imperial places in Europe contributed to the formation of an imperial culture by anchoring imperial networks to the local, mostly urban, context in Europe. Like the metaphorical tip of the iceberg, the places identified in this study were inherently part of an imperial whole that transcended their direct local environments. Imperial places thus helped Europeans construct and experience the idea that they lived in an imperial world in which their societies stood at the apex of power.

To understand what role imperial places played in the lives of Europeans between 1860 and 1960, it is useful to distinguish between the practical use and the symbolic meaning of imperial places, even if these were (of course) two sides of the same coin. First, imperial places were distinctive locations because of their use or function. They sustained networks between European metropoles and overseas colonies, and often also the colonies of other nations and zones of informal empire. These could be networks of people and objects, but also more abstract networks of political power or capital. Through factories, colonial materials and products entered the diets or households of Europeans and (whether or not they consumed these items themselves) offered them employment. Through the offices of shipping lines, Europeans transported their goods to and from the territories of the empire and booked journeys within it. Through mission houses, Europeans were sent to the colonies to spread Christian civilisation over the globe, or if they stayed in Europe, sustained missionaries through money and prayer. Government buildings allowed officials to govern colonies, and citizens to feel a sense of political belonging. Museums enabled Europeans to learn about the peoples of the empire or to be exposed to outright propaganda for it. Exchanges facilitated international trade, docks allowed imperial commerce to flourish, monuments glorified the overseas feats of soldiers

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and explorers. Capital was invested in the construction and maintenance of such sites.

Second, imperial places were distinctive locations as they came to symbolise these networks. Some did so implicitly, by association and connotation. For others, especially the most obvious examples such as colonial museums and colonial ministries, their straightforward imperial function explicitly inscribed them with clear imperial meaning. But this was also true for less obviously 'imperial' buildings, such as factories, offices, and mission houses. Invariably but often inadvertently, their relation to imperial networks rubbed off on the understanding Europeans had of them.

Repertoires of imperial placemaking

Building on the general associations of certain buildings, a range of deliberate placemaking strategies symbolically placed such buildings at the centre of imperial spaces. If European empires used recurring 'repertoires' of rule, this investigation has proved the existence of a shared and recurring repertoire of imperial placemaking. Europeans used this repertoire of overlapping strategies to make the submerged part of the iceberg visible – to deliberately construct the meaning of certain buildings as being predicated on their relationship to the empire, and thus to create an awareness that such sites belonged to an imperial space. In portraying imperial space, Europeans centred it on themselves as they downplayed the agency of, and their own dependency on, the colonised.

Writing, visual portrayals, and naming

As explained in the Introduction, the material architecture of sites was only one way in which certain buildings in Europe were invested with imperial meaning. Europeans used a number of other strategies as well. These stood at some distance from the placemaking means of the architecture itself, but this actually allowed them to present an overview of an imperial space and the position of metropolitan places in it.

First, we encounter the ways in which Europeans described and depicted particular buildings as imperial in written and visual media. As for written texts, any mention of a metropolitan building's links to the empire was, albeit in its own discrete way, an act of imperial placemaking. In quantitative terms this was probably the largest category, as newspapers, brochures, guidebooks, architecture journals, and other media described particular buildings as imperial places. This is best exemplified and summarised by the recurring and deliberate use of certain comparable metaphors that stressed places' connectivity and their crucial position in imperial networks. Hamburg was the German colonial empire's 'heart', according to contemporary rhetoric, just as Marseille and Portsmouth were the 'gateways' to the French and British empires, respectively. The Koloniaal Instituut in Amsterdam was a 'centre' of an imperial 'web of lines', while at the HAPAG office, 'globe-spanning threads' converged. Upon St Augustine's in Canterbury, 'the energies of European, African, Hindoo, Esquimeaux, and Australian' descended.

