



K O N I N K L I J K E N E D E R L A N D S E
A K A D E M I E V A N W E T E N S C H A P P E N

**Provenance report regarding Brief van de sultan van Madura and Kris of King William I
[Letter and Kris of the sultan of Madura presented to King William I]**

Quist, Tom

2022

document version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

document license

Unspecified

[Link to publication in KNAW Research Portal](#)

citation for published version (APA)

Quist, T. (2022). *Provenance report regarding Brief van de sultan van Madura and Kris of King William I [Letter and Kris of the sultan of Madura presented to King William I]*. (PPROCE provenance reports; No. 9).

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the KNAW public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain.
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the KNAW public portal.

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

E-mail address:

pure@knaw.nl

Provenance report regarding Brief van de sultan van Madura and Kris of King William I [Letter and Kris of the sultan of Madura presented to King William I]

Tom Quist

 Photo: Collection Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen. Inv.no. RV-360-8080	Custodian	NMvW Museum Volkenkunde
	Current possessor	Dutch State
	Inventory number	RV-360-8080
	Material/technique	Paper, velvet, sealing wax
	Measurements	Length: 29.5 cm Width: 12 cm

 Photo: Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (Inv.no. NG-NM-7115)	Custodian	Rijksmuseum Amsterdam
	Current possessor	Dutch State
	Inventory number	NG-NM-7115
	Material/technique	Iron, nickel, wood, gold, silver, diamond
	Measurements	Kris: 52 cm (length) x 12 cm (width) x 4.3 cm (depth) Sheath: 50.3 cm (length) x 7.5 cm (width) x 4.5 cm (depth) Sheath cover: 49 cm (length)

Summary of findings

The collections of the National Museum of World Cultures and Rijksmuseum Amsterdam include a letter and kris gifted by Sultan Cakraadiningrat II of Madura to King William I of the Netherlands in 1835. The objects were given in return for the royal honour bestowed on the sultan by the king a few years prior. After the arrival of the letter and kris in the Netherlands, the king decided to transfer the gifts to the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, where the objects remained for almost half a century. In 1876 the kris was displayed at the World Fair in Philadelphia. When the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden was dissolved in 1883 the letter came to Museum Volkenkunde. The kris was transferred to the Nederlandsch Museum van Geschiedenis en Kunst, which was subsumed into Rijksmuseum Amsterdam in the 1920s. Possible focal points for further research are the creation of a modern translation of the letter from the sultan and the identification of the demon depicted on the kris sheath, for which cooperation could be sought with Indonesian experts.

Reconstruction provenance

1835

Letter and kris: Sultan Cakraadiningrat II of Madura

NMVW, object number RV-360-8080; NL-HlmNHA, 476, inv.no. 847, 'Translaat. Brief van Zijne Hoogheid den Sultan van Madura, aan Zijne Majesteit den Koning der Nederlanden...', z.d. [Translation. Letter from His Highness the Sultan of Madura, to His Majesty the King of the Netherlands ..., undated].

1835

Letter and kris: King William I of the Netherlands

NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, royal decree, 11 September 1835, no. 77.

1835 - 1883

Letter and kris: Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, The Hague

NL-HlmNHA, 476, inv.no. 847, letter from the secretaris-generaal of the ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken to the director of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, 14 September 1835.

1883 - present

Letter: NMVW Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden

Kris: Nederlandsch Museum van Geschiedenis en Kunst (today Rijksmuseum Amsterdam)]

NL-HlmNHA, 476, inv.no. 875, inventory of art and other objects. Including amongst others the Van Overmeer Fisscher collection, 1877-1878.

Introduction and context

This report describes the results of provenance research into a letter from Sultan Cakraadiningrat II of Madura (†1847), also known as Panembahan Cakraningrat VIII, to King William I of the Netherlands (1772-1843) in the collection of Museum Volkenkunde, part of the National Museum of World Cultures (NMVW).¹ The second object the research focused on is a kris said to have been

¹ Rodovid. "Panembahan Cakraningrat VIII / Sultan Cakraadiningrat II (Pangeran Adipati Secoadiningrat III - R. Abdul Kadirun) d. 1847." <https://id.rodovid.org/wk/Orang:919005>; Wikipedia. "Cakraningrat VIII."; Biografisch portaal van Nederland. "Willem Frederik van Oranje-Nassau." <http://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/01504879>.

gifted by the sultan to the king which is in the collection of Rijksmuseum Amsterdam (RMA). The research was carried out by NMVW in December 2020 and January 2021.

