

## THE FAMILY BACKGROUND AND PERSONALITY OF JAN TOOROP

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*Jan Toorop (1858-1928) is regarded as the most important Dutch artist of the period between Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890) and Piet Mondriaan (1872-1944). Whereas the volume of publications on both these artists is enormous, the actual research on Toorop's life and work is still only in the preliminary stage, though more studies are beginning to appear. Investigation into Toorop's family background is of some importance, as Toorop believed that his artistry could be explained by his varied origins.*

Exact biographical knowledge of the earliest years in the life of Jan Toorop, and of the Toorop family as a whole, is difficult to collect, principally because the family originated in the Dutch East Indies. At the time of Jan's birth, the Toorops had already been settled in the East for nearly a century. Because doing research in Indonesia is difficult, particularly on an art historical subject, one is dependent on secondary sources located in the Netherlands. Fortunately, these are more abundant than one might expect.

Johannes Theodorus Toorop was born December 20, 1858, at the HOOFDPLAATS of Poerworedjo in the RESIDENTIE Bagelen<sup>1</sup>. The town Poerworedjo and the administrative district of Bagelen are located in the area of Kedoe on Central Java, not far from the island's southern coast. Jan, as he was called, was the third of five children. Charles, the eldest boy, was born in 1856 and Maria Theodora in 1857. After Jan came two more sisters, Elize in 1860 and Marie Magdalena in 1862. They all were born at Poerworedjo. For some time considerable confusion has existed concerning the year and the place of Toorop's birth. In his first letter to his future wife Annie Hall<sup>2</sup> he was already trying to rectify the confusion about the date of his birth and his ancestry. Even on this occasion Toorop is ambiguous, because although he states his correct age: "Je suis devenu 26 ans et très loin encore de 30. Je *peux te montrer* mon acte que j'ai justement avec moi." At the same time he writes: "tu sais bien que j'ai le même âge que toi et je *ne mente ça pas*." Annie was born in March, 1860 and Jan in December, 1858. Later, Albert Plasschaert, the art critic, was to point out the confusion about the birth date, to which several factors contributed.<sup>3</sup> Most important the notification of Toorop's birth appeared only in the 1860 edition of the *Indische Almanak*, which had not been published during the years 1858 and 1859. Thus it frequently was assumed that the artist had been born in 1860. Indeed the register of the students of the RIJKS ACADEMIE reads:

Jan Theodoor Toorop  
Born at Muntok (Banka)  
December 20, 1860<sup>4</sup>

In contrast, the Registry Office of the city of

Amsterdam states: "Born: December 20, 1857 Muntok".<sup>5</sup> This may, of course, simply be regarded as administrative error. However, the artist already in his youth was sensitive about his age, which may have resulted from a knowledge that he was considerably older than his comrades at school and at the academy. On his admission to the latter institution in 1880, thus at the beginning of his artistic career, Toorop was almost twenty-two years of age; his future friend Jan Veth (1864-1925), admitted at the same time, was only sixteen years old. True, Antoon Der Kinderen (1859-1925) was only one year younger, but he arrived in Amsterdam with a much more solid preliminary training in art.

It is also noteworthy that for a considerable length of time Toorop thought he had been born at Muntok, on the small tin producing island of Banka located to the east of Sumatra. Only later did he realize that he had come from Java. As we shall see, the earliest and happiest recollections of his youth date from the years spent at Muntok.

We encounter the Toorop patronymic for the first time at Amsterdam in 1730. A certain Jan Torop was baptized there as an Evangelical Lutheran on March 5.<sup>6</sup> That we are dealing here with the same family may be concluded from the identical Christian name Jan. That the family was not Dutch in origin but Scandinavian may perhaps be surmised from the Lutheran religion and from the rather un-Dutch name Torop. As early as 1762 a certain Abraham To(o)rop arrived in the Dutch East Indies from Rotterdam. He came as a sailor with the ship *Amsterdam*.<sup>7</sup> From this time onward, one can trace fairly well the descendants of the Toorop family on Java.<sup>8</sup> The paternal grandparents have been identified as Johannes Bernardus Toorop (1806-1852) and Wilhelmina Jeanetta Hartelieff (ca. 1808-1830). Christoffel Theodorus Toorop, father of Jan, was born on December 3, 1827, at Pekalongan on the north coast of Central Java. By this time the Toorops had become administrators in the civil service. Jan's father eventually became *Assistant Resident*, a responsible position with considerable prestige.

