

Chapter 2 Early Krisses



Sources of the Origin of the Kris and Its Ancient History

The sources of origin and history of the kris may be divided into five categories:

- 1) Written Indonesian sources, often mythological.
- 2) Asian and European travel accounts.
- 3) Temple reliefs, statues and ritual bronzes picturing krisses.
- 4) The oldest known krisses.
- 5) Krisses included in the existing old European collections.

The Indonesian written sources indicate that the development started as early as 230 A.D.¹ and continued through the ages till the beginning of the 14th century. However, the 9th century *Borobudur Temple* has about 1460 reliefs that depict all aspects of Javanese life, and no krisses are found here, despite the fact that many pictures show men carrying arms. The same thing applies to the reliefs on the *Prambanan Temple*². So it would be fair to conclude that real krisses did not exist before the 10th/11th century (see Fig 3 and 5).

The first time we find krisses mentioned is in the Javanese version of the *Ramayana*, where the attacking *Raksasas* carry awesome knives: "The *Raksasas* looked terrible and they carried knives with different hilts. The hilt rings of their daggers were in pure red gold with glittering diamonds. Extraordinary were their hilts in lion shapes, terrible as death. Those who looked at them had to close their eyes. Even the god *Kala* himself was shaken, terrified at the sight of them, so awesome and dangerous were they." These wry faced lions with protruding eyes and teeth and long manes may well be a description of the *Raksasa* hilts known from the early collections and the rings may well be the hilt rings, *Mendaks* or *Seluts* mounted with diamonds. It is however, not clearly ascertained, when this Javanese version of the *Ramayana* was written. Some sources say the 9th/10th century others 11th/12th century. If we accept that no krisses were made before the 10th/11th century, then the later dating is more likely to be true. Another delimitation confirming the above-mentioned idea is the fact that the *Naga* represented in the kris blade is relatively scarce in Indonesian art before well into the first part of the *East Javanese Period* (930 A.D.-1528 A.D.), influenced as it was by a *Sivaism*, which more often than earlier underlined the demonic aspects of *Siva*. In art it was expressed in a march of demons. The demon-hilted (*Raksasa* hilted) kris, known from early collections fits this description very well.

Java is the most likely place of origin among the many areas that claim to have invented the kris. Here the kris is found in its most developed form, and here, too, the oldest pictures of krisses are found. A Javanese legend supposedly gives us the origin of the kris³, saying that the Hindu king *Sakutram* (or *Sa-putram*) was born with a *Pasopati-kris* at his side. The twin theme indicates that the kris was seen as the twin of the king, his alter ego. The name indicates that the kris is connected with *Siva* as *Pasopati* is another name for

¹ Some of the Indonesian manuscripts about krisses traces the origin of the kris back to *Empu Ramadi* who lived about 230 A.D. He is said to have invented the kris with the straight blade and the kris with the waved blade should have been invented about 329 A.D.. A. Macgregor: *Tradescant's Rarities*. Oxford 1983. p 156.

² A.G Maisey has in his article "Origin of the Keris and its development to the 14th century" (*Arms Cavalcade* Vol 1 No 2, April 1998, p 9) a picture from the *Prambanan Temple* (775 - 864 A.D.) which depicts *Laksmana* holding a dagger. The blade of the dagger looks like a Kris Buda blade (see Fig 2,3).

³ *Pasopati* is a kris with a straight blade with *Telale Gajah*, two *Sogokan* and *Ripandan*. It is considered to be an original type of kris. *Pasopati* is also the name of the mystical arrow of *Arjuna*.

Siva, the lord of animals. Another legend that points in the same direction relates that the kris originated from a holy man's (*Wadi's*)⁴ phallus⁵, which was the most important symbol of the god *Siva*.

Javanese Sivaism goes back to the 8th century. It grew to be the leading Hindu religion during the *East Javanese Period* (930-1528), which indicates that the origin of the kris is closely connected to the dissemination of *Sivaism* in East Java. Add to this that the *Javanese Ramayana* makes it probable that the hilts are formed like *Raksasas*, which indicates that this type of hilt is supposed to be dominating as early as the 11th/12th century. If that is the case it underlines the connection of the kris with *Sivaism*, as the *Raksasa* is one of *Siva's* manifestations.

The rise of the *Majapahit Realm* in East Java further accentuated the demonic features due to the *Tantric* form of worshipping the god *Siva Bhairava* (*Siva's* terrible manifestation) that developed in this area. The development began during the 13th/14th century. This is also in agreement with the historic personages: *Ken Agrok*⁶ and *Panji*⁷, mentioned in sources connected with the kris. They are supposed to have lived in East Java in the 13th century and in the beginning of the 14th century respectively. Thus the written sources seem to point to the fact that the kris originated, or rather was fully developed, during the *East Javanese Period* and very likely in relation to the flourishing *Sivaistic Bhairava cult*. Its greatest dissemination probably happened in relation to the growth of the *Majapahit Realm* during the 14th and 15th centuries. This is underlined by the *Malacca Edict* (1415) which shows that the kris had reached the western parts of Indonesia at the beginning of the 15th century and was so widespread and popular with the population that it was necessary for legislation to uphold the difference between ordinary folk's krisses and those carried by the nobility (only krisses made for the nobility were allowed to have golden hilts).

Pictures of krisses found on Indonesian temples seem to substantiate that the kris originated in Java in close relationship to *Sivaism*. This is clearly illustrated by the kris found on *Siva's Lingam* in *Candi Sukuh* (15th century) (see Fig 16). The different pictures cannot date the kris earlier than the 14th century, which indicates that the kris was then a known and accepted weapon in Java. Non-Indonesian written sources do not go so far

⁴ *Wadis* or *Walis* were the holy men who brought Islam to Java.

⁵ A myth from Celebes tells that the kris should have been made from the first man's right rib and the woman from his left. This myth about the origin of the kris tells that the kris was seen as a holy, mystic and divine object closely connected with the body of the male and indicates that the kris was more important to the man than the woman was (to the man).

⁶ It is in the (hi)story of how *Ken Agrok* came into power in the principality of *Singahasari* that we for the first time hear about kris forging. *Ken Agrok* asked the *Empu Gandring* to make him a powerful kris to kill prince *Akuwu Tunggul Ametung* in order to be able to marry his wife, *Ken Dedes* with whom he had fallen madly in love. When he five months later visited the *Empu* to collect the kris, it was not finished. *Ken Agrok* became so furious, that he stabbed the *Empu Gandring* with the kris. Before the *Empu* expired he cursed the kris, saying that *Ken Agrok* and his descendants until the seventh generation should be killed by this kris. The curse came true. *Ken Agrok* was killed by his stepson with this kris and the curse seems to have followed the family. *Ken Agrok* ruled from 1222 - 27. *Kertanagara* the last regent of *Singahasari* was killed by his opponents during a *Siva Bhairava ritual* in 1292.

⁷ The cultural hero *Panji* may be identical with a historical person who should have ruled the *Janggala Realm* in East Java from the end of the 13th century or the beginning of the 14th century. P. Holstein: *Contribution a L'étude des Armes Orientale*. Paris 1931. Vol 1, p 155. I think however that his existence as an historical person may only be accepted with some reservation.

back, but they show that the Java-kris was so common during the 15th - 17th century that it was noticed by foreigners, and through their descriptions the picture, we have of the kris from the Indonesian sources, is confirmed.

In the 15th century the Chinese *Ma Huang* (1433) found quality kris blades with *Raksasa* or *Siva Bhairava* hilts like those mentioned by *the Ramayana* in the 11th/12th century⁸. It is clearly the same type of kris hilts, the French traveller *Pyrard de Laval* saw in Java at the beginning of the 17th century⁹. More evidence is offered in *Abbot Plautz's* reproduction of a *Raksasa* hilt (1621)¹⁰ and from *Pinoria's* *Siva Bhairava* hilt (1626)¹¹. *Plautz's* hilt, which is supposed to come from the 16th century, is a type that exactly corresponds with those found in European 17th century art collections (see chapter 3 figure 17,10 a). With this type of hilt we seem to have found a line, which in all probability may be traced back to the 11th/12th century.

Our sources do not give much evidence about the blades. The earliest known kris, which dates from 10th/11th century was found in *Malang* in East Java (Fig 3). It was probably used as a sacrificial knife in *the Siva Bhairava cult* and has much resemblance to a *Kris Buda*. Some finials of bronze incense burners from *the Majapahit Period* - about 13/1400 A.D. - show figures with a *Kris Buda* (Fig 5 e). The so called *Knaud-kris* which has an inscription that dates it to 1342, has a *Kris Buda* shape, too (Fig 7). This supports that the *Kris Buda* was the earliest type of kris.

From *Ma Huang's* account, however, we may conclude that damascening (*Pamor*) was well known as early as the 15th century. From the Portuguese traveller *Tomé Pires* (1515) we also learn that the kris blades carried by the nobility were gold incusted (*Kinatah emas*) as early as the 16th century¹². This fact is confirmed in the picture on *the phallus of Candi Sukuh*, which seems to have a floral decoration in the *Sorsoran* area (the lower part of the blade) (Fig 16). Such decorations were generally gold incusted. Only one of the written sources *Johannes Israel de Bry* (publisher and engraver in Frankfurt, who published "*Tertia pars India Orientales*" 1601) describes blades and he describes them as flame formed - wavy, which may be considered a typical European viewpoint, as straight blades seem to have been uninteresting¹³. This view is contradicted by the few images

⁸ *Ma Huang* was a Muslim translator at the Chinese admiral *Cheng Ho's* expedition in 1433. He wrote about his observations during his travel, which included a visit to Java. He relates that the prince as well as the common man carried a dagger in his belt. The blades of the daggers had very complicated patterns drawn like fine lines (*Pamor*). The hilts of the daggers were in gold, rhino horn or ivory and represented human forms with demon faces which were very skilfully carved. All men from the age of three to the age 80 carried those daggers. B.E. Colless: *Majapahit Revisited* in *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. 1975 . Vol 48 part 2, p 126.

⁹ He relates that the hilts of the Javanese weapons are shaped like demons or other ugly figures. P. Holstein: *Contribution a L'étude des Armes Orientale*. Paris 1931. Vol 1, p 176.

¹⁰ He was an Austrian abbot and the author of "*Nova Typis Transacta*", 1621.

¹¹ He wrote the appendix of "*Cartatari's Imagini Dei*", 1626.

¹² *Tomé Pires* relates that in Eastern Java the nobility carried krisses, swords and spears incusted with gold. Every Javanese man, rich or poor, must have a kris, a spear and a shield in his house. No man between 12 and 80 years of age will leave his house without carrying a kris in his belt. B.E. Colless: *Majapahit Revisited* in *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. 1975 . Vol 48 part 2, p 153.

¹³ *Johannes Israel de Bry* relates: " Their weapons are flame formed lances, daggers and short swords or cutlasses." In the old European collections 87,5% of the blades are wavy and only 12,5% are straight. Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris*, Copenhagen 1998, p 138. According to E. Frey the normal distribution of blades is 60% wavy and 40% straight. E. Frey: *The Kris, Mystic Weapon of the Malay World*, Oxford 1986, p 3.

found on Javanese temples, for instance *Candi Sukuh*, where three kris blades are shown, and they are all straight (see chapter 1 Fig 1,9 and chapter 2 Fig 16). When looking at other kris-attributes, the description of krisses in *the Javanese Ramayana* seems to show that as early as the 11th/12th century *Mendak /Selut* was used to form the connection between blade and hilt. As far as the sheaths are concerned a relief from *Candi Panatan* (1323-47 A.D) shows one of the earliest pictures of a man carrying a *Kris Buda* type of kris in a *Sandang Walikat* type of sheath. Its hilt looks like a *Kembang Temu* type (the ginger flower unfolding) from Madura (Fig 5 c, d). A figure representing *Bima* from the 15th century carries a kris in a *Old Landrang* type of sheath (chapter 3 p 7) - the same type of sheath as the krisses from *Banten* in the early European collections have and which is represented on the *Abbot Plautz`s* picture (chapter 3, Fig 17,10 a). A relief from *Candi Gogol* (15th century) shows a sheath design much like the Buginese *Tanggah* type. As the shape of this sheath is rather unusual to Java, the relief shows people of Buginese origin. This also applies to the statue of *Desa Gogol*. The figure carries a kris featuring a *Buntut* on the sheath, which implies that this kris must also come from Buginese areas in Celebes or Sumatra. So as well the *Sandang Walikat* type, the *Old Landrang* type and the *Tanggah* type was well known in the *East Javanese Period*.