The letter from the sultan of Madura is registered in the Museum Volkenkunde collection under object number RV-360-8080. The object record of the letter in The Museum System (TMS), the NMVW's collection management system, states that the document accompanied the gift of a kris to the king.² The kris in the collection of RMA bears object number NG-NM-7115. Both objects come from the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, a former royal collection of historical and ethnographic objects from all continents of the world.³ When the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden was dissolved in 1883 the letter was transferred to Museum Volkenkunde.⁴ At the same time the kris was added to the collection of the Nederlandsch Museum van Geschiedenis en Kunst, which was subsumed by the RMA in the 1920s.⁵ The kris is currently on display in the special collections of RMA.⁶

The letter with object number RV-360-8080 was documented in TMS in 2016 by Mirjam Shatanawi, then curator of the Middle East and North Africa collections at NMVW. The document contains Arabic script largely written in Malay. Shatanawi noted that in the calligraphic text key words, such as *raja* (king), are written large, with the writing at the top of the letter also being in larger script. According to Shatanawi, these are invocations of God in the Arabic language, such as "He who can make a way out for you from every difficulty." The bottom of the letter bears a red wax seal, with below it the date on which the document was written, first according to the Islamic calendar (20 Shawwal 1250) and then according to the Gregorian calendar (19 February 1835). The letter is surrounded by a decorative gold border. The text is headed by a field displaying the coat of arms of the Netherlands in the centre flanked by two golden solar motifs with a chakra symbol at the centre,⁷ and foliage and flowers above and below. The letter is accompanied by an envelope with three red wax seals and a yellow velvet case enclosing the envelope. A separate slip of paper has also been added, possibly to serve as a cover for the case, which bears a text in Malay similar to the front of the envelope. Shatanawi established that both the envelope and the slip of paper name the king as consignee, among other information. The contents of the letter were translated into Dutch in 1835 and will be discussed elsewhere in the report. Given that this translation is dated, a focus for further research into the letter could be to make a modern translation, including of the writing on the envelope and the slip of paper.⁸

² The Museum System (TMS, NMVW collection management system), object record RV-360-8080.

³ TMS, series RV-360.

⁴ In 1883 the museum was still known as Rijks Ethnographisch Museum. For reasons of clarity and consistency, this provenance report only uses the name Museum Volkenkunde.

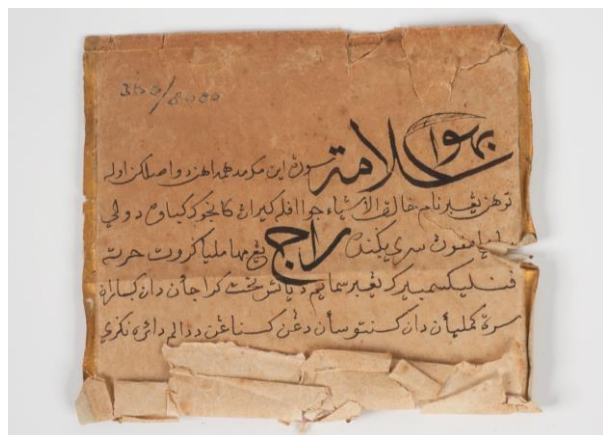
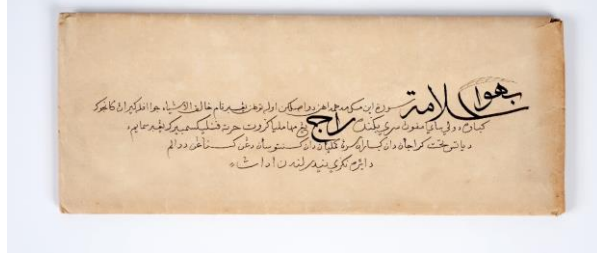
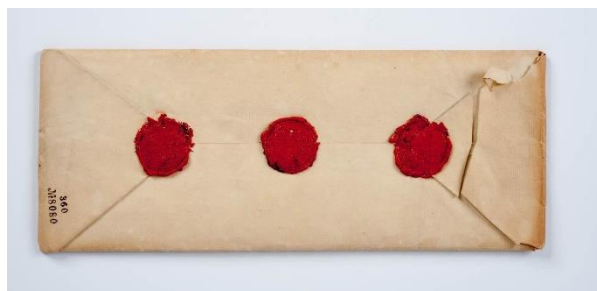
Rudolf Effert, *Volkenkundig Verzamelen. Het Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden en het Rijks Ethnographisch Museum, 1816-1883* (Leiden 2003) 11; Museum Volkenkunde (NL-LdnRMV), Archive series 360 (not inventoried), documents 'Serie 360', 26 September 1966 and undated.

⁵ TMS, object record RV-360-8079; North Holland Archives (NL-HlmNHA), archival finding aid 476: Rijksmuseum and legal predecessors in Amsterdam, preface to inventory, 1.5. The period 1885-1945, <https://hdl.handle.net/21.12102/01644F687DD84B309BF24360FD2B2A25>, consulted on 15 December 2020.