The maternal grandparents also came from Southeast Asia, but were of partially English origin. Grandfather Edward Cooke was born on Prince of Wales Island about 1790.<sup>9</sup> He was first captain of a ship and later owned a sugar factory in the *Residentie* of Banjoemas, just south-west of Poerwokerto, on Java. On March 17, 1830 he married Maria Magdalena Wolzijver (born ca. 1810). From this marriage Jan's mother, Maria Magdalena, was born on July 23, 1837.<sup>10</sup>

Although the Toorops were of Dutch nationality, spoke Dutch, and belonged to the Dutch Reformed faith, neither Jan's grandparents nor his parents ever left the Indonesian Archipelago for Europe. The

family regarded itself as European, having descended from European colonizers, they were educated in Dutch schools, and the men were in Dutch service. The Toorops associated with other descendants of European settlers and naturally also with the Europeans themselves. Toorop's father, on the other hand, being often stationed in remote areas, had a number of friends among the Asiatic inhabitants; for example, Saïd Ali, the Arabic captain of the *Iskandria*<sup>11</sup>, or Mohamed Sjafi-oedin, the Sultan of Sambas "who is a good friend of mine".<sup>12</sup> And one should not underrate the Oriental character of the family itself. In photographs one observes that both of Jan Toorop's parents had Asiatic features and a dark complexion. Grandmother Cooke seemed to have been of partially Chinese origin.<sup>13</sup> This explains the Chinese features in the early crayon portrait by Toorop of his mother. But the main non-European traits in the family must have been Javanese, however complex the origins of the population of this island are. Jan himself was rather dark. In a letter to Jan by Toorop, Sr., describing the Sultan of Sambas, we read: "The Sultan has the same facial colour as you and the colour of his eyes are also the same as yours."<sup>14</sup> And the Belgian poet Émile Verhaeren saw him as "ce grand garçon au teint olivâtre", and claimed that the passers-by in London "s'étonnent de sa chevelure noire aux reflets d'acier".<sup>15</sup>

For our purpose it is worthwhile to note the artist's attitude toward his own origins. This changed in time and had a certain impact on his art. Jan Toorop attempted to attribute not only his artistic impulses but also the particular expression formed in his art to his mixed European and Asiatic heritage. At the beginning he wished to emphasize his European heritage. In his first preserved letter to Annie he even goes so far as to establish descent from the knighthood:

...je peux reacheter notre arme...si nous voulons nous pouvons réclamer pour titre de chevalier. C'est peut-être déjà des siècles que ça n'existe plus, mais c'est ce que j'ai entendue...<sup>16</sup> [sic]

Jan in the same letter defends himself against "des petits blagues pareilles qu'on cherche absolument des mauvais choses de moi" from the direction of Annie's English relatives. In their righteous and Victorian attitude they were more intolerant of him than were the less prejudiced Dutch and Belgian friends, and this is reflected in a letter from Annie to her fiancé shortly before their marriage:

C'est dégoûtant les entendre toujours dire que les étrangers sont que les imbéciles, et les Anglais des demi-dieux. Ce n'est pas logique, nous sommes tous, une famille, et si tu étais un noir nègre de l'Afrique occidentale, ou un demi-dieu?? Anglais, ce me bien égale, si tu est intelligent et l'homme que j'aime ça c'est la chose principale.<sup>17</sup> [sic]

This negative attitude was new to Toorop. It made him reticent and defensive and his antipathy to England and the British during these years is explained by it. In November, 1892, Paul Verlaine strikes a different note: "Un superbe Javanais brun de teint aux yeux sombres extraordinairement doux, à la barbe épaisse et molle, bleue à force d'être noir".<sup>18</sup> By then the Oriental heritage had become an asset.

Eventually our artist did not mind creating a little myth about his appearance, as in William Rothenstein's account of 1894:

One of my first sitters was Jan Toorop, the Dutch symbolist. He had a magnificent head. The son of a Dutch administrator and a Javanese princess, he had the physical glamour of a portrait by Titian or Tintoretto. I painted a one-sitting study - a small canvas later acquired by the Tate Gallery.<sup>19</sup>

The claim to a princess for a mother and to the arms of knighthood seem to derive from the same lively imagination. Thus one notices in Toorop a changed attitude toward his origins between the mid-1880's and the mid-1890's. By the end of this time, the dual heritage is seen as partly responsible for the merging of the European and Asiatic visions in his art. And perhaps it was during this time as well that the idea of the Scandinavian strain in his blood evolved: "Toorop thought that his family, originally called *Thorup*, derived from Norway".<sup>20</sup> Charley Toorop, the artist's daughter, and Miek Janssen also expressed this thought.<sup>21</sup> But they only reflect the ideas of the artist himself:

— Look my father descended from a Norwegian, my mother herself was named Cook, that still appears European, but their grandparents already were born in the East Indies, particularly on Banka, and there everyone is family of the Chinese, particularly Chinese and then also Javanese blood. Things like this you know, because it has been told to you, but my feeling, my art, how shall I say: my moods (stemming) keep the centre between the Oriental and the Scandinavian.<sup>22</sup>

The curious discrepancy between Toorop's interest in hereditary factors and his lack of knowledge of, or even interest in, the real facts about his family can only be explained by the preconceived ideas he had and by which he tried to explain the apparent origins of his artistry. This is more precisely formulated in the writings of Belinfante-Ahn who quotes the artist:

Genius is the accumulation or concentration of all possible hereditary influences of the ancestry in such strong measure that it has to express itself, said Toorop, and he also regards instinct and genius as two factors which are also related to each other.<sup>23</sup>

In this articulate exposition we must, of course, beware of the interpretation of the author. Nevertheless, these lines express relatively well preoccupations and ideas held by Jan Toorop throughout his career.

As a consequence of the above discussion, the question should be asked: what experiences in the East Indies, during his childhood, could have been of importance for Toorop's art? The answer is not simple. First of all, as noted above, Jan does not seem to have remembered much of his earliest life on Java. This is not surprising, for the Toorop family left Java for Banka in 1863. There Toorop, Sr., hoped to improve his salary and his chances as an administrator at the government-run tin mines. The salary as recorder (*Griffier in Functie*) at the *Landraad* at Poerworedjo was not sufficient to maintain and bring up a family of five children.<sup>24</sup> Jan was not yet five years old and could not possibly remember much of his environment. Java at this point was thus not very important to him. On Banka the family lived in two different towns, first at Muntok in the northwest and later on at Soengei Liat in the

northeast. But the island is not particularly rich in art treasures, there are no large temples, and it is questionable if their presence would have interested the boy.<sup>25</sup> Toorop's only known painting of the East Indies, *The River Soengei on Banka* (P8415), a large oil of 1884, shows a barren tropical landscape with no particular features. Again five years later, in May, 1868, Toorop, Sr., sent his son Jan, in the care of Saïd Ali, captain of the *Iskandria*, to Batavia to prepare for his schooling in Holland.<sup>26</sup> The boy's earliest letters date from this time at Batavia.<sup>27</sup> Jan was nine and a half years old. Although he lacked the development a Dutch boy from Amsterdam or The Hague would have had, he was sensitive to his environment. His letters repeatedly display an interest in drawing and music. Batavia, the capital of the Dutch East Indies on the north coast of West Java, had a relatively large European community and was obviously the most westernized spot of the Archipelago. For the first time in his life the boy was exposed to such ambience. On the other hand, it does not seem that Jan saw, even during this time, much of Java beyond this city.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, particularly the impact of Banka had been greater than one would expect. In later life Toorop returns often to the memories of his youth:

— The East Indies have meant very much to me. The Indies cannot be left out (*weggedacht*) of the beautiful, half-Chinese environment on Banka and the Oriental nature there in the Indies brought me in contact with beauty for the first time. The dresses which work on your imagination, the beautiful materials, the mask-plays in the Chinese *Kampongs*...although I, of course, did not understand anything of it, for it all was in a kind of Chinese, nevertheless it made an enormous impression on me, even as a child.<sup>29</sup>

This, of course, is hindsight. However, Toorop's attachment to the East Indies never diminished, as the subjects of the early works already show.<sup>30</sup> Jan spent just fifteen months at Batavia. Late in August of 1869, at the age of ten and a half years, he was sent to Holland, never again to return to the country of his birth. The long journey around the Cape was made aboard the Dutch frigate *Cornelia* under Captain de Boer.<sup>31</sup>

The early childhood in the East Indies is not important for the direct influence it had on Toorop's artistic career. These years, however, gave the artist a natural and personal link with the Far East. And although he may not have remembered many specific details, it made him quite familiar with Oriental life and attitudes. Jan Toorop himself was in many ways an Oriental. In addition the East Indies assumed an increasingly important place in his thoughts and feelings, because it was augmented by the close contacts he maintained with the Archipelago through his own family.

