

Marind children through the lens of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart
Missionary photography on Netherlands New Guinea, 1906-1935

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Een propagandist der beschaving.

Pater van der Kolk, missionaris op Zuid Nieuw Guinea, is er na heel wat moeite eindelijk in geslaagd, de nog geheel wilde en onbeschaafde inlanders in de buurt van Okana [sic] sympathieker te stemmen voor het kledingvraagstuk.

Tot voor korten tijd nog wilden deze oermenschen ook van de meest primitieve kleding niets weten. Broeken en jassen en rokken trokken hen niet aan.

Toen kwamen de missionarissen op het idee eerst met de kleintjes te beginnen. Zij kleeadden de kinderen met broekjes en jasjes, welke speciaal voor dat doel uit Nederland waren gezonden. De proef gelukte. De groote lui sloegen de handen in elkaar, toen ze hun opgesmukte kleinen zingende en dansende zagen aankomen op het vlakke strand.

“Mijn hart popelde bij 't zien van dit beeld der toekomst”, schrijft pater van der Kolk; “tot de ouders zeide ik, dat ook zij zich moesten kleden, omdat zij menschen zijn, en niet moeten rondloopen, als een hond, een varken of een kangoeroe, en dat ze hun versierselen mochten blijven dragen”. Al spoedig kwamen een paar vrouwen een kleed vragen; den volgenden dag een paar mannen, die elkander uitlachten om hun broek, maar innerlijk blij waren als kinderen. Zij geneerden zich nog wel wat om gekleed in het dorp te verschijnen, maar het dorp gewende eraan. De een na den ander kwam in 't geheim een kledingstuk vragen. En zoo ging 't voort.

Nu zal ieder weldenkend mensch zich verheugen over het succes van deze proef, waardoor pater v. d. Kolk zijn arme Papoea's tenminste weer een trede hooger helpt op de lange beschavingsladder, op wier laagste sporten deze ongelukkigen nog zijn gezeten.

Nieuwe Venlosche Courant, 01-02-1912. Front page.

The fragment presented above contains three of the most pressing issues which occupied the minds of the Catholic Missionaries on Netherlands New Guinea in the beginning of the twentieth century: publicising their missionary efforts in order to gain support and funding, gaining a foothold amongst the inhabitants of New Guinea, and persuading these same inhabitants to start wearing at least some form of Western clothing. Many similar stories, celebrating the joy that the missionaries and their clothes brought the people of Netherlands New Guinea, can be found in missionary letters and periodicals from the same period. Photographs of that time, which I encountered in an earlier project, however, showed an entirely different scene. In sharp contrast with the official narrative, Western dress is almost completely absent in the visual sources. Fascinated by the difference, I decided to pursue the subject more in depth. This thesis is the result of that undertaking. I am indebted to the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart for kindly permitting me access to their archive, and to the Heritage Centre in Sint Agatha for their expert guidance. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Geertje Mak, who shares my passion for this topic and from whose many valuable suggestions I have gladly benefitted. She and prof. dr. Marit Monteiro introduced me to their innovative ideas on children as targets in missionary colonial practices, which inspired the focus on children in this thesis.

Marleen Reichgelt

Introduction

In the August of 1905, four Dutch Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (M.S.C.) arrived in Merauke, a small town and the most important military post on the south coast of Dutch New Guinea. The island of New Guinea had never aroused much interest among Western colonial powers and the official border of Dutch New Guinea had only been drawn a mere ten years earlier. Save a few trading posts and some minor ports along the coastline, most of the land had remained undisturbed by European influences. When the first mission-post was erected in Merauke in 1905, the missionaries had to learn the language and customs of the inhabitants of the region, the Marind-anim,¹ from scratch² – a reason why only the brightest and most promising priests were sent to the prefecture. Their working area was the south coast and the surrounding backwoods, uncharted terrain up to that point: the first expedition to chart and explore the southern half of the island would depart in 1907.

The Dutch colonial presence on the southern coast of Netherlands New Guinea was limited in the first decades of the twentieth century. The main interest of the colonial government in this period seems to have been the copra trade and geographical exploration of the island. Civilisation projects aimed at the Marind-anim, but also health care and education, were assigned to the MSC mission. With a notable exception in the form of Swiss ethnologist Paul Wirz,³ the MSC missionaries were among the first and very few to study and document the lives, language, traditions and culture of the Marind-anim.⁴ Their studies became so extensive that at one point vicar apostolic Johannes Aerts complained that the research carried out by the missionaries came ‘at the expense of the mission work and to the advantage of the Protestant competitors’.⁵ Nevertheless, many of the MSCs have become well known for their studies in the fields of ethnology and linguistics. Studies and works by missionaries like Petrus Vertenten, Jos van der Kolk, Henricus Geurtjens and Piet Drabbe lacked an academic basis, but were widely read and so influential that eventually Jan Boelaars was trained as a professional ethnologist before he was sent away on mission. Their efforts did not only translate into a massive amount of textual sources on the Marind-anim, but also in a collection of hundreds of

¹ The suffix *-anim* translates as ‘people’.

² Some glossaries of words of the Marind language had been composed by, inter alia, marine officers, captains of the KPM (Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij) and Controleur (government official) Seyne Kok. These were used by the missionaries, but proved very limited. See also Karel Steenbrink, *Catholics in Indonesia, 1808-1942. A Documented History. Volume 2: The Spectacular Growth of a Self Confident Minority, 1903-1942* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 239.

³ Wirz was educated and instructed by the MSCs when he arrived in New Guinea in 1915. Especially Father Petrus Vertenten taught him many things on the culture and the language of the Marind-anim.

⁴ German ethnologist Hans Nevermann and Dutch anthropologist Jan van Baal also performed well-known research on the people of Netherlands New Guinea, but only arrived on the island in the mid-thirties of the last century.

⁵ Gabriëlle Dorren, *Door de wereld bewogen. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse missionarissen van het Heilige Hart (msc)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2004), 208.

photographs taken by the missionaries. These photographs served multiple purposes. Photography was employed by the missionaries in their anthropological research, but was also used to document the work and proceedings of the mission.

As mentioned above, the mission seems to have been the sole executor of civilising projects among the inhabitants of Dutch New Guinea in the beginning of the twentieth century,⁶ providing pastoral care, health care, and most importantly: education. The main focus of the mission was ‘civilising’ the children. International research has indicated that children were the principal target for education, ‘civilisation’ and conversion.⁷ The reason for the missionary focus on children was manifold. First of all, the adults were often thought to be beyond help or ‘too savage to become good Christians’,⁸ or simply were not interested in changing their way of life.⁹ Children were still innocent, pliable, and able to learn quickly. Additionally, without reaching and influencing the young population, the mission would have no future, no-one to pass on their teachings. Finally, the youth played an important role in bridging local and missionary culture, functioning as intermediaries.¹⁰ This is illustrated by the newspaper article cited in the preface, where it is by virtue of the pioneering children that the adults became interested in European clothing. In most cases, schools formed the centrepiece of the mission. Ideally, these schools were boarding schools, so the susceptible but still innocent youth could be guarded from the influences of non-Christians. Separating the children from their parents, and keeping them ‘constantly within the circle of civilized conditions’ was believed to

⁶ This statement is made with the reservation, that I have found nothing that indicates there were other parties involved in ‘civilising’ the inhabitants of Dutch New Guinea at this point in time. However, there has been done little research on these matters and much is still unknown.

⁷ Although various studies have touched upon this, a recent project of Marit Monteiro and Geertje Mak (provisionally) titled ‘Children as targets and tools. Colonial governance in missionary civilizing projects in the Indo-Pacific World (1870-1962)’ is the first to take children as missionary targets as its main subject. See also: Maaïke Derksen, ‘On their Javanese sprout we need to graft the European civilization’. Fashioning local intermediaries in the Dutch Catholic mission, 1900-1942’, *Tijdschrift voor Genderstudies* 19 (2016), 29-55; Maaïke Derksen, ‘Local Intermediaries? The Missionising and Governing of Colonial Subjects in South Dutch New Guinea, 1920-42’, *The Journal of Pacific History* 51:2 (2016), 111-142; Frances Gouda, ‘Teaching Indonesian girls in Java and Bali, 1900-1942. Dutch progressives, the infatuation with ‘Oriental’ refinement, and ‘Western’ ideas about proper womanhood’, *Women’s History Review* 4 (2006), 25-62; William G. Clarence-Smith, ‘The redemption of child slaves by Christian missionaries in Central Africa, 1878-1914’, in: Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller, *Child Slaves in the Modern World* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 173-190; Margaret D. Jacobs, ‘Maternal Colonialism. White Women and Indigenous Child Removal in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940’, *Western Historical Quarterly* 36 (2005), 453-476; Modupe Labode, ‘From heathen kraal to Christian home. Anglican mission educations and African Christian girls, 1850-1900’, in Fiona Bowie, Deborah Kirkwood and Shirley Ardener (eds.) *Women and Missions. Past and Present* (Oxford: Berg, 1993), 126-144; Abosede A. George, *Making modern girls. A history of girlhood, labor, and social developments in colonial Laos* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2014), 88.

⁸ Clarence-Smith, ‘The redemption of child slaves’, 178.

⁹ Martha Lund Smalley, *Communications from the Field. Missionary Postcards from Africa*. Occasional Publication No. 5, rev. ed. (New Haven: Yale Divinity School, 2006), [14]-[15].

¹⁰ Derksen, ‘On their Javanese sprout’; Derksen, ‘Local Intermediaries?’.

be essential for successful education.¹¹ The children would receive a 'civilised', Catholic upbringing and were to abandon customs deemed improper by the missionaries and the colonial government.

In case of Netherlands New Guinea, a fundamental objective of the missionaries was to convince the Marind-anim to adopt Western clothing. The dress of the Marind-anim left most of the body uncovered and was unacceptable in the eyes of the missionaries, as well as to blame for what they considered an unconstrained sexual moral, as well as disease and deterioration.¹² Much has been said about the relation between nudity and primitiveness versus clothing and civilisation in the colonial setting. The condemnation of nakedness and its association with 'savagery' is usually considered especially strong in a Christian or missionary context. Dress serves as a strong and very visual marker of 'civilisation' or the lack thereof. As such, it plays an important role in the representation of the colonial Other.

This is also the case in the representation of the Marind-anim in the official media of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. Marind-anim wearing their traditional attires instead of Western clothing are belittled and ridiculed, compared to children.¹³ There is no room for any positive appreciation of the people depicted. However, the complete archival collection of photographs conveys a different impression. The majority of the photographs in the collection depict Marind-anim in their traditional dress. The strongest sentiment echoed in most of these images is not abhorrence or condemnation, but rather a sense of admiration. Raymond Corbey expressed the same opinion in his exploration of the photographs of the Marind-anim.¹⁴ The people in the photographs were proud of their appearance and proud to be photographed. In photographs depicting the interaction between missionaries and the Marind-anim, the easy and relaxed demeanour of both parties often stands out. Nudity does not always seem to be problematic.

In recent years, pioneering studies by anthropologists Elizabeth Edwards and Peter Pels, and historians Paul Jenkins and David Maxwell, have established how colonial and missionary photography shows an attitude far more intricate than the binary oppositions found in textual sources. Gradually, photographs are becoming accepted as cornerstones of historical research and cultural understanding. Still, the first full-length book on missionary photography appeared only as

¹¹ Jamie S. Scott, 'Penitential and Penitentiary. Native Canadians and Colonial Mission Education', in: Jamie S. Scott and Gareth Griffiths (eds.), *Mixed Messages. Materiality, Textuality, Missions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 119-120.

¹² Meghan Vaughan describes a similar reasoning in her work on colonial medicinal practices in Africa: '[...] whereas secular medicine saw modernity and the disintegration of 'traditional' societies as fundamental causes of disease, missionary medicine took the view that disease would only be conquered through the advancement of Christian morality, a sanitized modernity and family life.' Megan Vaughan, *Curing Their Ills. Colonial Power and African Illness* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 57.

¹³ *Almanak van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1916, 39-40.

¹⁴ Raymond Corbey, *Snellen om namen. De Marind Anim van Nieuw-Guinea door de ogen van de Missionarissen van het Heilig Hart* (Leiden: KITLV, 2007), 23.

recent as 2012 and the scope for further research remains virtually limitless.¹⁵ In an earlier project, the approximately 1300 photographs made on the south coast of Dutch New Guinea between 1906 and 1940 by the Dutch Missionaries of the Sacred Heart were thoroughly researched by the author and subsequently disclosed in a database which contains not only metadata on the pictures, but also maps out how the pictures travelled through multiple contexts and sites.¹⁶ The collection proves to be a rich and effective source when studying the contact and interaction between missionaries and the local inhabitants. When combined with textual sources, photographs can also shed a revealing light on colonial practices. This is especially interesting, as the mission has hardly been examined as an essential part of the colonial powers.¹⁷

Placing photographs at the centre of analysis, this research aims to study the civilising practices applied by the MSC missionaries in Netherlands New Guinea, specifically the imploration to adopt Western dress. With dress being a strong visual indicator of 'civilisation', photography is an eminently suited source for this particular study. Preliminary research has shown how, while the adoption of Western dress formed an important goal of the missionaries, the way they dealt with nudity seems inconclusive. Children, the main target of the missionaries 'civilising' practices, are often portrayed in traditional Marind-anim dress – and even admired for their 'truly comely appearance'.¹⁸ Ample, but mainly textual sources stress the importance of clothing for successfully 'civilising' the Marind-anim. Visual sources may show a whole new, more ambiguous side to how this practice functioned on the ground. This thesis addresses the following question: *How is the missionary civilising project on the former colony of Netherlands New Guinea manifested through the practice of missionary photography of children in the period 1906 – 1935?* In this context, missionary photography is understood both as an act, entailing an active encounter with the Other, as well as a means of representation. By addressing this question, this research focuses first of all on how dress functioned as a visual marker of civilisation, both on a symbolic level and as a colonial practice. Secondly, by concentrating specifically on the young population of Netherlands New Guinea, this thesis examines the position of children as the main target of the mission.

¹⁵ T. Jack Thompson, *Light on Darkness? Missionary Photography of Africa in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2012).

¹⁶ Marleen Reichgelt, 'Capturing the Marind-anim: Photography by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (M.S.C.) on the south coast on Netherlands New Guinea, 1905-1940', unpublished research (2016).

¹⁷ Historian Maaïke Derksen has recently published on the substantial role the Catholic mission played in the Dutch colonial project. See: Derksen, "On their Javanese sprout we need to graft the European civilization"; Derksen, 'Local Intermediaries?'

¹⁸ *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1916, 282. 'Ja, ik zeg gerust bewonderen [...]'; *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1916, 294. 'Zoo'n wahoekoe in vol ornaat is waarlijk een bevallige verschijning.'

Status Quaestionis

Over the course of history, covering the largest part of the body has become the cultural norm in Euro-American society. While the extent of covering differs depending on region, period of time, social class, gender, and circumstance, all Euro-American cultures share the deep conviction that one's genitalia must always be covered when in public. When peoples who deviated from this norm, like the Nuba of northern Africa and the Marind-anim of New Guinea, were encountered, they were considered "naked" or "undressed" according to Euro-American cultural expectations.¹⁹

The difference in appearance leads to a binary opposition in Western thought, especially in colonial contexts, between being clothed and nakedness. 'Dress was touted as a visible manifestation of the civilized state of being, of cultural superiority where advancement was defined in terms of superior economic development and global dominance.'²⁰ Much has been written on 'the enduring association between savagery and the lack of clothing', which was established in the seventeenth century.²¹ The nakedness of colonial people was considered a manifestation of 'primitiveness', a sign that they were unselfconscious and lacking in shame. One of the focal points of the colonial quest of 'civilising' was spreading Western clothing. The 'civilising' project of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in Dutch New Guinea, where the adoption of a Western style of dress was advocated from the very start of the mission in 1905, was no exception.

Historical studies on the 'colonial nude' in photography primarily concern scientific or anthropological photography, such as the anthropometric photographs of the Huxley-Lamprey system²² or the erotization of the exotic colonial nude.²³ Early research on the dress of the Other – or sometimes the perceived lack thereof – mainly came from anthropological studies and focused on portraying and describing the different forms of dress from over the world. Joanna B. Eicher states that dress was not considered a serious research topic until access was gained to the central highlands of New Guinea in the 1950s, where people dressed in beads, feathers, penis sheaths and other intricate ornaments were 'discovered' by anthropologists.²⁴ In more recent years, there have been numerous studies on dress as a cultural practice, clothes and (colonial) identity, and the role of

¹⁹ Joanne B. Eicher, Sandra Lee Evenson, and Hazel A. Lutz. *The Visible Self. Global Perspectives on Dress, Culture, and Society*. 2nd ed. (New York: Fairchild Publications, 2000), 25-27.

²⁰ Suzanne Baizerman, Joanne B. Eicher, Catherine Cerny, 'Eurocentrism in the Study of Ethnic Dress', *Dress* 20 (1993), 20.

²¹ Philippa Levine, 'States of Undress. Nakedness and the Colonial Imagination', *Victorian Studies* 50 (2008), 189.

²² For more on this topic, see Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories. Photographs, Anthropology and Museums* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2001) and Anne Maxwell, *Colonial photography & Exhibitions. Representations of the 'Native' People and the Making of European Identities* (London/New York: Leicester University Press, 1999).

²³ Raymond Corbey, *Wildheid en beschaving. De Europese verbeelding van Afrika* (Baarn: Ambo, 1989).

²⁴ Eicher, Evenson and Lutz, *The Visible Self*, 91.

clothing in a colonial context.²⁵ Most were written by either anthropologists or within the discipline of art history and focus on a specific form of dress, in a particular area or period. A groundbreaking exception is the book *Clothing. A Global History* by Robert Ross, first published in 2008. Ross, an African historian, wrote on the history of the globalization of dress more or less as an extension of his earlier work 'about the ways in which aspects of European culture were adopted, and put to their own uses, by the colonized'.²⁶ Still, as is the case with many international studies, the focus lies on Africa and India in the (late) nineteenth century. The situation in New Guinea in the first half of the twentieth century differed significantly. Whereas in most of Africa, large parts of the population had adopted some form of European dress by the twentieth century, the people of Dutch New Guinea were only just introduced to colonial influence.²⁷ Furthermore, missionaries and colonialists in the nineteenth century were unambiguous about the necessity of Western clothing for morality, propriety and civilised behaviour.²⁸ This had changed by the beginning of the twentieth century, partly under influence of anthropologists who thought the adoption of Western dress was an attack on pre-existing cultures. Wirz was one of them, which caused Geurtjens's passionate polemic against ethnologists with 'nudism as their hobbyhorse'.²⁹

Although the missionary movement has played a primary role in spreading European dress throughout the world from the eighteenth century onwards,³⁰ the role and perception of the dress and nudity of the Other in a missionary context specifically has been touched little upon as a research topic. When considering nudity in missionary context, a line is frequently drawn to the book of Genesis and the shame which was often lacking in the missionary charges. The photographs in missionary journals which oppose the naked heathen with the clothed, converted Christian, in order to show the fruits of the mission, are also regularly mentioned. Especially Norman Etherington has written extensively on clothing as an 'outward sign' of conversion.³¹ He argues that, just like there is much importance placed on outward, material signs of an inward 'heathenism' ('the destruction of

²⁵ Margaret Maynard, *Fashioned from Penury. Dress as Cultural Practice in Colonial Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994); Henk Schulte Noordholt (ed.), *Outward Appearances. Dressing State and Society in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV, 1997); Bernard S. Cohn, 'Cloth, Clothes and Colonialism. India in the Nineteenth Century', in: Annette B. Weiner and Jane Schneider, *Cloth and Humans Experience* (Washington D.C. [etc.]: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 303-354; Hildi Hendrickson (ed.), *Clothing and Difference. Embodied Identities in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa* (Durham [etc.]: Duke University Press, 1996).

²⁶ Robert Ross, *Clothing. A Global History. Or, The Imperialists' New Clothes* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), 4.

²⁷ Idem, 94.

²⁸ Idem, 86.

²⁹ H. Geurtjens m.s.c., *Oost is oost en west is west. Psychologische en andere tegenstellingen toegelicht met voorbeelden uit eigen ervaring* (Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 1946), 184-185; H. Geurtjens m.s.c., 'Conventionele moraal II', *Mannenadel en Vrouweneer* 23 (1933), 74-75; H. Geurtjens m.s.c., 'Nacktheit und Moral', *Nederlandsch-Indië Oud en Nieuw* 18 (1933), 319-325.

³⁰ Ross, *Clothing*, 84.

³¹ Norman Etherington, 'Outward and Visible Signs of Conversion in Nineteenth Century Kwazulu-Natal', *Journal of Religion in Africa* 32 (2002), 422-439; Norman Etherington (ed.), *Missions and Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

idols, rejection of implements of magic or witchcraft, and denunciations of naked bodies'), outwards signs of conversion should also be taken more seriously.³² According to Etherington, 'the moment at which the old signs are discarded and the new raiment put on' was a pivotal turning point in the process of conversion.³³ Ingie Hovland, however, does not wholly agree with Etherington that Western dress was a signifier of conversion. Questioning the relationship between outer appearance and inner faith, she argues that while European clothing may have been strongly associated with Christianity in the early years of the mission, in time it extended beyond that and Western dress became tied to fashion, labour, etc.³⁴ Hovland states that for the missionaries, wearing Western clothing was 'the Christian thing to do' and was associated with Christian civilisation, but did not make one a Christian.³⁵ Peggy Brock has also argued that while European dress was a marker of civilisation, it 'did not mark a transformation in [...] life, which came only with his acceptance of the Christian God and the rejection of his parent's beliefs'.³⁶ However, '[b]ecause of the missionaries' actions and interactions, clothes became intimately tied to both ideas of Christian civilizing progress and conversion on the mission stations'.³⁷

Although many authors mention what Etherington calls the 'missionary crusade' against 'nudity' and especially the distribution of items of clothing by the missionaries, much remains unknown about the practices developed by missionaries in relation to dress, and how these functioned in encounters in daily life.³⁸ Dress never really became a topic of theological reflection, and can therefore provide an interesting insight into dynamics of a mission.³⁹ A rare publication and an curious case with regard to the struggles relating to 'nudity' on the ground is the Ernabella Mission in Australia, which encouraged inhabitants of the mission to 'remain' naked. The policy was 'that the boys and girls attend in their *natural* state. For Aboriginal children of full descent, 'natural' meant 'naked', even though most of the children were used to wearing shirts and pants in their homes.⁴⁰ If, on the other hand, someone of non-European descent wore Western clothing not exactly

³² Etherington, 'Outward and Visible Signs of Conversion', 423.

³³ Idem, 436.

³⁴ Ingie Hovland, *Mission Station Christianity. Norwegian Missionaries in Colonial Natal and Zululand, Southern Africa 1850-1890* (Leiden [etc.]: Brill, 2013), 112-113.

³⁵ Hovland, *Mission Station Christianity*, 114.

³⁶ Peggy Brock, 'New Christians as Evangelists', in: Norman Etherington (ed.), *Missions and Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 148.

³⁷ Hovland, *Mission Station Christianity*, 114.

³⁸ Etherington, 'Outward and Visible Signs of Conversion', 435; Brock, 'New Christians as Evangelists', 148; Peggy Brock, 'Nakedness and Clothing in Early Encounters Between Aboriginal People of Central Australia, Missionaries and Anthropologists', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 8:1 (2007); Norman Etherington, 'Education and Medicine', in: Norman Etherington (ed.), *Missions and Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 262.

³⁹ Kirsten R  ther, 'Heated Debates over Crinolines: European Clothing on Nineteenth-century Lutheran Mission Stations in the Transvaal', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 28 (2002), 378; Hovland, *Mission Station Christianity*, 114.

⁴⁰ Rani Kerin, 'Natives Allowed to Remain Naked'. An Unorthodox Approach to Medical Work at Ernabella Mission', *Health and History* 8 (2006), 92.

according to convention, or was considered 'too dressed-up', this was also cause for disapproval or ridicule.⁴¹ Brock describes how missionaries were frustrated by the lack of gender associations which the clothes held for the people of Central Australia, who shared garments among men and women.⁴² Kirsten Rüther describes an even more controversial issue, where a missionary of the Berlin Mission Society in the Transvaal in 1875 was so enraged by the fact that the African women wore crinolines to church services that he went from door to door to confiscate the 'fashion items' and burned them in front of the women.⁴³ Dress was strongly linked to moral values and was therefore a socio-cultural element which the mission wished to carefully control. This could result in ambiguous policies with regards to Western dress.

Ambiguity between admiration for the 'state of nature' as seen in the Ernabella Mission on the one hand and the association between nakedness and savagery on the other hand is present in many encounters between colonialists and the Other. Studying this ambiguity is often difficult because of limited and one-sided source material. Textual sources often provide an absolute and stereotypical representation of the Other. This rings true especially for missionary writings, which were often aimed at a large audience and designed to inspire donations. The binary opposition between the brave missionary and unwilling heathen is exploited. An alternative, less tinted source for studying the colonial encounter, is photography.

Missionary photography

Until fifty years ago, the Other was the self-evident object of anthropological research. Terms which had been used to characterise people of different countries before decolonization, such as non-Western, primitive, or even savages, had become problematic. However, replacing these objectionable denominations with the vague but universally applicable Other, allowed anthropologists to continue the same topics of research. Studies focused on how different Others were, making them both divergent and inferior. These anthropological practices and their underlying colonial discourse were resolutely abandoned after radical critique was developed by Johannes Fabian and Edward Said in the late 70s. They established how the Other, whose empirical presence is the source of all anthropological research and colonial texts, is absent within the discourse on the Other and the Orient.⁴⁴ It was Fabian, however, who in his pioneering *Time and the Other* (finished in 1978, published in 1983) drew attention to the contradiction between the anthropological encounter and the discursive practices through which the knowledge obtained during this encounter was

⁴¹ Corbey, *Wildheid en beschaving*, 42.

⁴² Brock, 'Nakedness and Clothing', paragraph 17.

⁴³ Rüther, 'Heated Debates over Crinolines', 359.

⁴⁴ Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How anthropology makes its object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Edward Said, *Orientalism*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 208.

represented. As field work mainly consists of communicative interaction, argued Fabian, anthropological research is inescapably rooted in intersubjectivity. The anthropologist recognizes the interlocutor as his coeval. However, this coevalness is denied in the subsequent written representation of the field work, where the anthropological object is consistently placed in a different period of time, as primitive, savage, or tribal peoples.

Time and the Other revealed anthropology as an intrinsically political discipline and deconstructed the rhetorical devices which enabled the temporal distancing of the Other. But the work impacted other disciplines as well, greatly contributing to the shift from the 'absolute Other' to engaging with the Other. For colonial history, this entailed that studying textual sources only results in a one-sided and warped account of the encounters. The focus of research shifted towards the colonial encounter.⁴⁵

This also influenced missionary history. For a long time, the studies by missionaries had been disregarded as a valid source because of their supposed ethnocentric bias.⁴⁶ As the literary turn in anthropology in the 1970s problematized all anthropological texts as socio-historic and cultural documents, inescapably rooted in its own literary traditions, relations of power, and constructions of knowledge, missionary research was reappraised as well. From the 1980s onward, the representation of the Other in missionary context became the object of widespread research, subjected to semiotic and discourse analyses.

Anthropologist Peter Pels was one of the first to point out how, while 'the Other seems to be represented in the prefabricated binary oppositions used by Europeans to identify difference: black versus white, wild versus civilized, ignorant versus rational',⁴⁷ there are also instances where this narrative and the civilising myth are absent in the representation.⁴⁸ According to Pels, the discourse of the missionaries was shaped by 'ambiguities created by the contradictions of the colonial encounter'.⁴⁹ He came across sources in which the Other was represented or depicted without any reference or relation to the goal of the mission work. Some of these sources were textual, but the majority was formed by photographs, which did not seem 'burdened with the oppositions of the civilisatory myth'.⁵⁰ The allure and the appeal of strange but colourful cultures, which could almost

⁴⁵ A topic on which Fabian himself elaborated in *Out of our minds. Reason and madness in the exploration of Central Africa* (Berkeley [etc.]: University of California Press, 2000).

⁴⁶ Raymond Corbey and F. Melssen, 'Paters over Papoea's. Narratio, macht en ideologie in Kaiser Wilhelmsland, 1896-1914', *Antropologische Verkenningen* 9 (1990), 11.

⁴⁷ Peter Pels, 'Africa Christo! The Use of Photographs in Dutch Catholic Mission Propaganda, 1946-1960. Photographic Essay', *Critique of Anthropology* 9 (1989), 33.

⁴⁸ The civilising myth in missionary discourse is the notion that all heathens can be 'saved' from their dark, miserable lives and be brought to the true Christianity. No matter how much the lifestyle of the other is condemned, there is always the possibility of conversion and absolution. Anything which stand in the way of this tale of progress (idols, medicine men) is represented as the 'evil' which much be battled by the heroic missionary.

⁴⁹ Pels, 'Africa Christo!', 33.

⁵⁰ Idem, 36.

never be expressed in writing, becomes visible in pictures made by missionaries. While the people and cultures depicted in the photographs are clearly different from Western norms, they do not come across as repulsive or frightening.

Missionary photography shifted from being just a source to becoming a topic of research in the late 1980s. The first publications focused on the propagandistic nature of the photography and the often stereotypical style of the pictures.⁵¹ It was anthropologist Christraud M. Geary who in 1991 successfully argued that the character of missionary photography was far more ambiguous. She claimed there is a significant difference between the 'public' pictures, found in official collections and publications, and the 'unofficial imagery', which was never intended for a larger public.⁵² Geary broke a lance for the use of missionary photography as a source for several kinds of research, stating that '[c]learly, images are superior sources on the missionary experience as well as African culture, if their private readings have been documented or can be revealed.'⁵³ These private readings can also be applied to 'official' or published photographs, as it is possible – primarily with the use of accompanying texts and documents – to reinsert the images in the private domain.

With anthropologists Geary and Raymond Corbey, and historian Paul Jenkins at the forefront, research in German-speaking countries on the photography in the African colonies took on a leading role. The Basel Mission Archives were one of the first institutions to systematically preserve and catalogue historical photographs, making extensive collections – by the 1860s most functioning congregations had begun taking photographs⁵⁴ – accessible to researchers.⁵⁵ Their efforts resulted in an international meeting, 'Über die Wichtigkeit der Bewahrung photographischer Kulturzeunisse', in Berlin on the fourth and fifth of May, 1990. The lectures and contributions were collected in a special issue of the *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch*.⁵⁶ Although the articles were written in German, many became landmark publications because of the original approaches and the methodology used.⁵⁷ In

⁵¹ See, amongst others: Paul Jenkins, 'In the Eye of the Beholder. An Exercise in the Interpretation of Two Photographs Taken in Cameroon Early in This Century', in David Henge. T.C. McCaskie (eds.), *West African Economic and Social History. Studies in Memoriam* (Madison: University of Wisconsin 1990), pp. 93-103; Raymond Corbey, 'Der Missionar, die Heiden und das Photo. Eine methodologische Anmerkung zur Interpretation von Missionsphotographien', *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch* 40 (1990), 460-465.

⁵² Christraud M. Geary, 'Missionary Photography. Private and Public Readings', *African Arts* 24 (1991), 48-59 + 98-100.

⁵³ *Idem*, 59

⁵⁴ Paul Jenkins, 'On using historical missionary photographs in modern discussion', *Le fait missionnaire* 10 (2001), 71.

⁵⁵ Paul Jenkins and Christraud Geary, 'Photographs from Africa in the Basel Mission Archive', *African Arts* 18 (1985), 56-63.

⁵⁶ Theme issue 'Über die Wichtigkeit der Bewahrung photographischer Kulturzeugnisse. Eine internationale Arbeitstagung des Hauses der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, in Zusammenarbeit mit der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Photographie und der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Völkerkunde', *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch* 40:3 (1990).

⁵⁷ Christraud M. Geary, 'Text und Kontext. Zu Fragen der Methodik bei der quellenkritischen Auswertung historischer Photographien aus Afrika', *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch* 40 (1990), 426-439.

the issue, Corbey discussed his views on the erotization of the exotic for the first time.⁵⁸

Furthermore, it became one of the earliest instances where the conventions and practices in the missionary archives were explored.⁵⁹

All of these publications focused on Africa, but soon, other regions followed. In December 1997, the journal *Pacific Studies* published a special issue on 'Imaging, representation, and photography of the Pacific Islands'. The guest editor was Max Quanchi, a historian who specializes in both Pacific Island histories and the history of photography. The issue aimed at analysing photographs not only in the 'sites of their making', but also in their 'sites of use' and the trajectories which took them there.⁶⁰ Additionally, the authors proposed to see the images as 'constructed, contested fields of tension', duly formed by the 'the intention, ideology, and motivation of the photographer'.⁶¹ 'Their underlying and powerful intent is to unpack the images by treating them as historical evidence as well as to expose the scientific, intellectual, ideological, and commercial motives of the photographers; by doing so, they are able to trace the multiple uses to which these images have been put over time.'⁶² The issue included contributions from visual and historical anthropologist Elizabeth Edwards, renowned for her work on ethnographic photographs, Brigitte d'Ozouville, and Andrea E. Schmidt.