⁶ RMA collection website, object number NG-NM-7115, "Kris met schede geschonken aan koning Willem I door de sultan van Madura," <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.241275>, consulted on 15 December 2020.

⁷ This symbol returns in the current arms of the Bangkalan regency on West Madura. See: https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kabupaten_Bangkalan, consulted on 18 December 2020.

⁸ TMS, object record RV-360-8080; email Mirjam Shatanawi, 10 December 2020.



Photos: Collection Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, inv.no. RV-360-8080.

The kris with object number NG-NM-7115 has a straight blade featuring *pamor* — patterns in shades of grey created by welding together iron and nickel alloy.⁹ The lower part of the blade is decorated with golden plant motifs on both edges and the collar guard. The golden hilt fittings (*mendak* and *selut*) where the blade is attached to the hilt are crafted in Madurese style.¹⁰ By contrast, the wooden hilt suggests Balinese influences given its large size, the use of *kayu pelet* (mottled wood) and the use of carvings in a zigzag pattern.¹¹ *Kayu pelet* has also been used for the upper side of the

⁹ Edward Frey, *The Kris. Mystic Weapon of the Malay World* (Oxford 1988), 31.

¹⁰ David van Duuren, *De kris. Een aardse benadering van een kosmisch symbool* (Amsterdam 1996) 55; Frey, *The Kris*, 52-53, Plate 12c.

¹¹ Frey, *The Kris*, 45-46, Plate 15c.

wooden sheath.¹² The golden sheath cover is adorned with chasing featuring plants, flowers and birds. The top of the sheath bears an ornament shaped like the head of a demon inlaid with a large number of diamonds, two of which on the forehead are missing. The crown on the head is also inlaid with diamonds, with golden foliage and possibly fruits on either side of the head. It is not clear exactly which demon is depicted on the sheath cover. The object record of the kris on the RMA collection website states that it is Bhoma, but according to a standard work on krisses consulted in the course of the research Banaspati is a recurring figure on kris sheaths from Bali and Madura.¹³ Krisses with sheaths that feature a demon are called *keris topengan*, derived from *topeng* (mask).¹⁴ The purpose of the demon is probably to protect the owner of the weapon.¹⁵ Further research in collaboration with kris experts from Indonesia may provide more clarity about the demon depicted on the sheath of NG-NM-7115.



Photo: Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (inv.no. NG-NM-7115)

Provenance report

Linked to the object record of RV-360-8080 in TMS are two documents from the archive of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, which is currently kept in the North Holland Archives in Haarlem. The first document is a letter from the secretaris-generaal of the ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken to the director of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, written on 14 September 1835. On behalf of the minister, the secretaris-generaal announces in the letter that the director will receive “a gold kris set with diamonds” which had been offered by the sultan of Madura

¹² RMA collection website, object number NG-NM-7115, <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.241275>, consulted on 16 December 2020.

¹³ Ibid., consulted on 16 December 2020; Frey, *The Kris*, 42.

¹⁴ Francine Brinkgreve, Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer, David Stuart-Fox (eds.), *Kemegahan emas di Museum Nasional Indonesia/Golden splendour in the National Museum of Indonesia* (Jakarta 2010) 139.

¹⁵ Brinkgreve etc., *Kemegahan emas/Golden splendour*, 139.

as a gift to the king.¹⁶ The letter from the sultan was also to be sent along, together with a translation “also in order to be placed at the cabinet.”¹⁷

The second document is the translation made by J.D.G. Schaap (†1841) in accordance with his role as hoofdkommies for “Inlandsche Zaken” at the Algemene Secretarie of the government of the Dutch East Indies.¹⁸ The translation documents that the sultan reigned over Bangkalan in the west of Madura with the approval of the government of the Netherlands.¹⁹ Contrary to what his title suggests the sultan’s power was thus restricted to the western part of the island.²⁰ It is clear from the translation that the letter and the accompanying kris were a gift in return for the honour bestowed on the sultan by the king three years previously. Secondary sources show that the appointment of the sultan to Commander in the Order of the Netherlands Lion was in recognition for support on the Dutch side during the Java War.²¹ According to the translation the sultan in his letter thanked the king “a thousand times” for the honour.²² In reference to the kris it is stated that “the sheath is set in gold and decorated with diamonds,” and that the weapon was made in the *kraton* (the palace) of the sultan.²³

RMA has a second translation of the letter from the sultan.²⁴ The document is undated and unsigned, and it is therefore unclear who was responsible for it. However, the spelling and use of language suggest that the document was made prior to the Dutch spelling reform of 1947.²⁵ The translation has the same purport as the version by Schaap but differs on two points. Firstly, the content is preceded by a paragraph entitled “Address,” which begins with the words “Inscription of this letter.”²⁶ This must refer to a translation of the texts on the envelope and/or slip of paper

¹⁶ “Een gouden kris met diamanten omzet.” See: NL-HlMNA, 476, inventory number 847: Documents concerning the transfer of art and other objects gifted to the king and other persons or purchased by him, 1830-1859, letter from the secretaris-generaal of the ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken to the director of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, 14 September 1835, <http://noord-hollandsarchief.nl/bronnen/archieven?mivast=236&mizig=210&miadt=236&miaet=1&micode=476&minr=2198099&miview=inv2> (image 11), consulted on 16 December 2020.