Finally we learn from the sources that krisses were in general use as early as the 15th century. *Ma Huang* and *Fei Hisn* (a Chinese soldier and scholar, who took part in mapping Indonesia in 1433) does note, that men carry krisses from childhood onwards. Later sources like *Tomé Pires* (1515) and *Johannes Israel de Bry* (1601) confirm this statement.

The Origin of the Kris and Early Krisses

The origin of the kris is still much based on speculations and conjectures as there are no sure sources to base it on. I will shortly mention some of the most prominent theories.

*Heine-Geldern*¹⁴ relates the origin of the kris to a Vietnamese type of bronze *Dong-Son dagger* (about 300 B.C.) found in *Tongking* and *North Annam*. The hilt of the dagger has a small standing figure with its arms akimbo. He finds that the hilt has much similarity to the hilt figures of the medium types and small types of *Majapahit-krisses*. Although there are some similarities, the blades have none of the characteristics of the kris and none of the figures are sitting which all the figures of the *Majapahit-krisses* are¹⁵. Further there are over a thousand years between the the *Dong-Son dagger* and the earliest kris.

Heine-Geldern also seems to forget the *Kris Buda* type, which has no figure welded to the blade like the *Majapahit-kris* and which is supposed to be older than the *Majapahit-kris*.



Fig 2,1 a, b c) a) *Dong-Son* dagger in bronze with a standing figure with its arms akimbo (300 B.C.).
 b) A *Majapahit-kris* sitting in a squatting position on a throne with its hands on its knee.
 c) The figure of the *Majapahit-kris*. Notice that its thighs are bended in a sitting position.

¹⁴ Heine-Geldern, R. : Über Kris-Griffe und ihre mytischen Grundlage, *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, 18. 1932. p 257-292.

¹⁵ *Heine-Geldern* bases his theory on the assumption that the figures of the hilts of some of the *Majapahit krisses* are standing in a so called "stehhocker" position - that is a squatting standing position. I think, however, that it is a false assumption - it only looks so because the figures are so crudely made. They are in fact as all Indonesian ancestor figures sitting on a throne in a squatting position. Their thighs are bended like they are on all *ancestor/Raksasa* hilt figures. The smith just have not differentiated the legs from the throne.

Another theory is that the origin of the kris is to be found in the bronze blade of the old Chinese halberd "Ge"¹⁶. Again it has some similarities to a kris blade, but again the Chinese stopped using them about a thousand years before the appearance of the kris.

Fig 2,2) A Chinese Ge in Bronze (314- 256 B.C.)



A.G. Maisey puts forward the following theory : "The modern keris has existed since at least the mid 14th century. It developed in East Java from an earlier form known in Java as *the Kris Buda*. The *Kris Buda* was preceded by and, coexisted with, a Javanese dagger with a leaf shaped blade which resembled the leaf shaped blades of Indian swords. The period during which *the Kris Buda* and its immediate predecessor came into being was the Early Classical Period (end 7th century to end 9th century). This period of Javanese history was heavily influenced by Indian culture and ideas. The evidence, although incomplete, points to the keris being a descendant of the line of weaponry which embraces the leaf shaped blades of India, and proposed by Rawson as " ...a common Aryan heritage of the Indo Aryan peoples"¹⁷.

He bases his theory on a relief found in *the Prambanan Temple* (775- 864 A.D.) depicting *Laksmana* holding an Indian type of dagger in his hand (Fig 2,3). The dagger has a leaf shaped blade and he finds that it bears an asymmetric base, a defined *Ganja* (Gonjo), *Gusen* (*Kusen*) and *Ada-Ada* (*Odo-Odo*). The blade has similarities to the blade of a *Kris Buda*. It has the same proportions and the aforementioned characteristics of the kris. The hilt, however, is not a kris hilt, but the hilt of a type of an Indian dagger, which was very common at the time¹⁸. But the blade may be a forerunner of the *Kris Buda*.

¹⁶ Martin Kerner: *Ahnenglauben im bronzzeitlichen China und sein kultureller Einfluss im Malayischen Archipel*, Kirchdorff 1996, p 51-53.

¹⁷ A.G. Maisey: "Origin of the Keris and its development to the 14th century" (*Arms Cavalcade* Vol 1 No 2 April 1998 p 8-23). From Wonosobo (Central Java 8th century) comes a figure representing a Durga figure holding a similar weapon in one of her hands. Achim Weihrauch: *Der Kris in Indonesien*. Basel 1996, p 10.

¹⁸ Mr A.G. Maisey substantiates his theory by pointing out that "there are a number of other carvings at Prambanan that show similar daggers, but without the assymetric base and the blade details. This body of daggers, considered together, and in concert with the other weaponry shown at Prambanan, and in Javanese candi reliefs in general, when considered in the light of Indian cultural involvement in early Classical Java, is the foundation for the theory". E-mail from Mr, Maisey the 13th December -06.



Fig 2,3) *Laksmana* holding a dagger with a blade which has some of the characteristics of a *Kris Buda* blade. The *Prambanan* Temple (775-864 A.D.)

Martin Kerner has put forward a controversial and interesting theory about the origin of the kris, based on a very thorough research of material from many museums and private collections¹⁹.

*G.M. Laidlaw*²⁰ noticed how *Empus* in certain Malay areas measured the kris-blades to determine whether the kris would bring fortune or misfortune. They did so by a strip of palm tree leaf (torn out between the two lateral veins framing the main vein) which had the same length as the blade. This strip of palm leaf was folded in the middle and wound around the middle of the blade. The number of times it could be wound around the middle of the blade determined the magic propensities of the kris (Fig 2,4). From a Lontar - manuscript translated by *I.B. Dibia*²¹ from *Kawi* it appears that the number of windings are seen as a shape- indikator or factor. The thesis is that early krisses from different forges and times had certain basic forms and basic proportions that was defined from the ratio of the length of the blade to the width of the middle of the blade.

Martin Kerner classifies and defines these early krisses into groups (and sub-groups), as a preliminary to subjecting them to calculations. By statistical calculations *Martin Kerner* finds that the kris had developed from the aforementioned *Dong-Son* dagger (Fig 2,1 a) to the *Kris Buda* type with *Pichit* and hole in the top of *Peksi* (he calls it *Keris Brojol Pichit*) (Fig 6 b). Some of the blades of the early *Majapahit* types (he calls it *Sajen B 1-a*) and *Kris Putut* (he calls it *Keris Brojol Pendita*) (Fig 11) have the same proportions and must therefore have been produced at the same time as the aforementioned *Kris Buda* (*Keris Brojol Pichit*) (See Fig 2,5 b). He calls these types of krisses the primordial types. Later their blades became slimmer and more sturdy.

¹⁹ *Martin Kerner*: *Ursprung der frühen Kerise*, Kirchdorf 1998 and *Statistik der frühen Kerise*, Kirchdorff 1997.

²⁰ *G.M. Laidlaw*: *Some Notes on the Keris Measurements of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* Vol XX, 1947 p 45-47.

²¹ *I.B. Dibia*: *Keris Bali*, Indopress Utama 1995.

He finds, however, that the traditional *Kris Buda* type (Fig 5) also belong to the primordial types of krisses. This type he finds has developed from the Indian type of dagger, which you find depicted on the reliefs of *Borobodur* and *Prambanan* (Fig 2,3) and the Chinese *Ge* (Fig 2,2) (See Fig 2,6). I find his theory interesting, but I doubt that the early krisses have developed from the *Dong-Son* dagger and the *Ge* because there are at least a thousand years between them and the earliest krisses (see p 6-7)²². The theory, however is based on the assumption that the *Empus* at a certain time used the same standard of measurements to the production of their blades, which might not have been the case. Both *Majapahit* krisses and *Kris Buda* have been made later than *the Majapahit Period* (See fx Fig 9,3 and chapter 10 Fig 197 b).

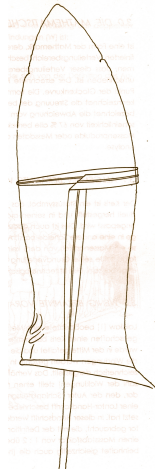


Fig 2,4) How to measure the kris blade with a strip of a palm leaf. Martin Kerner: *Ursprung der frühen Kerise*, Kirchdorf 1998, p 15.

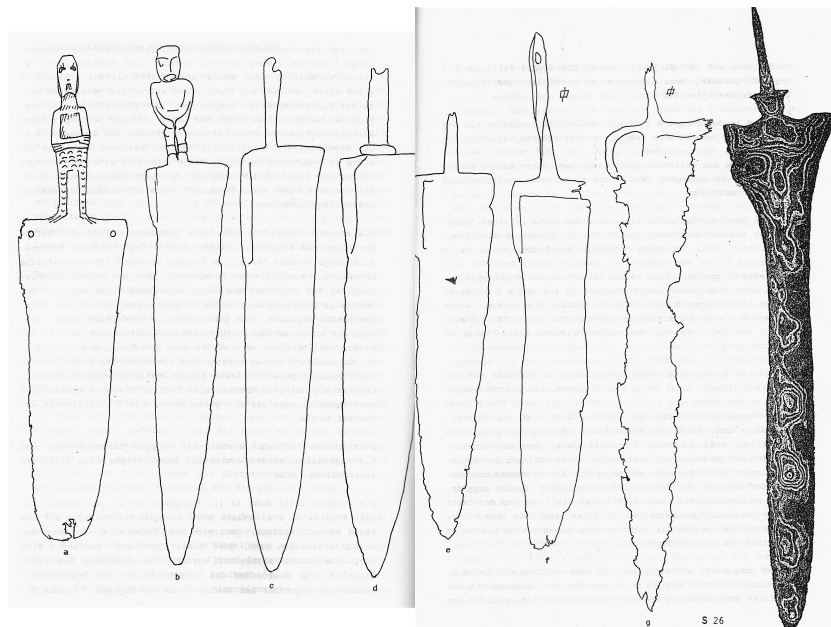


Fig 2,5) The primordial types. The development of the kris from the *Dong-Son* dagger to the *Putut* kris type. Martin Kerner: *Statistik der frühen Kerise*, Kirchdorff 1997, p 100-101.

²² Martin Kerner: *Ursprung der frühen Kerise*, Kirchdorf 1998, p 136-137.

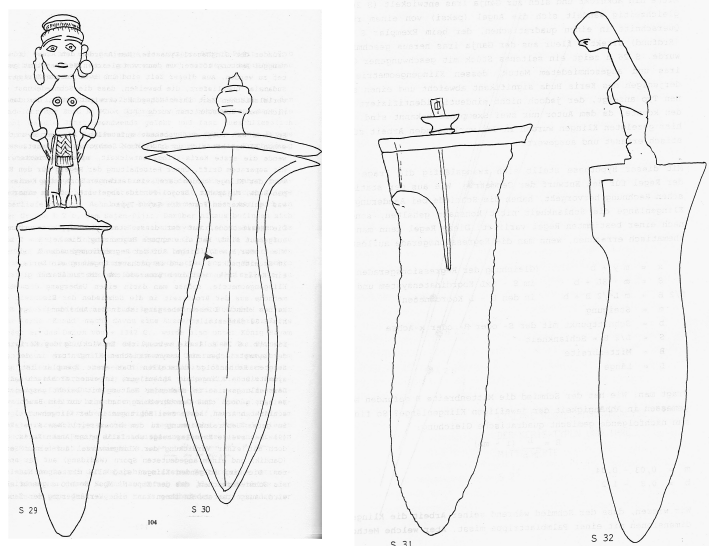


Fig 2,6) The primordial types. The development of the traditional *Kris Buda* type. Martin Kerner: Statistik der frühen Kerise, Kirchdorff 1997, p 105.

