

# Conservation Update

Publication of ERC



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European Research Centre for Book and Paper Conservation-Restoration

### ISSN

2663-0125

### Online at

<https://conservationupdate.com/>

*Conservation Update* is listed in AATA Online - Abstracts of International Conservation Literature. DOI: 10.48341/e1ev-n350

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# Foreword

Dear friends, colleagues and authors!

The Conservation Update is an international, twice-yearly, double-blind, peer-reviewed journal that publishes articles on the conservation, restoration, and preservation of works of art, ranging from common practice to cutting-edge scientific research. The journal invites individual researchers or groups from the community of conservators, archivists, librarians, philologists and other professionals involved in and associated with conservation for publication.

This issue focuses on the Indonesian heritage, conservation theory and practice, new preservation methods and materials, and a deeper understanding of the Indonesian bark cloth material.

I would like to thank all the reviewers for their valuable comments that helped improve the articles. I would also like to acknowledge Pascual Ruiz Segura, who helped us as the editor-in-chief of the previous issue and Lucija Planinc, who helped us with this issue.

I also want to take this opportunity to announce my own farewell from the work as a chief editor of “Conservation Update” and please allow me a personal comment with words of support for the Ukrainian people, who are now suffering from the brutal and unprovoked Russian invasion. We, together with the whole world, are shocked and condemn Russia's aggression against peaceful Ukraine, which has chosen the path of democratic reforms, and a peaceful sky over Ukraine.

We wish all readers, authors and friends good health and great success.

Sincerely,

**Maria Dmitrieva,**  
Chief Editor

# Why Indonesia

Between 2016 and 2021 a total of ten research projects were performed in the framework of ASEA UNINET, with the over-arching goal to design and implement a curriculum for a University Department of Conservation of Cultural Heritage to enable scholars to study the subject at university level and graduate in Indonesia.

Three universities, Institut Seni Indonesia, Yogyakarta (ISI), Universitas Gadjadara (UGM) and University for Continuing Education Krems, (DUK, now UWK) performed all the necessary legal, political and execution steps for the first ever higher education course for conservators of cultural heritage to be established in Indonesia. It will be a university MA-level course at ISI, Yogyakarta, opening in summer 2022.

Projects funded by ASEA UNINET and conducted between 2016 and 2021 ensured the vital exchange of Indonesian and Austrian scholars.

The cooperation actually started on the idea of making a conservation concept for the paintings, drawings, sculptures and other works by Affandi (please see the information note below), as well as the repair of the damaged roof of the Museum Affandi in 2015. This request was launched by Kartika in 2014 during her visit to Patricia Engel. However, it soon became clear that establishing a university training for conservators in Indonesia was the only meaningful and sustainable action in preserving Indonesia's cultural heritage items. In 2016 Kartika introduced Engel to the staff of ISI, Yogyakarta and after the latter had signed an ASEA Contract in the same year, the intense work started.

This included:

- Establishing a network of strong and interested institutions and scholars in Indonesia, supporting the implementation of the conservation of cultural heritage at the highest level as a university curriculum
- Legal steps taken to establish the department at ISI
- Legal steps taken to protect the profession in Indonesia, so that only university-trained graduates of ISI can preserve cultural heritage items in Indonesia in future
- The curriculum to be implemented
- A list of museums in Yogyakarta interested in co-operation for students' practical work
- New research results about wayang beber (please see the information note below) and its preservation
- New research results on how to use traditional plants for pest management in Indonesia
- New research results about material used by Affandi and the perception of his work

**An essential element of a conservation training at university level is the identification of a particular and suitable conservation theory.** To give this procedure of reflection a starting momentum, Patricia Engel was given the opportunity to give a lecture at ISI Yogyakarta on 19th December 2017 entitled “Conservation of Cultural Heritage” and another lecture at ISI Yogyakarta on 19th December 2019 entitled “An Introduction to European Approach towards Conservation of Cultural Heritage” and, on 18th December 2019, a lecture at UGM with the title “Fibre Analysis as an Aspect of Understanding a Cultural Heritage Item in the Framework of Conservation”. On 14th December, 2020, she was invited to an online workshop organized by Prima Dona Hapshari. Engel’s contribution was meant, again, to demonstrate the European mindset and to start a discussion about which of these “Western” ideas will not fit the Indonesian setting by presenting her talk called “Cultural Heritage Preservation in Europe – Some Basic Agreements, Definition of Terms, an Introduction to European Conservation Theory and Future Prospects”. Finally, on 2nd and 3rd November, 2021, Patricia Engel organized another online conference/workshop entitled “Indonesian Conservation Theory for Cultural Heritage”, whose results will be published as a special issue of “Conservation Update” (1/2022) <https://conservationupdate.com/> in spring 2022.

All these oral presentations, however, aimed at stimulating the thinking process rather than “pressing” the European way of preserving works of art on anyone outside Europe.

To develop the conservation curriculum for the course at ISI, Yogyakarta, the team of scholars chose some of the most important cultural heritage items of Indonesia, the two still existing *Wayang Beber* that are running very high risk of loss due to climate conditions and family rights disputes, and Affandi’s paintings as well as a glass slide collection about the historic conservation of Borobudur temple.

**Wayang Beber** is a puppet theatre which consists of scrolls made of bark-based Indonesian cloth and in-painted stories and displayed while the stories are told and sung, accompanied by musicians.

Traditional conservation methods, such as particular boxes used for storage and peacock feathers to keep the insects off the bark cloth, incense burning before the play is performed and so on, are of great interest in the context of conservation of cultural heritage of Indonesia and were all documented and analysed by the research team. Of particular interest was also the history of the *Wayang Beber* kept at Leiden and the material analysis done on it.

**Affandi** is one of the most important contemporary Indonesian artists who lived between 1907 and 1990 and did a lot of political work against colonialism and re-occupation of Indonesia by the Dutch and then went to India, Europe, USA, etc. He had exhibitions at the Venice Biennale and won many prizes. We had research projects

focusing on his paper and the conservation of his art. We have already found that he used imported as well as local paper, there are even stamps of dealers on the paper. Before the liberation and the war with Japan they could get good quality Dutch paper in Indonesia. We could perform the conservation of eight pastels by Affandi and one of his most important aquarelles, “The Tree Beggars”. We developed a conservation concept for the museum building and his paintings on paper and canvas. We did research on the perception of Affandi’s art in Indonesia and beyond.

**The projects and contributions submitted were entirely funded by ASEA-UNINET**

The 2021 project **was granted** but **due to CoVid the scholars did not travel**, instead a workshop was performed online.

- 2021 Survey of glass slide collection and further archival material, developing a conservation strategy and planning an optimal method of using all the material by scholars, developing a lecturing unit for ISI, lectures at DUK, IC-CROM, ISI and UGM
- 2020 Mobility Grant  
Conservation of wayang beber as a model for step-by-step conservation approach – accumulating first teaching modules for the new Department of Conservation and Restoration of Paintings on Paper and Canvas at ISI Yogyakarta II
- 2019 SP24 Grants  
Conservation of wayang beber as a model for step-by-step conservation approach – accumulating first teaching modules for the new Department of Conservation and Restoration of Paintings on Paper and Canvas at ISI Yogyakarta I
- 2019 Thermal Comfort Criteria in Indonesia and Europe
- 2019 Archive and Museum Conservation concept for paintings on canvas and paper, notebooks, drawings, glass plates, photographs, plans and films of the Museum Affandi and the archives of the Temple of Borobudur UNESCO Cultural Heritage site listed as UNESCO Memory of the World in 2017 as a training session to accompany the establishment of the Department of Conservation and Restoration at ISI, Yogyakarta
- 2018 The Influence of Daylight and Natural Airflow in the Architecture of the Museum Affandi, Yogyakarta
- 2018 Sustainable Hygiene Concept as a mandatory conservation aspect for people, paintings on paper and drawings and the buildings of Museum Affandi
- 2017 Affandi’s Art and Architecture as a Part of the Tangible and Intangible Heritage of Indonesia
- 2017 Interrelation between the state of the hosted art and the building performance

- 2016 Development of an integrated concept for the restoration of art and architecture at Affandi Museum, Yogyakarta
- 2017 Interrelation between the state of the hosted art and the building performance
- 2016 Development of an integrated concept for the restoration of art and architecture at Affandi Museum, Yogyakarta

Kartika Affandi, who is the major initiator of the work sent us a short greeting:

## A Glimpse of my Experience with Painting Restoration

Hello, I am Kartika Affandi.