¹⁷ ‘Om ook op het kabinet te worden geplaatst’. See: NL-HlMNA, 476, inv.no 847, letter from the secretaris-generaal of the ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken to the director of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, 14 September 1835, <http://noord-hollandsarchief.nl/bronnen/archieven?mivast=236&mizig=210&miadt=236&miaet=1&micode=476&minr=2198099&miview=inv2> (image 11), consulted on 16 December 2020.

¹⁸ Ibid., “Translaat. Brief van Zijne Hoogheid den Sultan van Madura, aan Zijne Majesteit den Koning der Nederlanden...”, z.d. [“Translation. Letter from His Highness the Sultan of Madura, to His Majesty the King of the Netherlands ...”, undated], <http://noord-hollandsarchief.nl/bronnen/archieven?mivast=236&mizig=210&miadt=236&miaet=1&micode=476&minr=2198099&miview=inv2> (images 13-15), consulted on 16 December 2020; National Archives of the Netherlands (NL-HaNA), archival finding aid 2.10.01: Ministerie van Koloniën (1814-1849), inv.no. 3093: Stamboek van Oost-Indische Ambtenaren, 1821, part C, f. 54, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/3093/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_3093_0032, consulted on 16 December 2020.

¹⁹ Wikipedia. “Kabupaten Bangkalan.” https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kabupaten_Bangkalan.

²⁰ At the time the other sections of the island were governed by the sultan of Sumenep and Panembahan of Pamekasan. See: Brinkgreve etc., *Kemegahan emas/Golden splendour*, 114; Wikipedia. “List of monarchs of Java.” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_monarchs_of_Java.

²¹ Jhr. F.V.A. ridder de Stuers, *Gedenkschrift van den oorlog op Java, van 1825 tot 1830* (Amsterdam 1847), 289, 296; Brinkgreve etc., *Kemegahan emas/Golden splendour*, 114, 141.

²² “Duizendmaal.” See: NL-HlMNA, 476, inv.no. 847, “Translaat. Brief van Zijne Hoogheid den Sultan van Madura, aan Zijne Majesteit den Koning der Nederlanden...”, <http://noord-hollandsarchief.nl/bronnen/archieven?mivast=236&mizig=210&miadt=236&miaet=1&micode=476&minr=2198099&miview=inv2> (image 13-15), consulted on 17 December 2020.

²³ “De scheede in goud gezet en met diamanten versierd.” See: NL-HlMNA, 476, inv.no. 847, “Translaat. Brief van Zijne Hoogheid den Sultan van Madura, aan Zijne Majesteit den Koning der Nederlanden...”, <http://noord-hollandsarchief.nl/bronnen/archieven?mivast=236&mizig=210&miadt=236&miaet=1&micode=476&minr=2198099&miview=inv2> (image 13-15), consulted on 17 December 2020.

²⁴ Rijksmuseum Amsterdam (NL-AsdRM), JOIN, file number D010310, document number COL19004708.

²⁵ Onze taal. “Mensch (oude spelling).” <https://onzetaal.nl/taaladvies/mensch/>.

²⁶ “Adres;” “Opschrift van dezen brief.” See: NL-AsdRM, JOIN, D010310, COL19004708.

accompanying the letter. According to the translation the sultan in this passage is addressing the king, with the words “to my august sovereign the highly illustrious king.”²⁷ The second and most salient difference can be found in the section in which the sultan introduces the kris. According to the translation, the weapon comes with a “golden sheath and waistband (belt) with diamonds.”²⁸ This belt is not mentioned in the Schaap translation and would not appear even to have been part of the collection of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden; the letter from the secretaris-generaal of the ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken makes no mention of a waistband or girdle. As will become clear further on, no description of such an object was found in any other archive documents consulted during the research. It is therefore possible that this is a translation error, and that the sultan’s gifts never included a waistband or girdle. A modern translation of the letter could also provide a definite answer on this.

