

COLONIAL COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATION

Objects	Statue of Ganesha, RV-1403-1759
Current owner	The State of the Netherlands
Custodian	Wereldmuseum Leiden (formerly National Museum of World Cultures)
Application for restitution from	The Republic of Indonesia represented by the <i>Tim Repatriasi Koleksi Asal Indonesia di Belanda</i> team ¹
Date of application for restitution	20 September 2023
Recommendation number	ID-2023-9
Date of recommendation	28 June 2024
The Colonial Collections Committee ² consisting of	Lilian Gonçalves-Ho Kang You (chair), Laura van Broekhoven, Remco Raben, Alicia Schrikker (members)
Secretariat	Jona Mooren, Meehea Park

1. The application

On 20 September 2023 the Republic of Indonesia submitted an application to the Dutch State Secretary for Culture and Media for restitution of the statue ‘Standing Ganesha in the entrance lobby of Volkenkunde, RV-1403-1759, Collection NMVW’.

2. The object

The statue of the Hindu god Ganesha is from the area around what is now Lemahduwur in East Java at the foot of the Semeru volcano. The 13th-century statue shows a standing Ganesha with the head of an elephant and four arms. The statue has a flat back, suggesting it was originally positioned against a temple wall. The statue is currently part of the Dutch National Art Collection in the custody of Wereldmuseum Leiden, where it is registered under inventory number RV-1403-1759.

¹ The *Tim Repatriasi Koleksi Asal Indonesia di Belanda* team consists of Nadiem Anwar Makarim, Retno Marsudi (directors), Hilmar Farid (person responsible), I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja (chair), Bonnie Triyana (secretariat), Oman Faturrahman, Sri Margana, Junus Satrio Atmodjo, Ninie Susanti Tedjowasono, Gabriel Roosmargo Lono Lastoro Simatupang, Irmawati Marwoto, Bondan Kanumoyoso (members), Sadiah Boonstra (external adviser).

² The Advisory Committee on the Restitution of Cultural Objects from a Colonial Context (in short: Colonial Collections Committee) was established on 6 September 2022 by the Dutch State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science.

3. The policy framework

The assessment in this recommendation was made within the framework of the *Policy vision on collections from a colonial context* of the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science.³ The policy vision is based on the Council for Culture report *Colonial Collection, a Recognition of Injustice*.⁴ Applications for restitution of a cultural object may be made by any State where the Netherlands exercised colonial rule for an extensive period of time.

The assessment framework set out in the Policy vision can be summarised as follows:

First the Committee determines whether the provenance research is satisfactory.

Then the Committee establishes whether involuntary loss of possession occurred. To this end it assesses whether it can be established with a reasonable degree of certainty that possession of the cultural object whose restitution is requested was involuntarily lost in a country where the Netherlands exercised colonial rule for an extensive period of time. If it is established that this the case, the Committee will recommend unconditional restitution of the cultural object.

If it cannot be established from the provenance history whether involuntary loss of possession occurred, and to the extent that the cultural objects in question are of particular cultural, historical or religious significance for the country of origin, then the Committee will consider the interests involved, whereby the importance of restitution for the country of origin shall be weighed against other relevant interests based on reasonableness and fairness.

Relevant interests may include the cultural importance of the cultural object to the country of origin, the communities involved both in the countries of origin and in the Netherlands, the significance to the Netherlands Collection, future storage conditions and public access. Objects may be significant for national and regional traditions as well as for the identity of a country, people, community or individual. A cultural object will often be of different importance to the Netherlands than to the country of origin. Colonial cultural objects in Dutch museums may also be of special significance to Dutch citizens with roots in the countries of origin.

If the object whose restitution is requested originates from a country that was colonised by another power then the Committee will similarly consider the interests involved, thereby weighing the importance of restitution for the country of origin against other relevant interests based on reasonableness and fairness. Rectifying injustice must, however, be the starting point in this assessment. In this case, whilst the Netherlands did not cause the injustice, as the current holder of the objects it is the only party that can rectify that injustice.

If the Committee recommends in favour of restitution to the applicant state then the transfer of title procedure for public collections shall be observed – in accordance with the Dutch Heritage Act and the *Policy vision on collections from a colonial context* of the State Secretary for Culture and Media – and the Committee's recommendation shall also be regarded as a recommendation on the indispensability and irreplaceability of the object in the sense of article 4.18 of the Dutch Heritage Act.

³ Policy vision, 29 January 2021,

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2021/01/29/rapportbeleidsvisie-collecties-uit-een-koloniale-context>

⁴ Report of 7 October 2020, <https://www.raadvoorcultuur.nl/documenten/adviezen/2021/01/22/colonial-collection-and-a-recognition-of-injustice>

4. The procedure

On 20 September 2023 the Republic of Indonesia submitted an application to the Dutch State Secretary for Culture and Media for the restitution of the statue of Ganesha. On 7 November 2023 the State Secretary requested the Colonial Collections Committee (hereinafter referred to as: 'the Committee') to advise on the restitution application.