Like my father, I am a painter, and we both living a life that painting is all we know for living. Back to 1979, when we talked about our big family, we somehow came up with a question about how to bring our museum to the future, how to run it professionally. By then, we had to stop our talk because our Austrian guest, Dr. Helmut Schonegger, having looked around the museum, was interested to talk about painting conservation with us after seeing some damaged paintings at the gallery. He said, “Mr. Affandi, why the paints of some of those paintings were falling off?” My father responded by simply saying, “I am sorry about that, I just don’t know how to repair them. For me, it would be easier to make a new painting than to repair it. But maybe my daughter is interested to learn how to restore painting”. Dr. Schonegger replied, “I know someone at the Academy of Fine Arts for Conservation Technique in Vienna, Professor Helmut Kortan. I can contact him if she is interested.” My father then said that he would discuss about that matter with me later. That day Dr. Schonegger bought a painting from my father.

Later on, I told my father that I want to go to Vienna to study painting conservation, and he gave me his permission. I, then, prepared myself to leave my children and left for Vienna in 1980. Dr. Schonegger’s family kindly accommodated me during my visit to the Akademie der Bildenden Kunste Wien (Vienna Institute for Conservation Restoration). I finally met Professor Helmut Kortan, and after introducing myself, I expressed my strong interest to learn how to conserve and preserve fine arts. I explained that around 130 paintings on canvas and paper owned by my family are damaged and needs restoring. Professor Kortan accepted me as a guest student for one semester with a condition that if I am able to follow the class then I could continue the class free of charge. I was only expected to cover for the insurance during my study period. I was so happy at that time – a great opportunity to study again just appeared before a 46-years old woman with a hectic life bringing up her children.



Most of my classmates were the same age as my children, while some others were much younger than me. This, however, did not stop me from keep painting and having exhibitions during the holidays. To earn some money, I got help from my senior classmates who brought me to clean church's sculpture or wall paintings after class or during holidays. I also gave Indonesian cooking course at the yoga center or volunteered at kitchen for elder people in the countryside. They were very friendly and I often make painting of them for my private collection.

After 5<sup>th</sup> semester I brought four damaged paintings of my father to Vienna, so I could discuss different methods to restore the paintings with my teachers. One important thing that Professor Kortan taught me was the danger of retouching. Because I am a painter myself, I have to respect the original artwork and keep a distance with the artwork I restore, otherwise I will overdo or over paint the artwork by imposing my own style.

Throughout my study, I did more practical work than joining the lecture class, thanks to my limited language proficiency. I made use the four damaged paintings as primary materials for doing restoration directly under my lecturers' supervision. The first painting I restored was an oil painting on hardboard titled my mother's name, mamie Maryati, painted by my father in 1939 (Figure 1). The second one was an oil painting on canvas depicting "Me on My Father's Lap", painted in 1939 too, which was torn around 12 cm (Figure 2). The restoration of both paintings was done at the Academy Vienna. The remaining paintings were an oil painting titled Cabbage Garden painted in 1966 (Figure 3), and a watercolor painting on paper titled Naked Mother painted in 1943 (Figure 4).



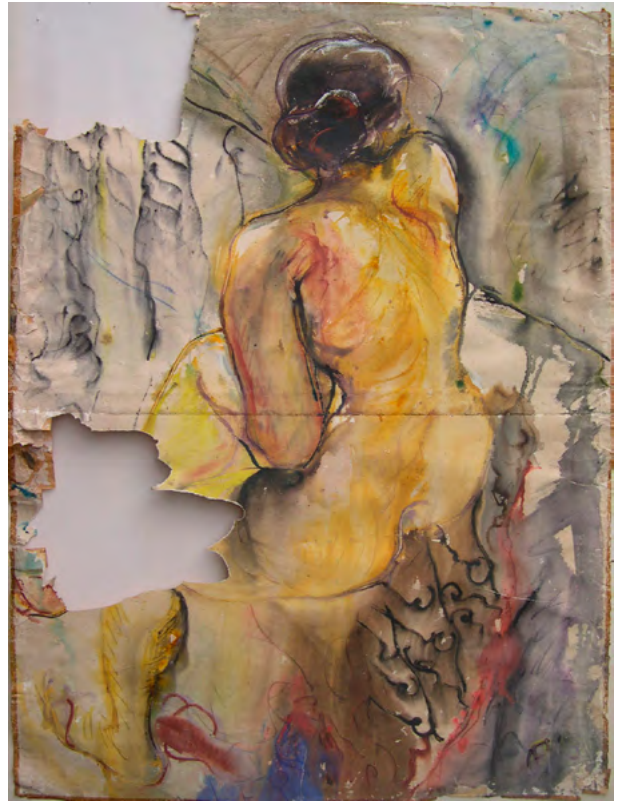
**Fig. 1:** Mamie Maryati, an oil painting on hardboard (1939).



**Fig. 2:** Me on my father's lap, an oil painting on canvas (1939).



**Fig. 3:** *Cabbage Garden*, an oil painting (1966).



**Fig. 4:** *Naked Mother*, a watercolor painting on paper (1943). (right)

From my experience restoring those four paintings, I learned that every painting has its own problem and require different restoration method. At first, it was very difficult for me to restore those paintings because I had no background at all on restoration. Only with my strong determination and help from many people I could overcome all obstacles. I will be forever in debt to the late Dr. Helmut Schonegger, who had picked up my interest in painting restoration. My appreciation also goes to Professor Helmut Kortan and his assistance Dr. Susanne Kortan, who were always there when a student like me facing a problem. Equally, I thanked Mrs. Rossen Berg, my paper restoration teacher, who had given me a free place to stay for several years. Last but not least, my gratitude goes to Habil. Mag. Dr. Patricia Engel who was my classmate back then and we are still best friend until now.

In respect to my late father's paintings, the Museum Affandi is holding a total of 295 paintings. Nearly a third of those paintings need restoring, and we are actively seeking for fund for their restoration. Many of them were painted in 1930s, the same age with me. I often feel that those paintings are my siblings, so I feel responsible to preserve them. I also had the idea for the Art Institute in Yogyakarta (ISI Yogyakarta) to have painting conservation study programme. It has already been initiated by the support of my Austrian friends (Habil. Mag. Dr. Patricia Engel and Dr. Ulrike Herbig, Dipl. Ing., Ph.D) and also friends from ISI Yogyakarta. I hope in the near future we can have a painting conservation study programme here in Yogyakarta, since as far as I know in universities throughout South East Asia there is no such programme study yet.

Kartika Affandi  
Museum Affandi, Yogyakarta

# Reflection of European Conservation Theory on some Indonesian Thoughts

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*Keywords:*  
Conservation Theory  
Indonesia

DOI: 10.48341/z8ep-4k92

## **ABSTRACT**

The paper is meant to be a reflection on what the author's impression and conclusion was on two outstanding contributions to the conference: "Indonesian Conservation Theory of Cultural Heritage"<sup>1</sup> held by the European Research Centre for Book and Paper Conservation-Restoration (ERC) on the 2nd and 3rd Nov. 2021 held online.

