

The Gods & the Forge

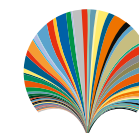
Balinese Ceremonial Blades
in a Cultural Context





"Tradition is not holding onto the ashes,
but the passing on of the flame."

Thomas Moore (1477–1535)



This publication is the companion volume for the exhibition of the same name at the IFICAH Museum of Asian Culture in Hollenstedt-Wohlesbostel, Germany December 2015 to October 2016.

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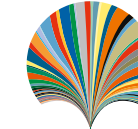
Pusaka in North Bali



Foreword

Summer 2015. Ketut, a native of Bali, picks me up on an ancient motorcycle. With our feet clad in nothing more resilient than sandals, we ride along streets barely worthy of the name to the hinterland. We meet people from different generations who live in impoverished conditions by western standards and who welcome the "giants from the West" with typical Balinese warmth. Ketut introduces me to some of them, including his father. We drink very strong, sweet coffee and wait for the only person in the village with the right to open the holy shrine and handle the ritual objects stored therein. Together we go to a small hut and squeeze our way through a narrow passageway to a wooden door. The door opens and we proceed barefoot, entering a room lit only by a weak bulb. Everything is covered in a thick layer of dust. Cobwebs entwine the objects and paintings. There is a strong smell of incense, herbs, and soot. After a short ceremony, the shrine is opened. With great pride and deeply shining eyes, I am shown the broken, holy lance tip, which has protected the village and its inhabitants for many generations. A group of children and teenagers stand behind me, watching curiously as I record events with my camera.

When we are all sitting in the village square, Ketut explains to me that the objects from the shrine in the village where he lives with his family were sold because there was no longer anybody who could carry out the ceremonies, and because all the young people are leaving this rural area.



Years earlier, the fishermen had sold the land bordering the beach to Western estate agents, which meant however that they can now no longer access the sea with their boats ...

It is precisely these experiences that underline the urgency of the work carried out by IFICAH – International Foundation of Indonesian Culture and Asian Heritage. At the beginning of the 21st century, the preservation of culture, social structures, objects, and traditions in many areas of the world – - even here in the "saturated West" – is fading increasingly into the background. But these are exactly the structures that form a basis for a society with which future generations can also identify. Communicating with one another, showing mutual respect, or perhaps just drinking a far-too-sweet coffee together and smiling at each other: small intercultural encounters and small steps towards open co-operation on a global scale.

By presenting objects with accompanying texts, the exhibition "The Gods & the Forge – Balinese Ceremonial Blades in a Cultural Context" represents one such step towards bringing an often unknown or forgotten culture and its handicraft skills to a wider audience.

Günther Heckmann
IFICAH Executive Board Director



Bali ...

... even in the age of mass tourism, there is a certain fascination associated with this name. Clichés that spring to mind may initially conjure up images of – the "ultimate paradise", with palm trees swaying in the breeze, smouldering volcanoes, graceful dancers, a mysterious ancient culture, full of gods and demons ...

Bali is a relatively small island amidst the vast Indonesian archipelago, and has preserved and kept alive its ancient Hindu-Balinese heritage throughout all periods of turmoil. Although westernisation is also taking hold there, many aspects of the everyday life of the Balinese are still governed by old traditions. To this day, when you stroll through a village, you can still see offerings everywhere that serve to secure the goodwill of earthly spirits and agricultural deities. Processions, music, ritual dances, and other social activities are ubiquitous, and not just in the tourist hotels. They are a continuous expression and reminder of the complex social systems that play an important role in the Balinese way of life.

On Bali, which only became part of the Dutch colonial empire briefly at the start of the 20th century, the legacy of the powerful Hindu empire of Java that fell into decline during the 16th century was continued at the royal courts. Exquisite *batik* fabrics, the *wayang* - a form of theatrical dance performed by people with shadow figures and puppets - and the ceremonial keris [or kris] daggers are particularly revered art forms, just as they are on Java. Indeed, the latter are so unique in terms of the diversity of their uses and meanings, and art

forms that go into their creation that they were recognised by UNESCO as Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. The *empu*, or blacksmith (literally, "trained, skilled one"), was a master of the secret knowledge that was required to create the dagger imbued with magic. The handing down of a keris from one generation to the next reinforced the esoteric powers of the blade, which embodied the ancestors. If the keris was in harmony with the user's character and occupation, then it possessed an inherent power that constituted a spiritual and material enhancement of the person's own ego. At the same time, the keris symbolised the equilibrium between the upper world and the lower world. It had a wide-ranging social and hierarchical significance and, just like the imperial swords associated with European royal families and imperial dynasties, the ownership of certain kerises guaranteed a ruler's legitimacy.

The International Foundation of Indonesian Culture and Asian Heritage – IFICAH is for the first time exhibiting a range of important Balinese works of art from private collections as part of the current exhibition at its own museum. In so doing, it is our intention to introduce to a European (and international) audience the outstanding artistic and symbolic quality and the importance of a category of objects that has not received sufficient recognition to date, and which embodies a history and culture that stretches back for centuries.

Dr. Udo Kloubert
Advisory Board IFICAH





Introduction

The keris is more than the sum of its parts, and more than the materials – steel and iron, wood, ivory, gold and silver, etc. – from which it is fashioned. It is not intended solely for warriors or another privileged class of society, as is the case for many traditional object categories, but is known and carried by all people within its area of circulation – be they farmers, fishermen, lawyers, teachers, dancers, men and women of all generations. Even if it no longer performs a practical function (i.e. as a stabbing weapon of last resort in an emergency), it nevertheless remains indispensable in a whole range of significant areas, and has always been considered far more than just a weapon.

Receiving one's own keris is an important step in a person's life. Under what circumstances does someone commission a keris? First and foremost, a father is under an obligation to commission a keris (assuming he can afford one) to celebrate his son's coming of age (puberty, circumcision). This is not about demonstrating his son's ability to defend himself or to engage in fights or displays of violence, but rather to express in concrete terms his acceptance of social responsibility and to acknowledge his place in the line of succession or inheritance, and in the tradition: something that has been embodied by the keris from time immemorial. During this transitional phase to "manhood", a young man without a keris would be considered incomplete.

The father will therefore seek out a keris smith, an *empu*, with whom he then discusses his son's character and temperament. The questions are as follows: Is he hot-headed or composed? Is he playful or quiet? Sociable or a loner? Ambi-

tious or modest? What are his tastes and his professional ambitions, or what prospects does he have in this regard? There are also questions relating to his physique, which in turn will help determine the size of the keris ... The potential fighting strength of the blade plays no role in this case. It's power is determined primarily by the physical build of its future owner (and formerly, by his social standing).

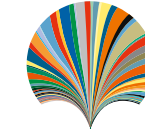
Therefore, the *empu* will forge a keris that suits the young man in this special stage of his life. However, a man will not possess just this single first keris in his life (assuming that he has sufficient wealth). Once he reaches a marriageable age (traditionally, when he is 18 or 19 years old), he will usually order another keris in preparation for his upcoming wedding ceremony and will seek out an *empu* himself. This keris will also not be his last; important and long-term plans and duties – be it as a soldier, a business man, when inheriting land (as a farmer) – are also frequently marked by the commissioning of a keris that is adapted to the particular undertaking – adapted in terms of its visible characteristics and the *isi*, its esoteric "content" that is added when the keris is forged and when it is blessed. At every decisive point or step in life, it is time to consider a new keris. In this context, the *empu* can – and should – exert an influence. If a person with improper or even dangerous ambitions orders a particularly powerful keris for questionable purposes, the *empu* will refuse to carry out the order as it stands.

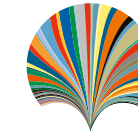
Taking all of this into consideration, it should therefore come as no surprise that there are

vast numbers of kerises in existence. Each one of these daggers embodies a particular person and an important time in a person's life. In this case, it is not so much one's expectations of one's keris that are important, but rather which of the characteristics of the keris suit the current circumstances of the owner's life. In this regard, selecting an older keris is considered just as important as having a new one made.

This brings us to the final step in the "life" of a keris – namely, its inheritance by the heirs. For instance, a grandfather who owns several kerises, each of which embodies important phases of his life, will pass them on to his grandchildren in such a way that they suit their respective personalities and circumstances. Therefore, the fortunate heir will not only see himself and his circumstances reflected and "immortalised" in this keris, but also his ancestors, when they were young and in similar situations. This cycle then continues across generations.

Adni Aljunied, Singapore
Advisory Board IFICAH





Bali – the ultimate paradise?

Bali – which of us is not familiar with it in one way or another?

For those who have never visited Bali, the island generally evokes images of beautiful people, lush emerald green tropical vegetation, and wonderful beaches. The island is also surrounded by an aura of mystery. There are probably few places on earth that are so closely associated with the notion of an "earthly paradise". The tourists who embark on this long journey and fly to Bali – mostly for a few days – gaze at the rice terraces, the temple celebrations, the picturesque buildings and colourful ceremonies and think that they know Bali – but is this really the case? The island's unmistakeable customs and traditions certainly leave an impression. However, what sets Bali apart is a long and eventful history, with Indian and Chinese cultural influences dating back for millennia and a correspondingly multi-layered and highly complex society. And this is something that one cannot immediately see, but must experience. Bali is an island in the Indian Ocean with a warm tropical average climate and belongs to Indonesia. It is situated between Java and Lombok and is the most westerly of the small Sunda Islands (which also include the islands of Nusa Tenggara). Bali is separated from its westerly neighbour Java, Indonesia's main island in political terms, by the Bali Strait, which measures just 2.5 kilometres across. The island measures 95 kilometres from north to south, and 145 kilometres from its western tip to the eastern tip. With a total area of 5,634 square kilometres, it is half the size of Jamaica.

The Province of Bali includes another three smaller islands called Nusa Penida, Nusa Lembongan and Nusa Ceningan. Bali itself has around 4.3 million inhabitants.

Bali is considered a relatively young island in geomorphological terms. All that separates the island from the Malaysian mainland is three relatively shallow straits. These have dried up repeatedly over the ages, with the result that the fauna and flora found on Bali does not differ significantly from that of the Malayan mainland. However, the strait to the east of Bali is much deeper, and the Wallace Line, a faunal line that separates the ecozones of Asia and Australia, runs through here.

Most of the mountains on Bali originated from volcanoes and they cover approximately two thirds of the island's entire land mass. At 3,031 metres, the Gunung Agung ("Great Mountain") volcano is the island's highest mountain and, as the seat of the God Śiva (= Shiva), its most important shrine. It also acts as the pole for the Balinese coordinate system. It is an active volcano whose eruptions have repeatedly cost land and lives. This volcanic activity is caused by the subduction of the Sahul Plate (part of the Australian Plate) under the Sunda Plate (part of the Eurasian Plate). These movements of the earth's plates are also responsible for the active volcanoes on neighbouring islands to the east and west.



The foundations: Bali's prehistory

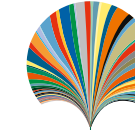
During the Ice Age, when large quantities of water were bound up in the form of inland ice, Bali was connected to the South East Asian mainland and could therefore be reached by humans and animals on dry land.

Already by the time of the Middle Ice Age (from half a million to approx. 120,000 B.C.), there is clear evidence of early human settlements on Bali. Homo Sapiens, the "modern man", which also includes us, first set foot on Bali at least 20,000 years ago as demonstrated by the remains of Javanese Wajak people. During the ensuing period, humans – hunters and gatherers – with Melanoid, Weddoid and Australoid traits appeared on Bali, of which the Australoid and Melanoid "curly-haired" humans have left the fewest traces behind. They appear to have migrated further in the direction of New Guinea, Melanesia and Australia. The Weddoid or "wavy-haired" peoples also found in southern India (Ceylon) had a decisive influence on the development of Balinese humans for millennia. In the centuries prior to the turn of the eras, Austronesian-speaking tribes migrated in several waves to the Indonesian island world. There is considerable evidence that these ancient Indonesians, who henceforth determined the destinies of the archipelago, were displaced due to population pressure from the north, specifically from the Chinese province of Yunnan. It is not possible to determine with certainty whether this was associated with the shift of power in Central Asia due to the expansion of the great Chinese empires and developments in the west

(such as the collapse of the ancient Persian empires). Climatic influences or population growth could also have played a role.

It appears that the northern Annemite Dong-So'n culture (from 300 B.C.) had a significant influence over large parts of Indonesia as well as Bali. Sacred heirlooms (Indo-Javanese: *Pu-saka*) dating from this period are still being discovered to this day. And particularly on Bali, the large kettledrum gongs such as the "Moon of Pejeng" are local shrines to this day. Other cultural influences can be explicitly associated with the contemporaneous late Zhou and Han dynasties in China. However, a detailed analysis of these relationships, some of which have yet to be researched, is beyond the scope of this publication. It is important to note that Bali always acted as a "transit station" for major migrations and population movements and that all of these left their mark in Bali in one way or another.

This brings us to the main thrust of our topic. For in addition to a dense hierarchy, elaborate house building, distinctive and technically accomplished boat construction, rice cultivation using wet and dry farming methods, an agricultural fertility and sacrificial cult, the widespread practice of ancestral worship involving secondary burial (i.e. after a certain period of time, the deceased are reburied and/or cremated accompanied by elaborate death rituals that can be attributed to a belief in transmigration of souls), the cultural spectrum of these migrants also includes metalworking – using bronze and



iron. And many Indonesians, and particularly also the Balinese, have long been and continue to be masters in working with iron and bronze. Iron has a significance on Bali (and in many parts of South East Asia) that goes far beyond the usefulness of this metal. There are reasons for this and we will examine these in more detail later on. An important point is that the practice of melting and shaping the processed ore in the fire has obvious parallels with the transformation of material objects and with the cyclical flow of life (genesis – decay – rebirth). Furthermore, the iron comes "from the mountain" (from the mountains down to the rivers, in the form of sand or as a deposit in river sediments), the domain of the gods, where the deified ancestors also reside. The best manifestation of this is the kris or keris, the sacred ritual weapon, which like few other object categories exemplifies contemporary Balinese culture with all its specific characteristics.

What is a keris? Technically speaking, a keris is a dagger with an asymmetrical, double-edged blade that is either straight or wavy, and with an unmistakable enlarged blade heel. This leads into the *Ganja*, the cross-piece that continues the shape of the blade, which is adapted to the shoulder of the blade and constitutes a typical feature of the keris. As a general rule, the blade exhibits a striking pattern that originates from the forging process and reveals the layering of different metals in the blade. The handle is mostly figuratively designed as a separate work of art, be it from fine wood, precious metals,

ivory, or a combination of all these. The same applies to the sheath, which reveals a striking enlargement at the top to accommodate the shape of the blade, and a separate boat-shaped mouthpiece.

Why is the keris so important – not just in Bali, but throughout South East Asia? This question is a core topic of this publication.

Throughout the history of metalworking, the keris holds a special history. By the 16th century at the latest, it had become an object form that was widely circulated in the South East Asian archipelago and was famous throughout the (ancient) world. And its diverse characteristics represented one of the most comprehensive complete works of art in the field of weapon technology – although the keris in the broader and truest sense is not a weapon at all, but rather a cosmological symbol, a form of individual expression, a symbol of national identification, a personally crafted *alter ego*, and an expression of exceptional craftsmanship.

In other words, it represents an object category that thoroughly deserves the status conferred on it by UNESCO in 2005, when it was declared a "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity".



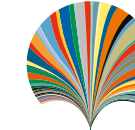
The society and religion of the Balinese – an insight

We want to attempt to outline this complex topic very briefly here, as more detailed expositions would fill encyclopaedias. For centuries, Balinese society has adhered superficially to Hinduism, although much older religious and cosmological elements also play an important role. This is particularly evident in conjunction with the rural rice culture of the villages, in whose complex system the various natural deities, but most importantly Dewi Sri, the goddess of the rice crop, play a central role. The systematic rice cultivation, which ultimately sustains everyone and which has a correspondingly important status, is based on a highly developed system of irrigation. All of the social, legal, and technical considerations that are inevitably associated with it require more or less harmonious cooperation. This is because the agricultural irrigation processes require seamless and smooth cooperation, and the primary source of sustenance for the Balinese (and Javanese) is the rural landscape. This is revealed at all levels.

The villages divided according to a dualistic principle into interrelated social units are agricultural communities that feel tied to the ownership of land for religious reasons because it belonged to their ancestors. And the spirit of the ancestors is omnipresent because, after all, it was they who arranged everything just as it is today. At the same time, there are genealogical connections with shared ancestors, which together with natural deities and chthonian powers must be revered and kept favourably disposed.

The village elders and the ancestral souls gather periodically on stone seats, which consist of a single horizontal and a single vertical boulder, and can be considered the forerunners of the meeting long houses, the *Bale Agung* ("great house" in the sense of a communal house). As commemorative monuments to the dead, menhirs are a visible and everlasting symbol of the veneration of the living group with the ancestral souls, who descend here to be honoured with sacrificial offerings, music, and dance. Similar systems can also be seen in ancient Europe (megalithic culture). Megalithic culture served as the basis for the subsequent portrait statues of the Hindu elite and its importance is also likely to have been, at least partially, transferred.

Therefore, it stands to reason that Hinduism was easily compatible with this existing system. Essentially, it offered the existing upper class the possibility of claiming special status in the context of existing hierarchies, but with the added aspiration to seek individual divine origin.



The historical period – the early history of Bali

In the context of this publication, the phrase "historical period" refers to the Bali's recent history, for which we can refer not only to the archaeology and anthropology, but also to historical accounts.

We are aware of a reference from China to the island of P'o-Li (Bali?) dating from the 6th century, although this cannot be attributed with any degree of certainty. Offering greater clarity is a reference by the Chinese scholar Yi-Tsing, who reports visiting a Buddhist land called Bali in 670 A.D. This coincides with other references to indicate that Hindu and Buddhist teachings had already become established in Bali at the time. These influences would appear to have arrived directly from India. At the village of Pejeng, votive stupas (burial temples) and clay seals bearing Buddhist aphorisms were discovered, and their features are comparable to the Javanese *candi* (temple) of Kalasan (approx. 778 A.D.). They point to the existence of Tantric Buddhism.

Bali as we know it today is barely conceivable without cultural influences from India. Sculptures and written documents dating from the 8th and 9th centuries – a period when one of the world's most spectacular Buddhist buildings, Candi Borobudur, was constructed on Java – can be interpreted as Buddhist.