The portrayal of metropolitan imperial places as nerve centres or hearts could also be a literal portrayal in visual terms that almost mapped the imperial spaces of which these places were part. The medium could be anything from a poster to an advertisement or even a tile panel, and this category is related to that of the sculpted or painted decorations on buildings themselves, which are discussed below. Unlike architectural decorations, visual representations of sites in Europe could be printed by the thousands, disseminating information about such sites among supporters and consumers. This trend is most visible in the publicity materials of mission societies. Cards and posters related their headquarters in Europe to the overseas mission fields, as seen with the mission houses in Barmen, Tilburg, and, repeatedly, Basel (Figure 5). These portrayals visualised the imperial space formed by missionary networks. They highlighted the uncivilised condition of the mission fields with images of cruel scenes and emphasised the indigenous' population's eagerness for Christian guidance with images of sermons and school classes. Nevertheless, despite the importance attached to these areas, only the mission houses were named as specific places while the mission fields were represented by generic, categorical images.

A similar image of buildings in Europe linked to empire was used in commercial publicity materials. This was rarer, since the depiction of one's own factory in Europe and the depiction of colonised people were two separate advertising strategies that were not always combined. However, the media surrounding the Zaan rice mills show a consistent pattern in which the mills were explicitly linked to the colonial territories where the rice was grown, a representation that was skewed in favour of the Dutch colony of Java. Rather than appearing destitute, here, the colonies were depicted more romantically as places of traditional agriculture (Figure 17). However, as with the mission houses and their mission fields, they were portrayed as naturally and necessarily linked to metropolitan industries. And whereas the factories were named and represented in detail, the colonies were portrayed as the stereotypical topos of 'rice field'.

Naming was a simple but effective means to make apparent that a site was connected to imperial trade or shipping. The obvious case that comes to mind are the rice warehouses along the Zaan named after colonial Burma and Java (Figure 19). Constructions like the Afrikahaus and Sudanhaus in Hamburg, Canada Dock and India Buildings in Liverpool, and the Javakade in Amsterdam exemplify this trend too, as do the India Mill in Darwen, the Huilerie franco-coloniale in Bordeaux, and the Colonial Rubber plant in Ghent. The latter two are exceptional as they explicitly referred to colonialism as the source of their raw materials, but naming a building after a colony was a clear enough sign as well. Furthermore, names did not just figure in texts but also on the buildings themselves. In these ways, the use of colonial names for metropolitan places – buildings, but also countless streets and squares – formed the complement to the many colonial places with metropolitan names, together creating an imperial space of signification that went back and forth.

Style and appearance

The second main grouping of strategies within the repertoire concerns the architecture, in the broad sense of the word, of imperial places. Style has been a recurring relevant characteristic of the buildings discussed in the foregoing pages. If anything has become clear it is that classicism remained an immensely influential recipe for associating buildings with imperial power in the modern era. Precisely the novelty of the era's modern building types allowed for the use of classical architecture, especially Renaissance and baroque, in a new, exaggerated form.

Of course, it is hard to overstate the importance of the classical idiom in European cultural history. By the mid-twentieth century at the latest, European-style classicism had gone global, becoming what John Summerson described as late as 1963 as 'the common architectural language [...] of nearly the whole *civilized* world' (emphasis added).[1] Its associations of power, order, and history were used by those in any position of power, not just imperial power. But the Western European states were imperial powers and thus employed classicism for projecting imperial authority. It is striking how consistent the use of Renaissance and baroque classical forms and references in the architecture discussed has been throughout the chapters. This was most obvious in government buildings, but also true for offices, exchanges, museums, research centres, and, in some cases, mission houses.

1 Summerson, *The classical language of architecture*, p. 7.

Classical architecture had varied but overlapping associations that were relevant for Europeans involved in imperial power relations. First, classical architecture referred to antiquity, which European science and culture had constructed as the cradle of European civilisation and thus the norm for civilisation per se. Second, classical architecture also referred to Renaissance Europe, which (the Basel academic Burckhardt published his influential studies of the Renaissance in the 1860s) was conceived as another key moment in European history, when Europe 're-discovered' itself. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were also the period when Europe's expansion into the rest of the world began in earnest. In this respect, the recurring self-fashioning after the merchant republic of Venice, whether in Hamburg or Glasgow, is typical. Third, classical architecture could also be associated with national history as in the case of Edwardian Baroque, Dutch Renaissance, and German Renaissance revival buildings.

