

Chapter 3 Banten



Banten - Western Java.

From the sources we know that the European trade and especially the important spice-trade on Indonesia in the 16th and 17th century mainly took place in three places: *Banten* in Western Java, *Macassar/Gowa* in Southern Celebes/Sulawesi and *Aceh* in Northern Sumatra. As the Acehnese kris types are known to be mainly of the *Buginese*- or the *Jawa Demam* types and the types from Macassar are either of the *Buginese* type or the special *Arjuna/Bima* type¹, *Banten* must be the source of the *Raksasa-/Yaksha* type of the krisses in the old European collections. Furthermore the Dutch conquered in 1619 *Jayakarta* (later called *Jakarta*) from *Banten* and founded *Batavia* there, which became the center of the Dutch administration of Indonesia. So the Dutch, who became the most influential foreign commercial power in Indonesia, also had their trading centre in the *Banten* area. Because of that most of the early krisses they brought home to Europe were of course krisses from the *Banten* area, that is type 1, 2 and 3 from the old European collections (see Fig 17 a, b and c). This is further indicated by the *Raksasa-/Yaksha* type (called the *Bima* type)² still found in the north-western part of Java, which is having many characteristics in common with the old *Raksasa-/Yaksha* type. Moreover the area was known to be much influenced by the *Siva Bhairava Cult*, even though the rulers of *Banten* in the 16th century had converted to *Islam*³. In 1579/80 *Banten* had overtaken the Sivaistic kingdom of *Prajajaran*, but the main part of the population was for a long time still influenced by *Sivaism* (see chapter 4 p 2).

Now *Banten* was a trade centre and people from other parts of Indonesia lived there or visited the place (see p 34 note 55). So in the old *Kunstammer* collections there will of course be types of krisses from other parts of Indonesia. But as my investigation indicated more than half (62,5%) of the krisses were from the *Banten* area⁴.

The hilts of the krisses are of three different types all representing a *Yaksha/Raksasa* of different ranks within the nobility. Perhaps krisses of type 1, which have no necklaces, might indicate that they have belonged to persons of a lower status than type 2 and 3, who are wearing necklaces? Their appearances indicate that they are connected with the *Siva Bhairava Cult*, which dominated during the *Majapahit period* (1294-1528).

The reason why the krisses from *Banten*, *Balambangan* and *Bali* look so much alike might be that after the fall of the *Majapahit Kingdom* in the beginning of the 16th century, the *Empus* of *Majapahit* fled to *Bali*, *Balambangan* and most probably to *Banten*, too. So they are most probably all related to the late *Majapahit types of krisses*. (see chapter 2 p 42-43)⁵.

¹ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 163 fig 110, p 171 fig 114, p 151 fig 104 and p 119 Fig 78. Chapter 9,1 Fig 137, 138 a,b Chapter 8, Fig 108, 111, 119.

² Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 123 Fig 82. Chapter 4, Fig 19.

³ *Ibid* : p 78-79, 227

⁴ *Ibid*: p 125 and 227.

⁵ Bambang Harsrinuksmo in *Ensiklopedi Keris*, Jakarta 2004, p 223. however, thinks that the krisses, I say come from *Banten*, come from *Bali*. I do not think that it could be the case in the 16th/17th century as there were no European trade centres near *Bali* or much European commercial contact with *Bali* at all. So if the aforementioned krisses were *Balinese*, they should especially have been imported from *Bali* to the European trade centres to be sold to the European traders, which I find highly improbable.

The Types of Hilts

The krisses from Banten may according to the hilts be divided into the following 3 types :

The Sultan of Yogyakarta with Sumping Ron.

Notice : The Sumping Ron.

Type 1)

A naturalistically designed *Yaksha-/Raksasa* figure⁶ with a friendly appearance sitting in the squatting *Pralambapada*⁷ position on a throne with alternating, reversed florally decorated *Tumpal* figures⁸. The type has a dwarfish appearance with rounded limbs and a potbelly, indicating vitality. He is naked with the exception of having earrings and a *Sumping Ron* (a leaflike jewellery) behind his ears indicating high rank.⁹ His eyes are protruding and sprout like (spirally shaped)¹⁰ and it has a big nose and a big moustache. In the front there may be a third eye shaped like a leaf, a flame, a tree or a trident, a *Sivaistic* symbol.



Fig 17 a

⁶ *Raksasa* is a Hindu spiritual demonic being. It may be either friendly or unfriendly to gods and human beings. *Kubera*, the lord of the underworld or *Ravana* (the demon king), is their lord. The *Yakshas* are Hindu or Buddhist demonic or spiritual beings, often connected to trees or springs in nature. They are guardians of fertility and the hidden treasures in the underground. They may respectively be either helpers and friendly to human beings or the opposite. *Kubera* or *Vaishnavana* (the Buddhist lord of the North) is their lord. I classify them by writing *Yaksha/Raksasa* or *Raksasa/Yaksha*. The first name indicate which type it most probably is.

⁷ The squatting position indicates that the figure of the hilt also symbolizes an ancestor and like this assumes the squatting position of the ancestor figures. But it is at the same time the position that early Indonesian *Buddha* figures assume (chapter 1 Fig 1,18 b). So different layers of the Indonesian culture mingle in this position, which emphasizes the mingle of cults and beliefs - ancestor cult, the *Buddhism* and the *Siva Bhairava* cult that dominated the *Majapahit Period* (1294 - 1528) and the beliefs that continued into the following periods. See Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske kris* 1998, p 27, 216 ff. Chapter 1 p 39 ff.

⁸ The *Tumpal* figure symbolizes the tree of life, so the figure is sitting on a throne of the very foundation of life. The *Tumpals* pointing upwards symbolizes the beginning of life - the rising sun, the masculine power and the ones pointing downwards symbolize the end of life - the setting sun, the feminine power. The life forces that alternate all the time. See Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske kris* 1998, p 29 ff and p 216 ff. Chapter 1, p 44.

⁹ M. Thomsen: *Java und Bali*, Mainz am Rhein 1980, p 124. Helen Ibbitson Jessup: *Court Arts of Indonesia*, New York 1990, p 246 no. 65.

¹⁰ This design of the eyes gives a hint in the direction of the dating the origin of the hilt. It only seems to be found in the period from 800 to the beginning of the 16th cent. See Karl With: *Java*, Leipzig 1922, fig 53. F. A Wagner: *Indonesien* Baden-Baden 1979, p 118 and *Budaya Indonesia: Arts and Crafts in Indonesia* Amsterdam 1987, p 95.

The hairdo is elaborate with the hair hanging down the back in 5 streamers ¹¹. The hands resting on the knees are leaf shaped, which indicates that it is connected with nature, growth and fertility and thus the *Yaksha* represents, the genius of Nature. He has a friendly and smiling appearance (the *Yakshas* are mostly friendlier than the *Raksasas*). Sometimes he has a *Palang* inserted just under the head of his phallus. His nakedness and his long hair indicate that he is an ascetic or hermit related to *Siva*. The type originates in *Banten*. (inv.nr EDb 21). *The National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen*.

Type 2)

A naturalistically designed *Raksasa-/Yaksha* prince with an aggressive appearance - perhaps representing *Siva Bhairava* himself¹² - sitting in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a throne with alternating, reversed florally decorated *Tumpal* figures. The type has a dwarfish appearance with rounded limbs and potbelly, indicating vitality. He is naked with the exception of eventually having *Sumping Ron* (a leaflike jewellery) behind the ears, wearing earrings, a necklace and a diadem, which may indicate that he has a higher rank than type 1, which is only wearing *Sumping Ron* and earrings.



Fig 17 b

The eyes are protruding and there is a third eye in the front in the same shapes as the shapes of type 1.

He has a big nose, a triangular formation of beard on each side of his mouth, grinning and showing his teeth and fangs, which emphasizes his aggressive and rude nature.

The hairdo is the same as that of type 1.

The hands, resting on the knees, are naturalistic shaped.

Some of them have a *Palang* inserted in their phallus, too.

His nakedness and long hair indicates that it is an ascetic or hermit related to *Siva*.

The type originates in *Banten*. (inv. nr 2887) *SES, Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden* ¹³.

¹¹The number five is connected with the *Raksasas/Yakshas* as well as *Siva*, which emphasizes the connection between them. See Moebirmann: *Kris and other Weapons of Indonesia*, Jakarta 1970, p 35 and Alain Daniélou: *Phallus*, Canada 1986, p 42. The hairdo indicates that it is an ascetic, meditative person.

¹² *Siva Bhairava* is *Siva* in his terrible appearance. *Siva* is the God of destruction and creation, life and death.

¹³ A kris with a similar hilt in ivory is in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Donald J. LaRocca: *The Gods of War*. N.Y. 1996, p 41 Fig. 4 .

Type 3)

A naturalistically designed *Siva Bhairava-/Raksasa* prince with an aggressive appearance sitting on a throne with alternating, reversed florally decorated *Tumpal* figures. The sitting position is *Rajalilasana* and *Maharajalilasana* respectively. The type has the same bodily and ornamental characteristics as type 2. Sometimes he has a *Palang* in its phallus. In his left hand he may hold a *Nagasari* flower or the arm or the leg of the victim, he is eating (chapter 6 Fig 63, 64, 65, 66). His nakedness and long hair indicates that he is an ascetic or hermit related to *Siva*. This type originates in *Banten* and *East Java/Bali* respectively¹⁴. (inv, nr, EDb 16). *The National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen*.



Fig 17 c

¹⁴ These early types of hilts (type 1,2,3) may date back to the 11th/12 as they may be similar to the ones mentioned in the early Javanese version of the Ramayana. See chapter 2 p 2 and 41.