The teachings of Tantric Buddhism, in which esoteric rituals enable a spiritual extension of powers in a direct and magical way, always

played a central role in Indonesia, and in other spheres of Buddhist influence such as Mongolia or Tibet.

There are several possible reasons for the transfer of culture from India to Bali, all of which are likely to have played a role. Typical throughout Indonesia, for example, is the establishment of trading colonies on the coastal seams, which then exert a growing influence inland. This is also likely to apply to Bali. Furthermore, Indonesia's ruling class, which traditionally traced its roots back to high-ranking forbears and tribal founders, certainly took the opportunity to increase their power and prestige or to legitimise their desire to exercise greater power. This resulted from the introduction of Hinduism or Mahayana Buddhism because exalted deities could then also be integrated into the ruling class's ancestral portrait gallery. For this reason, local rulers are likely to have gone to great lengths to attract priests and monks of the "new" religions into their own sphere of influence.

There are early records of influential centres of Indian religions in Indonesia, e.g., in Shrivijaya (Southern Sumatra), which was already home to more than 1,000 monks and novices by the 7th century. The same can be assumed of the great dynasties on Java.

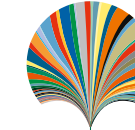


It seems reasonable to assume that the local rulers also discovered the potential offered by the Indian approaches to state organisation and strengthening one's own position. This was conveyed by priests who acted as advisers. Greater power could be acquired and secured through ritual acts performed by priests with special powers. "Genuine" faith certainly played a part in securing supposed and actual (i.e. perceived as such) legitimisation. For example, we know that the Javanese ruler Kertanagara from Singasari sought to reinforce his claim to power through esoteric and tantric rituals. It is possible that he did so following in the footsteps of the world's then most powerful ruler, Khublai Khan, who had himself ordained a Chinese Buddha for this very reason.

In the 8th century, the representatives of Mahayana Buddhism with its strong tantric component (amulets, magic formulae and practices, etc.) were in direct contact with the Nalanda monastery in northern India and other international centres. As a logical consequence of the universal claim to power, ever more colossal burial monuments were erected for rulers in order to preserve the importance of these ruling personalities for all eternity. By this time, a localised form of Shaivism had already become established, in which Śīwa (Shiva) was worshipped as Surya (the sun) – later to become the state emblem of Majapahit.

There are edicts on bronze plates dating from the 10th century that mention the existence

of both Hindu (primarily Shaivist) as well as Buddhist hermitages and monasteries on Bali. The priests of both religions appear to have coexisted peacefully while at the same time performing an advisory function for rulers and aristocrats. The rulers could have the highest honours bestowed upon them by the most important representatives of the monasteries and could be admitted to the pantheon of Indian gods. From then on, they could identify themselves as direct manifestations of Shiva or Buddha.



Bali and the East Javanese Period

The first Balinese king to leave a written record of his name was Warmadewa, the founding father of the Udayana tribe, whose policies ensured that the fate of Bali was closely linked to the East Javanese dynasties that emerged in the 11th century.

After 989 A.D., at the start of the reign of King Udayana and the East Javanese Princess Mahendradatta, there are numerous signs – primarily of an art history nature, but also in the form of written accounts –, which point to an increasing 'Javanisation' of the Balinese court. This period will be examined in greater detail here because it saw the creation or introduction of the *keris*, the sacred ritual weapon of Java and Bali.

Prior to the era of the famous ruling couple Udayana and Mahendradatta, a clear discrepancy between the ruling elite and the *desa*, the village communities, was decisive for Bali. Now, from the 11th century on, the courtly art forms were made accessible to the village authorities. These included puppetry, theatre performances and elaborate music with precious metal instruments (*gamelan*). The fundamental principles of the elite culture now found their way into the agricultural communities and were used in order to "educate the people". The legitimisation of the ruling elite was placed before the eyes of the local elite. The performances and rituals served, as before (and in parallel), as a means of carrying out the ancient agricultural ritualistic acts and rites of initiation, appeasing the gods and ancestors during celebrations,

thereby cementing the community. This is because the forms of expression and art in the village setting – unlike courtly sculptures and temples – were not intended to last for eternity, but live in the moment, from the act itself.

Java previously witnessed a shift in power from central to eastern Java, probably as a result of catastrophes (volcanic eruptions, enemy invasions, e.g., by the Indian Chola dynasty), which deprived the central Javanese sacred kingdoms of their reason for existing. After the centre of power had shifted to the eastern part of the island, the elite recognised the need to align themselves politically with their source of nutrition, i.e. at the level of the agricultural population, amongst whom ancient Indonesian elements had a decisive influence. Naturally, this called for the redefinition of the ideal of the ruler.

It was during this time – originally on Java – that the spiritual foundations of the strongly apotropaic (the warding-off of evil) *keris* culture were established. To this day, tantric rites and magic practices can be traced back to the belief in *leyak* (witches) and demons, which can be directly linked to older cults. Similarly choreographed rituals with a protective, and evil-repellent significance are also familiar from cults and dances such as the Dayak of Borneo, the Toraja of Sulawesi, the Niasser and other ethnic Indonesian groups.

The cult dedicated to repelling witches and demons, which was to shape Balinese culture



from that point on was clearly driven by Mahendradatta, whose tomb is located near Kutri (Gyanyar). The basis for this circumstance will have been the identification of the empress with Uma/Durga (Kali), Shiva's consort, one of the most powerful, complex and formidable deities of the Hindu pantheon.

This development was to play a major role with regard to the external design of the keris. The handles therefore show demons that can be identified with a greater or lesser degree of certainty from the Hindu Pantheon in the wake of Rangda (= Uma, Durga) and Shiva, whereas the sheaths are decorated with floral and agricultural motifs.

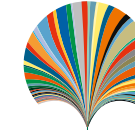
However, the root expression of the blade very probably harks back to ancient heirlooms from previous epochs (imported Chinese dagger halberds from the Chinese bronze age, *ge* weapons), which strengthened the legitimation of the village elite and protected the fields against malevolent influences by virtue of its threatening effect. However, this body of thought cannot be explained using Indian influences, but must be attributed to the ancient Indonesian cultural levels.

But let us first turn our attention once more to historical developments. The reign of Udayana, which had such a defining impact on Hindu Bali, ended around 1011. Power passed to Udayana's sons Airlangga and Anak Wungsu. Airlangga appears to have been extremely

capable both politically and militarily. He succeeded in uniting the fragmented and warring eastern part of Java, while his younger brother ruled Bali between 1049 and 1077. One can assume that the connection between Eastern Java and Bali became closer and the cultural exchange became more intense. This manifested itself in the royal tombs at the upper reaches of the Pakerisan River near to Tampaksiring, where in all likelihood the ashes of King Anak Wungsu and his wives were buried. Following the death of Airlangga in monastic isolation, the power passed to his sons and their heirs, whose importance has not yet been researched. It appears, however, that Bali achieved relative independence following the era of Airlangga, and that contact with Java initially weakened during this time.

This changed again irrevocably during the late 13th century when one of the most dazzling and powerful rulers in South East Asian history, King Kertanagara of Singhasari in East Java, captured the last heirs of Warmadewa during an invasion and Bali was thereafter governed from Java.

The Singhasari period and subsequent empires

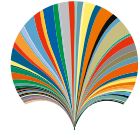


It is likely that the era of Kertanagara was decisive for the development of the keris and its subsequent importance (which is still shrouded in many secrets). Probably the oldest preserved kerises, the *keris buda*, are associated with his time in power (Singhasari) in the majority of traditional accounts (*tangguh*). Like their archetypes, the *ge* weapons from China and Myanmar, they were still relatively short and wide and not wavy. At this stage, they did not generally feature a *pamor* (a deliberately created welding pattern).

Kertanagara of Singhasari was the fifth, final, and most important ruler of the dynasty and of the empire of Singhasari during the period from 1268 to 1292. The Singhasari dynasty in East Java followed the Kediri kingdom and was founded in 1222 by Ken Arok. Under Kertanagara's rule, the power of Java expanded to an unprecedented extent across the archipelago and as far as the South East Asian mainland. Kertanagara was a follower of a mystical syncretism of Shaivism and Tantric Buddhism. He masqueraded as a Shiva Buddha and divine manifestation of both deities. In this context, he celebrated tantric festivals and commissioned sculptures and bronze inscription plaques that provide us with a solid historical basis today. During this period, the metalwork of Singhasari (and undoubtedly also the ironwork, although little is known about it) reached a level of quality that was unsurpassed before and since. Following Kertanagara's dramatic refusal to recognise Khublai Khan's rule over the world and to pay tribute to him (he humiliated the

emissaries of the world's most powerful ruler and had their faces disfigured), it was clear that the Mongols would launch a punitive expedition against his kingdom. As part of his preparations for war, King Kertanegara undertook the Pamalayu expedition. This wrested control over the Melayu Kingdom in East Sumatra. In addition, the Kingdoms of Sunda in West Java were incorporated into Singhasari and a broad hegemony was established over the Strait of Malacca. Madura and parts of Borneo also submitted to Kertanagara's rule. The influence of East Java was extended to the Malaysian peninsula and Bali. Javan control over the lucrative spice trade with the Maluku Islands was also secured. Furthermore, the autonomy of independent Javan kingdoms such as Cayaraja (Bhayaraja) and Mahisha Rangkah was permanently quelled in 1270 and 1280 respectively. Kertanagara also established strong diplomatic ties with the Empire of Champa, another dominant state in South East Asia.

Based on the political support and alliance achieved in this way, King Kertanagara achieved the impossible by successfully thwarting the punitive expedition undertaken by Khublai Khan (1292 A.D.) while it was on its way. It is highly likely that the tantric cult of Kertanagara was also intended to magically strengthen itself in advance against the Mongolian threat. Despite all of these endeavours, however, Kertanagara fell victim to a coup in the immediate aftermath. The pretender to the throne of the kingdom of Kediri, one of Singhasari's most powerful vassals, instigated a rebellion during



the campaign to repel the Mongols. With most of the Javan army dispatched to occupy the landing ports along the Mongol's route in an attempt to demoralise a military force that was practically invincible in the field, the rebel (his name was Jayakatwang) seized his opportunity and staged a coup against Kertanagara, during which he and his inner circle of courtiers were killed (in June 1292). Jayakatwang then declared himself the ruler of the Java and restored the kingdom of Kediri.

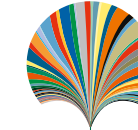
Among the few survivors of the coup was Prince Wijaya, Kertanagara's son-in-law. He fled to Madura, where he was sheltered by the local ruler. Soon afterwards, Wijaya established himself in the Brantas region, where he founded a settlement that sowed the seeds for the mighty Majapahit Empire, the successor state of Singhasari and the zenith of the Java power. Wijaya succeeded in enlisting the remaining Chinese and Mongolian troops that had landed to quell the rebellion. The army had already suffered heavy losses on the way; it was also weakened by a continuous lack of supplies due to the port blockades enforced by Singhasari. Wijaya then betrayed his Mongolian allies, who were exhausted from the war, drove the survivors out of Java, and expanded Majapahit into a mighty empire, which soon saw Java's power extend to the borders of present-day Indonesia, and exert a powerful influence over the mainland of South East Asia.

Kertanagara himself had no male heirs, but became the patriarch of the ruling dynasty of Majapahit through his daughter, who married

Prince Wijaya. His daughter and his granddaughters became the empresses of Majapahit, and his great-grandson Hayam Wuruk ("cockspur") became the most important ruler of Majapahit. This was primarily attributable to the remarkable political skills of prime minister Gaja Mada.

After Gaja Mada had guided the dynasty of Majapahit to the zenith of its power, he launched a military campaign that crushed the power of the Balinese Rajas and installed a vassal ruler and a colony of occupying forces in South Bali under the direct control of East Java. Decrees prove that Bali was still under direct rule from Majapahit in 1343 A.D., two generations after it was conquered. According to several chronicles, Sri Kresna Kapakisan was the first vassal ruler appointed by Gaja Mada. He became the semi-mythical founding father of the *kshatriya dalem*. These Javanese rulers were members of the *kshatriya jawa* caste, who see themselves as a political force to this day. Lower-ranking administrators became *washiya*, and the new hierarchy – based on the new *triwangsa* three-caste system – ranked slightly above the *wong jaba* or *sudra*, the natives (including Bali's previous ruling class).

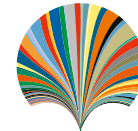
During the reign of Hayam Wuruk in Majapahit, the first successors of Kapakisan established a separate court in Gelgel near Klungkung, which was based on the *keraton* (palace) of Majapahit. Thanks to the skill of I Dewa Ketut, the first notable exponent of the court of Gelgel, this court soon developed into a cultural centre that was to have a lasting influence on Bali. The di-



rect influence of Majapahit soon declined as the empire suffered a loss of stability after the era of Gaja Mada and Hayam Wuruk due to internal decay, attempts by the Islamised coastal towns to achieve autonomy, and other factors. According to Chinese sources, the Majapahit Empire was still a stable entity during the mid-15th century. However, the 16th century saw a gradual exodus of nobles, priests and legal scholars, who found refuge in East Java (Banjuwangi and Blambangan) and Bali. They wanted to escape the spread of Islam and the associated abolition of the caste system, resulting in the removal of their special position. The Hindu-Javan world view was now further cultivated in the east (and perhaps as part of an identity propagated as an "act of defiance"). However, this process did not occur at one decisive point, but rather over many generations. Bali also remained in close political contact with Java at times following the collapse of Majapahit.

The reign of King Baturengong of Gelgel as successor to the rulers of Majapahit is glorified in particular in the Babad Dalem (Chronicle of Kings), which was written during the 18th century. According to this account, the successor dynasty of Majapahit initially established itself in Samprangan (present-day Gianyar Regency), although the youngest of the three sons of Sri Kapakisan, Dalem Ketut, had personally received important heirlooms from Majapahit, according to the Babad Dalem. What we do know is that Gelgel created a mighty empire in the 16th century, which included Blambangan,





Sumbawa and Lombok (all former dependencies of Majapahit). The Hindu deity Nirartha, who had fled from Majapahit according to local tradition, supported King Baturrengong in an advisory (and exculpatory) capacity.

However, the empire does not appear to have endured for long. Between the years of 1558 and 1578, Gelgel under the rule of the Bekung suffered heavy defeats at the hands of the East Javanese kingdom of Pasuruan. Furthermore, accounts of rebellions by court aristocrats are said to have only marked the start of the period of destabilisation. Under Di Made, further wars against Mataram II in Java were lost. Nevertheless, Dutch and Portuguese sources from 1652 and 1665 confirm the existence of a still powerful kingdom, which included West Sumbawa and Balambangan. However, it appears that Gelgel was under a massive threat from the Buginese kingdom of Macassar from 1619 onwards. Parts of Lombok and Sumbawa were lost. According to European sources from around this time, Bali had approximately 300,000 inhabitants and a flourishing agricultural sector, which (as with Majapahit) explains its ability to maintain a consistent display of military power.

Nonetheless, internal power struggles continued to break out between 1651 and 1686, although smaller successor kingdoms in Klungkung (Semanapura), Kangarasem, Sukawati, Buleleng, Tabanan and Badung, and elsewhere formed a fluctuating system of alliances. Generally, their rulers, who were descended from the ancestral lines of Majapahit, attempted to

legitimise their claims to power, and important heirlooms (*pusaka*) played a key role in these alliances. The fragmentation of the kingdom ultimately reached its peak during the Dutch conquest of Bali between 1849 and 1908. This culminated in a tragic manner in the well-known *puputan* of Badung and other locations, in which the Balinese elite, armed with kerises and spears, hurled themselves in demonstrative frontal attacks against Dutch machine-gun fire.



Bali as the heritage of East Java

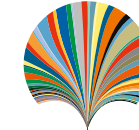
The conquest of Bali by Majapahit initially sounds like a radical event, but the Majapahit period was to give rise to a extremely fruitful partnership between court culture and the rural sphere, which gives Bali (in some respects, a continuation of ancient East Java) its unique character to this day. Incidentally, it should be mentioned at this point that the Islamisation of Java took place over many generations and in a tolerant manner. Indeed, Islam was already firmly established among sections of the population in the capital city Trowulan (then one of the world's largest cities) at the height of the Majapahit Empire in the 14th century. Trade had always been strongly influenced by Islamic merchants, and there are no indications of religious radicalism or intolerance on the part of the government.

It is historically inaccurate to regard the Islamisation of Java as a significant reason for the decline of the Majapahit Empire. However, it can be assumed that the creation of internationally important Islamic empires in the Indo-Persian and Turkish region during the 15th and early 16th centuries (Ottoman, Timurid and Safavid, Moguls) resulted in greatly increased Islamic influence and powers of its exponents on Java as well.

The Javanese and Javano-Balinese kings had succeeded in securing the loyalty of the old Balinese ruling classes (village chiefs) in order that they could maintain direct contact with the people. The policy of rapprochement with the

village culture in the 14th century was new, but was based on a tendency that had emerged as early as the 11th century. It corresponded to the "nationalist" aspirations of Hayam Wuruk, which led to the resurgence of ancient East Javanese traditions. This was reflected in secular and informal art that incorporated lifelike, humorous, erotic, and caricature-like aspects that is worlds apart from the Indian religious art that still had a defining influence on Java in the 13th century (the Kertanagara era).

The resounding success of the new ruling powers in the 14th century was also a consequence of the close ties that had long existed between Bali and Java and of the fact that the Indo-Javanese intellectual world had already found its way to Bali at the time of Airlangga. However, what now emerges as a reform is the propagation of Javanese art to the "lower classes". The content of this art is recast in the form of a ruling ideology whose proclaimers identify with the heroes of epic tales and poems. An entire team of specialist artists now worked on the publication of the thematic and epic material. More recent additions to their ranks – along with the classically trained scholars according to the Indian model – included singers, musicians, dancers, actors, iron and copper smiths, gold and silver smiths, painters, wood carvers and carpenters, all of whom were housed in their own quarters close to the court. Here, the themes that secured the legitimacy of the aristocracy were conserved, discussed, and reimagined.