Of a more explicit nature was the use of colonial forms and styles for European buildings. Adapting to local forms and techniques was fairly common for European architecture in the colonies. But colonial forms were rarely applied in Europe for permanent buildings. Some pastiches of 'Oriental' architecture could be found, such as the pagodas on the Ostasiahaus emporium of Hamburg or the Bisschop Hamerhuis in Nijmegen. But more serious and thorough engagements with indigenous architecture from the colonies or non-European countries in general have emerged as rare in this study. Still, they encompass Antwerp's colonial university and Joseph Cuyper's proposal for the Dutch Koloniaal Instituut. Most examples come from France: the Mediterranean mixture of Marseille's cathedral, the École coloniale in Paris, and the Morocco-infused Musée des Colonies by Laprade. These could be read as 'hybrid' structures, but only when taking into account that they were produced on European terms and with only limited (and often, superficial) adaptations of non-European building styles. By taking artistic inspiration from the architecture of other parts of the world, architects and their clients proclaimed the intellectual and spiritual connections their buildings had with the overseas empire.

Materials and decorations

Next to style, another common method of imperial placemaking through architecture was the use of colonial materials. For practical reasons this virtually always concerned tropical woods such as walnut, mahogany, palm, or ebony, used for furnishings, furniture, or flooring. But in at least one case – that of the Imperial Institute – colonial stone and brick were used too. It was highly symbolic to use timber that had been rooted in colonial soil for a metropolitan building: the trajectories of these materials had literally crossed imperial space to be employed in Europe. Granted, by the nineteenth century it had become quite normal to use valuable exotic woods in interior designs, and much of it was rather generically 'tropical' than explicitly 'colonial'. Even so, these overseas materials were consciously used to illustrate the reach and wealth of European firms and governments.

The third method of imperial placemaking through architecture was perhaps the most explicit and concerned building's decorative programmes in sculpture and murals. The former was the most common, as architectural sculpture became a fixed feature of classical architecture for both stylistic reasons and didactic reasons, and was used to communicate with an urban audience in a modern mass society. The caryatids of the first HAPAG office (Figure 23) and the friezes of Marseille's exchange, Glasgow's City Chambers (Figure 11), and Paris's museum (Figure 29) are the clearest examples, explicitly representing imperial trade, shipping, and politics. But simpler examples also abound. The ruthless Coen had already been a controversial figure in his own time but in the twentieth century, popped up in the Amsterdam cityscape on the exchange, the Scheepvaarthuis, the NHM office, and the Koloniaal Instituut to underline that these important institutes were linked to Dutch colonialism in the Indies. Meanwhile, the city's cocoa and chocolate factories used statues and panels of Indonesian or black African persons to advertise their wares. Other sculptural personifications of colonial territories could be found on official buildings such as the India Office in London, the colonial ministries in Paris and The Hague, and Amsterdam's institute, but also on the Afrikahaus in Hamburg (Figure 20) and the Rotterdamsche Lloyd office in The Hague. Overall, these stereotypical and racialised depictions were used to define a building's special nature and were not supposed to give any accurate representation of non-European populations.

Such schemes overlapped with the widespread motif of representing trading partners or the world's continents. In Hamburg alone, both HAPAG offices, the town hall, and the exchange were outfitted with sculpted personifications of the continents. The same motif could be found on the offices of the Norddeutsche Lloyd and Cunard in Bremen and Liverpool and the stock exchanges in Glasgow and Le Havre. Akin to the use of tropical woods, representing the continents was more general than representing the colonies but similarly stressed a firm's or city's global reach and ambitions from its position of power in Europe. Furthermore, that the scheme of personifications of the continents was an old artistic motif rooted in at least the sixteenth century did not make it any less political.[2] If anything, the fact that by 1900, Europeans actually ruled vast swathes of these continents only made the representation more salient. As mentioned in the Introduction, the division of the world into continents was a metageography that implied hierarchy, which was signified in statuary by the figures' different attributes, dress, or gender. Most examples clearly exemplify the habitual equation of the continents with certain 'races', which meant that the figures were also racialised to varying degrees.[3] Finally, representations of the continents spoke to the idea of Europe as an imagined community that clearly distinguished itself from other continents by virtue of its whiteness and 'civilised' culture.