Edwards focuses in her essay on the Cambridge Torres Strait Expedition of 1898 on photography as an act, actively used by missionaries as a means of social interaction.⁶³ Proposing to approach photographs not as just depictions of 'things', but as 'active entities in the making and remaking of histories', Edwards asserts that the photograph will emerge as a site of 'dialogue and interaction'.⁶⁴ This notion of the photograph as object or entity was quickly accepted and adapted. More recent publications on photography and the mission focus on photography as a social practice, used to 'establish and maintain relations with local people'⁶⁵; describe ambiguities such as missionaries performing ethnographic research when they were at the same time intent on changing the native customs⁶⁶; consider the relationships between 'subjects and photographers and between

⁵⁸ Corbey, 'Der Missionar, die Heiden und das Photo', 460-465; Raymond Corbey, 'Weißer Mann – Schwarze Frau. Erotische Inszenierungen aus dem kolonialen Afrika', *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch* 40 (1990), 479-482.

⁵⁹ Wilfried Wagner, 'Missionare als Photographen', *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch* 40 (1990), 466-474.

⁶⁰ Max Quanchi 'Introduction', *Pacific Studies. Special Issue: Imaging, Representation, and Photography of the Pacific Islands* 20:4 (1997), 2.

⁶¹ Idem, 2-3.

⁶² Idem, 6.

⁶³ Elizabeth Edwards, 'Making Histories. The Torres Strait expedition of 1898', *Pacific Studies* 20:4 (1997), 13-34.

⁶⁴ Idem, 29.

⁶⁵ Helen Gardner and Jude Philp, 'Photography and Christian Mission. George Brown's Images of the New Britain Mission 1875-80', *The Journal of Pacific History* 41:2 (2006), 175. See also David Maxwell, 'Photography and the Religious Encounter. Ambiguity and Aesthetics in Missionary Representations of the Luba of South East Belgian Congo', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 53 (2011), 38-74 on photographic practices.

⁶⁶ David Maxwell, 'The Soul of the Luba. W.F.P. Burton, Missionary Ethnography and Belgian Colonial Science', *History and Anthropology* 19 (2008), 325-351.

photographers and universal narrative'⁶⁷; and study 'the dissemination processes by which [photographs] entered the public domain'.⁶⁸

Philippa Levine was the first to address the relevant question of '[w]hat prompted observers, photographers, artists, and others to such ardency in depicting and capturing the naked form of indigenous people?'⁶⁹ However, she was quick to discard the notion that this could have anything to do with a sense of aesthetics, as '[i]ndigenous people [...] were widely regarded as ugly'.⁷⁰ This does not seem to be the case regarding the Marind-anim. The MSC missionaries often expressed their admiration for the appearance and physique of the Marind-anim. Both their physical appearance and bodily ornaments were considered impressive. Other studies have also touched upon the aesthetical appreciation which is often visible in missionary and colonial photography.⁷¹ One of these studies is Thomas Hendriks' 'Erotics of sin'. Hendriks signalizes a 'missionary economy of desire' in a series of photographs taken by Premonstratensian missionaries in the Belgian Congo, influenced by both 'Christian humanism, articulating a vision of commonality and equality' and 'paternalism, articulating a vision of superiority and inequality'.⁷²

As research on photography became more complex and comprehensive, the methodology evolved as well. Dismissing semiotic analysis of a photograph as 'a narrow focus', Helen Gardner and Jude Philp analysed both written texts and documents in order to obtain information about the moment of creation of the image.⁷³ Other authors have applied similar methods to contribute to the often minimal contextual information which accompanies a photograph.⁷⁴ Cambridge Professor of Ecclesiastical History David Maxwell also supports Edwards' view that a photograph should be studied as a cultural object, with its own 'complex discursive and political landscapes', rather than as 'representation per se'.⁷⁵ Still, the critical study of missionary photography remains largely limited to a number of pioneering researchers. T. Jack Thompson, who in 2012 wrote the first full-length book on missionary photography, observes that while textual missionary sources are examined very

⁶⁷ Max Quanchi, 'Visual Histories and Photographic Evidence', *The Journal of Pacific History* 41 (2006), 165.

⁶⁸ Max Quanchi, *Photographing Papua. Representation, Colonial Encounters and Imaging in the Public Domain* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2007), X.

⁶⁹ Levine, 'States of Undress', 197.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Raymond Corbey has often commented on a sense of aesthetics, for example in colonial postcards in *Wildheid en beschaving* (1989) and in the MSC photographs in *Snellen om namen* (2007). The beauty found in some photographs is also considered by Thomas Hendriks in 'Erotics of Sin. Promiscuity, Polygamy and Homo-Erotics in Missionary Photography from the Congolese Rainforest', *Visual Anthropology* 26:4 (2013), 355-382 and Maxwell, 'Photography and the Religious Encounter'.

⁷² Hendriks, 'Erotics of Sin', 355.

⁷³ Gardner and Philp, 'Photography and Christian Mission', 189-190.

⁷⁴ Quanchi, 'Visual Histories', 165.

⁷⁵ Maxwell, 'Photography and the Religious Encounter', 40.

critically, many researchers still use photographs as supplementary sources, often left to speak for themselves.⁷⁶ The possibilities for further research are practically endless.

So, while photographs have their own complex discursive landscapes, they form very relevant and useful sources for studying the colonial encounter and the functioning of colonial or 'civilising' practises on the ground. Pels pointed out how the prefabricated binary oppositions are often absent in the visual representation of the Other in photographic sources. Western dress versus nudity is one of the strongest of these binary oppositions. Furthermore, Western dress is often used as a visual trope of 'civilisation', which makes photography an eminently suited source to study the missionary civilising project on Dutch New Guinea.

The representation of children

The main goal of the 'civilising' practises by the MSC missionaries on Netherlands New Guinea, like many other missions and colonial projects,⁷⁷ was to influence and educate the children. Educating the children was both a 'means of reaching the older generation and rearing up a generation of converts who would eventually rise to positions of influence [and] would serve as Native examples and instructors'.⁷⁸ Boarding schools formed the centre of the mission, in which the easily influenced and innocent children would be safe from the 'harmful' influences of their parents and kind. Keeping the children 'constantly within the circle of civilized conditions' was deemed vital for a successful Catholic, 'civil' upbringing.⁷⁹ In other words, the children were both precious 'subjects' and important intermediaries for the missionaries. The role of importance that children played in the mission is a topic that is often briefly touched upon in many studies, but seldom explicitly stated or more thoroughly researched. It seems to be regarded as a self-evident truth, not needing further explanation or exploration. As such, the position of children in many aspects of the missionary movement is an overlooked subject in historical research. One of these aspects is missionary photography.

The focus on children is echoed in the photographic archive of the mission: a significant portion of the photographs in the MSC collection features children.⁸⁰ In the early twentieth century,

⁷⁶ Thompson, *Light on Darkness*, 3.

⁷⁷ Derksen, "On their Javanese sprout"; Derksen, 'Local Intermediaries?'; Gouda, 'Teaching Indonesian girls in Java and Bali'; Clarence-Smith, 'The redemption of child slaves'; Jacobs, 'Maternal Colonialism'; Labode, 'From heathen kraal to Christian home'; George, *Making modern girls*, 88; Smalley, *Communications from the Field*, [14].

⁷⁸ Jaenen, 'Education for Francization', quoted in: Scott and Griffiths (eds.), *Mixed Messages*, 112.

⁷⁹ Scott, 'Penitential and Penitentiary', 119-120.

⁸⁰ This also seems to be the case for other collections of missionary photography. The few other studies that have dealt with the photography of children in the mission mention numbers between 25% and 40%. In case of the MSC collection, I estimate that slightly over a quarter of the photographs feature children. See also: Carly Faison, 'In Pictures and Words. Vincentian Missionaries' Representations of Chinese Children in the 1930s and 1940s', *Creating knowledge. The LAS Student Research Journal* 6 (2013), 66.

photography of children was still a relatively new genre. The second half of the nineteenth century had seen the birth of the modern Western idea of childhood. The child, which had been looked upon as a smaller version of an adult, was increasingly thought of as an undeveloped human being which needed to be guided and educated until coming of age. Along with the rise of compulsory schooling and cultural elements such as children's literature, childhood also became the focus of systematic research. Around the same time, the camera became a standard instrument in matters of classification. Simultaneously, the notion of childhood as a blissful, but fleeting period of life resulted in a surge of romantic portrayals of children in amateur photography. While the romantic notion surrounding the figures of children has been around before the invention of photography, the camera's representational capabilities presented new ways to capture 'childhood'.⁸¹ Photography proved to be an eminently suitable medium to preserve the transitional stages of a young life.

Despite children being frequently photographed objects, there are very few studies on the photography of children. Research on the topic focuses either on specific collections made by a particular photographer, or on the imagery of children in (war) propaganda. The most well-known example of the former are the photographs made by English author Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (better known by his pen name Lewis Carroll) between 1856 and 1880. As one of the earliest amateur photographers, Dodgson developed a 'rather exclusive passion' for photographing children, particularly young girls, dressed up in exotic costumes and in elaborate poses.⁸² In slightly over two decades Dodgson produced around 3000 negatives, before abruptly abandoning photography for unknown reasons in 1880. His choice of subject was – and is – definitely not unproblematic. In the 1850s, photography was a new medium and there 'was no respectable precedent in contemporary Victorian culture for [...] interest in little girls'.⁸³ Dodgson, an unmarried Anglican deacon, was aware to the ambivalence of his practices and careful to stress the consent of the children as well as send copies of the photographs to their parents. His best pictures were collected in circulating albums.

Whether Dodgson's photographing of little girls simply stemmed from his competence as a photographer in combination with his work as an author of children's books, or if choosing children as an almost exclusive object had larger implications, has been the subject of a long debate. Standpoints range from Dodgson as a 'consummate photographer of children'⁸⁴ to 'plain accusations of paedophilia'.⁸⁵ Professor of English Lindsay Smith steps away from the person of Dodgson and draws attention to the material qualities of photography as a 'medium whose representational status

⁸¹ Lindsay Smith, 'The Nineteenth-Century Photographic Likeness and the Body of the Child', in George Rousseau (ed.), *Children and Sexuality. From the Greeks to the Great War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2007), 250.

⁸² Lawrence Gasquet, 'Lawrence Gasquet responds', in George Rousseau (ed.), *Children and Sexuality. From the Greeks to the Great War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2007), 261.

⁸³ Smith, 'The Nineteenth-Century Photographic Likeness', 237-238.

⁸⁴ Smith, 'The Nineteenth-Century Photographic Likeness', 244.

⁸⁵ Gasquet, 'Lawrence Gasquet responds', 262.

was not yet clearly established' and the 'more hesitant aspects of the new medium as they intersect with equally hesitant definitions of childhood'.⁸⁶ Smith sees in the photographic portraits a commitment to childhood, an urge to capture children as children instead of miniature adults, as was the practice in Victorian England.⁸⁷ Furthermore, she explores the 'provocative relationship between time, duration and memory'⁸⁸ in Dodgson's photographs, which preserved his encounter with the girls 'to [the] future as a place of return'.⁸⁹

Such a close analysis on the practice of photography and the relationship between the photographer and his child-object forms a rare instance. Not the practice, but the use of the imagery of children is discussed in relation to World War I propaganda by Celia Kingsbury in *For Home and Country*.⁹⁰ She notes how posters containing pictures of children were primarily aimed at other children, and sometimes at children and adults both. The images were often highly sentimental, the children pretty rosy-cheeked little blonde girls and boys.⁹¹ Their innocence symbolised the righteous cause of country in question and appealed to the protective feelings of the adults. Kingsbury also discusses the use of children in propaganda postcards. These were often humoristic and depicted children in adult settings, endorsing behaviour that would be considered inappropriate in peacetime.⁹²

In the colonies, indigenous children were photographed mainly for two reasons: firstly, ethnographical and anthropological research, and secondly propaganda purposes. A notable and well-known example of the first category is the research performed by Margaret Mead and Frances Cooke Macgregor on young children in Bali.⁹³ Mead and Macgregor used photographs to study the developmental progression and motor behaviour of children between the ages 0-3. Their research is one of the earliest examples of Visual Anthropology. From 1936 to 1939, more than 4000 photographs were taken.

Photographs of a distinctly non-scientific nature were used to secure the interest and financial support of the people at home, by secular organisations, but mostly by the various missions. The exact purpose and use of these pictures remains a largely unaddressed topic. An example of research which deals with the role of children in missionary photography, but does not clearly state or explore the importance of the children, is Christoph Rippe's research on the depiction of faith in

⁸⁶ Smith, 'The Nineteenth-Century Photographic Likeness', 244-245.

⁸⁷ Idem, 246-247.

⁸⁸ Idem, 256.

⁸⁹ Idem, 251.

⁹⁰ Celia Kingsbury, *For Home and Country. World War I Propaganda on the Home Front* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010).

⁹¹ Kingsbury, *For Home and Country*, 185.

⁹² Idem, 206.

⁹³ Margaret Mead and Frances Cooke Macgregor, *Growth and culture. A photographic study of Balinese childhood* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1951).

the photographs of the Mariannhill mission in Natal. All of the photographs chosen by Rippe prominently feature children, but this is neither problematized nor elaborated upon. The only remarks concerning the children are that '[t]he [accompanying] text suggested to European benefactors that South African children had the potential to adapt'⁹⁴ and that the portrayal of pious children might have been intended as an educational component for European audiences as well.⁹⁵

Another study, on the representation of Chinese children by the American Vincentian missionaries in the 1930s and 1940s, found that the photographs were most likely taken 'for purposes of fundraising or as evidence of successful missionary work'.⁹⁶ In Vincentian publications, there was a distinct difference between the 'Christian' children in the orphanages and schools and the non-Christian children. The former are mostly shown smiling, living 'happy and fulfilled' lives, accompanied by captions such as "Can you widen his smile with your pennies?" or "They are smiling their thanks to you for helping them in their need".⁹⁷ The non-Christian children, however, are depicted as impoverished and lost without immediate Christian help.

Unlike in many other countries where the mission was active, Chinese dress was deemed suitable and even proper by the missionaries. It is therefore difficult to distinguish between the Christian and non-Christian children in the photographs. Dress was not a marker of civilisation, like it was in Australia, Africa and in case of the Marind-anim. A unique study of the representation of 'nude' children was performed by Elwyn Jenkins, who examined South African Children's Books. She addresses the role of 'clothing and the state of dress or undress [as] signifiers of culture', symbolised by stories about black children dressing as white children and vice versa, stories about boys of different backgrounds shedding their clothes and swimming together.⁹⁸ While nudity is not condemned by the authors of these books, the focus of the stories often still lie on the physical differences between the children. Nudity does not reveal a common humanity.⁹⁹ The stories usually end with the white child returning to school, after a temporary and harmless fling with 'the forbidden'.¹⁰⁰ On the other hand, when 'a black child was dressed in European clothes this marked an inevitable and satisfying step forward in the civilising process'.¹⁰¹ Bathing and dressing them turned 'savages' into Christians, after which they usually ended up as useful and loyal workers in the colonial African society.

⁹⁴ Christoph Rippe, "'Histrionic Zulus"—Photographic Heterotopias at the Catholic Mission Mariannhill in Natal', *Safundi* 15 (2014), 182.

⁹⁵ Idem, 191.

⁹⁶ Faison, 'In Pictures and Words', 67.

⁹⁷ Idem, 70-71.

⁹⁸ Elwyn Jenkins, 'Nudity, Clothing and Cultural Identity in Some South African Children's Books', *English in Africa* 30 (2003), 87.

⁹⁹ Jenkins, 'Nudity, Clothing and Cultural Identity', 88.

¹⁰⁰ Idem, 99-100.

¹⁰¹ Idem, 92.

To conclude, the adoption of Western dress was one of the main pillars of the missionary civilising project, especially among peoples whose traditional dress left large parts of the body uncovered. These civilising practises were mostly aimed at children, who could still be influenced, and not at their often unwilling parents.¹⁰² While the textual sources often convey an outright rejection of the traditional dress of the Marind-anim as savage and indecent, photographs often provide a more ambiguous appreciation of the Other. However, very little is known about the subject, especially in the context of the Dutch mission, where civilising practices in general are rarely researched. Focusing on what can be understood about the way the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) dealt with the clothing of children in the former colony of Netherlands New Guinea between 1906 – 1935, by means of missionary photography, the aim of this thesis is on the one hand to contribute to the integration of missionary history and missionary practices in a larger colonial debate, while on the other hand showing the value of missionary photography as a historical source. Furthermore, this research focuses on how dress functioned as a visual sign of civilisation, both on a symbolic level and as a colonial practice. This is done by addressing the following question: *How is the missionary civilising project on the former colony of Netherlands New Guinea manifested through the practice of missionary photography of children in the period 1906 – 1935?* The focus lies on the earliest period of the mission on the south coast of New Guinea, from the moment when the first photographic equipment was received until its heyday in the late 1920s and 1930s. From the 1930s onwards, the work field expanded significantly to include large regions in the hinterland. A new generation of missionaries took over after 1935, which marks the end of the period with which this thesis is concerned.

Missionary photography is understood both as an act, entailing an active encounter with the Other, as well as a means of representation. In order to incorporate this, the photographs will be analysed on the three sites where the meaning of an image is made, namely the site of production, the site of the image itself, and the site in which the image is viewed. These sites will be elaborated upon in the following paragraphs, which discuss the methodology and the contents of the collection of photographs from the period under research. In order to ensure the research originates from a diverse range of sources, the photographs made by four different missionaries will be analysed, corresponding with three different places and time periods.

The research contributes to the existing knowledge on the following points. First of all, the mission played a substantial role in the Dutch colonial project. Yet, the mission is often neglected in Dutch colonial research.¹⁰³ Histories on the various Catholic missions are generally either

¹⁰² Smalley, *Communication from the Field*, [14]-[15].

¹⁰³ Derksen, “On their Javanese sprout”.

commissioned by the congregation or written by its members and seldom engage with colonial research. This study breaks with this practice by integrating missionary history and practices in the larger colonial debate.

Secondly, by placing missionary photography at the centre of historical analysis, this project contributes to the interdisciplinary debate on the status of photographs as cornerstones of historical research and cultural understanding. There are still relatively few historians who work in photographic archives.¹⁰⁴ Dutch research on missionary photography remains largely non-existent, which makes this research all the more pertinent. The often stunning photographs by the MSC missionaries have not gone unnoticed, but are so far only collected and described in what in the literature is known as 'coffee table books'¹⁰⁵ and are yet to be contextualised and placed in the wider academic debate on missionary photography.

Furthermore, the field of colonial and missionary photography has been dominated by anthropologists. Historical research is trailing behind both in the use of photographic sources and in developing the advanced methodologies used in anthropological studies. This thesis adapts these methodologies for historical research and studies missionary photography from a historical perspective.

Finally, the research sheds new light on largely neglected parts of the Dutch colonies and the Pacific Rim. The former Prefecture of Dutch New Guinea (and in a broader sense, the area formed by the current Republic of Indonesia) is largely neglected in international research on colonial history.¹⁰⁶ Far more research has been done about the depiction of the inhabitants of what is now known as Papua New Guinea, than on the western side of the island, currently known as Irian Jaya.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing. The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001); Marga Altena, *Visuele strategieën. Foto's en films van fabrieksarbeiders in Nederland (1890-1919)* (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2003).

¹⁰⁵ Petrus Drabbe, Nico de Jonge, Martijn de Rooi, *Tanimbar. De unieke Molukken-foto's van Petrus Drabbe* (Alphen aan de Rijn: C. Zwartenkot, 1995); to a lesser extent Corbey, *Snellen om namen*.

¹⁰⁶ Recent Dutch publications include: J.F.L.M. Cornelissen, *Pater en Papoea. Ontmoeting van de Missionarissen van het Heilig Hart met de cultuur der Papoea's van Nederlands Zuid-Nieuw-Guinea, 1905-1963* (Kampen: Kok, 1988); Jan Boelaars, *Met Papoea's samen op weg. Deel 1, De pioniers: het begin van een missie. Deel 2, De baanbrekers: het openleggen van het binnenland. Deel 3, De begeleiders* (Kampen: Kok, 1992-1997); Dorren, *Door de wereld bewogen*.

¹⁰⁷ The map in Ann Stephen (ed.), *Pirating the Pacific. Images of travel, trade & tourism* (Sydney: Powerhouse, 1993), for example, has Merauke as the most western point. West New Guinea is not included as part of Melanesia or the Pacific.

Methodology

To answer the research question, three groups of photographs depicting children of the Marind-anim stemming from different time periods and different places on Netherlands New Guinea are subjected to critical analysis. These photographs originate from a larger collection of photographs of the Dutch Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, which is described further below.

Following the work of Geary, Jenkins, and Edwards, which has shown how missionary photography can form a rich source for various types of research, this thesis uses photographs to study a colonial practice regarding the adoption of Western dress among children. Building upon Quanchi, the photographs are analysed not only in the 'sites of their making', but also in their 'sites of use' and the trajectories which took them there.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, photography is looked upon as an act and encounter, as advocated by Edwards.¹⁰⁹ As Christoph Rippe puts it, taking a photograph was 'a multi-layered social phenomenon with many realities, performances, representational intentions and afterlives', and the subsequent circulation of these images was a 'photographic occasions of a different order'.¹¹⁰

This research focuses on the trajectories followed by the photographs and the role they played in what Maxwell calls a complex discursive and political landscape.¹¹¹ In order to follow these trajectories as well as contextualise the pictures, the photographs are analysed according to the three sites where the meaning of an image is made:¹¹²

1. The site of production, influenced by technical possibilities and limitations and the (background of) the photographer;¹¹³
2. The site of the image itself, where the meaning is determined by both visible and invisible signs, explicit and implicit context, which can only be understood against the backdrop of the collection in its entirety;
3. The site in which the image is viewed. This is the only site which is changeable and entails the direct surroundings in which a picture is placed. This can also include the situation in the

¹⁰⁸ Quanchi, 'Introduction', 2.

¹⁰⁹ Edwards, 'Making Histories'.

¹¹⁰ Christoph Rippe, 'The missionary, the diviner and the chief. Distributed personhood and the photographic archive of the Mariannhill Mission', in: Christopher Morton, Darren Newbury (eds.), *The African Photographic Archive. Research and Curatorial Strategies* (London [etc.]: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 40.

¹¹¹ Maxwell, 'Photography and the Religious Encounter', 40.

¹¹² Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies. An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials* (London [etc.]: Sage Publications, 2001), 16.

¹¹³ As argued by Max Quanchi, '[photographs] did carry messages intended by the photographer at the moment of closing the shutter'. Max Quanchi, 'The Power of Pictures. Learning-by-looking at Papua in Illustrated Newspapers and Magazines', *Australian Historical Studies* 35 (2004), 52.

archive,¹¹⁴ the context of an album,¹¹⁵ or a publication.¹¹⁶ An important factor is the textual context, such as a caption, which can heavily impact and even change the meaning of an image: classified according to specimen ('a native'), to position ('the chief') or a human being or relation ('our friend').

By combining the analysis of the photographs with information gathered from textual sources, each photograph is contextualised. For this, an earlier constructed database is used, containing factual data such as the photographer, place, time etc. (the first site), a description of the image (the second site) and an overview of the publications in which the picture was featured (the third site).¹¹⁷ An analytical framework based on the studies mentioned above is used in the analysis of the photographs. This framework is centred around the portrayal and appearance of the people in the photographs on the one hand (the gaze of the photographer, the gaze of the subject, body language, facial expression, dress), and the context in which the photographs appeared on the other hand. An important element of this context is the narrative dimension surrounding the images, the way an image was supposed to be 'read' by the viewer (i.e. a successful conversion, an adversary of the missionary, a tragic victim of heathen lifestyle etc.).¹¹⁸ This way, it is possible to consider both how the act of photography functioned in the colonial encounter and how the images were used by the missionaries. Examining how the children are represented in photographs from different periods and by different photographers, this thesis offers a broad overview of the missionary practices with regards to the clothing of children in Netherland New Guinea in the beginning of the twentieth century.

The three sites also reverberate through the division of the chapters. Seeing as the first and second site are closely related (the site of production and especially the photographer determine the subject of a photograph), these sites are examined together in a first chapter. Subsequently, the third site is divided into two chapters: the second chapter studies how the photographs are presented in the archive, while a third and final chapter analyses the use of photographs in various publications.

¹¹⁴ Selection and censorship in the archives is a topic which was already raised by Geary and Wagner in the 1980s. See: Christraud M. Geary, 'Photographs as materials for African History. Some methodological considerations', *History in Africa* 13 (1986), 101; Wagner, 'Missionare als Photographen', 466-467. David Maxwell even encountered instances where images containing nudity were 'hidden away in a drawer', see Maxwell, 'Photography and the Religious Encounter', 42.

¹¹⁵ Carolyn Keyes Adenaike has effectively argued the importance of albums and how they form relevant contextualization of photographs. See: Carolyn Keyes Adenaike, 'Contextualizing and Decontextualizing African Historical Photographs', *History in Africa* 23 (1996), 429-437.

¹¹⁶ Peter Pels pointed out how in most cases 'the photographers were not the publishers of the photographs', and Quanchi elaborated on how 'once published they were open to diverse, contradictory and manipulative interpretations'. See: Pels, 'Africa Christo!', 38; Quanchi, 'The Power of Pictures', 52.

¹¹⁷ An overview of the most important publications checked for reproductions of MSC photographs can be found in the appendix.

¹¹⁸ Mieke, Bal, 'The Politics of Citation', *Diacritics* 21 (1991), 43.

Contents of the collection

The collection of photographs central to this research consists of just under 1300 photographs, taken by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart on the south coast (more specifically the coastal area between Yoh Sudarso and the border with the current Papua New Guinea) between 1906 and 1940. The collection was mapped out and thoroughly researched by the author in an earlier project, in which a database was constructed containing both the more factual aspects concerning how, where, and when a photograph was taken, and the possibly multiple contexts in which a photo appeared. As a result, there is not only detailed information on the provenance and the circulation (publication) of these photographs readily available, but also a broad overview of the composition of the collection in its entirety. Here, the contents of the collection are briefly sketched out.

The photographs in the collection can be divided in roughly three types:¹¹⁹

1. Pictures of the Marind-anim
 - Includes photographs of people, their villages, systems of farming, and cultural manifestations.
2. Pictures of the mission
 - Photographs of the missionaries, the stations and buildings, schools and pupils, churches and baptised people, *goeroes*, model kampongs, and special events (visitations, journeys, festivities).
3. Pictures of the surroundings
 - Amongst others of the Dutch government, Merauke, traders, and the landscape.

The majority of the photographs belongs to either the first or the second category. In the early days of the mission, most of the pictures belonged to the first category. In 1905, when the first four missionaries arrived in Merauke, they had few belongings and did not possess photographic equipment. Father Henricus Nollen was in charge of the group, which consisted of two priests and two friars. Like many other MSC missionaries, Nollen had a keen linguistic and anthropological interest in his surroundings. As soon as the mission station was set up, Nollen started writing his superiors, repeatedly asking for a camera. His request was granted in the August of 1906. In the years that followed, Nollen monopolised the camera and took a few hundred photographs. Characteristic of his photography are the many ethnographical pictures depicting a certain 'type' of

¹¹⁹ T. Jack Thompson distinguishes between two kinds of photographs *Light on Darkness*: the ones showing aspects of the missionary work, and the kind portraying the native people who were not under the influence of the mission. I have chosen to include a third category for those pictures that portray neither. See Thompson, *Light on Darkness*, 13.

people (i.e. men, women, children, elderly), often portrayed from different angles (*en face*, *en profil*, and *en dos*). These kind of photographs are clearly rooted in the tradition of anthropometric photography and were used by Nollen to support his research on the Marind-anim, published in his article 'Les différentes Classes d'Age dans la Société kaia-kaia, Merauke, Nouvelle Guinée Néerlandaise', in the journal *Anthropos* in 1909.¹²⁰ As the mission lacked in manpower and the photography equipment was cumbersome to move around, the bulk of the pictures is taken at the mission station in Merauke. The Marind-anim came freely (rewarded with tobacco, rice, or knives and other tools) to be photographed and were fascinated by the darkroom or 'dark house' (*hivim-ova*) on the station grounds.¹²¹

Additionally, Nollen photographed the missionary station and its inhabitants, as well as the occasional picture of Merauke. The essence of his oeuvre however, consists of portraits of the people of the Marind-anim. After Nollen left for the Kei Islands late 1909, there is a dramatic decline in the amount of photographs. It is unknown whether or not he took the photography equipment with him, but there are very few photographs in the archive which can be dated to the period 1910 – 1920. The pictures which do stem from this period, are primarily made by non-MSK such as government officials or members of the exploration expeditions.

From the 1920s onwards the use of photography in the MSK mission on Dutch New Guinea increases. The three other leading photographers (Nollen being the first) arrive in this period, each carrying their own photography equipment: Father Henricus Geurtjens, Father Nico Verhoeven, and friar Adrianus van Hest. Like Nollen, they had their own field of interest. Geurtjens for example, who was stationed in Okaba from 1921 to 1932, has captured the cultural practices of the Marind-anim the most. A lot of his photographs depict *dema* rituals, funeral practices, feasts, and coming of age ceremonies. Another major component of Geurtjens photographic collection of (young) children, usually in either a familial setting (depicted together with one or both parents, siblings, or grandparents) or in a 'friendly' setting with other children their age. In contrast with Nollen's ethnological photography, the aim behind these kinds of photographs seems to be to provide a more intimate view on the Marind-anim.

¹²⁰ H. Nollen, 'Les différentes Classes d'Age dans la Société kaia-kaia, Merauke, Nouvelle Guinée Néerlandaise', *Anthropos* 4 (1909), 553-573.

¹²¹ H. Nollen, 'Reis naar Okaba-Sangasee', *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1910, 278: 'Verscheidenen erkennen mij, daar ze wel eens in Merauke waren geweest. 't Eerst wat ze vroegen was: Het donker huisje (hivim-oha) staat er dat nog? (want dat is bijna het merkwaardigste stuk van Merauke in de oogen van den Kaia-Kaia, het photographie-huisje, dat ze zoo als ik ze hivim-oha noemen, of donker huis. Ze hebben me dikwijls gevraagd hoe ik het toch klaar speelde om de nacht daarin op te sluiten!!)'.
Brief Eduard Cappers 29-02-1908, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1908, 251: "'Morgen kom ik naar u om het donkere huis (de fotografiekamer) te zien; maar mij moogt ge niet teekenen hoor.'"

Whereas the photography of both Nollen and Geurtjens falls primarily into the first category, 'pictures of Marind-anim', Van Hest and Verhoeven focus more on phenomena relating to the mission. Van Hest, to start, was positioned on several places along the south coast between 1923 and 1928, where he supervised the building of churches, presbyteries, and schools. As one of the most talented construction workers of the MSC, Van Hest had already worked in many different missions over the years. As early as 1911, he had become one of the main providers of photographs for the mission journal of the congregation. Unsurprisingly, Van Hest took many pictures of the constructions he was involved in, such as schools, churches, and model kampongs. He was also the photographer at official events as processions. Furthermore, Van Hest also captured people, usually in the 'context' of the mission (students, people visiting the presbytery, etc.). Verhoeven's collection of photography largely features the same topics. Nico Verhoeven was stationed in Merauke in the period 1923 – 1935. The focus lies on the mission and the influence of the mission on Netherlands New Guinea and its inhabitants.

Today, the photographs are collected in several albums (all composed at least several years after the photographs were taken) in the archive of the Dutch branch of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, AR-P027. The archive is located at the *Erfgoedcentrum voor Nederlands Kloosterleven* in Sint Agatha.

Note on the definition of 'children'

As this thesis is concerned with children as the main target of the missionary civilising project and subsequently the depiction of children through photography, it is necessary to clearly delineate the term 'children'.

Marind society was divided in sharply defined age groups, each with a distinct form of dress. Transition from one group to another was accompanied by an extensive set of rituals. An overview of all the age groups with a short description of the corresponding dress can be found below.¹²² The Marind-anim considered boys and girls younger than approximately twelve years old (*patoer* and *kivasom* respectively) to be children. Around the age of twelve, boys had to move out of the village to live in a *gotade*, the dwelling of young men. They were forbidden to rest eyes upon women until they became *ewatis* around the age of twenty. The period of transition between childhood and adulthood was a lengthy one. Adolescence was considered the finest time of life and lasted until one had found a partner for life. When a couple settled in a village they were truly considered adults and became *saf* (women) or *amnangib* (men). This happened mostly around their mid-twenties.

For the missionaries, the boys lost their innocence after living in the *gotade* for a while, around the time they became a *wokravid*. The *gotades* were seen as 'breeding grounds for sloth and lechery'.¹²³ The presence of the other men ruined the children and even lead to 'bestialisation'.¹²⁴ So, for both the missionaries and the Marind-anim boys around age fourteen, fifteen, were no longer considered children. The matter is more complicated for girls. The Marind-anim saw girls as young as ten, eleven, already as *wahoekoe* or 'maidens'. Consequently, they were dressed in very similar matter to adult women, even if they still had the body of a child. The missionaries were less concerned with the girls than with the boys. *Wahoekoes* did not leave the villages, but instead worked on the fields or plantations with the other women. The morality of the adolescent girls was far less threatened. However, from the depiction of the younger *wahoekoes* by the missionaries, both in text and in image, it becomes clear that they still considered them 'innocent' children.

Observing the views of both the Marind-anim and the missionaries at the time under research, this thesis considers boys and girls up until the age of approximately fourteen, fifteen, to be 'children'. For boys, this entails the age groups of *papoeske*, *patoer*, and *aroi-patoer*. For girls *papoeske*, *kivasom*, and young *wahoekoes*.