The custodian of the object, Wereldmuseum Leiden, researched the provenance of the object and reported its findings on 13 May 2024. The Committee discussed the provenance report at its meeting of 28 June 2024 and had no additional questions.

An English translation of the provenance report was shared with the *Tim Repatriasi Koleksi Asal Indonesia di Belanda* team (hereinafter referred to as: the Indonesian Repatriation Committee) on 31 May 2024. The Committee asked whether there were any further questions regarding the provenance report. On 20 June 2024 the Indonesian Repatriation Committee responded that this was not the case.

On 28 June 2024 the Committee discussed the restitution application and resolved to recommend as stated below.

5. The provenance research

The provenance research was carried out by Tom Quist, who works as a provenance researcher at Wereldmuseum Leiden. The research report is attached as an appendix to this recommendation (Appendix 1).

The report is an integral part of this recommendation.

The provenance research into the statue drew on museum inventories, colonial government records, scientific publications and ego documents. The report contains the following findings.

Colonial administrator Johan Frederik Walraven van Nes, the Resident of Pasuruan, saw the statue in 1836 while climbing the Semeru volcano, near what is now Lemahduwur in East Java. An account of this climb in the *Javasche Courant* mentions the statue, which was at the foot of the volcano: *'Wij vonden aldaar op een heuveltje, regts van het gehakte voetpad, een beeld, 4 voeten hoog en 2 voeten breed, zijnde een staande Ganesa-beeld, zoomede twee losse versierselen in steen, welke waarschijnlijk tot den ingang van eenen tempel hebben behoord'*⁵ [On a small hill to the right of the hacked footpath we found a statue, four foot high and two foot wide, being a standing statue of Ganesa [sic], as well as two separate stone ornaments, which probably belonged to the entrance of a temple].

Other objects were also present in the area around the statue, including a stone with an inscription and a basin with a lid, as well as a number of graves, with the wider surroundings also containing Hindu-Buddhist statues and other ritual objects. The provenance report refers to the Anglo-Indonesian historian Hadi Sidomulyo, who linked the objects to a network of sanctuaries established around the religious centre of Kubub. According to the provenance report it is quite conceivable that the statue came from a temple in Kubub.

⁵ Appendix 1, p. 7

On Van Nes's orders the statue was then transferred to Pasuruan, where Van Nes was the Resident. The research was unable to establish when this happened, although the report concludes that it must have been before 1839, when Van Nes departed for the Netherlands.

The museum's collection also includes a drawing of the statue of Ganesha that was previously assumed to have been made in Pasuruan in 1822 by one of the Bik brothers: Adrianus Johannes or Jannes Theodorus. This assumption conflicts with other sources which emerged during the provenance research. The drawing, which the provenance report discusses at length, is therefore irrelevant to determining the provenance of the currently claimed statue.

In November 1841 preparations for the statue's transportation to the Netherlands got underway with an authorisation from Van Nes, although it was not actually shipped until April 1843. Following its arrival in the Netherlands the statue was added to the collection of the National Museum of Antiquities as a gift from Van Nes and in 1904 it was transferred to the Rijks Ethnographisch Museum, precursor of the Wereldmuseum Leiden, along with the other Hindu-Buddhist statues in the collection.

6. Assessment of the restitution application

The application for restitution was submitted by a State where the Netherlands exercised colonial rule for an extensive period of time and is therefore subject to the *Policy vision on collections from a colonial context*.

The Committee is of the opinion that the provenance research was conducted properly and provides a satisfactory basis for issuing a recommendation. Thorough source research was undertaken and a critical evaluation of the existing knowledge was made. The report provides sufficient information regarding the origins of the statue of Ganesha, its removal and its transportation to the Netherlands.

Next, the Committee examined whether involuntary loss of possession occurred in the sense set out in the policy framework. To establish this, the Committee considered as follows.

The provenance research showed that the statue came from the foot of the Semeru volcano, where there were also other objects, such as stones bearing inscriptions, and graves. The Anglo-Indonesian historian Hadi Sidomulyo linked the objects to a network of sanctuaries established around the religious centre of Kubub. According to the provenance report it is quite conceivable that the statue of Ganesha came from a temple in Kubub.

The Committee deduces from this that the statue was not an object that did not belong to anyone, for example because it had been left there (what is known as *res nullius*), but that it belonged to any entity that had established this temple complex with these statues or, in the case such entity no longer existed, that the temple complex was in any case public property.

Furthermore it emerged from the provenance research that colonial administrator Johan Frederik Walraven van Nes saw the statue in 1836 while climbing the Semeru volcano, near what is now Lemahduwur. On Van Nes's orders the statue was then transferred to Pasuruan, where he was the Resident.