Murals were applied mainly in interiors. Examples include East India House in London and the École coloniale in Paris, where 'the East' offering riches and France bringing 'civilisation' were portrayed in allegorical terms. The Paris colonial museum with its banqueting hall and salons is the most exuberant example of such portrayals. But the Charles office in Le Havre, depicting the harvest of tropical trees, and the first HAPAG office, with its map of the line's global reach, reveal that business offices could also contain similar imagery. Finally, the examples of the sgraffito panels in Liège and Basel remind us that murals could be applied to exteriors too. The common thread in the sculpture and murals is the depiction of colonies or foreign continents in the role of providing commodities, whether generic 'riches' or the neatly labelled rice, coffee, and copper of the frieze by Janniot.

European buildings, European culture?

The imperial places that have been identified and examined were clearly a European phenomenon. They could be found all over Western Europe and were turned into significant, meaningful locations through the repertoire of placemaking strategies that has emerged over the course of this investigation. The imperial spaces that they represented, were portrayed in Eurocentric terms. However, how Eurocentric were they in the literal sense? Did these meaningful locations also contribute to the development of a European imperial culture?

In general, the buildings that have been discussed shared general characteristics. All were erected mainly by bourgeois upper-class actors, whether

2 This goes back to at least Abraham Ortelius's 1570 atlas: Keen, *The Aztec image*, pp. 155–156.
3 Stuurman, 'Grenzen trekken', pp. 300–302.

Zaan industrialists, Basel patricians, Hamburg shipowners, French colonial governors, or Glaswegian merchants. Except for the conservative Pietists involved in the Basel mission society, they all operated within more or less the same ideology of liberalism in a variety of national and local settings. In gender terms, imperial matters have implicitly figured throughout the case studies as a male domain: it required action and expansion, which in the bourgeois understanding of the world were male activities.

Furthermore, contestations over the imperial places, overall, remained rather marginal. The scope of this study allows us to touch upon such contestations only briefly; however, in every chapter colonised subjects have figured, whose small numbers, subordinate positions, and mostly temporary presence in Europe meant their contributions to the maintaining of imperial spaces were easily silenced. In the case studies, only in the twentieth century did they occasionally formulate, together with local communists, clear – albeit small-scale – anti-imperialist contestations of the places under review, such as in the cases of Paris (1931) and Glasgow (1938). In general, the different placemaking efforts overlapped and reinforced each other rather than clashing. Besides the fact that it was difficult for the relatively small numbers of colonised subjects who had actual dealings with imperial places in Europe to make a real impact, this points to the virtual consensus that existed among Europeans concerning imperial power relations.

Finally, with the possible exception of Albert Laprade, who had worked in Morocco, none of the architects involved in the buildings of the case studies were particularly 'imperial'; rather, they were popular and very 'metropolitan' architects. Just as imperial places integrated imperialism into the everyday life in European metropoles, the design of such places was part of everyday architectural production. The existence of an imperial culture allowed renowned architects like Haller to adopt heavily racialised statues in his design (Figure 23), Berlage to include an image of Coen on his exchange and discuss the location of the Koloniaal Instituut, or Le Corbusier to inspire Lyautey in his vision of the French colonial museum.