¹²² The information concerning these age groups was mainly compiled from texts written by the missionaries. However, the conclusions of the missionaries are substantiated by Paul Wirz in his *Die Marind-anim von Holländisch-Süd-Neu-Guinea* (Hamburg: Friederichsen, 1922-1925), and by Jan van Baal in *Dema. Description and Analysis of Marind-anim Culture* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966). Other, more recent research is unavailable.

¹²³ Erfgoedcentrum Nederlands Kloosterleven (hereafter ENK), AR-P027, inv. no. 628. Concept version of the 'Reddingsplan' by Petrus Vertenten. 'De jongelingen-verblijven, kweekscholen van luiheid en ontucht [...]'.
¹²⁴ *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1908, p. 157. 'De jongen groeit stilletjesaan op; was hij tot hiertoe misschien nog niet heelemaal bedorven, dan wordt hier door de anderen de laatste hand aan zijne verdierlijking gelegd.'

Age groups for men	Age groups for women
<i>Papoeske</i> ¹²⁵ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby • Wears a necklace with some shells 	<i>Papoeske</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby • Wears a necklace with some shells
<i>Patoer</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child that has started to walk • Ornaments around the neck and upper arms. Ears are pierced around age seven or eight. 	<i>Kivasom</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child that has started to walk • Ornaments around the neck and upper arms. Ears are pierced around age eight or nine.
<i>Aroi-patoer</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child that has reached puberty • Lives apart from the village in the <i>gotade</i>. Ornaments around the neck, pieces of pork around the upper arms. Skin is blackened with soot. 	<i>Wahoekoe</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls of ten, eleven years old • Dresses like an adult woman, with long hair extensions, elaborate ornaments around the neck, and a braided texture covering the pubic area.
<i>Wokravid</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young man that has been an <i>aroi-patoer</i> for approximately two years, has developed the body of a man • Lives apart from the village in the <i>gotade</i>. Same dress as <i>aroi-patoer</i> but with hair extensions at shoulder length. Nose is pierced. 	
<i>Ewati:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unmarried, young man • Lives apart from the village in the <i>gotade</i>. Prime of life, admired by all. May participate in dances and travel. Dresses as an adult man, with long hair extensions, decorated straps around the upper body, and a band around the waist with a shell covering the penis up front and some dry grass on the back. Sometimes pig fangs are worn as nose decoration. 	<i>Kivasom-iwag</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unmarried woman • Prime of life, admired by all. Dress remain mostly the same as for the <i>wahoekoe</i>, only the hair extensions are slightly shorter.
<i>Miakim</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged man • Returns to the village. Dresses like a married man, with some minor modifications. 	<i>Iwag</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged or promised woman
<i>Amnangib</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Married” man 	<i>Saf</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Married” woman
<i>Mes-miakim, Somb-anem</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elderly man. <i>Somb-anem</i> is a title indicating respect, a man whose counsel is valued 	<i>Mes-iwag, Somb-anum</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elderly woman. <i>Somb-anum</i> is a title indicating respect

¹²⁵ The spelling of words from the language of the Marind-anim lacked uniformity in the period under research. In order to remain consistent and avoid confusion with the terms used in the quotations, this thesis uses the most common Dutch spelling of the period 1910-1940 (i.e. *Boeti* and not *Mboeti*, *Buti* or *Mbuti*).

Justification for reproducing the photographs

Dozens of the photographs taken by the missionaries on New Guinea are reproduced throughout this thesis. The people depicted in the images are – once again – subjected to the gaze of the Other. As they have not been asked for their permission in this matter, it is important to wonder whether our gaze is legitimised.

Elements of these photographs can only be understood by adopting the historically framed vision of the MSC missionary. But is that not the same as engaging in the ethnocentric, racist ideological constructs of the colonial age? Mieke Bal has pointed out how the scholar discussing visual sources inevitably becomes a ‘expository agent’.¹²⁶ The colonial representation of the Other is not a distant, extinct thing of the past, but still present in today’s postcolonial society.¹²⁷ Photographs and other visual sources have not lost their power of promoting a colonial ideology, even when put in a different context, and can therefore not simply be ‘quoted’. Not exposing the images, however, is not the answer. Ignoring missionary photography means its ideological power remains unanalysed, while the practice is very much in need of critical contextualisation and understanding.¹²⁸

The problem cannot truly be solved: reproducing visual sources in critical research of colonial practices of representation will always be very complicated. The ‘expository agent’ takes on a moral responsibility, through contextualisation and self-reflection, to explain the powerful effects which the images still have on the viewer. In this thesis, a substantial amount of images has been reproduced. The images are diverse and have been chosen after careful deliberation. Each presents – more or less – a wider range of photographs either from the same period, photographer, found in the same publication, or on the same topic. All illustrations are analysed in detail. A large part of this visual analysis relies on the (interpretation of the) body language and facial expressions, which made the visual reproduction of the pictures pertinent for the argumentation.

The images can be found throughout the text, rather than together in an appendix at the end. This in order to ensure that the photographs remain embedded in the critical analysis and prevent the effect of a ‘coffee-table book’, convenient for thoughtless browsing. The commentary on each picture does not only contextualise the image by examining the circumstances under which a photograph was taken and how it was used, but also tries to make the larger underlying narrative

¹²⁶ Mieke Bal, *Double Exposures. The Practice of Cultural Analysis* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 197.

¹²⁷ Bal, ‘The Politics of Citation’, 34.

¹²⁸ Especially since the digitalised photographic collections of many archives are increasingly made available online, following in the wake of large projects such as the Internet Mission Photography Archive (IMPA) and the Mundus Gateway. While the research advantages are obvious, there is also the danger of the images losing all contexts. In many cases, very little is known about each individual photograph. How can a historical photograph be critically understood without taking into consideration its specific contexts, without detailed historical knowledge on that context?

more explicit. Temporal and spatial distance do not necessarily change how an image is perceived and analysed. More important is to provide a clear distance between the discourse used to understand and interpret the missionary representation of the Other, and the discourse deployed by the missionaries and their contemporaries themselves.¹²⁹ As a white citizen of a former colonialist nation, there still might be obliviousness with regards to ethnicity in my discourse. However, I have taken care not to adopt the gaze of the missionaries to ensure that this thesis makes use of illustrations in an academically justified and responsible way.

¹²⁹ Bal, 'The Politics of Citation', 32.

I – Encounters and Imagery

This chapter explores the first two sites where the meaning of a photograph is made: firstly, the site of production, entailing the technical possibilities, the photographer, and the encounter with the subject; and secondly, the site of the image itself. This second site analyses what is portrayed in the photograph and takes into consideration aspects such as composition and position, but also contemplates the more implicit context of an image, which can only be understood against the backdrop of the collection in its entirety. As the site of production largely determines the contents of a photograph, these two sites are analysed jointly.

The early years: 1906-1909

As explained above, the first photographs were taken in the period between 1906 and 1909. The first four missionaries had just arrived and their main goal was to familiarise with their new working area. The first impression of the dress of the adult Marind was mainly negative. However, the children were from the onset presented in a positive light:

‘De eerste indruk is die van onzeglijke ongeloofelijke vuilheid: een mesthoop op een menschenlichaam en het gezicht toegetakeld zooals men den duivel wel eens afgebeeld ziet. [...] De kinderen zijn heel aardig en geven ons hoop op de toekomst.’¹³⁰

‘De kinderen zijn zeer net tot hun 15^e jaar, tot dat zij zich gaan tooien en neus en ooren doorboren, en zich letterlijk misvormen.’¹³¹

Since the mission had no following yet, there was little to do in terms of pastoral care or education. The two priests travelled between the various villages surrounding Merauke, trying to get acquainted with the inhabitants and establish a bond of trust by providing medical care and handing out small gifts in the form of tobacco or similar goods. The goal was to master the language up to the extent where a beginning could be made with the first education of the children.¹³² It seems that in this point of time, little effort was directed towards changing the customs and lifestyle of the Marind-anim.¹³³ The priest in charge, Henricus Nollen, was primarily occupied with the study of the language

¹³⁰ Letter by Philip Braun, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1905, 362.

¹³¹ Letter by Dion. van Roessel, 03-09-1905, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1905, 374.

¹³² Letter by Nollen, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1906, 251: ‘Ik wil met de kinderen beginnen, zoodra mijn kennis van de taal toelaat mij een beetje te wagen. Dan zal ik in het 4e of 5e dorp een huisje bouwen, waar ik een paar keeren in de week de kinderen kan vereenigen en hun een begin geven van onderricht.’

¹³³ Letter by Eduard Cappers, 20-10-1906, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1907, 88: ‘Ge ziet, Witoeike is iemand die een potje bij ons mag breken, ’t is nog de onschuld in persoon. Binnen enkele jaren echter zal hij even bedorven zijn als zijne natuurgenoeten. ’t Is jammer, maar voor ’t oogenblik is het onvermijdelijk.’; Letter by Eduard

and the customs of the Marind-anim. This shines through in his photography. The majority of the pictures taken by Nollen can be classified as anthropological photographs, rooted in the final episode of the anthropometric tradition, which was most prominent in the nineteenth century.

Photographing the Other was 'an essential part of scientific investigation',¹³⁴ and the MSC missionaries were no exception. Nollen's photographic oeuvre contains many ethnographical pictures depicting all the different classes of Marind-anim society (i.e. *patoer*, *kivasom*, *saf* etc.), often portrayed from different angles (*en face*, *en profil*, and *en dos*), against a neutral background. However, whereas the goal of anthropometric photography was to provide an accurate and objective means to measure the bodies of different peoples, Nollen's primary focus seems to have been not the physical appearance of the Marind-anim, but rather their dress. This can be deduced from the fact that only the men, women, and children with headdresses or hair extensions are also photographed *en dos* or from behind. *Patoers* and *kivasoms*, who wore relatively little, were never portrayed *en profil* or *en dos* (compare figs. 1 and 4 to figs. 2 and 3). Furthermore, only people in full dress are featured in the photographs.

Children of different ages, both boys and girls, are regularly featured in Nollen's anthropological photographs (figs. 1 to 4). The fact that there seems to be no disinclination to portray young, largely naked girls is remarkable. Thomas Hendriks, who researched the photographs by Premonstratensian missionaries in the Belgian Congo, postulates that '[g]irls are never photographed in a portrait format, because making them stand and pose in front of the camera would have made their implicit eroticization all too obvious.'¹³⁵ According to Hendriks, it would have both 'hurt the moral sensibilities' of those receiving the pictures as well as been uncomfortable for the missionaries taking the photographs. Judging from the significant amount of photographs similar to the images presented below, the MSC missionaries had less difficulty with capturing potentially sensitive groups such as young boys and girls.

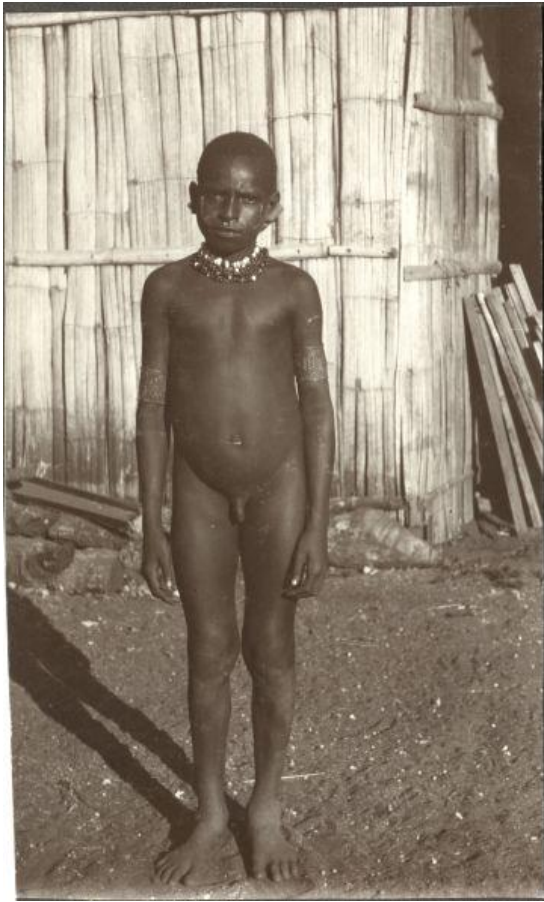
The four photographs below are examples of the anthropological photographs of children made by Nollen. They have several things in common. First of all, the location in each of the photographs is the same. As the mission lacked in manpower and the photography equipment was cumbersome to move around in the early twentieth century, the majority of the pictures are taken at the mission station in Merauke. The building in the background of the shots is most likely the presbytery. Another shared characteristic is the posture of the children, a neutral stance and impartial facial expression. It seems likely they were instructed by the photographer. The young boy

Cappers, 11-01-1907, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1907, 140: 'Wij doen onzen plicht en laten dan waaien wat waait.'

¹³⁴ Michael Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity. A Particular History of the Senses* (New York [etc.]: Routledge, 1993), 198-199.

¹³⁵ Hendriks, 'Erotics of Sin', 366.

Figs. 1, 2 (upper row); 3, 4 (lower row)¹³⁶



¹³⁶ To avoid an abundance of footnotes, the list of photo sources can be found after the conclusion of this thesis, page 108.

(*patoer* age class) in the first picture, for example, has a relaxed posture with his arms besides his body and his head slightly tilted. His facial expression, however, betrays he feels ill at ease and contrasts with his nonchalant pose. Still, he looks straight into the lens with a look that seems more annoyed than intimidated. The girl in the second and third picture also seems uncomfortable. Her stance is relaxed, but her eyes are averted from the camera and fixed at a point on the ground. Her dress indicates she belongs the age class of *wahoekoe*, but the girl does not seem to be older than eleven years old. While there are several photographs of *patoers* alone, *kivasoms* are only photographed alongside at least one other child (see Fig. 4) or adult. This is most likely because girls were generally better guarded than boys and had less freedom of mobility. It is important to keep in mind that all these children were visiting the mission station, which was at least a walk of half an hour from their villages. Young girls were most likely not allowed to make this journey (alone). Photographs of *kivasoms*, like the fourth photograph, are always of multiple people. The picture shows four girls with painted faces posing shoulder to shoulder. They look slightly unsure, but stand perfectly still and look in the direction of the photographer. A cap and jacket of one of the missionaries can be seen hanging in the background, making the implicit presence of the photographer explicit. While it can be read as the missionaries failing to hide themselves,¹³⁷ it also shows a human side to the photographic encounter: it is not hard to imagine a missionary standing across from the four girls in the burning sun, removing his cap and overcoat to deal with the heat while striving for the perfect shot. The girl on the far right holds something resembling rice in the palm of her hand. This could be a treat for coming to the station to be photographed. The Marind-anim were very well aware of what the process of photography entailed. Intrigued by the 'dark house' (*hivim-ova*) on the station grounds, in which 'the missionaries had confined the night', the letters and articles of the missionaries give the impression that most people gladly came to Merauke to get their likeness taken.¹³⁸

The space of the mission station should be explored a little more in-depth here. In essence, the small piece of land owned by the mission was a highly constructed and imagined space – not just in the missionary narrative, but also for the Marind-anim. The mission station – and, by extension, the entire town of Merauke – would have consisted of strange, perhaps dangerous, 'Other' territory in the eyes of the Marind-anim. It would also have been a place of exchange, where information, knowledge or Western commodities could be gained.¹³⁹ In other words, a place worth visiting, but essentially "land of the whites".¹⁴⁰ For the missionaries, however, the station was a lonely island in a

¹³⁷ Bal, 'The Politics of Citation', 42.

¹³⁸ H. Nollen, 'Reis naar Okaba-Sangasee', *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1910, 278; *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1908, 251.

¹³⁹ Hovland, *Mission Station Christianity*, 133.

¹⁴⁰ Idem, 165.

dark territory, a beacon of Christian civilisation surrounded by heathen primitivism and colonial depravity (such as the traders and later the bird-of-paradise hunters). The mission station has long been theorised about in terms of metropole versus periphery. In recent years, this has been problematized as too simple: while it is true that the mission station may have been a metropole in relation to the surrounding hinterland, it was also part of a colonial periphery to a European centre. In order to understand mission stations, several researchers have started thinking about them as heterotopias,¹⁴¹ a concept developed by Michel Foucault to describe a complex, infinite spaces of otherness, 'a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality'.¹⁴² Ingie Hovland has used the concept to compare the mission stations to mirrors, which would constantly remind the missionaries of their own imagined ideal space versus the actual site. Michael Marten argued that seeing the mission station as a heterotopia allows for a better understanding of the ambiguity of the colonial encounter, since the binary opposition inherent in the metropole-periphery trope is eliminated. The mission station as both metropole and periphery, formed an in-between space which functioned as a sort of contact zone.¹⁴³ In this cross-cultural, hybrid zone, somewhat of an imagined community existed. This becomes especially interesting when considering that the station was built at the very edge of Merauke, between the colonial settlement and the land of the Marind-anim. By photographing the children in this specific space, they have not simply entered a more enlightened place (although it could be presented as such in the missionary narrative), but it also underlines the element of exchange inherent in the colonial encounter. The presence of the Marind-anim in traditional dress on the mission station transforms it into a space where multiple cultures exist together, rather than being an isolated Catholic island.

While the anthropological photographs form a large part of the collection, there are also numerous more 'casual' pictures of Marind children, without the fixed composition and posing seen in the first four images. Figure 5 shows three boys at the edge of a beach village. They seem at ease. The boy on the left is laughing towards the camera and has a natural pose, while the boy on the right is posing self-consciously and scowling into camera. The boy in the centre has a somewhat sceptical expression on his face, but poses confidently with what seems to be the walking stick of one of the missionaries behind his back. Again, like in Figure 4, the presence of the missionaries is made explicit

¹⁴¹ Michael Marten, 'Re-imagining 'Metropole' and 'Periphery' in Mission History', in: Hilde Nielssen, Inger Marie Okkenhaug and Karina Hestad Skeie (eds.), *Protestant Missions and Local Encounters in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. Unto the End of the World* (Leiden [etc.]: Brill, 2011), 293-315; Hovland, *Mission Station Christianity*, 197-198.

¹⁴² Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics* 16 (1986), 24.

¹⁴³ Marten, 'Re-imagining 'Metropole' and 'Periphery'', 305.

Figs. 5 & 6



by their personal belongings in the frame. Only now, the presence is both subtler and more personal: the boy is holding the stick and seems to have been playing around with it. This implicates contact and exchange between the children and the missionary. He freely gave a personal item to the boy, who in turn accepted it. This implies at least some form of trust. The scene seems almost intimate, as if the children were disrupted in the middle of their play. Whereas the anthropological photographs were aimed to present archetypes and uniformity, there is individuality in this picture. Rather than a depiction of their outward appearance, this shot has captured the character of the children, and gives a glimpse of their relation with the missionaries.

Another picture which has captured the spirit of the person depicted, is the sixth photograph. It shows an adolescent boy of thirteen, fourteen years old, belonging to the class of *aroi-patoer*. The photograph is taken on the mission station, and is not unlike the ethnographical photography described above. The boy is facing the camera, with his eyes aimed at the lens. However, instead of a relaxed stance, he flexes his muscles. The twig in his hands accentuates the strength of his arms and the shape of his well-formed body. The picture is taken from a slightly lower angle, which makes the *aroi-patoer* look down to the camera, chin proudly in the air. Central to the picture is his impressive physique. The photograph breathes a sense of admiration for his vigour and vitality, for his youthful confidence.

These two pictures do not seem to have been taken with a specific goal in mind. Their explicit, frontal nudity makes at least the larger parts unfit for propaganda and or even publication. However, the appearance of the Marind boys does not seem to be conveyed as improper through these photographs. The pictures leave an impression of admiration and perhaps fondness. In accounts written by the missionaries, the free spirit of the Marind-anim and their 'natural' or 'unpretentious' behaviour are occasionally mentioned and praised.¹⁴⁴ Especially the children are described in terms like 'children of nature', with a pure and innocent state of mind.¹⁴⁵ The nudity of the children might not have been perceived as problematic per se, but rather as an element of their natural state of being. Denial of coevalness, observed by Johannes Fabian as central to the anthropological practice, is present in the writings of the missionaries as well. By not wearing

¹⁴⁴ An example of one such fragment is found in H. Geurtjens m.s.c., *Onder de Kaja-kaja's van Zuid Nieuw Guinea* (Roermond-Maeseyck: J.J. Romen & Zonen, 1933), 170-171: 'Wat zeggen zelfs een paar doode kiekjes? – Ik zou u de tafereelen willen laten aanschouwen in al de schittering harer kleurenpracht, in al de sierlijkheid van haar zwierig ritmisch beweeg; die spontane, geheel oorspronkelijke kunst van een natuurvolk, dat onbevungen uiting geeft aan zijn schoonheidsgevoel en naar voren brengt, wat het diepst op den bodem van zijn gemoed ligt, zijn heele geestesleven, zijn begrip en opvatting van de groote vragen des levens.'

¹⁴⁵ Geurtjens, *Onder de Kaja-kaja's*, 188: 'Als men dan weet, uit welke door en door rotte omgeving deze kinderen komen, dan staat men verbaasd, ze te zien zooals ze zijn: natuurkinderen met hun gebreken maar ook hun hoedanigheden en niet, zooals men verwachten zou, geniepige boefjes met een wormstekig hart.'

Western clothing, the Marind-anim were remnants of earlier times and existed in a different period than the missionaries and other 'civilised' people:

'Uit bovenstaande ziet Ge, dat er van kleederen, ook van de meest primitieve, geen sprake is. Wij staan hier nog in het eerste tijdvak van de beschaving, of zeggen we liever in het tijdvak, dat de beschaving voorafgaat.'¹⁴⁶

The link between dress and civilisation is strong here, up to the point where the two are almost the equivalent to each other.¹⁴⁷ Still, there are very few photographs of children in Western dress from this early period. Once the presbytery and outbuildings were finished, one of the first objectives of the missionaries was to persuade some boys (and their caretakers) to live with them on the grounds of the mission station.¹⁴⁸ This way, the mission obtained the much needed extra hands while simultaneously raising and educating the boys in the Christian way. Furthermore, the children would form a link between the missionaries and the Marind-anim. They provided valuable information on their people to the mission and helped relay the message of the missionaries to the other Marind. Additionally, the protégés had propagandistic value. They formed potential success stories and were tangible proof of the progress of the missionaries for higher-ups and people at home. As such, any apprentices or boys close to the Fathers and Brothers were significant photographic subjects. They are easily recognisable: the boys are wearing some form of Western clothing and are posing someplace with a clear relation to the mission. Figures 7 and 8 show two examples of how apprentices of the mission might be portrayed. The first photograph, dated to 1908, depicts Brother Jeanson¹⁴⁹ and an *aroi-patoer* at the make-do smithy on the mission station. While Jeanson is bent over the anvil and does not look up from his work, the boy poses happily for the camera with a beaming smile. Although his hand rests nonchalantly on the crank of the table saw, it does not look like he is working hard: his other hand is behind his back and his body is turned away from the saw. The youth wears a sturdy, but spotted pair of pants along with his traditional neck and ear ornaments. Despite being an *aroi-patoer*, he is not wearing pieces of pork around his upper arms. This was probably at the behest of the missionaries, who were horrified by the smell of the decaying meat.

The boys in Figure 8 have removed all forms of Marind dress. The photograph shows four

¹⁴⁶ Letter by Eduard Cappers, 27-08-1906, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1907, 44.

¹⁴⁷ Letter by Joseph Viegen 05-08-1906, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1906, 363: 'Terstond werden wij door een zestal beschaafde (behemde en bebroekte) kajakaja, met de vreugdekreten van Toe-an-Padri begroet.'

¹⁴⁸ Any girls 'obtained' by the mission (for example a girl of Chinese-Marind descent who was physically abused by her stepmother on a regular basis) were sent to live with the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart on the Kei Islands until 1928, when the first Sisters arrived in Merauke.

¹⁴⁹ Gerardus Wilhelmus Jeanson, Duisburg (Ger.) 26.9.1874 – Bojo (Ind.) 24.12.1944.

Figs. 7 & 8



boys, ranging from approximately twelve to seventeen years old, lined up in front of the main buildings of the mission station. They all wear similar, poorly made, pairs of pants. The garments are ill-fitted and have to be held up by belts. The crude pieces of clothing were probably made by the MSC Brothers, who frequently distributed clothes in the hope that people would start to wear them. The boys look unsure and do not seem to know how to present themselves, holding their arms behind their back or hanging them passively at their sides. All of them look frowningly in the direction of the camera. The difference in composure between these four and the youths depicted in images five, six, and seven is striking.

Both photograph seven and eight show Marind boys in connection to the mission, the first by 'participating' in the work of the missionaries, the others by posing in the centre point of the most concrete manifestation of the MSC in Merauke. Even though their attire is very similar, the appearance of the boys is not. The *aroi-patoer* in first photograph is portrayed sympathetically, sports a fitting pair of pants along with neck and ear ornaments. Even though boys like him were described as 'literally disfigured'¹⁵⁰ earlier, the image does not convey any sense of aversion at all. The four boys, on the other hand, look sullen and insecure in their malformed trousers. It is remarkable that in these few pictures of children in Western dress, there does not seem to be any effort made to present the children in a favourable light. The clothing looks unprofessional and by wearing just a pair of pants in comparison to the manifold colourful adornments of the other boys their age, the apprentices in the eight picture look rather naked.

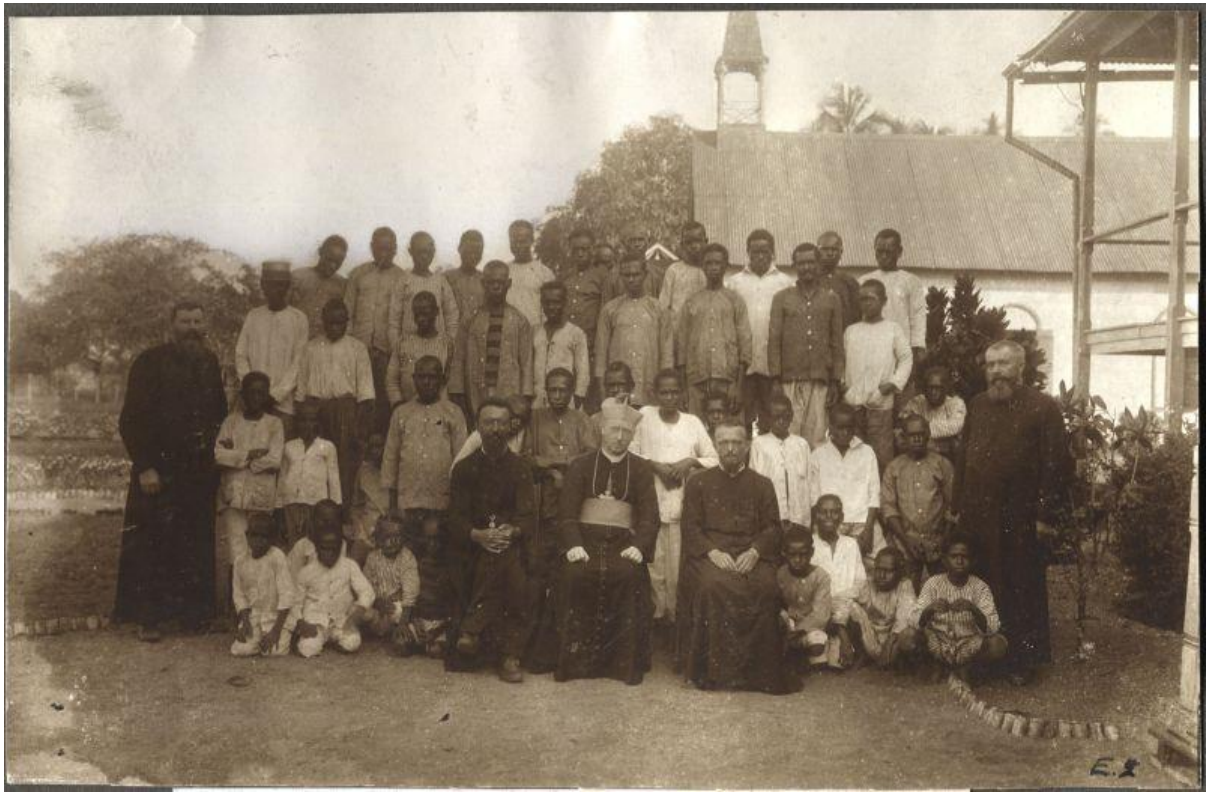
Crisis, recovery, and success: 1909-1935

It would take some years longer before the practice of wearing Western clothing became more widespread. In the 1910s, a then unknown venereal disease¹⁵¹ caused many deaths among the Marind-anim. The missionaries focused all their energies on the treatment of the sick in the small field hospital on the station. Although this led to a surge in churchgoers, it also meant that all other pastoral work, such as education, had to be abandoned. The MSC mission on Dutch New Guinea hit a low in 1915, when only Petrus Vertenten and two Brothers could remain on the island, due to the shortages caused by the Great War. The Marind-anim were decimated even further during the 1918 flu pandemic. At this time, Vertenten's call for help was picked up by influential media and led to parliamentary inquiries. The mission received a lot of governmental funding to develop and implement a 'rescue plan'. It recovered and expanded. By the early 1920s, people were returning to

¹⁵⁰ Letter quoted above, by Dion. van Roessel, 03-09-1905, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1905, 374.

¹⁵¹ In 1916 identified as *granuloma inguinale* or donovanosis.

Figs. 9 & 10



the mission and the model kampongs.¹⁵²

In this period, the mission had gained significantly more following. Many photographs from this period show Marind-anim in Western clothing, posing on the terrain of the mission or in one of the model kampongs. Especially the live-in pupils, called 'the internals'¹⁵³ by the missionaries, often feature in group photos. The ninth illustration shows such a group photo, taken on occasion of one of the first visitations of vicar apostolic Johannes Aerts in 1923. It is unknown who took the picture. The group is posing in front of the presbytery, of which the porch is just visible on the right. The church of Merauke can be seen in the background. The group consists of 42 boys and young men together with (from left to right), the missionaries A. van Hest, Vertenten, Aerts, J. van der Kooij, and J. Joosten. The man with the straw hat on the left is most probably a *goeroe*, a Catholic from the MSC mission on the Kei Islands, charged with assisting the Dutch missionaries. The age range is quite large, with the boys in the front rows and the young men in the back. All the Marind-anim wear shirts and trousers. Although the visitation was an important and official occasion, the posing is quite informal. The posture of most of the boys seems natural, with some having their arms crossed or playing with their hands. A boy on the left side of Vertenten has his hand on the leg of the boy next to him. The boy in the centre leans on the chairs of Aerts and Van der Kooij, while another is just peeking around the head of Vertenten. This casual composition contrasts slightly with the serious expression on most faces: only the boy on the right side of Van der Kooij is smiling brightly. Vertenten – whose tanned hand and face sharply contrast with Aerts's pale complexion – seems to smile as well.

Certainly not all photographs of Marind-anim in Western clothing convey such a tranquil, easy-going impression. The next image was taken around 1925 in the model kampong near Boeti, a beach village near Merauke. It depicts a woman with her two young children. In the early 1920s, many photographs were made of women in Western dress posing with their babies in the model kampongs, sometimes accompanied by triumphant comments by Vertenten: New Guinea lives again!¹⁵⁴ Births were the pride of the mission, proof that their 'plan' was working – when the venereal disease was at its worst, the birth rate in the area was almost zero. The woman in the photo has taken off all forms of Marind dress, including the hair extensions. She wears a sarong¹⁵⁵ and an unfastened blouse. The blouse is poorly kept and torn on her left shoulder. The woman glares in the

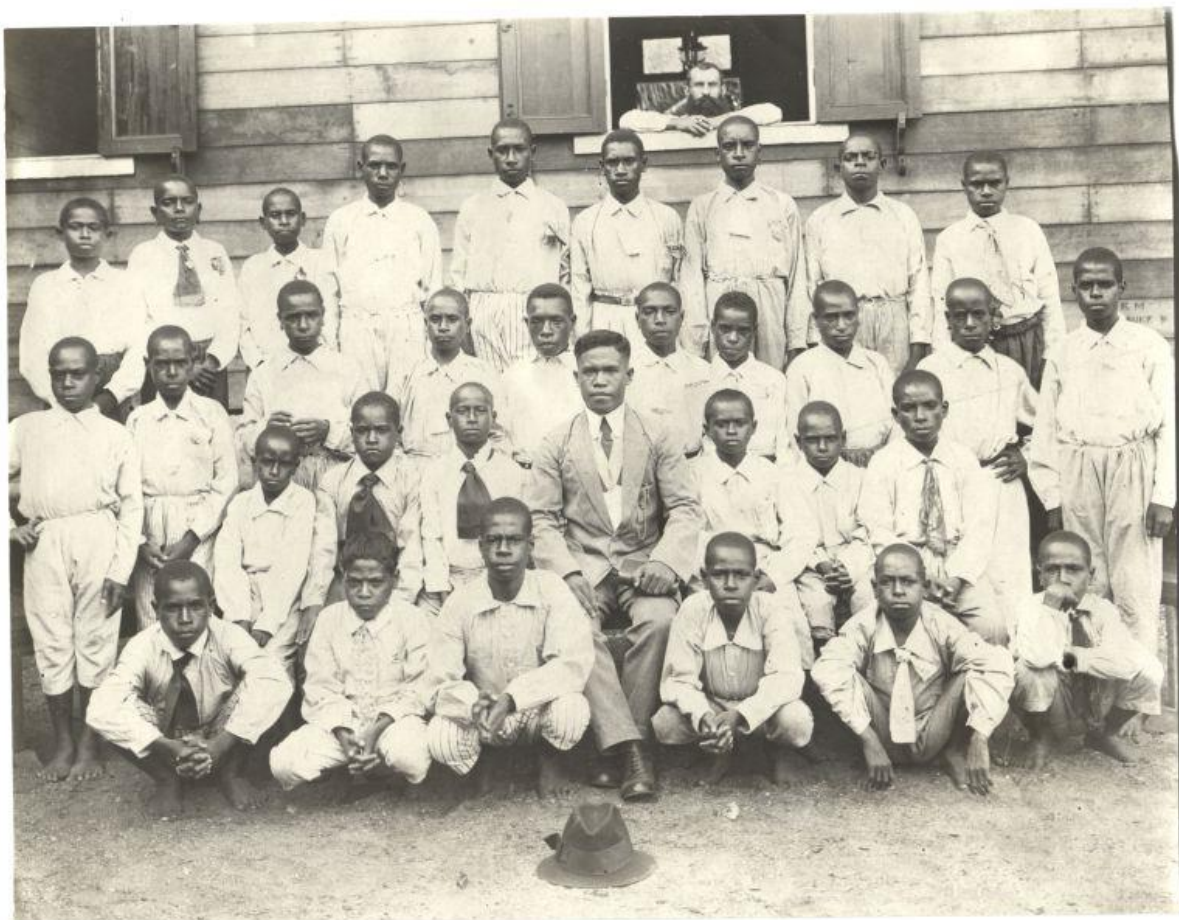
¹⁵² These model kampongs were built by the missionaries to separate the people who were more willing to live according to Christian (Western) values from the rest of the populace. The first model kampong was built in Okaba in 1913. Merauke soon followed. More of these model villages were constructed all along the coastline between 1923 and 1928.

