

X. A.A.J. PAYEN - DUTCH ARTIST (1792-1853)

Payen was a professional artist from the south of the then Netherlands (now Belgium) who toured for more than a decade in the Netherlands Indies (1817-1829). His oil paintings and gouaches were made for a great deal in and around Bogor and also in Manado (Northeast Celebes). His main subjects were vegetation and landscapes, silhouettes of solitary, or groups of, trees, and a few more detailed paintings of individual plant species. His work is particularly beautiful and artistic.

The State Museum of Ethnography at Leyden possesses several hundreds of paintings in three portfolios. A scanning learned that these paintings are not of any particular value for Malesian botany. Most of the plants depicted are common and mostly cultivated species: Gardenia (katjapiring), Opuntia, Pandanus, Cocos, Musa (pisang), Carica, Antiaris toxicaria, Parkia speciosa (petéh), Plumeria, Bauhinia, Zingiber, Alocasia, etc. The paintings are catalogued and provided by Payen with some notes in French, and often vernacular names.

Catalogue no. 57 is of some interest as on one sheet several detail gouaches are found of Aroids, which may have served as model for drawings in Rumphia or Flora Javae by Blume: Arisaema laminatum, Amorphophallus campanulatus, A. giganteus (sic). But the handwriting on them is neither by Payen nor by Blume.

There is also a Diary (Dagboek) on loan; from this it appears that Payen has probably had a substantial influence on the shaping of the Botanic Gardens at Bogor.

Mrs. A.J. de Loos-Haaxman, herself an artist, has mentioned Payen in her book on the art of painting in the former Netherlands Indies ('Verlaat Rapport Indië'). Further data on Payen are found in the Encyclop. v. Ned. Indië vol. 3 (1919) 368-369.

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