Preparations for the statue's transportation got underway in November 1841 and it arrived in the Netherlands in April 1843. Registered as a gift from Van Nes, it was added to the collection of the

National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden and in 1904 was moved to the Rijks Ethnographisch Museum, precursor of what is now Wereldmuseum Leiden.

Based on the above, the Committee considers as follows.

Although it is not known who, or which institution, was the rightful owner of the statue of Ganesha and it was also not established when the statue was removed, it can be assumed based on the provenance research that Van Nes was not the owner and was not given permission for the removal. Nor did it emerge that the statue was gifted or sold to Van Nes at some later point in time. That the statue was registered with the National Museum of Antiquities as a gift from Van Nes does not alter the fact that Van Nes had appropriated the statue without permission.

Based on the above grounds, which are set out in the provenance report, the Committee is of the opinion that it has been demonstrated with a reasonable degree of certainty that the cultural object whose restitution is requested was involuntarily lost in a country where the Netherlands exercised colonial rule for an extensive period of time. In view of the foregoing the Committee recommends unconditional restitution of the statue of Ganesha on the grounds of involuntary loss of possession.

The Committee was asked to advise on the application of article 4.18 of the Dutch Heritage Act should its recommendation be in favour of restitution of the requested object. It is the opinion of the Committee that rectification of past injustice prevails in this case, meaning that article 4.18 of the Heritage Act is not applicable.

7. The recommendation

The Committee has assessed the application for restitution and recommends the unconditional restitution by the Minister of the statue of Ganesha, RV-1403-1759, to the Republic of Indonesia.

This recommendation was adopted by the Colonial Collections Committee on 28 June 2024.

Chair

Secretariat

Lilian Gonçalves-Ho Kang You


Jona Mooren and Meehea Park


Appendix

1. Research report regarding Statue of Ganesha (Tom Quist, 23 April 2024)

Research report

Subject: Statue of Ganesha
 Date: 23 April 2024
 Author: Tom Quist

 <p>Photo: Stichting Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen</p>	Custodian	Stichting Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen
	Current owner	Dutch state
	Name and object number	Ganesha, RV-1403-1759
	Material/technique	Andesite
	Dimensions	Height: 159 cm Width: 84 cm Depth: 64 cm

 <p>Photo: Stichting Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen</p>	Custodian	Stichting Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen
	Current owner	Dutch state
	Name and object number	Drawing, RV-1403-3635
	Material/technique	Ink

Summary of research results

The statue of Ganesha was taken from what is now known as Lemahduwur in Simojoyan desa, at the foot of Gunung Semeru (East Java), in or before 1839. It was removed on the orders of colonial administrative official Johan Frederik Walraven van Nes after he and several of his subordinates had seen it in Lemahduwur while climbing the mountain in 1836. Van Nes had the statue taken first to Pasuruan, where he was resident, before donating it to today's Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (National Museum of Antiquities) while on leave in the Netherlands. The statue was added to the museum's collection in 1843. Since 1904 the collection has been housed at the museum now known as Wereldmuseum Leiden.

Reconstructed provenance

≤ 1839

Lemahduwur, Simojoyan desa, Malang regency (East Java)

KB, Delpher, *Javasche Courant*, 10-09-1836, p. 1, 'In-officieel gedeelte' section.

≤ 1839-1843

Pasuruan (East Java)

NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 3094, Stamboek van Oost-Indische ambtenaren, 1827, part D, folio nos. 127-129;

NL-HaNA, 2.04.01, inv.no. 4705, Brief van Conrad Leemans aan de minister van Binnenlandse Zaken, 08-06-1840, no. 24;

NL-HaNA, 3.12.21, inv.no. 67, Brief van Johan Frederik Walraven van Nes aan Conrad Leemans, 10-10-1841, no. 48, with appendices.

1843-1904

Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden

NL-HaNA, 2.04.01, inv.no. 4777, Brief van Conrad Leemans aan de minister van Binnenlandse Zaken, 08-11-1843, no. 92;

NL-LdnRMV, A03, inv.no. 18, Inventaris van het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, November 1843, 'Javaansche Oudheden'.

1904-present

Wereldmuseum Leiden

NL-LdnRMV, Seriedossier RV-1403, 'Proces-Verbaal van Voorwerpen enz. overgenomen uit het Rijks Museum van Oudheden te Leiden', 28-07-1904.

Introduction and features of the object

In response to a request for restitution from Indonesia in September 2023¹ the Wereldmuseum conducted research on the provenance of a statue of the Hindu god Ganesha (object number RV-1403-1759) in March and April 2024. The statue has stood in the entrance hall of Wereldmuseum Leiden since 2013. According to the current museum label by the statue and the object information in The Museum System (TMS), the Wereldmuseum's collection management system, the statue dates from the 13th century (Gregorian calendar), and was found on Gunung Semeru, East Java, the island's highest mountain and volcano.² The statue depicts a standing Ganesha with, as is common, the head of an elephant and four arms.³ The hand of the rear left arm holds a string of prayer beads and the right hand holds an axe. The hands of the front arms hold two bowls made from skulls. The hair is tied up and worn with a diadem, and the earrings and upper armbands feature skull motifs.⁴ The back of the statue is flat, suggesting it originally stood against a wall (perhaps that of a temple).