The Mendaks

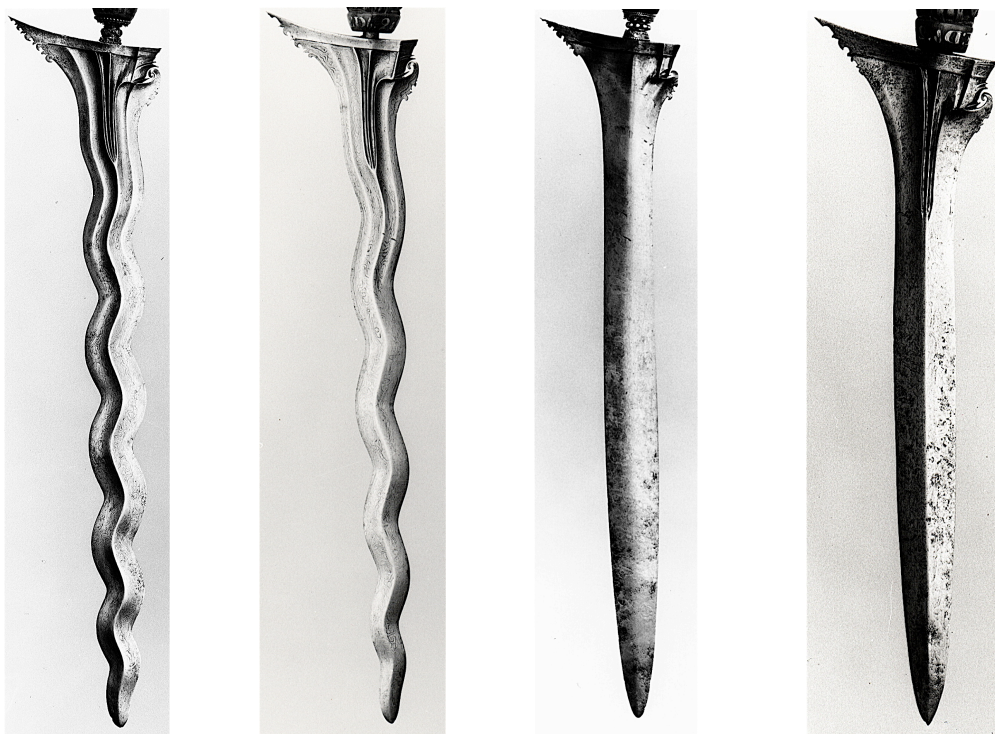
The *Mendaks* are mainly found in 3 types: A flat cup with a long or short stem more or less decorated with filigree and granulations and a belt set with stones. The second type is the long or short hourglass shaped *Mendak*, which may have a belt of filigree balls around the middle. The third type is the *Parijoto/Kendit* type .



(long)Stemmed type (short)Stemmed type (long)Hourglass with belt (short)Hourglass type *Parijoto/Kendit* type

The Blades

Characteristic of the blades is that they are rather long, broad and sturdy with sometimes rounded points (*Pucuk Nggabah Kopong* or *Pucuk Ngudhup Gambir*). They mainly have "full Prabot"¹⁵ (many and elaborated details). The blades illustrated below all comes from the *Royal Danish Kunstkammer*. The two first blades date from before 1617 (See Fig 17,1 and 17,2) and the straight ones date alternately from before 1690 and 1674 (See Fig 17,4 and 17,22). Presumably these blades are the same types as the types from the *late Majapahit Period* (the 15th century to the first quarter of the 16th century).



Typical Banten blades

¹⁵ "Full Prabot" indicates that the blade has a normal *Gandik*, *Pecetan*, *Tikel Alis*, *Telale Gajah* with or without *Jenggot*, *Lambe Gajah*, *Djalu Memet*, *Sogokan*, *Ada Ada* and *Greneng*. Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 70.

The Sheaths



The earliest illustration of the *old Ladrang* type of the sheath is found on a *Bima* statue from the 15th century from *Candi Sukuh*?

The sheaths are the *old Ladrang* type with *Wrangka Iras* (carved in one piece). They are often painted sometimes with landscapes (*Alas-Alasan*), different patterns and some have been painted, so that they appear to have a red *Pendok Blewah* (Fig 17,17). As none of the early krisses has a metal *Pendok* it is a fair assumption that the paint is original and the metal *Pendok* is a later feature. The sheath are carved in one piece - *Wrangka Iras* - indicating together with the paint, that they have belonged to the nobility (see chapter 5 p 6). The upper part of the sheath is called *Gambar* and the lower part *Gandar*. The sheath is a very old type.



Three *old Ladrang* sheaths. SES, Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden. (See Fig 17,6, Fig 17,9 and Fig 17,13).

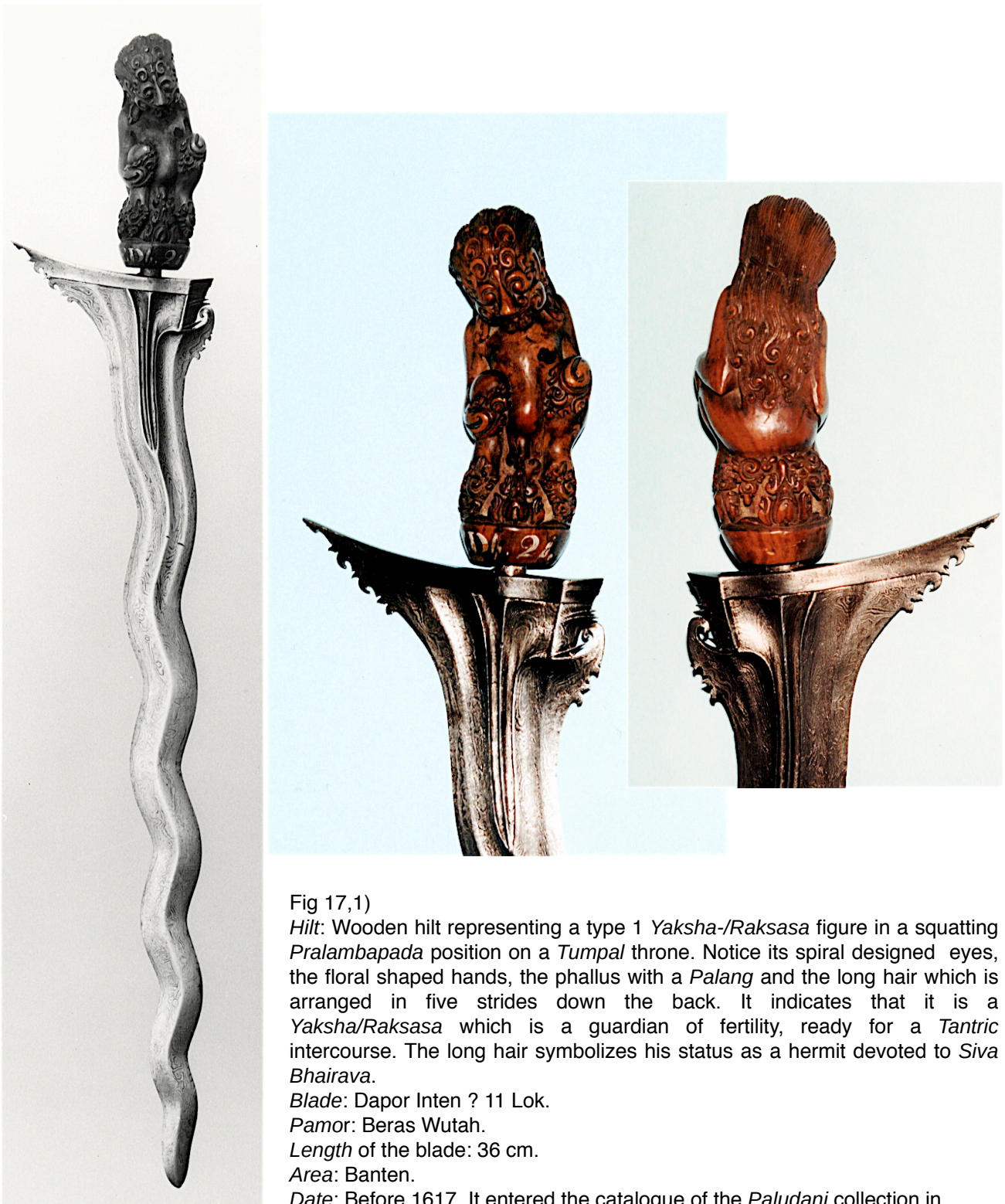
Type 1 Krisses

Fig 17,1)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1 *Yaksha-/Raksasa* figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. Notice its spiral designed eyes, the floral shaped hands, the phallus with a *Palang* and the long hair which is arranged in five strides down the back. It indicates that it is a *Yaksha/Raksasa* which is a guardian of fertility, ready for a *Tantric* intercourse. The long hair symbolizes his status as a hermit devoted to *Siva Bhairava*.

Blade: Dapor Inten ? 11 Lok.

Pamor: Beras Wutah.

Length of the blade: 36 cm.

Area: Banten.

Date: Before 1617. It entered the catalogue of the *Paludani* collection in 1617. *Die Gottorfer Kunstkammer* has probably bought it from the *Paludani*

collection 1651¹⁶. Entered into *The Royal Danish Kunstkammer* in 1743. (inv. nr EDb 21). *The National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen*.

¹⁶ *Bernard Palludani* (1550-1633) was a very learned and widely travelled physician, who lived in *Enkhuizen* in Holland. He collected among other things ethnographical items. In the catalogue of his collection from 1617 three krisses are mentioned, which most likely are the same krisses that entered into *Die Gottorfer Kunstkammer* in 1651 and in 1743 entered the *Royal Danish Kunstkammer*, when the Danish King took possession of *Die Gottorfer Kunstkammer*. See H.D. Schepelern: *Naturalienkabinett oder Kunstkammer*, Heide in Holstein 1981, *Nordelbingen* vol. 50, p 157-182.

The Royal Danish Kunstkammer was founded by King Frederik the Third in 1650. First housed in the Royal Palace in Copenhagen, it was transferred about 1680 to a new building, now the National Archives. The Kunstkammer existed as an institution until 1825. When it was finally dismantled in the 1820's, the objects were distributed to other collections and in time formed the nuclei of numerous public museums existing to-day. See Bente Dam-Mikkelsen & Torben Lundbæk: *Ethnographic Objects in The Royal Danish Kunstkammer 1650-1800*, Copenhagen 1980, p xviii. The following krisses can be traced back to the Royal Danish Kunstkammer: Chapter 3 Fig 17,1, Fig 17,2, Fig 17,3, Fig 17,4, Fig 17,5 and Fig 17,22, chapter 4 Fig 31 b and Fig 31 c and chapter 6 Fig 63.