After having traced the origins of the Toorop family in the East Indies, it is worth while to assess the personality of the artist. For this purpose the present writer has tried to make as much use as possible of contemporary documents. We therefore touch the difficult area of the insight contemporaries had into Toorop's character and his artistic achievement. Toorop had a somewhat elusive

and indefinable personality, although he favourably impressed most people with whom he came in contact. Jan Veth's memories go furthest back in time, and he writes:

My earliest memories of Jan Toorop...go back to 1881 ...that towards everyone obliging, but for all that more or less shy, at any rate retiring, young man, with his soft-*hautain* attitude, his gentle gesture and his bold-velvety glance, was Jan Toorop at the meetings of our at that time newly founded Society "Sint Lucas", where under the leadership of Der Kinderen, Van der Valk and Van Looy, we bravely had a jaw at art and literature, the dreamer Toorop was not particularly in the fore during the debates.<sup>32</sup>

Thus at the Amsterdam Academy he did not seem very active among the students, except that he once gave a talk about "Java and Javanese Art".<sup>33</sup> This reticence is the more remarkable since at Brussels (from September 1882 onward) the artist placed himself in the limelight. Toorop's earliest description of himself confirmed the defiant attitude towards others which Veth noticed:

J'ai beaucoup d'amis, heureusement et aussi beaucoup d'ennemis l'imbeciles. Depuis Paris jusqu'à Amsterdam. Je ne suis pas une personne pour être ami avec tout le monde, seulement avec ceux qui ont de l'esprit et de coeur. — Un artiste une fois certain pour combattre pas seulement sa vie mais son art, de celui là on a déjà dit une masse...une masse de bêtises.<sup>34</sup> [sic]

and indeed the correspondence with Annie Hall, the only person to whom he expressed himself freely, shows a persistent and dedicated artist, who is often quite naive, inexperienced and bewildered about the society in which he lives. He refuses to accept its injustices, of which he often feels himself a victim. Much of his attitude can be explained by the fact that, ever since his arrival in Europe, Toorop had had to defend himself. First because of bad results at school, then because of his convictions as an artist. From early on in Holland he had found little understanding, although no ill-will. In England, between 1884 and 1886, he found no understanding, and opposition from the art dealers and the Hall family. Only at Brussels did he find almost immediate approval of his ideas and attitudes. This explains his enthusiasm and open-heartedness there. And it supports the present writer's conviction that Toorop would never have returned to The Netherlands in 1890 if not forced to do so, mainly for financial reasons.

In 1902 Octave Maus, the Secretary of the Society *Les Vingt*, remembered:

During the five years he spent at Brussels I met him quite often at Mr. Edmond Picard's who liked the artist much because of his nature, the equability of his temper, the originality of his spirit and the kindness of his heart.<sup>35</sup>

More subtly, and with greater insight, the Belgian Painter William Degouve de Nuncques described the first encounter with his friend:

en ce moment [ca. 1884] il se révélait tel qu'il est encore aujourd'hui. Toorop est un délicieux grand enfant et il le restera jusqu'à la fin de sa vie, essentiellement bon, indulgent et tendre infiniment, concentré et expansif à la fois, sa nature comme sa production la désire que comme un grand artiste, dans le développement progressif de l'esprit il garde a bienheureuse naïveté, toute l'exubérance raffinée de race, parle haut, souverainement poète et musicien, il est donc de ceux qui possèdent cette complexité des dons similaires.<sup>36</sup> [sic]

But often Toorop continued to feel himself an

outsider, who was never entirely understood. And indeed his personality was not easy to grasp. In July, 1892, Henriëtte van der Schalk, who dedicated her first sonnets to Toorop, expressed herself to Albert Verwey as follows:

Yes Toorop, Toorop gave me a good day, Thursday...It surely had amused you - it amused us too...He was most cordial and talked, talked, talked all the time, so that in the evening I was dead tired. It is amusing to hear him about his earlier life, and how he made "quibbles" with everyone - I can never understand it, he seems so amiable. And it is beautiful to hear him about his art - his enthusiasm and his sureness now of being right. Sometimes it is a little confused, but what does that matter? has he not made the *rodeurs* and the old *dromers*? And *doing* is important; not saying.<sup>37</sup>

Much later the poetess remembered another trait of his character. She had sent him her first sonnet, written in only a few days:

I did not have to wait long. Already the next day Toorop came to thank me. He seemed highly pleased with my verses, this, however, did not mean anything; he completely lacked a critical sense and notwithstanding his strong intuition, he nevertheless was incapable of judging them.<sup>38</sup>

This weakness vis-a-vis his own art and that of others often placed the artist in a precarious position, sometimes even made him ridiculous, and as a consequence many doubted his sincerity and integrity. In the last ten or fifteen years of his life it made him the victim of sentimental feelings and attitudes both towards himself and others. It often gave the artistic expression of his deeply felt Roman Catholicism the cheap aspect of propaganda. Nothing has contributed more to the misunderstanding and rejection of Jan Toorop than this. It explains the devastating picture Aegidius Timmerman preserves for us:

...his nature was always amiable, I have never seen him angry, he talked scandal about no one, his fatalistic temper could not be disturbed by disappointment. "Kismet" was the combination which again and again unlocked his contentment...He was an artist at heart and a through and through clever draughtsman and a good colourist, but he possessed little originality and was only too easily inclined to take over new methods from others. If he discovered an artist who introduced something new, he copied it in his own fashion. We find in his work all kinds of influences. Pointillism, plein air, realism, im- and expressionism; Millet, Whistler, Signac, The Barbizon School, William Blake, Shannon and Ricketts, de Gouwe de Nuncques, Mancini, Monticelli; who is missing? His symbolism was naive and cheap and ready to hand. Only think of *De Drie Bruiden*, with the white rose of the virgin and the snake of that poisonous Eve, about the *Jonge Generatie* with that abominable, commonplace telegraph-pole and the babychair...the sweet melancholy of the thoughtless Catholic priests...it is too obvious and forces itself too much upon us to be original. With all his talent, Toorop had but little intelligence and much too vague notions about the really profound problems which touch our lives not to become superficial.

Timmerman continues about Toorop's "incomprehensible theories" and like Henriëtte van der Schalk observes:

Jan continuously argued and argued, but because he could express himself only badly, very soon he began to *schwärmen* and his argument became so confused that he did not understand it anymore himself. Then he said he could express it better in music, and sat down at the piano, which stood open in expectation, and fantasized with very pleasant melodies and chords.<sup>39</sup>

Of course, this negative attitude did not prevent

the sharp-tongued Timmerman from having himself portrayed by Jan Toorop. Neither did it prevent the latter from painting one of the finest Divisionist portraits of his critic.<sup>40</sup> And we must not forget that in the 1930's, when Aegidius Timmerman wrote his memories down, the antipathy towards the Symbolism of the 1890's was particularly strong.

Nevertheless, we can derive a certain picture of the artist himself from the sometimes diverse impressions of his contemporaries. Toorop had an amiable and happy personality and was essentially naive. However, he could be stubborn when he felt it necessary to defend his ideas. This has been observed particularly in his attitude towards the academies. Timmerman noticed a fatalistic tendency in Toorop's character. It may have become pronounced as the artist grew older, for earlier descriptions do not mention it. This fatalism could be seen as a part of Toorop's Oriental heritage. And we should never forget the Far Eastern roots of Toorop's character. That the artist had no strong intellectual inclinations becomes clear from the biography but also from the letters. However, to maintain that Toorop had little intelligence, as Timmerman does, seems to be based on a profound misunderstanding. The analytical intellect of Timmerman with its classical training could not grasp an attitude of mind which had its roots in the senses, as was the case with Toorop. Henriëtte van der Schalk understood the artist much better when she noticed his strong intuition. Toorop indeed often seems to have lacked a proper judgement of the artistic capacities of others. But this is not unusual among artists, even important ones. The greatest contradiction in the descriptions of Toorop's contemporaries is concerned with his artistic merit. Timmerman accuses him of little originality while Maus emphasizes his originality of spirit. Both judgements presuppose originality as an important criterion in deciding the merits of an artist. However, Toorop himself may not have had such an attitude. He was influenced by many nineteenth century artistic currents: The Hague School, Guillaume, Vogels, James Ensor and Divisionism, to mention only a few. But most artists undergo influences during their youth. On the other hand, we should not forget that Toorop in turn influenced other artists, particularly in The Netherlands. His name has almost become synonymous with the period in Dutch art between circa 1890 and circa 1910. Therefore the present writer prefers to agree with William Degouwe's observation about the complicated nature of Toorop's artistic personality.

In our attempt to see Jan Toorop's personality through the eyes of his contemporaries, religion has been mentioned several times. It is important to discuss its position in the artist's development, for little has been said about it by impartial observers. One must take into account that Toorop's religious experience took place against the background of the Roman Catholic revival in The Netherlands.

As mentioned before, the Toorop family belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church. And from the moment Jan enters the public records he is



designated thus.<sup>41</sup> Toorop's father does not seem to have been particularly religious. His matter-of-fact letters never mention the subject. They rather give the impression of having been written by a nineteenth century liberal. Toorop, Sr., had several Islamic friends, and he had reason to be free in his religious views in a largely non-Christian environment. More interested in the quality of the schools than in their religious affiliation, he sent his daughters to the Ursuline nuns at Batavia (Wetevreden).<sup>42</sup> Zon states that Jan was baptized at the age of eight before leaving for Batavia.<sup>43</sup> In the child's letters to his parents from there, he often invokes God's blessing. However, this should probably be interpreted as a formality, although it was not usual in the family. As a boy, Jan may have already had a religious sensitivity.