My own latest theory²³ is that the kris might have originated from offering knives used in the *Siva Bhairava cult*. This theory is based on some findings from *Malang* in East Java. In this area two daggers were found under very fortunate circumstances. They had been encapsulated in volcanic ashes, so their wooden and bone handles have been preserved. By a C 14 test of one of the handles it turned out to have been made between 900 A.D. and the beginning of 1000 A.D.²⁴ (Fig 3 and 4).

By comparing the weapons with the offering knives held in the hands of two *Siva Bhairava statues* - one found in the area of *Singaraja* and the other in Western Sumatra, both dated to have been made in the 14th century - they turned out to have so many traits in common with the afore-mentioned weapons, that I think they are the same kind of daggers as the *Siva Bhairava statues* are holding in their hands, namely early types of offering knives, which were used in the bloody offering rituals of the *Siva Bhairava-cult* (Fig 5 a and 5 b). Further the area of *Singaraja* (near *Malang*), where the daggers were found is known to have been an area where *Siva Bhairava* was much worshipped and they are perhaps showing that the cult, as early as about year 1000 had manifested itself (see p 3 note 6).

Now the dagger (Fig 3) is having so many traits in common with the *Kris Buda* (Fig 5), too - which is thought to be the oldest type of kris - that one may say that it might be the original model of the *Kris Buda*. Further one of the places, the old Indonesian sources mention as being the origin of the kris, is *Janggala* (see p 3 note 7), which is near the place where the daggers were found. So perhaps the origin of the kris is to be seen in connection with the *Siva Bhairava cult*, which might be one of the reasons why the kris always has been a weapon imbued with so much reverence and religiousness. This theory may be in accordance with *Maisey's* theory. The top of the sacrificial kris has some likeness to the top of the Indian type of dagger. So it may be a reminiscence of the Indian type. If that is the case it is a further development of the dagger on the relief from the *Prambanan Temple* (Fig 2,3).

²³ Karsten Sejr Jensen: Tidlige offervåben og krisse. Våbenhistorisk Tidsskrift Bd 36, nr 7, 2003, p 254-260.

²⁴ Martin Kerner: Pamor- Notizen, Krichdorff/Schweiz 2000, p 5.



Fig 3)

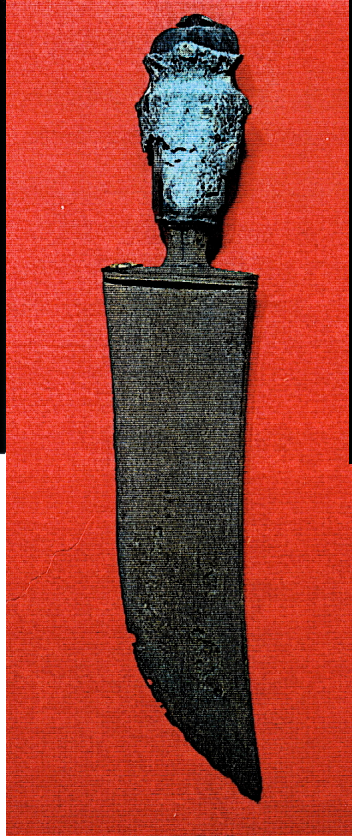


Fig 4)



Fig 3) Sacrificial knife/kris probably used in the *Siva Bhairava* cult. The handle, which has similarity to the handle of the sacrificial knife, which the *Siva Bhairava* figure from *Singaraja* (Fig 5 a) holds in his right hand, is produced from antler and wood. The blade is about 21 cm long and has *Ganja*, *Gandik*, *Sogokan Kalih* and *Ada-Ada*, but no *Pamor*. It has much resemblance to a *Kris Buda* (Fig 5). It was found near *Malang* in Eastern Java.

Date: 900-1000 A.D.

Private collection

Fig 4) Sacrificial knife, probably used in the *Siva Bhairava* cult. It has a similar handle in wood as Fig 3. The blade is without *Pamor* and curved as the blade of the sacrificial knife which the *Siva Bhairava* figure from Western Sumatra is holding in his right hand (Fig 5 b). There is a small golden mask on the top of the *Ganja*. The blade is about 16 cm long. Found in the same place as Fig 3.

Date 900-1000 A.D.

Private collection.



Fig 5) *Kris Buda*. This kind of kris is considered to be the oldest kris-type.

The hilt is made of whalebone sculptured as a female figure (*Durga* - the death goddess ? see chapter 6, Fig 74, 75) sitting in kneeling position on throne of opposite directed *Tumpals* (triangles). She wears a necklace, bangles on her upper arms and wrists and a belt buckle. With her left hand she grasps her left knee and with her right hand she grasps her right knee with her fingers pointing in the direction of the belt buckle. The eyes are indicated by carved triangles (unusual - perhaps re-carved). She has her hair taken up in front and its is falling down the back of her head in a big hair pad. The hairstyle has some resemblance to a *Majapahit* hairstyle. The handle is very old and worn, but younger than the blade. It might be from the later part of *Majapahit Period* (1294-1528)

Blade: Dapor Brojol. The *Peksi* is square. The blade has a separate *Ganja*.

It has *Pejetan*, *Gandik*, *Sogokan Kalih*, *Ada-Ada* and a *Mendak* in iron (*Metok*).

Pamor: None

Length of the blade: 17,8 cm long.

Area: Eastern Java.

The Date of the blade: 1000-1200/1300 A.D.

The Sheath in *Sandang Walikat* style is new.

Formerly in the collection of Mr Martin Kerner. Mr M. Kerner bought from Mr Wessel who told him it has formerly been a *Pusaka kris* in Indonesian family in Holland.

Private collection.



Fig. 5 a)
Siva Bhairava statue from Singaraja.
 The sacrificial knife he holds in his right hand has a handle similar to Fig 3 and 4. The blade is a hybrid form of blade of Fig 3 and 4.
Date: About 1300 A.D. *The National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden* (inv. nr 1403-1680).



Fig. 5 b)
Siva Bhairava statue found in Western Sumatra. He holds in his right hand a sacrificial knife which has resemblance to Fig 4.
Date: Last part of the 14th century A.D. It may depict Adityavarman (See chapter 9,1 p 10).
Museum Nasional, Jakarta (inv. nr 6470)



Fig.5 c, d) One of the earliest pictures of a man carrying a kris at his hip. The kris is a *Kris Buda* type in a *Sandang Walikat* sheath like fig 5. *Kembang Temu* hilt? (see chapter 5, Fig 42). Candi Panataran 1323-47 A.D.



Fig. 5 e) A night watch/*bhayangkari* ("the terribles", who were the king's own body-guards and the highest in rank of the watchmen guarding the *Majapahit* palace²⁵) holding a *Kris Buda* in his right hand. Note that the kris is held in the same way as krisses have been held ever since. The blade of the kris is used as an extension of the thumb²⁶, which is placed in the *Pejetan* part of the blade. The kris is ready to deliver a rapier kind of thrust. The finial of a bronze incense burner from *the Majapahit Period* - about 13/1400 A.D.

²⁵ N. Chutiwongs: *Indonesian Bronzes in the Domola Nieuwenhuis Collection*, Amsterdam 1990, p 84.

²⁶ In this way it may symbolize the *Pandawa Bima*'s famous and much feared weapon, his thumbnail *Panchanaka*. See chapter 4 Fig 19.

Early Krisses

Kris Buda

The so called *Kris Buda* and the *Majapahit*-krisses are generally considered to be the oldest known kris-types. *Kris Buda* is considered to originate as far back as *Buddhistic times* (8th/9th century), but there is no documentation to prove it. The heavy rather short blade is straight (*Dapor Brojol* or *Dapor Betok*) with a *Ganja Iras* and a square tang (*Peksi*) sometimes with a hole in the top of the tang and *Pichit* (depression in the blade)²⁷ (Fig 6 b, c). The type that is said to be the oldest and said to have been excavated, has a short, broad and heavy blade. It has a separate *Ganja* and more profiles in the blade²⁸ than the first mentioned type and no *Pamor*. It has an iron *Mendak*, called *Metok* (Fig 6 a). We do not know anything about the hilts of the *Kris Buda*, as none has been found with its original hilt preserved.

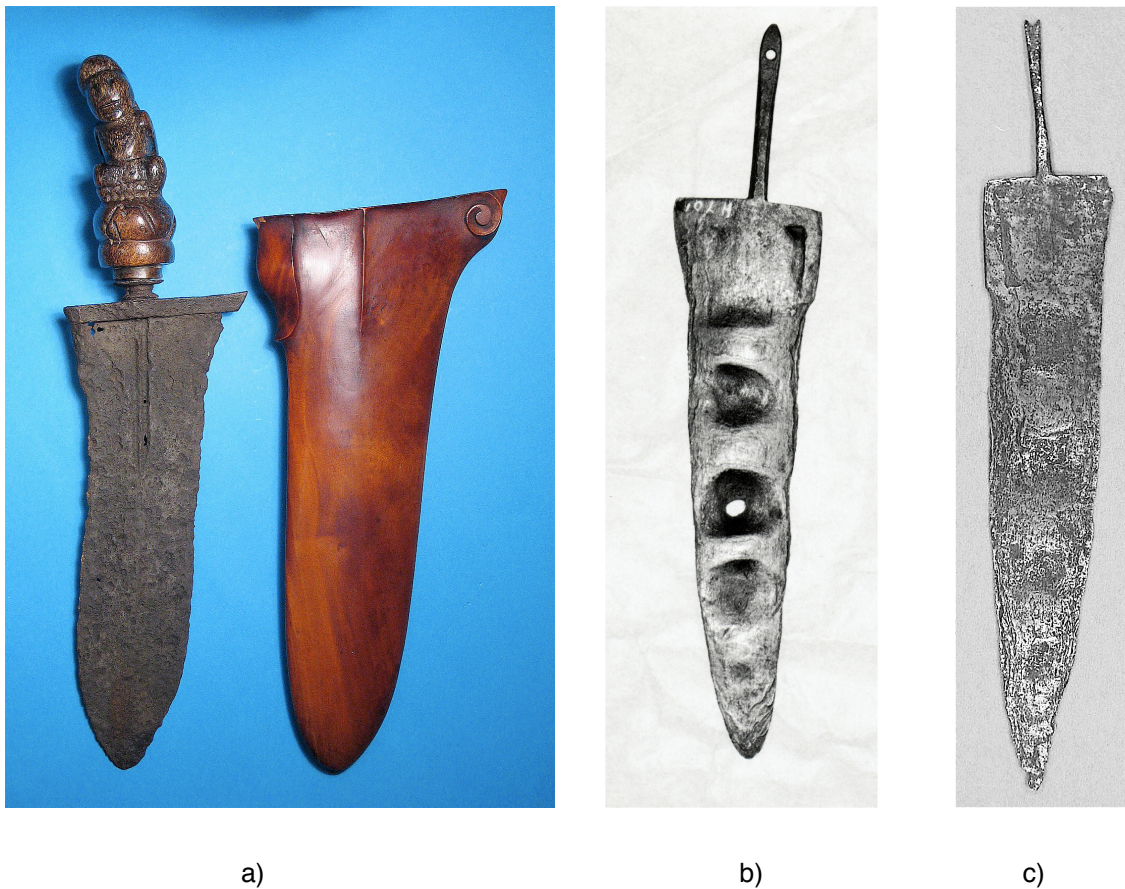


Fig 6 a, b, c)

a) *Kris Buda* with Betok (an iron *Mendak*) Date: 1000-1200/1300 A.D. Private collection.

b) *Kris Buda* with *Pichit* and a hole in the top of the *Peksi*. Date: 1000- 1200/1300 A.D. *Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam* (inv. nr H 701). According to tradition this type of *Kris Buda* was produced by the female *Empu Sombro* in the 10th/11th century (See p 43). They are said to help women giving birth²⁹

c) *Kris Buda* with *Pichit* and a notch in the top of the *Peksi*. Private collection.