¹ Letter from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) to the Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen (National Museum of World Cultures, NMVW), I2023 051/110, 07-11-2023.

² <https://volcano.si.edu/volcano.cfm?vn=263300>, 'General Information' tab, accessed on 17-04-2024; <https://www.geonames.org/1627837/gunung-semeru.html>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ganesha>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

⁴ Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer, 'Ganesha van de Berg Semeru. Een Staande Ganesha aan de Wandel', *Aziatische Kunst* 30 (4) (2000) 8-19, ibidem 9-10.



Stichting NMVW, object number RV-1403-1759.

The dating to the 13th century is based on the skulls and skull motifs, which are believed to be characteristic of statues of Ganesha from the period when the Hindu-Buddhist kingdom of Singhasari ruled East Java (1222-1292).⁵ Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer (b. 1943),⁶ former curator of South and Southeast Asian art at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, argues that skulls used as dishes and decorative motifs are also often found in statues of Hindu deities from the Majapahit empire period (1293-16th century),⁷ and that the statue might also originate from the 14th century.⁸

In the desa (village) of Karangates,⁹ close to Malang in East Java, there is a statue of a standing Ganesha that bears a strong resemblance to the statue in Leiden. One notable difference is the plinth on which the statue in Karangates stands, which features a semi-circle of nine skulls. The statue in the Wereldmuseum collection does not have such a plinth. The fact that the lower base on which Ganesha's feet rest appears to be the same in both statues has led several researchers to suggest that the statue in Leiden originally had a similar plinth.¹⁰

⁵ Description of the statue in TMS, object record RV-1403-1759. See the object record based on this on the Wereldmuseum collection website: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11840/703750>, accessed on 17-04-2024; <https://www.britannica.com/place/Singhasari>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

⁶ <https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q111977465>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

⁷ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Majapahit>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

⁸ Lunsingh Scheurleer, 'Ganesha van de Berg Semeru', 8-10.

⁹ <https://www.geonames.org/7035025/karangates.html>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

¹⁰ P.H. Pott, 'Four demonic Gaṇeśas from East Java', *Mededelingen van het Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden* 15 (1962) 123-131, ibidem 127; Lunsingh Scheurleer, 'Ganesha van de Berg Semeru', 11; Natasha Reichle, *Violence and Serenity. Late Buddhist Sculpture from Indonesia* (Honolulu 2007) 178-179.



Left: Statue of Ganesha in Karangates, Malang regency. Photo: <https://www.netralnews.com/bukan-gajah-duduk-ganesha-karangates-berdiri-di-atas-tengkorak/OUZIdkRFZTF4N1RFZGY2MHLxWndGz09https://www.kompas.id/baca/english/2023/12/08/en-ganesa-di-antara-dogma-dan-ekspresi-seni>, accessed on 17-04-2024. Right: Stichting NMVW, object number RV-1403-1759.

Provenance report

The Wereldmuseum's collection includes, under object number RV-1403-3635, a pen-and-ink drawing of the statue of Ganesha, with a short inscription in ink: 'Genésá (standing) found on the slope of Mount Smeroe. Volcano on the eastern salient of Java'. The inscription above the statue probably reads 'Batara(m) Dhana(m)' in Javan script.¹¹ It proved impossible to determine the meaning of this during the research. The inscription continues in pencil, giving first the height of the statue in Rhenish lengths, and then, in another handwriting, a note which reads 'found at a height of 6000 ft above sea level'. Based on the Rhenish foot, this would amount to an elevation of almost 1900 metres.¹² In the bottom right of the drawing there is a further inscription in pencil, probably in the same handwriting as the previous note, which reads 'van Nes. Smeroe'.

The figure 126 at the top of the page probably refers to the number assigned to the drawing by the previous custodian, the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden. In 1904 this drawing and several hundred other drawings, paintings, maps, blueprints and photographs were given to the Rijks Ethnographisch Museum (National Museum of Ethnology), known today as Wereldmuseum Leiden. At the time, the drawing of the statue of Ganesha was in a portfolio with the title 'Passaroean', containing thirteen drawings that Adrianus Johannes Bik (1790-1872)¹³ had donated to the museum (Rijksmuseum van

¹¹ Transcription by Pim Westerkamp, Southeast Asia curator at the Wereldmuseum, 08-04-2024.

