

Gereja Portugis, Gereja Sion in Jakarta-Batavia
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A slash-indication is used in behalf of the reproduction of street-names etc.: the Indonesian name at the left side of the slash, at the right side the old one. Jn means jalan or road.



Picture 1. The Portuguese church outside the walls / Gereja Portugis with bell-tower and main-entrance (north) in 1996, photo D. Teeuwen.



Picture 2. Gereja Portugis in 1869, from S. Merrillees, Batavia in nineteenth century photographs p.73 The side-entrance (west) is located behind the old tree. Maybe the same tree as shown in the middle of picture 5? Behind the brick wall the Jassen-cemetery / Jassenkerkhof. At the left a station of the fire-brigade of Batavia.



Picture 3. Gereja Portugis in 1739, drawing by J.W. Heydt. Jn Jayakarta / Jacatraweg / Heerenweg, Kali Ciliwung / Buitenkaaimansgracht and Jassenbridge in 1739 drawn from the wall of old Batavia. The side-entrance is at the right side of the building.



Photo D. Teeuwen
 Gereja Portugis
 in 2000
 Picture 4



Picture 5. Gereja Portugis (side-entrance behind the tree in the middle) seen from the west (Jalan Jayakarta and Kali Ciliwung), drawing by J. Rach 1776.

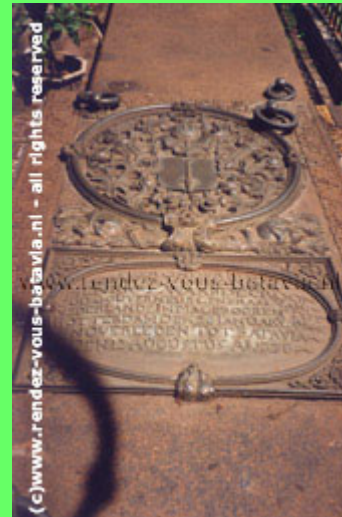


Photo D. Teeuwen

Picture 6. Tombstone of governor-general Henric Zwaardecroon 1728.



Picture 7. The Jassen-bridge in 1776, drawing by J. Rach.

The location of Gereja Portugese is at the left outside the picture. The bridge crosses Kali Ciliwung. The city-wall of old Batavia is situated at the right. In front of the city-wall one can see the town-moat / buitengracht.

The building with the bell tower in the front of it is the Gereja Portugis / Portugese Buitenkerk. Gereja Portugis has survived a turbulent history.

The Dutch name of the church was Portugese Buitenkerk or, in English, Church of the Black Portuguese outside the Walls. The protestant church was built by Ewout Verhagen and was inaugurated in 1696. The new church replaced a simple edifice constructed in 1676. This shelter had become too small for the growing number of black Portuguese living in this neighbourhood. The church was situated just outside the walls of old Batavia at the start of Jn Jayakarta / Jakatraweg, south-east from the colonial railway-station Stasiun Kota / Station Batavia. That is where Jn Mangga Dua / Gelderlandsche Weg now runs to the east. At the foot of picture 3 one can see a bifurcation of a canal (Kali Ciliwung, dug in 1650 to facilitate the transportation of wood) at the top. The two canals, from the point of bifurcation downwards, formed part of the town-moats / buitengrachten (picture 6). On picture 5 we have a look at the Portuguese Church from Jn Jayakarta in 1776. The bell tower stands at the left side. The brick wall surrounds a cemetery, so-called Jassen-cemetery / Jassenkerkhof. Named after a captain Jas. His reputation has fade away in the mist of history. The drawing, picture 5, shows us also the side-entrance of the church: behind the gate in the wall, compare picture 2.

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A Portugese Binnenkerk/Portuguese Church inside the Walls -on picture 8 on the crossing of the Kali Besar and Jalan Kopi / Utrechtse Straat- burnt down in 1808.



Picture 8. The Portuguese Church inside the Walls in 1776, drawing by J. Rach. View from the New Mint-Bridge / Nieuwe Muntbrug (crossing Kali Besar) to the west. Across the bridge, in front of us, we look into Jn Kopi / Utrechtse Straat, the Utrecht-Gate / Utrechtsche Poort and the Portuguese Church at the right behind a brick cemetery-wall..

The Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie / Dutch East India Company (V.O.C.,1602) defeated the Portuguese in India, in Malaysia and on Ceylon (1602-1660). The Dutch brought many Portuguese prisoners to Batavia. The white ones and the Eurasians among them settled, more or less, around the Portuguese Church inside the Walls of Jakarta-Kota / V.O.C.-Batavia in Jn Roa Malaka / Rua Malaka or Malaka Street.

The black Portuguese were made slaves but were promised liberty on condition that they became protestants. Therefore they were called Mardijkers (from merdeka / freedom). Mardijkers continued to speak a language of their own: a mix of Portuguese, Malay and Dutch.

The Jassen-cemetery was a large cemetery with about 2000 graves. Life was very unhealthy in old Batavia. The author (DT) counted only twelve tombstones in the summer of 2002. The most interesting one among them is the tombstone of Governor-General Henric Zwaardecroon (1718-1725). He was born in 1667 and died in 1728. He was buried among common people in accordance with his last wish. There are graves inside the church also. For example the tombstone of Carel Reiniersz and his wife Judith van Amstel on picture 11. Reiniersz was governor-general from 1650 untill 1653 and governor of Coromandel, India, before 1650. There he resided from Fort Geldria near Pulicat / Paleacatte. Pulicat is situated a couple of miles north of Madras. Reiniersz was fired in 1653 because of incompetence. Reiniersz was born in 1604 and departed from this world in 1653 (May 4th).

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Picture 9. The baroque organ inside Gereja Portugis in 2002, photo D. Teeuwen.



Picture 10. The pulpit built in 1695 in 2002, photo D. Teeuwen.

After 1795 the Mardijker quarters were used as quarries for new houses around Lapangan Banteng / Waterlooplein. Stones could not be brought in from the outside because of harbour blockades by the British.



Picture 11. Tombstone of Carel Reiniersz and his wife Judith (1653 / 1656) in 2000, photo D. Teeuwen.

On top of the skull:
"Christ is my resurrection."

drs. D. Teeuwen ~ H. Doorn



Picture 12. Pew de luxe in 2000 meant for the comfort of clergyman and elder, photo D. Teeuwen.

The black Portuguese disappeared in the kampung/villages around Batavia. Nowadays the integration of the Mardijkers is complete. Their former presence still exists:

- in Bahasa Indonesia,
- in kroncong music,
- in the name of the street Roa Malaka,
- on one of the tablets (in Gereja Emmanuel / Willemskerk near Medan Merdeka / Koningsplein) showing names of "Mardijker" clergymen,
- the presence of a Mardijker church in kampung Tugu near Tandjung Priok harbour-area.

Dirk Teeuwen, MSC End