It develops the differences between European and Indonesian approach, the latter being an wise approach, the possibility to exchange material as long as its spirit is kept, as well as the flexibility and openness of decision.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.donau-uni.ac.at/en/university/faculties/education-arts-architecture/departments/building-environment/news---events/events/2021/workshop-indonesian-conservation-theory-for-cultural-heritage.html>

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## 1 Introduction

This paper is meant to be a reflection on what the author's impression and conclusion was on two outstanding contributions to the conference: "Indonesian Conservation Theory of Cultural Heritage"<sup>2</sup> held by the European Research Centre for Book and Paper Conservation-Restoration (ERC) on the 2nd and 3rd Nov. 2021 held online. The two contribution in question were those by Sugi Lanus named "A typical Indonesian approach towards conservation – opposed to the European and American conservation approach" and the contribution by Lono Simatupang with the title "Some thoughts about Conservation of Cultural Heritage". While the first zoomed in on transformation of ideas into practical work and showed the openness towards a wide variety of philosophical approaches in conservation, the second explained in detail how the recent legal situation roots in particular terminology in the language officially spoken in today's Indonesia.

The second source of inspiration for this contribution are the observations made by the author during her co-operation with Indonesian scholars during her visits to Indonesia and Indonesian scholars visiting Austria in the years 2015 to 2021. This includes scholars connected to ISI Yogyakarta and conservators at Borobudur Conservation Centre, Afandi Museum, the Sultan's Palace museum in Yogyakarta and the Archaeology Department at UGM.

Based on her many years' research into conservation theory and the ongoing co-oper-

ation of ERC with Institut Seni Indonesia, Yogyakarta, aimed at eventual establishment of a department of conservation at ISI Yogyakarta, the author took a growing interest in understanding whether or not European ideas in conservation theory, rooted deeply in centuries of European philosophy, are applicable at all to items and expressions of cultural setup outside Europe culture and their preservation.

To understand what a suitable conservation theory for the new generation of university trained conservators of Indonesia could be, she held a workshop in November 2021 to not only find a path towards a new conservation theory appropriate for Indonesia, but also to allow for discussion of aspects in European conservation theory which might need some refreshment.

One of the mandatory requirements for launching this work is discussing the terms and definitions that have been in use so far and have not been applied consistently. This was addressed in an outstanding manner by the contribution of Lono Simatupang and will be taken up by Peter Strasser in his contribution to this special issue of *Conservation Update* ([page 21](#)).

As mentioned before, this paper seeks not only to summarize the two papers - the scholars were not able to directly deliver their material to the publisher due to their tight time schedule<sup>3</sup> - but also to add an interpretation by the author rooted in her own decades of experience in the field of conservation of cultural heritage and her particular interest in the theory in conservation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The author strongly recommends that both speakers should be invited as permanent teachers to the new chair of conservation at ISI Yogyakarta.

<sup>4</sup> Patricia Engel, "Systemic Thinking in Conservation Theory", *Atlanti, International review for modern archival theory and practice, Trieste-Maribor, 2017, pp. 205-215*;

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.donau-uni.ac.at/en/university/faculties/education-arts-architecture/departments/building-environment/news---events/events/2021/workshop-indonesian-conservation-theory-for-cultural-heritage.html>

## 2 Understanding versus Authenticity and Respect

While the term “understanding” is one of the key terms for the European approach, having taken root in the early 1950s, the term “authenticity” was not only chosen as a title for one of the most important documents in “post European” conservation theory, THE NARA DOCUMENT ON AUTHENTICITY (1994)<sup>5</sup> but also appeared as an underlying idea in the talks of the Indonesian experts during the conference in November 2021. The term “respect” seemed to be equally important. “Respect” is also mentioned in the European E.C.C.O. professional guidelines, but it takes a far less prominent position there.<sup>6</sup> The Preamble to the Nara document, 1994, states: “In a world that is increasingly subject to the forces of globalization and homogenization, and in a world in which the search for cultural identity is sometimes pursued through aggressive nationalism and the suppression of the cultures of minorities, the essential contribution made by the consideration of authenticity in conser-

vation practice is to clarify and illuminate the collective memory of humanity.”<sup>7</sup> Now, nearly 30 years later, we find the world changed again, with globalization a well-established reality, which raises the question of what this means for the cultural heritage protection.

To illustrate today’s Indonesian perspective on these issues, the author shall begin with a European story: In the 1990s in European book conservation (to mention only one branch of the profession), much later than in paintings conservation, there still had been a very common habit of separating older elements (in the case of books, the bindings) from what was supposed to be the “contents” part of the heritage item, namely, the book blocks themselves, and replacing them with new good quality fully functional structures). Today this is not practised any more, because the binding structure itself is considered to hold information on the history of the book binding profession and the past of the individual codex and is also considered valuable for historians, art historians and conservators.

The author had bitter discussions with conservators, who used to insist that replacing the binding was right and proper because they knew everything about the particular binding type. Now in the course of the discussion during the conference Sugi Lanus said he was allowed to replace elements of traditional Indonesian books himself – because he is part of the tradition handed down from his ancestors. The idea that the legitimization for interference comes from a direct connection with the past is a fundamentally different one from the idea of having complete knowledge about a certain topic. Sugi Lanus said: “The

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oral contribution Yerevan, Armenia 27.-29.10.2015, “Restaurierung und Erinnerung” at Liki Pamjati; Patricia Engel, „Systemic Approach Towards the Intangible Aspects in Tangible Heritage”; RESTIZUTIO (RESTITUZIO?) Reclaiming the Tangible and Intangible Heritage-Conservation and Restoration Attitudes, Muzeul National al Satului Vol. 2, 10/2016 Bucharest, pp. 247-249; Harald Riedl, Patricia Engel, “Systems, patterns and fractals – Both decay and conservation in the Sisyphusposition”, in: ERC Newsletter, 2/2015, pp. 18-25; Patricia Engel, „Konservierung von Schriftgut als Aspekt der Menschenrechte“, Vienna University, 2015, Online-publication, <https://dighist.hypotheses.org/115>; Engel, Patricia: Buchrestaurierung – eine Zerstörung?, in: Kodex. Jahrbuch der Internationalen Buchwissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft, 3 (2013), S. 165–180; Patricia Engel, “Books Convey not only Knowledge, but also Beauty”, [http://www.icininfo.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=55&Itemid=59](http://www.icininfo.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55&Itemid=59) 5 <https://www.icomos.org/charters/nara-e.pdf> 6 E.C.C.O. professional guidelines: <https://www.ecco-eu.org/home/ecco-documents/> 13th January 2022

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7 Nara document <https://www.icomos.org/charters/nara-e.pdf>

legacy should be approached more wisely/humanely/ and with empathy to it.” And: “Authenticity has to do with carma access”. This demonstrates, that authenticity, “the quality of being true or what somebody claims it is” (Oxford Dictionary) doesn't lie in the material of the item, but in the immaterial tradition and this is true even when the item itself is material.

This suggests that the European conservator sees him/herself as something or somebody external to the heritage – and tries to be neutral. This of course, is not possible, yet he/she tries to adopt a neutral perspective (at least, this is the so-called “scientific” principle of recent centuries), whereas the Indonesian conservator draws legitimacy for his/her actions exactly from the opposite, i.e. “standing within the tradition”.

While the Nara document mentions “spirit and feeling” as two aspects of the sources of authenticity, this seems quite impossible to be applied practically in the current conservation field in Europe where “values” are discussed in terms of their relevance to history and aesthetics. Sugi Lanus made it very clear: what actually makes this material item a cultural heritage is its *i m m a t e r i a l*, intangible element.

This focus on the immaterial aspect of works of art also became obvious during the co-operation of Indonesian and Austrian scholars and is explained in the paper entitled *Wayang Beber Preservation: Towards an Indonesian Conservation Theory* in this issue of *Conservation Update*. “It should be mentioned that it was sometimes not possible to establish where exactly the measures were taken, still the figures acquired already represent more accurate information than ever before. This reflects the general “tension” in

this procedure of developing a conservation concept between the wish to understand the material by the Austrian scholar and the clear focus on the story (the *s t o r y l i n e* itself rather than its pictorial presentation) by the Indonesian scholars. This “struggle”, even though it seemed originally to be an obstacle, proved to be an utmost important observation in the striving for a particular Indonesian conservation theory.”