¹⁵³ De internen.

¹⁵⁴ ENK, AR-P027 inv. no. 20210. 'N. Guiné herleeft!'

¹⁵⁵ Not exactly 'Western' clothing, but propagated by the mission as suitable clothing for the Dutch East Indies. The combination of a sarong with a blouse or European jacket was a standard attire in Java in the early twentieth century. See Ross, *Clothing*, 80.

Figs. 11 & 12



direction of the camera, looking thoroughly annoyed. She presents a basket with a baby to the camera. The child looks distressed, its face turned towards the mother. Another child, perhaps five or six years old, is sitting behind the basket. He or she looks rather miserable and appears to be dressed according to Marind customs: a small necklace can be seen. The child is covered by a large cloth, draped over the shoulders. The photograph is taken from up close and from a slightly higher stance. In the background, the backside of a man and a wooden wall are visible. The photographer was most likely either Van Hest or Vertenten.

After 1925, when the rescue plan had almost fully been implemented and Vertenten had been replaced by Nico Verhoeven, this kind of picture became less frequent. Instead, the focus shifted to the pupils. A boarding school for boys was erected on the mission station and its students were regular subjects of the photographs by Van Hest and Verhoeven in the period 1925 – 1930. The boys are captured in portrait style, posing informally in small groups, or in class pictures. Figure 11 presents a class picture. The photograph was taken by Van Hest in the beginning of 1928. The students of the boarding school and their teacher (a *goeroe* from the Kei Islands) are posing behind a building on the mission station. Verhoeven stands in the window behind the group, casually leaning on the windowsill with a cigarette in his hands. A hat lies in front of the group. Several things have changed compared to the group photo from 1923. The group is more homogenous, with the students ranging from roughly twelve to fourteen years old. The expressions and the ‘mood’ of the picture is serious: no one is smiling and there are no spontaneous poses – with the exception of Verhoeven perhaps (although he could also be standing there by design). Most noticeably, the children are better dressed. The garments are of better quality and the clothes are well-kept. All of the clothes are predominantly white, symbolising purity, which must have cost quite an effort to maintain. It must be noted that this was not their everyday garb, but the Sunday suit. The wardrobe of the pupils had expanded. The *goeroe* is still the only one to wear shoes, however.

Were all children so dressed-up in this period? Not quite. The boarding school was not the only school in Merauke and attended exclusively by children ‘given’ to the mission and children who did not belong to the Marind-anim.¹⁵⁶ Most children from the beach villages attended the kampong schools. These schools were open for boys and girls both and generally taught only in the morning, so the children were free in the afternoon.¹⁵⁷ Only the children who would show exceptional promise were sent to Merauke for additional schooling. The differences between the boarding school and the kampong schools were large. The twelfth illustration shows three girls attending the kampong school in Merauke. The picture was taken late 1926, early 1927 by Brother Van Hest in front of the school

¹⁵⁶ I.e. the children of the *goeroes* and the children from other parts of the island, such as the hinterlands.

¹⁵⁷ This was necessary primarily so the girls could help the women in the fields.

Figs. 13 & 14

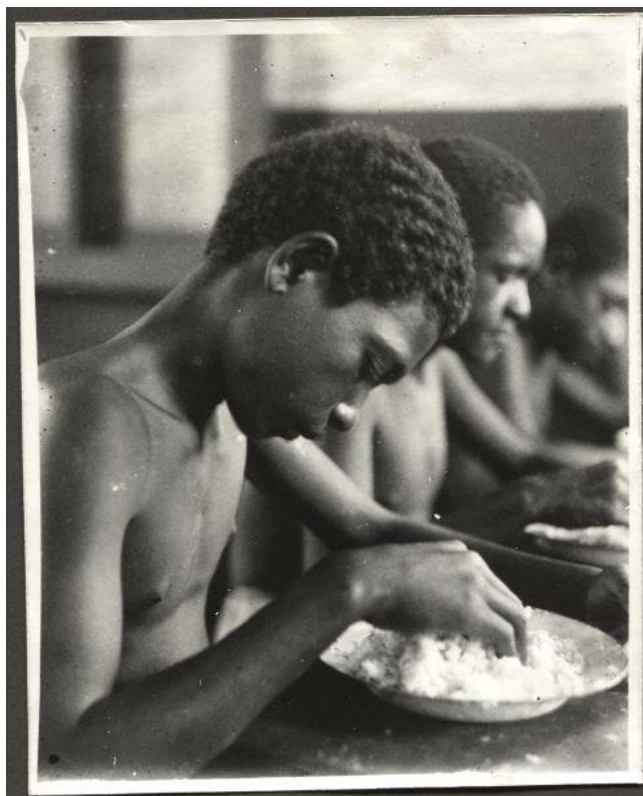
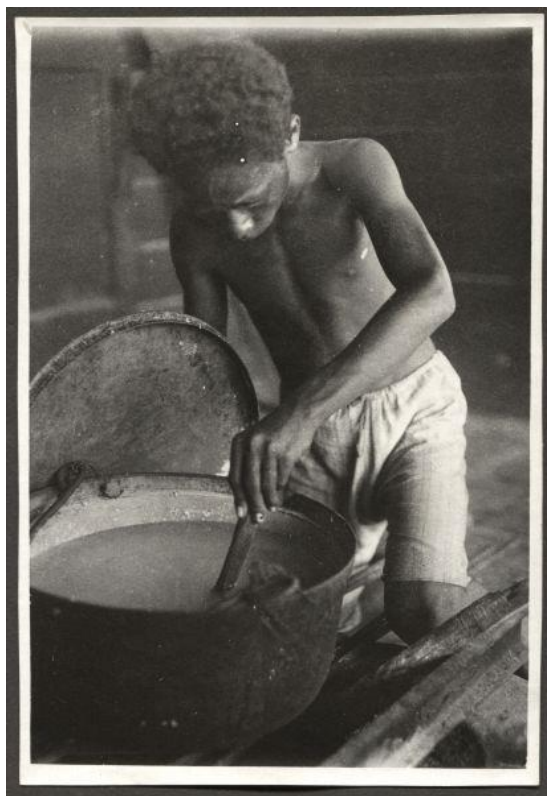


Fig. 15



building. The girls seem to be circa eleven years old. The necklaces of the two girls on the sides are typically worn by *kivasoms*. The girl in the middle wears a simpler ornament. All three appear to have their ears pierced, but do not carry anything in them. They wear sarongs around their waist. The girls are sitting close together, with their arms around each other's shoulders. All three look straight into the camera. The picture was taken from up close, with only the upper bodies of the girls inside the frame. Even though the girls are on the brink of puberty, it seems they were allowed to attend school largely in Marind dress – with the exception of the sarongs. The archive contains no group photos of the students of these kampong schools.

There are also photographs indicating that even in the boarding school, Western dress was not a priority. Figures 13 and 14 were taken around 1934, 1935, by Father Jan Verschueren in the boarding school of Merauke. The pictures show the students in supposed daily activities: helping in the kitchen and at the dinner table. The composition of the photographs seems more studied and constructed than in images from earlier periods. Unlike the previous pictures, the boys in the photographs are purposely not looking in the direction of the camera. Because the gaze of the camera is not returned, the viewer can observe the children without constraint. The feeling that the photographs show a glimpse of daily life is heightened by the absence of any all-too-obvious posing. None of the students sport any forms of Marind-anim dress. Even their ears are not pierced. Their attire seems to consist of a pair of shorts. After all the efforts to persuade the Marind-anim to wear Western clothing in the 1910s, the students of the most important school barely wear anything two decades later.

Nevertheless, dress was still imperative in signifying difference between the 'good' Catholic Marind-anim and the 'helpless', 'primitive' non-Christians. By adopting foreign forms of dress, Marind placed themselves outside of their traditional society, even receiving the name of *Marind poe-anim*, which roughly translates to 'foreign Marind-anim'.¹⁵⁸ This becomes especially visible in photographs of religious celebrations, which often feature the kneeling, clothed, Catholic masses in the centre, with the people in Marind dress looking on from a small distance. The fifteenth picture forms a striking example of a photograph following this pattern. It was taken by an unidentified photographer at an outdoor mass, part of the celebrations of the mission's 25th anniversary on south Dutch New Guinea in May 1930. The picture was taken from quite a distance, capturing both the festive altar around the Holy Heart statue and the attending crowd. The boy's boarding house is visible in the background. On the foreground, a lone child stands in the grass. The kid appears to be

¹⁵⁸ The missionaries were well aware of this and saw it as a double-edged sword, as they did not want to create discord and dependence: Geurtjens, *Oost is oost*, 35: 'Bovendien, behalve dat alle nette lui toch kleeven dragen, stelt de Kaja-kaja door 't aannemen van kleeven zich ook eenigszins buiten zijn oorspronkelijke samenleving met al haar ongere en mufte kantjes. En hij kan voorloopig nog geen enkele rem missen!'

no older than six years old and wears no clothes. His or her back is turned towards the altar and is illuminated by the rays of the sun, leaving the face shadowed. The child seems to look to the ground. Its isolated position appears to be highly symbolic: while the other people are receiving the blessing of the lord, those not willing to adapt remain 'undeveloped' or 'primitive' in the eyes of the missionaries. Children not only symbolised innocence, but also the 'status' of the Marind-anim as 'children', who had not yet 'developed' and 'matured' like their European (Caucasian) counterparts and needed a 'proper upbringing'.¹⁵⁹ The comparison between childhood and supposed primitivism is frequently found in the colonial discourse and works on several levels: it designates the 'primitive' people as both 'unknowing' and 'innocent' and appeals to the responsibility of the 'adults' to 'save' the child from 'bad' behaviour or sinfulness, but the 'childlike' state also entails that although they were 'primitive', correction and development were still possible.¹⁶⁰

Photographs by father Geurtjens, 1921-1933

It is important to keep in mind that all previous pictures were taken in Merauke, at the centre of the mission. The goals and practises of the mission work in more remote parts of the mission territory were often quite different. The most important station other than Merauke on the south coast of Netherlands New Guinea was Okaba. Okaba was situated just over a 100 kilometres from Merauke from a bird's eye view. The first MSC missionaries settled in the area in 1911, but the station had to be abandoned in 1915 due to lack of personnel. Okaba was reoccupied by Henricus Geurtjens in 1921. As part of the campaign against donovanosis, one of Geurtjens's main tasks was to ensure all children and youngsters not yet eligible for marriage in Okaba and the surrounding villages were sent to school. These village schools were managed by *goeroes* and focused primarily on instilling 'social and Christian virtues'.¹⁶¹ The MSC archive contains photographs made by Geurtjens of the opening of two of such schools: in Wambi in 1923 and in Makalin in 1924. The group photos of the students diverge significantly from those made in Merauke in the same period.

¹⁵⁹ *Almanak van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1916, 39-40: 'Doch gelijk het kind beschaafd gekleed moet worden door zijne moeder, zóó deze arme natuurvölker door den Missionaris!'; Jos. van de Kolk, *Bij de oermenschen van Nederlandsch Zuid-Nieuw-Guinea* (Sittard: Indische Missie-Vereeniging, 1919), 118: 'De menschen zijn nog echte kinderen in alles en lachen dan ook als kinderen, even luidruchtig, even goedkoop, even lang.'; Geurtjens, *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's*, 167: 'Ze hebben hier nog pret met een klein beetje; immers een kinderhand is gauw gevuld, ook al zijn 't groote kinderen'.

¹⁶⁰ Amelia Bonea, 'Discourses of Labour, Religion and Race in the *Australian Methodist Missionary Review*. The 'Indian Coolie Mission' in Fiji', in: Felicity Jensz and Hanna Acke (eds.), *Missions and Media. The Politics of Missionary Periodicals in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013), 184. See also Corbey, *Wildheid en beschaving*, 42, on the stereotype of the African as a 'large, naïve, impulsive child' in literature and nineteenth century ethnology.

¹⁶¹ Geurtjens, *Onder de Kaja-kaja's*, 17: 'Het hoofddoel toch der dezer scholen is niet den Kaja-kaja vertrouwd te maken met de kunstgrepen en foefjes van wis- en stelkunde, maar, zooals dat heet, maatschappelijke en christelijke deugden bij te brengen, of zooals onze Gezaghebber de Heer Wenting zegt: er geen geleerde koppensnellers van maken maar fatsoenlijke menschen.'

Figs. 16 & 17



Figure 16 depicts the schoolgirls of Makalin in front of the newly constructed school building. The group consists of six *wahoekoes*, standing closely together, and six *kivasoms* kneeling in front of them. Two girls hold each other's hand. The *wahoekoes* standing on the sides seem to have been instructed to turn towards each other. Most girls look frowningly in the direction of the camera. All girls wear Marind dress. When the school in Wambi was opened in 1923, people were reluctant to give up the girls and young women, who normally worked on the fields all day. In order to make the children seem older and as such too old to go to school, even the young *kivasoms* were dressed-up as *wahoekoes*. The plan did not convince Geurtjens, who described the incident as follows:

Ook kwamen er rekesten los. Waarom moesten die opgesierde meiden nog schoolsche wijsheid opdoen? Die hadden ze heelemaal niet vandoen om sago te kloppen en dat was toch haar eerste levensdoel. Ze stonden daar in al de glorie van haar fleurigen opschik en de *toean* zag toch, dat ze allemaal *wahoeki* (opgeschoten meisjes) waren. En dien opschik mochten ze ook niet meer afleggen, want, *toean*, dat is zoo onze overlevering en wij Marindineezen weten, dat het zoo blijven moet, want het staat vast: zoodra wij onze versieringen niet meer dragen, zullen onze klappers geen vruchten meer voortbrengen.

Zoo mogelijk werd aan de bezwaren tegemoet gekomen. De grootere kinderen zouden altijd, wanneer haar hulp noodig was, verlof krijgen om de school een keertje te verzuimen en niemand zou gedwongen worden zijn nationale dracht af te leggen, zelfs de namaak "huwbare meisjes" niet.¹⁶²

As such, the students of the village schools were allowed to wear Marind dress. Apparently, Western dress was not seen as a crucial factor of the 'social and Christian virtues' the government and the mission hoped to instil. As the seventeenth picture, which depicts the schoolboys of Wambi, demonstrates, this policy was the same for boys and girls. Even more so than the photograph of the girl students, this picture follows the conventions of a typical class or school picture: the pupils are positioned according to height, with two boys lying in front of the group, heads together. Most obediently look in the same direction, a point left of the camera. Two boys lying on the ground are a notable exception: both look slightly cross and have their faces turned towards the sand. It seems as if they felt rather ridiculous.

It is interesting to note that the ornaments of the Marind-anim are described by Geurtjens in terms of 'national dress' in the quotation above, which is quite a difference from the derogatory descriptions found elsewhere. Like Nollen, Geurtjens had a keen anthropological interest. As a MSC

¹⁶² Ibidem.

missionary from the first hour, working in the Apostolic Prefecture of Dutch New Guinea since it was appointed to the Dutch branch of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart on the 22nd of December 1902, Geurtjens had already performed ethnographical and linguistic research on the Kei and Tanimbar Islands. He continued his research among the Marind-anim. Geurtjens was especially interested in spiritual matters, such as the legends surrounding the *dema* deities, funeral rites, rites of passages, and ritual dances. His photographic oeuvre contains many pictures depicting scenes related to these themes.

Among these pictures, there are also ones featuring children. Figure 18 is reminiscent of Nollen's photographs. It depicts four young children, two girls and two boys, dressed-up for a ritual feast. The children are positioned in such a way that their attires are visible from all sides: of the two girls, one is facing the camera, while the other has her back turned to the lens. The same applies to the boys. The pose and expression of the children is neutral. The photograph is taken from up close and from the same height as the children.

The next photograph shows a young boy at the feast celebrating the piercing of his ears, an important rite of passage. The boy stands on top of a sago cake, which is smothering underneath bark of eucalypts and garnished with fruit and other food. The pile is surrounded by a group of people attending the festivities. A clothed man can be seen in the upper right corner. The photograph was taken from a low stance, making the boy look down on the camera. The child is truly the centre of attention.

Like in the photographs from the early days of the mission, the appearance and attire of the children is the subject of these pictures, rather than the children themselves. Despite the fact that the children might be perceived as naked, the depiction of the different forms of dress holds cultural and scientific value for the missionaries in their role as anthropologists. The photographs are not connected to the mission work. Geurtjens's photographs have even less relation to the mission than Nollen's photographs, which were taken at the mission station. Furthermore, while the photographs are similar, Geurtjens descriptions of the young Marind in the *Annalen* are quite different from those of Nollen and his contemporaries. Whereas the earlier missionaries primarily commended the children for their physical appearance,¹⁶³ Geurtjens also admires the dress of the children:

'Deze wilden hebben ontegenzeggelijk hun schoonheidsgevoel. Het moge desnoods een woeste schoonheid zijn die de hunne is, maar schoon is het. [...] De opschik der jonge meisjes is zwierig en elegant. De vaak kolossale haarverlengsels in hun verscheiden vormen staan waarlijk sierlijk. Zelfs

¹⁶³ Letter by Nollen, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1906, 13: 'De kinderen [...] het zijn zoo'n snoeperige gezichtjes! en hunne oogen kijken U aan, zonder schroom en met meer oprechtheid dan wij ooit zagen in een Kanakisch oog.'; Van de Kolk, *Bij de oermenschen*, 98: 'De kinderen der Marindineezen hebben bijna allen een lief gezichtje met regelmatige trekken, heldere vrije oogen, vluggen, lenigen gang, en een kortgehouden krulleskopje'.

Figs. 18 & 19



de olie waarvan hare bronzen lichamen glimmen, geeft haar een indruk van keurigheid en verzorgdheid, en de keurige sierblaadjes en bloemen die ze in haar bovenarmbanden dragen, steken daarbij keurig af. Heusch op afstand is het waarlijk mooi, ofschoon van dichtbij soms wel wat vies.¹⁶⁴

Tot hun twaalfde jaar ongeveer kennen de jongens geen ander sieraad dan een snoer kralen of stukjes nautilusschelp, waarvan het paarlemoer schitterdend afteekent op de donkere huid. [...] Wanneer ze eindelijk huwbaar geworden zijn, worden ze *ewatti* en dan worden ze eerst voor goed opgetuigd, en elk meisjeshart, dat onder den zwarten boezem klopt, moet wel van steen zijn, als 't niet aan 't popelen slaat bij zulk een verschijning. Op het hoofd draagt hij zwiepende vogelpennen; over den schedel een krans van paradijsvogelveeren, aan het 't haar lange aanhechtsels, waarvan 't middenstuk met bijzondere zorg versierd tot bijna op den grond afhangt. Over de borst kruisen zich fraai glinsterende banden van witte vruchtenpitjes. [...] Om het midden draagt hij nog een breeden rotangordel, die ook zoo wat de grens van den opschik aangeeft, ofschoon men verder nog wel iets meer zou kunnen wenschen.¹⁶⁵

Next to his anthropological interests, there is another passion which can be surmised from Geurtjens's photographs: people in general, particularly (young) children. Whereas his fellow missionaries mainly photographed cultural phenomena, special occasions, and the fruits of the mission work, Geurtjens's oeuvre contains an overwhelming amount of pictures depicting people. Among these pictures, a substantial majority features children. The photographs have a particular 'style', which might most aptly be signified as 'innocent'. The subjects of the photographs, which are without exception Marind in traditional dress, are often heavily orchestrated into certain positions. Young children are typically portrayed in a way which underlines their 'cuteness'. People are often smiling in the direction of the camera. Unlike the anthropological photographs depicted above, the people and children in these pictures are almost consistently positioned in such a way that their genitals remain hidden from sight (for example by posing in tall grass or by placing the hands in their laps).

Figures 20 to 23 form examples of such photographs. All were taken by Geurtjens in the period between 1925 and 1930 in the vicinity of Okaba. The first two photographs show a common trope used by Geurtjens, namely the depiction of (nuclear) families or familial relations. The Marind-anim traditionally lived divided in separate men and women's houses. It was the aim of the

¹⁶⁴ Travel impressions by Geurtjens, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1916, 282.

¹⁶⁵ Idem, 294. It must be noted that when this article was written, Geurtjens did not yet work on New Guinea, but had just returned from a visit of a few weeks.

Figs. 20, 21 (upper row); 22, 23 (lower row)



missionaries, as was implemented in the model kampongs, to form households of nuclear families. Geurtjens often captures such families with young children, sometimes even along with their pets. Figures 20 and 21 depict toddlers in the laps of probably their mother and father respectively. The child in the first picture looks puzzled in the direction of the camera, while the woman protectively holds her arms around his. She is kneeling on the beach. The man in the second photograph holds his bow in his right hand, while supporting the child with his left. The child holds one hand in front of its mouth and looks unsure in the direction of the camera. The picture was taken in front of a fence in a village. Both pictures were taken from a low stance and from up close, creating a feeling of intimacy.

Geurtjens also photographed adolescent children. Unlike the babies and toddlers, who were typically depicted as wide-eyed and gullible, older children were generally portrayed amicable. The twenty-second illustration, for example, shows three *wahoekoe* girls posing in front of a large termite hill. The girls are kneeling together, with their arms around each other's shoulders. The girl on the left seems distracted, but the two other girls smile warmly in the lens. Again, the photograph is taken from a low angle and from up close. Despite their 'exotic' appearance, the image does not depict the girls as unusual or mysterious: somehow they look very familiar, essentially no different from any other girl their age. Figures 20 to 22 all seem to have in common that what is depicted in the photographs is the relationships between the people depicted – parent-child, or bonds of friendship – rather than the people themselves as 'exotic' beings.

Finally, Figure 23 gives an example of what is meant by small children being portrayed as 'cute'. The photograph shows a toddler crouching in the grass, appearing to be drinking from a coconut, which covers the lower part of its face. The child looks in the direction of the camera. The background is out of focus. The photograph is taken from ground level and up close. Pictures like this one are clearly deliberately designed to elicit feelings of infatuation from the viewer. The child is the epitome of innocence. Perhaps the absence of the Western clothing only contributes to this image of purity – although there also lived clothed families in Okaba, the archive contains no photographs made by Geurtjens of clothed children. Seeing as genitalia were carefully obstructed from sight, it seems that Geurtjens did intend these photographs for a wider audience. If and how these pictures were used in publications will be elaborated upon in the third chapter.

It has been established that the photographic archive contains an abundance of pictures of children in Marind dress. A significant portion of these photographs can be said to have been taken for anthropological purposes, with the aim to depict and preserve cultural expressions of the Marind-anim. In these photos, the children pose in a homogenous way, with neutral expressions on their faces. Especially Nollen and Geurtjens were keen on this type of photography. Additionally, there are

also many 'casual' pictures of children in Marind dress, particularly from the first period of the mission. The children pose naturally and are smiling or sport bold expressions, showing their personalities and individuality. These photographs become less frequent after the mission achieved its first successes in the 1920s. After gaining publicity and government funding through Vertenten's 'cry for help' and 'rescue plan', the mission expanded considerably. The focus of the photography shifts to accomplishments of the mission, predominantly depicting babies in model kampongs and students of the boarding school. This was only the case, however, in the centre of the mission in Merauke. Photographs taken in Okaba in the second half of the 1920s bear very little resemblance, both in theme and style. Children were allowed to attend school in Marind dress and even though there was a clothed community of Marind-anim in Okaba, there are no pictures of Marind children in Western dress in Geurtjens's extensive oeuvre.

To conclude, it seems that the overwhelming majority of the photographs of Marind children in Western dress stems from a very limited period and area: Merauke in the 1920s. The few earlier photographs generally feature awkward and uncomfortable children in poorly made trousers, and pale in comparison to some of the beautiful and captivating pictures of confident youths in Marind dress. If anything, the pictures of children in Marind dress express a sense of admiration and appreciation, rather than disapproval or denunciation. This contradicts the message conveyed by the missionaries through the official media, which represented the children as leading their peoples towards the adoption of Western clothing, and subsequently, towards civilisation:

'De kleinen werden hier de apostelen. De jongens en meisjes van Mewi zijn de voorlopers der beschaving geweest. Op een zekeren dag waren ze allen bij ons aan huis: we hadden juist weer een bezending kleedjes uit Holland gekregen en stapelden die met een zekeren wrevel in de kleerkast op, die al goed vol zat: "goed voor 'n jaar of vijf, of tien later misschien", dacht ik. De kleinen keken wel met begeerige oogen naar die bonte kleedjes: zij wilden wel, o ja. Maar de ouders!.... Kom, dachten we, we zullen die lieven kleinen eens 'n half uur plezier gunnen: als ze thuis komen met die kleeen aan, krijgen ze een malsch standje en de kleeen gaan het vuur in, - maar dan hebben ze er toch eens plezier [sic] van gehad: en ik gun het hun liever dan aan de motten.'¹⁶⁶

The scene pictured here by Father Van de Kolk, in which the children are overjoyed with the prospect of wearing Western clothing, is very different from the image presented in the photography from the same period, in which – au contraire – the traditional Marind dress is the centre of attention.

¹⁶⁶ Letter by Jos. van de Kolk to the editorial department of "Voorhoede", *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1912, 38.

II – Circulation and Preservation

The previous chapter demonstrates how children of the Marind tribe were portrayed in missionary photography and explains under which circumstances these photographs were created. The physical act of photography as well as the imagery in the pictures were subjected to analysis. Now the material culture surrounding the actual photographs, or rather the prints of the photographs, will be explored. How were the photographs used and exhibited? This chapter examines the third site which attributes meaning to a photograph: the context in which a picture is viewed. The immediate surroundings of the pictures play a pivotal role in how the images might be perceived by the viewer. Unlike the first two sites, the third site can be constituted as a diverse multitude of contexts. This chapter analyses what might be considered the primary contexts of the photographs, namely the sites where the actual prints could (and sometimes can) be observed. First, the use of photographs by the missionaries, both in the mission and back home in lectures and exhibitions, is examined. Next, the preservation of the photographs in the archive is studied. The more secondary contexts, namely the various publications in which the pictures were reproduced, are considered in the third chapter.

Photographs as postcards and slides

As mentioned in the first chapter, the photographs were developed on New Guinea. This meant that the pictures were almost immediately available to be used by the missionaries. Unfortunately, very little is known about what happened to the developed photographs in the mission. Whether they were collected in albums, sent to Tilburg, or perhaps passed around amongst themselves first, has not been recorded in any of the printed or archival sources. However, hints about some of the possible uses of the photographs in the mission can be collected from various sources.

Perhaps the most well-known, and certainly the most used, form of propagation of colonial photography was the postcard. The improving printing technologies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century made affordable, high quality postcards widely available. Well over one billion postcards were processed through the German mail in 1906 alone.¹⁶⁷ Some of the MSC missionaries followed the practice. Various pictures in the archive were printed on postcards. Some of these have actually been sent and have entire letters written on the back. The large majority of these were written by Van Hest, who most likely attributed significantly to the composition of the photographic archive. The postcards were sent to his family in Tilburg and befriended MSCs all over the world. It is probable that Van Hest developed the photographs himself, and therefore choose which ones he

¹⁶⁷ Smalley, *Communications from the Field*, [1].

would use as postcards. Of the postcards in the archive, most focus on the mission. Many show building sites or recently erected churches and schools, sometimes accompanied by one of the missionaries. Sceneries or portraits of people were seldom used. Van Hest also developed series of postcards covering celebrations and events, such as the first processions and the substitute *dema* ceremony organised by the colonial government. Judging by the messages on the postcards, the pictures were passed along to the entire family. The following was written on a postcard depicting the start of the procession of Boeti in June 1925:

‘Merauke, 2 juli 1925. Bemind zij overal het H. Hart van Jezus. Beste Zus, Marie, Jan, Piet, Bart, en Kees, Han, Drika, Miet, Ida, en Bertha. Ook Tante Marie plus alle lieve kleine neefjes en nichtjes van geheel de familie. Ook de [...] van 't bruidspaar en alle belangstellende. Aan u allen zend ik deze kiekjes ter Inzagen om belangstelling en gebeden voor onze Kaja-kaja's te bekomen...’¹⁶⁸

Missionary postcards were produced by congregations all over the world and offered visual evidence of missionary work as well as played into the West's fascination with the distant and the exotic. The main purpose of the postcards were gaining publicity and gathering support, but the approach to this goal depended heavily on the agency producing them.¹⁶⁹ In this case, the postcards were created on a small scale by one missionary, rather than on the printing presses of the *Missiehuys* in Tilburg. Still, it is telling that Van Hest provided his friends and family at home primarily with information on the progress of the mission work, instead of images of the Marind-anim and their customs. This might have been because it was a ‘safe’ choice: as shown, the postcards were meant to be passed along freely, and were therefore not suitable for ambiguous photographs, or photographs containing nudity. Of course, it could also be that Van Hest was proud of the ‘progress’ the mission was making and wanted to show the fruits of his work to the people supporting him at home. The choice of the photographs seems to have been intended to present the viewer with a glimpse of the ‘new and improved’ New Guinea under the control of the MSC and the Dutch government.

Photographs were not just used to enthuse the people at home. Geurtjens, for example, seems to have used the pictures as an attraction for the Marind who visited his home. In his publications he sometimes relates how he showed them photographs through a stereoscope or magic lantern.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ ENK, AR-P027 inv. no. 20244, image no. 229128.

¹⁶⁹ Smalley, *Communications from the Field*, [2].

¹⁷⁰ Geurtjens, *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's*, 106. ‘En dan is daar nog de stereoscoop, waardoor ik hun allerlei opnamen laat zien uit eigen land of zelfs uit eigen dorp. ‘t Is opmerkelijk, hoe makkelijk ze de personen op de foto's herkennen. Het wonderbaarlijke is echter, dat je zoo'n plaatje vlak voor je neus zet en de menschen en dingen daarginds in de verte ziet. ‘t Is grappig hen dan met dan onzeker zwaaienden vinger in ‘t onbestemde te zien gebaren. Dat is trouwens de eenige gelegenheid, dat ze zóó wijzen; anders is voor hen de aantoonende wijs onveranderlijk: de vinger er boven

Pictures and clippings of his photographs were also used to decorate the walls and other parts of his house, such as the pendulum of this clock.¹⁷¹ Geurtjens would preferably show images of people or places known to the viewer through the stereoscope, and landscapes on the magic lantern. Four of the stereoscopic cards have remained in the archive.¹⁷² Two of them depict people dressed up as *dema* during a ritual dance on the beach near Okaba, one shows a group of six men and five children, also dressed up for a ceremony, posing on the mission station in Okaba, and another picture features Geurtjens himself posing amidst five Marind men in full dress. Rather than showing scenes relating to the mission, or showing foreign and new images, Geurtjens wanted to present familiar sights, things close to the viewer. He sometimes went as far to show mothers pictures of their dead children:

‘Zwaar leed Mandim onder deze herhaalde slagen en ik was ook innig met haar lot begaan. Van haar eerste kleintje had ik op zijn praalbedje nog een kiek genomen. Kort daarop liet ik haar ’t portretje zien, maar ze duwde ’t weg en ging zwijgend heen: de wonde was nog te versch, men moest er niet in peuteren. Nu onlangs kwam ze met een paar andere vrouwen bij me aan huis en liet ik haar ’tzelfde kiekje door de stereoscoop zien. Nu kwam ze niet uitgekeken; ze bleef almaar turen, totdat dikke tranen over haar wangen rolden.’¹⁷³

It seems Geurtjens primary motive to use the photographs was to attract people to the mission station. By using familiar scenes, he wanted to move, to amaze, and amuse people – a technique similar to the narrative structure in his books, as will be elaborated upon in the next chapter. Geurtjens believed that entertainment was a way ‘to win people’s hearts’.¹⁷⁴

After his departure from New Guinea in 1933, Geurtjens continued to make use of his slides. Back in the Netherlands, Geurtjens shared the knowledge acquired during his career of more than thirty years as a missionary with the general public. From 1933 until after the War (albeit increasingly less frequent as he grew older) Geurtjens gave hundreds of lectures, in various settings and in front of very diverse audiences. The showing of slides or *lichtbeelden* formed an important part of these lectures, and was always spelled out in large print on the announcements. Reviews in various newspapers praised the orations for their interesting subject matter and lauded Geurtjens for his

op. Daardoor komt het, dat menschen, die de prenten zien, welke de wanden mijner woonstee probeeren te verfraaien, wel eens denken: lieve grut! wat is die *Amei* toch een vuilpoes!’ [...] ‘En dan mogen ze nog een even turen door ’t roode glas van mijn fotolantaarn. Liefst laat ik ze dan naar de zee of de lucht kijken; die kleuren ’t mooist.’