Only in 1885 do we again encounter such feelings in a letter. In June he wrote to Annie:

Je veux beaucoup travailler si Dieu, qui est partout dans la nature, me donne toujours la santé...Beaucoup travailler, surtout beaucoup observer et sentir les choses, pas d'après des problèmes ou des vieux livres ou sont des règles inventé par toutes sortes de petits esprits ou des gens fanatiques, non par les lois que Dieu a donné par les lois de la nature, qui parle pas mais qui fait sentir ceux qui ont de l'esprit.<sup>44</sup>

In England Toorop may have renewed his interest in religion. The Hall family was Anglican, and from what one can understand from Annie's somewhat superficial letters, this Anglicanism was more formalistic than deeply religious. But whereas Dutch Calvinism hardly could have inspired the sensitive young man, the Anglican Church may have been attractive. And Croydon, where Annie lived, was a centre of the Oxford Movement.<sup>45</sup> Although the letters to Annie often mention religious impulses as a basis for creativity, Toorop's work rarely has religious content in this early period. It has been maintained that the beginning of Toorop's conversion to Roman Catholicism occurred during the difficult year 1887. A nun of the *Hôpital Saint-Jean* at Brussels, where the artist was admitted, pointed him toward the Church.<sup>46</sup> It is indeed true that shortly afterwards the first nun appears in his work, in *De Bruid Der Kerk* exhibited at Pulchri Studio in the Hague in 1888.<sup>47</sup> But nuns, and with them religious subjects, became prominent only in 1891 in the *Rôdeurs* and much later still in *De Drie Bruiden*.

It is curious that in the public records at Katwijk, for April 22, 1890, the Toorops are already indicated as Roman Catholic,<sup>48</sup> for Jan Toorop's official conversion to the Roman Catholic Church took place only in 1905.<sup>49</sup> Perhaps Annie insisted that the high Anglican Church was much closer to Roman Catholicism than to the Dutch Reformed Church, and no official conversion took place in 1890. That his wife had considerable influence in religious matters is certain, and Mrs. Toorop-Hall converted to Rome before her husband.

For purposes of accuracy, another aspect of the spiritual experiences of the Toorop family should be mentioned. Miss J.E.M. Masthoff<sup>50</sup> reported to me, on February 19, 1968, that the artist's sister Marie was a writing medium (*Schrijvend Medium*), but Jan Toorop himself did not take part in any séances

because his wife would never have consented to this. Quite a different impression is given in the obituary of Mrs. Toorop-Hall:

It was curious that this woman, who had such a strong view of reality, on the other hand possessed a through and through Celtic spirit, full of fantasy, and believed as strongly in the reality of miracles and of all the supernatural. When Mrs. Toorop began to tell about her "miraculous" experiences, about appearances of ghosts and spherical influences, then she was in her element.<sup>51</sup>

On the other hand, at the very end of his life, the artist himself appears to have turned towards the religious experiences of his youth in the Far East. For according to the oldest grandson of Jan Toorop, the artist died as a real "Oriental" and refused priests at his deathbed.<sup>52</sup>

This brief discussion about Toorop's religion is primarily based on documents. Of course, this is not enough for an extensive discussion on this subject in relation to Toorop's art. Nevertheless, the present writer thought it important to present these facts as they highlight another aspect of Jan Toorop's complex personality.

#### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.H.B.	<i>Algemeen Handelsblad</i> , Dutch business paper.
CENTRAAL BUREAU VOOR GENEALOGIE	Genealogical Institute of The Netherlands at the Hague.
K.B.	<i>Koninklijke Bibliotheek</i> , Royal Library at the Hague.
N.R.C.	<i>Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant</i> , Rotterdam newspaper.
R.K.D.	<i>Rijksbureau Voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie</i> , The Netherlands Institute of Art History at The Hague.
T.C.	Toorop Collection: K.B. T.C. — Toorop Collection at The Royal Library, The Hague; T.C. R.K.D. — Toorop Collection at the Netherlands Institute of Art History, The Hague.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>*Indische Almanak 1860*, p. 42 and also K.B. T.C. C249.

<sup>2</sup>The letter can be dated shortly after Toorop's birthday on December 20, 1884.