However, not each and every Indonesian cultural heritage item is rooted deeply in Indonesian history, i.e. goes far back in time. During the conference it seemed to have become evident that there are two different sorts of cultural heritage items in Indonesia today, for which two different conservation theories apply. On the one hand, the traditional heritage, such as puppets, keris and batik<sup>8</sup> requires an Indonesian conservation theory that would put respect, authenticity and wisdom into its centre. On the other hand, “traditions and material” of clearly imported origin, such as painting with acrylic paint on canvas (such as the paintings by Affandi and Kartika, to give a widely known example), are not only unfit for the local climate material-wise, but definitely do not stand within the intrinsic tradition of the Indonesian culture and therefore – in the author’s view – allow for the application of European conservation theory.

### **3 Language, Words, Terms and Legal Ground**

In his presentation Lono Simatupang explained the legal ground on which conser-

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*8 It should be clear that some of those items and ideas are also “imported notions,” and only Indonesian scholars can define what is Indonesian (as well as, for example, Javanese, Balinese, etc.) and why.*

vation of cultural heritage is done in Indonesia today. As parts of the audience, i.e. the non-Indonesian, could not understand the terms used in the legal regulations, Lono Simatupang presented translations: Benda Cagar Budaya = Tangible Cultural Heritage and Warisan Budaya Tak Benda = Intangible Cultural Heritage. The definitions of these two groups follow in large parts the definition adopted by UNESCO. We assume that the “Benda Cagar Budaya” doesn't include, according to UNESCO terminology, only “a) man-made objects, movable or immovable in the form of units or groups, or parts thereof or remnants thereof, which are at least 50 years old, and are considered to have important value for history, science, and culture;”, but also “b) natural objects that are considered to have important value for history, science, and culture,”<sup>9</sup> given that, according to UNESCO definition, “The term cultural heritage encompasses several main categories of heritage:

## 1. Cultural heritage

### 1.1 Tangible cultural heritage:

1.1.1 movable cultural heritage  
(paintings, sculptures, coins, manuscripts)

1.1.2 immovable cultural heritage  
(monuments, archaeological sites, and so on)

1.1.3 underwater cultural heritage  
(shipwrecks, underwater ruins and cities)

1.2 Intangible cultural heritage: oral traditions, performing arts, rituals”

and that there also exist two more kinds of heritage:

“2. Natural heritage: natural sites with cultural aspects such as cultural landscapes, physical, biological or geological formations

<sup>9</sup> Presentation by Lono Simatupang, 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov. 2021

## 3. Heritage in the event of armed conflict.”<sup>10</sup>

It is not entirely clear to the author whether the Indonesian definition of “natural objects that are considered to have important value for history, science, and culture” covers the same area as UNESCO’s definition of “natural sites with cultural aspects such as cultural landscapes, physical, biological or geological formations.” It appears as if the UNESCO definition rather targets landscapes like the areas cultivated by Cistercian monks while “natural objects” sounds more like revered natural formations, such as Ayers rock.

This difference can only be properly addressed by an expert in Indonesian cultural history and philosophy, and the author only wished to point it out.

If it is true that conservation of cultural heritage is strongly connected with a distinct mindset of a particular culture, a “language of the culture” in its own right, we could ask: how can material expression of culture, i.e. cultural heritage items, be preserved properly in the many museums they were brought to and, in the process, taken from their local context? The conservation theory applied by the different conservators is most probably the local theory and this makes sense, because in these museums “non European” collections are often brought together, i.e. a large number of items, which have in common only the fact that they are “not from Europe”. This means they come from countless different cultural backgrounds and a vast multitude of philosophies should be understood in case individual concepts should be applied for preserving the many items.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illegal-trafficking-of-cultural-property/unesco-database-of-national-cultural-heritage-laws/frequently-asked-questions/definition-of-the-cultural-heritage/>

These stray objects could, of course, also be seen entirely with a “Western eye”, could be understood as sort of backup or frozen moment which preserves artefacts that would have otherwise been destroyed by the tropical climate or some other factors. However, what can be stated with confidence is that these items were de-contextualized, and whether or not they could maintain their intangible aspects this way remains an open question.

#### **4 Tradition, nationalism, folklore and their reflection in and of society**

In a world that is felt by many people entirely globalized some counter-balancing force is found in tradition, nationalism and folklore and it is evident that conservation became fashionable even within the recent years, which the author does not attribute to the work of conservators and their advocacy for the heritage, but, rather, sees in it a result of digitization, sentiment and lack of orientation of many people with no background in conservation.

There is no doubt that a general interest in conservation as well as turning tradition into folklore and the use of cultural identity for nationalisms do influence the conservation of heritage, however, how this influence works out is an issue in its own right.

Here the author only wants to shed some light onto a few aspects which came along with the conference she refers to throughout this paper. We may ask the question: To what extent can the cultural heritage of each really be the cultural heritage of all? as it is formulated in the Nara Document.

The author believes that this commonality is a fact and that the mankind is one

whole. This does not by itself suggest that the heritage can be understood by everyone in the same depth.

This profound idea of heritage belonging to the world population as a whole – as it seems to do – was only possible at a particular moment of history when globalization was the dominant topic, in the early 1990s, which was actually the time when the Nara Document was written. And it is a fact that in the course of the development of conservation of cultural heritage as a field of expertise in its own right the spirit of the time and place is visibly reflected in all the written documents and charters of the profession. The Charter of Venice, one of the most prominent and most quoted charters in the field of conservation, is a child of the post World War II era, and its echoing of the spirit and choice of words of the UN and its organisations and their charters cannot be denied. There are numerous other conservation charters written since Venice - 42 between Venice and Nara - and 25 after Nara and actually 12 before Venice, but, as the author has noticed, it is Venice Charter and Nara Document that are mostly cited in Indonesia.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps it will remain a topic of study in the new faculty for teaching conservation at ISI, Yogyakarta, to clarify why some documents seem to have a larger and others a less strong impact on the discussions on conservation in Indonesia.

So the question remains: To what extent can the cultural heritage of each really be the cultural heritage of all? The answer might be that it is very well the heritage of all, but still the development of any conservation strategy must be dominated by a mindset rooted

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<sup>11</sup> [https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications\\_resources/research\\_resources/charters.html](https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/research_resources/charters.html) [14<sup>th</sup> January 2022]



in a collective knowledge and understanding of the society i.e. the common knowledge of communities it came from.

Now, we could argue that these societies changed too. Interestingly enough, we have also presented an example of how cultural heritage is transformed in a changing society in the above quoted article in CU 1/2022, which is the adoption of the Wayang Beber from pre-Islamic language of painting into Islam-tolerated style and from this into recent comics art. However, this in particular can only be done by people who draw upon their history, otherwise such an enterprise would become a picture, lines and colours only. An example of Austrian tradition of this sort could be the Nestroy theatrical performances, where, in addition to the original texts in the songs, new lines are continually composed and presented on the traditional big stages of the country. Here the tradition of critical comments of social and political events is still fully understood and – what is important in our context - the form/the way it is brought forward, is kept too.

In contrast to this lively use stands the folklore, which uses the shape of cultural heritage only. To the author's mind, this is dangerous, as it might create the impression that something is preserved, but actually it is more killed in this way, because if it would not be done any more, people might get alarmed, but this folklore creates a false impression, i.e. that it is kept and no one gets alarmed about the fact that it is actually not.

Folklore is fostered by tourism; however, in Indonesia we have another influence of foreigners, which was colonialism.