The representation of imperial spaces

The spaces that imperial places created in a practical sense were not necessarily those of formal, national imperial territories neatly outlined on a map. For political buildings such as ministries and colonial museums, this kind of national-political frame was leading. For missionaries, industrialists, merchants, shipowners, and scientists, this was not the case. Instead, their imperial spaces were the more ambiguous spaces of mission houses and mission fields, factories and tropical production areas, home ports and overseas destinations, scientific institutions and regions with inhabitants thought to be marked by cultural or racial difference. These spaces never fully escaped the powerful pull of the political and, thus, the national – missionaries often favoured their own colonies, and merchants could count on officials in 'their' colonies to have their interests in mind more than those of their foreign competitors. But the political dimension did not determine imperial spaces, which tended to weave in and out of formal imperial boundaries. In a globalising world, imperial spaces often spread along transnational or, technically speaking, trans-imperial lines: missionaries also worked for foreign organisations and in foreign colonies, German and Dutch rice millers sourced their resources from Burma, and shipping lines such as HAPAG sailed to any destination where a profit could be turned. The degree of transnationality thus depended on context and the kind of actors involved. Missionaries seem the most transnational group of actors, followed by scientists. National governments, naturally, would be the least transnational actors. Economic actors seem to fall in between, with shipping lines towards the more transnational end and industries towards the more national end of the spectrum.

However, this transnational dimension was less obvious in the placemaking processes by which metropolitan nodes in imperial networks became significant locations. First, its visibility depended on the domain in which the location in question was active. Following the same 'gradation' as above, mission houses and the corresponding discourses of Christianity, salvation, and civilisation were far better suited to more transnational interpretations than national institutes. But even for the mission houses, this transnational dimension often remained unclear in the placemaking strategies in practice. Similarly, museums and, even more obviously, offices and factories, were turned into nationally significant locations despite their potential to be recognised as sites of transnational connections.

The varied placemaking strategies had a clear overarching theme: all buildings in Europe that were constructed as imperial places were represented not just as a part of imperial networks but as sitting at their heart. Yet this usually created a discrepancy between their use in practice and their meaning. It reduced the complex transnational entanglements between the colonies, other nations' colonies, territories of informal empire, and other European states to simple and clear-cut networks. In these imaginative geographies, the imperial places were imagined to be the undisputed centres of those networks, where agency to form and maintain them resided exclusively. In a familiar pattern of exclusion and negation, this downplayed or ignored the contributions by actors in or from the colonies, as converts, peasants, sailors, artists, traders, local rulers, and others also contributed to the functioning of imperial networks. More subtly, this also excluded the links to other metropoles.

Imperial places gained their significance through their connections to the world outside of Europe, whether these were their 'own' colonies, foreign colonies, or politically independent states. Most of the imperial placemaking repertoire was focused on places' connections to extra-European regions, not their relation to other European countries. Classical architecture might have alluded to the idea of European civilisation and sculpted personifications of the continent did so, too. But in using this style and sculpture, architects and their clients also appropriated that larger European entity in order to harness it for more local and national interests. Furthermore, classical architecture and sculpture were rather implicit and generic signs of Europeanness, compared to the more explicit and distinctive placemaking strategies that referred to the colonies, such as naming, the use of tropical woods, decorative programmes, and visual representations. Only in the case of shipping line offices did the most explicit placemaking strategies refer to other European countries, as it did in the offices of HAPAG (first office), Cunard, and Norddeutsche Lloyd.

This apparent disregard for making explicit an idea of pan-European imperialism in the placemaking strategies was part of a more general pattern. Throughout this study, many contemporary understandings and representations of the world during imperialism clearly worked from the idea of European civilisation, thought to be distinct from the other regions of the world by virtue of its cultural and racial traits. Yet this figured as a background or taken-for-granted context that surfaced mainly in unguarded moments: the Wessanen booklet on rice mentioning 'European' diets, the German treatise describing the opening up of Asian markets for 'European' trade, the French museum presenting the 'European' influence on indigenous art. Even so, the millers, shipowners, and the museum were primarily concerned with their local and, respectively, Dutch, German, and French roles in this context. In that respect, to answer the question from the Introduction, the imperial culture that developed was European primarily 'in' itself rather than 'for' itself.