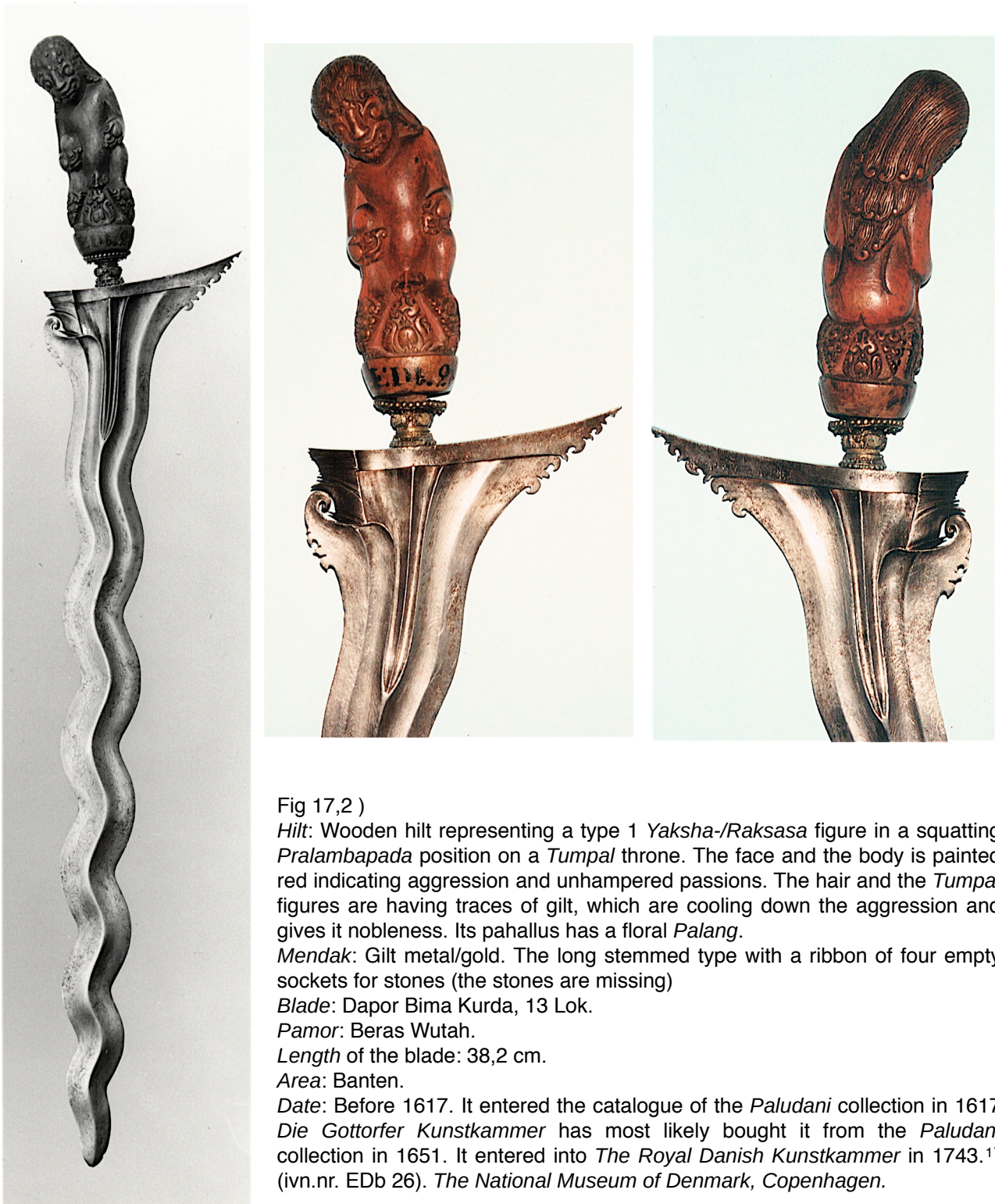


Fig 17,2)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1 *Yaksha-/Raksasa* figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The face and the body is painted red indicating aggression and unhampered passions. The hair and the *Tumpal* figures are having traces of gilt, which are cooling down the aggression and gives it nobleness. Its pahallus has a floral *Palang*.

Mendak: Gilt metal/gold. The long stemmed type with a ribbon of four empty sockets for stones (the stones are missing)

Blade: Dapor Bima Kurda, 13 Lok.

Pamor: Beras Wutah.

Length of the blade: 38,2 cm.

Area: Banten.

Date: Before 1617. It entered the catalogue of the *Paludani* collection in 1617 *Die Gottorfer Kunstkammer* has most likely bought it from the *Paludani* collection in 1651. It entered into *The Royal Danish Kunstkammer* in 1743.¹⁷ (ivn.nr. EDb 26). *The National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen*.

¹⁷ Fig 17,1, Fig 17,2, chapter 6 Fig 63. See Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1988, p 65, Fig 43, p 71 Fig 46 and p 77 Fig 49.



Fig 17, 2 a)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1 *Yaksha-/Raksasa* sitting in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a throne with alternating, reversed florally decorated *Tumpal* figures. Notice: The phallus with the inserted *Palang* with floral design.

Mendak: Gilt copper. The short stemmed type with a ribbon of four empty sockets for stones (the stones are missing)

Blade: Dapor Bima Kurda, 13 Lok. There are holes in the blade in the bottom of the *Sogokan* called "*Bertuwa*", which is a fortunate sign¹⁸.

Pamor: Beras Wutah.

Length of the blade: 37 cm.

Area: Banten.

Date: 17th century or earlier.

Private collection.

¹⁸ By looking through the holes you may look into the future or bewitch a person to fall in love with you.



Fig 17,3)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1 *Yaksha-/Raksasa* figure sitting in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. Breast and navel are indicated by circles. The head of its phallus is hidden under the point of a *Tumpal*. Traces of white paint on the head, body and hair and the *Tumpals* have traces of gold paint. The *Bungkul* (the nether part of the hilt) is decorated with a consecutive row of ovals in gold paint with a red spot in the middle.

Mendak: (Short) Hourglass shaped type in gold.

Blade: Dapor Sabok Inten ?, 11 Lok.

Pamor: Beras Wutah.

Length of the blade: 36 cm.

Area: Banten.

Date: The Royal Danish Kunstkammer 1674 (ivn.nr EDb 22)¹⁹.

The National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.

¹⁹ Karsten Sejr Jensen: Den Indonesiske Kris 1998, p 67, Fig 44



Fig 17,4)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1 Yaksha-/Raksasa figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The nipples and the navel are indicated as spouts. The phallus has a florally shaped *Palang*.

Blade: Dapor Kala Misani.

Pamor: ?

Sheath: Old Ladrang type, *Wrangka Iras* (the back part of the *Gambar* is broken off). There is a floral carving on the front part of the *Gambar* and on the *Buntut* (the point) of the *Gandar*²⁰

Length of the blade: 27 cm.

Area: Banten.

Date: The Royal Danish Kunstkammer 1690. But the wear of the hilt shows it must be considerably older.

(ivn.nr EDb 24)²¹.

The National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.

²⁰ The sheath has the same design as a sheath from Mataram - see chapter 5 Fig 34.

²¹ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 69, Fig 45



Fig 17,5)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1 *Yaksha*-/Raksasa figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The phallus is florally stylized.

Mendak: *Parijoto/Kendit* type in gilt copper

Blade: Dapor Sempana, 9 Lok. The *Ganja Wuwung* (the upper side) has a golden *Kawi* inscription and the *Gandik* part of the blade has a golden decoration.

Pamor: Beras Wutah. The blue colour of the blade is preserved.

Length of the blade: 34,5 cm.

Area: Banten.

Date: The Royal Danish Kunstkammer 1690. (ivn.nr. EBd 20)²².

The National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.

²² Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 73, Fig 47



Fig 17,6)

Hilt: Ivory hilt representing a type 1 Yaksha-/Raksasa figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The phallus is with a *Palang*.

Mendak: Gilt metal. The long stemmed type with a belt set with stones (all stones missing)

Blade: Bima Kurda, 13 Lok. Pamor: Beras Wutah.

Length of the blade: 39,2 cm²³.

The Sheath: Old Ladrang type in gilt silver with floral ornamentation on the *Gambar*, the upper part of the *Gandar* and on the *Buntut* (the point). The middle of the *Gandar* has an ornamentation imitating shark or ray skin (see Fig 17,7)

Area: Banten.

Date: Before 1649. SES, *Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden*²⁴ (ivn.nr. 2889)²⁵.

Photo: Eva Winkler

²³ The hilt and the blade is rather similar to Fig 17,7.

²⁴ The collection at *Staatliches Museum in Dresden* dates back to 1560 when *Electeur August von Sachsen* founded his *Kunstammer* collection in Dresden. He established a special room called the *Indian Chamber* in his castle in Dresden. The *Indian Chamber* exhibited among other things krisses. Till now its has not been possible to trace the krisses further back than to the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th century. The oldest krisses (18 pieces) come from a collection of 20 krisses, which the Ethnographical Museum took over from the Historical Museum in the period 1875-82. It includes the following krisses: chapter 3 Fig 17,6, Fig 17,8, Fig 17,9, Fig 17,10, Fig 17,11, Fig 17,12, Fig 17,13, Fig 17,17 and Fig 17,19, chapter 4 Fig 31 d, chapter 5 Fig 35 a, Fig 37 a, Fig 37 b. Fig 37 c, chapter 6 Fig 66, Fig 69, chapter 8 Fig 120, chapter 9,2 Fig 148.

²⁵ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 95-96, Fig 61



Fig 17,7)

Hilt: Ivory hilt representing a type 1 Yaksha-/Raksasa figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The phallus is florally stylized.