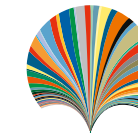
In the theatrical world, "translators" were now introduced to the stage, where they displayed clownish traits and spoke Balinese (translating the High Javanese normally spoken up to then). They were very much liked by the general population and clearly displayed character traits of the old local peasant deities. In addition to reciting lengthy Kawi (old Javanese) or Sanskrit meters at courts, the singers and storytellers now also developed a popular style that became increasingly popular even at court. All festive occasions were accompanied by theatrical performances, processions and dances and music was ubiquitous – this can be seen from the temple friezes on which orchestras are everywhere to be found. Even the highest-ranking aristocrats such as King Hayam Wuruk performed as dancers and *wayang* (puppetry) performance were on offer at all times and everywhere.

These were all important innovations compared with the Singhasari era. Nevertheless, this period paved the way by ushering in an exorcising Shiva-Buddha syncretism and, with it, an opportunity to connect with the rural cults focussed on repelling evil. However, this new populist policy required more immediate symbols of identification that could promote local patriotism and required a "non-Indian" iconography that could be understood by the general public. The art of the 14th century reveals almost no traces of Indian influence.

It was against this background that the *keris* and its creator, the *empu*, came into play. De-

spite the high level of skills they provide, weapon smiths in India have a low status (*sudra*) and the idea of a weapon being regarded as a sacred heirloom (*pusaka*) is almost unheard of. From this point on, however, both of these factors are decisive in the development of *keris* culture (and that of Bali). It is from this period – the dates are not exact, but we are talking approximately about the 14th and early 15th centuries – that the earliest definitive illustrations of the *keris* originate, and the disparate threads of archaeology, art history, religious history, written sources and folklore are converging to an increasing degree.





The keris – a cultural asset of Bali

The keris in Bali (and Java) has a significance that extends far beyond its importance as a weapon or its representative function. Nor can it be explained by the "classical" cultural influences of India and China (and naturally not of Islam). On the contrary, this prominent position is more closely aligned with old Austronesian concepts and meaningful associations with inspired objects, as can be seen from Japan to New Zealand.

The potential power of the ancestors slumbers in the keris. It is venerated as a family deity and is an important element of a person, and must accompany its owner at all important religious and social occasions. In Balinese and East Javanese villages, all men are required by law to carry their keris once they travel beyond the boundaries of their immediate residential area: a fact that was already alluded to by the voyager Ma Huan in Majapahit in the early 15th century. Persons failing to observe this law were sometimes punished with temporary exclusion from social interaction.

When and exactly how the keris came to Bali is not clear. It is not certain whether the keris achieved its final manifestation on Bali during the heyday of Majapahit and the conquest of Bali by Majapahit (around 1343 A.D.) or during the migrations of the late 15th and 16th centuries and the decline of Majapahit. We know of only one unreliable source, according to which Sri Kresna Kapakisan brought his divine keris and his entire royal household with him

to Samprangan. However, since handle types and mounting elements that are commonplace on Bali never existed on Java, we would tend towards the latter time-frame notwithstanding the fact that people had undoubtedly known about the keris since the mid-14th century. This aspect will now be examined in greater detail below.

Sources in Majapahit, particularly the Pararaton (Book of Kings), do not mention that the keris was necessary to legitimise the sovereignty of vassal rulers. On the contrary, the large and wonderfully crafted blades of the better classes of Balinese kerises (cf. e.g. items 4, 5 and 8 starting from page 68) can be traced back directly to Javanese kerises of the 16th century, such as those preserved from this time in European collections. The octagonal, gem-set basis of top-class Balinese keris handles also features in a similar manner on stately kerises, which are known to have been presented at the close of the East Javanese period to the vassal rulers of Majapahit (Sulawesi/Gowa, Sumatera, Jambi and others) to illustrate their loyalty to Java.

The blades on the finest examples of these "stately kerises" date from the 16th, but no earlier than the 15th century, as can be verified based on comparisons with the oldest preserved pieces from European collections in former cabinets of curiosities. However, the Balinese gold handles are certainly a unique development and are not comparable with the earliest known Javanese handles. It is therefore



inaccurate to regard Balinese handles as a direct evolution of the Javanese (Majapahit) tradition, despite the similarities of the respective basic designs.

Candi Penataran, the royal temple of Majapahit (14th century), and some East Javanese bronze and temple guard figures, for example, still depict short, broad kerises that relate more closely to earlier keris shapes, which were wider, short, and not yet wavy. The kerises depicted at *Candi* Sukuh and on East Javanese temple guard figures provide evidence of a version of the keris

in the 15th century that is similar to that used today.

It was on Bali that the keris probably achieved its final form of expression and importance as the outstanding exponent of this cultural symbiosis during the 16th century, which was the era of the still revered King Baturrengong of Gelgel, when Bali was liberated from the Majapahit Empire, and continued to develop its legacy independently.

The earliest definitive representations of the keris date from the 14th century. The blades are short, broad, and tapered.

Shown here are depictions from Candi Penataran, the stately temple of Majapahit. The bearers of the keris are clearly depicted as masculine, with moustaches and prominent genitalia. Right: Kertolo figure, Sonobudoyo Museum Yogyakarta



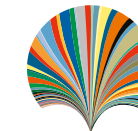


Origins and characteristic shapes of the keris

The keris within its comprehensive meaning is certainly neither of Indian nor Chinese origin, but is a cultural asset unique to central Indonesia. Metal objects (*ge* halberd blades) adopted from China and Vietnam, which performed important functions as amulets and guardian spirits in a rural context, were completely re-evaluated as part of the "rural exegesis" of the tantric-apotropaic rites in the East Javanese and Balinese court culture.

To which historical era can the keris now be most obviously attributed, and at which cultural levels? On the many preserved temple friezes dating from the "classical period" of Central Java (9th, 10th century), which replicate numerous details of the costumes and weapons of the time, it is not to be found. Likewise, the archaeological associations of this era make no reference to it. In the late 14th and 15th centuries, it has already become firmly established in East Javanese culture.

To understand the keris and to place it correctly in the Balinese context both chronologically and in art history terms, one must be aware of the spiritual and intellectual climate that led to the creation of such an "spiritually charged" object category. It cannot be readily integrated into the Indian-influenced, rigid hierarchy of Buddhist or Shiwaitic divine kings. Closer examination of the temple figures of Kebo Edan (Pejeng) reveals a trend in Balinese art, which calls to mind the Singhasari period. Under Keratanagara's rule, Bhairavistic (Siwa Bhairava =



Shiva in a demonic manifestation as a destructive force) and syncretic magic cults were inherent components of the conceptual world. The background to this was probably the desire to repel external political threats, also on a spiritual level.

The power of sexuality or libido as a designated "driving" element of the tantric-demonic being, rituals aimed at keeping mischief at bay, and "left-handed" magic (which tends normally to be considered a grotesque offshoot in classical Buddhism and/or Shaivism of the Indian high religions) were now accepted elements of the religion of the state. The use of phallic symbolism in representations of ancestors was already notorious in many Indonesian cultures – to symbolise fertility on the one hand, and to confound and distract the demons who have a natural affinity with this level on the other.

Figures on left page: early kerises
First and second from left: Examples of what is probably the oldest keris type (betok buda), which are traditionally associated with the Singhasari era (13th century).
Third and fourth from left: the Keris of Knaud, dated mid-14th century. The Keris of Knaud reveals similarities to ge halberd blades of the Dong So'n Dynasty (up to approx. 200 A.D.).



The figures on the handles of the Balinese keris – *danganan*, *landeyan* – illustrate a fusion of Shivatic and Buddhist cults, which are virtually indistinguishable in iconographic terms. The demonic, apotropaic element is always predominant, be it in the planar handles or the figurative demon handles. Planar (wood) handles, which account for a large proportion of Balinese handles, especially the "middle level", – along with Javanese planar handles (*nunggak semi*) with the *patra*, or stylised "masks" on the inner side - are probably an abstraction of the veiled goddess Durga, the mother of all magic (information provided by *Panembahan Hardjonagoro* in Surakarta in discussions with the author, 1997, 2000, 2004, and Haryono Haryoguritno, Jakarta, 2000, with reference to Central Javanese handles). To control her power, she wears the hood as otherwise she would suck up and absorb all life and all positive energy – similar to the Medusa from the Argonaut myth.

Another Balinese handle type, the *cocet-cocetan* (Kusia of the longhorn beetle), represents the same symbolism in an elegant manner. The longhorn beetle handle is specific to Bali. What inspired this is a mystery; however, it appears that the original motif can also be attributed to Uma/Durga, the shrouded one, as is the case with the planar (flat/flat symmetrical) handles. The shrouded or cocooned being is a clever dramatic trick to damp or control the magical power of the embodied personality without eliminating it altogether, as the representation

can in itself attract the attention of uncontrollable forces, which makes it dangerous but also useful as a "power store". The principle of co-cooning as a means of "moderating" a powerful being in dramatic terms is known throughout the world of sacred art.

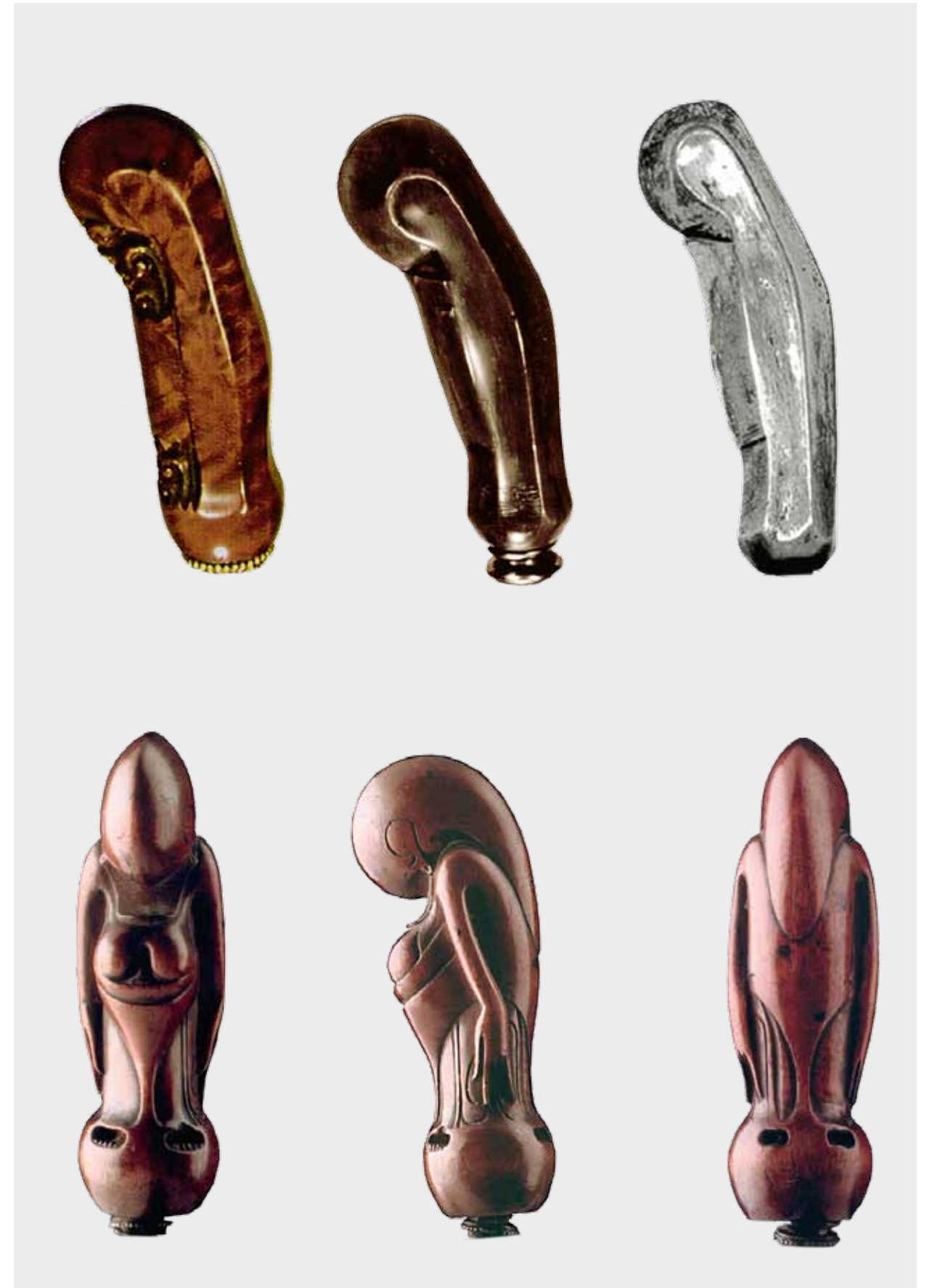
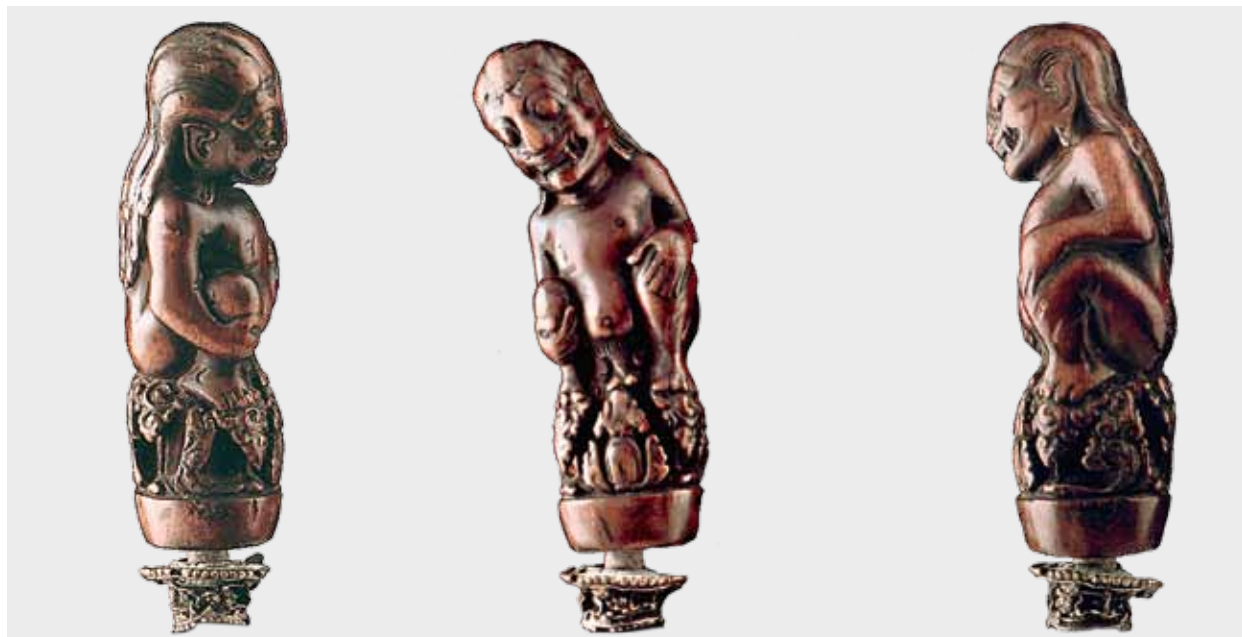
Figures on right side
Early keris representations: temple and palace guard statues at an East Javanese Candi, who are wearing kerises with planar handles, equivalent to today's planar Bali handles.
15th century.





As the mother of the world and the female emanation of Shiva, Uma is known in all her various forms and manifestations as an abstract, shrouded goddess, as the great mother, Durga, Kali, Gauri, Maya, Tara and Parvati. Like Shiva, she has a component that is both destructive as well as creative. As Uma or Gauri, she is worshipped not only as an emanation of Shiva, but also as a goddess in her own right, who acts as a provider of sustenance to all beings and therefore as a "supreme authority" in agriculture in (Dewi Sri, "Goddess of the Rice"). The topic is a complex one; reference is made here merely to the above-mentioned circumstance that the iconographic focus on Durga symbolism in Javanese and Balinese art can be traced back to innovations of the 13th and 14th centuries. Ultimately, Durga is one of the most powerful emanations of the earth and mother

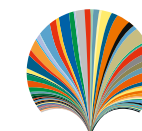
goddess in Hinduism. She is also described in the Vedas of the pre-Hindu era. Unusual, elegant-looking figures can be identified as ruling figures in specific meditative poses, mostly on the octagonal base (with the Hindu significance of the eightfold path), to depict the legitimation of the East Javanese or Balinese rulers (or high-ranking aristocrats). *The most important types of handle, based on examples from the 16th or early 17th century at the latest. Below: Ambras collection, around 1620, handle as a naked demonic figure with long hair on tumpal (lotus) – base. Upper left and centre VKM Dresden, before 1720 (left) and 1630 (centre), as well as Wrangel collection (right, before 1620). Below: handle as a disguised Durga in a naturalistic and abstracted design; model of the planar handle type (as above). Ambras collection, before 1620.*





Javanese keris, probably 16th century. Formerly of the Green Vault, Dresden. Gold, precious gems, steel.

This keris is an important historical item. One can clearly see the beautifully executed iron sculpting of the sor-soran (base of the blade), which is also to be seen on quality Balinese blades. The handle with the octagonal base is the archetype of the East Javanese stately kerises, which were presented to the vassal rulers of East Java in the 15th and 16th centuries to symbolise their loyalty to the Javanese ruling dynasty. In typological terms, they developed in the Bali handles of the aristocracy, but tend towards a "representative" special form. The figure represents a "noble" type in Hindu emblematic terms (cord of the gods, Mudra gestures, lotus base), the bowed posture reminding of the more usual demon handles and implies the actual meaning: clarification of specific states of mind through "expressive" posture. The cord, or toli-toli, is a Buginese/Macassar element.



The figures on the handles of Bali kerises are called *deling* or *togog*. Based on the Javanese model from the 14th or 15th century, they represent demons with long wavy hair – an ancient feature of "barbaric" races in the ethnocentric perspective of Javanese advanced and court culture. Occasionally, the demon king Rahwana, the wind god Bayu or Bhoma, son of Parwati, can be recognised. In most cases, however, they cannot be identified with certainty as the attributes are inconsistent.

Also typical of Bali is the *loceng* handle type, the better examples of which are woven with fine precious metal bands – a remarkable technical achievement. This type is completely unknown on Java and may have been derived from sword handles. Handles made of gold tended to be confined to the elite. The "ordinary people", the *shudra*, were permitted to use wooden handles.