However, less than a dichotomy between either transnational or national understandings of empire, both understandings were part of a layered set of attachments and frames of reference that scaled from urban or local to European. The role of Scottish identity in the case study of Glasgow provides a parallel. Articulations of Scottish identity were not very relevant in the 1880s rhetoric about the City Chambers compared to a Unionist British and imperial identity, but this lack did not exclude Scottish sentiments. Similarly, if articulations of a European identity were, in many contexts, less relevant than national identities and national frames of reference, a feeling of European cultural and racial commonality was often still implied underneath. Only in some cases did they clash explicitly, as in the Swiss–German dispute in the Basel mission society over the question of sending missionaries to the German colony of Cameroon (Chapter 1), the German colonial propagandists who distinguished between generic 'colonial products' and 'German colonial products' (Chapter 3), or Marcel Olivier's distinction between a generic 'exoticism' and a true 'colonial spirit' (Chapter 5).

Patterns and developments

As described in the Introduction, a sense of imperialism as a transnational and pan-European undertaking surfaced more clearly at some moments than at others. It is proposed here that the twentieth century saw a movement towards a more national understanding of imperialism in European imperial culture, which had set in in the late nineteenth century and became particularly noticeable after 1918. In general this process was a constituent part of the nationalisation of society and politics that characterised Western Europe in the modern era, a protracted process that took much longer than the period of a century (1860–1960) under review here. In this process, nation-states became more established and pervasive, increasingly structuring not only society and politics but also understandings of the world. Part of this process of nationalisation can be discerned specifically in the development of a European imperial culture.

A rough chronology can be sketched. The earliest contributors to an imperial culture appeared in this study as missionaries and scientists. Their houses and museums were rooted in the early nineteenth century and, more or less, in civil society. Of all the groups examined in the above chapters, missionaries and scientists maintained the most transnational networks connecting to other regions of the world, although these were often understood in national terms already.

Later, as contributors to imperial culture, missionaries and scientists were joined by merchants, industrialists, and shipowners and their offices, factories, and docks. These groups had all maintained links between Europe and the colonial world up to this point, but would make their biggest impact with the globalisation of the world economy from about 1870. With their worldly aims, they were tied more to formal imperialism than missionaries and scientists. Although their activities could not be reduced to the national domain, they mainly represented their work – with the possible exception of the shipowners – as being in the national vein. And as these economic activities clustered in certain cities, local civic elites and political bodies such as town councils and chambers of commerce adopted similar rhetoric in their representative buildings, such as town halls and exchanges. Rather than undercutting nationalist conceptions of imperial trade and shipping, these local identifications with empire usually reinforced them.

Finally, nation-states themselves emerged as contributors to imperial culture with their state-funded colonial museums, which came into being from circa 1890 and were particularly prevalent in the twentieth century. Besides the establishment of national museums, other national instruments such as monuments, government propaganda campaigns, and efforts to stimulate 'national' imperial trade and consumption were launched in the interwar period. These implied the most strictly national understandings of empire. In other words, in the twentieth century the impact of imperialism on Europe had changed from something that involved particular groups in society to something that involved the nation as a whole and was understood and celebrated as such.

This conclusion does not imply that national understandings of empire totally displaced European understandings of empire. None of the above groups displaced or excluded the others; rather, they were all distinct actors who contributed to imperial culture with their own agendas and presented their own individual but interrelated narratives. In the twentieth century, the concept of European civilisation and white racial kinship remained in place, whether implicitly or explicitly, as the 1931 Paris exposition illustrates. Rather, the dominant perspective became *international* rather than *transnational*: it came to be based on nation-states and national frames of reference, rather than on more private and particular actors who crossed or defied those frames of reference.

