

The Amsterdam Gate of Jakarta / Batavia
Dirk Teeuwen MSc
The changing world of Jakarta's Jalan Cengkeh, former Batavia's
Prinsenstraat

Survey

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Sources and comments

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a. Pictures

-Photographs

1. photo's Dirk Teeuwen, Holland
2. private collection of postcards/drawings/lithographs Dirk Teeuwen

-References to books

1. Municipality of Batavia: Batavia als handels-, woon- en industriestad; Batavia 1937
2. Vries, H.M. de: The importance of Java seen from the air; Batavia-Weltevreden 1928
3. Godee Molsbergen, dr E.C.: Geschiedenis van de Nederlandsche Oostindische Compagnie; Batavia Weltevreden 1925
4. National Library of Indonesia and The Rijksmuseum Amsterdam: Johannes Rach 1720-1783, artist in Indonesia and Asia; Jakarta 2001
5. Van der Hoop, dr J.: Excursiegids voor Oud Batavia; Batavia 1947
6. Wormser, dr C. W.: Zóó leven wij in Indië; Deventer Holland 1943
7. de Haan, dr F.: Oud Batavia Platenalbum; Bandoeng 1935
8. Stapel, dr F. W.: Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indië deel/part III; Amsterdam 1939
9. Perelaer, M. T. H.: Het Kamerlid van Berkenstein in Nederlandsch-Indië; Leiden Holland 1888 with drawings by Jhr J. C. van Rappard
10. Colijn, H.: Neerlands Indië, deel/part 1; Amsterdam 1911
11. De Vletter, M. E., Voskuil, R. P. G. A., Diessen, J. R. van, a. o.: Batavia / Djakarta / Jakarta, beeld van een metamorphose; Purmerend Holland 1997 (**notes, quotations 1**)
12. Nieuwenhuis, Rob, pen name E. Breton de Nijs: Tempo Doeloe, fotografische documenten uit het oude Indië 1870-1914; Amsterdam 1961 (**notes, quotations 2**)
13. Merrillees, Scott: Batavia, in nineteenth century photographs; Richmond Surrey England 2000 (**notes, quotations 2**)

"Notes, quotations" (at the end of this article) are handled mentioning sources.

b. Date of production by "Rendez-vous Batavia"

Nieuwpoort, Holland 15-09-06

c. Street names, Indonesian and Dutch

Taman Fatahillah, formerly Stadhuisplein (City Hall Square)

Jn Cengkeh, formerly Prinsenstraat (Prinsestraat before 1800)

Sunda Kelapa, formerly Havenkanaal

Amsterdam Gate, formerly Amsterdamsche Poort, Pintu Gerbang Amsterdam (Batavia)

Museum Sejarah Jakarta, formerly Stadhuis (Balai Kota), later Office of the Governor of Batavia

Jalan Pintu Besar Utara, formerly Binnen Nieuwpoortstraat

Kali Besar, formerly Kali Besar (the name is of all time)

Jl Besar Timur, formerly Leeuwinnegracht

Pictures and text from the collection of the author and photo's taken by Dirk Teeuwen only!! – are available on request.

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1. Jalan Cengkeh / Prinsenstraat



**P.1 View from the old City Hall, now Jakarta History Museum / Museum Serajah Jakarta, into Jl. Cengkeh, Jakarta 1996
Photo Dirk Teeuwen**

Picture 1 accords us a look from Taman Fatahillah into Jalan Cengkeh, called Prinsenstraat in the Dutch period. At the northern end of this road once there was a castle. The castle, construction 1619-1627, was the centre of power of the Dutch East India Company (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, V. O. C.). From 1790 until 1810 this stronghold has been demolished gradually, with the exception of a part of the southern Amsterdam Gate. The building material coming from this immense fortress was used to create a new center of government in Weltevreden (Medan Merdeka / Koningsplein, Lapangan Banteng / Waterlooplein and the vicinity).

B - on our map, see picture 4 - is the old City Hall. The area around E is the location of the castle. The southern Castle Square, the outer court, is around D and F. An arm of the Ciliwung, Kali Besar (8) flows into Sunda Kelapa and Java Sea at the western side of this complex. F is the end of, what is now, Jalan Cengkeh (7) and was once the place of the Amsterdam Gate (F). Like I already said: the castle has been demolished. However some remains of the Amsterdam Gate survived the turmoil of history, but later has vanished as well. In 1950 it was torn down to facilitate traffic. But on picture 2 the gate is still existing. Here appears, at the far end of Jl Cengkeh, the Amsterdam Gate of the former castle of the Dutch East India Company. Right from the gate an electric streetcar is on its way to Taman Fatahillah. The tram passes the post office and, left on the photo, the office of the Dutch insurance company "Nederlandsche Lloyd".