The phallic aspect of the keris is fundamentally beyond doubt, and not just with regard to the handle. Even during the marriage rituals of today, this is clearly conveyed in a drastic manner. During wedding ceremonies on Bali to this day, the groom pierces a bamboo mat held by the bride in symbolic anticipation of the sexual act, and, in former times, it was not unusual for the bride at a state wedding to be married with the ruler's keris. Many ancient Javanese figures on handles feature naked demonic figurines from Shiva's or Shiva Buddha's entourage, in some cases with obvious attributes of their demonic nature. They often wore *Palang*, piercings of the penis, and plinth-like bases on which they sit in a relaxed posture is shaped into a *Tumpal* (lotus) motif. In Vajrayana Buddhism, this is used to represent the *yonis*, the female sexual organ. This closes the circle to the ancient Indonesian body of thought in which the phallic representations of ancestors play an essential part. It would be scarcely imaginable in this form in the aristocratic and still primarily Indian-influenced

court culture of an Airlangga, and most probably not in the esoteric circles of the court of Kertanagara, where nevertheless the foundations were laid for the tantric exorcism inherent to the keris and on which it is based. It appears more likely that Kertanagara's successors, the rulers of Majapahit, whose politics include aspects more closely in touch with the population, had a use for this kind of multi-layered iconography, which characterises the keris. One only has to compare the at times caricaturesque terracottas and statues of Majapahit with the art of the Airlangga/Kediri period to recognise the vast difference between the representational concepts and the meanings contained within it. The keris is by its nature the product of a fusion of cosmologies and a religious symbiosis – a universal symbol that is simply inconceivable without the ancient Indonesian cultural level.

Left: Two important Javanese kerises from the 16th century, VKM Dresden. One can recognise the smooth patina of the blades, as it was applied in Bali. The left piece is probably from the former collection of Philipp II., from the 2nd half of the 16th century.

Bottom right: One of the oldest accurate European representations of the keris and a "proud Javanese man" with a keris from Ludovico de Varthema, around 1600.

At the top right is the handle of the Vienna keris (cf. S. 45), with handle figure made of painted wood decorated with gold leaf. The figure represents an aristocrat with slightly demonic traits and a hibiscus flower on the ear.





Summary of the most important cultural and historical eras for the development of the keris

1. The early era, before 500: metal objects introduced (kettle drums, ge blades, vessels, etc.) are important heirlooms in ancient Indonesian society and on Bali. They embody high prestige, the power of the ancestors, as well as material ownership and wealth. In particular, blades are likely to have held a protective function that was applied to the fields. Ancient Indonesian representation forms and cosmology also have a defining influence in art.

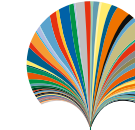
2. The early historic period up to the 11th century: The establishment of the East Javanese kingdoms fostered closer ties between Bali and Java; the peasant population that supported the new power base has not yet or scarcely emerged. The cult of the sacred ruler with its Indian influence brings about the identification of the ruling class with Hindu deities. A convergence takes place with the ancient Indonesian peasant class that exists in parallel. Agricultural fertility cults are combined with esoteric Buddhism and Hinduism. Indian influences continue to play a defining role in the art of the ruling class.

3. The zenith of East Javanese power, late 13th century, 14th century: Bali is incorporated into the Javanese sphere of influence; Java pursues a centralistic policy and advances to become the centre of power in South East Asia. Due to outside political factors, the dynasties maintain a defensive demon cult, which gains increasing acceptance by the general population. Large inward migrations also include Chinese and

Muslims; a multi-cultural centre of power is created in East Java in which there was a need for explicitly Javanese identification symbols. Indian influences disappear from all levels of society. The art becomes non-sacred, lifelike, spontaneous, international and popular. The keris is developed on the spiritual and formal basis of the old metal heirlooms in line with ancient Indonesian thinking, and for the purpose of embodying tantrism, which offered defence against harm, and its ethnic adaptations. The fact that many Chinese migrated to Java during this period as a consequence of the Mongols coming to power may have played a part in promoting ancient Chinese culture.

4. The early Islamic period, late 15th century, 16th century, ensuing period: The Hindu-Javanese heritage is further cultivated and developed, above all in East Java and Bali (the Gelgel and Klungkung kingdoms). Java becomes nominally Muslim and decentralised. Syncretic court cultures, in which courtly ideals of abstraction and spiritualism (mystical Islam) are cultivated, emerge and their influence on the keris becomes noticeable.

From the mid-17th century on, the influence of Europe grows; the courts become impoverished and lose their political power. Bali remains independent until the early 20th century.



The social importance and perception of the keris

There is a deep and inseparable bond between the island of Bali and the keris. The keris plays a central role in virtually every form of social life and in every ceremony, be it in traditional dances, on important community occasions such as weddings or funerals, or even in the image and personal perception of the individual.

In addition to a large number of other meanings, the keris first and foremost represents an aesthetic concept that is a characteristic of Bali. This also applies to the kerises from other regions of Indonesia: In each case, they embody specific design stipulations that achieve their realisation and culmination in the keris. The fine, spiritual elegance of Javanese court culture and its many centuries of history, the powerful, almost aggressive desire for expansion by the Malaysians and Buginese, the luxurious, self-assured eloquence of Balinese art and design – they are expressed in the respective local forms of kerises.

In ancient Java, a man was said to need five things in life: a wife (in this sense: a functioning family), a house (in the sense of a permanent abode and a domicile), a horse (in the sense of mobility), a keris (as a symbol of his masculinity and defensive capabilities, his caste and social standing) and a songbird (in the sense of music and fine arts, meditation and relaxation, also of literature and poetry).

Since the late East Javanese Period (14th/15th centuries), the keris has been shown to be an inherent and indispensable part of the (male) personality – to a greater and deeper extent

than we in the West have ever known for any object category.

For hundreds of years, the keris has also been a bearer of sophisticated aesthetic concepts, which operate according to specific conventions while also permitting a striking degree of freedom and diversity of design. The concept of aesthetics in (central) Indonesia is based not only on conscious perception by the five senses, but also on holistic perception in the sense of a holistic aesthetic experience. One could describe it as a form of "object empathy", or simply as artistic pleasure. In this case, it is not only mystical and cosmological aspects that play a role in the perception of the keris, but also emotions and desires, conscious and unconscious perceptions. For example, dreams experienced in connection with a specific keris (*tayuh*), the quality of experiences that occur soon afterwards, omens and other things: they all contribute to the overall perception of the keris. The Balinese refer to these individual perceptions as *bhawa*. These can be absorbed and verified by *dhyana* (concentration), *darana* (the appearance of the supernatural, visions) and *samadhi* (ecstasy, temporary self-surrender, obsession). A deeper understanding of all these aspects is generally not accessible to most people, but operates outside the boundaries of the intellect and is therefore delegated as required to a shaman or a medium.

Therefore, the keris is not only a manifestation of physical beauty, but also embodies an invisible, metaphysical beauty conveyed and experienced through feelings. Added to this is



a whole range of concepts from ancient cultures that not only require the inspiration of all forms of life, but also of all objects. These ideas had earlier spread across the world. As a result of dogmatic concentration on "supreme deities" and associated imperialist and centralist tendencies, they have confined themselves to a few religious centres (e.g. Japan: Shinto, Borneo: Kaharingan, Tahiti/West Africa: Voodoo) and cultures, but continue to act as a guiding force for a highly beneficial and healthy attitude among millions of people with regard to the natural phenomena and resources in their surroundings.

From a physical perspective, the keris was previously, i.e. before the industrial age and the late colonial period, made from materials extracted directly from the ground (ores) or which came from heavenly bodies (meteoric iron). Once they have witnessed the creation of iron and steel from ore, no-one can resist the awe-inspiring shower that results when fire is used to transform sand and "dirt" into hard matter. Through forging processes that last for days, often conducted in semi-darkness or complete darkness to ensure better temperature control, the blade is born from earth (ore), carbon (reducing agent and fuel), water (hardening medium, often also river water as the source of the raw iron) and air (the forger's bellows). Its cohesion, strength, and smoothness – emphasised by organic profiling – are the embodiment of sheer perfection.

If one considers the process of combining heavenly iron (meteoric iron) with earthly iron as an

additional "feature" of many kerises, the intensity of veneration will only increase. Put simply: while in the forging fire, the metals undergo a metamorphosis that symbolises purification, cleansing, and perfection.



The ancient keris culture of Java and Bali

Right: one of the most important kerises in Europe. Formerly in the Art Cabinet Prague, before 1607.

The painted sheath sunggingan is almost perfectly preserved. Light wood, fashioned from a single piece. Agricultural motifs and explicitly male mythical creatures in paint and gold leaf. Blade 44 cm.

Left: The sheath of the keris from the Sendai City Museum, Japan; formerly in Spain, presented to Hasekura Tsunenaga before 1598. Light wood. Probably mid-16th century.

Sheath similar to left; animal and landscape motifs. Fashioned from a single piece (lras). Above with the heart and Jesus motif, probably painted over a phallic mystical creature.

All high-ranking Javanese kerises that are preserved have these types of sheaths carved from a single piece, and their effect is based on the painting and shape (and not on the wood grain or metallic applications). The significance of these items, whose survival is particularly fortunate as they are extremely fragile, can scarcely be overstated. They represent the direct precursors of the Balinese keris (cf. objects 2, 11, 25 from page 64) and illustrate the original meaning of the Javano-Balinese keris during the late East Javanese period.





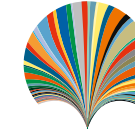
Purity is of central importance throughout the keris world. This fits seamlessly with the religion of Bali, where cleansing rituals involving holy water, *agama tirtha*, play an important role in everyday life. To protect it from contamination, the keris is stored in a suitable room. The most important kerises only leave the room of *pusaka*, the holy heirlooms, on special occasions. A *keris pusaka* is protected with precious oils and must never come into contact with unclean objects. Indeed, such is the cleansing power of the keris that water into which the tip of a blessed keris is immersed is elevated to the rank of holy water, which is always in demand on Bali for use in cleansing ceremonies.

Neka (2014) cleverly summarised the most important aspects of perception and meaning of the keris as follows into four categories. First of all, there are philosophical aspects, whereby the keris' compatibility with Islam as an animated object is beyond question here. Since the keris is identical to its owner at a metaphysical level, the keris or its "focused" blade can encapsulate wishes, needs, goals, almost in the form of a materialised prayer. Buddhism has a similar concept, where the sword as an "absolute factotum" cuts through all illusions. In this sense, the keris is revered not as an object, but as a "physical vehicle that expresses the philosophy of life", referred to in Bali as *paraning sumadi* ("the source and purpose of the created form").

Furthermore and secondly, there are spiritual and religious aspects, in the sense that the keris

embodies the ancestors and therefore the family succession and is an immortal bearer of their essence. Since a fulfilled and useful life in the greater Austronesian area (and previously also in "our" realms) included a strong tendency towards the values and demands of the ancestors (who are the unquestionable source of all social and cultural aspects), the keris is an indispensable symbol of continuity and power in the family genealogy. The fact that – third of all – historical perspectives play a role is self-evident; the legitimisation of the aristocracy is embodied in consecrated heirlooms, ideally from the aristocracy of Majapahit.

Finally and fourthly, the mythology and the holy knowledge relating to the Balinese (and ancient Javanese) traditions are clearly revealed and materialised in the keris. The art forms employed in the production of the keris include carving, metalworking in all its variations (forging, grinding, soldering, polishing, chasing, embossing, etching/patinating, etc.), painting and many other traditional craft techniques. Nothing in this process is coincidental or purely decorative; the choice of colours, for example, for the design of the sheaths, the selection of the wood for the *gandar*, the keris sheath in the narrower sense (which encases and protects the blade), the motifs and details in the handle design, the forms of the blade or the forging pattern (*pamor*): everything is embedded in traditional Balinese culture to a degree that makes them impossible to separate and renders any analysis that is disassociated from newer tendencies unthinkable. The keris is an

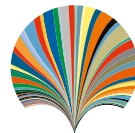


all-encompassing symbol of Bali and of Indonesia in the broader sense.

This is clearly shown by the re-evaluation of the keris in the modern age. *Keris kamardikan* (the modern keris; the keris since Indonesia's independence) embodies the Indonesian nation – one of the largest in the world – in its diversity (art forms of the keris), its determina-

tion (blade with a pronounced orientation) and in its roots in tradition (lore, historical heritage of the keris; part of the world's cultural heritage since 2005).





The Gods & the Forge

Kerises are not only works of art, but symbols. They are not merely physical objects, but manifestations of the wishes, goals, and ideals of the bearer – both as an individual and as a member of society. During rites of passage (e.g. as part of circumcision), the keris plays an integral role, as it does during weddings and funerals. On Bali, the validity of the Javanese text *Tantu Panggelaran* is recognised, and it contains an account of how the Brahma, the great Hindu god of creation, came down to earth in order to instruct humans in the art of metallurgy. Their descendants then became the *pande besi* (smiths). According to the text *Brahmana Pande*, smiths have the same status as kshatriya (warriors, aristocrats according to the Hindu ideal) and priests, or brahmins.

The special position of iron and iron processing is not confined to Bali. The fact that iron in Indonesia had a significance over and above its material properties can be seen, for example, in the name Sulaw(b)esi for Celebes (*besi* = iron), which has a long history of iron production, and where the nickalous *pamor* was traditionally forged. Throughout Indonesia, there are regions that are named after the properties and quality of the iron available there.

The ability to work with metal is a divine activity in itself and cannot be considered in isolation from the religious aspects. Not everyone is permitted to learn the art of forging. The term *empu* for a keris smith is an Austronesian stem word meaning 'mister'. An *empu pande*

(master smith) is selected according to his clan, but also according to specific personal criteria. His person is deemed to be holy, in the sense that he possesses a supernatural talent. Certain purification processes (asceticism, meditation), reveal to him nature's design language and the underlying meanings, which he then combines with his "teachings", i.e. the handed down symbolism, magic, traditions, and spirituality, in order to create a work of art "that satisfies the aspirations of the soul" (Neka 2014), or, in other words, which enables deep and lasting inner pleasure and satisfaction.

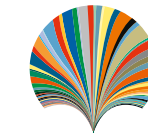
A keris smith has *daya cipta* (the power to focus his thoughts on a goal and to achieve it), *daya rasa* (intuition, through the recognition of natural signs), *daya karsa* (the gift of interpreting the signs so that a work is created free of interfering spiritual influences, that also conforms to astrological, chronological and other view points), and *daya karya* (the strength and technical competence to realise the work by a combination of forging and grinding techniques and the requisite rituals).

The forging of iron is "hot", *panas*, and not just in the technical sense, but also in the magical sense. Brahma as the god of fire is called upon to control the procreative powers of this medium to the benefit of the smith and the subsequent owner of the keris. To ensure physical and spiritual purity, the smith will fast and abstain from sexual activity before commencing an important piece of work – the more impor-

tant the keris, the greater degree of asceticism is required. Similar laws concerning cleanliness also applied in ancient Japan – according to historical sources, the most famous blades required up to 200 days of asceticism and prayer. The element of abstinence before particularly significant, and challenging forging activities is common to all cultures and is also known in the Celtic/Germanic context.

The selected metals are inscribed with *rerajahan* (magical symbols) before they are processed. Every work step is accompanied by mantras (incantations) and sacrifices. An auspicious day is chosen for the basupati, the awakening ceremony for the finished blade.

Metal, but especially iron, is considered throughout South East Asia to be charged with magic. Those who deal with it on and "juggle" with the element of fire on a daily basis therefore need more strength than others (in terms of spirituality). In the past, this was the case in many parts of the ancient world. In many ancient cultures, smiths are closely associated with the aristocracy and appear in the genealogy of kings. Temüjin, Genghis Khan's personal name, means e.g. "smith"; Siegfried/Sigurd was a smith during his youth and apprenticed to the Mime (probably a humanised god), Tibetan rulers can trace back their roots to smiths etc. In the ancient Balinese system, they were not merely craftsmen (*sudra*), but could marry into the ruling families, kept their own genealogies and could even produce their own holy



water, a ritual that was otherwise reserved for the *brahim*. In the holy mother's temple of Bali, Pura Besakih, the keris smiths have a separate room that is reserved exclusively for them.

This special status of forging, which is actually a gruelling and "dirty" trade, is remarkable. It is possible that this dates from the time when the ability to produce iron was not widely known (Bronze Age, Early Metal Age). And of course the notion of playing with fire has a whole range of associative meanings in depth psychology. Be that as it may: Smiths in Bali traced their roots back to Brahma as their mystical progenitor, kept to themselves within the clan boundaries, married within their phratries and their guild (although smiths were permitted to marry into aristocratic circles) and observed their own calendar cycles. In this way, it was possible to keep the techniques and ritual acts secret. A smith remained obligated to the divine progenitor for his entire life, and he remained a smith even if he had never worked as one. This also applies to smiths in other ancient peoples of Indonesia such as the Dayak in Borneo. Once a smith, always a smith – although the smiths on Borneo discovered their calling by appointment, in the same way as a shaman.

The keris smiths (*pande besi* = ironsmith), who also produced betel cutters, *lontar* (= palm leaf, used as a writing implement) knives and other implements for the court, received land in exchange for their services and were relieved of all obligations with regard to the village. In times of war, they served as palace guards along with



the artists and goldsmiths, only taking to the battlefield as the King's personal protection squad if he himself chose to intervene.

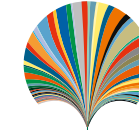
When the ruler or an aristocrat commissioned a new keris, the smith, after he had relocated his workshop to the palace area (if it was not situated there anyway), selected the favourable days for forging, and his daily work from that point on was accompanied by prayers and sacrifices. Specific purity laws and taboos were also observed if the keris in question was a weapon of importance. Incidentally, the sacrificial offerings were significantly more expensive than the assistants, living expenses, and work materials.

The blade is the central part of a keris; the handle and sheath are merely the clothing. It is to the blade alone that the owner pays tribute when he worships the ancestors in the keris every 210 days on the appointed feast day. The sheaths and handles, regardless of the materials used in their construction, do not hold any inherent power and can be replaced at will. They serve merely to protect the blade and the holder, and naturally as an indicator of status. The "damasking" of the blades using the *pamor* technique, which is equivalent to the process known as pattern-welding in the western world (steel made up of numerous layers welded together), is among the most revered of the Balinese arts. *Pamor* means "to mix", in other words, the mixing of different metals, which are hammered together, or forge welded, when white hot. The term also describes

the pattern that will appear on the blade. At least two, but often more metals are forged together. After the blade has been polished and etched or patinated (e.g. with arsenic, red arsenic), they are revealed as different colour tones on the blade.