¹⁷¹ Geurtjens, *Onder de Kaja-Kaja’s*, 105-106. ‘Op de plaat van den slinger heb ik een uitgeknipte kiek geplakt van een glunderend Kaja-kaja-nikkertje.’

¹⁷² ENK, AR-P027 inv. no. 20236.

¹⁷³ Geurtjens, *Onder de Kaja-Kaja’s*, 124. Mandim or Mandiem can also be seen in illustration 40.

¹⁷⁴ Geurtjens, *Onder de Kaja-Kaja’s*, 107. ‘Voor pretjes heeft de mensch het meest over [...] [e]n als hij ze niet met centen hoeft te betalen, dan geeft hij er een stukje van zijn hart voor. En om de harten der menschen te winnen, daarvoor zit te Okaba ook *Amei*.’

narrative skills and sense of humour.¹⁷⁵ They often mention how the room was packed. This image conforms with international research on missionary lantern lectures, the public appeal of which has been likened to that of 'a modern rock tour with several thousands of people attending'.¹⁷⁶ The overview, found on the next page, gives an indication of how frequent Geurtjens's lectures were and the spheres in which they might be given. The list is limited to the year 1933 and only presents a small part of Geurtjens's public appearances, but nonetheless shows how diverse both the public and the venues were. Geurtjens travelled all over the country, orating in front of anthropologists, colonialists, Indonesians, Catholics, middle- and working classes, women and youth. Slides with photographs were used in all of the lectures. Owing to his articles in national newspapers and journals, Geurtjens was already a well-known missionary figure in the (Catholic) Netherlands, and his appearances on the KRO radio made him more prominent.

Sadly, none of the slides used by Geurtjens or his fellow missionaries¹⁷⁷ from before 1950 have remained in the archive. T. Jack Thompson was the first researcher to compare the slides shown in Africa to (possible) converts with the images screened for fund-raising purposes in the land of origin.¹⁷⁸ The use of photographs in these lectures, given both in the Netherlands and abroad,¹⁷⁹ remain a thoroughly under-researched topic and could provide a 'very clear picture of the message which the mission was trying to project to its supports', as 'the magic lantern lecture was one of the most powerful means of promoting the missionary message, particularly (though not exclusively) on the home front'.¹⁸⁰

Whereas Geurtjens's talks mainly focused on his ethnographical research on the Marind-anim, there were also presentations which focused on the mission specifically: mission exhibitions. The MSC promoted their mission work on several of these exhibitions. The archive contains photographs of the MSC stands on some ten of these exhibitions.¹⁸¹ The items on display were mainly ethnographica, including a life-size 'replica' or 'bust' of a man of the Marind-anim in full attire. The paintings of the Marind people made by Petrus Vertenten also seem to have been part of the 'permanent collection' on the exhibitions. Interestingly enough, it seems like the photographs were not displayed on these occasions. In pictures of the exhibitions, photographs can be spotted on the

¹⁷⁵ Reviews inter alia in *Limburger Koerier*, 13-01-1933; *De Telegraaf* 16-03-1933; *Provinciale Overijsselsche en Zwolsche Courant*, 15-05-1933 ('zeer onderhoudend', '[v]erschillende aanwezigen werden er zoodanig door geïnteresseerd, dat zij als lid van "Oost en West" of als begunstiger der vereeniging toetraden'); *Nieuwe Tilburgsche Courant*, 10-10-1933 ('op zeer humoristische wijze', 'spr., die de luisteraars aan zijn lippen deed hangen, en zoo nu en dan deed schateren van het lachen').

¹⁷⁶ Thompson, *Light on Darkness*, 213.

¹⁷⁷ Other MSC missionaries, especially Vertenten, were known for their frequent and popular public talks as well.

¹⁷⁸ Thompson, *Light on Darkness*, 17.

¹⁷⁹ When still in the mission, both Geurtjens and Vertenten also gave presentation in other parts of the Dutch Indies, most notably Batavia.

¹⁸⁰ Thompson, *Light on Darkness*, 17.

¹⁸¹ ENK, AR-P027 inv. no. 354, 'Propagandamateriaal, 1918-1957 (met hiaten)'.

Lectures by Geurtjens in 1933

03-01-'33	KRO Radio, 22.00: 'Zuid-Nieuw-Guinea'
12-01-'33	Heerlen, Katholiek Heerlen ¹⁸²
07-02-'33	Groningen, Commissiezaal der Harmonie ¹⁸³
14-03-'33	Den Haag, Koninklijke Vereeniging Oost en West ¹⁸⁴
13-05-'33	Zwolle, Koninklijke Vereeniging Oost en West ¹⁸⁵
11-06-'33	KRO Radio, 15.25: 'Gesprek tusschen Pater Dr. B. Zuure W.P. en Pater H. Geurtjens M.S.C.'
07-10-'33	Amsterdam (Artis), Nederlandsch Nationaal Bureau voor Anthropologie, Koninklijk Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap ¹⁸⁶
09-10-'33	Tilburg, R.K. Werkliedenverbond ¹⁸⁷
October 1933	Bergen op Zoom, Koninklijke Vereeniging Oost en West ¹⁸⁸
15-10-'33	Oosterbeek, Ned. Kolonisatie-vereeniging Nieuw-Guinea ¹⁸⁹
24-10-'33	KRO Radio, 17.30: 'Zwarte bloemen en bloesems'
25-10-'33	Den Haag, Indisch restaurant Tampat Senang ¹⁹⁰
09-11-'33	Deurne, Ontwikkelingsavond van den R.K. Jongen Middenstand ¹⁹¹
20-11-'33	Eindhoven, Katholieke Kring ¹⁹²
28-11-'33	Deurne, 'voor de dames van Deurne' ¹⁹³
13-12-'33	Haarlem, Koninklijke Vereeniging Oost en West ¹⁹⁴

¹⁸² *Limburger Koerier*, 12-01-1933.

¹⁸³ *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 01-02-1933.

¹⁸⁴ *De Telegraaf*, 16-03-1933.

¹⁸⁵ *Provinciale Overijsselsche en Zwolsche Courant*, 13-05-1933.

¹⁸⁶ *De Tijd*, 04-10-1933.

¹⁸⁷ *Nieuwe Tilburgsche Courant*, 10-10-1933.

¹⁸⁸ *Bredasche Courant*, 10-10-1933.

¹⁸⁹ *Arnhemsche Courant*, 19-10-1933.

¹⁹⁰ *Het Vaderland*, 24-10-1933.

¹⁹¹ *De Zuid-Willemsvaart*, 11-11-1933.

¹⁹² *Eindhovens Dagblad*, 20-11-1933.

¹⁹³ *De Zuid-Willemsvaart*, 11-11-1933.

¹⁹⁴ *Haarlem's Dagblad*, 13-12-1933.

stands only once or twice, and in these cases all the photographs on display were portraits of the Fathers and Brothers missionaries who worked on New Guinea.¹⁹⁵

Preservation in the archive

The postcards, lantern slides lectures, and exhibitions all show how the mission provided western European countries with a window on non-Western cultures.¹⁹⁶ Unfortunately, in case of the Dutch MSC, very little source material remains of these endeavours. The representation of the Other to a larger European audience is further discussed in the next chapter on the use of photographs in publications. First, the preservation and organisation of the images in the archive of the congregation are discussed. What do the arrangement and contents of the photographic archive say about the meaning of the photographs in the eyes of the missionaries? In order to answer this question, several aspects will be taken into consideration. First of all, the albums and other containers in which the pictures are collected are examined, and, if possible, who made them and when they were made will be determined. Another important factor is formed by captions and other kinds of textual context. Furthermore, the amount of prints of the same photograph in the collection will be considered. Whether the photographs were edited or censored in any way is a final point of concern.

What remains of the photographs taken by the MSCs on the south coast of Dutch New Guinea rests mainly in seven separate inventory numbers in the archive of the Dutch branch of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. The collection consists of four albums and three other containers. The first two albums, inventory numbers 20152 and 20153, mainly contain photographs made by Nollen between 1906 and 1909. The albums are titled '*Nieuw Guinea 1905-1922. Oorspronkelijke bewoners van de Zuidkust van Nieuw Guinea rond 1910 Plus enige andere foto's*' and '*Marind N. Guinea 1910-1923. Oorspronkelijke bewoners van de zuid kust van Nieuw Guinea, de Marind stam rond 1910*' respectively. The first album consists of roughly sixty photographs, the second around ninety. It is most likely that the second album was composed by Nico Verhoeven, as his signature can be found on the flyleaf. The albums are similar in both content and style, almost exclusively containing pictures of Marind-anim posing on the mission grounds or occasionally a beach village, accompanied by plain captions simply stating 'Marind man', 'Marind girls' etc. Most of the prints are in good shape and all are approximately the same size. Apart from oval frames which have been added to a few pictures in album 20153, the photographs do not have been edited or censored in any way. Although the albums do not present a linear narrative in themselves, they can be understood as part of a larger narrative concerning the mission on Dutch New Guinea. As the word

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Smalley, *Communications from the Field*, [4].

oorspronkelijk in both titles indicates, the topic of the albums is the original situation on the island – the situation before the coming of the missionaries. The two albums present how it was before the mission, and can be understood as the background against which the missionary movement started its work. When considering the collection as a whole, these early albums can be read as offering a significant contrast to albums concerning later periods. This seems more likely considering that Verhoeven was involved in at least one of the photographs, who was active in Merauke when things had already changed considerably. The captions accompanying the photographs also strengthen the assumption that the two albums should primarily be understood ‘before’ collections to later missionary ‘success’. If the albums had been composed out of reasons like anthropological or historical interest, the captions would most likely have contained more information than just the sex of the people depicted. Instead, descriptions of the dress, habits, and lifestyle of the Marind-anim would presumably have been included.

20152 and 20153 form an exception in terms of their good condition and the consistency in theme. The album found under inventory number 20244, with over 200 pictures the biggest one in the collection, is in very rough shape. Its cover has been torn off and some pages have come loose. The pictures in this album seem to have been collected from a multitude of sources, as the prints are of many different sizes. Furthermore, the album also contains post cards and even a few pictures which have been cut out from magazines. The photo album was most likely put together by a missionary who had worked on the south coast of New Guinea himself, judging by the many elaborate descriptions found in the album, detailing the occasions on which the pictures were taken and the names of the people and places in the photographs. However, there are also sections of the album where the descriptions are minimal, incorrect, or completely absent. Unlike 20152 and 20153, the album has no clear theme, but contains a wide range of pictures from the period 1920-1930, depicting inter alia the missionaries, mission buildings, school photos, Marind villages, and both Catholic and Marind rituals. In this sense, inventory number 20210 is very similar. Although not an album, 20210 is formed by three archival boxes containing unbound ‘album pages’, together holding almost 850 photographs. It seems this was intended as the official photo archive: the first page contains an overview titled ‘*fotoarchie*’, providing an overview of how the photographs were divided in subdivisions according to a) region, b) theme (either missionaries, mission work, country and peoples, or travel photos), and c) specification of the theme (i.e. mission work could be further specified in ‘schools’). Each page has a corresponding code signifying its subdivision in the upper left corner. On the back of the page is a label, meant for a short description of the photographs. These have been filled in for roughly 60 per cent of the pictures. Judging by the handwriting, this part of the collection was probably compiled and described by Brother Adrianus van Hest. Like 20244, inventory number 20210 consists of different collections put together. Many of the photographs contain glue

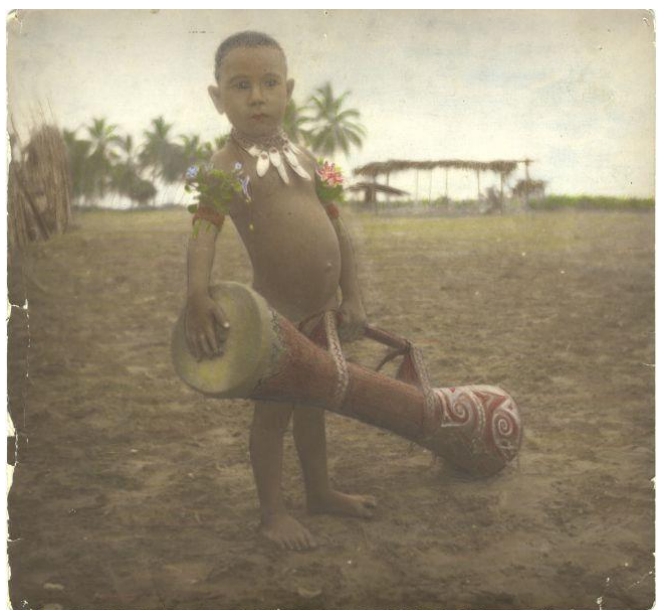
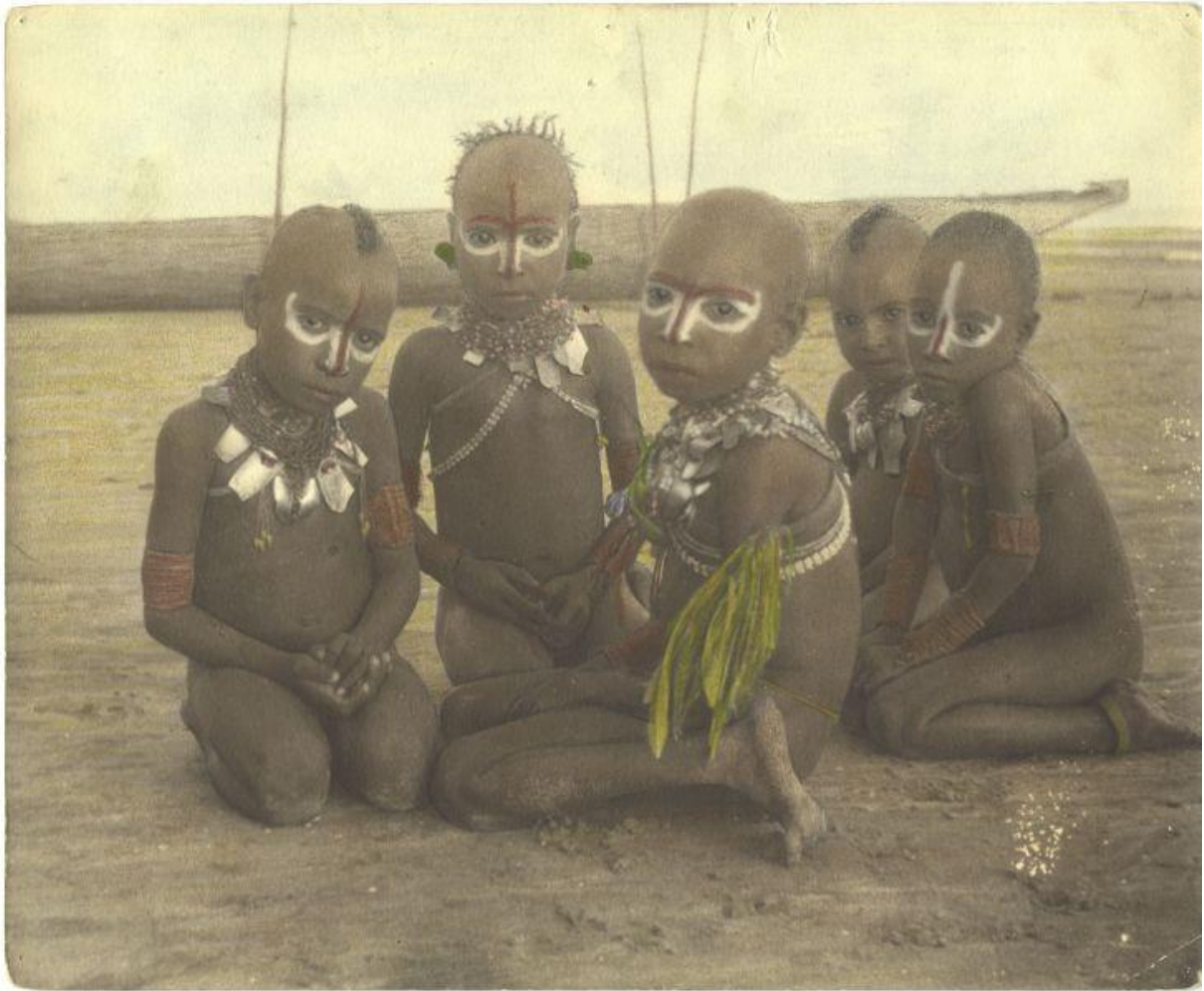
residue and are slightly torn, indicating that they have been removed from other albums. Additionally, the prints are in different shapes and on different material. Photographs made by Geurtjens, for example, are easily recognisable due to their square form and glossy paper. 20210 also contains many photographs sent as postcards by Van Hest to friends and family, often with elaborate messages written on the back. Since most, if not all, of the pictures have been taken from older sources, the prints are often not in good shape. Some have been cropped or edited. Photographs from different time periods (spanning the period between 1906 and approximately 1935) and different areas follow each other in disorderly manner. Since 20210 and 20244 consist of so many different parts, it is hard to discern a consistent or comprehensive narrative in the two holders. If anything, it seems that the reader was presented with an extensive overview of the mission before 1940, telling multiple stories focusing on different regions, different periods of time, various missionaries, and various aspects of the life of the Marind-anim.

The three other inventory numbers do not contain comprehensive collections, but rather selections of photographs, assembled for a specific purpose. These are especially interesting, as they offer some insight as to which photographs the missionaries found most precious or representative of the mission. Inventory number 20243, for example, consists of five envelopes containing enlarged and hand-coloured prints of forty-three photographs. The colouring was done by Petrus Vertenten. It is unknown if the prints were ever put on display or used for any other purpose. All of the photographs depict Marind in traditional dress and other elements of Marind culture. The images have not been censored, although in some instances the pictures of young men have been cropped to the hips. The selection is interesting: thirty-seven of the pictures were taken by Geurtjens, and fourteen depicted young children.¹⁹⁷ About half the photographs of the children can be classified as the type of 'cute' photography mentioned in the previous chapter. Figures 24, 25, and 26, found below, form examples of these coloured prints. They show the children in Marind dress with innocent expressions on their faces. The children are positioned in such a manner that the genitals are carefully kept out of view. The photographs were taken from up close and from a low stance, preferably from a lower level than the children. The selection of the hand-coloured pictures indicates an aesthetic appreciation of the children in Marind dress.

Like in the early albums 20152 and 20153, the focus of the selection is not the mission, but cultural expressions of the Marind-anim, especially dress. However, whereas the earlier albums seem to have been composed mainly as a contrasting, historical overview of the situation before the arrival of the mission, these images serve a different purpose. These photographs were selected for the long and intricate process of colouring the pictures by hand. It is telling that all of these photographs

¹⁹⁷ Amongst others illustration 4 of the previous chapter.

Figs. 24 (upper row), 25, 26 (lower row)



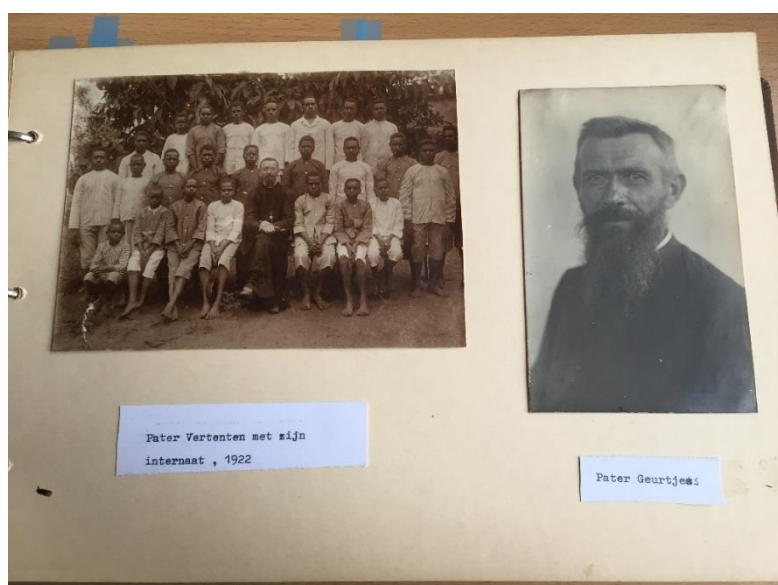
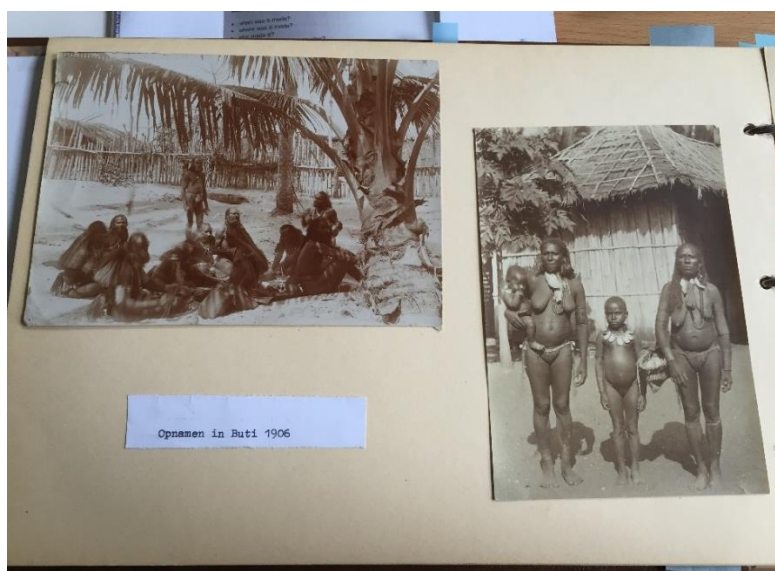
depict men, women, and children in Marind dress. These pictures were probably meant to capture the colours used in the various elements of the Marind attire and attributes, which were lost in the black-and-white photographs. They can be understood as an addition to the various ethnological and anthropological studies of the MSC missionaries. However, that is not all. The photographs were also chosen for their beauty and allure. If the goal was purely anthropological, the 'neutral' photographs made by Nollen would have sufficed. Instead, the overwhelming majority was made by Geurtjens, including several of his photographs of young children. The images were not meant to simply show the appearance of the Marind-anim, but convey its attraction and charm as well.

The final two inventory numbers were put together at least several decades after the Second World War and consist of a ring binder and an album. The ring binder, inventory number 20172, contains several enlarged (and therefore new prints) pictures of the mission, seven of which stem from the period under research. All seven depict Marind in traditional dress, two feature children. Most of the captions accompanying the photographs contain words as '*vroeger*', '*oude tijd*', or '*heidensch*', emphasizing the fact that the appearances of the people in pictures are obsolete. Inventory number 20297 is an album made in 2006 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the mission by mgr. J. Duivenvoorde, who was archbishop of Merauke from 1972 until his retirement in 2004. The album contains some thirty-five photos from the period under research, only four of which feature children. Out of these four, three show the children in Marind dress. Figures 27, 28, and 29 offer some examples of the photographs of children selected in this album: a group of *wokravid* and an *aroi-patoer* posing behind the mission station, two women and a girl posing with a baby on the mission station (both taken by Nollen between 1906 and 1908), and a group photo of a smiling Vertenten and students of the boarding school (unknown photographer).

Both 20172 and 20297 feature a clear linear narrative. While 20172 most explicitly contrasts the 'heathens' in the photographs with their later Catholic counterparts, 20297 is the only album which presents a narrative in chronological order. While the story does not necessarily highlight mission 'success' – the older photographs are described in very neutral terms – it does focus on the changes throughout the history of the mission on Dutch New Guinea. There are relatively few pictures unrelated to the missionaries and the mission work. The album ends with photographs depicting the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the mission in Merauke and Boeti in 2005.

What can be concluded from the contents and organisation of the photographic archive? First of all, it must be noted that every photograph in the collection has withstood the test of time. As the archive was maintained and moved around in the past century, several albums were disposed of. All photographs which remain today were considered valuable enough for preservation. However, it seems that some are valued over others. Interestingly enough, these are not the photographs with a

Figs. 27, 28, 29



clear relation to the mission, but rather those which depict the cultural expressions of the Marind-anim as they were before the colonial domination put its mark on the area. The two albums dedicated to this period are in the best shape. The prints seem to have been developed to put in the albums, whereas the majority of the pictures in the other containers seems to have been collected from various other sources. All containers were composed at some point in time at least a decade after the photographs were originally taken. None of the holders was put together exclusively by the photographers themselves, although some of the captions were written by the respective photographers. The captions in the albums are generally purely descriptive and quite plain – however, the Marind are seldom mentioned by name, and often represent a large part of the population (i.e. the elderly women, the *kivasoms*, the inhabitants of *Wendoe* etc.).

On the other hand, photographs of the Marind-anim from before the colonial domination do not serve clear purpose. With the exception of the coloured pictures in inventory number 20243, the albums with the early photographs are not presented as an ethnographical or anthropological collection. Rather they seem to present a historical glimpse on the Marind-anim before the arrival of the Dutch government and the Catholic mission. The albums and containers put together in later periods focus more explicitly on the missionary movement.

Photographs of children make up for a large part of the collection. Approximately 45 of the 150 photographs in 20152 and 20153 depict children – around thirty per cent. These all concern children in Marind dress. In those inventory numbers which hold a specific selection of photographs (20243, 20172, 20297), pictures of children in traditional attire are favoured over children in Western clothing as well. In fact, out of the three, only 20297 contains a photograph featuring clothed children (Fig. 29). Especially the fact that quite a few pictures of children in Marind dress were hand-coloured by Vertenten, which was a laborious process, gives a clear indication that these photographs were thought of as precious and worthwhile.

Another sign that a photograph was ‘popular’ can be provided by the number of times it occurs in the archive. Virtually all photographs from period 1906-1909 can be found at least two, occasionally even three times in the collection – except the already scarce pictures of children wearing Western clothing.¹⁹⁸ The pictures from later periods are rarer. While it is not uncommon to encounter photographs of important occasions, places, buildings, or groups twice, it is exceptional to find a portrait of a Marind in Western clothing more than once. Pictures taken by Geurtjens are generally found relatively little, but there are a few exceptions. Overall, there are only a few photographs which appear more than three times, and none that appear as often as five times.

¹⁹⁸ The three photos depicting children in some form of Western dress dated before 1910 (photos 228318 and 228628 in inventory number 20210, and photo 229208 in inv. no. 20244) all occur only once.

Figs. 30, 31 (upper row), 32 (lower row)



Among the pictures of which four different prints are present in the archive, quite a few portray children. Some examples can be found above. The first example is a photograph of three girls or *wahoekoes*, approximately fourteen years old, posing on the mission station in Merauke (Fig. 30). The photograph was taken by Nollen between 1906 and 1908. The girls look very tense and are standing stiff, arms at their sides. Their steady gazes are fixed on the lens of the camera. To quote Michael Taussig, '[i]t does not take much imagination to think of them as very much "on view"'.¹⁹⁹ Four different prints remain in the archive²⁰⁰ – one of which is a close-up of their upper bodies and has been cropped up to hip level – as well as three pictures of the back of the same group of girls.²⁰¹

As already indicated, the anthropological photographs from the first years of the mission were apparently highly valued. Although this is not the only one, photographs of young *wahoekoes* were fairly uncommon, which might explain the rate of recurrence of this particular picture in the archive. However, it is not just the anthropological photographs with neutral poses which occur often. Figure 32, for example, seems to have been equally popular, as there are (at least) four prints still in existence.²⁰² The photograph shows two boys of the *patoer* age class, about eleven years old, posing confidently, almost brazenly, in front of a piece of foliage on the mission station in Merauke. The presbytery can be seen in the background. The boys hold their hands behind their back and glare in the direction of the camera. The boy on the right holds his chin high in the air, perhaps to show off his pierced ears. The picture was presumably taken by Nollen around 1908. Although the photograph catches the eye and is full of character, the somewhat menacing look of the two boys makes it not very suited for propagandistic means, nor for underlining the supposed innocence of the children. Yet it was popular enough to appear in the archive in four different containers.

Photographs which do portray children in an 'innocent' light, however, seem to have been equally popular. Of Figure 31, taken by Geurtjens in the late 1920s, are also four different prints available.²⁰³ Another typical example of Geurtjens's photography of young children, the picture depicts a small toddler, focused on the camera. The child is sitting half up in front of a mission building. In addition to his Marind necklace, he wears a baptismal medallion.

All other photographs of which four copies are present in the collection were either made in the first period by Nollen, or by Geurtjens in Okaba. All show people of the Marind tribe in traditional dress and ornaments. As shown above, a fair amount of pictures of children is included. The absence of (Western) clothing, or nudity in eyes of the missionaries, does not seem to have been of influence

¹⁹⁹ Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity*, 186.

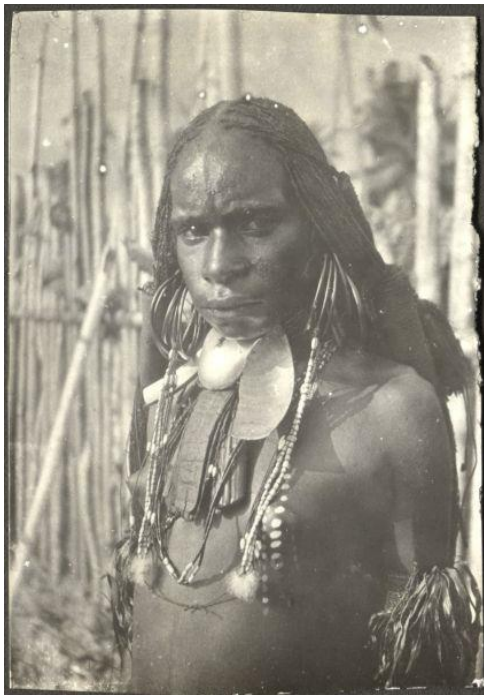
²⁰⁰ Pictures 228024 in inv. no. 20152, 228142 in inv. no. 20153 (close-up of the upper bodies), 228603 and 228715 in inv. no. 20210.

²⁰¹ Pictures 228023 in inv. no. 20152, 228154 in inv. no. 20153, and 228714 in inv. no. 20210.

²⁰² Pictures 228086 in inv. no. 20153, 228157 in inv. no. 20172 (enlarged, relatively new print), 228734 in inv. no. 20210, and 229245 in inv. no. 20244.

²⁰³ Pictures 228503 and 228861 in inv. no. 20210, and pictures 229014 and 229019 in inv. no. 20243.

Figs. 33, 34 (upper row), 35 (lower row)



when it comes to preservation in the archive. However, there are also photographs in the archive which indicate that the nudity was at times problematic. The archive contains nine pictures which clearly have been 'censored' in one way or another. As will be elaborated upon in the next chapter, censoring in publications was not uncommon. Editing the photograph itself with pen or similar instrument, as happened in these nine instances, was rare, judging from the other pictures in the collection.

One of the censored photographs was almost certainly not made by one of the MSC missionaries. It features well-known Italian aviator Francesco de Pinedo and his mechanic Ernesto Campanelli, posing with some men of the Marind-anim in front of the army barracks during their stop in Merauke on the 28th of August 1925. With the use of blue ink, something resembling a pair of briefs has been drawn on the three Marind men most prominent in the photograph. A message on the back indicates that the photograph was most likely sent to Jos Festraets msc in Borgerhout-Antwerpen, with the note to 'retouch what is necessary yourself'.²⁰⁴ It is unclear how the photograph ended up in the archive of the Dutch branch of the MSC. In comparison to this rigorous censoring, the alterations made to the photographs of the missionaries are less extensive. Five of the eight edited pictures depict children. Three examples can be found in Figures 33 to 35.

The selection of the photographs and the consequent editing is peculiar; it seems as if the pictures either did not contain prominent nudity to begin with, or the censoring is hardly thorough. Figure 33, for example, shows a photograph of a young *wahoekoe* posing at the edge of a beach village. Little is known about the origins of the photograph, but it was presumably taken in the early 1920s in a village near Merauke. A white substance has been used to carefully form dots over the breast of the young woman. It has been made to look as if it was part of the necklace. The censoring is hardly conclusive, however, seeing as large parts of the breast remain visible. This is the only photograph of which most likely the negative was manipulated, as the print shown in illustration 33 can be found twice in the archive.

In case of Figures 34 and 35, parts of the pictures have been scratched by pen. Interestingly enough, these photographs hardly contained any nudity to begin with. Figure 34 is a photo of the house of Father J. van der Kooij in the village of Jobar around 1914. The builders, workmen from the Kei Islands, are having a meal on the porch, surrounded by dogs and some Marind boys. The photograph was taken from some distance and even though the people are hardly visible on the small print, someone has drawn something resembling shorts on the boys. The next illustration shows the pupils of the boarding school playing around in the ocean, probably in the vicinity of Merauke in the early 1920s. Some of the boys wear shorts or a shirt, others do not. Some small

²⁰⁴ 'Retoucheer zelf maar wat noodig is', ENK AR-P027, inv. no. 20210 (photograph 228421).

traces of pen can be seen on the boy on the left side of the picture, who stands with the right side of his body turned towards the camera. What is striking about these two pictures, is that it seems as if not the nudity itself, which would have hardly been visible anyhow, but rather the suggestion of nudity is problematic.