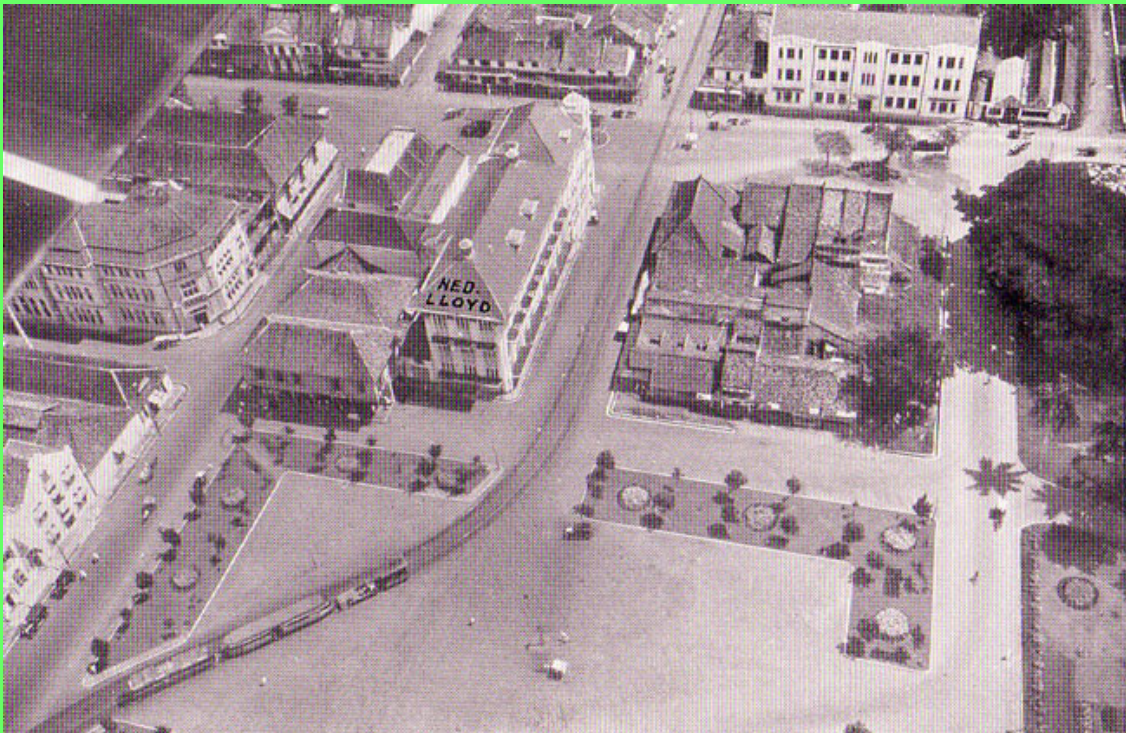
In the year 1923 the service of the colonial State Railways commenced the extension of the railway lines in and around Batavia. This was the result of the electrification of these lines. During this episode the railway viaduct, on picture ..., was constructed. The tramways were electrified also. The rebuilding and the electrification of the various tramway lines and electric streetcars was effected during the year 1934.

The tram track - on picture 3, from left to right - goes from Jn Cengkeh via Taman Fatahillah into Jn Pintu Besar Utara. Tram cars are visible: bottom left on this photo (3).