<sup>3</sup>Albert Plasschaert: "J. Th. Toorop", *Kritiek van Beeldende Kunsten en van Kunstnijverheid*, 3<sup>e</sup> jaargang, No. VIII, 1927: "There are three statements concerning the year of birth and the place of birth of J. Th. Toorop: December 20, 1860 at Poerworedjo are the date and location indicated by himself; further are to be found December 20, 1860, Muntok and December 20, 1858, Muntok." However, there exist several more variations on this theme than even Plasschaert knew. A copy of the register of birth of Poerworedjo from the year 1858, No. 21, is now at the Royal Library, The Hague, T.C. C249. This was made on April 19, 1886.

<sup>4</sup>*Stamboek I*, November 25, 1870 - February 25, 1893, No. 178, September 30, 1880.

<sup>5</sup>The Registry Office of Amsterdam, vol. 131, p. 128, February 2, 1881: Toorop, Johan Theodoor. Male. Born: December 20, 1857 Muntok. Dutch reformed. Single. Without profession.

<sup>6</sup>Post-card from K.A. Citroen to N. Zon, dated Amsterdam, 23.10.'58. R.K.D. T.C., The correspondence of N. Zon. Mr. Citroen is an Amsterdam collector of Art Nouveau. A large part of his collection now belongs to the Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt.

<sup>7</sup>Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie, The Hague, Kwartieren - Toorop - 4.2.44 and 6.6.44.

<sup>8</sup>The family relationship between Jan Torop of Amsterdam and Abraham To(o)rop of Rotterdam is not known exactly. The former was a silversmith, the latter a sailor. However, the Toorops seem to be numerous in Indonesia in contrast to their presence in The Netherlands.

<sup>9</sup>There are two islands by this name, one near the Malay Peninsula, the other in the Torres Strait - Australia. See: Registry Office, Batavia, 1823, **Survey of the Non-military Inhabitants of Java ca. 1820-ca. 1830**, p. 131.

<sup>10</sup>About the family-name Cook see R. Nieuwenhuys: **Tussen Twee Vaderlanden**, (Amsterdam: G.A. van Oorschot, 1967), p. 102. The family appears to have been widespread in the Dutch as well as in the English possessions. Indeed, in the summer of 1971 a photograph of Jan Toorop with one of his sisters and a maid taken at Singapore, was deposited at the R.K.D.

<sup>11</sup>Later on he took Jan from Banka to Batavia; cf. a letter from father to Jan, Soengeiliat, November 11, 1875. K.B. T.C. C74.

<sup>12</sup>Letter from father to Jan, Sambas, June 6, 1881. K.B. T.C. C74, No. 9.

<sup>13</sup>Centr. Bur. Geneal., The Hague, Kwartieren - Toorop.

<sup>14</sup>Letter, Sambas, November 16, 1881. K.B. T.C. C74, No. 11.

<sup>15</sup>**L'Art Moderne**, September 27, 1885, p. 311.

<sup>16</sup>Letter to Annie, December 1884.

<sup>17</sup>Letter to Jan, May 7, [1886].

<sup>18</sup>Paul Verlaine: **Quinze Jours en Hollande, Lettres à un Ami, avec un portrait de l'auteur par Ph. Zilcken**, (La Haye: Maison Blok - Paris: Leon Vanier, [1893]). See also the reprint published by Het Spectrum, Utrecht, 1944, with the additions of letters by Johan Thorn Prikker and souvenirs by Philippe Zilcken.

<sup>19</sup>William Rothenstein: **Men and Memories, Recollections of William Rothenstein 1872-1900**, (London: Faber and Faber, March 1931), p. 117. For the portrait see the catalogue **British Painting, Modern Painting and Sculpture: The Collections of the Tate Gallery**, p. 184: Rothenstein, Sir William 872-1945, No. 3850, Jan Toorop (1894).

<sup>20</sup>Charles Beets: **De Kunstschilder Johannes Theodorus Toorop (1858-1928)**, Ms. T.C. R.K.D. 3 p. 6.

<sup>20</sup>Letter of Charley Toorop to Mr. J. J. Valetton, Bergen N.H., 10-2-423. Miek Janssen: **Herinneringen aan Jan Toorop**, (Amsterdam: N.V. Van Munster, 1928), p. 2.

<sup>22</sup>**N.R.C.** December 5, 1925.

<sup>23</sup>L. Belinfante - Ahn: **Het Kinderteekenen en Het Volle Leven**, (Zeist: J. Ploegsma, 1920), pp. 347-348.

<sup>24</sup>T.C. R.K.D. 3 pp. 1-2.

<sup>25</sup>H. Zondervan: **Banka en zijn Bewoners**, (Amsterdam: J.H. De Bussy, 1895).