Mendak: Gilt metal - short stemmed type with a belt of stones (some of the stones are missing).

Blade: Dapor Bima Kurda, 13 Lok²⁶.

Sheath: *Sandang Walikat* type wrapped in ray skin.

Area: Banten.

Date: 16th/17th cent.

Collection Wallrapp, Germany.

²⁶ The hilt and the blade are very much alike Fig 17,6.



Fig 17,8)

Hilt: Brass hilt representing a type 1 *Yaksha-/Raksasa* figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. (it has a dent on the top of its head). The phallus is florally stylized or it may wear a modesty plate of the Majapahit type²⁷.

Mendak: The short stemmed type with a belt of stones in the middle.

Blade: Dapor Tilam Upih. There is a golden *Kawi* (pre-Islamic type of writing) on the *Wuwung* (the upper side of the *Ganja*) (see Fig 17,5)

Pamor: Beras Wutah ?

Length of the blade: 33,4 cm.

Area: Banten.

Date: The handle and the *Kawi* inscription indicate that the kris is from the 16th/17th cent.

SES, Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden.(inv. nr 2891)²⁸

Photo: Eva Winkler .

²⁷ Jaap Polak: A Unique Gold Modesty plate from the Majapahit Period, *Arts of Asia*, November-December 2000, p 97-102. See fig 3 p 98.

²⁸ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 101, Fig 64



Fig 17,9)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1

Yaksha-/Raksasa figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The phallus is partially florally stylized with a *Palang*.

Blade: Dapor Bima Kurda, 13 Lok.

Pamor: Beras Wutah.

Length of the blade: 41 cm.

Sheath: Old Ladrang style with *Wrangka Iras*. The *Gambar* and part of the *Gandar* is painted in red and green on a gilt background representing a mountain landscape with vigorous growth (*Alas-Alasan*). The nether middle part of the *Gandar* is painted black grey. The whole *Gandar* has a red frame in the same red colour which covers the backside. It looks like a red *Pendok Blewah*, indicating that it belonged to a person related to or close to the prince (see chapter 5 p 6 and Fig 40)

Area: Banten.

Date: The Dresden catalogue (1882) gives both the date 1683 and 1697. But the wear of the hilt indicates that its origin is at least about 1600. SES, *Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden* (inv.nr. 2892). Photo: Eva Winkler. (Both the hilt and sheath is seen from the backside.)²⁹

²⁹ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 97, Fig 62 (The front side of sheath, blade and hilt)



Fig . 17,10)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1 Yaksha-/Raksasa figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The phallus is partially florally stylized with a *Palang*. The hilt is showing some unusual features for a type 1 hilt :

- 1) A hairdo with locks of hair freely extending from each side of the head.
- 2) The feet are spirally shaped.
- 3) A necklace.

Mendak: The long stemmed type in gilt metal with a belt of 4 set rubies (two stones are missing).

Blade: Bima Kurda, 13 Lok.

Pamor: Udan Mas

Length of the blade: 38 cm.

Area: Banten.

Date: Probably the same kris as seen on plate 8 in Abbot Plautz's book "*Nova Typis Transacta Navigatio*" 1621. It most probably originates from the collection of Philip II of Spain.

SES, Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden. (inv.nr 2894)³⁰

Photo: Eva Winkler.

³⁰ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 98 -104, Fig 63.



Fig 17,10 a)

Copperplate number 8 from *Abbot Plautz's* book "*Nova Typis Transacta Navigatio*", 1621. The copperplate is made by *Kilian of Augsburg* on the basis of a drawing by *Abbot Plautz* that he drew, when he visited the library of the castle in Graz, where the kris was deposited. The visit must have taken place before 1608, because he mentions *the Archduchess Maria* still living - she died in 1608. Probably the visit took place in 1604 when he passed his doctorate in Graz.

The copperplate, however, shows several misinterpretations. The cause might be that the engraver did not have the understanding of how a kris hilt looked. He probably had not in real life seen such a one, as krisses at that time were very scarce. On the other hand the original drawing of *Abbot Plautz* might also have contained some faults. Being an abbot he might have added the belt which is hiding the genitals of the *Yaksha*. However, the engraver seems to have forgotten to laterally reverse the engraving on the copperplate, which is necessary to get the picture right. So the picture is laterally reversed. I have laterally reversed the photos as to get as close as possible to the engraving. The engraver however seems to have left out several features. For example the right (in fact the left) leg and the half of the moustache. But apart from these mistakes the pictures illustrate very clearly a type 1 *Yaksha/Raksasa*. It has the same spirally shaped eyes, the same kind of moustache, the same grinning appearance and the same florally shaped hands. But most decisive are the unique characteristics, which the engraving has in common with the hilt of the real kris. That is the hairdo with the hair locks extending from its head, the unusual shape of the foot, which is ending in

some spirally shaped formations and the necklace on its chest³¹ - features which no other type 1 hilt has (not to mention that no other *Yaksha* or *Raksasa* hilt have these features among all the old *Kunstammer* krisses I have seen). The *Mendak* is a long stemmed type with a belt of four mounted stones which also seems to be similar to that on the engraving and the description given by *Abbot Plautz* : “ (The hilt is) ornamented with gold, rubies and emeralds at its basis (*Mendak*) ”³² Now, the *Mendak* is mounted with rubies- two are still in their original setting, but two stones are missing. The missing stones might have been emeralds. Now, emeralds are usually never to be seen on krisses, so the memory of *Abbot Plautz* may not be right at this point.

In my opinion it seems, however that this kris is most probably the same as the one *Abbot Plautz* saw in Graz in the beginning of the 17th cent., but it cannot be finally proved. We only know that the Dresden kris entered “das Historische Museum” in Dresden in 1833 and now is to be seen in “ Museum für Völkerkunde” in Dresden³³. This kris might of course be a similar kris and not the kris from Graz. But I do not find it likely as a kris hilt of this design is so special. However, should it be the case then you must assume that the kris is of the same age as the one on the engraving and the hilt must most probably have been made by the same carver.

The history of the kris on the engraving is the following. It is dated before 1599, because it should have been presented as a gift by *Philip III of Spain* to his mother in law the *Archduchess Maria of Austria and Bavaria*, when *Philip III* married her daughter *Margrethe*. *Philip III* had most likely inherited the kris from his father *Philip II*, who is known to have had a great collection of weapons among which were krisses. So in my opinion the kris is at least from the end of the 16th cent.³⁴

³¹ Only type 2 and 3 wear a necklace.

³² Note on the copperplate the outline of a sheath of the *old Ladrang* type. It is now missing.

³³ According to Curator Petra Martin at “ Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden” the kris entered “Das Historische Museum” in 1833. Its way from Graz to Dresden may perhaps forever be a puzzle.

³⁴ The description is based on C.H., Feest: *Zemes Idolum Diabolicum*, Archiv für Völkerkunde 40 p. 181-198, Vienna 1986. Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Genfundne Kris. Vaabenhistorisk Tidsskrift* bd 29 nr 7 p 240-48. København 1996.

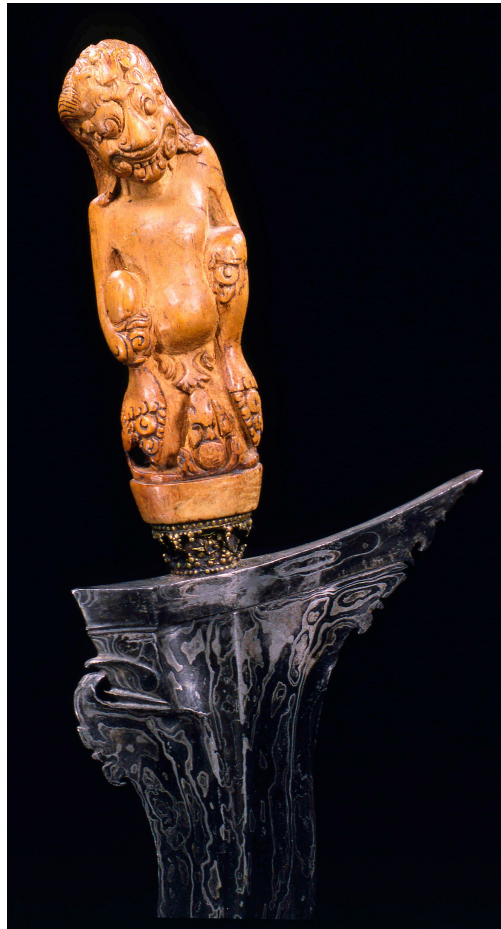


Fig 17,11)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1 *Yaksha*-/Raksasa figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The phallus is partially florally stylized with a *Palang*.

Mendak: The short stemmed type with a belt of settings - the stones are missing.

Blade: Dapor Bima Kurda ?, 13 Lok.

Pamor. Beras Wutah. The blue colour is preserved.

Length of the blade: 41,8 cm.

Area: Banten.

Date: The kris is undated, but the shape of the hilt, the *Mendak* and the blade indicates that its origin is Banten in 16th/17th cent.

SES, Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden. (inv.nr 2895)³⁵

Photo: Eva Winkler.

³⁵ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 102, Fig 65.



Fig 17,12)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1 Yaksha-/Raksasa figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The phallus is florally stylized with a *Palang*.

Mendak: The short stemmed type with a belt set with rubies.

Blade: Dapor Balebang, 7 Lok.

Pamor: ?

Length of the blade: 36 cm.

Sheath: Old *Ladrang* type with *Wrangka Iras*.

The back part of the *Gambar* is broken off. The surface of the sheath is lengthwise fluted. It is painted red and there are traces of a gilt decoration on the *Gambar* and *Gandar*. A slip of paper is glued on the *Gandar* saying: "Japanese dagger called kris. It may bring luck or unluck"³⁶.

Area: Banten.

Date: The kris is undated, but the shape of the hilt, the *Mendak* and the blade indicate that its origin is Banten in 16th/17th cent.

SES, Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden. (inv.nr 2896)³⁷ Photo: Eva Winkler.