¹² 1 Rhenish foot = 0.314 metres. See: <https://mgw.meertens.knaw.nl/maat/201>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

¹³ <http://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/16122523>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

draughtsmen to Caspar Georg Carl Reinwardt (1773-1854)¹⁸ in 1816. As director of agricultural, artistic and scientific affairs in the colonial administration in Batavia (1816-1822), Reinwardt was concerned with the collection and transport to the Netherlands of natural history objects and antiquities.¹⁹ In February 1821 the Bik brothers accompanied Reinwardt on a trip to the Moluccas and Sulawesi. They returned from East Java to Batavia by land. From 5 to 7 January 1822 the three men stayed in Pasuruan, before continuing their journey to Malang.²⁰

Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer, and before her Pieter Hendrik Pott (1918-1989),²¹ curator of the Indies cultural region and then director of the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde (today's Wereldmuseum Leiden) from 1947 to 1982, concluded that one of the Bik brothers had made the drawing in 1822.²² In other words, the statue of Ganesha is believed to have been in Pasuruan at that time. It is not clear what source Lunsingh Scheurleer and Pott used as the basis for their conclusion. The fact that, according to the inscription, the statue was 'found on the slope of Mount Smeroe' seems at any rate to suggest that it was no longer there when the drawing was made. On the other hand, however, the drawing does not appear to be signed, the inscription does not state that the statue was in Pasuruan at the time, and the portfolio named 'Passaroean' also contains drawings not made by Adrianus Johannes or Jannes Theodorus Bik.²³ In short, therefore, there is no conclusive evidence that one of them drew the statue in Pasuruan in 1822.

During the provenance research, several sources were found that are not mentioned by Pott and Lunsingh Scheurleer. First and foremost, articles in the *Javasche Courant* (of 10 September 1836)²⁴ and the *Tijdschrift voor Neerland's Indië* (of 1849),²⁵ reporting ascents of Gunung Semeru. The article in the *Javasche Courant* gives an account of an unsuccessful attempt undertaken in August 1836. It is not clear who was involved in this attempt. The second source, in which German-Dutch scientist Franz Wilhelm Junghuhn (1809-1864)²⁶ describes climbing the volcano in September 1844, provides more clarity in this respect. Junghuhn mentions four colonial administrators by name who made an

¹⁸ <http://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/40457008>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

¹⁹ National Archives (NL-HaNA), Inventory of the archive of the Bik family and related families, 1789-1946 (finding aid 2.21.024), pp. 8-9, <https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.21.024/download/pdf>, accessed on 17-04-2024; W.H. de Vriese, *Reis naar het oostelijk gedeelte van den Indischen archipel, in het jaar 1821 door C.G.C. Reinwardt* (Amsterdam 1858) 32-36; Teunis Willem van Heiningen, *The Correspondence of Caspar Georg Carl Reinwardt (1773-1854)* (The Hague 2011) 16-18, 22.

²⁰ De Vriese, *Reis naar het oostelijk gedeelte van den Indischen archipel*, 307-308, 607-608, 621, 626.

²¹ <https://www.dutchstudies-satsea.nl/deelnemers/pott-pieter-hendrik/>, accessed on 17-04-2024; Ger van Wengen, "Wat is er te doen in Volkenkunde?". *De bewogen geschiedenis van het Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde in Leiden* (Leiden 2002) 195.

²² P.H. Pott, 'Four demonic Gaṇeśas from East Java', 125; Lunsingh Scheurleer, 'Ganesha van de Berg Semeru', 13.

²³ The drawings with object numbers RV-1403-3639, RV-1403-3641 and RV-1403-3642 are signed 'Carolus'. See also: NL-LdnRMV, Series dossier RV-1403, 'Drawings, maps and photographs of Indonesian antiquities, acquired from the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden', n.d..

²⁴ Royal Library (KB), Delpher, *Javasche Courant*, 10-09-1836, p. 1, 'In-officieel gedeelte' section, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010502953:mpeg21:p001>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

²⁵ KB, Delpher, *Tijdschrift voor Neerland's Indië* 11 (1) (1849), pp. 112-138, 'Goenong Smeroe of Maha Meroe. De hoogste Berg op Java. (Eene schets.)', <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=dts:2798003:mpeg21:0016>, accessed on 17-04-2024. The name of the author does not appear with the article. The fact that Junghuhn wrote the piece is evidenced by the fact that it was published in 1853 in part III of his book *Java, deszelfs gedaante, bekleeding en inwendige structuur* (pp. 736-783).

²⁶ <http://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/99314660>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

attempt on the summit in 1836:²⁷ Johan Frederik Walraven van Nes (1795-1873),²⁸ resident of Pasuruan, Jean Henri Dickelman (± 1789-1850),²⁹ assistant-resident in Malang, and *controleurs* Hendrik Albertus van der Poel (1807-1866)³⁰ and Gerard Cornelis Schonck (1807-1892),³¹ who also worked in Pasuruan. They departed Malang on 3 August. The report in the *Javasche Courant* states that they set off on horseback in a southeasterly direction from the desa of Bululawang³², and after crossing the river Lesti spent the night in the nearby desa of Majang Tengah.³³ The next day the group crossed several rivers, including Kali Padang³⁴ and Kali 'Pringapoes'.³⁵ Near the latter river there was a 'wilderness named Oetan-Soongie-Petoeng':

'There we found on a hill, to the right of a cut footpath, a statue, 4 feet high and 2 feet wide, being a standing statue of Ganesa, with two separate decorations in stone, which probably belonged to a temple entrance'.³⁶

This is a description of the Ganesha statue that Van Nes would some years later donate to what is today known as the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, and which is now in the collection of Wereldmuseum Leiden.