²⁷ The depressions in the blade is said to be the thumb marks of the *Empu*.

²⁸ It has *Pejetan*, *Wideng*, *Gandik*, *Sogokan Kalih*, *Ada-Ada* and a *Mendak* in iron (*Metok*).

²⁹ Martin Kerner: *Statistik der Frühen Kerise*, Kirchdorff 1997, p 47.

The Knaud Kris

The earliest kris is the aforementioned kris from *Malang* dated 900/1000 A.D.(Fig 3). But the earliest kris with an inscribed date is *the Knaud Kris*. The inscription dates it to 1342 A.D. It is a very special kind of magic kris decorated with scenes from *the Ramayana*. It has the shape of a *Kris Buda*.



Fig. 7) The *Keris Knaud* (named after *Charles Knaud* 1840-1897). The earliest kris, which has an exact date. The engraved figures give the *Saka era* date 1264 = A. D 1342. It is a very unusual kris partly covered with a thin copper layer embossed with scenes from the *Ramayana*. The type of the blade is *Kris Buda*. It has a *Ganja Iras* and the *Peksi* is shortened due to rust. The kris is probably a *Ki Sudamala* kris type, as the story it is referring to, is about the good fighting the evil and symbolizing the liberation of the soul (*Sita* from her captivation by *Ravana*, the demon king (see chapter 6 Fig 62, note 10)³⁰.

Length of the blade: 27,7 cm.

Charles Knaud, a Dutchman raised in Indonesia had been taught Javanese magic by a *Dukun* (shaman) and became himself a well known physician. The kris was presented to *Charles Knaud* by *Paku Alam V*, because he had cured his son. It was thought to have been stolen by the Japanese during the second world war and lost. But in fact it has been buried in the garden of the *Knaud family* and was later sent to the Netherlands

³⁰ See for instance the reliefs of the *Borobudur* and the *Prambanan* temples.

and kept in a banksafe by the *Knaud family*. It has since 2003 been exhibited in *Tropenmuseum ,Amsterdam*³¹.

The Sidemen Kris

According to *Martin Kerner* and *Urs Ramseyer* the Pusaka-kris *Ki Sudamala*³² from Bali may also be dated to the 14th century. It is supposed to have been presented by the king of Majapahit *Hayam Wuruk* to his Balinese vassal of the *Majapahit Realm* around 1380³³. The kris stayed with the same family through ages and may now be seen in *Sidemen*, but according to sources of the history of *Klungkung* the kris in question should feature a *Naga* on its blade. This kris remained in *Klungkung* until it disappeared in connection with the collective suicide of the principality, when they let themselves be butchered by the Dutch in 1908. However, the sources state that in 1350's the father of above-mentioned vassal was presented by *Gajah Mada* with a kris with a *Durga-head* on the *Gandik* and this is exactly the type of head seen on the *Sidemen kris*. It is possible that a mistake has been made here?³⁴ No doubt the *Sidemen kris* is very old and may very well be from the 14th century³⁵. If it is so it indicates that the kris in the middle of the 14th century had a fully developed shape (*Dapor*).

³¹ David van Duuren: De "Kris van Knaud" Aziatische Kunst nr 2 juni 2004 Amsterdam, p 2-19.

³² *Ki Sudamala* means "released from impurity". The meaning is that by the pure magic power of the kris the prince should be able to cleanse his realm from harmful influences of spiritual as well as material nature. Urs Ramseyer: *Wie Ki Sudamala nach Bali kam*. 1995. p 275. Martin Kerner: *Der Keris Ki Sudamala*, Burgdorff 1995, p 8

³³ The name of the vassal was *Dalem Ketut Semara Kapakisan* or *Dalem Ketut Nguglesir*. He was the youngest son of *Dalem Sri Kresna Kapakisan*, a Buddha priest who *Gajah Mada* had installed as regent of Bali in the 1350's. *Gaja Mada* presented him with the kris *Durga Dingul*, which was imbued with the magic power to conquer his enemies. The name probably indicates that the kris had a picture of *Durga* on its blade. The *Ki Sudamala* kris from *Sidemen* has such a picture at its *Gandik*. Martin Kerner: *Der Keris Ki Sudamali*. Burgdorff 1995, p 20-21. Margaret J. Wiener: *Visible and Invisible Realms*. London 1995, p 113. chapter 7 p 2.

³⁴ The rather complicated history of the kris may be read in: Margaret J. Wiener: *Visible and Invisible Realms*, London 1995, p 359.

³⁵ The pictures on the blade is in the *Wayang style* of the 14th century and the hilt has the lying C, which indicates that the hilt is at least from the 17th century. The blade has no *Pamor*, which is an indication of its age, too.

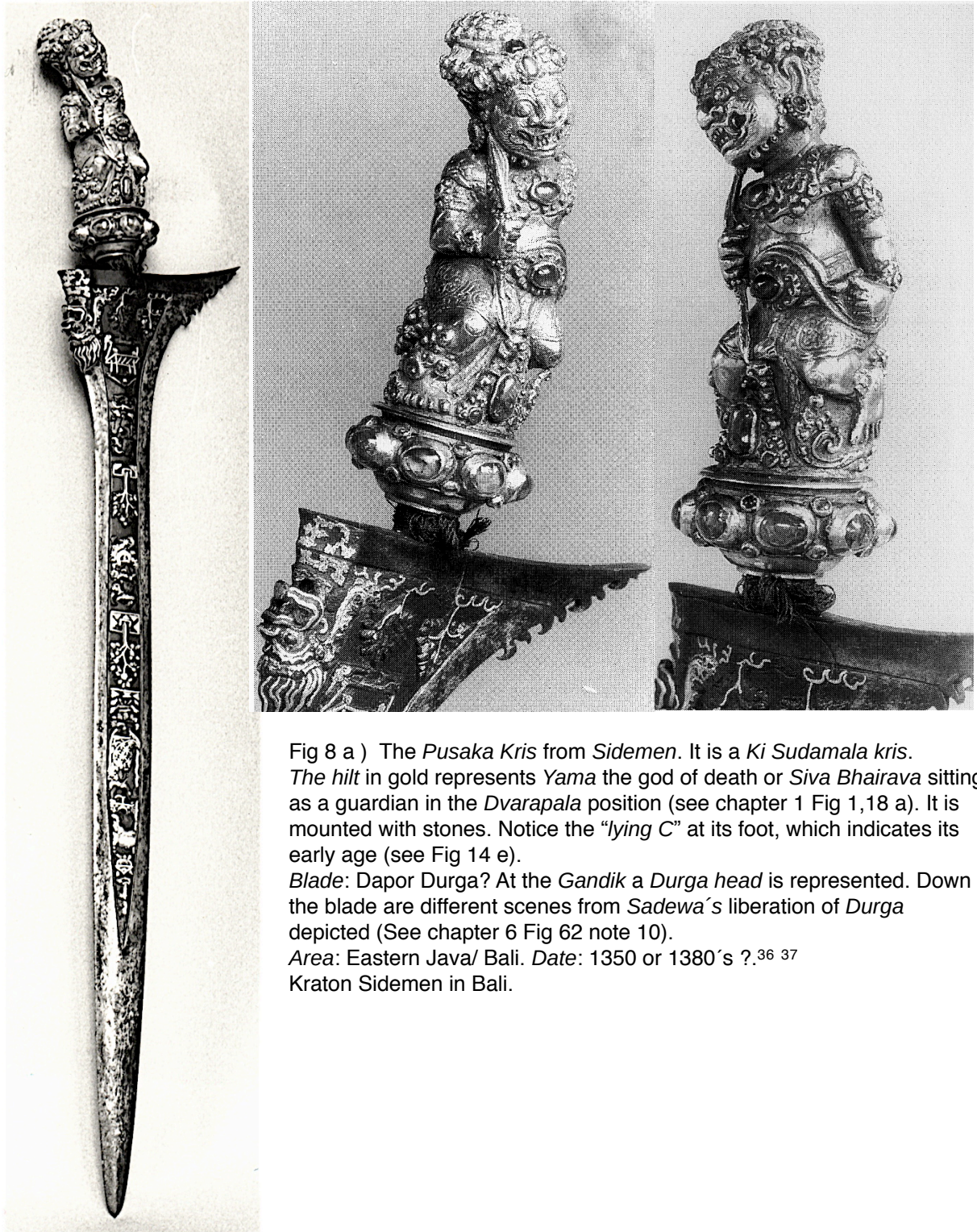


Fig 8 a) The *Pusaka Kris* from *Sidemen*. It is a *Ki Sudamala kris*. The hilt in gold represents *Yama* the god of death or *Siva Bhairava* sitting as a guardian in the *Dvarapala* position (see chapter 1 Fig 1,18 a). It is mounted with stones. Notice the “lying C” at its foot, which indicates its early age (see Fig 14 e).

Blade: Dapor *Durga*? At the *Gandik* a *Durga* head is represented. Down the blade are different scenes from *Sadewa*’s liberation of *Durga* depicted (See chapter 6 Fig 62 note 10).

Area: Eastern Java/ Bali. *Date*: 1350 or 1380’s ?.^{36 37}
Kraton *Sidemen* in Bali.

³⁶ Martin Kerner: *Der Keris Ki Sudamala*, Kirchdorff 1996, p 23 ff,

³⁷ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske kris*, Copenhagen 1998, p 46 fig 27.



Fig 8 b) *Ki Sudamala kris*. A Balinese *Pusaka Kris*.

Hilt: *Sissia* ? in ivory.

Mendak: Balinese ring type in gold set with stones.

Blade: Dapor Nagasasra. Down the blade is a *Sadewa*'s liberation of *Durga* depicted?

Area: Eastern Java/Bali.

Date: 14th century³⁸

Private collection.

³⁸ Martin Kerner: *Der Keris Ki Sudamala*, Kirchdorff 1996, p 29 ff.

The Majapahit-Krisses and Other Early Types of Magical Krisses

The *Majapahit-krisses*³⁹ can be divided into 3 categories: a) The small *Sajen*⁴⁰ krisses (10-16 cm), b) the medium sized *Majapahit-krisses* (20-30 cm) and c) the big *Majapahit-krisses* (30-50 cm). Characteristics of the *Majapahit-krisses* are: The blade and the hilt is made in one piece from a single piece of steel and the hilt figure is sitting in the squatting ancestor position. According to tradition the big *Majapahit-krisses* should be males and the small ones females, that is, the big ones is said to have a male spirit while the small ones have a female spirit. So the big ones were mainly carried by men and the small ones by women. However, according to the later tradition *Majapahit-krisses* as such were especially connected with women, that is, mainly women had the right to carry them⁴¹.

Sajen Krisses

Sajen krisses are fairly primitive in design and have been ceremonially used as protection of people and crops even until today⁴². The blade may be as well straight as wavy. The *Pamor* is often difficult to define and may in most cases be defined as *Pamor Tiban* (a *Pamor* which has more or less come into existence by chance). In several cases however the *Sajen kris* has a *Pamor Adeg*⁴³, which endows the kris with the power to protect against natural disasters and emphasizes its protective effect. The *Sajen Krisses* have a special quality not to rust as easily as other kinds of krisses. It is a quality it has in common with *Kris Buda* and the other types of *Majapahit-krisses*. It might indicate that they are made of meteoric iron, which contains nickel, and so reduces the rust-process. The mouth of the hilt figure is mostly wide open, which may indicate the aggression of the figure and its connection to the *Raksasas* and *Sivaistic gods*. Because of their crudeness it may be difficult to determine what kind of headgear they wear. It usually look like a turban or a *kuluk* (fez). It is difficult to determine the age of a *Sajen kris*, because they have been produced and used until today. Some of them might be from *the Majapahit Period* or even older.

³⁹ The *Majapahit-kris* is supposed to date from *the Majapahit Period* (from 1294 to the beginning of the 16th century). That is the cause of its name. But the krisses have not been found under circumstances which with certainty may date them to this period and there are no written sources that mention them. But without doubt many of them are very old. However, in the 19th century a kris of this type was found in the central stupa of *the Borobudur temple* (875 A.D). But it does not prove anything, as it may have been placed there at a later time.