³⁶ The person who wrote this slip, did not know much about the origin of the kris, calling it a Japanese dagger - but that it might bring luck or unluck is maybe what the Indonesians ascribed to the kris.

³⁷ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 103, Fig 66.

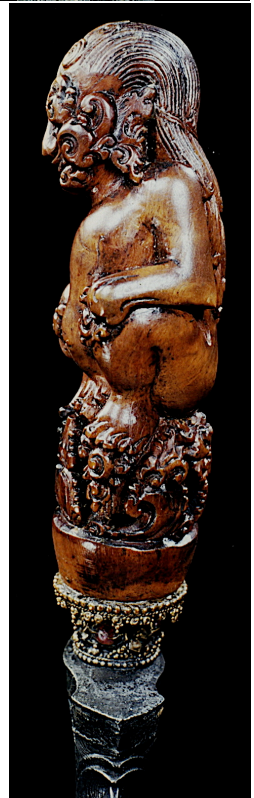


Fig
17,13)
Hilt:
Wooden

hilt representing a type 1 Yaksha-/Raksasa figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The phallus is florally stylized with a *Palang*.

Mendak: The short stemmed type with a belt set with rubies.

Blade: Dapor Sabok Inten, 11 Lok.

Pamor: Beras Wutah.

Length of the blade: 36,8 cm.

Sheath: Old Ladrang type with *Wrangka Iras*. It is painted red and there are splashes of gold and flower decorations in grey, black and gold on the *Gambar* and the upper part of the *Gandar*. (Here seen from the backside)

Area: Banten.

Date: The shape of the hilt, the *Mendak* and the blade indicates that its origin is Banten in 16th/17th cent. SES, *Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden*. (inv.nr 2897)³⁸. Photo: Eva Winkler.

³⁸ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* p 105, Fig 67 (the front of the sheath).

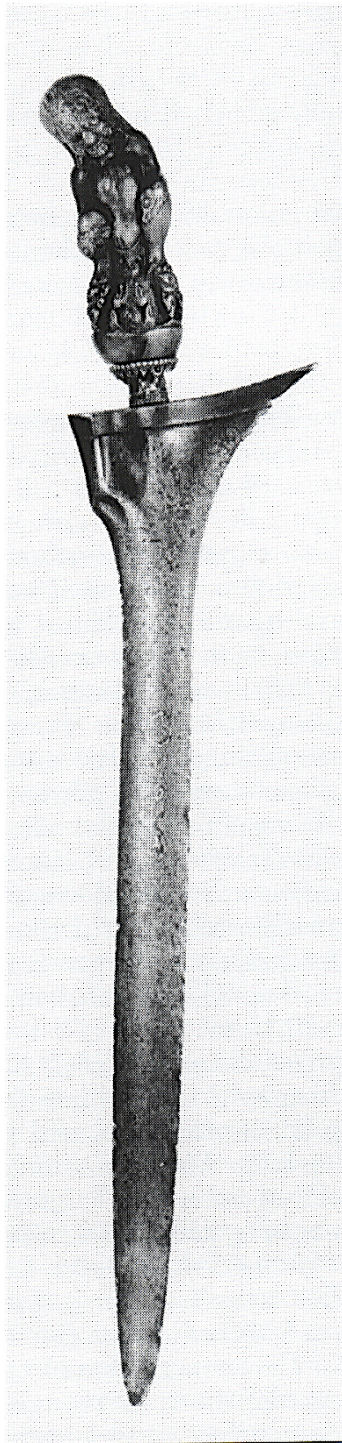


Fig 17,14) (left)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1 *Yaksha-/Raksasa* figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The phallus has a *Palang* inserted.

Mendak: The long stemmed type in gilt brass with a belt with setting for stones, but the stones are missing.

Blade: Dapor Jalak Ngore - the shape of the blade indicates that it comes from *Southern Sumatra - the Lampung/Palembang area*, which in the 16th/17th cent, was under the domination of *Bantern*³⁹.

Pamor: Beras Wutah/Undan Mas.

Length of the blade: 38 cm.

Area: Banten/Southern Sumatra.

Date : *The Tradescant Catalogue* 1656 (1637). But the wear of the hilt indicates that it is considerable older.⁴⁰

The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

³⁹ Jean Gelman Taylor: *Indonesia, Peoples and Histories*, New Haven and London 2003, p 82

⁴⁰ It was originally in the collection of *John Tradescant*. He and his son of the same name were travellers, naturalists and gardeners. In the service of *Georg Vivillers*, the Duke of Buckingham, the father dealt "with merchants of all places" including the East Indies. He died in 1637 and his son, who inherited the collection, made in 1656 a catalogue of the collection, where he mentions the krisses: "Poisoned Creeses or Daggers, two waved, two plain". So there seems to have been a kris more, which is now lost. In 1659 *Thomas Ashmole* inherited the collection and in 1677 *Thomas Ashmole* offered the collection to Oxford University. In 1683 a building for the collection was built by *Wren*.

R.O.Winstedt: *Three Early Keris*. R.A. Soc. 1912 No 62, p 21-23. Arthur Macgregor: *Tradescant Rarities*, Oxford 1983, p 150 ff. Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 82-84 Fig 52.

The collection of krisses includes Fig 17,14, Fig 17, 26 and chapter 9,2 Fig 149.

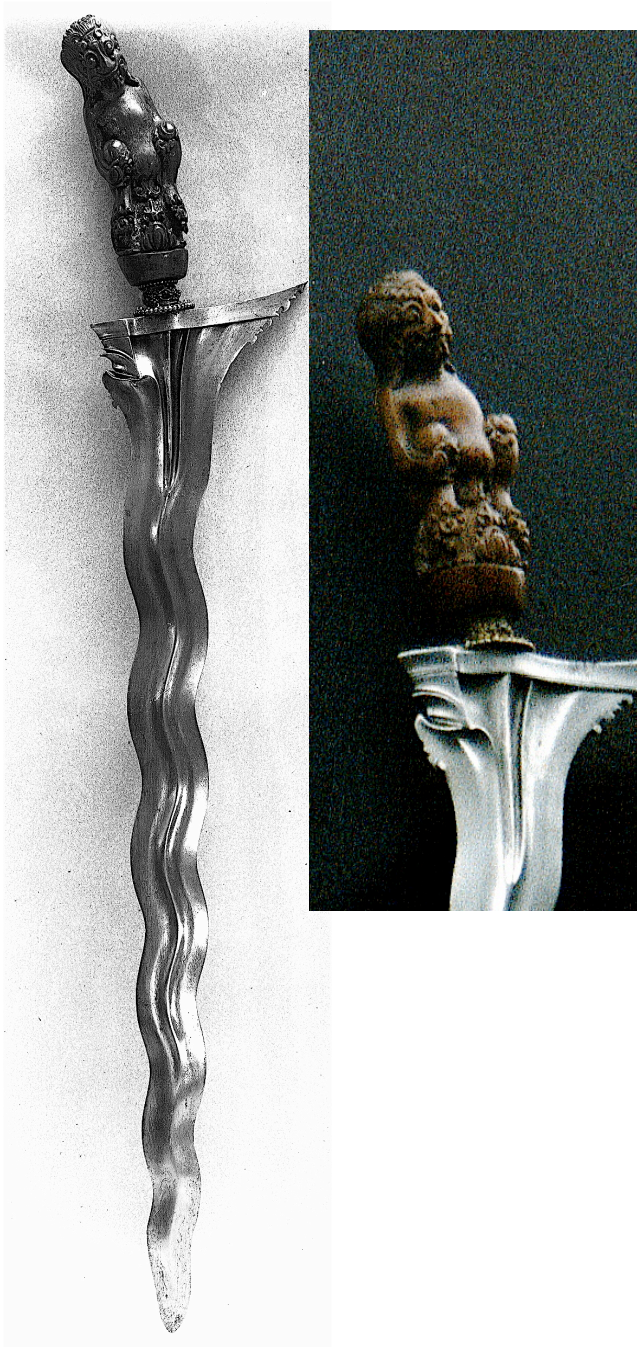


Fig 17,15)

Hilt: Wooden hilt representing a type 1 Yaksha-/Raksasa figure in a squatting Pralambapada position on a Tumpal throne. The phallus is florally stylized with a Palang.

Mendak: The long stemmed type in gilt brass with a belt of set stones. It is placed upside down.

Blade: Dapor Bima Kurda, 13 Lok.

Pamor ?

Length of the kris: 44 cm.

Area : Banten.

Date: Before 1631, when Ferdinand I transferred his collection from Urbino to the Medici collection in Florens. Museo Bargello, Florens (inv.nr. M 278)⁴¹

⁴¹ There are three krisses left from the old collection of the Medici. When the collection was at its height it contained more than 23000 weapons. They were kept together until 1775 when a greater part of the collection was either sold or melted down to removed the precious metals and stones. Only a representative selection was kept in future. Not until 1864 the remaining part of the weapons was transferred to Museo Bargello. The three krisses that were spared in future date back to before 1631 when Ferdinand the First transferred his collection from Urbino to the Medici Collection in Florens. Most probably the krisses might be traced further back, if you might succeed in finding them in the archives in Urbino. See The collection of Palazzo Vecchio: Committanza e collezionismo Medicei, Florens 1980, p 117 ff. Karsten Sejr Jensen: Den Indonesiske Kris 1998, p 120 Fig 79.

The collection of krisses includes: Chapter 3 Fig 17,15, chapter 6 Fig 64 and Fig 70.



Fig 17,16)

Hilt: Gilt silver hilt representing a type 1 Yaksha-/Raksasa figure in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a *Tumpal* throne. The phallus is florally stylized with a *Palang*. *Indo-Persian* guard with floral decoration. The ends of the guard represents a dragon head.

The Persian blade has an exquisite floral decoration in gold.

The sheath is a *Persian* type in gilt silver with floral decorations.⁴²

Area: Banten/Persia.

Date: The dagger was originally a part of the collection of Archduke Maximilian III. He was the Grand Master of "Der Deutsche Orden" from 1595 to his death in 1618.⁴³ The dagger was left by will to "Der Deutsche Orden" by Archduke Maximilian 1618.