The letter from the secretaris-generaal of 14 September 1835 marks the last stage in the voyage of the letter and kris from Madura. During research files were found in the archives of the ministeries van Binnenlandse Zaken and Koloniën, which are managed by the National Archives of the Netherlands, that enable the reconstruction of the route the objects took to the Netherlands. The route starts with a letter sent by the acting resident of Surabaya, Carel Jan Riesz (1791-1856), to the acting gouverneur-generaal of the Dutch East Indies, Jean Chrétien Baud (1789-1859), on 10 December 1834.²⁹ At that time the island of Madura was part of the residentie of Surabaya.³⁰ In the letter Riesz informs Baud that the sultan was planning to write a letter to the king to thank him for his appointment as Commander in the Order of the Netherlands Lion. He was also planning to send an “a grand cross of the Military William Order made at his *kraton*.”³¹ Baud sent a reply to Riesz on 27 December stating that honours were bestowed on one crowned sovereign by another or by a crowned sovereign on a subject, “but never by a subject on the sovereign.”³² The gouverneur-generaal goes on to speculate about the sultan’s intentions. He considers it possible that the gift stems from “the wish to elevate himself.”³³ Perhaps the sultan even believes that if the king can appoint him a Commander then he can similarly decorate the king with the grand cross, according to Baud. He instructs Riesz to inform the sultan that such a gift cannot be offered, and that in sending a gift the sultan ought to limit himself to a “characteristic product of Madurese artistic craft, such as a kris, a pike or similar.”³⁴

²⁷ “Aan mijn doorluchtigen Vorst den hoogroemvollen Koning.” See: NL-AsdRM, JOIN, D010310, COL19004708.

²⁸ “Gouden schede en buikband (koppel) met diamanten.” See: NL-AsdRM, JOIN, D010310, COL19004708.

²⁹ <http://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/56100347> and <http://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/38327009>, consulted on 21 January 2021.

³⁰ J.K.W. Quarles van Ufford, ‘Naamlijst van Hoofden van Gewestelijk Bestuur op Java en Madura van 1817 tot 1859’, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* 7:1 (1860) 117-135, *ibid.* 121.

³¹ “In zijn kraton vervaardigd groot-kruis der Militaire Willems Orde.” See: NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238: Confidential note verbale, 1835, numbers. 87 - 173, letter from the acting resident of Surabaya to the gouverneur-generaal ad interim, 10 December 1834, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0349?tab=metadata, consulted on 21 January 2021.

³² “Maar nimmer van den onderdaan aan den vorst.” See: NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, letter from the gouverneur-generaal ad interim to the acting resident of Surabaya, 27 December 1834, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0351, consulted on 21 January 2021.

³³ “Den wensch, om zich zelf te verheffen.” See: NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, letter from the gouverneur-generaal ad interim to the acting resident of Surabaya, 27 December 1834, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0352, consulted on 21 January 2021.

³⁴ “Characteristiek voortbrengsel van Maduresche kunstvljijt, zoo als een kris, eene piek of iets dergelijks.” See: NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, letter from the gouverneur-generaal ad interim to the acting resident of Surabaya, 27-12-1834, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0352, consulted on 21 January 2021.

On 28 January 1835 Riesz informed Baud that he had conveyed the message to the sultan and that he had given him “a kris made on Madura along with a gold *pendok* (kris sheath) adorned with diamonds.”³⁵ The sultan was also sending a tin of bird’s nests, a delicacy consisting of the edible nests of swifts.³⁶ The two gifts were accompanied by a letter to the king, including a translation by Schaap. The letter and the translation are part of the file on the gifts in the archive of the ministerie van Koloniën.³⁷ Although the format of the letter differs somewhat from RV-360-8080, its contents based on the translation are virtually identical, barring a short passage concerning the bird’s nests. Because the tin of bird’s nests was too large to be sent by post, writes Riesz to Baud, the resident had only been able to send the letter with the translation and the kris to the gouverneur-generaal. With the approval of Baud the bird’s nests would be dispatched from Surabaya on board the ship the *Madura*. However, the gouverneur-generaal was unhappy with the sultan’s choice of the bird’s nests. On 3 February he expressed his displeasure in a letter to the minister van Koloniën Johannes van den Bosch (1780-1844), who had preceded Baud as gouverneur-generaal.³⁸ At that point Baud had already received the kris, letter, and translation from Riesz. The gouverneur-generaal considered that the resident had not followed his instructions, “which certainly did not imply that a gift of food [...] could be considered suitable.”³⁹ Given that a ship was ready in Batavia to take the sultan’s letter to the Netherlands, Baud considered it too late to make any changes to it. He therefore asked for the sultan to be informed that “Your Excellency [the minister] may deem it unsuitable to offer the bird’s nests to His Majesty.”⁴⁰ In conclusion, the gouverneur-generaal advised to leave the matter of any return gift from the king to the government in Batavia, to avoid the sultan being able to say that he was the only ruler in the Dutch East Indies to have received a gift sent directly from the king.

³⁵ “Eene te Madura vervaardigde kris met dies gouden pendok (krisschede) met diamanten versierd.” See: NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, letter from the acting resident of Surabaya to the gouverneur-generaal ad interim, 28-01-1835, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0353, consulted on 21 January 2021.