All in all, it is safe to conclude that there is virtually no censoring in the photographic archive. Only nine out of almost 1300 photographs show clear traces of manipulation, which constitutes as less than one per cent. Furthermore, organisation and contents of the collections in the archive have served to determine which photographs were – and are – most valued. Photos from the first period are held in special regard, and in terms of preservation at least, favoured over pictures which depict scenes with a stronger connection to the mission. Both in the collection in its entirety and in special selections of photographs, pictures of people in traditional attire are preferred to pictures which show colonial influence. Children are primarily represented in Marind dress. However, when looking at the narratives presented in the various albums and containers, the emphasis is on the story of the change and implied progress. With a few exceptions, the dominant narrative is that of the supposedly obsolete, 'before' situation versus the situation under the influence of the missionaries.

III – Publication

In the previous chapter, the use and treatment of photographs depicting Marind children in ‘primary’ contexts were explored. These primary contexts included both the use of the photographs by the missionaries themselves, for example as a means to establish contact with the Marind-anim or in lectures and exhibitions in the Netherlands, as well as the archival context and albums in which the photographs were preserved. This chapter examines a more ‘secondary’, but very significant context in which a considerable amount of photographs appeared: as illustration in printed media. Earlier research has shown how the photographs made by the MSCs on New Guinea can be found in a wide variety of printed media, including the MSC journals, missionary journals by other congregations, newspapers, books and articles by the missionaries, publications by other groups and people involved with Dutch New Guinea, and secondary literature on the MSC mission.²⁰⁵ In accordance with the scope and scale of this thesis, however, only the publications of the congregation and the individual missionaries are taken into account here. First, the use of pictures of children of the Marind-anim in the official MSC mission journals, *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* and *Almanak of O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart*, are considered. After that, the publications of three missionaries are analysed: Henricus Nollen, Jos van de Kolk, and Henricus Geurtjens.

The *Annalen*

The *Annalen van Onze Lieve Vrouw van het Heilig Hart* was published by the *Missiehuis* in Tilburg from 1886 to 1956. It began as a biweekly publication, turning into a monthly journal after 1917.²⁰⁶ While the editions also contained some general religious articles and stories, monthly novena, and general news concerning the congregation, the focus of the journal was primarily on the proceedings of the various MSC missions from 1900 onwards. Like many other missionary journals, its function ‘was multifaceted being utilised to influence the readership, to conjure support for missions, to construct images of the foreign ‘other’, and to help legitimise the missionary endeavour’.²⁰⁷ For this purpose, several forms of media were incorporated, such as reports, letters, articles, texts of missionary lectures, fictional stories, copies of sketches, and photographs. From 1905 onwards, articles and letters concerning the mission on the south coast of Dutch New Guinea were published. Although clearly edited to suit a large, Catholic readership, most of the pieces contain a lot of details

²⁰⁵ Reichgelt, ‘Capturing the Marind-anim’. See also the list in the appendix.

²⁰⁶ See also Vefie Poels and Zjuul van den Elsen (eds.), *Bibliografie van katholieke Nederlandse periodieken. Deel. 3: Godsdienstig en kerkelijk leven* (Nijmegen: Valkhof Pers, 2012), 69-70.

²⁰⁷ Felicity Jensz and Hanna Acke, ‘Introduction’, in: Felicity Jensz and Hanna Acke (eds.), *Missions and Media. The Politics of Missionary Periodicals in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013), 9.

and give some insight in the ethnological and linguistic research of the missionaries.²⁰⁸ It is hard to say, however, how much of the text was edited, changed or rewritten by the editors of the journals.²⁰⁹ Still, despite their propagandistic function, missionary periodicals provided some of the most detailed and ‘richest information about foreign people and lands’.²¹⁰ Like most other media, the journals had the double function of both informing and influencing its readership.²¹¹

The first photographs appeared in 1907 and soon became a significant feature of the journal. In the first period, 1907-1910, some 75 pictures of the mission on New Guinea appeared in the *Annalen*. The pictures were often quite large, occupying anything between a quarter page and half a page. In general, the illustrations bear little to no relation to the text. Almost half of the illustrations in the first period depict ‘views’ of the island, such as views on Merauke, the villages, and the flora. Of the remaining illustrations, twelve are related to the mission, six show ethnographica, twelve portray adults of the Marind-anim (among which one picture of a couple in Western dress), and twelve depict children. So, while pictures of children were not overrepresented, they still made up almost twenty per cent of the illustrations in the *Annalen* between 1907 and 1910.

Of these twelve pictures, eight depict children in Marind dress. The photographs are always cropped, showing only the upper body of the children. The primary motivation behind publishing the photographs seems to have been to illustrate the appearance of the children. There is never referred to the illustrations in the accompanying articles – in that sense, the photographs of the Marind children and adults might have served a similar function as the images of the views on the island, being part of the ‘landscape’ surrounding the missionaries. Many of the captions accompanying the photographs comment on the dress and ornaments of the children,²¹² while others simply read ‘Kaia-Kaia-jongens’. Names or any other personal details are never mentioned. Even though the focus seems to lie on the appearance of the Marind children, the photographs taken in a distinctly ‘anthropological’ style are seldom used. Instead, pictures of children smiling seem to have been

²⁰⁸ Van Baal had to following to say on the journal: ‘The earlier volumes, however, contain many useful details. The anecdotal approach, so sadly lacking in Wirz’s monograph, is richly represented in these short stories and travels. They have details which cannot be found anywhere else and, since there is such a great number of them, together they constitute an invaluable supplement to Wirz’s monograph. Among the earlier contributors were Fathers Nollen and Cappers, but the most prolific writers were Vertenten, Van de Kolk and Geurtjens.’ Van Baal, *Dema*, 7.

²⁰⁹ Felicity Jensz has written on how the editors of many missionary societies reshaped and rephrased the accounts of the missionaries, even up to the point where the writings were ‘at odds with the lived experiences of the missionaries’. See: Felicity Jensz, ‘Diverging Reports of European Politics and Imperial Aspirations in the *Periodical Accounts* and in the *Missions-Blatt*’, in: Felicity Jensz and Hanna Acke (eds.), *Missions and Media. The Politics of Missionary Periodicals in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013), 48-49.

²¹⁰ Jensz and Acke, ‘Introduction’, 12.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² For example: ‘Kaia-Kaia-jongetjes, versierd met bamboe-stokjes in de oorlellen en schelpen en kraaltjes om den hals’; ‘Kinderen van Z.N.-Guinea met gevefd gelaat. – Zij schilderen zich allerlei figuren op het gezicht met witte, roode of zwarte verf’; ‘Beschilderde kinderen van Ned. Zuid-Nieuw-Guinea’; ‘Vier Kaia-Kaia dames met mooi afhangend hoofdhaar’.

Figs. 36, 37, 38



favoured. Figures 36 and 37 show two of the pictures from the *Annalen* of 1909 and 1910 respectively. The first is a picture of a smiling *aroi-patoer* from the shoulders up, captioned ‘Een jongen (*aroi patoer*) uit Merauke (N.G), met oor- en halsversierselen’. The background has been removed.²¹³ A decorated frame give the picture an ‘exotic’ feeling – the exotic sells, and the journal was intended for a large readership.²¹⁴ The second shows a group of five *patoer* boys posing on the terrain of the mission station (Fig. 37). Although neatly lined up, their facial expressions and poses are somewhat bold, especially of the two boys on the right. The caption reads ‘Een groep Kaia-Kaia-jongens van Merauke’.

Three of the photographs feature girls in Marind dress: two depict *kivasoms* (one of which is the same photograph as shown in Fig. 4 of this thesis, cropped from the waist downwards) and one shows the back sides of four young *wahoekoes*. The captions accompanying these photographs, however, obstruct the fact that the pictures depict girls. As opposed to the captions of pictures of the boys, which all identify the children as either ‘boys’ or ‘little boys’, the *kivasoms* are described with the gender-neutral ‘children’.²¹⁵ The caption accompanying the picture of the *wahoekoes*, on the other hand, identifies them as ‘ladies’ (‘dames’),²¹⁶ even though the girls depicted are around thirteen years old. Apparently, while the images in themselves were not unsuitable for publication, the information that it were in fact girls in the pictures, was considered too sensitive for the reader.

Four illustrations feature children in Western clothing. The children are all boys. In one of these, it is unclear whether the boy was Marind or an assistant sent from the Kei Islands. The caption reads ‘Een weg in een kokoswoud te Novari Holl. N.-Guin.’, not even mentioning the boy. Since whether or not the child was Marind is crucial for the analysis (and the fact that he is not specifically identified as a clothed Marind boy in the caption makes it more likely he came from Kei), this picture will not be taken into consideration. The three other pictures all show the children in a distinctly ‘missionary’ context. One of these pictures is the same as the one found in Figure 7 of this thesis. It is printed in its entirety, without any modifications. The caption reads ‘Br. Jeanson en zijn zwarte smidsgast’.²¹⁷ The boy is not ‘Marind’, but set apart as ‘black’ – a word rarely used by the MSCs to describe the Marind-anim. The *aroi-patoer* is taken so much out of the ‘Marind’ context, that even in the caption he is no longer identified as Marind. The Dutch word for black smith's apprentice, *smidsgast*, could have had a double meaning: *gast* also means guest. By denoting the boy as a guest, the metropole-periphery trope is reinforced. He was the guest of Brother Jeanson and the other

²¹³ The original photograph, found in ENK AR-P027, inv. no. 20153, shows the boy posing in the garden of the mission station in Merauke with another *aroi-patoer* and an adult man.

²¹⁴ Jenz and Acke, ‘Introduction’, 10.

²¹⁵ *Annalen* 1910, 54 and 342.

²¹⁶ *Annalen* 1910, 359.

²¹⁷ *Annalen* 1908, 362.

missionaries, but to the reader he might also have been a 'guest' at an enclave of civilization in primitive land. In the first chapter, the mission station as heterotopia or an in-between space which functioned as a sort of contact zone or point of exchange was discussed.²¹⁸ Even though it was argued there that the photographs of the children on the mission station could be seen as transforming the place into a cross-cultural zone, quite the opposite happens in the *Annalen*. By denoting the boy as a guest, the metropole-periphery trope is reinforced. This narrative underlines the sanctity of the mission station and the binary opposition between its inhabitants and the 'black' people from the surrounding 'dark', uncivilised periphery.

The two other illustrations depict children fully dressed in Western clothing. One of these illustrations can be found in Figure 38. The picture shows Brother Joosten and five young men working in the garden. They are posing with a wheelbarrow, spades in hand. The picture is accompanied by the following caption: 'Eenige Kaia-Kaia-jongens, werkend met Br. Joosten in den tuin. Dat die wilde natuurkinderen reeds willen werken, bewijst dat wij vorderingen maken onder de laaggezonken bevolking van N.G.'. ²¹⁹ In this case, the illustration is – quite literally – used as proof of the progress that the mission is supposedly making in 'civilising' the population which has 'sunken low'. Presumably not all of the young men are Marind: especially the first and fourth from the left look more Moluccan than Papuan. The third boy still wears Marind ornaments on his upper body, but it is unclear whether he wears a pair of pants, as his lower body is obstructed from view. The facial expression of the people in the photograph is serious and the poses look rather rigid.

Two things are striking when comparing the pictures of children in Marind dress to the pictures of children in Western dress. First of all, whereas all the other pictures can still be found in the archive, the two photographs of Marind children entirely dressed in Western clothing have not survived in the archive. This might be a coincidence, but it could also be sign that the photographs were 'valued' less or lesser prints were made. Secondly, it seems as if the caption accompanying the photograph of children in Western dress was more negative and prejudiced than those describing children in Marind dress. The boys are described as 'those wild children of nature', even though they are posing in a more collected and less childlike manner than the youths in the other photographs. Instead of supporting the notion that the children were 'wild' and did not want to work before the arrival of the missionaries by using photographs of supposedly 'wild children', illustrations of children who were working, the 'good' examples, are used to censure the population in its entirety.

After 1910, pictures of children in Marind dress become increasingly rare in the *Annalen*. As the mission on Dutch New Guinea reached its low point around 1915, it also received less coverage.

²¹⁸ Marten, 'Re-imagining 'Metropole' and 'Periphery'', 305.

²¹⁹ *Annalen* 1910, 293.

Only approximately 60 pictures taken on New Guinea appeared in the *Annalen* published in the period 1911-1920. Of these, about half concerned either the government or the mission, eleven showed ethnographica, six depicted adults of the Marind-anim (five of which in Western clothes), and eleven featured Marind children. Only three of those eleven illustrations show children in Marind dress, and in only one are the children clearly visible: a close-up of two *aroi-patoers* leaning on the railing of the porch of the presbytery in Merauke, captioned 'Jongens van Nederlandsch Nieuw-Guinea'.²²⁰ This photograph, like many others published in the *Annalen* between 1910 and 1920, is not present in the archive. A possible explanation for this is that Nollen presumably took the photographic equipment with him when he left New Guinea in 1909, and the missionaries had to look to other inhabitants of Merauke for pictures.²²¹

Of the pictures featuring children in Western dress, three were published mainly because of the fact that the people depicted on them were wearing Western clothing: two portraits of families with small babies living in Merauke, and a group picture of Vertenten, Van de Kolk, Brother Van Santvoort, and the inhabitants of the model kampong of Okaba. The group consist mainly of adult men and women, with two young children. The photograph was taken by *assistent-resident* Plate. Chinese trader and government confidant Baba Geo can be seen on the far right. The caption reads 'Nieuw-Okaba: nieuw-gesticht dorp van gekleeden. – De eerstelingen.'²²² The picture seems to have been used to underline the progress of the mission, declaring the people of 'New-Okaba' the first of many to follow. Strangely, there are virtually no children in the image. In an entire decade worth of *Annalen*, there are only three illustrations which focus explicitly on children. One is the picture of the boys on the porch mentioned above, the other two portray the Marind children within the sphere of the mission. The first is similar to Figure 38, showing four boys working in the garden with Brother Joosten, only this time the children are literally 'claimed' by the mission, as they are described as 'de jongens der missie'.²²³ The second can be seen in the thirty-ninth illustration and supposedly depicts the 'school' in Merauke. It appeared in the *Annalen* of 1911. The picture shows Father Johannes van der Kooij pointing at some words written on a large slate with a pointer. His face is turned in direction of the slate, which is standing on a table at which three boys, dressed in white shirts and light pants, are seated on what appear to be dining chairs. Each has a small slate in front of him and a stylus in his hands. The scene is not very convincing. The 'classroom' is situated on a field of grass, against the background of a corrugated sheet, presumably the wall of a building on the mission grounds. The picture was probably taken outside because of the lack of suitable light inside,

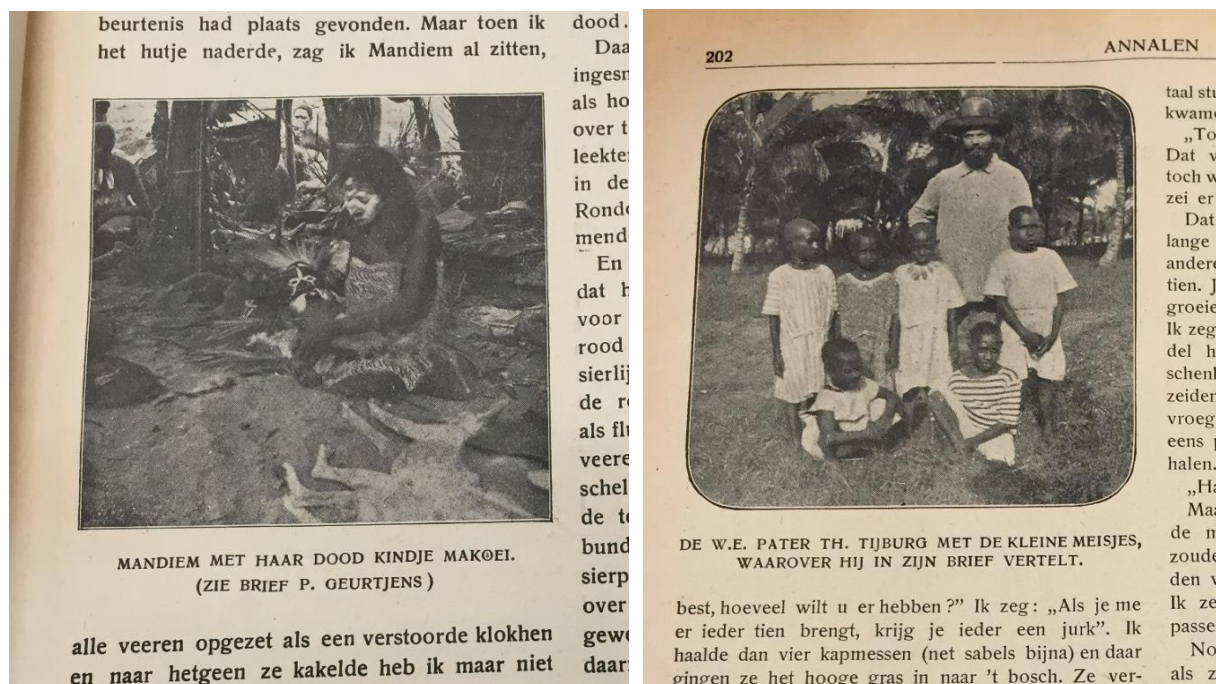
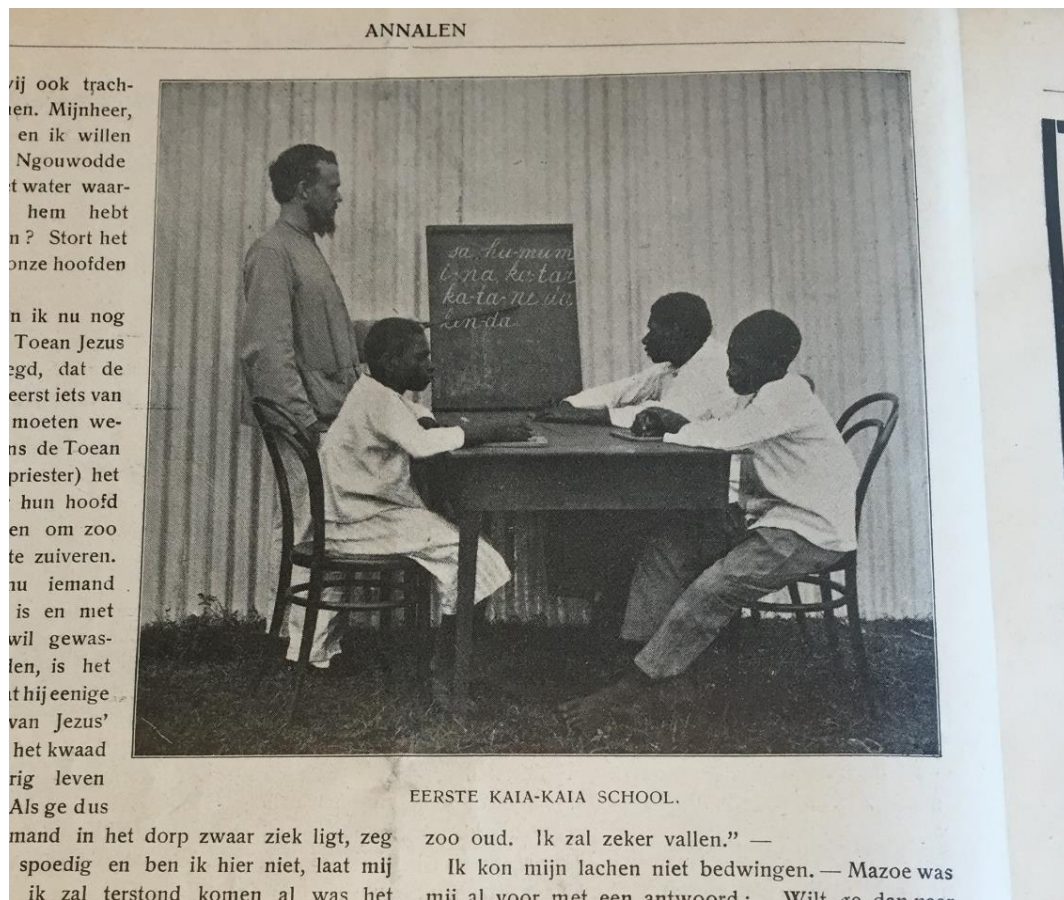
²²⁰ *Annalen* 1913, 84.

²²¹ The fact that almost all the pictures which appear in the *Annalen* from 1923 onwards (when Nico Verhoeven arrived, presumably with a camera) can be found in the archive, makes this assumption likely.

²²² *Annalen* 1914, 283.

²²³ *Annalen* 1912, 121.

Figs. 39 (upper row), 40, 41 (lower row)



but it is unlikely that there even was a separate building or room for the ‘school’ at this period in time. The three boys seem unfocused and look about with blank expressions on their faces. Furthermore, they are sitting rather slovenly – none of them is sitting up straight, and the boy on the right has his legs wrapped around the table leg. Van der Kooij does not make the impression of an inspired teacher either and is also not standing up straight. The picture is captioned ‘Eerste Kaia-Kaia school’. Although the image is far from what the reader of the *Annalen* expected school to look like, the message is clear: the beginning of educating the Marind-anim has been made. These students are the first of many to follow. The children in the photograph differ significantly from the children which had appeared in the *Annalen* up to then. The boys are dressed in impeccable white shirts. Their clothes more or less fit and all forms of Marind dress have been removed. The fact that the children are dressed in white is in itself an explicit statement, especially considering the effort which would have gone into laundering and maintaining white clothing.²²⁴

In comparison to the illustrations used before 1910, there was a clear shift from attention for the land and its habitants to the presence of the mission and the government. This trend continued and grew in the *Annalen* published after 1920. In the period 1921-1925, forty-five of the total of fifty-five photographs featured in the *Annalen* depicted either the mission, model kampongs, or activities organised by the mission. There are circa twenty pictures of children. Only one shows a child in Marind dress – and this was a baby which had just passed away. The photograph as it appeared in the *Annalen* can be seen above in Figure 40. In this period, a direct relation between text and illustration was not uncommon anymore. The picture accompanied a short article by Geurtjens, titled ‘Zoo’n stout engeltje!’.²²⁵ It tells about the birth of a baby called Makoei, and of the grief of the mother when the child passed away a few weeks later. The picture shows the mother with the body of her child in her arms. The original photograph, which remains in the archive, shows how the mother has removed all forms of dress, except for the white clay on her face, to show her mourning. The picture in the *Annalen*, however, was manipulated to make it seem as if she was wearing a sarong or dress. The body of the child has been dressed for the funeral rite. The mother and her son are sitting in a rather cluttered hut, photographed slightly from above, which gives the image a forlorn feel. It is captioned ‘Mandiem met haar dood kindje Makoei. (zie brief P. Geurtjens)’. The story about the death of Makoei is interestingly enough not used to make any kind of statement with regards to the death of the child. While, like in most of the narratives from this period, the baby did symbolise ‘hope’, as Geurtjens asserts ‘hij was mij lief, zooals alles wat hoop geeft bij dit volk, mij lief is’,²²⁶ the death of the child is not linked to the hygienic practices of the Marind-anim, nor is it used

²²⁴ Ross, *Clothing*, 189n7.

²²⁵ *Annalen* 1925, 32-33.

²²⁶ *Annalen* 1925, 32.

as a call to help, pray for, or ‘save’ the Marind – not explicitly, at least. The story does fit in with the narrative trope of the ‘poor’ or ‘needy’ native, which served to legitimise the missionary presence and request for donations.²²⁷ Still, the tragic story and the grief-stricken mother contrast sharply with all the other photographs and stories concerning children in the *Annalen* between 1921 and 1925. These might be most accurately characterised as ‘success stories’ and show women in Western dress holding swaddled babies in the model kampongs,²²⁸ group pictures of school children,²²⁹ portraits of baptised children,²³⁰ children kneeling in front of the altar,²³¹ children serving as acolytes in the first procession,²³² and the visiting apostolic vicar Aerts surrounded by children in the model kampongs and villages.²³³

The fact that the children are all wearing Western clothing in these pictures, symbolised the ‘progress’ the Marind-anim were making on their road to ‘civilisation’. The influence and presence of the mission is a central element in the photographs: the children are not depicted in their villages, playing on the beach, or with their family, but instead on the mission station, with the missionaries, or in the model kampongs. Both in the illustrations and in the stories in the *Annalen*, the children have been ‘removed’ from Marind society and are integrated in the Catholic community, under the wing of the MSC missionaries. This transition was symbolically completed with the adoption of Western clothing.²³⁴ Figure 41 shows how this narrative functioned. The picture appears in the *Annalen* of 1924, and was accompanied by the article of which fragments can be found below.²³⁵ In the text, Father Tijburg tells of how he dressed four girls, who badly wanted dresses. First, they had to ‘buy’ the dresses with coconuts and *sago*, later they promised to work for them, but in the end Tijburg says he practically gave the clothes to them. The instant the girls put on the dresses is painted as a moment of the greatest joy for both the girls and Tijburg. When the girls show their dresses to Geurtjens, he proposes to take a photograph of the scene. This prompts two other boys to put on their Western garb as well, which they apparently had left at home. The picture accompanying the story shows a smiling Tijburg and the six children. It is captioned ‘De W.E. Pater Th. Tijburg met de kleine meisjes, waarover hij in zijn brief vertelt.’ Most of the children look ill at ease, but two are smiling in the direction of the camera.

In both the picture and the story, the children are completely isolated from Marind society.

²²⁷ Jensz and Acke, ‘Introduction’, 12.

²²⁸ *Annalen* 1922, 34; *Annalen* 1923, 198.

²²⁹ *Annalen* 1924, 150; *Annalen* 1925, 61.

²³⁰ *Annalen* 1924, 8-9, *Annalen* 1925, 177.

²³¹ *Annalen* 1925, 201.

²³² *Annalen* 1925, 226-228.

²³³ *Annalen* 1922, 40-41; *Annalen* 1924, 149, 177.

²³⁴ Steenbrink, *Catholics in Indonesia*. Volume 2, 248.

²³⁵ *Annalen* 1924, 201-202.

‘Om een jurkje!’

‘We mogen hier aan de menschen geen kleeen *geven*, ze moeten ze ofwel zelf verdienen bij ons, ofwel ze koopen voor cocosnoten bij de Chineesche ruilhandelaars. De regeering wil dat zoo, opdat de menschen iets meer geven om kleeen, en ze ook wat beter behandelen. Dat is een erg goede regeling: maar voor de kinderen is het soms wat bezwaarlijk, want die hebben zelf geen cocosnoten, en de ouders hebben het er niet voor over, om ter wille van de kleeen voor hun kinderen een paar dagen te komen werken, of er een aantal noten voor af te staan, en wel allermint zoo het ouders zijn die zelf van kleeding en van heel die nieuwe beweging niets willen weten. Zoo was ik dan laatst in Okaba wat aan het timmeren, en liepen me voortdurend een paar meisjes voor de voeten. Nou, ik zag wel gauw dat het ergens om te doen was, ze waren zóó lief en gediensig! Dus ik zeg: “Nou. spreek maar eens op, waar kom je nu eigenlijk om?”

– “Toeane, zeiden ze, mag ik een jurk?

– “Gerust, zeg ik, maar niet voor niks: als je me ieder tien cocosnoten brengt, dan krijgen jullie een jurk.” Tien noten is een kwartje: daar kun je eigenlijk geen jurk voor leveren, maar ik zie ze zelf zoo graag gekleed, dat ik de condities maar zoo makkelijk mogelijk maak. [...] “Toeane”, vroeg er eindelijk een, mogen we er voor komen werken?” Stel je voor, vier van die peuters, de oudste hoogstens zeven of acht jaar, en dan nog wel meisjes, daar doe je wat mee. [...]

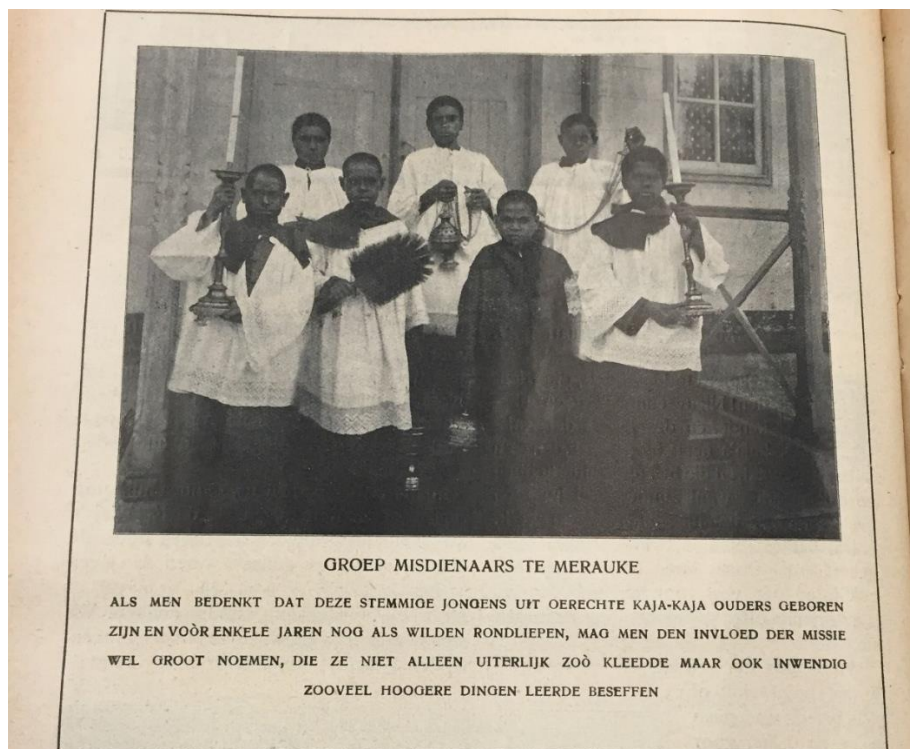
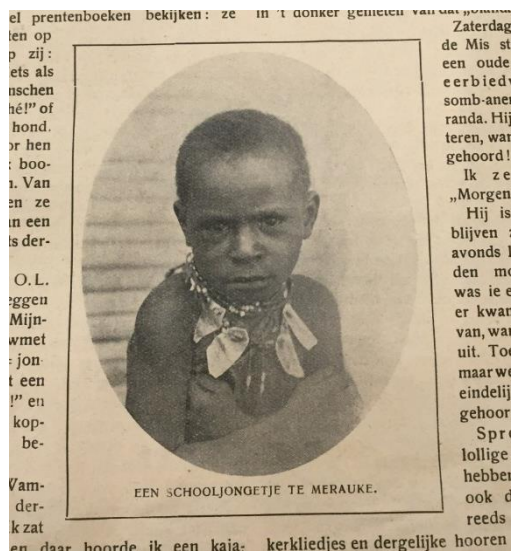
“Toeane”, vroeg er een, “mogen we misschien eerst onze jurk eens passen, dan gaan we daarna weer twee bundels halen.” “Ha, kleine slimmerd!” dacht ik bij m’n eigen. Maar ik was zelf zoo verlangend om eens te zien, hoe de mooie jurkjes die frissche lieve kindertjes staan zouden, en getuige te zijn, hoe blij ze er mee zouden wezen, dat ik me toch maar heb laten beetnemen. Ik zeg dus: “Vooruit, we zullen eerst maar eens passen”... Nou het was een lust, zoo mooi, en zoo blij, als ze er mee waren, en ze liepen al heel gauw eventjes bij Toean Henricus (Geurtjens) binnen, om zich te laten bewonderen. En Toean Henricus vond het zoo’n aardig stel, dat hij er een kiekje van wilde maken. Er waren nog twee jochie’s hier op het erf, die een pakje thuis hadden liggen, en die gauw weg om het te gaan halen, om ook op ’t portret te komen. Nu, het portret is erg mooi geslaagd, maar de twee andere bundels boonstaken heb ik niet meer gezien, en die zullen ook wel nooit meer komen, maar dat is het minste. Erger is, dat er daarna nog heel wat zijn komen “werken”. Nu heb ik me wel niet telkens zo laten beetnemen, maar ik ben nu al bijna door al mijn kleertjes heen en dan ben ik nog niet eens op mijn eigen parochie...’

The parents are only present in the narrative as a bad influence, who, in contrast to the missionaries, do not care whether the children have access to Western clothing i.e. 'civilisation', and consequently do not care about the future of their children. The story is used to illustrate the concern Tjibburg has for the children. The photograph shows him towering over the children as their benefactor and guardian. An important element in the narrative is how the girls themselves supposedly longed for the dresses and turned to the missionaries, showing the 'progress' the missionaries were making under the Marind-anim. In fact, Tjibburg is so successful, that he is already running out of clothing, he asserts in a not-so-subtle plea directed to the readers of the *Annalen*.