⁴⁰ *Sajen* means offering of flowers or food to the spirits.

⁴¹ W.H. Rasser: *Panji, The Cultural Hero*, Haque 1959, p 285 note 91.

⁴² During the *Bersih Desa Ceremony* a *Kris Sajen* was buried in the field to protect the field and its crops. They have also been carried as protective amulets. The former president *Sukarno* is said to have carried a baton containing *Sajen krisses* to protect himself against evil influences.

⁴³ Ing. Tammens: *De Keris 2*, Eelderwold 1993, p 19.



Fig 9,1) *Sajen krisses* - the small type of *Majapahit- kris*. They were used as protective amulets.

The Medium Sized Majapahit-Krisses

The medium sized krisses are more detailed designed than the *Sajen* krisses. The blades may be straight or waved with a usually distinctive *Pamor*, often *Adeg*. Besides the *Pamor Batu Lapak* is often found in the *Sorsoran* area (the lower part of the blade) and it has frequently *Pichit* marks. *Pamor Adeg*, as well as *Batu Lapak*⁴⁴ and *Pichit* indicate, that it is a magic kris. Krisses imbued with so much power were reckoned to be *Pusaka krisses*, that is sacred heirlooms, which were handed down from father to son for generations. The hilts are designed rather primitively. Lineaments are only slightly indicated and generally have an introverted, meditative touch featuring the bowed head. Often they have big ears with holes which may falsely be assumed to be their eyes. Most likely they illustrate images of ancestors, whose different headgears indicate to which caste they belonged⁴⁵. Five different types of headgear may be found: A turban, a forked(cleft)-crown, round-crown or steeple-crown, a cap and a fez (*kuluk*).

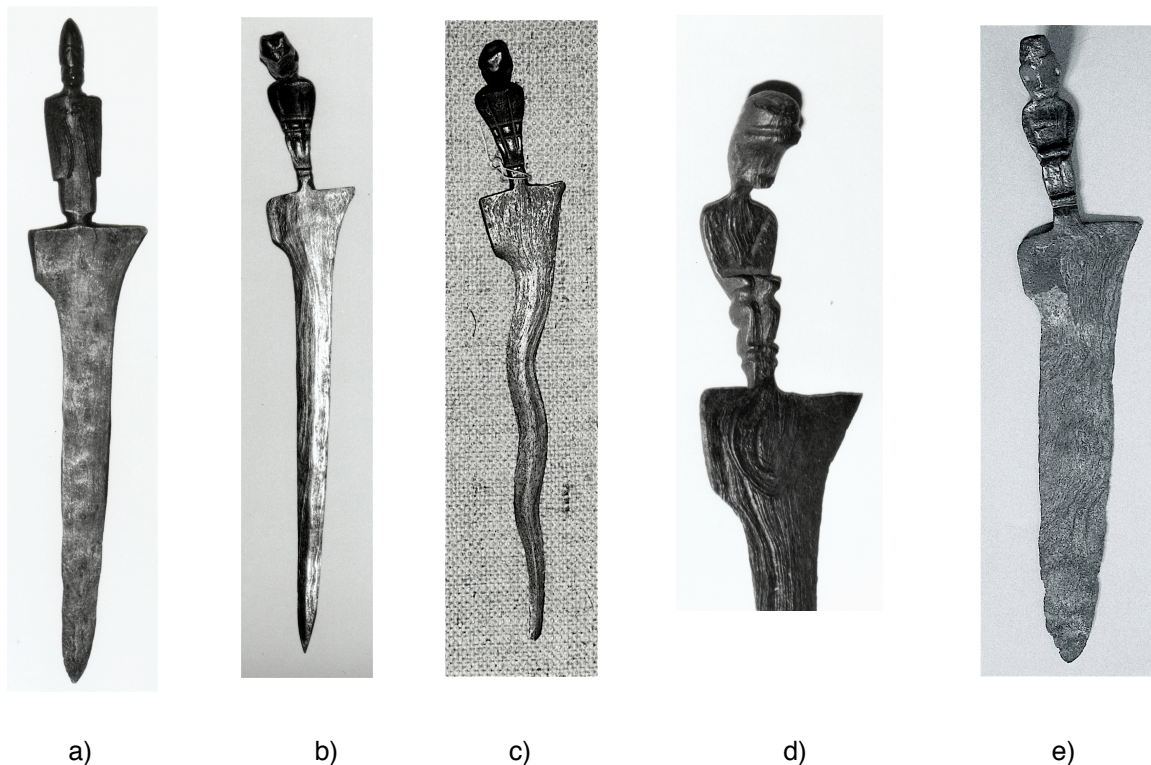


Fig 9,2 a, b, c, d, e) The different headgears of the medium sized *Majapahit-kris* type.

a) a turban (the headgear of a priest). *The National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden* (inv. nr 300 N 1420)

b) a forked-crown (the headgear of a courtier/nobleman) *The National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden* (inv, nr 3600-32353)

c) a round- or steeple-crown (maybe the headgear of a prince). Private collection.

d) a cap (the headgear of Panji). *The National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden* (inv, nr 3155/123)

e) fez (*Kuluk*). Private collection.

⁴⁴ *Batu Lapak* (saddle stone) represents the footprint of the ancestor or the seat of the ancestor/god. It endows the kris with the power to make its owner rich, have many beautiful women and it protects against quarrels at home. J. Engel: *Geschiednis en algemeen overzicht van Indonesische Wapenkunst*. 1980. p 13.

⁴⁵ The original Hindu-Javanese society was divided up into castes. The highest caste was *the Brahmans*, the caste of priests, the second caste was *the Satria*, the cast of the nobility, kings, princes and warriors, the third caste was *the Wesia*, the caste of farmers and the fourth caste was *the Sudra*, the caste of servants. Below all castes were those without caste.



Fig.9,3) (left) Medium sized *Majapahit-kris*. *Hilt*: Figure with a fez (*Kuluk*). *Blade*: Dapor Brojol with *Pichit*. *Pamor*: Batu Lapak. Length of the blade: 19 cm. (right) *Hilt*: *Panji* figure, indicated by his cap. *Blade*: Dapor Brojol. *Pamor*: Adeg and Batu Lapak. Length of the blade: 20 cm. Date of the *Majapahit krisses*: The 16th century. Above the figure a golden *Kuluk* crown from *Demak*. The 16th century. Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam (inv. nr. 124/1)

The *Majapahit-krisses* were thought to have great magical powers. Just to point it at the footprint of an enemy might mean his death. However it is uncertain if they all have their origin in the *Majapahit Period*, many are probably made later. They may have been used in the forefather cult.

Batu lapak (Fig 9,3 a) (saddle stone) the *Pamor* design in the

Sorsoran area represents the footprint or the seat of the ancestor/god. Fig 9,3 (left) has *Pichit* marks along the blade, which is said to be the prints of the smith's thumb made in the red-hot iron to imbue it with the strong power of the *Empu*.



Fig 9,3 a) *Batu Lapak*

The Big Majapahit-Krisses.

The big *Majapahit-krisses* show a variety of *Dapor* shapes⁴⁶, *Pamor*⁴⁷ patterns and figures in great detail. The hilt figures are sitting in a squatting position (ancestor position) on a *Tumpal* throne. Their arms and hands are placed in different positions: Sometimes their hands rest on their knees like type one and two in the old European collections (see Fig 14 a, b) or they may hold a sword in the right hand or just hold their arms down their sides or they hold their hands in front of them in a kind of praying position or hold a bowl with sacrifices in front of them. Mostly their feet are placed together with the toes turned inwards. This position indicates that the person practises asceticism⁴⁸. Most of the figures have en hatched decoration - sometimes with a herringbone pattern and sometimes with a scale like pattern. The patterns probably represent the design of the clothes they wear. The figures are often adorned with a necklace and bangles. The faces have a clearly shaped nose, mouth, eyes and ears. The mouth is open and may have pointed teeth or fangs. The expression of the face may be sad, tragic, introverted, aggressive, but you may find a kind expression, too. They have long hair hanging down the back, which indicates that the person is an ascetic or a *Raksasa* connected with *Siva* or is *Siva* himself. Here, too, the head-dress, expressions and attributes indicate the wide range of characters, going from *Siva*, the god, *Ravanna*, the king of demons, princes, *Raksasas*, priests and jesters. Now this big and rather heavy types of *Majapahit-krisses* might have been used as weapons pure and simple. But even if that is possible I think that the main function of the *Majapahit-krisses* is connected with magic and religious practices. None of them would be very good weapons.

⁴⁶ The greater part of the blades is straight, but blades with 7 lok, 9 lok and 11 lok are found. They may have *Dapor Singa* (a *Singa* figure at the *Gandik*) or *Nagasasra* (a *Naga* head at the *Gandik*, and its body winding along the blade.)

⁴⁷ They may have *Pamor Beras Wutah*, *Adeg* or *Bendo Segodo* and *Pichit* marks.

⁴⁸ Helene Bommel: *Dvarapalas in Indonesia*, Rotterdam 1997, p 77



Fig. 9,4) Big Majapahit-kris.

The hilt depicts a *Raksasa* prince in meditation (notice the feet are together and turned inwards). It probably represents the ancestor of a prince.

Blade: Dapor Sempana, 9 Lok, Ganja iras.

Length: 37,5 cm.

Area: Eastern Java

Date: Probably from the Majapahit Period.

Private collection.



Fig. 9,4 a) *Tankolak*: Featuring a face in the *Sorsoran* part of the blade. It is thought to give the owner of the kris ability to see hidden things - the spiritual world.

Theories about how the Majapahit-Krisses were used.

Professor *H. Balfour* has advanced the theory that the *Kris Buda* as well as the *Majapahit-krisses* have been used as a kind of coins⁴⁹. Presumably iron was rather scarce at the time and therefore represented a considerable value, so the normal would be to sell it by weight. If so, you might think that you indicated the different units of weight by different sizes and types of krisses. But such a uniformity of the krisses, which that would require, is not to be found. Further I find it improbable that you should have used so much energy, which have been spent to produce the *Pamor*, *Pichit* etc. of the early krisses just to produce means of payment. Might it then be the magic power of the krisses that the *Empu* sold? I find it highly improbable, too. In keeping with tradition as regards the magic of the kris, the magic power of the kris should be exactly adjusted to the person that received the kris, otherwise it might have a disastrous effect. Moreover the theory is in opposition to how the Indonesians relate to krisses - and especially to these *Pusaka krisses* - that is such a kris could not be sold and keep its magic power. You can only keep the power of a kris intact if it is acquired through a personal relationship, that is if it is given by a father to his son or presented as a personal gift⁵⁰.

My own theory is, that it is most likely, that all *Majapahit-krisses* have been part of an ancestor cult, which flourished vigorously during the *Majapahit Period*. It is my theory that the relatives of a deceased important man would have a kris made, the hilt of which pictured the man in question as a divine figure (see chapter 1 p 39). Through this his descendants could keep up the contact with their ancestor and the god in the hereafter. I think the different types of hilts may indicate to which kind of person the kris has been produced or rather to which caste the deceased ancestor belonged. For instance a hilt figure with a high turban, which is the headgear of a priest, a counsellor or viceregent of a prince, indicates that the ancestor belonged to a family, the members of which held such an office in the society⁵¹. It is therefore possible that the different hilt figures besides representing the ancestors in their divine shape at the same time represent the office they held.

The Indonesian society during the *Hindu Period* was divided into castes. The highest caste was the *Brahmans*, the priests, then followed the *Satrias*, the kings, princes and nobility, below them were the *Wesias*, the farmers and finally the *Sudras*, the servants. It is therefore possible that the *Majapahit-krisses* with the hilt figures with a high turban on their heads belonged to the families of priests, those with round-crowned headgear, fez (*Kuluk*) or a diadem belonged to the princes and the nobility, and those with an *Raksasa* hilt belonged to the farmers, because the *Raksasa* like the farmer were connected with the chthonic element, the earth, the foundation of society. Many *Raksasas*, however, wear a diadem, what presumably means that they represent the king of *Raksasas*, *Siva* and because of that the krisses may have belonged to a king, prince or nobleman. The lowest caste may not have had any *Majapahit-krisses*, and therefore no hilt figures to present them. But the jester, who was held in high esteem, had his ancestor presented as a clown/

⁴⁹ G.C. Woolley: *The Malay Kris: Its Origin and Development*, p 66. D.A.P van Duuren: *Oerkrissen*. *Aziatische Kunst* 1992/4, p 14.