When Van Nes and the others continued on their way, they found in the vicinity of the statue some graves, a basin with a lid³⁷ and a stone with an inscription. The hill in 'Utan Sungi Petung' (in current Indonesian spelling) where the statue was spotted has been identified by the British-Indonesian

²⁷ KB, Delpher, *Tijdschrift voor Neerland's Indië* 11 (1) (1849), pp. 112-138, 'Goenong Smeroe of Maha Meroe. De hoogste Berg op Java. (Eene schets.)', ibidem p. 137,

<https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=dts:2798003:mpeg21:0041>, accessed on 18-04-2024.

²⁸ NL-HaNA, finding aid 2.10.01, inventory number 3094, Register of East Indies officials, 1827, volume D, folio numbers 127-129, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/3094/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_3094_0070, accessed on 17-04-2024;

https://www.berghapedia.nl/index.php/Nes,_Johan_Frederik_Walraven_van, accessed on 17-04-2024.

²⁹ NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 3092, Register of East Indies officials, 1819, volume B, folio no. 357, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/3092/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_3092_0191, accessed on 17-04-2024; KB, Delpher, *Javasche Courant*, 15-05-1850, p. 6, 'Sterfgevallen' section, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB32:164596039:mpeg21:a00010>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

³⁰ KB, Delpher, *Bataviaasch Handelsblad*, 14-11-1866, p. 4, article 'H.A. van der Poel † 6 november 1866', <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:110536651:mpeg21:a0023>, accessed on 17-04-2024; CBG|Centre for Family History (NL-HaCBG), East Indies sources, *Almanak van Nederlandsch Indië, voor het schrikkeljaar 1836* (Batavia 1835) 24, 72, 170.

³¹ NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 3096, Register of East Indies officials, 1836, volume F, folio no. 29, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/3096/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_3096_0020, accessed on 17-04-2024; <https://koloniaalerfgoedtevoet.nl/tiel/>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

³² <https://www.geonames.org/1647737/bululawang.html>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

³³ <https://www.geonames.org/1965931/majang-tengah.html>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

³⁴ <https://www.geonames.org/7051892/kali-padang.html>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

³⁵ It was not possible to identify the geographical location of this river during the investigation.

³⁶ KB, Delpher, *Javasche Courant*, 10-09-1836, p. 1, 'In-officieel gedeelte' section, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010502953:mpeg21:p001>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

³⁷ Since the 1860s, at any rate, the lid of the basin has been at what is known today as Pemandian Alam Banyu Biru, a bathing place in the desa of Sumber Rejo, Pasuruan regency. See: N.J. Krom, 'Eenige gegevens over de Hindoe-Oudheden van Oost-Java, *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* 72 (1) (1916) 412-459, ibidem 450-451; Stuart Robson, Hadi Sidomulyo, *Threads of the Unfolding Web. The Old Javanese Tantu Pangġelaran* (Singapore 2021) 133, 136 (Figure 28); <https://maps.app.goo.gl/9a4mrKpCo1URCFn6>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

historian Hadi Sidomulyo (English name: Nigel Bullough, b. 1951)³⁸ as today's Lemahduwur³⁹ in the desa of Simojayan,⁴⁰ at the southwestern foot of Gunung Semeru in the sub-district of Ampelgading.^{41, 42} Lemahduwur lies just over 600 metres above sea level, so the elevation at which the statue was found according to the inscription on the drawing (approx. 1900 metres) cannot be correct. Later in the nineteenth century the colonial authorities discovered Hindu-Buddhist statues and stones with inscriptions in neighbouring Petungombo,⁴³ part of Simojayan.⁴⁴ Archaeological and other finds have been made at other locations in Ampelgading, both during the colonial period and more recently, including a bronze linga (ritual object) that was donated to the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in 1891 and has been in the collection of Wereldmuseum Leiden since 1904.⁴⁵ Finally, there is a temple, Candi Jawar,⁴⁶ that is believed to date from the 14th or 15th century, on the edge of the desa of Mulyoasri,⁴⁷ which neighbours Simojayan.⁴⁸

According to Sidomulyo, the objects from Ampelgading might be associated with a network of sacred sites that were linked through a centre belonging to a religious community. He outlines the possibility that this centre, named Kukub, which already existed in circa 1350, and was possibly established even earlier, was located in Simojayan, because that is where the most statues and inscriptions have been found.⁴⁹ In this context it is quite possible that the statue of Ganesha was part of a temple in Kukub, as suggested by the report in the *Javasche Courant*. It is not possible to determine the age of the statue on the basis of Sidomulyo's research. Nor is it clear whether it once stood on a plinth decorated with skulls, like the statue in Karangates. There is at any rate no mention of this in the report from 1836.