This one-sided narrative presented through the pictures becomes more ambiguous after 1925. Of the approximately fifty pictures published in the journal between 1925 and 1930, the overwhelming majority is still concerned with the mission, but the focus is less on conversion or success stories and there is a slight increase in photographs of people in Marind dress. There are fourteen pictures of children in this period, three of which feature children in Marind dress. Two of these are shown in Figures 42 and 43. The first shows a young *patoer* in front of the school building of the model kampong in Merauke. He has his arms crossed and looks rather defiantly into the lens. The illustration is captioned 'Een schooljongetje te Merauke'. It is worth noting that, despite his dress, the boy is not identified as 'Marind' or 'Kaja-Kaja', but as a school boy. The second picture portrays two *patoers* in a village, smiling cheerfully and genuinely. The caption reads 'Twee vroolijke Kaja-Kaja jongens'. Neither of the illustrations has a relation to the surrounding text, nor do they clearly convey a message. Some hundred pages along in the same volume, appears an illustration which does contain a strong message. The picture, seen in Figure 44, features a group of seven boys as acolytes in front of the church in Merauke. All hold attributes used during mass and look in the camera with very serious expressions on their face. The illustration is captioned: 'Groep misdienaars te Merauke. Als men bedenkt dat deze stemmige jongens uit oerechte Kaja-Kaja ouders geboren zijn en voòr enkele jaren nog als wilden rondliepen, mag men den invloed der missie wel groot noemen, die ze niet alleen uiterlijk zoò kleeedde maar ook inwendig zooveel hoogere dingen leerde beseffen'. The image is published on the same page as an article by Nico Verhoeven about how much progress has been made in last five years on the south coast, and how the time is ripe to 'save' the souls of the hinterlands. As underlined by the caption, the picture serves as a demonstration of the achievements of the mission. It indirectly contrasts the boys with both their parents and their own selves of a few years back. Again, like in the first period, a picture of a 'good example' is used to call out the 'bad examples', rather than using an actual picture of children who have not made the same 'progress'.

The same article by Verhoeven is accompanied by another picture, shown below as Figure 45. It depicts the pupils of the boarding school posing together for a group picture. While it is presumably also meant to underline the accomplishments of the mission, it differs considerably from

Figs. 42, 43 (upper row), 44, 45



the picture of the acolytes. The children are dressed haphazardly in torn and dirty clothes. Most wear nothing but a pair of pants. All forms of Marind dress have been removed. The poses of the children are rather casual, with several of them holding items up for the camera. One boy has a bandage around his head. If not for the caption, 'Jongens van het patronaat te Merauke', there would have been little to indicate that the children were pupils of the boarding school. The appearance of the children is more unkempt and ungroomed than that of the *patoers* in Figures 42 and 43.

In the *Annalen* published in the 1930s, there is a return of photographs of a more ethnographical kind. Besides some twenty-five pictures directly related to the mission, roughly the same amount portrays adults in Marind dress and views of the nature on the island. There are a few pictures of children in Marind dress, but these mainly concern very young children. The children in Western dress, however, are often wearing only a pair of shorts. As already pointed out in the first chapter, the dress code of the pupils in the boarding school appears to have become more lenient after 1930. Even though the clothing seems to become less important, the children are yet more firmly presented in the context of the mission. An example can be found in Figure 46, which shows a pupil of the boarding school with Father Verhoeven. The boy is sitting at a desk, looking at the paper or book which lies in front of him. Verhoeven stands behind him, looking over his shoulder. Verhoeven has one hand planted on the desk, and the other on the back of the chair, which makes it look like the boy is enclosed or even 'trapped' by the Father. The room is dark, except for the desk light which illuminates the child and the man. The boy wears only a pair of pants, and his shining, dark chest contrasts with the white robes of Verhoeven. In earlier periods the students of the boarding school were set apart from the other children by their Western, often white clothing. Here, it is no longer his dress which separates the boy from the 'heathen' Marind-anim. Still, his surroundings clearly mark him as a student 'of' the mission. The choice to portray the boy without a shirt was perhaps made in order to offer a sharp contrast with Verhoeven and so draw attention to the missionary figure. Both Verhoeven's white clothing (light and thus "pure") and his privileged position by towering over the boy, reinforce the dominance of the missionary, 'the hierarchy between the knowing and the unknowing, and thus the ultimate superiority of the whites'.²³⁶

Almost all the children in the illustrations are either students of the boarding school or too young to go to school. Even in the one instance where a young person is shown in Marind dress, he is presented in a Christian context. Figure 47 shows a young man posing in the bushes with a drawn bow. He wears a headdress made of feathers of the bird-of-paradise. What is interesting, is that the caption does not identify the youth as Marind, but dubs him 'Nimrod, de jager getooid met

²³⁶ Christraud Geary, 'Different Visions? Postcards from Africa by European and African Photographers and Sponsors', in: Christraud Geary and Virginia-Lee Webb (eds.), *Delivering Views. Distant Cultures in Early Postcards* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998), 147.

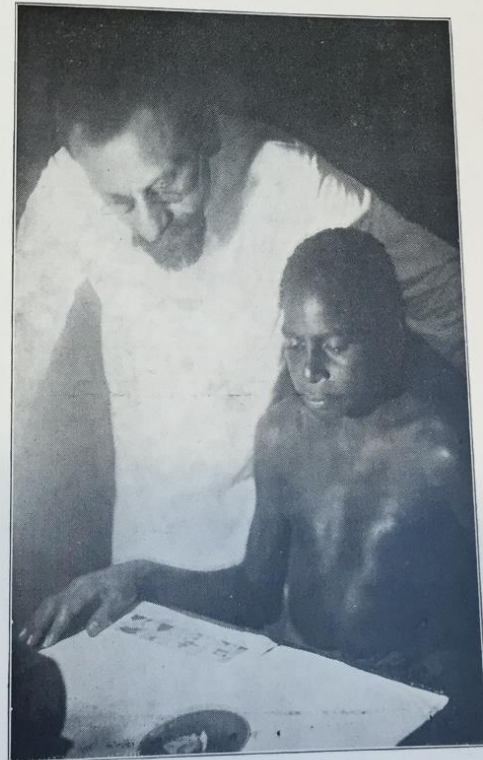
Hierboven: De Eerw. Zrs. Frederica (Helena van Buel) uit Eindhoven en Angelica (Maria van Oers) uit Tilburg, beiden Dochters van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart, 30 Sept. l.l. naar de Missie vertrokken.

Hiernaast: De Z. E. Pater N. Verhoeven (uit Oisterwijk) met een internaatsjongen te Merauke.

de Paters Zegers en Münster, werd daarop opgedragen waarbij de leprozen de missa de Angelis zongen. In zijn toespraak wees Mgr. er hen op, hoe de H. Geest, Die hen op bijzondere wijze komt versterken in het H. Vormsel, genoemd wordt de Trooster bij uitnemendheid.

Daarop ontvingen 9 leprozen het H. Vormsel.

Ten afscheid zongen de melaatschen onder leiding van goeroe Felix die zelf ook melaatsch is, enkele liedjes ter eere van Mgr. en een van hen dankte namens allen Mgr. voor het toedienen van het H. Vormsel en het bezoek bij hen. Er werden versnaperingen uitgedeeld en 't was verder feest in de kampong Baroe.



bewaarder heb!

Een droog pak is ondertusschen



NIMROD, DE JAGER, GETOOID MET PARADIJS-VEEREN. (Z. N. GUINEA) FOTO P. VERHOEVEN

paradijsveeren. (Z.N. Guinea)'. Instead of representing the culture of the land he was born in, the young man symbolises a biblical figure.

To conclude, it can be surmised that there is a clear narrative present in the pictures published in the *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart*. Whereas photographs of children in Marind dress were still used in the early years of the mission, these were increasingly replaced by children in Western clothing. Especially in the 1920s, when the mission recovered after a difficult period and expanded significantly, the journal was filled with images of converted children and similar success stories. At the same time, children were more strongly presented in the context of the mission rather than as part of Marind-anim society as the years went by. The captions no longer read 'Kaja-Kaja jongen', but 'internaatjongen'. After 1930, there was less emphasis on dress. However, while several photographs of adults in Marind dress appeared in the *Annalen* in this period, there are hardly any pictures of children in Marind dress, creating the illusion that the practice was something of time gone by, to be abandoned by *spes patriae*.²³⁷

The Almanak

Whereas there is clearly a linear narrative present in the *Annalen*, this is less the case in the yearly *Almanak van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart*. The annual publication appeared from 1894 until 1953 and was also published by the MSC in Tilburg. It featured a calendar of saints and Catholic holidays, devotional stories and poems, articles on the mission and the congregation in general, and puzzles and competitions for the younger readers.²³⁸ Between 1908 and 1940, some 115 photographs of the mission on the south coast of New Guinea appeared in the *Almanak*. Approximately sixty of these depicted Marind-anim and their cultural expressions, whereas only forty-five pictures are related to the mission and only twenty-one show Marind in Western dress – of which ten concerned children. The focus in the *Almanak* was always slightly more on the Marind than on the mission work, and this did not change over time. Another difference with the *Annalen* is that the pictures in the *Almanak* are often more 'personal' than those in the *Annalen*: from 1925 onwards,²³⁹ the captions frequently mention the names and other details of the Marind portrayed in the illustrations.

Thirty-one pictures featuring children can be found in the almanacs from the period 1908-1940. Of these, only twelve depict children in Western clothing. Unlike the images in the *Annalen*, these pictures are not necessarily strongly related to the mission. There is, for instance, a picture which shows three young boys in Western clothing fishing in a creek,²⁴⁰ and a portrait of a Brother

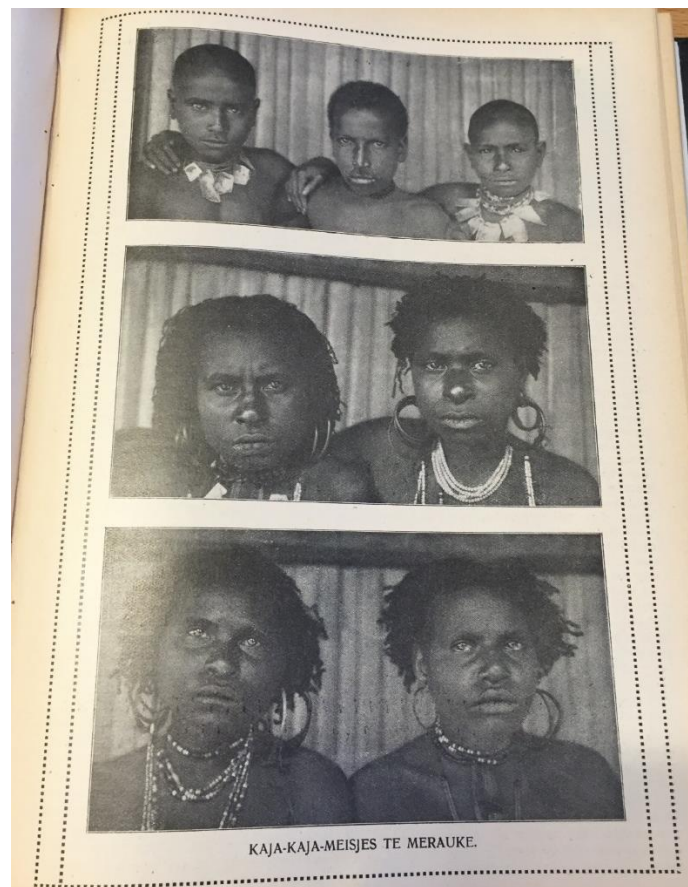
²³⁷ *Annalen* 1933, 129.

²³⁸ Poels and Van den Elsen (eds.), *BKNP. Deel 3*, 48.

²³⁹ Until 1915, Marind in were often presented as by the word 'type' or similar words in the captions.

²⁴⁰ *Almanak van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart* 1931, 61-62.

Figs. 48 & 49



toe; de druk van de atmosfeer en de druk der en bijgevoig geen ijkmeesters; geen cijfers en getallen en bijgevoig geen accountants: hier



No. 4. — De twee kleine meisjes van no. 3. — Ze zitten dik in de klapperolie en roode en witte verf: op 't hoofd dragen ze paradijsgelveeren, op borst en schouders allerlei schelpen en sierplanten.

and sister from Wambi, posing arm in arm.²⁴¹ Even though success stories and school pictures similar to those in the *Annalen* appear as well, these are a minority rather than a majority. When examining all the photographs used in the *Almanak* together, they provide a more varied and perhaps more personal outlook on the children of New Guinea. In the early years of the mission, the *Almanak* used largely the same photographs as the *Annalen*, but especially after 1925 the pictures published in the *Almanak* start to differ significantly from those in the *Annalen*.

Figures 48 and 49 present four photographs which would not be found in the *Annalen*. The first page shows three pictures of groups of girls in front of the school building of the model kampong in Merauke. All three of the photographs have been cropped to below the shoulders and all the girls are in Marind dress. There is no relation to the surrounding text, which describes Verhoeven's trek to the border with British New Guinea. The caption reads 'Kaja-Kaja-meisjes te Merauke'. Although the fact that the girls were attending school in Merauke is obscured, the fact alone that photographs of girls in Marind dress were published is remarkable. Only a few pictures of Marind girls can be found in the *Annalen*, and almost all of these concern girls in Western dress. As seen in the beginning of this chapter, the sole three photographs of girls in Marind dress published in the journal, are used without disclosing the gender or age of the children. Furthermore, this photograph appeared in the *Almanak* of 1927, a period of great successes for the mission. Instead of publishing pictures of baptised children or students of the boarding school, the redaction opted for a series of photographs which probably provide a realistic view of what the average girl in the vicinity of Merauke looked like.

The forty-ninth image appeared in the *Almanak* of 1929. It was taken at what might best be described as a 'surrogate' *dema* ritual organised by the government in the August of 1927, to reward to people of Wendoe for building single-family houses. Brother Adrianus van Hest was present at the event and took many photographs, eight of which were published in *Almanak* of 1929, accompanied by relatively detailed captions. This pictures shows two young *kivasoms* dressed up as *nakari*, described by Van Baal as 'a kind of female mythical beings, the companions of the more important male *déma*'.²⁴² The image is captioned 'De twee kleine meisjes van no. 3 – Ze zitten dik in de klapperolie en roode en witte verf: op 't hoofd dragen ze paradijsvogelveeren, op de borst en schouders allerlei schelpen en sierplanten.' The photograph is taken from up close and shows the girls from the waist up. Both look somewhat tense. The girl on the right has her lips pressed together and looks to a point on the left side the camera, probably the photographer. The girl on the left,

²⁴¹ *Almanak* 1930, 53-54.

²⁴² Van Baal, *Dema*, 188.

however, looks straight into the lens, almost in an imposing way. In this picture, the children are unequivocally shown rooted in Marind culture.

So, while it seems unlikely that the *Almanak* had a different readership than the *Annalen* and was made by the same group of people, there is quite a large difference in the manner in which the children are presented. Particularly in the period after 1925, the pictures in the *Almanak* differ notably from the illustrations in the *Annalen* on two points: first of all, the photographs in the *Almanak* are more personal, often detailing the names and villages of the children in the captions. Secondly, the influence of the mission is either not present at all, or plays in the background, rather than being the dominant element in the pictures. The children are more often portrayed as Marind-anim, instead of apprentices of the mission. Yet, like in the *Annalen*, there is an unmistakeable underlying narrative when looking at the illustrations throughout the years. Slowly but steadily, the number of children in Western clothing increases, 'Kaja-Kaja-jongens' become 'schooljongens', and the *nakari* in the image above were part of 'een van de oude Demafeesten'.²⁴³ The presence of the mission might be less pronounced when compared to the *Annalen*, but the implied future of the children is undeniably one of school, church, pants, and dresses.

Individual publications: Nollen, Vertenten, and Van de Kolk

In general, both the *Annalen* and the *Almanak* were popular magazines, aimed at a broad audience. The items were edited by members of the congregation in Tilburg and had to be accessible to a large public. Many of the missionaries also wrote and published individually, in anthropological and geographical journals, Catholic newspapers, and books. Together with their contributions to the official MSC journals, this resulted in a vast output of publications. Van Baal estimates that Vertenten alone wrote at least 150 articles between 1911 and 1926.²⁴⁴

Most of the individual writings of the missionaries were not illustrated by photographs, but there are a few exceptions. The first of these is an article written by Nollen, which appeared in *Anthropos*, an international journal for ethnology and linguistics, in 1909. The piece is titled 'Les différentes Classes d'Age dans la Société kaia-kaia, Merauke, Nouvelle Guinée Néerlandaise' and describes Marind-anim age-grades and their corresponding dress. The text was supported by no less than fifty-six photographs, compiled in eleven plates. The photographs were arranged according to gender and age group. Two of the plates contained pictures of children and can be seen below.

The first plate shows the youngest male age groups, with four photographs of *patoers*, one *aroi-patoer*, and a *wokravid*. The images consist of rather small cut-outs of larger photographs. All of

²⁴³ *Almanak* 1929, 43-44.

²⁴⁴ Van Baal, *Dema*, 7.

Fig. 50



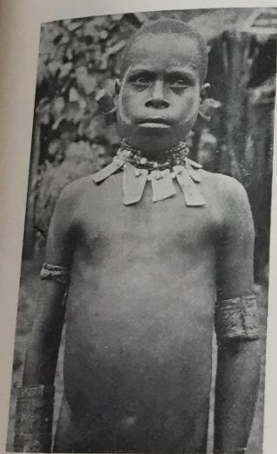
H Ia.



H Ia.



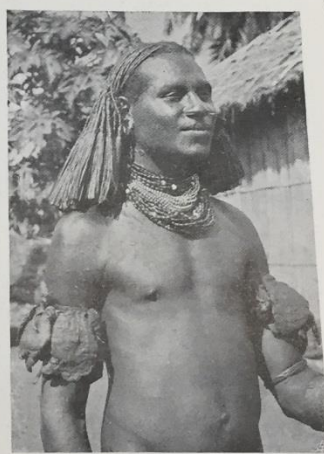
H Ia.



H Ia.



H II.

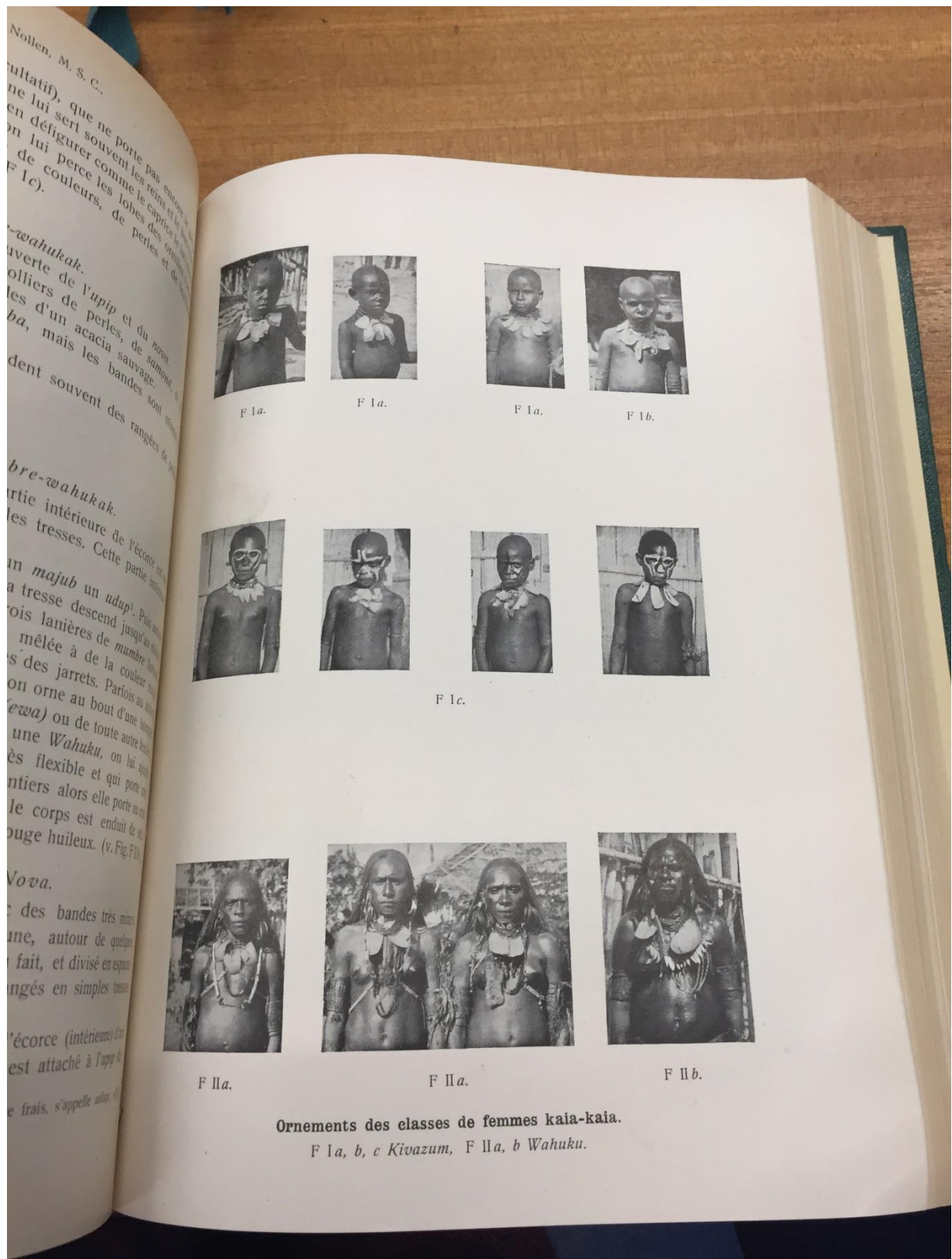


H III.

Ornements des classes d'hommes kaia-kaia.

H Ia *Patur*, H II *Aroi-Patur*, H III *Wokravid*.

Fig. 51



the boys are shown only from the waist upwards, except the *patoer* in the middle picture in the upper row, whose genital area is largely covered by his hands. This was probably to show the case he wears on his lower arm, which has been (partly) cropped out of the other pictures of *patoers*. The fact that the lower bodies are not shown is remarkable. In general, nudity was acceptable in learned journals, and the older men are shown entirely in the same article. It was certainly not for lack of space that the pictures were cropped. A possible explanation might lie in the fact that the lower bodies of the age groups shown in the first plate were unadorned, while the older men did wear ornaments in the genital area and on the lower legs. Still, it was a deliberate choice which shows it was preferred to keep the 'levels' of nudity as low as possible.

Although the people in the photographs are used to represent their entire age group and can therefore be seen as 'types', the pictures do not have a dehumanising feel about them. In most of the pictures, buildings and foliage can be seen in the background, which makes them less clinical. The poses and facial expressions of the boys also contribute to the fact that the pictures show individuals as well as 'types'. Four of the six look straight into the lens. While the body language of two the *patoers* betrays some insecurity, all the boys have tough, bracing expressions on their faces. The two older boys breathe an air of confidence.

The second plate features the age groups of girls and young women. There are eight photographs depicting *kivasoms* and three photographs of four *wahoekoes*. Again, the pictures are small fragments of larger photographs, and again, only the upper body of the girls is shown. Whereas this is understandable for the *kivasoms*, it is very peculiar in case of the *wahoekoes*, who covered their pubic area. In fact, not one woman in all fifty-six photos used in the article can be seen in her entirety while facing the camera. The woven covering, which was attached to a waistband and passed between the legs, is discussed in the article, but not shown in the illustrations. This is particularly strange, considering that male genitals are clearly visible in some of the pictures.

Similar to the photographs of the boy age groups, the background of most of the images of the *kivasoms* and *wahoekoes* is clearly visible. All the girls look into the camera, but they look less self-assured than the boys. The four *kivasoms* shown in the upper row were originally photographed together with their mother. The original photographs of the *kivasoms* with the painted faces can be seen in the fourth illustration of this thesis. For some reason, the girls are here shown separately. Finally, four *wahoekoes* of approximately fifteen or sixteens year old can be seen in the lower row. Originally, the first two images were part of one photograph. Even though the covered genitals were apparently too sensitive to show, the chests of the young women are not obstructed from view.

Nollen's article shows how the same photographs could be framed in fundamentally different ways. When compared to *Annalen*, the pictures are at the same time presented in a more neutral

light, but the people in them are also reduced to curiosities. Whereas the people themselves were the focus point in the mission journals, here they are mannequins wearing '*ornements distinctifs*'.²⁴⁵ In general, the children are portrayed in the same way as the adults. The only notable difference is the fact that the lower body of the boys is carefully kept out of view, while this was not the case for the adult men.

Nollen seems to have been the only MSC missionary who used photography on such a large scale and in such a distinct way to study the Marind-anim and support his research.²⁴⁶ Other publications, such as Van de Kolk's *Bij de oermenschen van Nederlandsch Zuid-Nieuw-Guinea* (1919) and Vertenten's 'Het koppensnellen in Zuid-Nieuw-Guinea' in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* 79 (1923) and *Vijftien jaar bij de koppensnellers van Nederlandsch Zuid-Nieuw-Guinea* (1935), although published by different publishers, used mainly the same photographs as appeared in the *Annalen* and the *Almanak*, in a similar style. However, what makes these books interesting for this research, is that they were reviewed in major publications. This gives an indication of how the books and the use of photographs in them were perceived. Van de Kolk's *Bij de oermenschen van Nederlandsch Zuid-Nieuw-Guinea* will be examined as an example, since it contains more photographs than Vertenten's book. *Bij de oermenschen* was published in 1919, four years after Van de Kolk had left New Guinea. It has just over 200 pages and consists of a collection of short anecdotal articles, most of which had earlier appeared in the *Annalen* or *Java Post*, and two longer fictional stories about children who had been abducted during an attack by head-hunters. The articles mainly describe various peoples and practices of the Marind tribe. Even though Van Baal deemed the information in the book 'accurate' and 'reliable',²⁴⁷ its main purpose was not to contribute to ethnological research, but rather to promote the Catholic mission and attract more support for the work of the missionaries in the Dutch colonies.²⁴⁸ It was therefore aimed at the general, Catholic public. The book was illustrated by twenty-five photographs. Nineteen of these showed people in Marind dress, three in Western clothing, and two in a mixture of elements from both. Like in the *Annalen* and the *Almanak*, all genitals are kept out of view by either cropping the pictures or manipulating the photograph to make it appear as if the people were wearing loincloths. Images of women only show their backs, so nothing except for the long hair extensions and a pair of legs are visible.

²⁴⁵ Nollen, 'Les différentes Classes d'Age', 558.

²⁴⁶ Quite a few of Vertentens articles were illustrated as well, but almost always with drawings he made himself.

²⁴⁷ Van Baal, *Dema*, 7.

²⁴⁸ Van de Kolk, *Bij de oermenschen*, [3].

Bij de oermenschen received positive to very positive reviews in the large Dutch and Indonesian Catholic newspapers, as well as some non-Catholic periodicals.²⁴⁹ Fragments from the book would also be published individually.²⁵⁰ It was praised for its 'captivating stories', 'vivid descriptions', 'warm concern', and for the beautiful photographs.²⁵¹ Two of the reviews single out the use and the effects of the photographs. The following quote appeared in the *Tilburgsche Courant* of the 27th of June, 1919:

'[E]en boek met talent, met warmte en liefde geschreven. Maar wat meer is: die warmte en liefde is in ons overgegaan: wij voelen iets voor de omgeving waarin de Missionaris zich vrijwillig heeft geplaatst. En onwillekeurig slaan wij het uitgelezen boek nog eens open. Hoe anders schijnen ons nu die plaatjes toe. Eerst waren het voor ons zoo'n vreemde menschen, en nu zijn ze ons veel sympathieker geworden: wij betrappen er ons op namen, die wij uit de schetsen hebben onthouden, onder de portretten te plaatsen.'

It was already concluded in the first chapter that many of the portraits of the Marind-anim from the first period captured the individuality and spirit of the people depicted, rather than reduce them to types or generalities. This review shows that the photographs were also interpreted thusly, especially in combination with the articles. They depicted people, not 'savages', with familiar and perhaps even enviable characteristics, as postulated by P.M. Vismans in a contemplation of 'western chagrin' in *De Maasbode* of the 2nd of July, 1919:

'Lees het hoofdstuk over den humor der Marindineezen, beschouw het kiekje van broeder Jeanson met zijn vroolijken Marindineeschen²⁵² smidsgast te Merauke en besef dan de diepe betekenis van het slotwoord, waar de schrijver de dichtregelen van Guido Gezelle aanhaalt: "We hebben al niet veel anders meer, maar we hebben hier nog leute." Het dringt de verzuchting naar de lippen: Waren toch ook wij, menschen van de upper-beschaving, weer tevreden en hadden wij "leute", reine, onvervalschte, onschuldige "leute", die het hart rustig stemt en tevreden maakt met het geringste, dat ons deel is.'

²⁴⁹ Amongst others in: *De Tijd*, 23-05-1919; *Het Centrum*, 28-01-1928; *Delftsche Courant*, 30-09-1919; *Tilburgsche Courant*, 04-10-1919; *De Sumatra Post*, 09-12-1922; *De Maasbode*, 02-07-1919; *Tilburgsche Courant*, 27-06-1919; *De Tijd*, 18-10-1920.

²⁵⁰ For example in: *Nieuwe Tilburgsche Courant*, 20-11-1920; *Het Centrum*, 24-01-1920.

²⁵¹ *De Tijd*, 18-10-1920; *Het Centrum*, 28-01-1928

²⁵² Instead of 'zwarte smidsgast', as the image was captioned in the *Annalen*, the caption in *Bij de oermenschen* reads: 'Br. Jeanson met zijn vroolijken Marindineeschen smidsgast te Merauke'.

The photograph he is referring to was shown before in Figure 7 of this thesis. The broad smile of the *aroi-patoer* in the photograph is interpreted as ‘pure, unadulterated, innocent’ joy, something which people of the ‘upper-civilisation’ have lost. The statement invokes the concept of the noble savage who has not been ‘corrupted by civilisation’. While this might not necessarily have been Van de Kolk’s motivation (or that of the editors of the *Annalen*) behind using the image in *Bij de oermenschen*, it shows that the photographs were studied carefully, interpreted, and appealed to the reader.

Individual publications: Geurtjens

While Van de Kolk and Vertenten illustrated their publications largely in the same style as in the *Annalen*, one missionary used photographs in a rather unique way in his books: Geurtjens. Shortly after he retired from the mission work in 1932, he published *Onder de Kaja-Kaja’s van Zuid Nieuw Guinea*, the first of various books to follow.²⁵³ Like Van de Kolk’s *Bij de oermenschen*, it was not a ‘deep study, but scenes taken from life’,²⁵⁴ and consists of many short articles and twenty plates containing as many as eighty-four photographs. These photographs are arranged in a style which resembles something of a combination between a scrapbook and a family album. The photos have been cut in various shapes and are casually pasted together against a grey background, sometimes partially on top of each other. The pictures are loosely ordered in various themes, which often can be found in a caption at the bottom of a plate. Each photograph has an individual caption as well, generally in a humorous or ironic tone. Six of the plates with a special focus on children can be found below, in the same order as they appear in the book. Rather than analysing each picture or plate separately, the use of the photographs of children throughout *Onder de Kaja-Kaja’s* and how the children are presented will be considered as a whole.

Unlike the publications by the other missionaries, there are many aspects to Geurtjens’s use of photography in *Onder de Kaja-Kaja’s* which differ distinctly from the pictures in the *Annalen*. In fact, even though Geurtjens was an able and fervent photographer, his photographs were rarely used in the MSC mission journals. Of the pictures which appear in *Onder the Kaja-Kaja’s* on the other hand, at least three-quarters was made by Geurtjens himself.²⁵⁵ The first element which sets the illustrations in the apart, is the much stronger focus on the youth. As shown in the first chapter, Geurtjens photographic oeuvre was characterised by the large amount of photographs of (young)

²⁵³ Although *Op zoek naar oermenschen*, published by Romen in 1934, also concerns the Marind-anim and uses a similar style with regards to the illustrations, it falls outside the scope of this thesis to analyse all of the books of the missionaries. *Onder de Kaja-Kaja’s* serves as an example of how Geurtjens deployed photography in (some of) his publications.

²⁵⁴ Geurtjens, *Onder de Kaja-Kaja’s*, 7.

²⁵⁵ This is more exceptional than it may seem: Van de Kolk, Vertenten, and Van Baal, for example, had only a handful of the photographs which in appear in their books themselves.

children. This inclination is present in *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's* as well. Thirty-nine of the eighty-four photographs appearing in the book feature children. Furthermore, it seems likely that all of these were taken by Geurtjens himself. The children in the pictures generally range from babies or toddlers to *patoers* and the occasional *kivasom*. There are very few photos of *aroi-patoers* and *wahoekoes*.

Secondly, Western clothing is almost completely absent in the illustrations in *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's*. Except for the first photograph, which shows Geurtjens himself, and the last plate, there appear virtually no people in Western dress in the pictures. This also means that the illustrations show far more 'skin' than any of the publications discussed before. Even though the people in the photographs are generally positioned in such a way that 'compromising' body parts are not visible, most of the pictures would never have been published in the official MSC mission journals – especially not in 1933, when there were plenty communities of Marind wearing Western clothing. In *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's*, even women in Marind dress can be seen from the front and in their entirety. Still, there was some censoring. As can be seen on the second plate from the book, shown in illustration 53, Geurtjens also cropped photographs to avoid displaying nudity. However, while this technique was employed on almost every photograph depicting people in Marind dress in the missionary journals, it is only used on a handful of illustrations in *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's*. Instead, the aforementioned positioning of the people in the photographs and angling of the camera are the preferred methods of keeping the illustrations 'chaste'. See for example how the children are frequently positioned in front of the adults in illustrations 55 and 56, how the grass obscures the lower bodies of the *patoers* in the plate in image 56, and how the hands of the children are always positioned in their laps.