By means of lamination processes ("folding"), twisting and other techniques, it was possible to achieve different numbers of layers and patterns. It was also possible, after the intended number of layers was achieved by repeated folding, it was also possible to make small cuts into the layers by means of notching or by using the chisel, after which the nicks created in this way were hammered flat again. This method allowed the smith to influence the course of the layers and their appearance at the surface. With these techniques, the layers can generally appear vertically or horizontally (or in both directions, e.g. in the case of twisted patterns) on the surface. The thickness of the alternating light and dark layers also decisively influences the pattern and the overall appearance.

As with the old Javanese blades, the Balinese *pamor* patterns mostly use a small number of layers, but the forging work and the materials are often of very high quality. Brighter metal could be meteoric iron, for example, whose natural nickel content makes it appear brighter after etching compared with the (dark) steel or iron. Another material source was e.g. nickelous ore from Sulawesi or imported European steel.



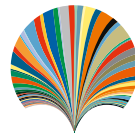
Different aspects that are documented with pendantic precision in *lontar* transcripts make prescriptions regarding characteristics of a magical and esoteric nature, along with spiritual and social aspects. Not everyone was permitted to carry every keris, and specific characteristics were reserved for particular social classes. Kerises have a special nomenclature, whereby every blade form (Javan. *dhapur*), as well as the forging pattern, *pamor*, bears its own name. The sculpted or chiselled elements in the iron are called *ricikan*. Their composition is decisive for the *dhapur*.

It should be mentioned that achieving a good *garapan*, i.e. the finish of the *ricikan* and the process of polishing and smoothing the forged and chiselled blades often takes significantly longer than the forging process itself. Even today with the benefit of modern tools, it takes 30 to 50 hours of solid working time, in the author's experience, just to complete the *garapan* of a complex blade, even if all elements of the blade have already been brought to their final dimensions and there is no further need to remove large amounts of material (i.e. it is already forged and pre-ground). Depending on the *pamor*, the same amount of time was previously required for the forging process under certain circumstances, but with the added and significant risk of rejection and rework. Even the process of adapting the *ganja*, the cross-piece, on the well finished examples is a remarkable piece of forging and precision work.

It goes without saying that virtually no expense is spared with regard to the effort that goes into producing the mounting parts. The traditional sheath is often *iras*, i.e. created from a single piece: a truly impressive achievement by the *mranggi* (sheath maker). The wooden sheath is ideally painted and decorated with gold leaf by a *wayang* specialist who is familiar with suitable traditional motifs. The repoussé work for the *pendok* (the metal outer sheath), the production of the handle as a work of art in itself ... all these factors meant that a customer had to allow for the fact that a keris would take many months to produce once it had been commissioned. And that there was no upper limit to the cost.

But of course, he or she also knew that every good keris represented a unique synthesis of the arts, whose unique form was utterly irreplaceable then, just as it is today.





Item descriptions of Bali keris

Straight and wavy keris blades can be found in equal numbers. *Luk* are the waves on wavy blades. There is no qualitative or symbolic difference between these two basic shapes. According to tradition, the wavy blade is described as a snake in motion, while the straight blade is a snake at rest. When you describe the blade, the number of waves is calculated as follows: the first wave is the concave indentation directly above the *gandik* (shorter side, ricasso), the second wave is the next indentation on the side opposite and above it, then back to the other side, etc.

Balinese keris terminology is not as highly differentiated as that of the Javanese; for this reason, reference must be made in some cases to Javanese terminology – a common practice in "kerisology", the scientific study of the keris. The specific Balinese keris is called *kadutan*; keris is the generally accepted name used for this object category throughout Indonesia.

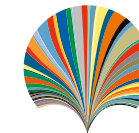
Dapur or *dhapur* describes the shape. It is based on the number of waves, the iron sculpting/fullers and other external features. The science behind the *dhapur* is inconsistent; in addition, the many hundreds of existing *dhapur* designs are continuously being added to (cf. Junus 2012) as the *empu* creates a new shape. The keris "lives". There are however many different shapes that have existed for centuries and that remain consistent (e.g. *sengkelat*, *mégantara*, *tilam upih*, *singa barong*, *panji paniwen* and many others; at this point, reference is made

by way of example to the publications by Guritno/2005 and SNKI/2010).

Pamor is, after the shape *dhapur*, the second key element of the blade (the third is *isi*, "content", which is more difficult to grasp and includes esoteric, historical, and personal aspects). *Pamor* describes the forging pattern (pattern-welding) of the blade. Here too there is a vast and ever-increasing number of variations of the "classic" patterns (*beras wutah*, *untiran*, *lar gangsir*, etc.). Refer to M. Sachse (Damascus Steel, 1989), which examines the topic of "Damascus Steel" in detail. At this point, it should be mentioned that all known steel patterns, occasionally even Wootz, Indo-Persian crucible Damascus steel, are to be encountered in kerises, and that the techniques are equivalent to those employed in "ancient Europe" since the time of the Roman emperors.

There is an extensive list of terminology relating to the keris. Some terms can be translated into German/English, e.g. *wilah* (blade), or *warangka* (entire sheath). Terms that cannot be directly translated include *mendak* (Balinese *wewer*), the haft ring that sits between the handle and the blade, *selut* (the base of the handle, often set with eight stones) and *gandar* (the lower part of the sheath that protects the blade).

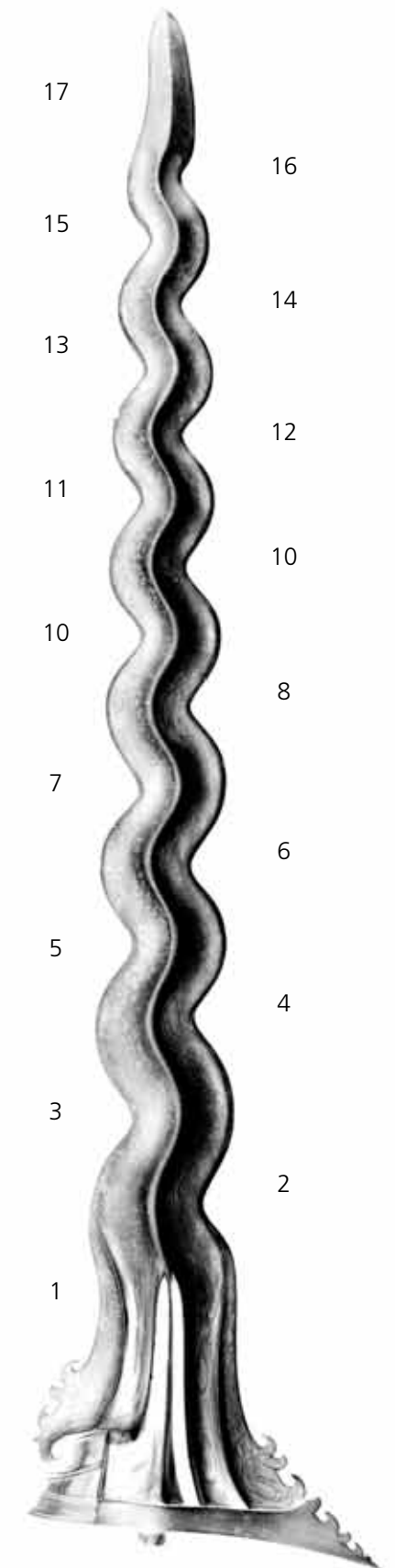
Gandik describes the base of the keris blade that is typically thickened on one side, *ganja* is the cross-piece, which continues the shape of the blade. *Pendok* is an additional outer



metal sheath that protects and strengthens the blade sheath, the *gandar*, (in former times, the sheath was also used to ward off an attack in an emergency). *Sorsoran* is the part of the blade that displays the most important iron sculpting elements, roughly the bottom third (near the handle).

The remaining terms can be found in the terminology for the blade (cf. page 58).

Examples of blade shapes and counting the waves:





Straight, no wave (*lurus*),
Shape: *marak* or *tilam upih* (Javan.)



Straight (*lurus*),
Shape: *tilam upih* (Javan.)



One wave or straight,
Shape: *singa-lembu*
("lion/bull")



Three waves,
Shape: *jangkung*
(possibly with addition, e.g. *mangkurat*)



Five waves,
Shape: undefined



Seven waves,
Shape: *caburuk* or *balebang*



Nine waves,
Shape: *sempana*



Eleven waves,
Shape: *nagaraja* or *nagasasra*



Eleven waves,
Shape: *keris pedang* or *sepang*
("sword-keris")



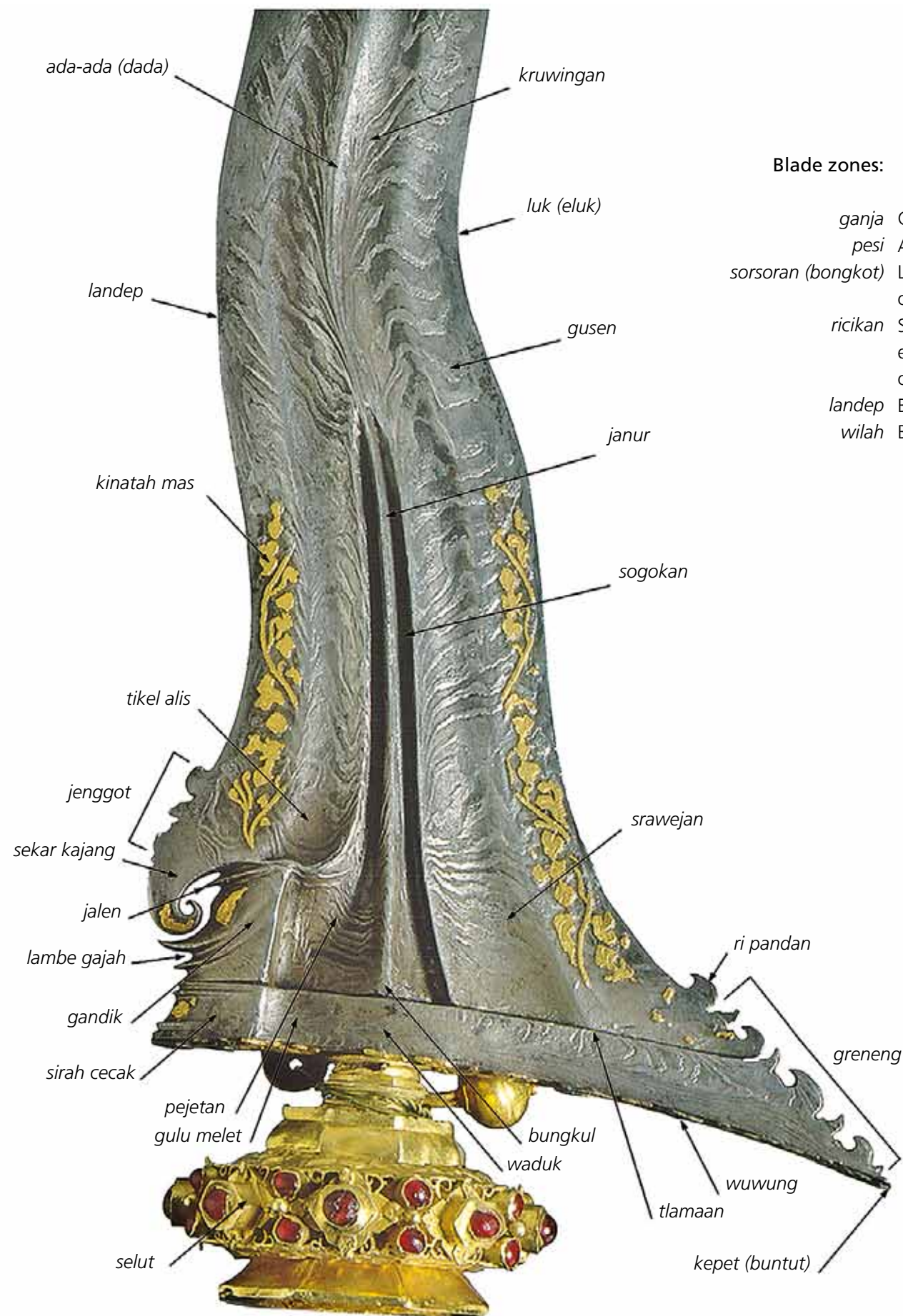
Thirteen waves,
Shape: *nagaraja*-related



Seventeen waves,
Shape: *kalawija*



Thirty five waves,
Shape undefined



Blade zones:

ganja	Cross-piece
pesi	Angle pin
sorsoran (bongkot)	Lower third of the blade
ricikan	Sculpted iron elements of the sorsoran
landep	Blade smith
wilah	Blade

Keris today

Over the past few years, there has been renewed interest in the keris. This interest has manifested itself at different levels and has pleasing but also worrying aspects. The keris is ubiquitous on Bali in the context of public rituals, although it is most likely to catch the eye of the visitor as part of the *barong* dances and the associated seemingly suicidal acrobatics of the dancers.

(Note: During the barong dance, Durga curses her opponents, the followers of the local guardian spirit Barong, in such a way that they want to stab themselves in a fit of madness. However, the power of Barong, a mythical creature with dragon-like and lion-like traits, protects them from injuries.)

Nevertheless, one can see that the keris, although surrounded by "hype" due to its status as part of the world's cultural heritage, is at the same time experiencing a distortion of its content. Since economic and financial circumstances frequently do not allow the owners to maintain the ancient shrines and since the land on which the shrines are situated is continually being sold off to investors, the traditional importance, the actual cultural heritage and the spiritual familial and historic value of the keris as a sacred object and heirloom whose function is to protect the legacy of the generations, is very much under threat.

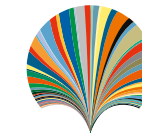
New and in some cases exceptionally spectacular kerises are being made, which appeal to a broad clientèle (and most definitely to the au-

thor!), whereas the old items are either being forgotten or completely reclassified as part of revisions or recreations.

There is a need to support a view of the keris that focuses on conservation, the preservation of inherited knowledge, and the distribution of information. Experience shows that a reckless approach based solely on enthusiasm and completely detached from the history will not endure in the long term. A considered, long-term, and sustainable policy of appreciation is based on the knowledge and conservation of inherited cultural assets. However much one can appreciate and should promote the development of the *keris kamardikan*, the keris since Indonesian independence, as a creative platform, it is however equally important to look after and protect the old items properly and to secure the basis for their continued existence.

With this in mind, the introduction of a whole range of measures to preserve this culture is overdue. And even if these measures cannot prevent the at times lavish reworking and re-interpretation of possibly important historic pieces in an attempt to "upgrade" and present them in a better light, then they should at least document this work in a traceable manner.

And in so doing, give the proud owners the opportunity to preserve a heritage that goes back for centuries.





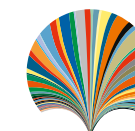
Remark: This book does not present any theories, but briefly outlines the acknowledged state of historical research and the cultural historic situation. For this reason, the use of references in the text was avoided as far as possible for the sake of readability. The chapters that address the still unexplained origins of the keris refer primarily to publications by Weihrauch, Haryoguritno and the SNKI (for the traditional historical assessment, *tangguh*), References ibid.

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Object and detailed description

The Balinese keris represents a direct continuation of the East Javanese keris since the middle of the last millennium. Whereas the influence of European colonial powers, Islamisation, and efforts by the powerful coastal cities to achieve independence, and other factors caused Java to follow a different path, Bali retained its Hindu religion, but with typical Balinese characteristics. While the Javanese kingdoms became increasingly dependent on Holland and Great Britain and entangled in their colonial policy, Bali was able to develop independently and maintain and expand its proud East Javanese heritage. One of the consequences of this relatively free development over the last few centuries is the Balinese keris.

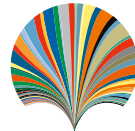
This publication to accompany the exhibition "The Gods & the Forge" uses selected examples to trace the evolution of the Balinese keris from its Javanese precursor from the 16th century to the present day. The selection covers a representative range of higher-quality and top-quality kerises of various eras that offer a high informative value in line with art history criteria. This informative value is based on historical and cultural insights.

However, this does not in any way mean that other, less "spectacular" kerises that a Balinese farmer, craftsman, or employee might own and cherish are any less important. Quite the contrary. As explained above, the keris is a very personal object, and its true value is based on personal perceptions. The term "value" should

be understood in neutral terms ...

Some of the pieces presented are extremely significant in terms of the history of art and of styles, and are featured here for the first time. In particular, the painting of old sheaths has naturally become very rare due to the climatic conditions on Bali. The same is true of the high-gloss patina that was a feature of the high-quality old Balinese blades and represents an extremely high level of artistic and metal-working skill.

Top-quality Balinese kerises are among the most outstanding examples of historical metal-working, and this (among other things) is what we want to showcase here.



01 Blade: wavy (small wave amplitude, *regol*), 7 luk.

Pamor (welding pattern) *benda sagada*, or *serante* (see Neka 2014: 78). Layering is manipulated by filing and grinding away sections of the rough blade, and successive flat forging, so the layers are cut in a determinable way. The forging is done with a low layer density, and is executed flawless. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggol* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove), *sekar kajang* (trunk) and *lambe gaja* (elephants lip), *sogokan* (double fuller).

Handle: figurine handle (*deling*), ebony with silver applications. Showing a smiling/grinning figure with aristocratic attributes (diadem, necklace), standing/crouching on a *tumpal* base. One hand performs a *mudra*, the other holds a vessel (tantristic priest emblem?).

Selut with orange-red gemstones, *mendak* with pink ruby-cabochons.

Scabbard: *batun-poh*-mouthpiece, rounded profile (*gayaman* in Javanese), wood, completely painted in red, blue and gold. The latter forms lotus-motives in Chinese manner in three sections of the sheath (*gandar*). In-between painted red, with rim in red and gold.

Probably later 20th century, blade and handle contemporary with scabbard.

Length total 65 cm

Blade 44 cm





02 Blade: straight.

A hybrid between *keris* and *pedang* or *chundrik*, sword, called *sepang*. Base widened, with grooves, main part of blade diamond-section. *Pamor untiran*, made up of twisted rods (two rods on each side of hard steel core, *saton*). Very long blade. Good preserved arsenic patina, smooth and glossy. The development of the pattern in twist *pamor* patterns depends strongly on how much material is ground away after forging; semi-circular patterns appear when the rods are ground or filed away up to their central area. This is called *untuk banyu* (water bubbles) in Javanese terms. Blade base widened, with hollow-ground surfaces. Exceptional flawless work, a masterpiece of the bladesmith's art.