Der Deutsche Orden, Vienna.(inv, nr Do 171)

⁴² It all shows the highest grade of Indo-Persian workmanship of the 16th century.

⁴³ During his reign of the order (1595-1618) the Archduke Maximillina III fought the *Turks in the Balkans* and the dagger might have been part of the spoils from a high standing vanquished *Turk*. The *Turks* loved *Persian* artifacts and had via *Persia* commercial connections to Indonesia. The *Persians* were of the *Shiitic* observation of *Islam* which did not take the *Islamic* prohibition of depicting human beings very seriously. This Ottoman dagger and the Balinese kris in (chapter 7 Fig 101) the collection of Archduke Maximilian seems to indicate that Ottoman warriors might have used weapons of Indonesian origin (See also chapter 6 Fig 7) E. Petrasch: *Die Karlsruhe Türkenbeute*, München 1991, p 386 and Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris*, p 249 note 215, 216, 217 and p 91-92, Fig 59. The collection includes Fig 17,16 and chapter 7 Fig 101.

Type 2 Krisses

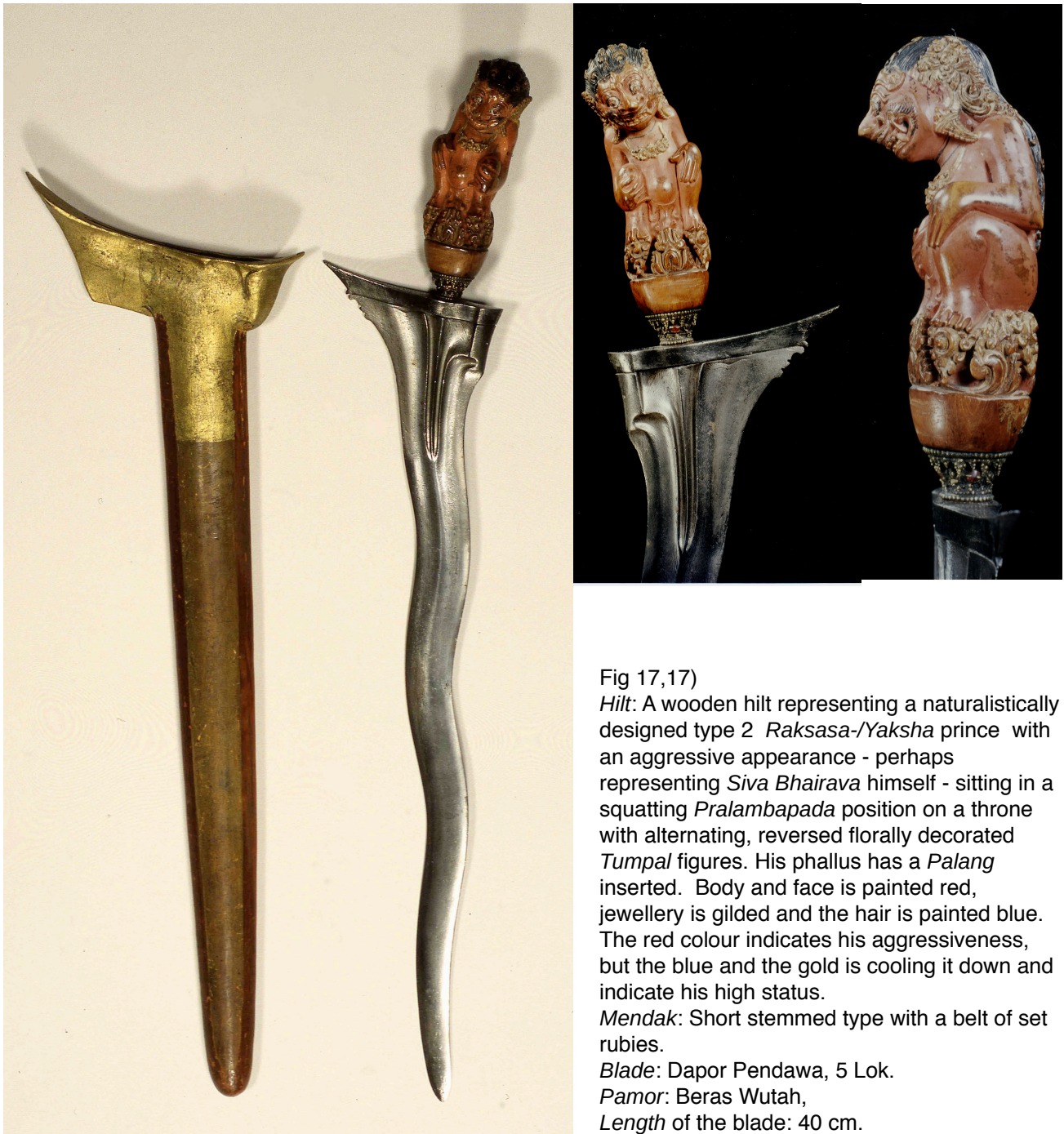


Fig 17,17)

Hilt: A wooden hilt representing a naturalistically designed type 2 *Raksasa-/Yaksha* prince with an aggressive appearance - perhaps representing *Siva Bhairava* himself - sitting in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a throne with alternating, reversed florally decorated *Tumpal* figures. His phallus has a *Palang* inserted. Body and face is painted red, jewellery is gilded and the hair is painted blue. The red colour indicates his aggressiveness, but the blue and the gold is cooling it down and indicate his high status.

Mendak: Short stemmed type with a belt of set rubies.

Blade: Dapor Pendawa, 5 Lok.

Pamor: Beras Wutah,

Length of the blade: 40 cm.

The sheath: Old Ladrang type with *Wrangka Iras*. The *Gambar* (the upper part) is gilded. The *Gandar* (the lower part) forms a red frame like a *Pendok Blewah*.

Area: Banten.

Date: The Dresden catalogue (1882): 1671.

SES, *Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden* (inv.nr 2886)⁴⁴. Photo: Eva Winkler.

⁴⁴ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris*, p 106 Fig 68.

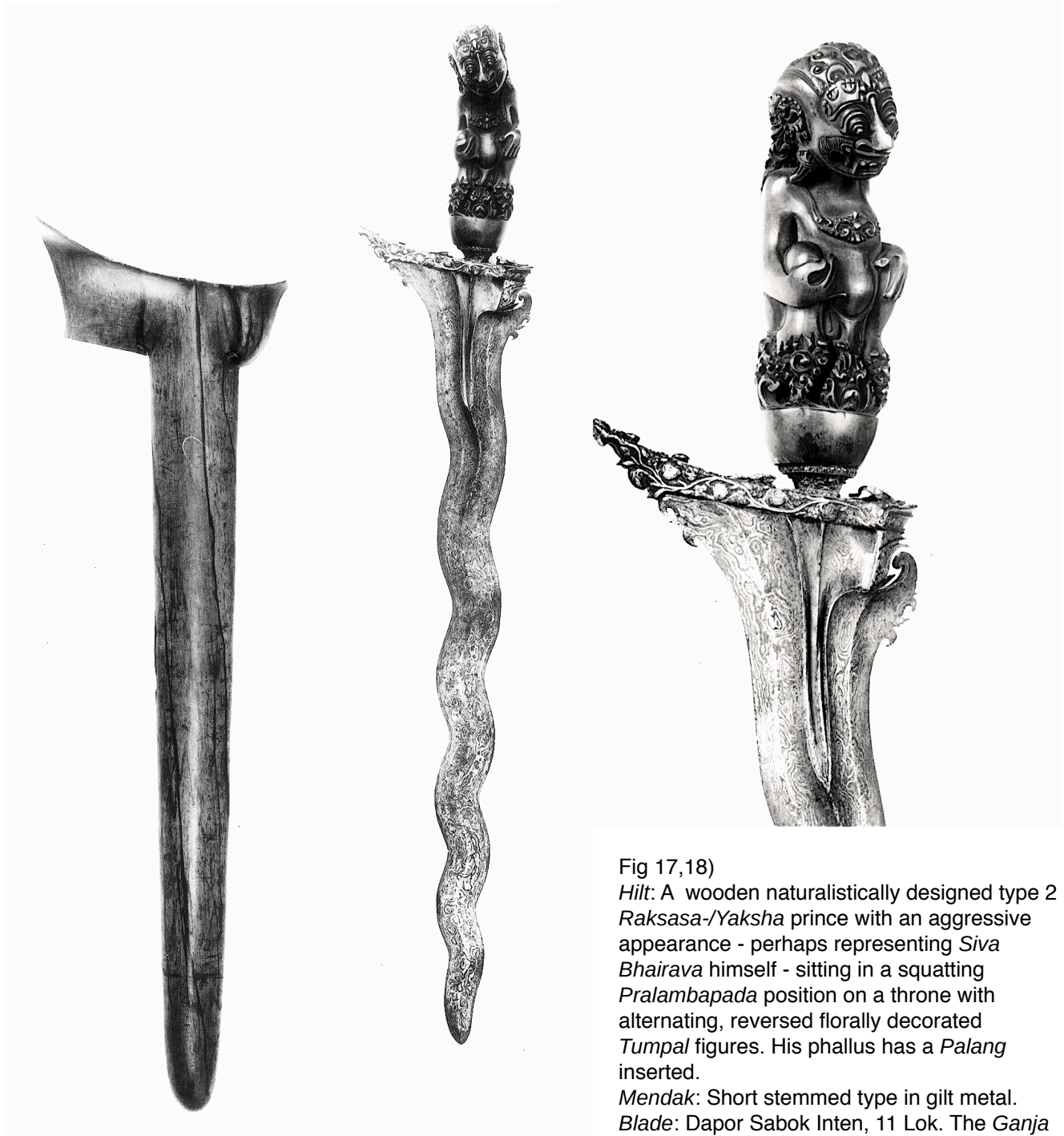


Fig 17,18)

Hilt: A wooden naturalistically designed type 2 *Raksasa*-/Yaksha prince with an aggressive appearance - perhaps representing *Siva Bhairava* himself - sitting in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a throne with alternating, reversed florally decorated *Tumpal* figures. His phallus has a *Palang* inserted.