Material items of Indonesian cultural heritage were brought out of the country in large quantities during that time. While Solo-

monik<sup>12</sup> tells us that wayangs cannot be sold as family tradition forbade it, it was actually the fact that the particular Wayang Beber scrolls which are today in Leiden were sold to Dutch and brought to the Netherlands. The museum curators and conservators of later generations then took care of these items in the best way they knew of. This has even created an impression that Europeans and Americans had become experts in such conservation treatment.

Today people from outside come to restore works of art in Indonesia. This is a phenomenon the author cannot observe in European countries and therefore seems to be of interest in the course of searching for a different approach between European and Indonesian heritage preservation.

Sugi Lanus gave an example of an integration, interpretation and re-interpretation of colonial influence by making the audience acquainted with the relief in Pura Meduwe Karang: “The relief is a depiction of Dutch artist W.O.J. Nieuwenkamp who explored Bali on his bicycle in 1904. This is not the only depiction of a westerner in a Balinese temple [...] The reason for a number of internationally-influenced reliefs in the temples of northern Bali is because of it being the entrance to the island of Bali in the early 20th century. The man on a bicycle relief is not in its original condition as it was badly damaged in the 1917 earthquake and was altered during the restoration process. The restoration adds more floral decoration in the original bas-relief.” (Fig. 1<sup>13</sup>)<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Solomonik, Inna: *Traditsionny teatr kukol Vostoka. Osnovnie vidi teatra ploskikh izobrazheny [Traditional Puppet Theatre of Oriental Main Types of the Flat Image Performances]*. Moscow: “Nauka”; 1983

<sup>13</sup> Links where the photo or table isn't on the same page as the refernece in the text

<sup>14</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pura\\_Meduwe\\_Karang](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pura_Meduwe_Karang) [23<sup>rd</sup> January 2022]



**Fig. 1 a:** Dutch artist W.O.J. Nieuwenkamp depicted at Pura Meduwe Karang; presentation Sugi Lanus 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021

It is not only the “floral decoration”, which is added, it is that one of the wheels is changed into a lotus flower and the hat and dress of Nieuwenkamp was changed from Western style in which he most probably appeared, into a symbolic Indonesian outfit. From the author’s perspective this looks like a sort of occupation – reconquering of style and the actual question is: how could it happen that a mindset allowed such a bicycle there at first. However, we should know, that this particular temple was built only at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Nevertheless, the Indonesian understanding that “The temple can be renovated with an element of innovation; manuscripts can be saved by buying and copying the original manuscripts or the fact that manuscripts could not be removed from the owner’s house and some were left damaged, or actually to decay in near future”, was very clear contrasted by Paul Hepworth’s Western comment during the discussion: “It is fine to add, but not ok to subtract”.



**Fig. 1 b:** Same relief after the restoration of the relief; <https://observerid.com/idanna-pucci-from-florence-to-bali-part-iii-vagando-aquiro/> [23<sup>rd</sup> January 2022]

## **5 Values: cultural language, what it means for people**

So far we have focused on digging up some peculiarities, which might serve as the foundation of a particular Indonesian conservation theory. However, conservation of rites and material items needed for their performance is ages-old, even if we consider conservation as a discipline about 100 years old. Therefore, we started digging up old conservation methods in Java. This work was done to fulfil 3 purposes: first, to preserve in the last moment some old knowledge still existing but risking to be lost soon, secondly, show students of conservation how such a search is designed and executed and, thirdly, to start a collection of reference material for later scientific analysis at ISI Yogyakarta. The two topics of search were: old disinfection material and methods against mould and insect attack and traditional plants used in preparing paints (pigments, dyes, binding media, primer and varnish).

Indonesia is a place where tradition functioned/s orally. This means the information must be collected by individuals dedicated to the topic and capable of speaking local dialects and winning the trust of those who still hold the knowledge – sometimes as a secret. This keeping secrets – even if this is not one of the predominant behaviors in Indonesia, according to the author’s observation, might have been fostered by previous so-called “field studies” of European scholars as well. It must be understood, however, that no documentation, filming or sound recording conveys the spirit of a cultural heritage item or action. This can be seen lately with the attempts of German schoolchildren, who make interviews with last witnesses of WWII and only the actual conversations with these people gave them some sort of understanding what it was like to live in that time under that circumstances and that they had not obtained similar impression by just reading books or seeing films about the same topic.

This means that forwarding knowledge orally is probably a human quality which is world wide, but in some cultures it was strongly substituted by written media.

Preserving cultural heritage has consistently been considered science in the past decades in Europe and the USA; it has recently been recognized a “cultural technique”, which is a misinterpretation to the author’s mind; it is defined as being a specific field of humanities by the European Commission; we could consider it a fundamental human need.

To what degree thoughts, philosophic reflections and approaches towards the activity of preserving heritage originating at one place can be valuable, transportable and applicable at another place and in a different cultural setup will become evident to fu-

ture conservators and hopefully lead them to some reflections of their own.

The author sees three different lines in how cultural heritage is treated in today’s Indonesia:

1st, made into folklore

2nd, preserved professionally

3rd, kept alive, i.e. changed when needed

## 6 Conclusion

Conservation as a habit of humans is ages old – conservation as a discipline is some 100 years old, which is only after it was identified as a theory in its own right. However, as modern conservators we do not only deal with old conservation measures – attitude and material, which we tend to call “repairs” - but also immaterial attempts to preserve items our fathers handed down to our generation, which both, no doubt, need to be incorporated into any conservation theory, meaning “a formal statement of the rules on which a subject of study is based or of ideas that are suggested to explain a fact or event or, more generally an opinion or explanation” (Cambridge Dictionary)

The European Conservation theory is based on “understanding” a work of art in its historic and aesthetic dimensions and its material. An “understanding”, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is “the knowledge that someone has about a particular subject or situation”. And yet, it seems evident that an Indonesian conservation theory might rather be rooted in respect (“a strong feeling of approval of somebody/something because of their good qualities or achievements”, according to the same dictionary) and authenticity (“quality of being true or what somebody claims it is”. – same source). And what it “is” is rather defined via its immaterial identity.

However this means as a next step of logical thinking, that those who do the conservation, preservation or preventive conservation must have full access to the true character of a heritage item.

The legacy to be wisely approached, the possibility to exchange material as long as its spirit is kept, as well as the flexibility and openness of decision might be the core of an Indonesian conservation theory.

## **CV**

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# **“Authenticity” in the context of Indonesia – foreign influence or inherent concept of cultural heritage? World Heritage Nominations from Indonesia as possible indicators**

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*Keywords:*

UNESCO

World Heritage

immovable cultural heritage

authenticity

Venice Charta

Nara Document on Authenticity

ICOMOS

Indonesia

international cultural property protection

outstanding universal value

DOI: 10.48341/whj1-k498

## **ABSTRACT**

This contribution examines the development of the concept of “authenticity” demonstrated by the nominations of cultural heritage properties from Indonesia for the UNESCO World Heritage List. The concept of authenticity, based on the Western paradigm of “truthfulness” of tangible cultural heritage, derives from the “International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (Venice Charter)” from 1964. Its world-wide notion goes back to the “test of authenticity” demanded by UNESCO as requirement for evaluation if a site fulfils the “outstanding universal value” for inclusion in the World Heritage List. The narrow European concept was widened in the aftermath of the “Nara Document on Authenticity” in 1994. The contribution analyses if and how the cultural World Heritage nominations from Indonesia reflect the changing character of the notion of “authenticity”.

## Introduction

This contribution tries to identify if and how the Indonesian monument protection authorities have adapted the Western concept of authenticity in the context of World Heritage. The nomination practice of cultural World Heritage sites shall serve as indicator. Authenticity constitutes a principal element in the assessment of cultural heritage sites in terms of whether they fulfil the requirements for inclusion in the World Heritage List. One will note that Indonesia joined the World Heritage Convention in 1989; thirty years later, in 2019, its ninth World Heritage property was included in the List: five cultural sites<sup>1</sup> and four sites of natural heritage<sup>2</sup> demonstrate that Indonesia was successful with incorporating its natural and cultural monuments in the “common heritage of humankind” – the World Heritage.