Furthermore, there were variations between the different metropoles and between the different domains. Every metropole had its own dynamics. Although imperialism formed an integral part of Dutch national identity, for instance, as a small power in Europe with a vast empire overseas, the Netherlands would always depend on transnational connections to other colonies and European powers more than other states – Dutch neutrality during World War I being a case in point. For the United Kingdom, part of the world's biggest empire and physically separated from the European mainland, the situation might be the other way round. Meanwhile, imperial Germany's bids for power seemed to come as much from a desire to be accepted as a 'normal' European power as from nationalist, self-aggrandising efforts. When World War I cut off the former path, a virulent racist ideology developed that swapped the idea of the racial superiority of Europe for the idea of (German) racial superiority *within* Europe.

Moreover, every domain had its own dynamics, too. For example, missionaries deliberately strove towards less national and less Eurocentric conceptions of their work after 1918, which went against the nationalising current sketched above. Politicians experimented with some form of international surveillance of certain colonial territories in the same period. But for them, actual shared European administration of their colonies only became a realistic policy goal in the context of the European integration process starting in the late 1950s.[4]

Imperial places today

Any historical study is primarily concerned with looking back to the past. But the subject of imperial places and imperial culture is not a closed chapter and also invites us to look forward. In terms of scholarship, the present book discusses well over 150 individual sites but, of course, still offers plenty of leads for further research. Monuments would seem to merit more attention than they could be given here, as do buildings related to migration. Military buildings would make for another relevant category as the military was at the forefront of imperial expansion in many ways and involved large numbers of recruits and soldiers. In the nineteenth century, for instance, the small Dutch town of Harderwijk was home to the colonial army's recruitment depot, which drew so many potential soldiers from all over the continent that it was known as the 'sewer of Europe'.[5]

More topical is the presence of buildings, constructed as imperial places with messages about colonial dominance and racial superiority, in current-day society. As stated in the Introduction, an important criterion for selecting the case studies was that they have survived up to the present day so that they could be visited, entered, and experienced. All have, more or less, retained their inital function: the HAPAG office and Glasgow City Chambers still serve their original purpose, the Missionshaus is in use by the Basel mission society and its partner organisations in Mission21, and the Lassie rice mill still produces rice (the Kamphuijs mill partially remains but, instead of milling rice, extracts guar gum from guar beans cultivated in

4 Hansen and Jonsson, *Eurafrica*, pp. 147–238.
5 Krauer, 'Welcome to Hotel Helvetia!'.

South Asia; the Bloemendaal & Laan factory has been converted into flats and offices). The Paris museum building still serves as a museum, although this is no longer a continuation of the museum established there in 1931. Furthermore, a range of other sites mentioned, such as the museums of Tervuren, Hamburg, Basel, and Steyl, the Marseille exchange and railway station, the ministry and offices of The Hague, the Basel sgraffito panel, the Lisbon monuments, the Hamburg town hall, and multiple sites in Paris and London, among others, were visited and assessed during this research project. Together with street names and monuments, these buildings form a layer of the European built environment that testifies to Europe's imperial past.

The fact that these buildings remain, and in some cases still have similar functions to when they were erected, means that they also testify to Europe's imperial present. The current-day users of remaining buildings (firms, governments, NGOs, museums) certainly hold different attitudes regarding their place in the world than their imperialist predecessors who built these sites. Nonetheless, the imperial origins of the cultural, political, and economic relations of our world today are hard to miss. In their own way, the worldwide protests of recent years against monuments to colonialists and proponents of slavery and racist ideology have brought this to the fore. Citizens have particularly targeted statues of colonial politicians or merchants, such as Jan Pieterszoon Coen, Leopold II, or Cecil Rhodes, but also street names, stereotypical sculpture, or entire institutes. In doing so, they make the violence or white supremacy in which these men and institutes participated – which mainstream historical culture long downplayed or ignored – subject to public debate, as part of a wider contestation over the colonial past that is also playing out in museums and educational curricula. As societies in the present continue to be plagued by the cultural, social, and economic structures to which these figures contributed, their presence in public space is increasingly seen as unfit and damaging. Responses range from removing such monuments – in some cases, with crowds taking matters into their own hands – to adding information panels or starting critical evaluations of institutes' pasts. Several government agencies have drawn up suggestions on how to deal with such contestations over historic architecture or nomenclature.[6]