Mendak: Short stemmed type in gilt metal.

Blade: Dapor Sabok Inten, 11 Lok. The *Ganja* is decorated with a golden floral design covered in gold (*Lung Kamarogan*

Kinatah). The upper side (*Wuwung*) has an elephant and lion covered in gold, too.

Pamor: Beras Wutah.

Length of the blade 37,7 cm.

Sheath: Old Ladrang style with *Wrangka Iras*.

Area: Banten. *Date:* Before 1692⁴⁵. *Vereeniging Nederlandsch Historisch Scheepvaart Museum, Amsterdam* (lost in 1988)⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ The origin of the kris is connected with *Admiral Willem van der Zaan*. He is said to have wrestled "the poisoned Turkish kris" from a *Turkish* enemy (see p 27 note 43). Now there are two admirals by that name. The first lived from 1621 to 1669. He was killed during a battle with three Algerian privateer ships. The second was his son. He was killed in 1692 during a battle with three French ships.

⁴⁶ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 89 Fig 57



Fig 17,19)

Hilt: An ivory hilt representing a naturalistically designed type 2 *Raksasa-/Yaksha* prince with an aggressive appearance - perhaps representing *Siva Bhairava* himself - sitting in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a throne with alternating, reversed florally decorated *Tumpal* figures. His phallus has a *Palang* inserted.

Blade: Dapor Sangelat, 13 Lok. The *Telale Gajah* (trunk) seems to be broken off. The upper side of the *Ganja* (*Wuwung*) has a gilt floral decoration (most of the gold is worn off).

Pamor: Beras Wutah.

Length of the blade: 38 cm.

Sheath: Old *Ladrang* type with *Wrangka Iras*.

Area: Banten.

Date: The Dresden Catalogue (1882): 1649 entered the *Indian Chamber*.

SES, Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden (inv. nr 2887)⁴⁷. Photo: Eva Winkler.

⁴⁷ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 107, Fig 69.



Fig 17, 20)

Hilt: A wooden hilt representing a naturalistically designed type 2 *Raksasa-/Yaksha* prince with an aggressive appearance - perhaps representing *Siva Bhairava* himself - sitting in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a throne with alternating, reversed florally decorated *Tumpal* figures. His phallus has a *Palang* inserted. Notice that he wears no necklace, like the other type 2 figures.

Mendak: Long stemmed type in gilt copper with a belt of settings for stones, but the stones are missing.

Blade: Dapor Balebang, 7 Lok. This type of blade with a short *Gandik*, but a wide *Sorsoran* part is said to date the blade to *Segaluh* in the 13th-15th century⁴⁸.

Pamor: Beras Wutah.

Length of the blade: 34 cm. Compared with the typical blades of the other 16th/17th cent. krisses, this blade is rather plain, without much *Prabot* (see Fig 17,14 which is plain, too.).

Area: Banten, Cirebon/Tegal.

Date: 16th/17th.cent. 1628 *Schloss Ruhelust* near Innsbruck in Austria.

Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. Sammlungen Schloss Ambras. (inv. nr PA 502)⁴⁹.

⁴⁸ Bambang Harsrinuksmo: *Ensiklopedi Keris*, Jakarta 2004, p 45

⁴⁹ Archduke Ferdinand the Second of the Tyrol (1529-1595) founded the *Ambras* collection at the *Ambras Castle*. *Ruhelust* is a castle nearby which belonged to Ferdinand, too. Three krisses (17,20, 17,24 and chapter 6 Fig 75) are indicated to have been at the *Ruhelust Castle* in 1628. Dr. Heide Leigh-Theisen propose that the kris might have belonged to a person of lower status than the krisses with more elaborated blades. Notice that the figure is wearing no necklace, which the hilt figures of type 2 usually wear. It may indicate a lower status. See page 4 Fig 17 b. Wilfried Seipel: *Exotica*. Vienna 2000, p 251, fig 159.



Fig 17, 21)

Hilt: A wooden hilt representing a naturalistically designed type 2 *Raksasa*-/Yaksha prince with an aggressive appearance - perhaps representing *Siva Bhairava* himself - sitting in a squatting *Pralambapada* position on a throne with alternating, reversed florally decorated *Tumpal* figures. Genitals are hidden by a belt and a *Tumpal*.⁵⁰ Maybe it is a forerunner of the *Bima* type - notice its long pointed tumb nail, *Panchanaka* (see chapter 4, p 2 and p 3 Fig 19).
Mendak: Golden short stemmed type with a belt of golden balls (instead of stones ?) A star is designed under the cup.

Blade: Dapor Sempama, 9 Lok.

Pamor: Lawe Setukel ? (a dangerous Pamor)⁵¹. The shape of the blade is rather similar to that of Fig 17,20, although the *Gandik* (the area under the elephant trunk) is longer. Both the hilt and the blade are very worn - a *Pusaka kris*⁵² that has been worn for generations.

Length of the blade: 37,5 cm.

Area: Banten, Cirebon-Tegal.

Date: 16th/17th cent.

Private collection.

⁵⁰ The belt points in the direction of the *Cirebon-Tegal* area, which at that time was connected with *Banten*. See Jean Gelman Taylor, New Haven and London 2003, p 122.

⁵¹ Ing. G.J.F.J Tammens: *De Kris* vol 2 Eelderwolde 1993, p 55.

⁵² A *Pusaka kris* is a heirloom.

Type 3 Krisses



Fig 17, 22)

Hilt: A Wooden hilt representing a naturalistically designed *Siva Bhairava-/Raksasa* prince with an aggressive appearance sitting on a throne with alternating, reversed florally decorated *Tumpal* figures. The sitting position is *Rajalilasana*.⁵³ It is having the same bodily and ornamental characteristics as type 2. The body and the face is painted red, which indicates aggressiveness, but it is balanced by the traces of gold on the hair, eyes, teeth, necklace, *Tumpals* and the blue colour on the flower, which cool it down. A *Palang* is inserted in its phallus. In its left hand it holds a *Nagasari* flower (representing the tree of life) and the right hand is held in the position of the *Mudra Abhaya*.⁵⁴ Notice it has painted the same decoration on the *Bungkul* (the nether part of the hilt) as Fig 17,3.

Mendak: Golden (long) hourglass type with belt.

Blade: Dapor Sempana Bener.

Pamor: Walang Sinuduk. A rare *Pamor*, which strengthen the spiritual power of the owner of the kris.

Length of the blade: 39,2 cm.

Area: Banten.

Date: The Royal Danish Kunstammer 1674. The wear indicates that it is much older. (inv. nr ED 16). The National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen..

⁵³ A sitting position typical of Hindu gods. See Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 74-75, Fig 48.

⁵⁴ The mudra symbolizes renunciation and means "have no fear".



Fig 17, 23)

An illustration from a German book from the 17th century. To the left is an enlarged reproduction of the hilt of the kris, which the man in the middle wears at his hip. It shows a type 3 figure rather similar to that of Fig 17, 23 (see Fig 17,22). The plant twisted around the palm tree in the middle and the plant lying on the ground illustrates pepper, which was one of the main export articles from *Banten* in the 16th/17th century⁵⁵. It indicates that the origin of this type of hilt is *Banten*. This is further manifested by the fact that the hilt has the same decoration (only seen on these two hilts) on the *Bungkul* of the hilt (the nether rounded part of hilt) and has the same kind of *Mendak* as Fig 17,3, which most certainly has its origin in *Banten* (See Fig 17, 23 a).⁵⁶ The type of hilt probably spread after the fall of the *Majapahit Kingdom* to *Balambangan*, *Bali* and *Banten* (see p 2 and chapter 2 p 42-44).



Fig 17, 23 a)

The *Bungkul* (the lower part of the hilt) of Fig 17, 3. It has the same decoration as the *Bungkul* of Fig 17,23 and a similar type of hourglass shaped *Mendak*.

⁵⁵ Pepper was grown in Western Indonesia from 600 B.C. It was one of most important export articles of Indonesia. In the 16th century *Banten* expanded the cultivation of the pepper plant to other areas. *Banten* used warfare to expand its access to pepper and control its sale. Fx *Banten* conquered *Prajajaran* and *South Sumatra* and became the main exporter of pepper - so the European traders mainly bought their pepper in *Banten*. See Jean Gelman Taylor, New Haven and London 2003, p 56 and p 122-123.

⁵⁶ Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris* 1998, p 79-80.