Indonesia’s contributions to the common heritage and its cooperation with UNESCO has to be seen in the context of Indonesia’s “Cultural Development Programme” dating from 1973, which stated that “the development of Indonesian national culture under the Five-Year Development Plan” was to be based on several factors, among others<sup>3</sup> “c) counteracting the possible negative effects of

certain foreign cultural influences.”<sup>4</sup> Adopting the concept of authenticity on the occasion of Indonesia’s cultural World Heritage nominations raises the question if the (then) Western concept of authenticity could cause “possible negative effects of certain foreign cultural influences” (as stated in the above-mentioned cultural development programme).

## “Authenticity” as a World Heritage Protection Concept

The term “authenticity” was used first in the *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites* (“Venice Charter”) dating from 1964.<sup>5</sup> Its preamble refers to the duty to conserve historic monuments “in the full richness of their authenticity”. The 1972 World Heritage Convention itself does not refer to “authenticity” but has relegated this term to its set of technical rules, the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. The concept of authenticity was introduced in the first edition of the Guidelines in 1977<sup>6</sup> as a tool to assess the “outstanding universal value” of potential (nominated) World Heritage properties. According to Herb Stovel, this “test of authenticity” was adapted from the integrity requirements for nominating sites to the US National Register of Historic Places.<sup>7</sup> The “test of authenticity” referred to the “truthfulness” of a monument regarding “design, materials, workmanship and setting”. The “test of au-

<sup>1</sup> The sites (with their year of entry) are: Borobudur Temple Compounds (1991), Prambanan Temple Compounds (1991), Sangiran Early Man Site (1996), Cultural Landscape of Bali Province: the Subak System as a Manifestation of the Tri Hita Karana Philosophy (2012), and Ombilin Coal Mining Heritage of Sawahlunto (2019)

<sup>2</sup> Komodo National Park (1991), Ujung Kulon National Park (1991), Lorentz National Park (1999), and Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra (2004, since 2011 also on the List of World Heritage in Danger)

<sup>3</sup> The two other points were a) encouraging archaeology and museums as centres of research, preservation and cultural education and b) establishment and maintenance of art institutes and cultural activities in the provinces (UNESCO (1973), 12)

<sup>4</sup> The whole paragraph reads as follows: “c) counteracting the possible negative effects of certain foreign cultural influences; promoting cultural tourism by providing art centres and conservatoires, and taking care of monuments.” (UNESCO (1973), 12) [Italics in the original text]

<sup>5</sup> ICOMOS (1965)

<sup>6</sup> UNESCO (1977)

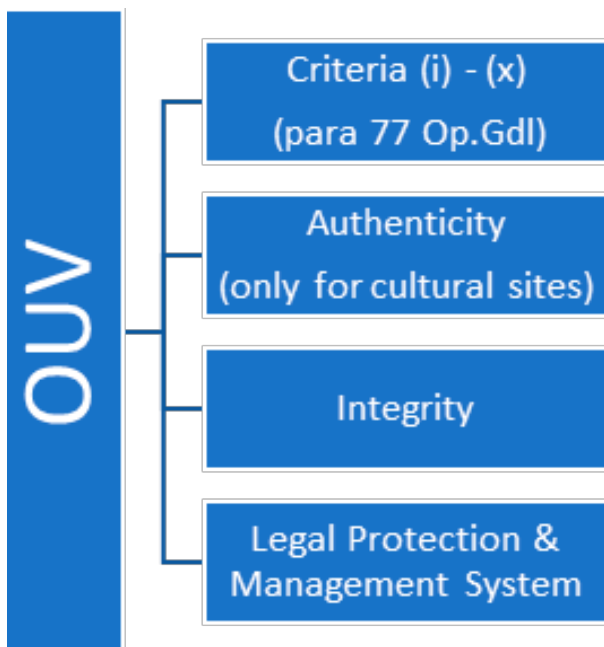
<sup>7</sup> Stovel (2008), p.10; Cameron (2019), p. 95

thenticity” with its four aspects represents a Western concept.<sup>8</sup> (Figure 1)

9. In addition, the property should meet the test of authenticity in design, : materials, workmanship and setting; authenticity does not limit consideration to original form and structure but includes all subsequent modifications and additions, over the course of time, which in themselves possess artistic or historical values.

**Fig. 1** The “test of authenticity” applicable to proposals for inclusion of properties in the World Heritage List was first elaborated in the 1977 Operational Guidelines. (Facsimile: UNESCO 1977)

The “outstanding universal value” of a cultural World Heritage property was defined by a set of criteria (i)-(vi) and the requirement of authenticity (for natural sites, instead, four criteria and the “conditions of integrity” were required.). (Figure 2)



**Fig. 2** The “Outstanding Universal Value” (OUV) as a condition for inclusion in the World Heritage List is based on a sophisticated concept elaborated by ICOMOS and IUCN in 1977 and redefined since. Cultural sites must meet four conditions and natural heritage sites three, to be included in the List. (Graphics by the author)

For more than 25 years – until 2005, when the “test of authenticity” was considerably reviewed – hundreds of candidate cul-

tural heritage sites nominated for inclusion in the World Heritage List from all over the world were “tested” in this “European” way. The test, which was required only for cultural sites and not for natural World Heritage, was performed in two stages. First, the nominating state party had to justify the authenticity in the nomination dossier. Then, ICOMOS, as advisory body to the World Heritage Committee, assessed the nomination including the authenticity of the site. It documented its results in its evaluation report. ICOMOS evaluations for cultural nominations (and, correspondingly, IUCN evaluations for nominations of natural heritage) served as recommendations for the World Heritage Committee. The Committee is not bound to follow these recommendations, but in most cases follows them.

Until 2005, when a broader “test of authenticity” was introduced, the testing followed the Western approach to authenticity. This testing system was in operation for a rather long period (1978-2005), although as early as 1994 efforts were made to base the notion of authenticity on a more global concept: Norway with the wooden houses in its World Heritage site Bryggen (Bergen) as well as Japan with its numerous wooden temples identified challenges in the strict approach of material authenticity in the framework of World Heritage: reconstructions – apart from small replacements in case of renovations – were not considered to be in line with the

<sup>8</sup> Labadi (2010)

*Charter of Venice* and with the Operational Guidelines at that time. Norway and Japan (which joined the World Heritage Convention in 1993) followed traditional approaches by replacing wooden structures after a certain lifespan applying old traditional handicraft. In 1994 two workshops were held in Norway and Nara in Japan<sup>9,10</sup>. The “Nara Document on Authenticity”<sup>11</sup> was an important step to acknowledge that the question of authenticity is strongly linked with the cultural background of the heritage: the concept of authenticity was understood as dependent on the cultural context of the heritage: whether a structure fulfilled the requirement of authenticity did not depend anymore only on its preserved form and material, but on whether the item was treated within its cultural context: while the demolition and subsequent reconstruction of a cathedral in Western Europe would constitute a “no go” in terms of authenticity, the entire replacement of wooden churches and houses in Norway and Eastern Europe and of temples in Asia would fulfil the criteria of authenticity, as the reconstruction of wooden buildings by new material (but on the basis of traditional handicraft) constituted the traditional life cycle of such buildings.