It was not possible to establish during the investigation precisely when the statue of Ganesha was taken from Lemahduwur. It is however certain that this must have been before or in 1839, and that Van Nes ordered its removal. Van Nes travelled to the Netherlands on leave in 1839.⁵⁰

³⁸ <https://viaf.org/viaf/50653686/>; <https://festival.borobudurwriters.id/bio/hadi-sidomulyo/>, both accessed on 17-04-2024; Robson, Sidomulyo, *Threads of the Unfolding Web*, 325.

³⁹ <https://www.geonames.org/7051887/lemahduwur.html>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

⁴⁰ <https://www.geonames.org/7051855/simojayan.html>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

⁴¹ <https://www.geonames.org/7333297/kecamatan-ampelgading.html>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

⁴² Robson, Sidomulyo, *Threads of the Unfolding Web*, 133. Sidomulyo writes that C.F. Clignett wrote the report in the *Javasche Courant* of 10 September 1836. This misunderstanding probably arose from the fact that the report was republished in the *Tijdschrift voor Neerland's Indië* in 1844, with an additional reference at the beginning to a report by Clignett of his ascent of Gunung Semeru, published in 1838. See: KB, Delpher, *Tijdschrift voor Neerland's Indië* 6 (3) (1844), pp. 158-165, 'De berg Smiroe', <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=dts:2795003:mpeg21:0054>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

⁴³ <https://www.geonames.org/1631238/petungombo.html>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

⁴⁴ *Inventaris der Hindoe-oudheden op den grondslag van Dr. R.D.M. Verbeek's Oudheden van Java* (Vol. 3), Rapporten van den Oudheidkundigen Dienst in Nederlandsch-Indië (Batavia 1923) 53-54.

⁴⁵ TMS, object record RV-1403-3190. See also the object record on the Wereldmuseum's collection website: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11840/705188>, accessed on 17-04-2024; Robson, Sidomulyo, *Threads of the Unfolding Web*, 136-137.

⁴⁶ <https://maps.app.goo.gl/968S7DVXsXeQ5UkA48>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

⁴⁷ <https://www.geonames.org/7051852/mulyoasri.html>, accessed on 17-04-2024.

⁴⁸ Robson, Sidomulyo, *Threads of the Unfolding Web*, 137.

⁴⁹ Robson, Sidomulyo, *Threads of the Unfolding Web*, 137, 140.

⁵⁰ NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 3094, Register of East Indies officials, 1827, volume D, folio nos. 127-129, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/3094/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_3094_0070, accessed on 18-04-2024.

Correspondence from Conrad Leemans (1809-1893),⁵¹ director of Leiden University's archaeological cabinet, now the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, shows that he met Van Nes at De Besognekamer gentlemen's club in The Hague in May 1840.⁵² The resident probably offered to donate the statue to the archaeological cabinet's collection on that occasion. Afterwards, Leemans received a 'likeness' of the statue,⁵³ possibly the drawing with object number RV-1403-3635 discussed above. In June 1840 Leemans wrote informing the Minister of the Interior that Van Nes would notify the ministry of the gift, and that the statue had already, on the orders of the resident 'been transported to a place, where it can be loaded without difficulty or cost'.⁵⁴

When it became apparent in October 1841 that Van Nes had not contacted the Ministry of the Interior, Leemans seized the initiative. He asked the resident, who was staying in Rotterdam, for authorisation to take the matter further with the ministry. Leemans also enquired where the statue was at that moment, and who should be approached to arrange the transfer in the resident's absence.⁵⁵ Van Nes agreed, and informed him that the statue was in Pasuruan, in safekeeping with sugar merchants Thomas Benjamin Hofland (1799-1858)⁵⁶ and Peter William Hofland (1802-1872).⁵⁷ He sent Leemans official authorisation for the Hofland brothers so that they could hand over the statue to be transported to the Netherlands.⁵⁸ If the 'likeness' that Leemans had seen a year earlier was object number RV-1403-3635, it seems logical that the drawing was made in Pasuruan after the statue had been taken there.

After Leemans had informed the Minister of the Interior, the Ministry of the Navy and Colonies arranged transport in November 1841.⁵⁹ The statue of Ganesha did not however set sail for the Netherlands until April 1843, on board the frigate *Rotterdam*.⁶⁰ It may be that there was no vessel, or no room in the hold, available before this time. The *Rotterdam* arrived in Den Helder in August 1843,

⁵¹ <http://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/85187536>; <https://www.rmo.nl/museumkennis/geschiedenis-en-collectie/rijksmuseum-van-oudheden/>, both accessed on 18-04-2024.