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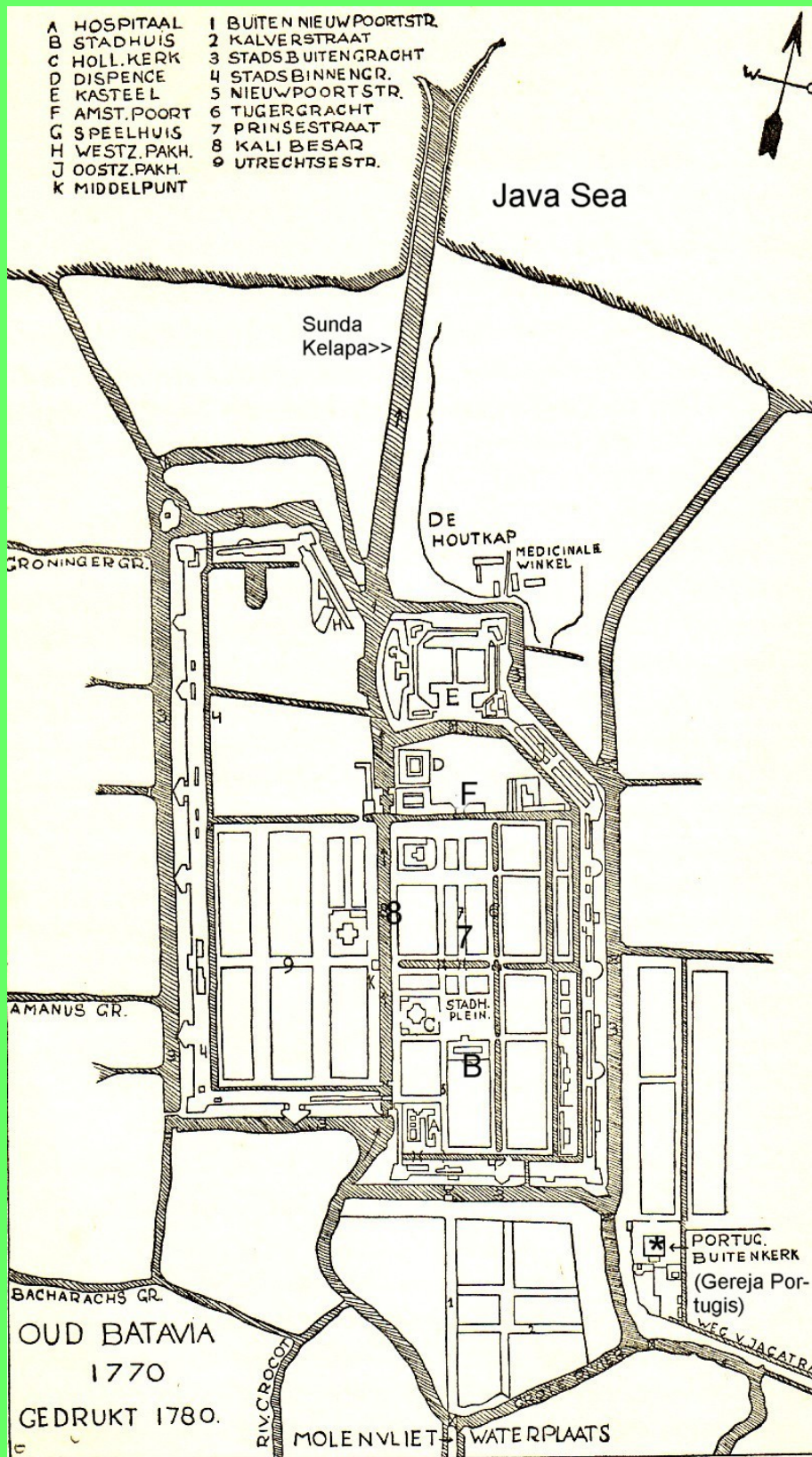
P.2 Jl Cengkeh / Prinsestraat, renamed later as Prinsenstraat, from Fatahillah Square / Stadhuisplein, Jakarta 1937
From: Municipality of Batavia p. 42



P.3 An air view of Taman Fatahillah / Stadhuisplein (City Hall Square) and Jl Cengkeh, Jakarta 1928

From: De Vries p. 110

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P.4 Jakarta / Batavia, 1770 (printed 1780)
From: Van der Hoop p. 12

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P.5 JI Cengkeh to the south, a view through the Amsterdam Gate in the direction of the City Hall, Jakarta 1935
From: Wormser p. 41



P.6 JI Cengkeh to the south, a view of old Balai Kota, City Hall, Jakarta 1885
From: De Haan picture A 11
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P. 7 Kali Besar to the north, Jakarta 1670
From: Stapel p. 497

On picture 3 one can see a small Chinese quarter right from the Ned. Lloyd building in 1928. The house on picture 6, 1885, was part of this quarter. It was a big house consisting of dwelling and shop. The photo was taken from the corner of Jl Besar Timur and Jl Cengkeh to the south. In 1925 the Chinese quarter made way to the construction of a post office. The project was served in 1929. This Chinese house shows a remarkable resemblance to the house left on picture 7. This kind of architecture survived the ages! On this painting by Beeckman one can see much more. The castle is at the right on the other side of Kali Besar. The outer court is still a bare plain. The painting shows Pasar Ikan, the fish market. Nowadays hotel Omni Batavia is situated on this location. Pasar Ikan has been moved to Sunda Kelapa since time immemorial.



P.8 Jn Cengkeh to the north, to the grounds of the former castle and Java Sea, Batavia 1870
Collection of the author
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P. 9 Jn Cenkeh to the north, the Amsterdam Gate, Jakarta 1870
Collection of the author

3. The Amsterdam Gate of the V.O.C.-castle



P.10 The Amsterdam Gate of the V.O.C.-castle in 1770, seen from north to south, drawing by J. Rach, Jakarta 1770

From: Godée Molsbergen p. 45

Hardly visible, at the left, there is a scaffold where sentences are carried out.