⁵⁰ *Ensiklopedia Budaya Nasional*, Jakarta 1988, p 16

⁵¹ In the ethnographical Museum in Leiden there is a kris (Leiden inv. nr. 1403 N 2574) with a hilt figure wearing a high turban on its head. The catalogue of Juynboll "Javanische Altertümer", Leiden 1909, vol 5 p 196 states that the kris had belonged to the deceased (1860) *Patih* (viceregent) of Temanggung and that it formerly belonged to a family of priests. So it is a kris which has belonged to viceregents and priests.

jester may have belonged to the servants and be a representative of them. This figure, however, might have been connected with farmers, too (see Fig 9,6 e).

So the *Majapahit-kris*es most probably were connected with the ancestor cult, being a kind of alter-ego of the ancestor. The ancestor cult can be traced back to the prehistoric period of Indonesian history. But during the *Eastern Javanese Period* (930- 1528) it was intensified, and culminated during the *Majapahit Period* (1294-1528). During this period the deceased prince had a statue set up in a temple 12 years after he had died. The statue represented him as a god (most often *Siva*), the god he had incarnated, when he was living. In this way he was worshipped as a god and an ancestor simultaneously⁵². This kind of ancestor worship might have spread to the whole society and the *Majapahit-kris*es may be one of its expressions. The flourishing ancestor cult seems to be closely connected with the growth of the *Tantric Siva Bhairava cult* during the *Majapahit Period*.

The use of ritual daggers you will find mentioned in *Indian Tantric Buddhistic texts* from 600-900 A.D. and it is exactly from India the *Indonesian Tantric Buddhism* and *Hinduism* have their origin. Therefore I am inclined to believe that the *Majapahit-kris*es might also have a ritual function within this cult similar to that of the Tibetan dagger of spirit, the *Phur-bu*, which was used to nail and drive away evil spirits. The belief in magic power of the *Majapahit-kris* is well known. G. B. Gardner relates in his book "*Keris and Other Malay Weapons*" (p 59) about a Raja who, having got into trouble with the Dutch authorities, went with a few followers, against a whole Dutch regiment. He solemnly drew his sacred *Majapahit-kris* and pointed it, expecting to kill the entire regiment. The story has a sad ending as he and his followers were all mowed down by rifle fire.



Fig 9,5) Tibetan *Phur-bu*. Used for nailing evil spirits in shamanistic rituals. 18th/19th century.

⁵² Ann R. Kinney: *Worshipping Siva and Buddha*, Honolulu 2003, p 25.

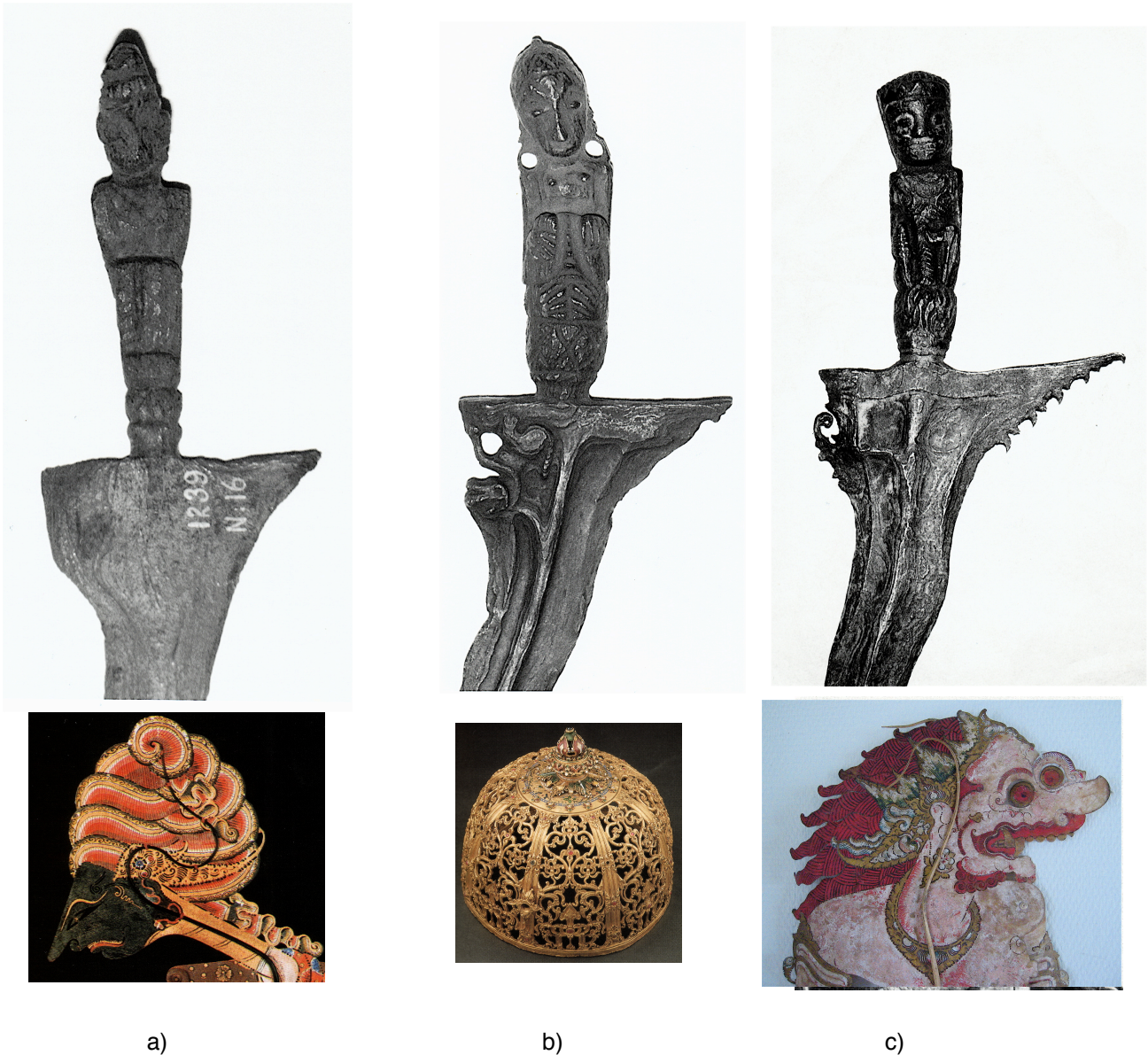


Fig 9,6 a, b, c)

a) Priest or a counselor of a prince wearing a turban. Below a *Wayang Kulit* figure which represents a priest.

An ancestor kris of a member of a *Brahman* family.

Area: Eastern Java.

Date: Majapahit Period. *The National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden* (inv. nr 1239 N 16)

b) A prince wearing a round-crowned crown similar to the one below. This type of crown dates back to 14th/15th century⁵³. He wears typical Majapahit ear-plugs in his ear-lobes. He smiles like a Buddha. An ancestor kris of a prince.

Area: Eastern Java.

Date: Majapahit Period. *The National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden* (inv. nr 924 N 63)

c) A *Raksasa* prince/ *Siva Bhairava* sticking out his tongue. This is supposed to have a deprecating function. Below *Batara Kala* with the same type of open crown as the hilt-figure.

An ancestor kris of a prince or chief.

Area: Eastern Java.

Date: Majapahit Period. *Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam* (inv. nr A 87/71)

⁵³ Arne und Eva Eggebrecht: *Versunkene Königreiche Indonesiens*, Mainz von Zabern 1995. Fig 165



d)

e)

Fig 9,6 d, e)

d) *Ravana* ? the king of the demons - indicated by the sword he holds in his right hand. Below a golden *Ravana* hilt from Balambangan, 15th/16th century.

An ancestor kris of a prince ?

Area: Eastern Java. *The National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden* (inv. nr 1309 N 87).

Date: Majapahit Period.

e) A jester - maybe *Petruk*⁵⁴.

Maybe it is an ancestor kris from a family of court servants (jesters) or a family of an important farmer (*the Panakawans* were originally fertility gods.)

Below a *Wayang Kulit* figure which represents *Petruk*.

Area: Eastern Java.

Date: Majapahit Period. *Private collection*

Dating and Production of the Majapahit-Kris

Judging from the headgears I think it is possible to ascertain a dating of some of the *Majapahit- krisses*. With the introduction of *Islam* on Java in the early 16th century the princes began to wear the fez (*Kuluk*), consequently the hilt figures sporting a fez must be

⁵⁴ *Petruk* belongs to the *Panakawan* the servants of the heroes fx *Arjuna*. He is one of *Semar*'s sons. *Semar* is like all of his sons hunchbacked and misshapen. They are always helping the heroes with good advice and have the function of jesters at the court. *Semar* is probably originally an old fertility god.

later than the beginning of the 16th century (see Fig 9,3)⁵⁵. But as it is only the figures of the big type of *Majapahit-kris* that do not wear a *Kuluk* it might indicate that they are produced before the 16th and might represent the earliest type of *Majapahit-kris*.

The stories about the production of a *Majapahit-kris* are filled with sorcery and magic. For instance many *Majapahit-kris* have depressions (*Pichit*) in their blades, which is said to be the thumb prints of a powerful *Empu*, who was able to handle the red-hot metal with his bare hands. Another story relates how the *Empu* hardened the blade by pulling it through his armpit and then throw it into the water. A female *Empu* used her vulva in the same way. She drew the kris between her labias and then threw it backwards into the water⁵⁶.

It appears from the aforementioned stories that it was not for every *Empu* to produce such a kris, it required special gifts and powers. It was an art that even princes might engage in⁵⁷. Several legends relate that the special magic kresses, fx *Majapahit-kris* were shaped by the *Empu* with his bare hands. So these kresses are indeed hand-made. This might explain why the *Majapahit-kris* as well as the *Kris Budas* are so relatively primitive. They are shaped with the bare hands - or rather they might pretend to be produced in that way. So I do not think as some researches do that their primitive look is because they represent an early stage of the development of the kris. It cannot be the cause because at the same time the Javanese craftsmen produced the most refined and elaborated metal works in other fields⁵⁸. The idea is that these kresses bear the imprints of the hands of the especially powerful and magic skilled *Empu*. He has directly touched the red-hot iron with his bare hands (or it should look like he has done so) and by doing so he has transferred his magic power to the kris.



Fig 10) *Bima* forging a kris with his bare hands. Candi Sukuh 15th century.

⁵⁵ The insignias of the different characters may of course change over time according to the changes of fashion. Therefore the way ancestors, gods and heroes are represented may over time change a bit, but the main characteristics will stay, as it is important to people to be able to recognize to which group an idol belongs. So the *Kuluk* which became an insignia of the Islamic rulers signifies the same as the crown has done during the Hindu-Javanese Period. The squatting position of the figures, however, stays and signifies that it is ancestor. So it still signifies the same: It is a princely ancestor.

⁵⁶ G.B.Gardner: *Keris and other Malay Weapons*, Singapore 1936, p 43 and p 45.

⁵⁷ A legend connect the ability to make thumb-prints in the blade (*Pichit*) with a Buginese prince in Celebes. The prince, who was born by a supernatural being, introduced the production of kresses. Edward Frey: *The Kris, Mystic Weapon of the Malay World*, Oxford 1986, p 14.

⁵⁸ Fx the beautiful figures and tools in bronze, which were produced during the Hindu-Javanese Period.