³⁶ <http://gtb.inl.nl/iWDB/search?actie=article&wdb=WNT&id=M081371&lemma=vogelnest&domein=0&conc=true>; and Wikipedia. “Vogelnestje (voedsel).” [https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vogelnestje_\(voedsel\)](https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vogelnestje_(voedsel)).

³⁷ NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, letter from Sultan Cakraadiningrat II of Madura to King William I, with translation by J.D.G. Schaap, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0355 and https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0363, consulted on 25 January 2021. According to Schaap’s translation the letter was written on 29 January 1835 but given that Riesz mentions the letter a day earlier in his letter to Baud, it is likely that Schaap made an error in converting the date according to the Islamic calendar.

³⁸ Biografisch portaal van Nederland. “Johannes van den Bosch.” <http://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/18152873>, consulted on 25 January 2021.

³⁹ “In welke het voorzeker niet opgesloten lag, dat een geschenk van eetwaren [...] als voegzaam kon worden beschouwd”. See: NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, letter from the gouverneur-generaal ad interim to the minister van Koloniën, 03 February 1835, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0348 and https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0359, consulted on 25 January 2021.

⁴⁰ “Uwe Excellentie [de minister] het welligt onvoegzaam zal achten de vogelnestjes aan Zijne Majesteit aan te bieden.” See: NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, letter from the gouverneur-generaal ad interim to the minister van Koloniën, 03 February 1835, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0359, consulted on 25 January 2021.



Photo: NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, letter from
 Sultan Cakraadiningrat II of Madura to King William I.

In the end matters took a different turn. On 18 March Baud notified Van den Bosch that he had in the meantime received a new missive from Riesz.⁴¹ He had informed Baud on 21 February that the person who would transport the sultan's gifts to the Netherlands would be departing from Madura and Surabaya later than had been expected.⁴² In light of this Riesz had urged the sultan to dispense with the bird's nests. His attempt proved successful because the sultan provided a new letter omitting the passage about the bird's nests. This is the letter with object number RV-360-8080 in the collection of Museum Volkenkunde. The accompanying translation mentioned by Baud in his letter to Van den Bosch is the document held in the archive of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden.

In the correspondence between Riesz and Baud, and in Baud's letters to Van den Bosch, "(W.) Hegi" is mentioned several times as the person who would deliver the kris to the ministerie van Koloniën. The letter and translation, however, were enclosed with Baud's letter of 18 March to Van den Bosch.⁴³ During the research "(W.) Hegi" was identified as Willem Hegi, kapitein-adjutant with the

⁴¹ NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, letter from the gouverneur-generaal ad interim to the minister van Koloniën, 18 March 1835, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0360, consulted on 25 January 2021.

⁴² Ibid., consulted on 25 January 2021.

⁴³ Ibid., https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0361, consulted on 2 February 2021.

army in the Dutch East Indies.⁴⁴ The National Archives of the Netherlands include Hegi's military record, in which it is noted that he departed on leave to the Netherlands aboard the *Madura* on 4 March 1835.⁴⁵ The newspaper *Javasche Courant* mentions Hegi three times as a passenger of the ship, whose destination was Amsterdam. According to the shipping news section the *Madura* sailed from Surabaya on 6 March.⁴⁶ On 8 April the ship arrived in Batavia, embarking on her voyage to the Netherlands not long after that.⁴⁷ The *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant* reported that she arrived at Texel on 24 August.⁴⁸ Some two weeks later the letter and kris from the sultan were the subject of a secret decree by the minister van Koloniën, signed on 8 September.⁴⁹ It emerges from this that Van den Bosch had presented the letter and kris along with Baud's letters to the king, so that he could determine where the gifts should be placed. Three days later the king signed a decree instructing the government in Batavia to present a return gift to the sultan, along with the message that the gifts had been "received with pleasure"⁵⁰ by the king. In addition, he determined that the letter and kris along with the translation were to be added to the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden. The king instructed the minister van Binnenlandse Zaken to see to this, according to a letter from the secretaris van staat to the minister, also dated 11 September.⁵¹ Another three days later the kris, letter, and translation were delivered to the director of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden by the secretaris-generaal of the ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken.