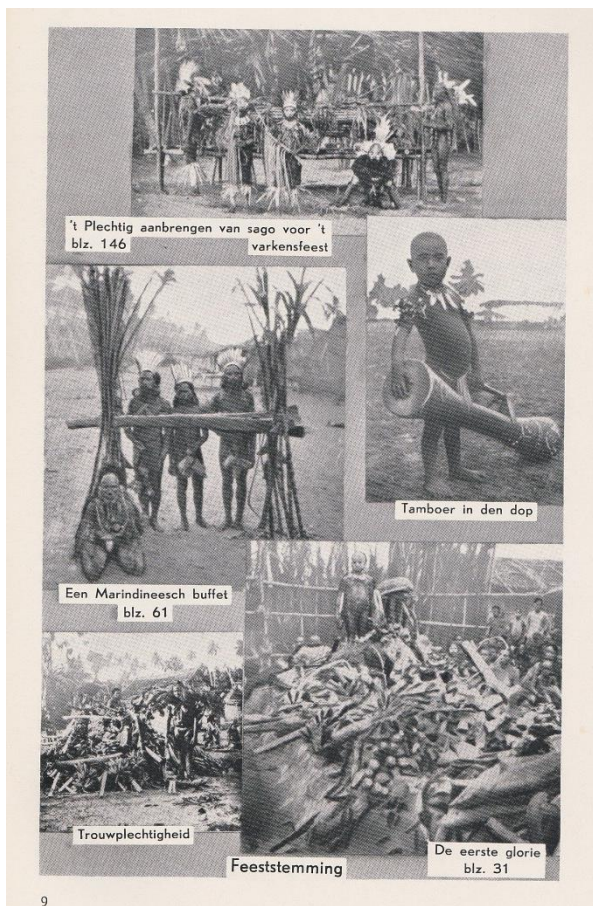
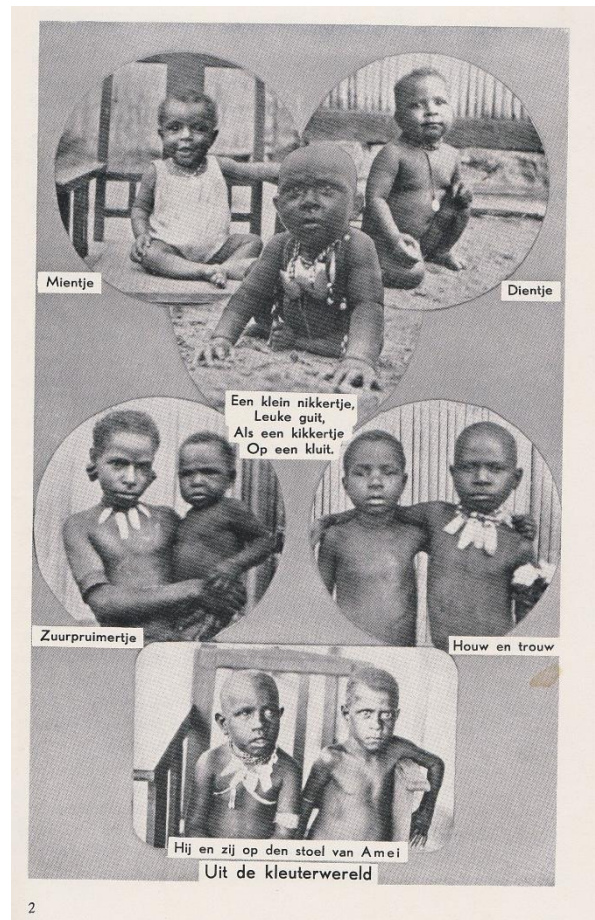
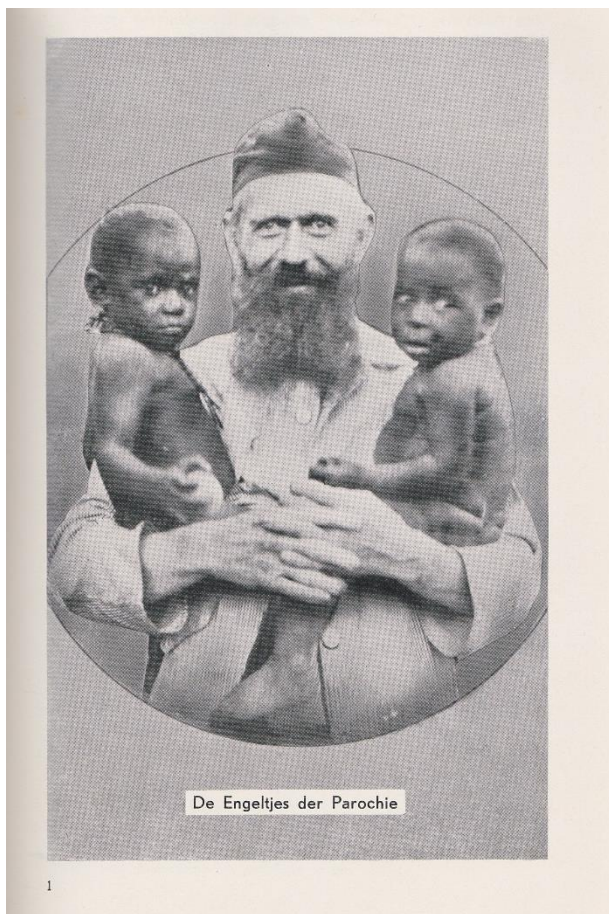
This method of concealing the body could of course only be applied during the process of taking the photograph. When Geurtjens wanted to use a picture in which either genitals or breasts were visible, and could not or would not resort to cropping the photograph, he had to make use of different censoring methods. As mentioned before, the other publications discussed sometimes manipulated the images in these cases, by 'photoshopping' pieces of clothing on the people in the photographs. An example of this technique can be seen in illustration 40. In his publications, Geurtjens used an entirely different, far subtler method: the details of certain areas of the body, such as the loins or a woman's nipples, were either slightly blurred or made darker by shading the area. The rest of the photograph remained as it were, allowing for the dress to remain unchanged and clearly visible in the photograph. This method was primarily used on pictures which featured the breasts of women. Together with Nollen, Geurtjens was the only MSC missionary in the first half of the twentieth century to show women as well as men in Marind dress without severely cropping the images. This concerned only adult women, interestingly enough. Pictures of girls and women aged between 10 and 25 years old are rarely featured in Geurtjens's publications, and if they are, the only

the backs of the young women, covered by their long hair extensions, can be seen. Geurtjens archival collection makes clear that he did take photographs of *wahoekoes* and bordering age groups in Marind dress and in various positions. These images were apparently too sensitive to show to a general public, even if censored.

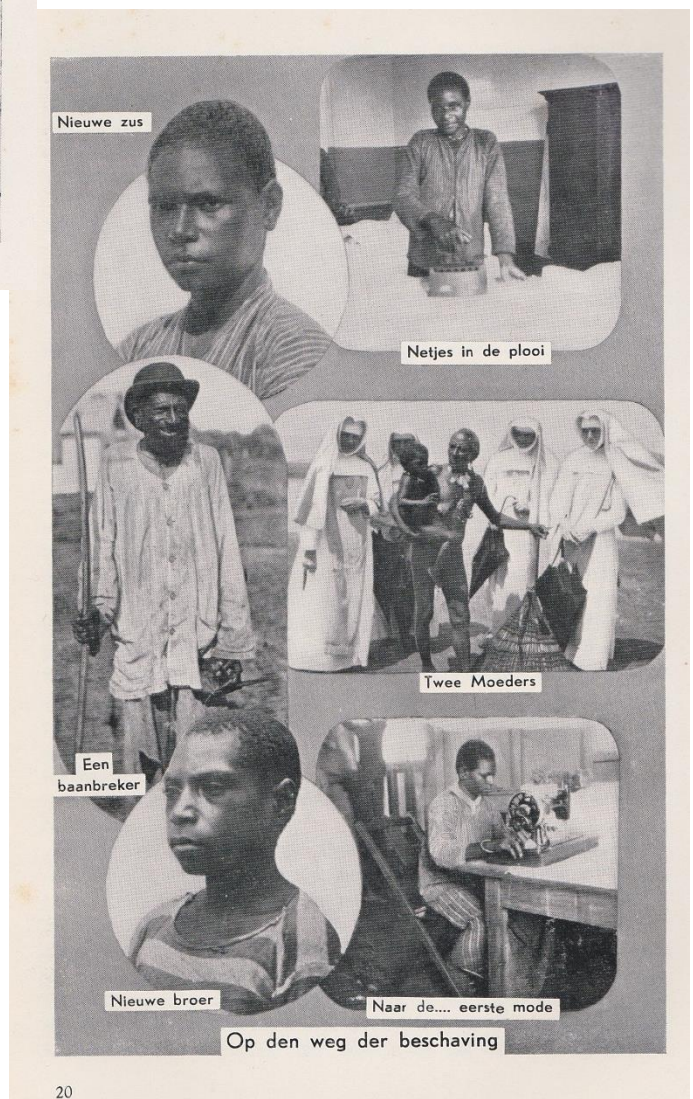
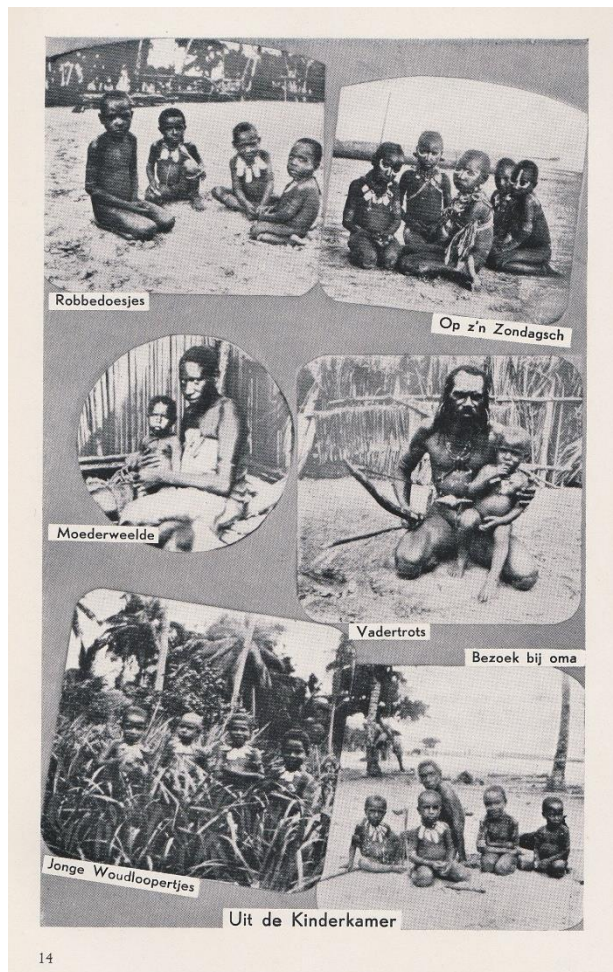
So, Geurtjens's *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's* was unique both in featuring a large amount of photographs of children in Marind dress, as well as in the way in which the pictures were edited. But what was the meaning behind the illustrations? What message were they meant to convey? As mentioned before, the presentation of the photographs in the book is reminiscent of the fashion of a family album. This is caused by several factors. First of all, the images are presented as snap shots of daily life. The scenes in most of the photographs are mundane, alternated with some special occasions, for example in the plate shown in Figure 54. The large majority of the pictures might be classified as portraits, especially because of the clear posing, but also because most people look directly into the lens. Overall, the images are personal and show mostly personal elements of life. However, the scenes in the photographs also seem highly constructed: the posing of the people is more obviously orchestrated than in photographs by other photographers. The scenes are presented as glimpses of everyday life, with the plates bearing titles such as 'Uit de kleuterwereld' (Fig. 53), or 'Uit de kinderkamer' (Fig. 56). This purported everyday life seems to be modelled as closely as possible to the everyday life of the intended Dutch reader. This impression is reinforced by the captions of the individual photographs, most of which have very strong Dutch connotations. Take for example the two toddlers receiving the names 'Dientje' and 'Mientje' (Fig. 53), the typical expressions like 'Zuurpruimertje', 'Houw en trouw' (Fig. 53), or 'Robbedoesjes' (Fig. 56), recognisable scenes as 'Bij moeders pappot' (Fig. 55), 'Jonge woudloopertjes', 'Bezoek bij oma' (Fig. 56), and even inappropriate and incorrect terms describing cultural manifestations such as 'Opoe' (Fig. 55), 'Tamboer', and 'Buffet' (Fig. 54). Through these peculiar captions, the scenes in the photographs are constantly compared to their supposed Dutch counterparts. The images, although depicting Marind-anim mostly in their own socio-cultural environment, are thus continuously placed in the context of Dutch socio-cultural expectations. In some instances, the contrast is so sharp that the captions become ironic and perhaps even ridiculing: in the picture of the young girls in Figure 56 for instance, described as 'Op z'n zondagsch', or in case of the elderly woman posing with the four Sisters in the next illustration.

A second aspect of the illustrations which makes them resemble pictures a family album, is the focus on personal relations and familial ties as a central element in the photographs depicting children. Especially plates 53, 55, and 56 show the children together with either supposed friends and siblings, or older caretakers, such as parents and other family members. Through the captions, these familial relations are unambiguously presented as being those of a nuclear family: 'Bij moeders

Figs. 52, 53 (upper row); 54, 55 (lower row)



Figs. 56 & 57



pappot' and 'Huiselijk geluk' (Fig. 55), 'Moederweelde' and 'Vadertrots' (Fig. 56). The Marind-anim actually lived in separate men's and women's houses, and the children often had a wide range of caretakers functioning as mentors, such as the brothers of the mother.²⁵⁶ The missionaries and the Dutch government were opposed to this system and pressured the Marind to start living in one-family households. By presenting the social units of the Marind-anim according to a nuclear and extended family structure, while at same time also depicting socio-cultural elements inherent to Marind society like the transitional rites ('De eerste glorie', Fig. 54) or the separate huts for giving birth ('Een booswichtje', Fig. 55), the illustrations in *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's* form a peculiar mix. The images depicting socio-cultural elements of Marind society, are in fact the only illustrations which refer to – and correspond with – specific parts of the text. This highlights the feeling that the images were chosen for a separate purpose. Again, it might have been an attempt to familiarise the Dutch reader with an unfamiliar culture. However, it could also be that Geurtjens only showed those cultural elements which were acceptable to him, while obscuring others.

Finally, the individual photographs show little to no foreign elements. The children are, unlike in other publications, not portrayed as pupils of the missionaries or students of the schools. In fact, the influence of the mission and the Dutch government is absent in the majority of the images. Instead of under the wing of the missionaries or Catholic teachers appointed by the mission, the caretakers – and thus the ones raising and shaping the children – shown in the illustrations are the family and tribe members of the children. The children are also depicted amongst and with their peers. In other words, the youth is shown in the context of their own people, rather than as a completely separate element which must be guarded from the corrupting influence the non-Catholic Marind were supposed to be. Furthermore, the pictures even show the children as active participants of Marind society, partaking in rituals and celebrations.

However, while many of the photographs do not show the children in the context of the mission when considered separately, a completely different message comes to the surface when regarding the book as a whole. As stated before, the plates are shown here in the same order as they appear in the book, and the very first image (illustration 52) the reader is confronted with is already a highly symbolic one. The picture shows Geurtjens himself, wearing somewhat shabby clothes, holding two young toddlers firmly pressed against his chest. Geurtjens is smiling broadly in the lens, but the two children have turned their faces and upper bodies away from him and look ill at ease. Both seem to be wearing necklaces corresponding to their age groups. The background of the photograph has been removed. The image is captioned 'De Engeltjes der Parochie', referring to the young children. Here, the influence of the mission could not be clearer. The children are literally in

²⁵⁶ On the *binahor*- and *yarang*-parents, see Van Baal, *Dema*, 117-121.

the hands, in the grasp even, of the missionary. Denoted as members of the parish by the caption, the young Marind are completely isolated from their kinfolk in this images. What was to be their future becomes clear in the very last plate, titled 'Op den weg der beschaving' (illustration 57). On the road towards this 'civilisation', all elements of Marind dress have been replaced by Western clothing. The 'new sisters' and 'new brothers' of the reader wear their hair cropped short, do not have their ears and nose pierced, and wear shirts and blouses. The emphasis on clothing could not be stronger in this final plate. Two photographs of pupils of the girl's boarding school are included. One shows a young woman behind a sewing machine, apparently working diligently on 'the first fashion'. Another photograph depicts a young woman with a flatiron in her hand, smiling radiantly in the direction of the camera. The image is captioned 'Netjes in de plooi', which can refer both to the linen she is ironing, as well as to the boys and girls of the boarding schools, whose 'rough patches' have been straightened and smoothed out by the missionaries.

The two images which show in what ways the girls and young women of the boarding school were educated, both concern the tailoring and maintaining of clothing. Sewing formed an important, if not the most important, part of the curriculum and had 'the double role of teaching women to control their bodies, particularly their hands, and of supplying clothing to cover the naked bodies'.²⁵⁷ Furthermore, needlework was associated with many 'civilised' values, such as concentration, preciseness, calm, and patience.²⁵⁸ The pictures show a supposed betterment from the earlier, 'primitive' state: not only are the pupils clothed, they are learning to manufacture their own garments. The most outward sign of their 'civilised' state was not imposed on them, but came from within, was a product of their own hands. True and complete conversion.²⁵⁹ Still, their European clothing is virtually the only way in which the 'trailblazers' 'on the road towards civilisation' can be told apart from their 'uncivilised' counterparts in the other plates. The two portraits of the young woman and the boy of the boarding schools are also divergent for another reason, however. The children in the photographs used in the earlier plates, all look in the direction of either the camera or the photographer. What is more, they all have expressive faces, with some even smiling. In contrast, the 'new sister and brother' do not only have their gaze and heads averted, but also wear bland and almost bleak expressions on their faces. They mark the end of a linear narrative throughout the illustrations in *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's*, which started with the two babies in the arms of Geurtjens and ends with the boy and girl on the brink of adulthood, still firmly in the care of the mission. Although

²⁵⁷ Richard Eves, 'Colonialism, corporeality and character. Methodist missions and the refashioning of bodies in the pacific', *History and Anthropology* 10 (1996), 106.

²⁵⁸ Eliza F. Kent, Books and Bodices. Material Culture and Protestant Missions in Colonial South India', in: Jamie S. Scott and Gareth Griffiths (eds.), *Mixed Messages. Materiality, Textuality, Missions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 81.

²⁵⁹ Cf. the distinction between *performing* and *attaining* faith that Christophe Rippe discusses in relation to missionary accounts for propaganda purposes: Rippe, "'Histrionic Zulus'", 181.

the illustrations used between the first and final plate are more ambiguous and seem to depict life without influence of the mission, the final plates leaves no mistake about what is to be the future of the Marind-anim.

There is a lot going on in the illustrations in *Onder the Kaja-Kaja's*. Both the photographs and the accompanying captions can often be interpreted in various ways. At the time of release, the reception of the book was very positive. Geurtjens was already a well-known figure in the Catholic part of the Netherlands, and *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's* was reviewed and discussed in almost all Catholic media, as well as in various other newspapers and periodicals.²⁶⁰ *De Haagsche Post*, *De Limburger Koerier*, and *De Tijd* even dedicated an entire page to the book, with the latter two newspapers reprinting two and five plates from the book respectively. The reviews were overwhelmingly positive. The work was described as moving, interesting, candid, 'as captivating as a novel', and Geurtjens was universally praised for his humour, talent as a writer, and his 'warm hart'.²⁶¹ *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's* sold well and a German edition appeared in 1935.²⁶²

The distinctive style of the book also attracted some criticism. Especially Van Baal denounces the work for failing to contribute to a scientific understanding of the Marind-anim: 'A certain section of the public may have appreciated his jokes, but the anthropologist cannot help feeling inclined to avail himself of the rare opportunity to quote Queen Victoria, saying: "We are not amused"'.²⁶³ It must be noted, however, that Van Baal here completely disregards the introduction to the book, which states that it is not intended as ethnographical research, and that *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's* is still cited in Van Baal's *Dema* several times.²⁶⁴

The illustrations of the books were unanimously lauded in the contemporary commentaries. Various reviews single out the photographs as 'splendid' or 'gorgeous',²⁶⁵ while the captions were seen as 'entertaining and enjoyable'.²⁶⁶ An article in the *Delftsche Courant* stated the following:

²⁶⁰ A selection of the reviews of 1933: *Utrechts Nieuwsblad*, 10-11-1933; *Soerabaijasch Handelsblad*, 02-06-1934; *Het Vaderland*, 10-12-1933; *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 02-11-1933; *Haagsche Courant*, 02-12-1933; *Provinciale Geldersche en Nijmeegsche Courant*, 13-09-1933; *Nieuwe Apeldoornsche Courant*, 25-11-1933; *Delftsche Courant*, 09-10-1933; *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, 04-11-1933; *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 07-10-1933; *De Zuid-Willemsvaart*, 16-11-1933; *De Tijd*, 29-10-1933; *De Limburger Koerier*, 14-10-1933; *Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 11-10-1933; *Nieuwe Venlosche Courant*, 26-09-1933; *Nieuwe Venlosche Courant*, 27-09-1933; *De Indische Courant*, 31-10-1933; *De Haagsche Post* [cited on blurb]; *Het Koloniaal Weekblad* [cited on blurb].

²⁶¹ *Provinciale Geldersche en Nijmeegsche Courant*, 13-09-1933; *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, 04-11-1933; *Haagsche Courant*, 02-12-1933.

²⁶² H. Geurtjens m.s.c., *Unter den Kaja-Kajas von Sud Neuguinea*. (Paderborn: Ferd. Schöningh, 1935).

²⁶³ Van Baal, *Dema*, 7.

²⁶⁴ He heavily relies on Geurtjens dictionary, as his 'own knowledge of the language is not sufficient' (page 7) and even calls Geurtjens and Wirz his 'main sources' on the religious concepts of the Marind-anim (page 196).

²⁶⁵ *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 11-10-1933; *Soerabaijasch Handelsblad*, 02-06-1934; *De Zuid-Willemsvaart*, 16-11-1933; *Limburgsch Dagblad*, 07-10-1933; *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 02-11-1933; *Delftsche Courant* 09-10-1933.

²⁶⁶ *Soerabaijasch Handelsblad*, 02-06-1934.

‘[Een boek] met vele zeer goede, zeer geestige, zeer barmhartige foto’s. [...] Bij elke schets vrijwel zijn passende plaatsjes. Beiden, tekst en beeld, getuigen, schoon de schrijver zich op den achtergrond houdt, van diens groote liefde voor zijn medemenschen’.²⁶⁷

Overall, it can be concluded that there are considerable differences in how photographs of children were used to illustrate the publications by the congregation and the individual missionaries. Especially the ‘context’ in which the children are presented – mission, school, villages, family, childhood – diverges significantly. But there are also clear similarities. The most poignant of these is the narrative of linear progress which is inherent in the illustrations in the books and journals. Even though it differs how the children were portrayed throughout the publications, all eventually present an unambiguous outlook on the future, in which the children are ‘neatly’ dressed in Western clothes and raised firmly ‘in the hands of’ the mission. In the photographs which depict this vision of the future, all ties to Marind society seem to have been severed: any elements of Marind dress have disappeared, and the kin of the children has disappeared from view. This narrative is most clearly present in the *Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart*. Whereas photographs of children in Marind dress were still used in the early years of the mission, these were increasingly replaced by children in Western clothing. Subsequently, the children were no longer denoted as ‘Kaja-Kaja’ or ‘Marind’, but as students of the schools in the captions. In the other MSC journal, the *Almanak van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart*, the mission was not the dominant element in the pictures. The children are more often portrayed as members Marind society. Yet, there is still an undeniable underlying narrative when looking at the illustrations throughout the years. Slowly but steadily, the number of children in Western clothing increases, and the children are gradually stronger rooted in the sphere of school and church.

Illustrations in books and articles by the individual missionaries, like Van de Kolk and Vertenten, were mostly similar to those in the *Annalen*. There are two notable exceptions. The first was an article that Henricus Nollen wrote for *Anthropos* in 1909. Here, the photographs are used to support his research on the ‘*ornements distinctifs*’ of the Marind-anim. The images of the children are framed in fundamentally different ways than was customary in missionary journals, showing them as – and for the sake of – being Marind-anim and being different, rather than potential converts. The other exception are the popular books by Henricus Geurtjens. Geurtjens presented his photographs in a unique, scrapbook-like way, accompanied by ironic and silly captions. There was a strong focus on the young population in the illustrations, captured in various innocent or even ‘cute’ poses. Almost all of the people in the illustrations in Geurtjens’s books were depicted in Marind

²⁶⁷ *Delftsche Courant* 09-10-1933.

dress. There was also substantial focus on cultural manifestations of the Marind-anim. Ironically, out of all the publications discussed, the binary opposition between 'Marind dress = uncivilised' and 'Western dress = civilised' is perhaps most strongly present in Geurtjens's *Onder de Kaja-Kaja's*. The final plate in the book, presented as a glimpse of the future prospects of the Marind-anim, leaves no doubt about the fact that 'civilisation' can only be found amongst people in Western clothing.

Conclusion

From the photographic encounter from which they spawned, to the publications in which they were reproduced and the albums in which they are preserved: the images discussed in this thesis have travelled long and far. The previous chapters have shown how photography in various stages or contexts functioned and can be understood as valuable part of the missionary movement. This research started with the following question: *How is the missionary civilising project on the former colony of Netherlands New Guinea manifested through the practice of missionary photography of children in the period 1906 – 1935?*

The central focus on children was inspired by recent attention to the pivotal role that youth played in civilising projects worldwide. Missionaries and other colonial ‘civilisers’ considered children to be the most effective instruments of change: innocent, malleable, and quick to adapt. By influencing the young population, the teachings of the mission would be passed on. As there are still few studies focusing explicitly on children as the objects of civilising practices, this thesis contributes to newly formed insights in colonial history.

In the analysis of missionary photography in the three sites where the meaning of an image is determined, two different lines are clearly discernible. On the one hand, Western dress is unambiguously presented as a prerequisite for ‘civilisation’. Although European clothing was never mandatory for visiting the mission station or attending the village schools, it played an important role in dividing the Catholic community from the rest of the population. Even when the majority of a collection of photographs in a publication or in an album freely and nonchalantly portrayed Marind dress, there was almost always a strong underlying narrative. This narrative presented a story of change and implied progress under the influence of the missionaries. Marind dress – and by extension, other elements of Marind culture that were deemed improper by the mission and the colonial government – was supposedly becoming obsolete, to be replaced with Western clothing and Catholic morals.

On the other hand, many of the photographs also betray a keen interest in and an aesthetic appreciation of the children in Marind dress. While several of the pictures depicting children in Western dress which were reproduced in various publications can no longer be found in the archive today, it does contain many well-kept photographs of people in Marind dress. The most visually outstanding photographs were coloured in with great care, pictures of children were put on display in the houses of the missionaries, and the Fathers and Brothers MSC posed together with children in Marind dress. The photographic encounter was a space of cultural exchange and the photographs provided a window on an unfamiliar culture for Western viewers. The missionaries were conscious of

the power of the pictures and used them to move people, both on the south coast of New Guinea and in the Netherlands.

However, even in the publications where Marind dress is unrestrainedly depicted in the individual photographs, in the end the belief that there can be no civilisation without 'clothing' is consistently reinforced. The missionaries postulated that it was not the dress itself that was the issue, but rather the various 'harmful' *adat* which it was connected to. After his return from the mission, Geurtjens wrote frequently on the relation between nudity and morality,²⁶⁸ and even gave weekly lessons on 'the morality of native peoples' in the Catholic library of Tilburg.²⁶⁹ He described the issue as follows:

'Op sommige plaatsen bestaat een nationale dracht, die nauw met de adat (de gebruiken) verbonden is. [...] Door de onschuldige mode te treffen, krijgen heel wat minder onschuldige gebruiken, welke ermee vasthangen, onrechtstreeks ook een knak en dat is juist de bedoeling. [...] Door de misbruiken, welke aan de huwelijksplechtigheid verbonden waren, werd de bruid onvermijdelijk besmet [met een vreeselijke besmettelijke venerische ziekte]. Een bruiloft volgens eigen gebruiken stond dus voor haar gelijk met een doodvonnis. Dan begaven de verloofden zich in stilte naar den missionaris, met het verzoek, hen te ontdoen van hun nationalen opschik en hen te kleeden. Door het afleggen dier nationale kenteekenen en het aannemen van een vreemden tooi, stelden zij zich openlijk buiten hun gemeenschap en waren dus niet meer aan dezelve gebruiken onderworpen. Ze trouwden dan in het modeldorp der missie, bleven gezond en kregen gezonde kinderen. Zoo was [op Zuid N. Guinea] het kleedingvraagstuk uitgegroeid tot een kwestie van leven of dood.

Zoolang de inlander zich houdt aan zijn nationalen opschik, behoort hij tot zijn primitieve, stokstijf conservatieve maatschappij en is hij gehouden er alle gebruiken en misbruiken van te volgen. Door het aannemen van kleeën, treedt hij openlijk uit die maatschappij en is daardoor ook ontheven van vele minder gewenschte adat-voorschriften.'²⁷⁰

In other words, it was not (just) the dress that was the problem, but rather the entirety of the culture which it represented. Dress was thought to prevent assimilation, while a few simple Western garments would completely sever the ties which bound people to their society and its *adat*.

²⁶⁸ H. Geurtjens m.s.c., *Zijn plaats onder de zon* (Roermond-Maaseik: J.J. Romen & Zonen, 1941), 41-42; Geurtjens, *Oost is oost*, 184-185; Geurtjens, 'Conventionele moraal'; Geurtjens, 'Nacktheit und Moral'.

²⁶⁹ *Nieuwe Tilburgsche Courant*, 14-11-1936.

²⁷⁰ Geurtjens, *Zijn plaats onder de zon*, 41-42.

Although it seems unlikely that a change of attire really ensured such a smooth transition between two different cultures as presented by Geurtjens above, dress undeniably played a role of paramount importance in colonial identity and consequently in colonial civilisation practices. And not just colonial identity: dress still serves as a cultural marker today. In the Netherlands, the discussion on Islamic headscarves for example has of course nothing to do with the piece of fabric itself, but rather with the morals and practices of the culture it represents, which are by some considered to be irreconcilable with 'our' 'Western' values.

The role of dress as cultural marker and children as targets are just a few one of the topics addressed in this thesis about which there still much more to be said. By focusing on missionary photography, the civilising project is approached through sources that present a less dichotomised account than the missionary narrative found in the textual sources. Visual sources are seldom at the heart of historical research. By adapting advanced visual methodologies used in anthropological studies for historical research, this research could draw from very rich source material. The analysis took into account how images perform different functions in different context, but also considered how photography functioned on different sites: the site of production, the site of the image, and the site of viewing. The act of photography was a both an intercultural encounter and a practice of exchange, entailing different modes of agency of the photographer and the photographic subject. Photography not only facilitated initial contact, but also enabled the missionaries to connect to all layers of Marind society, including well-guarded groups such as the *kivasoms*. Furthermore, it seems that the act of capturing the likeness of another, helped to form bonds. The Marind-anim took pride in their appearance and dress, and were often happy to pose. The missionaries, in turn, came to appreciate some of the elements of Marind culture they were so keen to depict. Finally, the images were used to influence and emotionally move the Marind viewer, as seen in the 'showing' arranged by Geurtjens for his visitors.

Relying almost exclusively on visual sources entailed that more traditional types of sources, such as written accounts of the missionaries, could not be studied in great detail. Given the limited time for conducting the research, the historical and political context of the period under research has not been explored as thoroughly as I would have liked to have done. A lot of time was spent in researching, dating, and interpreting the photographs. This project was only possible because of earlier work on a database of the MSC photography on Dutch New Guinea. The considerable amount of time and effort which have gone into this were paramount for the research. Although I would not change my working method, I feel that good ground has been laid for deeper analysis involving the historical context in greater detail.

During my research, I was confronted with many unexplored areas in the field of colonial and missionary civilising practices in the former Dutch colonies. As a Master's Thesis, this research was

limited and aspects like gender, regional differences, and social stratification, to name a few, could not be taken into consideration – even though the source material does prove valuable for these research topics. Many collections of photographs in (missionary) archives have not been disclosed by researchers yet. This provides opportunities, as this thesis has shown that – provided that the photographs are interpreted with great care and an appropriate methodology is used – photography constitutes a rich source for colonial history.

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Archive

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Appendix: Publications checked for reproductions of MSC photographs

This list does not include minor publications, such as the various short articles by the MSC missionaries collected in the archive, and periodicals checked sporadically, e.g. the various Catholic newspapers. Contemporary publications featuring reproductions of MSC photographs have been excluded from this overview as well.

Journals

Annalen van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart, 1904 – 1956

Almanak van O.L. Vrouw van het H. Hart, 1904 – 1952

Algeme(e)ne Missiekalender, 1926-1929, 1934-1937, 1941-1942, 1946-1949, 1951, 1953, 1955-1964, 1974

Publications by the missionaries

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Publications by other inhabitants of Dutch New Guinea

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Wirz, Paul, *Die Marind-anim von Holländisch-Süd-Neu-Guinea* (New York: Arno Press, 1978).