To say exactly how old the *Majapahit-krisses* or the *Kris Buda* are, is not possible. We have some bronze statuettes from the 14th century which shows a person who holds a *Kris Buda* (Fig 5 e) and a 14th century relief which shows a man who wears a *Kris Buda* at his side (Fig 5 c and d). But we have no pictures of *Majapahit-krisses*. But as I mentioned my guess is, that they date from the origin of the *Singhasari-/ Majapahit Realm* that is in the 13th/14th century in connection with the bloom of the *Siva Bhairava cult*. They might have been used in this cult to create connection with the other world, the ancestors and to conquer the evil spirits like the *Phur-bu* of the Tibetan Tantrics.

The dating of the *Majapahit-krisses* as well as the *Kris Budas* is made difficult by the fact that there have been produced “genuine” *Majapahit-krisses* as well as *Kris Budas* until the present time. This is connected with the strong magic power of these krisses which is still needed. Further fakes have been produced to cheat mainly Europeans, who wanted a *Majapahit-kris*. A part of them betray themselves by being too heavy and clumsily designed and by missing the slightly upwards curved *Ganja* towards the figure, that most of the genuine ones have⁵⁹. All in all I think that it is prudent not to make the *Majapahit-krisses* older than other types of krisses. I think they appeared with fx the *Kris Buda*, as a special magic version of the kris. The reasons to my reservation concerning the theory about the *Majapahit-kris* being the first ancestor of the kris are that the simple design of the kris is no proof to its age, the earliest representations of krisses show no *Majapahit-krisses* and the krisses mentioned in the early descriptions are only “common” krisses.

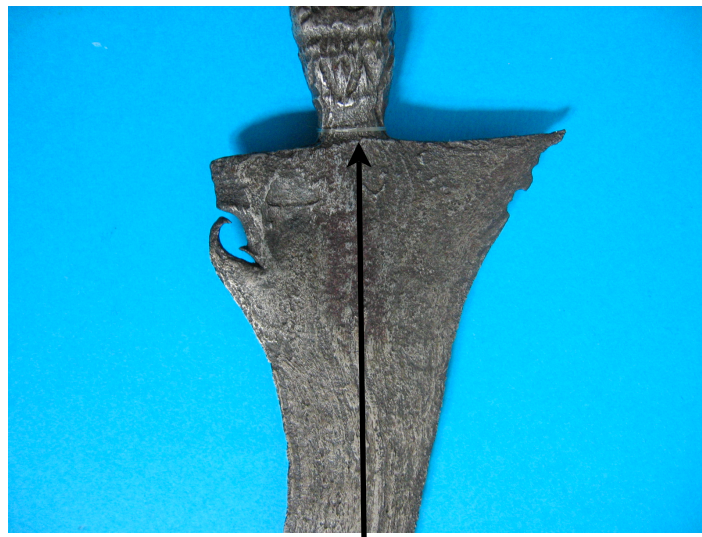


Fig 10, a) Notice the upwards curved *Ganja* towards the figure, which indicates that it is a genuine *Majapahit-kris*.

⁵⁹ A “fake-center “ is placed in Terengganu in Malaysia and in Madura.

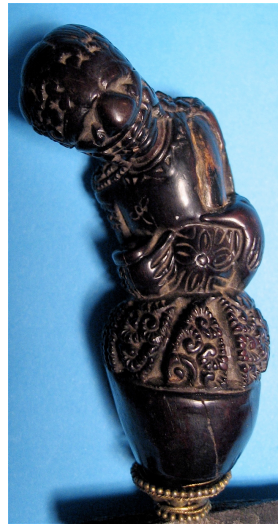
Other Types of Early Magical Krisses

Fig 11) Ancient *Kris Putut* .

Hilt: Represents a Yaksha/Raksasa in ebony.

Blade: Dapor Brojol-Putut. The Blade has *Pichit* (the finger marks of the *Empu*). At the *Gandik* part of the blade a young priest (*Putut*) is sitting in an offering position ⁶⁰.

Pamor: Jung Isi Dunya.

Length: 26,8 cm. *Blade*: 18,4 cm.

Sheath: *Sandang Walikat* type.

Area: Eastern Java.

Date: The blade indicates that it might be from the *Majapahit Period* ? The kris is probably a magical instrument used by a *Dukun* (shaman).

Formerly in the collection of Mr. Martin Kerner. Private collection.



Putut figure (*Putut* means a young priest, but maybe a priestess is indicated by its breasts - the *Shakti*⁶¹ of the kris?).

⁶⁰ In East Java this type of kris is called a kris *Umyang*, referring to an *Empu* by that name, who lived in the ages of *Kerejaan Pajang*. But according to B. Harsrinuksmo it is a wrong designation. However, it is said to have the power to collect money from debtors and to protect your property. Bambang Harsrinuksmo: *Ensiklopedi Budaya Nasional*, Jakarta 1988. p 135 and 174-75.

⁶¹ *Shakti* meaning force, power or energy is the Hindu concept or the personification of God's female aspect. She embodies the active energy and power of the male deities.



Fig 12) Newer kris *Putut Kembar* (twin).

Hilt: Nunggak Semi - Solo type. The grains in front are forming a *Gunung* (mountain) formation.

The blade is similar to Fig 11 with Pichit apart from the young priests/priestesses (*Putut*) are placed both in the front- and at the back side of the blade.

Pamor: Jung Isi Dunya.

Sheath: Sandang Walikat type.

Length: 38 cm. Blade: 28,5 cm.

Area: Surakarta.

Date: 19th/20th century.

The former owner of the kris was the Swedish explorer *Eric Lundquist*, who's father in law was a Javanese *Dukun*.

Private collection.



Twin (Kembar) priests (Putut) figures.



Fig 13) Ancient *Keris Kembar Putut*. A very old magical kris probably used by a *Dukun*.

Hilt: A kindly smiling *Yaksha/ Raksasa* in ivory.

Selut in gold

The blade is similar to Fig 12 with *Pichit and Pamor*: Jung Isi Dunya.

Length: 31 cm. *Blade*: 23 cm.

Area: Eastern Java.

Date: 16th cent. or earlier? The wear of the blade and hilt indicates great age. The male genitals of the hilt figure indicate a feature which only krisses from the 16th/17th century have. It is very similar to krisses from the old European *Kunstammer* Collections (See Fig 14 a).

Private collection.

Kembar Putut figures.





Fig 13 a)

The fragment of a ceremonial kris in white metal (bronze with a lot of pewter or silver with a lot of copper)
Hilt: Welded with the blade. Broken. The fragment of two feet indicates that a figure has decorated the hilt. Some fragments of a winding floral decoration is also indicated.

Blade: Dapor Putut, Singa with *Pichit* (6 impressions are seen in the *Sorsoran* part of the blade, indicating that the *Empu* has imbued the kris with his magic power by marking it with impressions of his thumb). In the *Gandik* area it is decorated with a *Brahmin* priest sitting in squatting position, holding an offering bowl in front of him. Behind him a lion (*Singa*) which protects him.

Length of the whole fragment: 41,5 cm. Width of the Ganja: 25,5 cm. Width of the blade (at the end): 8,5 cm. The total length of kris has probably been about 100-105 cm.

Date: The blade has a similar shape as some of the blades from the early European Kunstkammer collections. It indicates that it dates from the 15th to the early 16th century. It has most probably been a ceremonial kris with *Pichit* markings indicating that it is a magic kris. The break in the blade is old and may indicate that it may have been broken before it ended up in the river *Brantas*, where it was found. It may indicate that its former owner destroyed the kris and threw it in the river, because he was not able to handle the magic power of the kris? It may also be a sacrifice to the river?

Area: River Brantas, Eastern Java.

Private collection.

Krisses in the Early European Collections

This group of krisses comprises krisses introduced into European collections before 1800. The krisses come mainly, if not entirely, from art collections - Kunstkammer collections that had belonged to princes, kings and emperors. This group of krisses have the advantage that they are dated, that is the date they entered the collection or rather the date they were listed in the old catalogues of the collections. They may have been in the collection or in other collections for a long time before they were listed. Further the wear that many of the krisses have, indicates that several of the krisses must have been used in Indonesia for a long time before they were collected. But all in all they give a clear indication of how old they at least are. An analysis of these collections is found in my book "*Den Indonesiske Kris*"⁶². However, most of the krisses from the old European collections and krisses of this types found after the publication of my book are described in this CD⁶³.

⁶² Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske kris- et symboladet våben*, Vaabenhistoriske Aarbøger nr 43 Copenhagen 1998, p 65-154 and p 223-232.

⁶³ Sometimes I have chosen to focus on details, which are not in my book. Especially in relation to the hilts.

Characteristics of the 15th-17th Century Krisses from Banten - Western Java.



Fig.14) *Banten kris* : Dapor Sabok inten ? Pamor Beras Wutah. *Banten* about 1600 (see chapter 1 Fig 17,1).



Fig.14 a) Front: The handle represents a *Yaksha/Raksasa* type 1.



Fig.14 b) The *Yaksha/Raksasa* type 1 is sitting in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne⁶⁴. Area: Banten. Date: The Royal Danish Kunstkammer (Inv. Nr EDb 21). The Gottorp collection 1651, the kris entered into the Royal Danish Kunstkammer in 1743, but is probably originally from the *Palludani* collection about 1600. The National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.



Fig 14 c) The back - note the long hair that hangs in streamers down the back.

⁶⁴ The *Tumpal* is a triangle. Pointing upwards it represents the masculine power and pointing downwards the feminine power.



Fig. 14 d) Both the front side and the back side of the *Tumpal* have a kind of seed/vagina-figure or *Karang Bintulu* (the burning eye of the sun) in the middle. Most krisses from the 15th -17th century have this formation.



Fig. 14 e) The lying C at the feet of the *Yaksha/Raksasa* which indicate an early date - probably from 15th -17th century.



Fig. 15) Ivory hilt representing a type 2 *Raksasa prince/Siva Bhairava*.⁶⁵
Area: Banten, Western Java.
Date: The Dresden Coll. 1649, but the wear suggest an older date. SES, *Museum für Völkercunde, Dresden* (inv. nr 2887)



Fig. 15 a) Most hilts from the Banten area have a *Tumpal* with this kind of seed/vagina figuration or *Karang Bintulu* on the front - and back side (see Fig. 14 d). Note the penis above with two balls at the end of it. It indicates the *Palang* - a stick with a ball at each end of it which is inserted under the head of the penis. It is said to withhold the ejaculation and heighten the pleasure of the woman. It is probably an indication of the *Raksasa* prince being ready for the intercourse of the *Tantric* rites of the *Siva Bhairava cult*. The men of the *Dayak* tribes in Borneo were still using it in the 19th and early 20th cent.⁶⁶ Many early hilts from the old *Kunstammer* collections present phalluses with *Palangs*.

⁶⁵ *Bhairava* means terrible. *Siva Bhairava* is the terrible *Siva*.

⁶⁶ Eric Mjoberg: *Borneo*, Stockholm 1927, p 458-59.



Fig 16) The phallus from *Candi Sukuh* about 1440. It is having 2 *Palangs* inserted (see Fig 15 and chapter 1 Fig 1,14 c). The following is written in *Kawi* script: "The sign of manhood/ manliness is the essence of the world ". At the end of the sentence a kris is pictured pointing towards a star (the sun?), representing the sign of manhood and indicating that the kris is similar to *Siva's Lingam* (phallus). Through various *Tantric* rites, including eating human corpses, drinking alcohol and especially exercising sexual intercourse (sometimes in graveyards) where the orgasm was held back by the *Palang*, the participants tried to enhance the psychic energy (the *Kundalini*) which would rise and lead to a unification with *Siva*. The main idea was to identify with *Siva Bhairava* and thus be able to control the demonic forces and then use them for their own purposes. So the connection between the kris and the phallus of *Siva* indicates that the kris was regarded as a weapon with *Sivaistic powers* and able to control and use demonic powers.