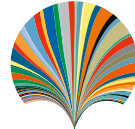
Handle: unusual type without parallels, medium-dense wood, painted in red and black. The style is reminiscent of Ming-Chinese art (clouds and rocks). *Wewer/mendak* silver, with coral cabochons.

Scabbard: *batun-poh-shape*, light wood, painted with flowers (lotus) in red, gold, white and black, on green (mouthpiece) and red (*gandar*, blade part of scabbard) ground. The whole decoration evokes Chinese reminiscences. Well preserved. The style of the scabbard stands in the tradition of the *kerises* of the oldest European collections, 16th century.

Unusual *keris*, 19th century or older.

Length total 70 cm
Blade 53,5 cm





03 Blade: straight.

Dhapur (shape) *sepang* or *pedang* (or Balinese *sundri*; = *chundrik*), „sword-shape“. The blades's shape is rather similar to no. 2. *Pamor* made of twisted rods (*pamor untiran*). The *pamor* is also similar to the *keris* shown before, but if you look closely at the edges of the *keris* described here, the *pamor* lines actually "touch" the edges and continue on the other side. The *pamor* lines of no. 2 do not touch the edges. In this case, the *pamor* layers are "wrapped" around the core (*saton*), or there is no core at all. This *pamor* type is called *buntil mayit* or death shroud in this case.

Ganja with *greneng* (teeth), blade base widened and partially hollow-ground. Patina faded, but still visible. Smooth, good preserved original surface.

Handle: cylindrical *loceng*-shape, variety with oval pads all over the surface, ground carved in lines. Hard wood, deeply red stained. *Mendak* (ring) gold with pink rubies (?).

Scabbard: *batun-poh* shape (Javan. *gayaman*), rounded profile, whole surface painted with floral- ornamental motives and birds in heraldic composition (gold on deep-red ground). European influences in style (19th century?) might be recognized.

Historically significant *keris*-ensemble, compare SNKI (2011: 334; with gold-adornment on blade). Blade 17th or 18th century, mounting later.

Length total 71,5 cm

Blade 55,7 cm





04 Blade: wavy, 13 luk.

Overall good condition, „classical“ Bali-keris. 19th century or earlier.

Pamor in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water) in Javanese *beras wutah*. Technically „lying“ lamination (*mlumah*), few layers. Patina (*warangan*) well preserved. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove), *sekar kajang* (trunk) and *lambe gaja* (elephants lip), *sogokan* (double fuller). Blade shape is called *sengkelat* in Javanese.

Handle: *deling*-shape, also called *togokan* (*togok* = statue). Gold, demonic deity (*dasamuka*) with half-precious stones and rubies. In the right hand a weapon attribute, or maybe the *amerta* (water of life) from Sanskrit mythology (in this case it would be Rahwana, the demon king from the Mahabharata epos).

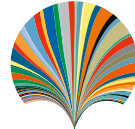
Scabbard: non – identified shape, restricted to Bali and Lombok. Mouthpiece ivory, blade sheath part (*gandar*) in *kayu timoho* (Kleinhovia hospita L.), in this selected grain called *kayu pelet* (speckled grain), with floral gold applications and stones.

Keris for high aristocracy, Bali or Lombok, 19th century

Length total 69,5 cm

Blade 45,5 cm





05 Blade: wavy, 15 luk.

Pamor in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water) in Javanese *beras wutah*. Technically „lying“ lamination (*mlumah*), few layers. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove), *sekar kajang* (trunk) and *lambe gaja* (elephants lip), *sogokan* (double fuller). Referring to some sources, shapes with more than 13 waves are called *kala wija*.

Handle: *grantim*-handle, embossed silver, imitating a woven *lotjeng*- or *grantim* handle (see no. 06, 07). In the pommel cap, the tail of a mythical animal can be seen, or a plant's sprout. *Selut* silver, set with eight coloured stones (blue and red).

Mendak missing.

Scabbard: mouth piece in *sesrengatan*-shape, Javan. *ladrang*. Ebony. Carved in deep relief on both sides, showing *kala*- or *bhoma*-motives (apotropeic mask with fangs) and stylized Garuda-motives in the border area (Garuda, the eagle, being a main protagonist in several Hindu epics). Embedded in floral-ornamental motives in typical Bali-baroque.

Scabbard cover sheet silver over wooden core, set with large stone cabochons (*gagat*). Embossed in floral-ornamental motives, showing European influences. On the backside, a heraldic cornucopia (horn of plenty) might be recognized.

Bali, being still independent, was entangled in the activities of the East India Trade Company (VOC) in several respects in the 19th century.

Very large, representative keris, blade 18th or 19th century, mountings 20th century.

Length total 74 cm

Blade 52,5 cm





06 Blade: wavy, 9 luk.

Exceptional large blade, without *pamor* (*kelen-gan*). With inscriptions in silver, Islamic context. Meaning: La ilaha ilallah Muhammad rasulullah - No God but God and Muhammad is messenger of God. *Sor-soran* (blade base) with *jeng-got*, *greneng*, *tikel alis*, *sekar kajang*, *lambe gajah* (see description of no. 4). Blade maybe Javanese origin, for *greneng* shape, 19th century or most probably earlier. Similar blades were attributed to the Mataram-Kartasura-era (see SNKI 2010: 334).

Handle: very well executed *grantim*-handle, woven silver strings over a wooden core. In the pommel cap the tail of a mythical animal can be seen, or a plant's sprout – still an unresolved question.

Scabbard: mouth piece in *sesrengatan*-shape, Javan. *ladrangan*. Probably referring to ancestral myths (in Austronesian societies, the ancestors were seaborne). Whalebone. Scabbard with especially elaborate silver cover, embossed very detailed with floral and geometrical motives.

Keris of historical significance, which requires deeper research. Blade probably earlier 18th century.

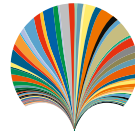
Bali or maybe Lombok (compare SNKI 2011: 352)

Length total 92,5 cm

Blade 43 cm







07 Blade: straight.

Pamor in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water), in Javanese *beras wutah*. Technically „lying“ lamination (*mlumah*), few layers. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove), *sekar kajang* (trunk), *lambe gaja* (elephants lip) and *sogokan* (double fuller). The shape is *si anom* (*sinom*) *robjong*, (*si anom* = young, youthful; see Neka 2014: 60), similar to *pasopati* (arrow, or throwing dart of the gods), which usually have no *sekar kajang*. The *greneng* (teeth) on the *buntut-side* (the wider side of the base) show Balinese style. Blade 18th century or older.

Handle: very well executed *grantim*-handle, woven gold strings over a wooden core. In the pommel cap the tail of a mythical animal can be seen, or a plant's sprout. *Selut* gold, set with ruby-cabochons, which additional rubies in the space between the larger stones.

Mendak in the same style and workmanship, with gold-granulate between the cabochons. Most probably preserved as original ensemble, which is encountered very seldomly.

Scabbard: mouth piece in rounded *batun poh*-shape („mango-seed“), *gayaman* in Javanese. Selected *kayu pelet* („speckled wood“), *gandar* (blade part of scabbard) in the same high wood quality as the mouthpiece. Rim covered with sheet gold, backside with silver *pendok* (cap), gilded in upper part, and embossed in floral-ornamental motives with „gordic knotwork“ in the center part, in midst of lotus-motives.

Mouthpiece with central gold plaque, deeply embossed with lotus motive, set with rubies in the same style and quality as the handle.

A set of *kadutan* (keris) mountings of unique quality, 19th century (or maybe older). Blade most probably older.

Length total 73 cm
Blade 41,5 cm







08 Blade: wavy, 11 luk.

Elaborate blade, well preserved, 18th or 19th century. Pamor balines. *ilining warih* („flowing water“), Javan. *beras wutah*, low density in layering. Fine patina, well preserved. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove), *sekar kajang* (elephant trunk) and *lambe gaja* (lip), *sogokan* (double fuller). Blade sides hollow-ground (*kruwingan*), which means much effort for the blademaker, especially in wavy blades.

Handle (*danganan*, *landean*) classical example for *kojongan*-type (also called *bebondolan*), planar handle. Probably abstract figurine of concealed Durga. Usual type, already seen in depictions from the 15th century (see page 34) *Mendak* is missing.

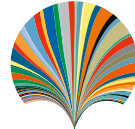
Scabbard in *kayu timoho* (*Kleinhovia hospita* L.), speckled (*pelet*). Highly polished. Mouth piece in rounded *batun poh*-shape („mango seed“), called *gayaman* in Javanese.

A classical Bali *kadutan* (keris), definitive in its restrained shape and style.

Length total 67,8 cm

Blade 46,5 cm





09 Blade: wavy, 15 *luk*.

Moderate wave amplitude (called *luk regol*). *Pamor* in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water) in Javanese *beras wutah*. Technically „lying“ lamination, few layers. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove), *lambe gajah* (trunk) and *lambe gaja* (elephants lip), *sogokan* (double fuller). Blade sides deeply hollow ground (*kruwingan*, from Javanese *di ngruwing*, „hollowed“), making the mighty blade astonishingly light. *Gandik* is chiselled as hermit or ascetic sitting in a meditation grotto, a very elaborate minute chisel work. Patina in good condition.

Handle: *deling*, figurine handle. Black horn with embossed silver applications. Showing a boar-headed god, with unspecific attribute in the right hand, half-crouching (*lalita*-pose) on a rudimental triangular tumpal- (Lotus-) socket. The handle is unusual. *Selut* and *mendak* set with half-precious coloured stone cabochons.

Scabbard: mouthpiece rounded *batun poh*-shape, Javan. *gayaman*, black ebony. Wooden blade sheath (*gandar*) covered with silver, embossed in floral motives. This part, called *pendok* in Javanese, protudes in a grinning *bhoma*- or *kala*-mask with tusks and an abstract flame auriol, covering the central mouth piece. The style reminds on Tibetan *kala*-faces.

Blade and mountings probably 20th century
Representative ensemble for high-quality contemporary Bali-kerises.

Length total 67,8 cm
Blade 46,5 cm





10 Blade (not shown): 11 luk.

The blade's shape is called *sabuk inten* in Java. *Pamor* in Balinese terminology *ilining warih*, „flowing water“. Low density in layering. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove) and *lambe gajah* (elephant's lip) as well as *sekar kajang* (trunk), *sogokan* (double groove) and hollow-ground flanks (*kruwangan*). Patina not well preserved, etched.

Handle: *deling*-shape, also called *togokan* (*togok* = statue). Demonic figure, maybe Kumbakarna or Rahwana, hammered/embossed silver, partially gilded. The figure is holding an unclear attribute in the right hand (maybe a mirror, but more probably a weapon, eg. a *chakra*, a throwing disk); the left hand performing a *mudra* (gesture). Slightly crouching *lalita* pose, in a somewhat threatening posture. *Selut* with imitated „stones“ integral with the *selut*, *mendak* with red (glass ?) cabochons.

Scabbard: mouth piece ivory, *kandik*-shape, *gandar* covered with sheet silver, partially gilded. *Gandar* (blade's part of the scabbard) covered with florally embossed silver cap (*pendok* in Javanese).

Blade 19th century or earlier, mountings 20th century.

Length total 61 cm

11 Blade (not shown): straight (*lurus*)

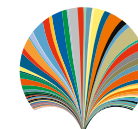
Floral gold applications at blade base. *Gandik* chiselled as seated animal figure (*singga*). On Bali, kerises with *gandik* in animal shape are called *tantri* (*tantri* = fable, Javanese term is *ganan*). *Pamor* balines. *ilining warih* („flowing water“), Javan. *beras wutah*. Patina not well preserved, etched with sharper acid solutions.

Handle: (balines. *danganan*) a classical example for *kojongan*-type, planar handle. Wood. Abstract concealed Durga. In this case, it is done in the same carving and colouring style as the sheath, in slight relief, painted and sheet gold plated.

Scabbard: mouth piece in *ladrang/sesrengatan* style, boat-shaped. In the central part Kala- or Bhoma-mask, open-mouthed, with *protuding* fangs. Scabbard base and mouth piece are worked in the same style as the handle. The middle of the *gandar* is painted in classical manner, aristocratic figures and vegetable motives in Gianyar-style.

There is an European influence to be identified; Dutch leather tapestry from the Wilhelminic era shows the same kind of decoration. Therefore, this keris can be attributed to the beginning of the 20th century. The blade might be somewhat older.

Length total 67,8 cm





12 Blade: wavy, 15 luk.

Pamor in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water) in Javanese *beras wutah*. Technically „lying“ lamination (*mlumah*), few layers. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove), *sekar kajang* (trunk) and *lambe gaja* (elephants lip), *sogokan* (double fuller). Referring to some sources, shapes with more than 13 waves is called *kala wija*.

Handle: Balinese *danganan* in the shape of bug's grub, called *cocet-cocetan*. Finely hammered silver, once gilded. Set with half-precious red or pink-red stones. One recognizes the bug's grub, the „hidden persona“. Base (*selut*) set with pink and moon-coloured cabochons.

Scabbard: mouthpiece in *batun poh*-shape, Javanese *gayaman*, made from whalebone. The scabbard's blade part is plated with horn or tortoise shell, carved in relief with floral motives.

Stilistic highly unusual mounting, early 20th century or earlier.

Length total 67,5 cm

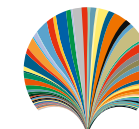
13 Blade: wavy, 15 luk.

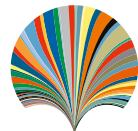
Exaggerated waves, blade with very deep groove cutting, 19th century or earlier. *Gara-pan* (blade profiling) very elaborate. *Pamor*, balines. *ilining warih* („flowing water“), Javan. *beras wutah*. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove) and *lambe gaja* (lip of elephant), *sekar kajang* (trunk) and *sogokan* (double fuller). Deeply hollow-ground sides (*kruwingan*), making the blade light, in spite of the rather massive dimensions. Blades with more than 13 waves are termed as *kalawija* in Javanese. The shape shows a rudimental *pudak sategal*, when the first *luk* on each side reaches in a thorn-like protrusion out of the otherwise blade profile/edge line on both sides. This shape is not unusual on Java kerises (eg. the shape *karna tinanding*) of the 19th century, but seldomly encountered earlier. Patina not well preserved, etched-over. Referring to some sources the shape with more than 13 waves is called *kalawija*.

Handle: figural, *deling* or *togokan* (*togok* = statue). Embossed silver. It depicts a *bhuta nawasari*, demon (rice demon) on lotus (*tumpal*) base. In very old handles (see page 36), one can sometimes see a stylised vagina inside the lotus, which can be interpreted as a tantristic (Shivaitic) constellation in connection with the phallic figurine crouching above. On Bali, as it seems, that original tantristic motive became obscured over the centuries. Base (*selut*) one-piece with the handle, with imitated bulging „stones“. *Mendak* gold, with pink ruby cabochons.

Blade probably 18th or 19th century, handle later part of 20th century.

Blade 41,6 cm





14 Blade: wavy, 17 luk.

Strong blade with very deep groove cutting, 19th century or earlier. *Garapan* (blade profiling) very elaborate. *Pamor*, balines. *ilining warih* („flowing water“), Javan. *beras wutah*. Patina worn. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (lip), *lambe gaja* (trunk of elephant) and *sogokan* (double fuller). Blades with more than 13 waves are termed as *kalawija* in Javanese (Hidayat 2013: 126).

Handle: *loceng* shape, wood wrapped in human hair string. Also called *lelocengan rambut*, see SNKI 2011: 220. *Loceng* can be translated as bell. Neka (2014: 14) determines it as „handle for youths“, which is questionable because of the size, and the often-seen combination with large high-quality keris blades and swords (*cundrik*) for warriors (*khsatrya*). Human hair has inherent powers beneficial for the warrior (see no. 16).

Typical Balinese keris, *kadutan*, 19th century or earlier.

Blade 41,6 cm



15 Blade: wavy, 35 (!) luk.

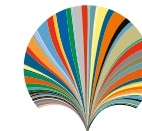
Pamor in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water) in Javanese *beras wutah*. Technically „lying“ lamination, few layers. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove), and *sogokan* (double fuller), the latter following the shape of the dense *luk* in this case. The *gandik* is shaped as non-specific four-legged fabulous animal with trunk, which forms a *sekar/kembang kajang* here. Rudimental *pudak sategal* (an exaggeration of the first *luk* on each side, sprouting out of the edge line, compare no. 13), known for the shape *karna tinanding* in Javanese (SNKI 2010: 249, Guritno 2005: 196).

Blades with more than 13 waves are called *kalawija* in Javanese. The large amount of dense waves means very high effort for the smith, respectively the *mengarap* (finisher).

Handle: *cocet-cocetan*, black horn with embossed silver embellishments, partly set with pink ruby-cabochons. Depiction of a bug's larva. *Mendak* set with pink cabochons (rubies?), *selut* of gilded silver with integral „stones“ of silver.

Blade probably 19th century, handle 20th century.

Blade 46,5 cm





16 Blade: partially wavy, 5 luk.

Straight for the most part, with wavy section in the front part near the tip. In Javanese called *pedang cengcrong* (see Hidayat 2013: 175). Long *gandik*; the first of the *greneng* (teeth) very large and claw-like bent-in. Above the *gandik* you see a small *lambe gajah* and *sekar kajang*, elements of the elephant's face as symbol of power. *Pamor* in Balinese terminology *sisik*. Slightly manipulated layers. Technically „lying“ lamination, few layers. Blade etched, with rougher surface. Cross-section bi-convex (lense-like).

Handle: *loceng* (*lonceng*)-shape, cylindrical, medium-hard wood wrapped in string of human hair. *Mendak* set with coloured glass cabochons.

This type of handle is attributed to youths and ordinary people (Neka 2014: 14). The human hair is considered as bringing extra power to the bearer (maybe referring to an ancient belief in the power of the head). It was widely used in Bali and Lombok. Referring to some sources, this type is used only by *sudra* and young men of lower status, but this is questionable because of high-ranking pieces combined with this type of handle (see Neka 2014: 82).

Scabbard: not shown, strongly grained wood, mouthpiece rounded *batun poh* shape (Javanese: *gayaman*).

The whole keris most probably 19th century.