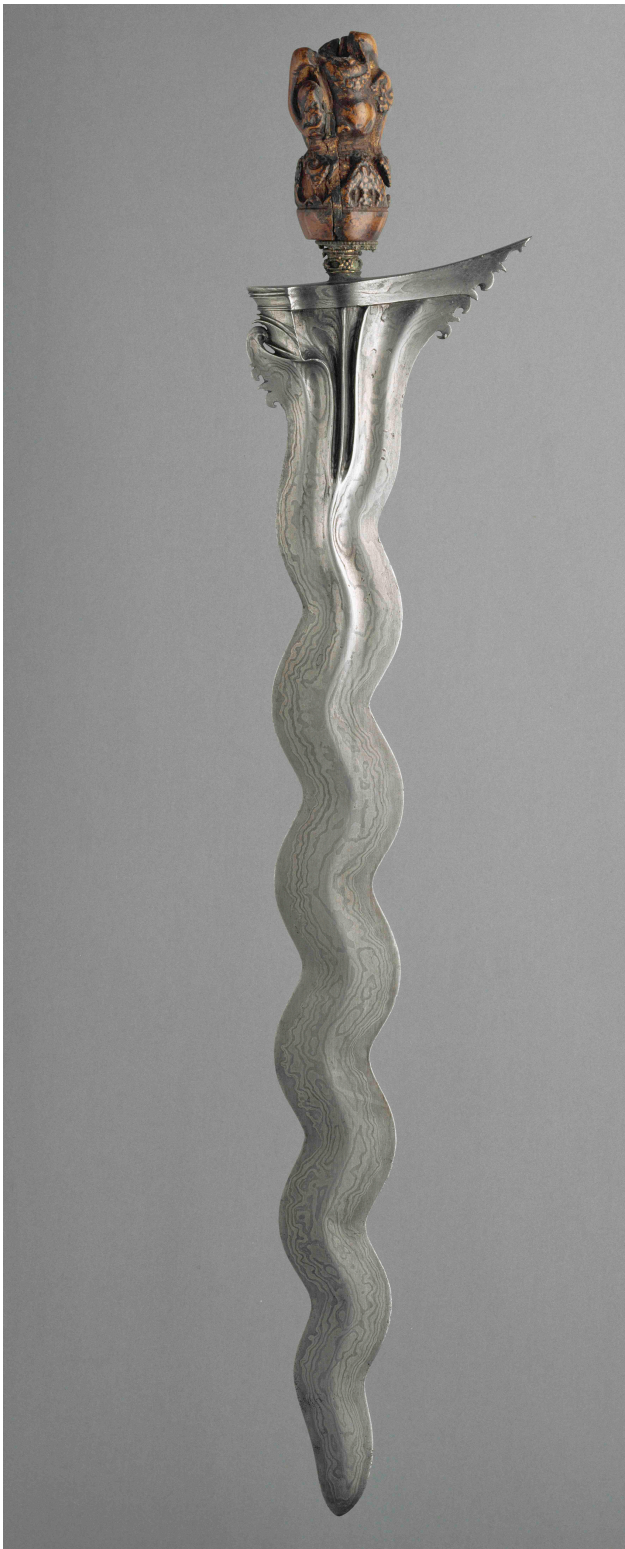


Fig 17, 24)

Hilt : Wooden hilt representing a *Raksasa-/Yaksha* figure type 2 or 3 ? sitting in a squatting position on a throne with alternating, reversed florally decorated *Tumpal* figures. On the *Bungkul* at the left side sits a strange, crouching figure with a pointed snout (dog-like face)⁵⁷. The head of the main figure is missing.

Mendak: Long stemmed type in gilt metal with a belt of set stones (some of the stones are missing).

Blade: Dapor Bima Kurda, 13 lok.

Pamor: Beras Wutah.

Length of the blade: 40,7 cm.

Area: Banten,

Date: 1628 *Schloss Ruhelust* near *Innsbruck*.

Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. Sammlungen Schloss Ambras (inv. nr. PA 509)⁵⁸. Photo (right):

Achim Weihrauch.

⁵⁷ It might be a dog. The dog was the *Vahana* of *Siva Bhairava*.

⁵⁸ Wilfried Seipel: *Exotica*, Vienna 2000, p 249-51, nr 158 Dr. Heide Leigh-Theisen.

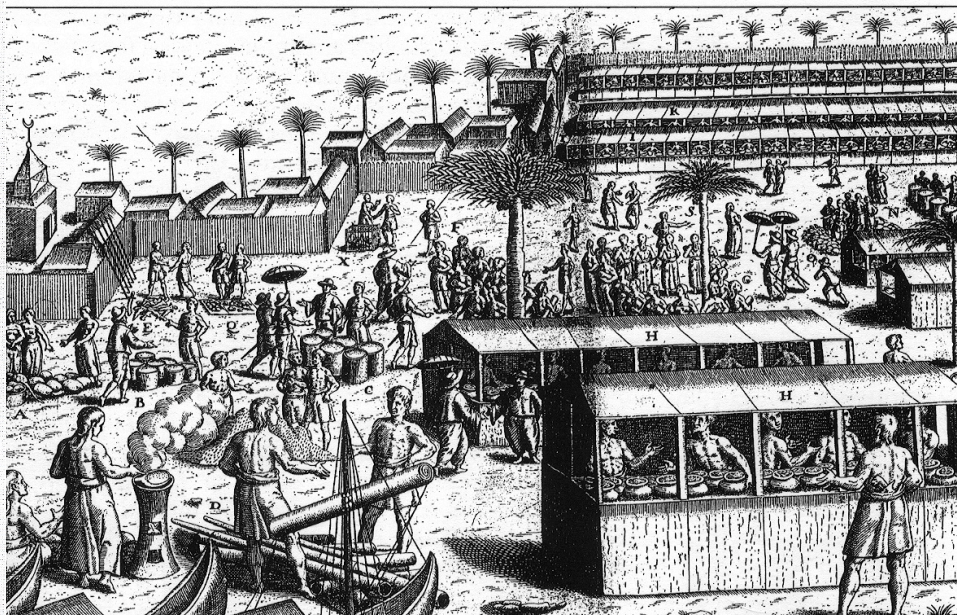
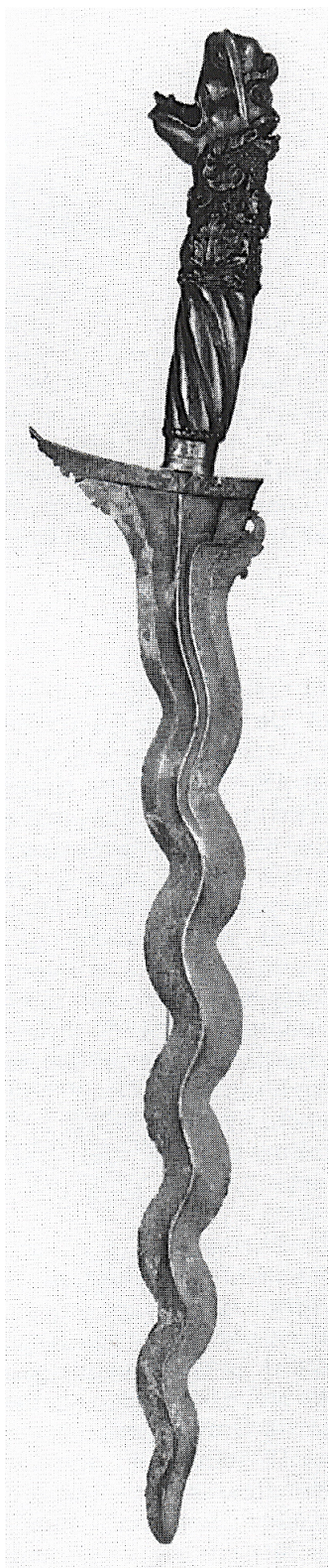


Fig 17, 25)
The market in *Banten*. Notice the arms dealer in the left corner of the picture with the pile of krisses on the ground. It seems to be cheap krisses of low quality - not the kind of krisses that were made especially by an *Empu* to fit the person they were produced for. *Johannes Israel de Bry: Tertia Part India Orientales. 1601.*



Fig 17, 26)
Hilt: An atypical type. Most likely produced by a European sailor?
Mendak: A brass metal ring, perhaps a European stick-fitting.
Blade: Dapor Kantar, 13 Lok.
Pamor: ? The blade is worn, rusty and of low quality. It may be the same kind of blade that the *Banten* arms dealer on the picture sells. Perhaps it was used as a hunting sword by a European?
Area: Banten ?
Date: *The Tradescant Catalogue 1656 (1637)*.⁵⁹ *The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.*

⁵⁹ See Fig 17,14 and chapter 9,2 Fig 149. Karsten Sejr Jensen: *Den Indonesiske Kris 1998*, p 82- 84, Fig 52.

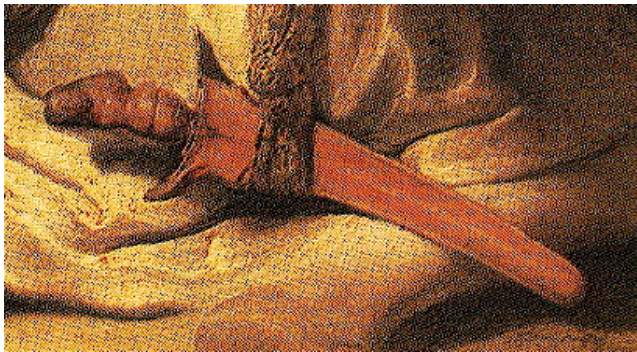


Fig 18)

Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669) has in two paintings pictured a kris. The first painting represents "*The Capture of Samson*" (Judges 16:19) and is painted in 1629. The picture shows *Samson* sleeping with his head in the lap of *Delilah*. She is pointing at his hair to tell the enemy entering the room that his strength is sitting in his hair. Samson

wears a *kris* with a *Yaksha-/Raksasa hilt type 1* and a *red painted old Ladrang type of sheath*.

The Dutch had in 1596 entered the Indonesian area and began to bring krisses of this type home to Holland. The Europeans found them very exotic and Rembrandt, who collected oriental weapons, has presumably purchased one.

The other painting illustrates "*The Capture and Blinding of Samson*" and is painted in 1636. At the painting a soldier is blinding Samson with a kris with a long, strong and waved blade. It is most possible the same kris as the one pictured in the first picture.

I do not think that it is accidental that *Rembrandt* twice connected the kris with *the capture of Samson*. It is most probable connected with the fact that the Europeans thought the kris was a demonic weapon. Many sources relate that the blade is poisonous (perhaps because of the arsenic that was used to blue the blade). It was a view harboured by the snake symbolism of the blade (the blade symbolizes a *Naga*, snake, the ruler of the underworld). This idea was made clear by the waved snake-like blade, which most of the krisses the Europeans brought home to Europe had and which *Rembrandt's* kris had as well. Now the snake is according to the *Jewish* and *Christian* tradition connected with *Satan* as the tempter and seducer, a connection which is further accentuated by the demonic *Yaksha-/Raksasa* hilt of the kris. Because of that it is probable that *Rembrandt* has equipped Samson with a such a kris. It symbolizes that *Samson* wears a seductive and treacherous weapon in his belt - a weapons which turns against himself and literally blinds him, like he was blind to the seductive treason of *Delilah*.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Kasten Sejr Jensen: Rembrandts Kris. *Våbenhistorisk Tidsskrift* vol 31 nr. 8, Copenhagen 1998. p 284-87.
Gary Schwartz: *Rembrandt, his life and paintings*. London 1991.