<sup>26</sup>Letter from father to Jan, Soengeiliat, November 11, 1875. K.B. T.C. C74.

<sup>27</sup>There are preserved 15 letters written by Jan Toorop from Batavia to his parents on Banka. The earliest is dated May 16, 1868, the last August 25, 1869. T.C. R.K.D. 6.

<sup>28</sup>Nieuwenhuys: **Tussen Twee Vaderlanden**.

<sup>29</sup>F.I.R. van den Eeckhout: "Gesprekken met Kunstenaars - Jan Toorop", **N.R.C.**, December 5, 1925. It should be noted that Toorop mentions Chinese (?) mask plays and not Wayang, the Javanese shadow puppets, which appear to have had a considerable impact on his art.

<sup>30</sup>Mrs. A. Bremmer-Beekhuis, the wife of H.P. Bremmer, noticed that at Leiden, ca. 1893, Toorop whistled Javanese songs. See J.M. Joosten: "De Leidse Tijd van H. P. Bremmer 1871-1895", **Leids Jaarboekje**, 1970, p. 87.

<sup>31</sup>Receipt signed J.R. de Boer and dated Batavia, August 27, 1869. T.C. R.K.D. 6.

<sup>32</sup>**A.H.B.**, March 4, 1928.

<sup>33</sup>See Otto van Tussenbroek's article in an unidentified newspaper of December 20, 1923 - R.K.D. One has to be careful with this information, for the rest of the article is contradictory to the trustworthy Jan Veth.

<sup>34</sup>First preserved letter to Annie, which is datable London, late December 1884.

<sup>35</sup>Letter concerning Jan Toorop, probably addressed to Albert Plasschaert, with the date, Brussels, March 12, 1902, T.C. R.K.D. 11, orig. French.

<sup>36</sup>Letter from William Degouve de Nuncques to Albert Plasschaert at Delft, with the postmark 1902, T.C. R.K.D. 11.

<sup>37</sup>Letter of Henriëtte van der Schalk to Albert Verwey with the date Noordwijk, Monday morning [July 18, 1892] published in Nijland-Verwey, **op. cit.** p. 46.

<sup>38</sup>Henriëtte Roland-Holst-van der Schalk: **Het vuur brandde voort**, (Amsterdam - Antwerp: V.H. Van Ditmar, N.V., Third edition, April 1950), pp. 58-59.

<sup>39</sup>Aegidius W. Timmerman: **Tim's Herinneringen**, (Amsterdam: H.J. Paris, Second Edition, [originally 1938]), pp. 171-175.

<sup>40</sup>Catalogue of **Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Painting**, Kröller-Müller, State Museum, Otterlo, second edition, 1962, p. 226, No. 696. **THE PRINT CONNOISSEUR (DR. AEGIDIUS TIMMERMAN)**, with the date 1900. Reproduced in Rewald: **Post-Impressionism**, p. 419, **THE PRINT LOVER (LOOKING AT A LITHOGRAPHY BY LAUTREC)**. The portrait was painted in Toorop's studio at Katwijk.

<sup>41</sup>For the first time in the Registry Office, Leiden, Public Records 1870-1880, No. 12, October 12, 1870.

<sup>42</sup>T.C. R.K.D. 6.

<sup>43</sup>T.C. R.K.D. Zon does not give a source. Besides Jan was not eight, but almost ten when he went to Batavia.

<sup>44</sup>Letter to Annie which is datable London, the end of June, 1885.

<sup>45</sup>The development of the Oxford Movement in Croydon was centered around St. Michael and All Angels, built in 1871 in Gothic style.

<sup>46</sup>K.B. T.C. C2496 and the correspondence between De Groux and Degouve, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, ML 2169, 1 à 26.

<sup>47</sup>Catalogue **De Tentoonstelling van Pulchri Studio ter Gelegenheid van de Openign der Kunstzaal - Prinsegracht 57, September 25, 1888**, p. 26, Toorop, No. 275, **DE BRUID DER KERK**.

<sup>48</sup>Letter of the Gemeente Secretarie Katwijk, Afdeling Bevolking, July 2, 1941, now at the Centr. Bur. Geneal., The Hague.

<sup>49</sup>Baptized in the church of Pastoor van Straelen, at Amsterdam, May 12, 1905, Zon archive, R.K.D.

<sup>50</sup>Daughter of Jan Toorop's sister Theodora Masthoff-Toorop.

<sup>51</sup>**De Telegraaf**, January 15, 1929.

<sup>52</sup>Interview of February 7, 1968, Bergen, N.H. with Mr. Edgar Fernhout, who quoted his mother Charley Toorop.