Blade 41,2 cm

17 Blade: wavy, 11 luk.

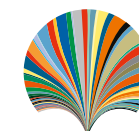
Shape: *chundrik*, in Javanese also called *pedang cengkrong* or keris *pedang*, „sword-like keris“, with back on the first half of the blade, and fuller. The blade base further shows *sogokan*, double decorative grooves, which are an essential part of many keris shapes. *Chundrik* (see Hidayat 2013: 175) is an old word for keris which derives from old-Javanese *curiga*. The word is also applied to bladed objects of social meaning in other parts of Indonesia, e.g Timor (*surik*). Front part wavy, 11 luk, *pamor untiran* (twisted), one thick twisted rod forged on the *saton* or *slorok* (steel core layer) on each side. Surface slightly worn.

Handle: *loceng* (*lonceng*)-shape, cylindrical, medium-hard wood, dyed with vegetable sap, wrapped in string of human hair, maybe a reference to the old head-cultus in Indonesia/Austronesia, as seen in many parts of the old world, eg. celts, germanic tribes etc. One can remind the story of Samson and Deliah, the whole power of Samson being removed by cutting his hair. *Mendak* set with dark cabochons.

Scabbard: not shown, mouth-piece fully elaborate *sesrengatan*, Javan. *ladrangan*, which was meant for religious and aristocratic upper social level (*brahmana*, *khsatrya*).

Blade 18th or earlier 19th century at latest, mounting later (20th century).

Blade 47,3 cm





18 Blade: straight (*lurus*)

Dhapur „marak“ (see Neka 2014: 34). On the wider side (*buntut*-side) *greneng* (teeth), blade base with single groove (*sogokan*), diamond blade cross section, blade with *pamor* in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water) in Javanese *beras wutah*. Technically „lying“ laminations, few layers. Patina (*warangan*) well preserved.

Handle: carved Bhuta (demon) figurine of dark brown hardwood, finely grained. The figure is sitting/half-crouching on a *tumpal*-base, in relaxed pose (*lalita*). Its style is close to Javanese handles from the 16th century and earlier (see pg. 36, 40). *Selut* is one-piece with handle, set with dark green stones. Unusual configuration, usually the *selut* is made of metal. *Mendak* with brighter green glass cabochons.

Scabbard (not shown): mouth piece *ladrang/sesrengatan*-shape, red-brown hardwood. Carved elaborate, and equipped with well executed decoration lines, called *sesangetan*, *kebitan angkup* and *cecawian*. *Gandar* (blade sheath, balines. *penyejer*) plated with tortoise shell.

The blade 19th century or older, mounting 20th century.

Blade 44,5 cm

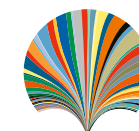
19 Blade: straight.

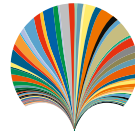
Probably very old blade, straight (*lurus*), 18th century, maybe older. *Pamor keleng* (without). The *pejetan*, the hollowing behind the *gandik*, the thick part on the shorter side of the blade base, with piercing gold pin (referring to U. Kloubert, a „magic eye“ meant for high ranking priests).

Handle: *deling*-shape, also called *togokan* (*togok* = Statue), embossed as half-demonic deity (Bayu ?) or aristocrat in demonic emanation. Set with rubies and coloured glass cabochons. In the right hand an attribute (probably a stylized weapon).

Scabbard: not shown, *batun poh*-shape, wood.

Blade 38 cm





20 Blade: wavy, 11 luk.

Gandik as crowned *naga* (dragon serpent), shape in *nagaraja* („lord of the serpents“) style, compare description no. 25. Blade base with *greneng* (teeth) at wider side (*buntut*). Blade hollow-ground at the main surfaces (*kru-wingan*). Pamor in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water), in Javanese *beras wutah*. Technically „lying“ lamination, few layers. Patina (*warangan*) well preserved.

On Bali, blades with zoomorphic *gandik* are called *tantri* (= fable). On Java, this is called *gan-nan*.

Handle: Balinese *danganan*, type *cocet-cocetan* (bug's larva), embossed silver, set with coloured glass cabochons. The bug larva is a motive restricted to eastern Java, Madura and especially Bali, probably referring to the principle of transformation/initiation, or the hidden person or mytheme of the concealed godly person, which hides its inherent magical powers and might (eg. Durga/Uma/Kali).

Scabbard (not shown): mouth piece in rounded profile, *batun poh*-shape, Javanese *gayaman*. Dark hardwood, probably coromandel (*Diospyros celebica*). Sheet brass applications in three sections, chased in floral ornaments.

Probably early 20th century.

Blade 41,2 cm

21 Blade: wavy, 13 luk.

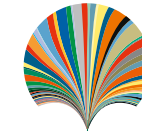
Sorsoran (the lower, wide part, blade's base) worked out as double *naga* (dragon snake), whose body reaches over the blade to the tip of the blade. Shortly before the widening of the blade's base, the snake body parts in two, twists around the axis and terminates in two crowned heads (double crown, compare description no. 25, peeking out oft the blade's profile on both sides. Deep, plastic chisel work. Pamor in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water), in Javanese *beras wutah*. Technically „lying“ lamination, few layers. Sides around the snake body are hollow-ground (*kru-wingan*). Wavy crosspiece, *ganja* (*ganja wilut*), with *greneng* (teeth). The blade type with *naga* in a wider sense (*dhapur: nagasasra, nagaraja*, „lord of the serpents“; snakes representing fertility since remote times in Indonesia and elsewhere) is known in Java since the era Sultan Agung, early Mataram, early 17th century, the zenith of keris culture. It might be older, but we have no reference pieces. Snakes represent the Lower World and soil fertility, and the meaning of the ruler as axis of the world as well (world snake, carrier of the Middle World) since remote times.

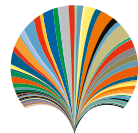
On Bali, kerises with animal-shaped *gandik* are called *tantri* (*tantri* = fable, Javanese term is *gan-nan*).

Handle: wood, *loceng*-shape, sheet gold plated (worn), wrapped with human hair string. Also called *lelocengan rambut*, see SNKI (2011: 220). *Loceng* can be translated as bell. Human hair has inherent powers beneficial for the warrior. *Loceng* are found only on Bali and Lombok. *Mendak* set with coloured glass cabochons.

Probably 19th century, blade maybe older.

Blade 48 cm





22 Blade: straight (*lurus*)

Abruptly slendering after 1/3 of the blade. This slendering; which is quite sudden and starkly deliberate, is considered in some references as „one wave keris“ or *luk 1*. *Pamor* in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water) in Javanese *beras wutah*. Technically „lying“ lamination, few layers. Patina (*warangan*) not well preserved. The blade's base, *gandik*, depicts a mythical scene, the keris' shape *dhapur singalumbu* refers to the Tantri Kamandaka, a series of moral fables based on the Indian Pancatantra and Tantropakhayana texts which came to Java in the 14th and to Bali in the 16th century. Such blades with zoomorphic *gandik* are occasionally called *dhapur tantri* (Hidayat 2013: 138). They might refer to a metaphorical animal fight, the bull (clerical power) and the lion (secular power) fighting each other.

Handle: example for *cojongan*, planar handle. Probably abstract depiction of concealed Durga. Probably *kemuning*- or *trambalo*-wood (*Murraya paniculata*). *Mendak* gold, set with coloured stones and coral cabochons.

Scabbard (not shown): *Batun poh*- resp. *gayaman*-shape, rounded mouthpiece. Wood.

The blade of this keris might be very old; Neka (2014: 40, 41) shows a similar piece attributed to Gelgel kingdom (15th century). In this case questionable, but definitely 18th century or earlier.

Mounting 19th or 20th century.

Blade 44,5 cm

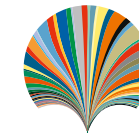
23 Blade: wavy, 3 *luk*.

Probably very old Javanese or Balinese blade (*greneng* show a more Balinese profile), probably 17th or 18th century (at latest), wavy *ganja* (*ganja wilut*, *ganja wulung*). *Pamor* in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water) in Javanese *beras wutah*. Technically „lying“ lamination, few layers. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *lambe gajah* (lip), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove) and *sekar kajang* (elephants trunk), *sogokan* (double fuller). Sides hollow-ground (*kruwingan*). Elephant's face covered with gold, probably done later.

Handle: black horn, figural (*deling*). Partially covered with embossed silver. Set with pink and bright-blue stone cabochons. Aristocratic figure (probably one of the Pandawa brothers, Bima) with double crown, in left hand an attribute (*vajra* ?), the right, which is held before the left shoulder, performing a protective gesture. *Selut* and *mendak* with coloured cabochons. 20th century.

Scabbard (not shown): mouth piece in *batun poh*-shape, Javanese *gayaman*. Wood (not identified). Covering of embossed silver, with lotus motives.

Blade 37 cm

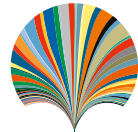


24 Blade: straight (*lurus*).

Well preserved, *pamor balines*. *ilining warih* („flowing water“); Javan. *beras wutah*. Good smooth arsenic-patina. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove), *sekar kajang* (trunk), *lambe gaja* (lip) and *sogokan* (double groove, fuller at base). Blade sides hollow-ground (*kruwingan*). The shape, or *dhapur*, on this blade, which has one elephant trunk on each side of the base, is referred in the Javanese *pakem* (traditional references). The *dhapur* is called *karna tinanding* (Harinuksmo, 2004: 223).

This blade type represents an unusual shape, which is sometimes found in the Javanese era *nem-neman* („new new keris“). On Bali very unusual.

Handle: (*balines*. *danganan*, *landean*) classical example for *kojongan*-type. Wood. Abstract depiction of concealed Durga. Usual Balinese type, on Java already seen in statues from the 15th century (see plate 30).



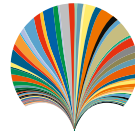
Scabbard: wood with selected grain, *kayu pelet* (speckled wood). Mouth piece in *batun poh-shape* (mango seed), backside painted red, referring to a high-ranking bearer. The *gandar* (blade's sheath, bottom part of scabbard) is made from two pieces of wood, causing the *pelet* wood grain being not continuous. Balinese *gandar* are often made with several pieces of wood, in contrary to Java and Madura, where the *gandar* and the mouth piece are preferably made from a single piece of wood. This is also the case in the oldest preserved scabbards (16th century, compare plates on pages 28 - 31)

Mounting probably contemporary with the blade. 19th century.

Length total 61,5 cm

Blade 46,7 cm





25 Blade: wavy, 13 luk.

Gandik (base) chiselled as *naga* (dragon serpent), the body of the animal stretching over the length of the blade. *Pamor ilining warih* („flowing water“), Javan. *beras wutah*. Blade sides slightly hollowed (*kruwingan*). Cross-piece (*ganja*) slightly wavy. Patina well preserved, slightly worn, but still well to recognize. This blade type (*dhapur: nagasasra, nagaraja*, „lord of the serpents“; snakes representing fertility since remote times in Indonesia) is known in Java since the era Sultan Agung, early Mataram, early 17th century, the zenith of keris culture.

The shapes of *nagaraja* and *nagasasra* are slightly different in Javanese keris terminology. Although both are similar in terms of showing a snake as central design element, the crown or tiara of the animal is slightly different. *Nagasasra* is the more popular type with the tiara resembling the one worn by Adpati Karna, while *nagaraja* resemble the tiara worn by Prabu Kresna (Krishna, = Wishnu). Both are characters from the Ramayana or Mahabharata. The difference can also be found in shadow play figures. The shape of the double crown is already shown in ancient Greek/Alexandrinic depictions, eg. of Ptolemy VI Philometor c. 186–145 BCE, a Ptolemaic dynasty king. This crown type, *pschent*, is originally the traditional double crown of ancient Egypt. It seems that the *nagaraja* refers to worldly rulers, while the *nagasasra* is representing primarily spiritual power, or the ruler in an elevated spiritual state of mind, but deeper research is necessary to clarify this subject century.

Handle: classical example for *cojongan*, planar handle. Probably abstract depiction of concealed Durga (see page 35).

Scabbard: *kandik*-shape, specific to Bali. Painted with floral motives. There is a stylistic relationship to kerises in the oldest European collections (end of 16th century, compare plates pg. 44, 45), as well as to Cirebon-style keris mountings, which are said to keep alive the Majapahit tradition (see Hidayat 2013: 110, 114).

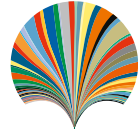
This keris represents a very high class of keris in quality and aesthetics.

Late 19th century, blade maybe older.

Length total 63 cm

Blade 45,5 cm





26 Blade (not shown): straight (*lurus*)
Pamor dwiwarna („two tones”), composed of twisted rod and straight rod on each side of the steel core (*saton*). Surface etched, elliptical cross-section without fullers. The shape is called *tilam upih* in Javanese.

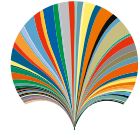
Handle: *danganan deling* (metal figurine handle), partially gilded silver (usually covering a damar core). Adorned with pink and pale stones. Depicts a somewhat aggressive, slightly demonic aristocratic character (Bima, Bayu) in *somewhat aggressive pose*, protruding on a *tumpal* base. *Mendak* gold, set with pink rubies.

Scabbard: mouthpiece in *kandik* (hatchet) shape, between *gayaman* and *ladrang*. A shape specific for Bali. In the rectangular, wider part the rim is covered with gold, embossed into ornamental motives. *Gandar* (blade sheath) in upper part with floral-ornamental tendrils, set with ruby cabochons. Lower part covered with sheet silver, florally embossed.

Mounts probably earlier 20th century.
Blade older, 18th/early 19th century at latest.

Length total 61,5 cm





27 Blade: straight.

Sword shape, *chundrik* (sanskrit: *curiga*, „sword“), in Javanese terminology also called *cenkrong*. Sometimes called *sepang*. Straight, single-edged. Base widened, front part of blade double-edged. Base with erased *naga*-head, flowing *pamor* (*beras wutah*) in few layers. *Ganja* (crosspiece) is eventually missing or intentionally removed for the „western“-style crosspiece. This *naga* has a body that "disappears" in the top half. This element is typical for the *dhapur* (shape) *naga seluman* in Javanese reference (see Harsrinuksmo 2004: 308). Blade now with rough surface, etched in Javano-Malaysian manner. Brass parrying element in European style, 19th century.

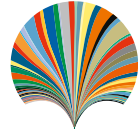
Handle: horn, in shape reminiscent of Durga-handles, but with a bird-like appearance which has no reference.

Scabbard: red-laquered wood, with four brass bands.

The weapon shows European influence and can be attributed to the later 19th century. In this era, madurese and Balinese hired soldiers were employed by the VOC (East India Trade Company) and the British government.

Length total 71 cm
Blade 55,5 cm





28 Blade (not shown): straight (*lurus*).
Iras (one-piece, without separate *ganja*). The *pamor* (pattern welding) *uler lulut*, („twisted snakes“), is made by grinding or filing horizontal grooves and successively forging to make them flat again. By this way a certain determined layering can be achieved.

Handle: ivory, detailed carving, type „*deling*“, „figurine“, probably Rahwana resp. Dasamuka, a high-ranking demon with god's string, *garuda mungkur* (apotropheic dragonbird's mask) in neck, sitting on a *tumpal*-base. Non-identified attributes in hand (probably a mirror, repelling evil). Base set with rubies. This handle's carving represents the highest standard.

Scabbard: *sandang walikat*-shape, mouthpiece in flowing line with the *gandar*, the blade sheath. Top part plated with ivory, painted *karang bhoma* (apotropheic Kala- or Bhoma-face). A stilistic relationship to Tibet is obvious in the style of the painting. Rim painted and partly with sheet gold applications. *Gandar* (blade sheath) with selected *kayu pelet*, floral gold-applications, set with rubies.

Mounting 20th century, blade 19th century or older.

Length total 64,8 cm





29 Blade: straight, single-edged with bulbous edge profile.

Golok or *wedung*, blade with decorative fuller cutting in back section, with filework at blade shoulder (rudimental *makkara*-dragon). Flat-convexe cross-section, visible forge folding structure.

Handle: wood, pommel carved as an in-bent (rolled) fern, probably with the original meaning of a fabulous animals head. Handle base with steel ferrule, lower part with an imitated carved *selut*.

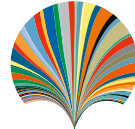
Scabbard: light wood, painted, *gandar* (blade sheath section) painted as imitation of a tortoise shell or wood grain, strongly worn. Upper part with carved demon's head with tusks, adorned with crown and ear pendants. Painted in red and black.

Chopping knives like this are depicted on East Javanese bronze monk's staffs and were obviously already an ancient blade type in the 14th century, from when the bronzes date. They are encountered in the whole archipelago of South East Asia, including the Philippines. In this elaborate shape, they play a role at cremations and other social events on Bali. In simpler form they are used as daily tools still today. The terminological difference between *golok* and *wedung* is somewhat unclear.

Probably later 19th century, parts of mounting seem contemporary, blade probably older.

Length total 58 cm
Blade 33 cm





30 Blade: *golok*-, or *wedung*-style, chopping knife.

Bulbous blade adorned with groove and brass inlay. Asymmetrical cross section, blade back with *makkara*-brass application (*makkara* = a mythical sea dragon) in stylized form.

Handle: horn, elaborately carved pommel, „fern“-shape, most probably an stylized mythic animal which refers to Malay prototypes in style (South Sumatera). Backside with *Garuda mungkur*, dragonbird-mask, an apotropeic symbol.

Scabbard: *sandang walikat*-shape, sheath part for blade plated with tortoise shell, mouth-piece enlarged while keeping line with the blade part, carved in relief with floral motives and painted red.

Chopping knives like this are depicted on east Javanese bronze monk's staffs and were obviously already an ancient blade type in the 14th century, from when the bronzes date. They are encountered in the whole archipel of South East Asia, including the Philippines. In this elaborate shape they play a role at cremations and other social events. In simpler form they are used as daily tools still today.

The terminology of chopping knives like this is somewhat unclear. Today, the term *golok* is referred primarily to a chopping knife. This particular type of single edge blade; with mid sectioned belly and pointed tip, fulfilling representative functions as well, are usually referred to as a *wedung*. The *golok* is used in most other regions as well, but the *wedung* is restricted to Java/Madura and Bali/Lombok.

19th century, at latest beginning 20th century.