After the gifts from the sultan had been handed over to the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden the objects remained in the collection until it was dissolved in 1883. The kris is mentioned in a visitor's guide from 1855, indicating that the weapon was on display to the public in the Mauritshuis, where the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden was housed at the time.⁵² More than 20 years later the object went on display for six months in the Dutch pavilion at the Centennial Exhibition, the 1876 World Fair in Philadelphia.⁵³ In the catalogue of the Dutch section the weapon is described as "A gold kris, with diamonds set in silver, with a wooden handle and an exquisitely worked blade. Gift from

⁴⁴ NL-HaNA, archival finding aid 2.13.04: Service records and military records of the officers of the Royal Dutch Army and of the colonial troops in the Netherlands (1814-1940), inv.no. 388: East-Indian army, part 6, f. 68, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.13.04/invnr/388/file/NL-HaNA_2.13.04_388_0072, consulted on 25 January 2021; inv.no. 614: Supplement to military records, Letter C1, KNIL, c. 1836-1840, f. 8, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.13.04/invnr/614/file/NL-HaNA_2.13.04_614_0013, consulted on 25 January 2021.

⁴⁵ NL-HaNA, 2.13.04, inv.no. 388, f.68, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.13.04/invnr/388/file/NL-HaNA_2.13.04_388_0072, consulted on 26 January 2021.

⁴⁶ Royal Library of the Netherlands (KB), Delpher, *Javasche Courant*, 18-03-1835, p. 8, rubriek "Scheepsberigten" [shipping news section], <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010503837:mpeg21:p008>, consulted on 26 January 2021.

⁴⁷ KB, Delpher, *Javasche Courant*, 11 April 1835 and 15 April 1835, p. 6, rubriek "Scheepsberigten" [shipping news section], <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010503844:mpeg21:p006> and <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010503845:mpeg21:p006>, consulted on 26 January 2021.

⁴⁸ KB, Delpher, *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 27 August 1835, p. 2, section "Nederlanden," <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010519078:mpeg21:p002>, consulted on 26 January 2021.

⁴⁹ NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, secret decree by the minister van Koloniën, 8 September 1835, no. 164, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0331, consulted on 26 January 2021.

⁵⁰ "Met welgevallen zijn ontvangen." See: NL-HaNA, 2.10.01, inv.no. 4238, royal decree, 11 September 1835, no. 77, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.10.01/invnr/4238/file/NL-HaNA_2.10.01_4238_0347, consulted on 26 January 2021.

⁵¹ NL-HaNA, archival finding aid 2.04.01: Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken, 1813-1848, inv.no. 4623: Notes verbales: decrees, minutes of outgoing letters and incoming documents, 1 September - 30 September 1835, letter from the secretaris van staat to the minister van Binnenlandse Zaken, 11 September 1835, https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.04.01/invnr/4623/file/NL-HaNA_2.04.01_4623_0400, consulted on 26 January 2021.

⁵² A.A. van de Kastele, *Korte handleiding ter bezigtiging der Verzameling van Zeldzaamheden in het Koninklijk Kabinet op het Mauritshuis in 's-Gravenhage* (The Hague 1855) 17.

⁵³ Lieske Tibbe, "Holland op z'n mooist in Amerika, de Wereldtentoonstelling van 1876 in Philadelphia," *De Negentiende Eeuw* 40:4 (2016) 334-350, *ibid.* 335-336; "Verslag aan Zijne excellentie den Minister van Binnenlandsche Zaken over de Nederlandsche Afdeeling op de Internationale Tentoonstelling gehouden te Philadelphia, van 10 mei tot 10 november 1876, uitgebracht door de Nederlandsche Hoofdc commissie, gevolgd door de Officieele Lijst der Bekroonde Nederlandsche Inzenders" (Haarlem 1877), <http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:1046255>, consulted on 26 January 2021.

the Sultan of Madura.”⁵⁴ The kris was selected for the exhibition along with other Indonesian weapons from the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden by director Abraham Anne van de Kastelee (1814-1893), at the behest of King William III of the Netherlands (1817-1890).⁵⁵

In 1879 an inventory of the collection of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden was drawn up by acting director David van der Kellen, Jr. (1827-1895), who combined his new job with his position as director of the Nederlandsch Museum van Geschiedenis en Kunst.⁵⁶ The kris and letter from the sultan are included in the inventory under the numbers 8079 and 8080.⁵⁷ Van der Kellen, Jr. described the weapon as a “Kris mounted with gold, with gold sheath. Richly decorated with diamonds, including a crown.”⁵⁸ He also noted that no diamonds were missing. Behind the number 8080 the director noted that it was a “Letter from the Sultan of Madura accompanying the aforementioned kris. In yellow velvet case.”⁵⁹ There is no doubt that these are the letter and kris which were added to the collection in 1835.⁶⁰ After completion of the inventory Van der Kellen, Jr. was instructed by the minister van Binnenlandse Zaken to work with Lindor Serrurier (1846-1901), (deputy) director at Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden, on drawing up a plan for the separation of the collection; in 1883 this resulted in the closure of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden and the collection being divided among various museums.⁶¹ The letter and kris from the sultan now became separated, with the kris being added to the collection of the Nederlandsch Museum van Geschiedenis en Kunst under object number 7115 and the letter ending up in the collection of Museum Volkenkunde. Here the document was registered together with other objects from the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden under serial number 360. The inventory numbering assigned by Van der Kellen, Jr. was maintained, meaning that the letter was given object number 360-8080.