Conclusion

I think we can safely leave out the allegation of some Indonesian sources, that the origin of the kris can be traced back to the 3rd century A.D. There is no archaeological or written material to substantiate it. The first trace of a kris-like blade is found in a relief from the 9th century in the *Prambanan Temple* in Central Java. It may be the forerunner of the sacrificial kris found in *Malang* in East Java from about the 10th/11th century (see Figure 2,3 and Fig 3) which seems to be the forerunner of the *Kris Buda* - the oldest type of a "real" kris (Fig 5). Both the kris from *Malang* and the *Kris Buda* have separate hilts like the ones mentioned in the Javanese version of the *Ramayana*, which is the first time krisses are mentioned. Both the *Malang* kris and the krisses mentioned in the *Ramayana* are dated to the early part of the *Eastern Javanese Period* (930-1528). It was a period characterized by the demonic aspects of *Sivaism*. In art it was expressed in a march of demons. So the krisses with *Raksasa/Yaksha* hilts (demonic hilts), known from the early European collections, fit very well into this context and tradition.

Now, both the *Kris Buda*-type and the *Majapahit*-type of krisses are said to be the original kris type. The *Kris Buda*-type, however, seems to correspond with the description of the krisses in the early Javanese version of the *Ramayana* and the early pictures of krisses, which the *Majapahit*-kris does not. From the description of the krisses, mentioned above, it appears that the krisses have separate hilts, which the *Majapahit*-krisses do not have, as their hilts and blades are made in one piece and without any decorations, unlike those mentioned in the *Ramayana*. Further the *Kris Buda* with its heavy, sturdy blade might have been used as weapons and most of the *Majapahit*-kris types were not intended for use as a real weapon. It does not mean that they might not be very old, but they are not the model of the original kris. More likely they represent a variety of the original kris type. A rare type connected with the ancestor cult and magic rituals and was used by *Dukuns*, shamans, for cures etc.

I think the *Majapahit*-kris may correspond to the Tibetan ritual dagger the *Phur-bu*, which like the *Majapahit*-kris, was imbued with magical power to protect against evil spirits and drive them out. Its primitive shape points in the same direction. This primitive design contrasts so glaringly with the highly developed *Hindu-Javanese art* that it cannot be the consequence of the lacking skills of the *Empus*, but must be a deliberate design. The most powerful *Empus* were famous for their ability to forge krisses with their bare hands. The *Majapahit*-krisses demonstrates that they are forged by such *Empus* and because of that filled with magic power. That is the reason why they are so primitively shaped - they are "handmade". These "handmade" krisses might have been especially used in the ancestor cult, which during the *Majapahit Period* spread to the whole society. The different headgear of the figures of their hilts seem to indicate that they might represent the different castes of the society and represent the deceased ancestor in his divine appearance.

The kris seems to be closely connected with the *Eastern Javanese Sivaism*. Several myths support this assumption, fx the Hindu king *Sakutrem* was born with the first kris *Pasopati* at his side. *Pasopati* is one of *Siva's* early names, so the first kris was a *Siva-kris*. Another myth relates that the first kris was created from a holy man's (*Wadi's*) phallus, which is the very symbol of *Siva*. This connection with the phallic aspect of *Siva* is supported by the *Raksasa/Yaksha* hilt figures of the early European collections. They

expose as some of the only *Hindu-Javanese* figures their male genitals⁶⁷ and have further a *Palang* inserted in their phallus. The *Palang* was an instrument connected with the *Tantric Sivaistic* cultic sexual intercourse through which the participants tried to unite and identify with *Siva Bahirava*.

But the question is: When did the kris appear during *the Eastern Javanese Period*? The written sources point at the period 11th- to the 13th/14th century. But the uncertainty about the “historical” originators is too great, like the hero *Panji* or *Inerkati Pati* to connect them with the origin of the kris. *Ken Agrok*, however, is a “certain” historical person, who in 1222 founded the *Singhasari-dynasty*, the foundation of which is closely connected with the kris. This tale traces the kris back to the beginning of the 13th century. But as the narrative indicates, the kris was not a new phenomenon at the time, so it is probable that its origin is to be found at an earlier date.

According to *T.S. Raffles*⁶⁸ *Empus* are mentioned for the first time in *the Prajajaran Principality* in Western Java in 11th century⁶⁹. A greater part of the *Empus* fled in the beginning of the 13th century because of the bad conditions in the country and settled down in *the Majapahit Realm (Singhasari)*⁷⁰. There they perfected the art of forging krisses by producing the first krisses with *Pamor*. If *T.S Raffles* is correct⁷¹, then the completely developed kris dates back to the 13th century in Eastern Java and was produced by the *Empus* that came from *Prajajaran*, who already had produced its first shape in the 11th century. The aforementioned sacrificial kris found in *Malang* may be an early kris, produced by one of the *Prajajaran Empus*. (Fig 3)

Prajajaran was one of the strongest *Sivaistic* influenced areas in Java, where the belief was preserved for a long time after the realm officially had converted to *Islam*⁷². *The Singhasari/Majapahit Realm* also developed a strong *Sivaistic* cult⁷³. So there might be a connection between the arrival of the *Sivaistic Empus* from *Prajajaran* and the strong *Sivaism* which *Singhasari/ Majapahit* became exponent of. Anyway the *Empus* might have pushed on in the *Sivaistic* direction. The sacrificial kris found in *Malang* near *Singhasari* indicates that *Siva Bhairavaism* was a cult in that area in the 11th century. So the early type of kris may seem to have been connected with a *Siva Bhairava cult*.

The *Sivaism* continued with undisturbed power during *the Majapahit Kingdom* (1294 -1528) which came into power in Eastern Java after the fall of *Singhasari* (1292). The kings of *Majapahit* proved their identity by claiming that they descended from *Ken*

⁶⁷ Only one *Siva Bhairava* figure and a *Ganesha* figure both from the 14th century exposes their sex in the same way. See Fig 5 a and chapter 1 Fig 1,9.

⁶⁸ T.S. Raffles: *The History of Java*, London 1830, p192

⁶⁹ *Prajajaran* was a *Sivaistic* realm, which included the *Banten* area. It existed from the 10th/11th century to 1582, when it was conquered by the prince of *Banten*.

⁷⁰ He might have meant *Singhasari* (1222-1292) as *the Majapahit realm* first came to existence in 1294.

⁷¹ Unfortunately he does not mention his sources.

⁷² The rulers of *Banten* converted to *Islam* in the 16th century and had conquered *Prajajaran* in 1579/80. The *Raksasa/Yaksha* hilts which the krisses from *Banten* have in 16th/17th century show that the *Sivaistic* influence remained long after the conversion to *Islam* (see chapter 3 p 2).

⁷³ The last ruler of *Singhasari*, *Kertanagara* was killed during a *Siva Bhairava ritual* in 1292.

Agrok (1222-27)⁷⁴ who was called “the son of the lord of the mountains” that is the son of Siva. The *Prajajaran* tradition of forging krisses continued during the *Majapahit Period*, too, and spread to the Hindu *Bali* and *Balambangan*⁷⁵. Especially after the *Majapahit Realm* had been conquered by the Muslim *Demak* in the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th century the influence on *Bali* and *Balambangan* became very strong, as a great number of the Hindu *Empus* and most of the nobility of *Majapahit* fled to *Balambangan* and *Bali* and settled permanently down there. The reason why especially the *Empus* fled, is presumable because they were most deeply rooted in the Hindu tradition, fx their forging rituals were pure Hindu rituals. Moreover the *Empus* were directly attached to the prince and his court and was always with him. But by the loss of so many *Empus* the kris forging tradition of Eastern and Central Java had lost so much, that it changed after that time. Maybe it also changed to demonstrate that a new era had begun. The kris-types from Islamic *Demak*, *Padjang* and finally the *Mataram* empire are slimmer than the earlier West Javanese types of krisses (*the Prajajaran types*), but the West Javanese kris-types continued to influence *Balinese* and *Balambanganese* krisses. In *Bali* the West Javanese kris forging tradition continued and that is the reason why the *Balinese* krisses have such a great resemblance to the early West Javanese krisses⁷⁶. The resemblance applies to both the blades, sheaths and the figural hilts. Fx the hilts have much resemblance to the Western Javanese *Raksasa-/Siva Bhairava* hilts and the *Balinese* sheath tradition has preserved the *old Ladrang* type. In *Banten* (the old *Prajajaran* Realm), however, the same types of krisses as the types of *Majapahit* continued to be produced, so the *Empus*, who fled from *Prajajaran*, must have stayed in contact with their original area and therefore have developed the same types of krisses as the ones from *Majapahit* or some of the *Empus* from *Majapahit* must have emigrated to *Banten* and brought the kris forging tradition back to *Banten*.

The theory of *Prajajaran* being the place of origin of the kris is supported by several old Javanese manuscripts to identification of Javanese krisses. They mention *Prajajaran* (the *Banten* area) as the kris's place of origin⁷⁷. This tradition is further confirmed by the fact that the Javanese *Empus* before the start of the forging-process invoke the female *Empu Sombro* to give them the ability to forge the kris⁷⁸. According to tradition she lived in the 10th/11th century in *Prajajaran*. As the forging-ritual is meant to re-create the creation of the world, that is to return to the original state, you may then suppose that the *Empu Sombro* is considered to be one of those who invented the kris. You may, however, wonder how the kris-tradition has remained the same during the centuries in such a way that the more modern *Balinese* kris looks so much like the early *Banten* krisses that you might immediately assume, that they came from *Bali*. But if you consider how the art of forging, containing great secrets, was transmitted from father to son through generations and any

⁷⁴ Ken Agrok founded the *Singhasari* kingdom in 1222.

⁷⁵ See chapter 7 p 2

⁷⁶ That must be the reason why *Bambang Harsrinuksmo* in “Ensiklopedi Keris”, Jakarta 2004, p 223 thinks that the *Banten* krisses described in my book (Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris*, Copenhagen 1998) are *Balinese* krisses.

⁷⁷ Garrett and Bronwen Solyom: *The World of the Javanese Keris*, Honolulu, USA 1978, p 12.

⁷⁸ *Sombro* was their *Sakti*, that is the female active power which the *Empu* according to *Tantrism* had to unite with if the forging process should succeed. *Sombro* was one of the powerful *Empus* who was so powerful that she was able to create the kris by handling the red-hot iron with her bare hands. *Bambang Harsrinuksmo*: *Ensiklopedi Budaya Nasional*, Jakarta 1988, p 155.

deviation from the tradition was regarded as a sacrilege, then it might be no wonder why these kris-types have remained unchanged for many centuries.

However, if the birthplace of the kris is not *Prajajaran* and it was not the *Empus* from *Prajajaran*, who developed the kris in *Singhasari* and *Majapahit* in Eastern Java, how could it be that the krisses in *Balambangan* and especially *Bali* have so much resemblance to the krisses from *Banten* in the old European collections? The most simple explanation might be that during the fall of the *Majapahit Empire* the *Empus* from *Majapahit* did not only immigrate to *Balambangan* and *Bali*, but some of them immigrated to *Banten*, too. Although *Banten* had officially converted to *Islam* in the 16th century it remained, as I formerly mentioned, for a long time *Sivaistic* and could therefore accept the *Hindu Empus* from *Majapahit*, who continued to forge krisses in the *Majapahit tradition*.

This theory, however, does not conflict with the theory, that the origin of the kris is *Prajajaran* and that the *Empus*, who fled from *Prajajaran* to *Singhasari/Majapahit* in the 13th century, continued the kris tradition from *Prajajaran* (The West Javanese kris tradition) there and at the same time maintained the contact with the *Empus* in *Prajajaran*. In this way a parallel development of the kris might have happened in *Prajajaran* and *Majapahit*. The sources indicate that it is the same type of kris, which *Mahuang* (1433), *Tomè Pires* (1515), *Pyrard Laval* (beginning of the 17th century), *Abbed Plautz* (1621) and *Pinoria* (1626) describe and which we find in the early European collections as type 1, 2, 3 and 4⁷⁹ There may, however, have been other early traditions and kris-centers which have developed other types of krisses than those, which belong to *Prajajaran/Majapahit tradition*. Because the kris is spread out to all *Indonesia* and *Malaysia* and it is connected with so much prestige, many areas in Indonesian archipelago claim to be the birthplace of the kris and their type of kris to be the original kris type. But both the material and the written sources indicate that *Java* is the most likely birth place of the kris.

⁷⁹ See chapter 3, Fig 17a, b, c and chapter 6 Fig 69, 70.