In this light, what can we learn from the study of imperial architecture in Europe – accepting, of course, that historians are far from the only scholars to draw connections between past and present (and might even be wary

6 'Checklist to help local authorities'; *Omgaan met koloniale verwijzingen*.

of the pitfalls in doing so) and that in fact, it was not scholars but active citizens who have put the debate about the colonial past– in its diverse forms – on the agenda?[7] For one, even for those sympathetic to the idea of 'decolonising' European public space, the sheer number of surviving imperial references in sculpture, architecture, and nomenclature must put into question the possibility and usefulness of ever doing so completely. Furthermore, the understandable focus on monumental statues of (and streets named after) 'Great Men', which then serve as the battlegrounds for opposing feelings and conflicting narratives, is not the best way to create awareness of Europe's imperial past and its consequences – which might well be a condition for reaching real understanding and recognition. Prominent, symbolic pushes towards redress and change are necessary. But if we only single out explicit imperial places, we overlook the more mundane buildings that were connected to the daily operations of imperialism much more directly and undeniably, as this book has demonstrated: the hundreds of offices, factories, exchanges, government buildings, mission houses, docks, museums, and other sites by which the colonial world found its place in Europe, and vice versa. This array of places, plenty of which still remain, illustrates the scale, variety, and nature of Europe's entanglement with overseas empire much better than colonial monuments and their emphasis on high politics and overseas conquest.

Compared to more ephemeral and mobile media that were part of imperial culture, the presence of so much imperial architecture *in* Europe can also help to confirm that imperialism is very much *of* Europe. Dealing with the imperial past concerns former European metropoles as much as former colonies, and concerns society as a whole instead of particular groups. Rather than concerning only minorities whose perspective is marginalised or citizens who are the victims of racism, it requires us to realise that marginalising one group means sanctioning the perspective of another as the 'objective' norm, and that victims of racism can only exist if there are also beneficiaries. It also requires us to realise that the very communities we live in have at least partially derived their identity from their imperialist activities: nations, cities, Europe. Of course, the more overtly imperial elements of European culture have diminished and changed. Because of the 'inertia' of culture, however, they have not disappeared.[8] In the cultural archive that has remained, there are still normative and exclusionary ideas

7 On some of these pitfalls, see Cooper, *Colonialism in question*, pp. 17–22.
8 Jansen and Osterhammel, *Decolonization*, pp. 1–2, 12–15, 185–186.

of cultural superiority or racial difference.[9] Although these are far more implicit than before they are not less tenacious, and the current political invocations of Europe or the West as an exclusively 'civilised', Christian, or white region show that they are never far from the surface.

The main value of studying imperial architecture in Europe, then, is that it allows us to place discussions of imperialism, including high-profile topics like slavery, colonial wars, economic exploitation, and the illegitimate gathering of colonial objects, firmly in Europe. Imperial places in Europe highlight how imperialism formed part and parcel of European societies. Empires are large, as noted in the Introduction. It is through architecture that we can grasp exactly how large and fateful their reach is.

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Empires stretched around the world, but also made their presence felt in architecture and urban landscapes. *The Architecture of Empire in Modern Europe* traces the entanglement of the European built environment with overseas imperialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As part of imperial networks between metropole and colonies, in cities as diverse as Glasgow, Hamburg, or Paris, numerous new buildings were erected such as factories, mission houses, offices, and museums. These sites developed into the physical manifestations of imperial networks. As Europeans designed, used, and portrayed them, these buildings became meaningful imperial places that conveyed the power relations of empire and Eurocentric self-images. Engaging with recent debates about colonial history and heritage, this book combines a variety of sources, an interdisciplinary approach, and an international scope to produce a cultural history of European imperial architecture across borders.

Miel Groten is a historian of modern colonial history, whose research areas include imperialism's impact on European countries, its relation to architecture, and the role of transnational entanglements. He has previously worked as researcher and lecturer at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and as Johan Huizinga Fellow at the Rijksmuseum.

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