⁵⁴ “Een gouden krits, met diamanten in zilver gevat, met houten gevest, het lemmet zeer fraai bewerkt. Geschenk van den Sultan van Madura.” See: “Afdeeling Nederland der Internationale Tentoonstelling van Voortbrengselen van Kunst en Nijverheid en van de Producten van den Landbouw enz. te Philadelphia. 1876. Officieele Catalogus, Uitgegeven op Last van de Hoofdcommissie” (Amsterdam 1876) 157, <http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:1047415>, consulted on 26 January 2021.

⁵⁵ NL-HlmNHA, 476, inv.no. 915: Documents concerning the ending of loans of art and other objects granted to private individuals and institutions, 1816-1876, letter from the minister van Binnenlandse Zaken to the director of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, 26 January 1876; list of descriptions of objects in the collection of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, undated, [c. 29 January 1876], <https://hdl.handle.net/21.12102/A44089BFD40B4DCD848395D6C9B93727> (images 79 and 84), consulted on 26 January 2021; NL-HaNA, archival finding aid 2.04.13: Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken: Afdeling Kunsten en Wetenschappen (1875-1918), inv.no. 1952: Documents concerning the separation of the collection of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, etc., 1876-1887, letter from the director of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden to the minister van Binnenlandse Zaken, 29 January 1876; inv.no. 1957: Documents concerning loans and surrender of objects from the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden, 1875-1879, letter from the director of the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden to the minister van Binnenlandse Zaken, 10 February 1876; Effert, *Volkenkundig Verzamelen*, 34, 58; Biografisch portaal van Nederland. “Abraham Anne van de Kastelee.” <http://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/74540752>, consulted on 3 February 2021.

⁵⁶ Effert, *Volkenkundig Verzamelen*, 212-213, 216; <https://rkd.nl/nl/explore/artists/43780>, consulted on 1 February 2021.

⁵⁷ NL-HlmNHA, 476, inv.no. 875: Inventory of art and other objects. Including amongst others the Van Overmeer Fisscher collection, 1877-1878, <http://noord-hollandsarchief.nl/bronnen/archieven?mivast=236&mizig=210&miadt=236&miaet=1&micode=476&minr=2198140&miview=inv2> (image 215), consulted on 28 January 2021.

⁵⁸ “Kris met goud gemonteerd, met gouden schede. Rijk met diamanten versierd, waaronder een kroon.” See: NL-HlmNHA, 476, inv.no. 875, <http://noord-hollandsarchief.nl/bronnen/archieven?mivast=236&mizig=210&miadt=236&miaet=1&micode=476&minr=2198140&miview=inv2> (image 215), consulted on 28 January 2021.

⁵⁹ “Brief van den Sultan van Madura ter begeleiding van den bovengenoemden kris. In geel fluweelen foudraal.” See: NL-HlmNHA, 476, inv.no. 875, <http://noord-hollandsarchief.nl/bronnen/archieven?mivast=236&mizig=210&miadt=236&miaet=1&micode=476&minr=2198140&miview=inv2> (image 215), consulted on 28 January 2021.

⁶⁰ The letter from the Sultan of Madura is the only letter among all the objects from Insular Southeast Asia that once belonged to the Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden. Moreover the kris gifted in 1835 is the only item in the former collection with a sheath cover that is unmistakably decorated with diamonds. In other words, Van der Kellen, Jr. could not have erroneously linked a different kris and letter to the numbers 8079 and 8080 in his inventory.

⁶¹ Biografisch portaal van Nederland. “Lindor Serrurier.” <http://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/53975829>, consulted on 29 January 2021; Effert, *Volkenkundig Verzamelen*, 215-218, 227; NL-HlmNHA, 476, preface to inventory, 1.3. De Haagse musea, <https://hdl.handle.net/21.12102/01644F687DD84B309BF24360FD2B2A25>, consulted on 29 January 2021.

The research was unable to reveal why the objects were not included in the same museum collection at the time. It would not appear that a mistake was made when distributing the items, because the numbers 8079 and 8080 are not mentioned in the correspondence maintained by Serrurier and Van der Kellen, Jr. after 1883 regarding objects which had not arrived or had ended up in the wrong collection.⁶²

⁶² NL-HaNA, 2.04.13, inv.no. 1952; NL-HlmNHA, 476, inv.no. 1076: Documents concerning the handling of the division of art objects from the former Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden between Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden and the Nederlandsch Museum van Geschiedenis en Kunst, 1885-1888, <https://hdl.handle.net/21.12102/2472CF6620004E9E878802D9406CE688>, consulted on 8 February 2021.