Length total 65 cm

Blade 26,5 cm





31 Blade: not shown, wavy, 11 *luk*.

Pamor in Balinese terminology *ilining warih* (flowing water) in Javanese *beras wutah*. Shape is called *sabuk inten* in Javanese. Technically „lying“ lamination, few layers. Patina (*warangan*) not well preserved, partially pitted. *Sorsoran* (blade base) with *jenggot* (beard), *greneng* (teeth), *tikel alis* (groove) and *lambe gaja* (elephants lip), *sogokan* (double fuller) and *sekar kajang* (trunk). Sides hollow-ground (*kru-wingan*).

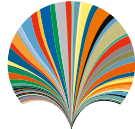
Handle: *deling*-shape, also called *togokan* (*togok* = statue). Silver, partially gilded. Demonic character with fangs (*dasamukha*), holding a weapon attribute in the right hand; the left hand performing a *mudra* (gesture). Slightly crouching *lalita* pose, in a somewhat threatening posture. *Selut* with imitated „stones“ integral with the *selut*, *mendak* with red (glass ?) cabochons.

Scabbard: mouth piece ivory, *kandik*-shape, *gandar* covered with sheet silver, partially gilded. *Gandar* (blade's part of the scabbard) covered with florally embossed silver cap (*pendok* in Javanese).

Blade 18th or 19th, mounting 20th century.

Length total 67,5 cm





32 Blade: not shown.

Wavy, 9 luk. Shape: *sempana*, Pamor *ilining warih* with low layer density. Blade without *sekar kajang* and groove cutting, but with hollow-ground surfaces (*kruwingan*) and *greneng* (teeth).

Handle: cylindrical *loceng*-shape. Checkered ebony, pommel cap (buttcap) of ivory. *Selut* made of silver.

Scabbard: *kojong*-type, a variety of the *sandang walikat*. It shows european influences. Wood covered with embossed silver, worked in floral/vegetable motives, deeply chiselled.

Earlier 20th century, maybe end of 19th century.

Length total: 67 cm





33 Blade: not shown.

Straight (*lurus*), shape with *greneng* (teeth) and *jenggot* (beard) and *sekar kajang* (trunk), but missing *sogokan* (double groove). *Pamor* with few layers, type *ilining warih*. Flanks are hollow-ground, original etching patina (*warangan*) is faded away and re-etched. The *dhapur* is like *basopati*, besides the existent *sekar kajang* (being missed in the latter. Neka (2012: 36) calls this shape *tumenggung robjong*.

Handle: embossed silver. Showing a dragon-like creature, with scales. In style it is still reminiscent of *cocet-cocetan*-handles. *Selut* integral with the handle, imitated silver „stones“.

Scabbard: *kojong*-type, an elaborate variety of the *sandang walikat*. It shows European influences, becoming usual in the latter part of the 19th century, partly because of the VOC (East India Trade Company) activities and hired soldiers from Bali and Madura, who adopted european styles and regalia (see SNKI 2010: 299). Wood covered with in florale/vegetabile motives embossed silver, deeply chiselled.

Earlier 20th century, maybe end of 19th century.

Length total 60,7 cm





34 Silver handle, figural (*togog*), with gold applications. Female demon or witch (Rangda ?) with aoptropheic gesture and attribute in one hand. She is wearing a *kain poleng* (hip cloth) with checkered pattern, as symbol of ambivalence of good-evil, bright dark and so on, and sporting pronounced breasts. The left foot

stands on a skull, a typical tantric reference. The combination of silver and gold is a typical feature on Balinese *danganan*. Base (*selut*) set with coloured (pink, bright blue) cabochons.
20th century
Height 13 cm



35 Gold handle, figural (*togog*), with rubies and other half-precious stones. Godly person with effervescent character (probably Bayu, the Hindu god of winds), holding an unclear attribute (a weapon) in right hand. „Classical“ *danganan* in high quality (see no. 04). Concerning the interpretation of figural han-

dles as specific deities, there is mostly a certain degree of uncertainty. In many cases, the descent and wishes of the bearer would have led to a combination of different attributes.
18th or 19th century
Height 13,3 cm



36 Wooden handle with bone inlays, type „*cecanginan*“. Medium-dense wood, painted red, upper surface with carved blossom, formerly sheet gold plated (worn). This type of handle is restricted to Bali; on Java and in the other parts of the archipelago there is no equivalent. Detailing and colouring is

typical for Balinese „folk-art“ (non-courtly). Old well-preserved examples – as this one - are scarce and hard to find today, owing to their fragile nature.
19th or early 20th century.
Height 13,2 cm



37 Silver handle, figural (type: *cocet-cocetan*). Motive is *kusia*/bug's grub or larva, with a face similar to a horse's face, *selut* set with *gagat* cabochons. The meaning refers most probably to transformatory processes, as are reincarnation or initiation, as is the nature of the bug's larva, or to the concept of the hidden

person with inherent magical power. It is unclear whether the sometimes striking similarity of the grub with a horse's face has a meaning of its own. On Madura and in Eastern-Java, this type is known as well.
20th century
Height 12,7 cm



38 Wooden (?) handle, figural (*togog*), showing Rangda/Durga in threatening posture with out-stretched flaming tongue and breasts, as „mother of all witches“ and foremost representative of sinister magic. Similar handles are sometimes found on betel-crushers (*sirih*). Wooden variety of a specific Balinese handle

type. Durga-symbolism is a central motive in the realm of keris-handles, but „realistic“ depictions are found only on Bali. Carved one-piece with the *selut* (base). Probably earlier 20th century. Height 12 cm



39 Figural handle, cast brass, set with glass „stones“. Stylized variety of a demonic person with headdress. Atypical technique. While falling out of the usual canon of shape and style, this handle is of fine quality and shows characteristics of an older piece (fine

old patina, reworking of the casting structures, well-executed „stone“ settings, cabochons made of inhomogenous glass etc.). 19th or early 20th century. Height 11,5 cm



40 Silver handle, figural (*deling/togog*), partly fire-gilded. A demonic character with crown, high headdress in the style of the Pendawas/Kaurawas in the shadow play. Set with ruby cabochons. The presence of the tail and the rather ape-like facial expression suggest Hanuman, the monkey god from the Ramayana, as

interpretation. This kind of hair dress is definitely a Javanese feature and first encountered in the 14th century. Rather unusual is the application of this motive for a keris handle. Presumably earlier 20th century. Height 12 cm



41 Metal handle, figural (*deling/togog*), sheet copper, once gilded (worn). Set with bright red coral cabochons and glass. Very detailed embossing. Because of the attributes a very high-level personality, probably depicting Bayu (father of Bima and veda god of winds), while the long claws and fangs are atypical for

a high deity. However, the interpretation as a specific deity should not be done too easily. Of foremost meaning might be the symbolism inherent to the details. Probably 19th century. Height 15 cm



42 Figural handle, ivory, same workmanship as in 43, probably of the same workshop. A naked, well-fed male person with demonic (and slightly ape-like) face properties, grasping himself on the breast. Hibiscus-petals behind the ear are discernible. This handle shows clearly erotic, almost invec-

tive references – the left hand shows a geste of coitus (thumb between the index- and middle finger), the facial expression and the touching of the left breast(-nipple) might be also seen as sexual allusion.
20th century
Height 15 cm



43 Figural handle (*togog/deling*), carved ivory. Depicting a hidden persona, belonging to the group of *balu mekabun* (Durga) handles. High-quality carving, bright patina. On the hood hiding the face and head, a flaming eye can be observed as an attribute of power. A Kala-/Bhoma-attribute is held before the body.

The motive of the hidden goddess Durga/Uma - Shivas spouse, originally presumably a pre-vedic fertility- and mother goddess – is of central meaning for the whole of keris-culture.
20th century
Height 11,2 cm



44 Figural handle (*togog/deling*), ivory. Patinated. Showing a pronounced demonic person with high-ranking attires and *garuda mungkur* headdress (apotropeic Garuda-mask at head's back), presumably Rahwana (in the turn of robbing the *amerta*, the water of life from the gods). *Selut* carved in one-piece with the han-

dle. The quality of the carving is remarkable, work in this precision is still realized eg. in Tampaksiring and Gianyar, but mostly with modern electric tools. Presumably middle or later 20th century. Height 11 cm



45 Figural handle (type *cocet-cocetan*), carved ivory. Motive is *kusia*/bug's grub, or larva. The meaning refers to the concept of the hidden person with magical power, or to transformatory processes, as are reincarnation or initiation (see Neka 2012: 14). The grub shows six

legs, tentacles following the line of the back, and a face similar to a horseface, but equipped with eyebrows and tusks. *Selut* silver, set with pink and bright-blue gemstone cabochons. Once gilded, worn. 20th century Height 10,5 cm



46 Figural handle, carved ivory. Depicting a laughing bare-headed Buddhist priest, with rosary, and six points on forehead. Chinese influence in style can be clearly discerned. The influences of Buddhism in the Javano-Balinese Hinduism are notable. The handle as a whole give rise to a phallic connotation because of its



shape – take a look at the shape of the head's back, and the fabric folds in neck. *Selut* with bright-blue and tiger-eye cabochons. Earlier 20th century, probably older. Height 11,5 cm



47 Figural handle (*deling, togog*), carved ivory. The witch Rangda in all her demonic might, with fangs, long hair, flaming tongue and oversized hands as child-devourer, standing over a *bhoma*-socket. She holds a child's corpse. The twisted foot refers to the otherworldly, supernatural origin of the goddess. Good old patina,



selut silver, set with dark gemstones. Presumably earlier 20th century. Height 12 cm



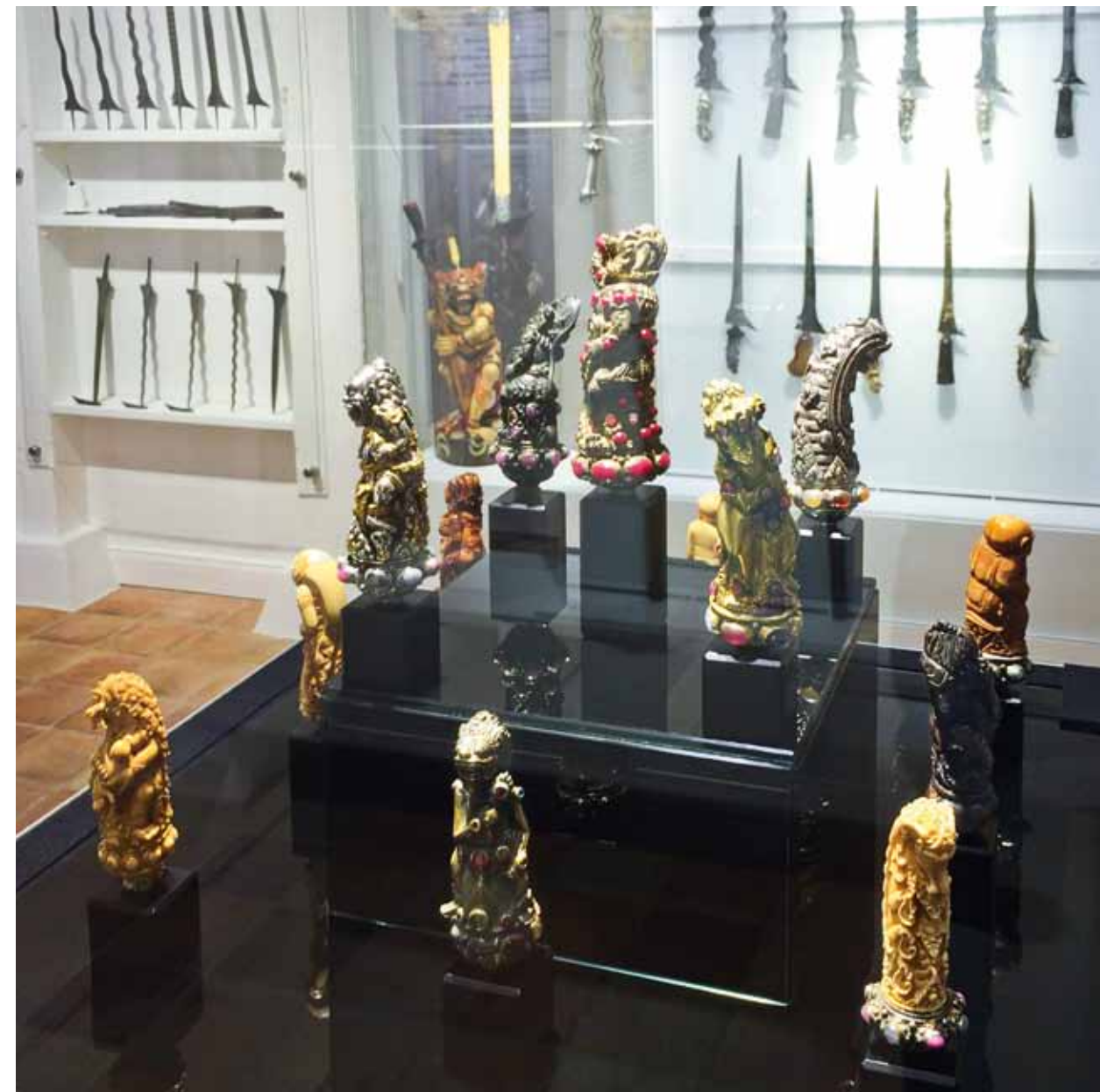
48 Figural handle (*deling, togog*), carved ivory. Showing the witch Rangda, respectively Durga in demonic emanation. She is recognized by large fangs, long curling hair, flaming tongue, large sagging breasts and oversized hands with claws and carries a baby's corpse, referring to her role as child-devourer. Her right

foot is twisted/bent out, indicating her origin from the supernatural world. She holds her right hand above the shoulder, grasping a fabric (probably a death shroud, referring to necromantic cultus).
20th century
Height 12 cm





Exhibition „The Gods & the Forge“
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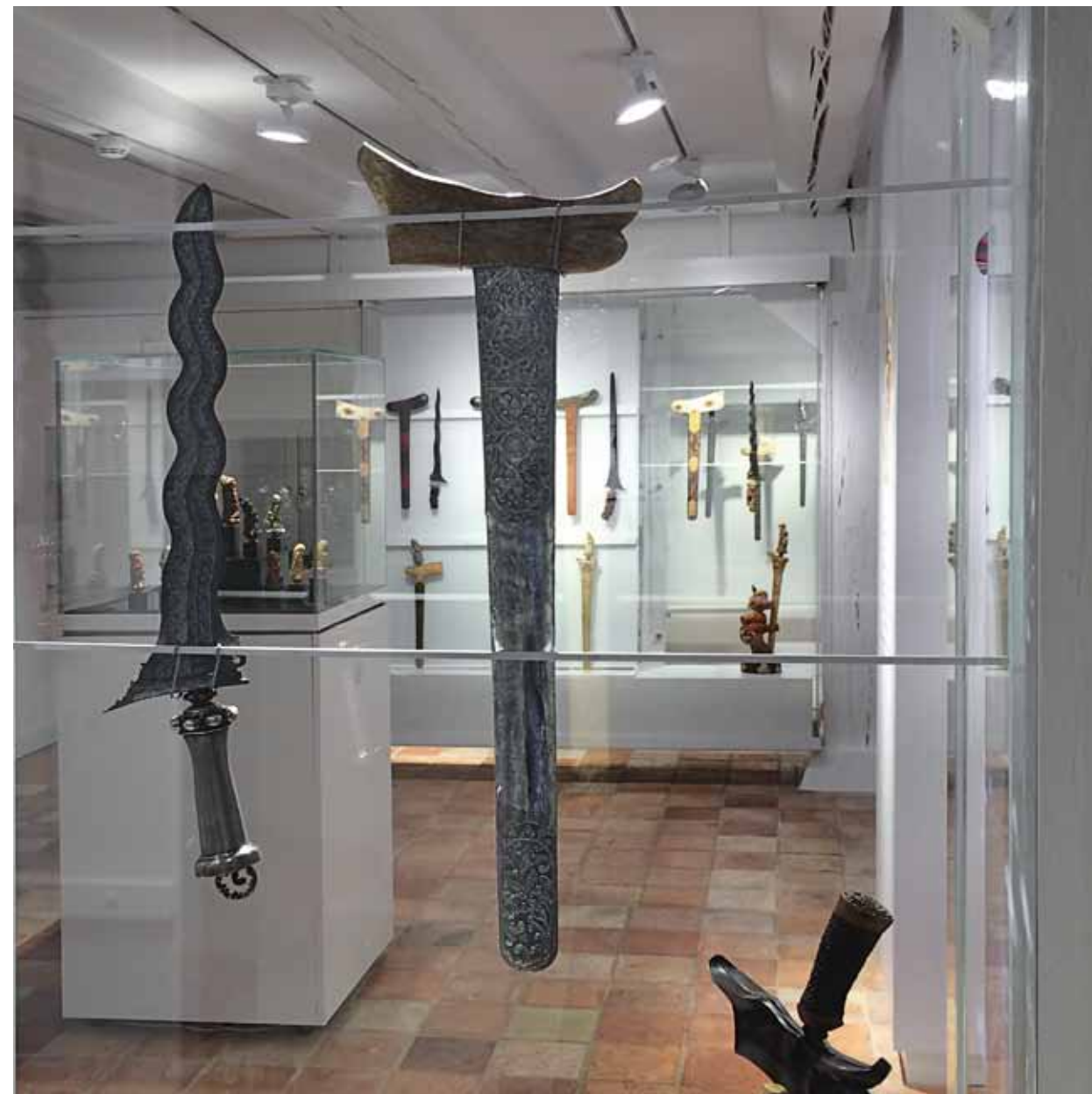




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52 (TM-60023116)

2: Temple at Singaraja

12: Temple in Negara (image from 1918)

23: Temple entrance in Buleleng (image from 1918)

24: Son and daughter of Sultan of Buleleng (image from 1918)

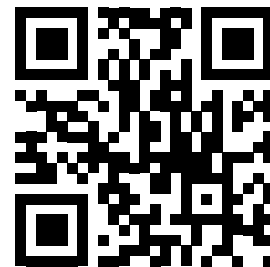
27: Prince Jelant in the Jagaraga campaign against the Dutch (1846-1849) (painting in museum in Singaraja)

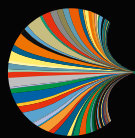
133: Stone sculpture in Buleleng temple (image from 1918)

139: Sculpture in the garden of the Banjar Tegehe temple

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