⁵² NL-HaNA, finding aid 3.12.21, inv.no. 6, Letter from Leemans to Van Nes, 05-10-1841, number 70bis, https://archieven.rmo.nl/wp-content/object_files/009.pdf#page=71, accessed on 18-04-2024; <https://www.monumentenzorgdenhaag.nl/monumenten/buitenhof-21-tm-24>, accessed on 18-04-2024.

⁵³ NL-HaNA, 3.12.21, inv.no. 6, Letter from Leemans to Van Nes, 05-10-1841, no. 70bis, https://archieven.rmo.nl/wp-content/object_files/009.pdf#page=71, accessed on 18-04-2024.

⁵⁴ NL-HaNA, finding aid 2.04.01, inv.no. 4705, Letter from Leemans to the Minister of the Interior, 08-06-1840, no. 24, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.04.01/invnr/4705/file/NL-HaNA_2.04.01_4705_0399, accessed on 18-04-2024.

⁵⁵ NL-HaNA, 3.12.21, inv.no. 6, Letter from Leemans to Van Nes, 05-10-1841, no. 70bis, https://archieven.rmo.nl/wp-content/object_files/009.pdf#page=71, accessed on 18-04-2024.

⁵⁶ G. Roger Knight, 'Descrying the bourgeoisie. Sugar, capital and state in the Netherlands Indies, circa 1840-1884', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 163 (1) (2007) 34-66, ibidem 41-42; 'Short History of the Pamanoekan and Tjiassemlands' (c. 1938) 2; KB, Delpher, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 03-07-1858, p. 3, 'Advertentien' section, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010115748:mpeg21:p003>, accessed on 18-04-2024.

⁵⁷ 'Short History of the Pamanoekan and Tjiassemlands', 3.

⁵⁸ NL-HaNA, 3.12.21, inv.no. 67, Letter from Van Nes to Leemans, 10-10-1841, no. 48, with enclosures, https://archieven.rmo.nl/wp-content/object_files/072.pdf#page=91, accessed on 18-04-2024.

⁵⁹ NL-HaNA, 2.04.01, inv.no. 4735, Letter from Leemans to the Minister of the Interior, 11-10-1841, no. 71, with enclosure, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.04.01/invnr/4735/file/NL-HaNA_2.04.01_4735_0783, accessed on 18-04-2024; inv.no. 4738, Letter from the Minister of the Navy and Colonies to the Minister of the Interior, 08-11-1841, no. 3, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.04.01/invnr/4738/file/NL-HaNA_2.04.01_4738_0006, accessed on 18-04-2024.

⁶⁰ KB, Delpher, *Javasche Courant*, 22-04-1843, p. 6, 'Scheepsberigten' section, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010503409:mpeg21:p006>, accessed on 18-04-2024.

and the statue was temporarily stored in a naval warehouse in the Willemsoord shipyard.⁶¹ In November 1843 Leemans informed the Minister of the Interior that the statue had arrived in Leiden.⁶² Marked 'vN', it was registered in the inventory as a gift from Van Nes.^{63, 64} More than sixty years later, in 1904, the statue was moved to the Rijks Ethnographisch Museum when the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden's collection of Hindu-Buddhist statues was transferred there.⁶⁵

⁶¹ KB, Delpher, *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 24-08-1843, p. 1, 'Nederlanden' section, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010518920:mpeg21:p001>, accessed on 18-04-2024; NL-HaNA, 2.04.01, inv.no. 4774, Letter from the Minister of the Navy to the Minister of the Interior, 11-09-1843, no. 9, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.04.01/invnr/4774/file/NL-HaNA_2.04.01_4774_0706, accessed on 18-04-2024.

⁶² NL-HaNA, 2.04.01, inv.no. 4777, Letter from Leemans to the Minister of the Interior, 08-11-1843, no. 92, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.04.01/invnr/4777/file/NL-HaNA_2.04.01_4777_0598, accessed on 18-04-2024.

⁶³ NL-LdnRMV, finding aid A03, inv.no. 18, Inventory of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, November 1843, 'Javaansche Oudheden'.

⁶⁴ In 1861 an engraving of the room with Hindu-Buddhist objects at the Museum van Oudheden, at its Breestraat location in Leiden, was published in the French magazine *Le Magasin pittoresque*. At first glance, the statue of Ganesha appears to be to the left in the engraving, but because the objects are not depicted realistically, this cannot be confirmed. See: Lusingh Scheurleer, 'Ganesha van de Berg Semeru', 17; <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k31444j/f381.item>; <https://www.rmo.nl/museumkennis/geschiedenis-en-collectie/rijksmuseum-van-oudheden/>, both accessed on 23-04-2024.

⁶⁵ NL-LdnRMV, Series dossier RV-1403, 'Official report of Items etc. acquired from the Rijks Museum van Oudheden in Leiden', 28-07-1904; Ger D. van Wengen, 'Indonesian collections in the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden' in Reimar Schefold & Han F. Vermeulen, *Treasure Hunting? Collectors and Collections of Indonesian Artefacts* (Leiden 2002) 81-108, ibidem 87.