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P.11 Detail from p.10: the scaffold, with gallows
Guards: infantry and cavalry



P.12 Detail from 10: the Amsterdam Gate also
called Pinang Gate (Pinang=Areca Palm Tree)



P.13 The Amsterdam Gate of the V.O.C.-castle in 1770, seen from south to north, drawing by J. Rach, Jakarta 1770
National Library, p. 18

In front, more or less in the centre of the picture, there is a water reservoir.

Picture 10 and picture 13 show a gate and large buildings at both sides of the Amsterdam Gate. These buildings were cavalry barracks (ground floor) and housed prisoners as well as their guards. On picture 10 we are standing with our back to castle and Java Sea. On picture 13 we are standing with our back to the city of Batavia. The southern part of the castle was reconstructed by order of governor-general Van Imhoff (1743-1750). On picture 2 and picture 3 one can see only a part of the results of the reconstruction. The new Amsterdam Gate or Pinang Gate – also called Hoofdwacht / Main Gate- is right in front of us (pictures 10 and 12). Nowadays nothing is left from this beauty of rococo architecture.

The Amsterdam Gate was demolished partly in 1830. Statues of the Greek-Roman gods Mars and Minerva were placed left and right from the opening. Eight urns on top of the building were meant to be the finishing touch. The effect - the gods showed very protruding eyes - was somewhat ridiculous. In 1869 horse-drawn trams started operations along Jalan Cengkeh. The gate itself was too small to pass. The carriages followed a track alongside the gate. See note 1 about the vanished side wings of the gate.

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There were barracks behind the gate until 1907. Those barracks were meant for soldiers employed by the city government of Batavia. These military guardsmen had a traditional (V.O.C.) background. During the nineteenth century the guarding of the gate and the nearby buildings were only a ceremonial activity. The soldiers were called Papangers. Papangers were descendents of the Papango-people on the Philippine island of Luzon. The soldiers were dressed in white and blue. Weaponry consisted of pikes and choppers. Their activities were terminated in 1907.

The Japanese invasion of Nederlandsch-Indië / Netherland India started in 1942. Ridiculous or not: the Japanese have carried off Mars and Minerva as well as bulging eyes and also the urns. The Japanese brought their prizes to an unknown place and never returned the booty. Dutch as well as Indonesians draw a breath of relief.

This was the only positive contribution the Japanese made to the history of Indonesia. For the rest murder, blood, ruin and damnation were their monumental performances during those olden days.



**P.14 A commando of Papangers on its way to relieve the guards. Mark the tramway on the right.
Jakarta 1906**

From: Colijn p. 55

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P.15 The Amaterdam Gate, Jakarta 1885
From: Perelaer, p. 38/39, drawing nr. 3
At the right the horsetram comes rushing up.



P.16 The Amsterdam Gate, Jakarta 1890
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P. 17 The Amsterdam Gate, Jakarta 1934
Collection of the author

Notes and quotations



See note 2. 1868

Note 1

The Amsterdam Gate has been demolished in 1950 to facilitate traffic.

A picture can be found in > M. E. de Vletter, R. P. G. A. Voskuil, J. R. van Diessen and others: *Batavia/Djakarta/Jakarta, beeld van een metamorphose*; Purmerend Holland 1997 p. 116. The publishing company is Asia Maior, Holland. Asia Maior publishes a lot of books and atlases about the Dutch East Indies and Indonesia. The products of Asia Maior have a remarkable beauty.

This book "Batavia etc." describes and portrays with wonderful pictures and maps the Dutch involvement in the development of the city of Jakarta. The book is on sale at Van Stockum's, booksellers in The Hague, Holland (and at other bookshops) and at antique books markets in Holland. The book is written in Dutch.

Note 2

This picture "Amsterdam Gate with wings" is from > E. Breton de Nijs: *Tempo Doeloe, fotografische documenten uit het oude Indië 1870-1914*; Amsterdam 1961 p. 19. Rob Nieuwenhuis, pen name E. Breton de Nijs, has lived in the Dutch East Indies and describes and explains beautiful old Indonesian photographs in this book and in many other books. His publishing company is mostly Querido's in Amsterdam. His books are on sale at Van Stockum's booksellers in The Hague, Holland (and at other bookshops) and at antique books markets in Holland. His books are written in Dutch. An even more remarkable picture (gate with wings) can be found in Scott Merrillees' superior "Batavia, in nineteenth century photographs" Richmond Surrey England 2000 p. 39. The wings consisted of a high and a low section. The sections are clearly visible in Merrillees' book.

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Mark!

1. The wings on the mini picture shows an ellipse to the south. On picture 10 and 12 there is an ellipse to the north. I have no explanation for this historical miracle!!

2. On picture 9 one can see a part of the remains of the wings after their demolition in 1868. The remains (low section) are partly visible: a white fragment of a gate left on the photo.

Post scriptum



Shortly after the demolition of the wings?

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A final appearance in this article

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End**