Despite the global relativism of authenticity which was finally acknowledged in 1994 in the “Nara Document on Authenticity”, it eventually took ten years or so for the World Heritage Committee to include this broadened concept in the *Operational Guidelines*. Since 2005, the “test of authenticity” is defined in paragraph 82 of the Guidelines by a broad range of attributes, which constitute

some aspects to establish authenticity:

[Paragraph] 82: *Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, properties may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural values (as recognized in the nomination criteria proposed) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including:*

- *form and design;*
- *materials and substance;*
- *use and function;*
- *traditions, techniques and management systems;*
- *location and setting;*
- *language, and other forms of intangible heritage;*
- *spirit and feeling; and*
- *other internal and external factors.*<sup>12</sup>

As a result, authenticity is not to be based on the material (whether a building is still “original” in its material substance and not “reconstructed”), but – by taking the life cycle of buildings into consideration – e.g. wooden churches and temples rebuilt in the “old style” while applying traditional construction techniques will pass the “test of authenticity”. Therefore, the case of the nomination of the “Historic Centre of Warsaw” might nowadays not cause discussions anymore. However, in 1980, when the site was proposed for inclusion by Poland, members of the World Heritage Committee and ICOMOS questioned the “legitimacy” of inclusion of that town in the World Heritage List: its authenticity (in the narrow sense applied then) was put into question as it was destroyed by Nazi troops by more than 85% during the “Warsaw Up-

<sup>9</sup> Falser (2015)

<sup>10</sup> Larsen (1995)

<sup>11</sup> ICOMOS (1994), <https://www.icomos.org/charters/nara-e.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> UNESCO (2021)



rising” in August 1944 and afterwards reconstructed within five years. As the requirement of authenticity could not be met in 1980, the reconstruction itself became part of the justification for its entry on the List. Since then inclusion criteria “(vi)” (referring to intangible aspects)<sup>13</sup> contributes to the “outstanding universal value” of that site:

*Criterion (vi): The Historic Centre of Warsaw is an exceptional example of the comprehensive reconstruction of a city that had been deliberately and totally destroyed. The foundation of the material reconstruction was the inner strength and determination of the nation, which brought about the reconstruction of the heritage on a unique scale in the history of the world.*<sup>14 15</sup>

## The Application of the Test of Authenticity in Indonesia

Did the “Nara Document” with its extended meaning of authenticity have any influence on the nominations of Indonesian sites for the World Heritage List?

<sup>13</sup> The Committee considers a property as having Outstanding Universal Value if the property meets one or more of the following criteria. Nominated properties shall therefore [...] (vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria), in: paragraph 77, Operational Guidelines 2021 (UNESCO (2021) )

<sup>14</sup> The entry of the Historic Centre of Warsaw on the List was not only based on the (rather rarely used) criterion “(vi)”, but also on criterion “(ii)” (which is defined as follows: exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design). The justification for criterion “(ii)” is as follows: The initiation of comprehensive conservation activities on the scale of the entire historic city was a unique European experience and contributed to the verification of conservation doctrines and practices. (UNESCO (2022) )

<sup>15</sup> UNESCO (2022)

Currently there are nine World Heritage sites in Indonesia, five of them belong to cultural heritage, while four represent natural heritage. Four of these properties were included at the same time in 1991, when Indonesia got its first World Heritage sites on the List. The latest entry took place in 2019. (Ombilin Coal Mining Heritage of Sawahlunto)

The following sites from Indonesia form part of the World Heritage (in chronological order of entry, C = cultural site, N = natural heritage, with number of criteria according to paragraph 77 of Operational Guidelines 2021)

- Borobudur Temple Compounds (1991, C, criteria: (i), (ii), (vi) ) (UNESCO (2022a) )
- Komodo National Park (1991, N, criteria: (vii), (x) ) (UNESCO (2022b) )
- Prambanan Temple Compounds (1991, C, criteria (i), (iv) ) (UNESCO (2022c) )
- Ujung Kulon National Park (1991, N, criteria: (vii), (x) ) (UNESCO (2022d) )
- Sangiran Early Man Site (1996, C, criteria (iii), (vi) ) (UNESCO (2022e) )
- Lorentz National Park (1999, N, criteria: (viii), (ix), (x) ) (UNESCO (2022f) )
- Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra (2004, since 2011 also in the List of World Heritage in Danger, N, criteria: (vii), (ix), (x) ) (UNESCO (2022g) )
- Cultural Landscape of Bali Province: the Subak System as a Manifestation of the Tri Hita Karana Philosophy (2012, C, criteria: (ii), (iii), (v), (vi) ) (UNESCO (2022h) )
- Ombilin Coal Mining Heritage of Sawahlunto (2019, C, criteria: (ii), (iv) ) (UNESCO (2022i) )

In the context of authenticity and its evolving meaning, the five cultural sites among the nine properties in Indonesia are of relevance here. The sites represent different pe-

riods of authenticity discussion: both temple compounds (Borobudur and Prambanan) were entered on the List in 1991, when the “traditional” meaning of authenticity from 1977 was applied and not yet questioned by the World Heritage “community”. The entry of the Sangiran Early Man Site took place in 1996, when the 1994 Conference in Nara and its “Document of Nara” already enriched the global discussion but did not yet lead to changes in World Heritage regulations. The later inscriptions in 2012 (cultural landscape) and 2019 (coal mining heritage) were already based on the far-reaching review of the Operational Guidelines in 2005.

### **Borobudur Temple Compounds and Prambanan Temple Compounds (included in the World Heritage List in 1991)**

These two compounds were originally submitted in 1990 as one single nomination, however, ICOMOS recommended dividing this single submission in two separate entries.<sup>16</sup> Following the practice of entries until the late 1990s, the World Heritage Committee did not formulate the statement of outstanding universal value, which would have included also the statement of authenticity. As the justification from 1991 is missing, the current statement was made in 2012, when the states parties of the World Heritage Convention were asked to provide a “retrospective statement of Outstanding Universal Value” for their earlier entered sites. In the cases of Borobudur and Prambanan, the dossiers for the nomination are not available on the website of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. As the Committee

and ICOMOS remained silent about the proposed statement of authenticity, we are not in a position to analyse the original statement. However, the fact that ICOMOS in its evaluation reports did not elaborate any conflicting issue leads to the conclusion that the proposed statement of authenticity in 1990 did not cause any problem. In fact, both temples were abandoned about one thousand years ago and only discovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, at that time overgrown by jungle. At both sites alterations and reconstructions were undertaken, in Borobudur to a greater extent than in Prambanan. The statements, which are now accessible through the website of UNESCO, are from 2012.

Although Borobudur underwent reconstructions,<sup>17</sup> it passed the “test of authenticity” by ICOMOS in 1990 during the evaluation procedure. As the same material (which were part of the original buildings and could be found in-situ there) was used for the reconstruction, the then narrow understanding of authenticity was still fulfilled. The current statement on authenticity – as formulated in 2012 – describes the reconstruction method:

*The original materials were used to reconstruct the temple in two phases in the 20th century: after the turn of the century and more recently (1973-1983). Mostly original materials were used with some additions to consolidate the monument and ensure proper drainage which has not had any significant adverse im-*

<sup>17</sup> *The conservation of the temple complex including the “Borobudur Restoration Project” (1973-1983) is considered as one of the first international campaigns to preserve cultural heritage. As precursor to the creation of the World Heritage Convention (1972), the restoration constitutes the first project which involved the use of modern monument conservation techniques. The huge documentation was (following the proposal by Indonesia) included as “Borobudur Conservation Archives” in the Memory of the World Register in 2017. (UNESCO (2022j))*

<sup>16</sup> ICOMOS (1991), 11

*pact on the value of the property. Though the present state of Borobudur Temple is the result of restorations, it retained more than enough original material when re-discovered to make a reconstruction possible.*

*Nowadays the property could be used as a Buddhist pilgrimage site. Its overall atmosphere is, however, to a certain degree compromised by the lack of control of commercial activities and the pressure resulting from the lack of an adequate tourism management strategy.<sup>18</sup>*

With regard to Prambanan, the statement from 2012 highlights the efforts which were undertaken to preserve the authenticity of the structures. Without referring to the term “reconstruction”, restoration methods combined the “original traditional method” with “modern methods using concrete”:

*Prambanan Temple Compounds contains the original structures that were built in the 9th century AD. The temples collapsed due to earthquake, volcanic eruption and a shift of political power in the early 11th century, and they were rediscovered in the 17th century. These compounds have never been displaced or changed. Restoration works have been conducted since 1918, both in original traditional method of interlocking stone and modern methods using concrete to strengthen the temple structure. Even though extensive restoration works have been done in the past and as recently as after the 2006 earthquake, great care has been taken to retain the authenticity of the structures.<sup>19</sup>*

## **Sangiran Early Man Site (included in the World Heritage List in 1996)**

The “Sangiran Early Man Site”<sup>20</sup> was entered on the World Heritage List in 1996. It is an archaeological site, where 50 - half of the world’s known - hominid fossils were found. Its outstanding universal value, which justified the entry of this site on the List, is based on the global importance of the findings: “Inhabited for the past one and a half million years, Sangiran is one of the key sites for the understanding of human evolution.”<sup>21</sup>

With regard to authenticity, there is no evidence in form of human-erected structures at the site. The property – farmland – is an archaeological excavations site, with additional accidental findings by the local people, who – according to the ICOMOS evaluation report – “are conscientious over handing these to the appropriate authorities.”<sup>22</sup> When ICOMOS evaluated the nomination, it concluded that “the concept of authenticity has no relevance to this site, which is essentially a series of buried and largely untouched geological strata.”<sup>23</sup> Although the test of authenticity was not applicable, the OUV statement contains some reference to authenticity:

*This property illustrates the sequences of human, cultural, and environmental evolutions over two million years by means of the cultural materials from their original layers, which show specific periods and environments.<sup>24</sup>*

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<sup>20</sup> Note that UNESCO or ICOMOS may have recommended a more “gender balanced” name of the site in case the proposal for inclusion would have been made recently.

<sup>21</sup> UNESCO (2022e)

<sup>22</sup> ICOMOS Evaluation in UNESCO (2022e)

<sup>23</sup> ICOMOS Evaluation in UNESCO (2022e)

<sup>24</sup> UNESCO (2022e)

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<sup>18</sup> UNESCO (2022a)

<sup>19</sup> UNESCO (2022c)

## **Cultural Landscape of Bali Province: the Subak System as a Manifestation of the Tri Hita Karana Philosophy (included in the World Heritage List 2012)**

In this case a broad concept of authenticity was applied, going back to the Nara Document. It combines a cultural landscape with a system of cooperative water management (“Subak”) and the underlying philosophical concept which brings together the realms of spirit, the human world and nature (“Tri Hita Karana Philosophy”).

Consequently, authenticity provides here a broad application of the attributes which are listed in paragraph 82 of the Operational Guidelines. The characteristic of this World Heritage sites forms a unique combination of material, use and function, traditions, techniques and management systems, location and setting, many aspects of intangible heritage and finally of spirit and feeling.

When the landscape was nominated in 2011 by Indonesia, the nominating authorities approached authenticity by questioning it from two perspectives: “Do the farmers of Bali consider the Subak system as an authentic manifestation of their beliefs?” and “Is the system proved by a well-documented history?”<sup>25</sup> No mention was made of the “traditional” (in terms of the UNESCO Guidelines from 1977) attributes of authenticity like material and form.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, with reference to the 1994 Nara Document, which stipulates that the authenticity of cultural heritage should be considered and judged within the cultural context, the dossier highlighted the temples’

traditional life cycle which includes the regular replacement of their construction material through new timber, rather than the material evidence (e.g. of the temples).<sup>27</sup> Consequently, the members of local community living at the site and carrying the traditions of the past to the future, play a vital role in the daily management of the heritage.<sup>28</sup> In the case of Bali, local communities were not only present and included in the preparation of the nomination dossier but also played a role in defining the monitoring plans.<sup>29</sup>

Consequently, although the statement of authenticity, which contributes to the outstanding universal value of the site, highlights the wide sense of authenticity, it also refers to the risks of a system which is based on spiritual values and permanently endangered through economic, social and environmental changes:

*The authenticity of the terraced landscapes, forests, water management structures, temples and shrines in terms of the way they convey Outstanding Universal Value and reflect the subak system is clear.*

*The overall interaction between people and the landscape is however highly vulnerable and, if the sites are still to reflect the harmonious relationship with the spiritual world and the ancient philosophical concept of Tri Hita Karana, it will be essential for the management system to offer positive support.*

*The village buildings have to a degree lost some of their authenticity in terms of materials and construction, although they are still functionally linked to the landscape. (UNESCO (2022h) )*

Although the notion of authenticity

<sup>25</sup> Indonesia (2011), III-19

<sup>26</sup> Lawless, Silva (2017), 155

<sup>27</sup> Indonesia (2011), III-20

<sup>28</sup> Pratihari, Martokusumo (2019)

<sup>29</sup> Lawless, Silva (2017), 156

in the context of this World Heritage site is widely referenced to spiritual and intangible aspects, the statement refers in its last paragraph to the loss of material evidence.

Such a broad understanding of authenticity is in terms of nominations for World Heritage also in Asia (which “triggered” the revision of the notion of authenticity in the mid-1990ies) not yet commonly applied.<sup>30</sup> The approach selected by the nominating bodies in Indonesia by referring broadly to the local population as bearer of tradition (and consequently as contributor to authenticity of the site) is rare: According to Lawless and Silva, who examined 31 World Heritage nominations from Asia, which were submitted to UNESCO between 2005 and 2014, only four of them applied the criteria of authenticity in an integrated way. Among them<sup>31</sup> was also the cultural landscape of Bali.<sup>32</sup> These nominations were characterised by *a clearly articulated application of an expanded authenticity framework with meaningful discussion. The test of authenticity for a site is established within the cultural context and relevant sources of evidence are convincingly presented. Descriptions of how intangible qualities of the site exemplified its universal value and authenticity were engrossing and complete.*<sup>33</sup>

The nomination of the cultural landscape of Bali represents a “modern” type of World Heritage: a cultural landscape with high social (Subak system) and spiritual val-

ues (Tri Hita Karana Philosophy) which “exceeds” the notion of “Western” World Heritage sites. Its entry became possible thanks to the broadened concept of authenticity which was triggered by the Nara process. World Heritage as a “site-based convention” requires an immovable, tangible cultural heritage asset (like a monument, ensemble, or cultural landscape<sup>34</sup>). Therefore, the protection of intangible aspects (like traditions and customs) is not directly covered by the protection-instruments of the World Heritage Convention. However, UNESCO applies for the protection of the intangible cultural heritage a similar protection- and registration system like World Heritage, namely the international convention from 2003<sup>35</sup> with a list, the “Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity”.<sup>36</sup> Indonesia contributed since 2008 with twelve elements to the representative list. The “Wayang puppet theatre”<sup>37</sup> (included as first contribution from the country in 2008) represents the intangible heritage of the cultural landscape of Bali.

### **Ombilin Coal Mining Heritage of Sawahlunto (2019)**

Also, this site represents – as technical heritage – a “modern” World Heritage category. Technical heritage is still not adequately presented (in terms of numbers of sites) in the List. Technical heritage does not only contain manifestations of technology, but, with regard, for example, to workers and their working conditions, it also refers to intangible as-

<sup>30</sup> Lawless, Silva (2017)

<sup>31</sup> The four sites are: *Cultural Landscape of Honghe Hani Rice Terraces, China (2013)*, *Bali Cultural Landscape, Indonesia (2012)*, *Royal Tombs of Joseon Dynasty, South Korea (2009)*, *Hahoe & Yangdong Villages, South Korea (2010)*, *Namhansanseong City, South Korea (2014)* (Lawless, Silva (2017), 153)

<sup>32</sup> Lawless, Silva (2017), 153

<sup>33</sup> Lawless, Silva (2017), 152-153

<sup>34</sup> See the definition of “cultural heritage” in Article 1 of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO (1972) )

<sup>35</sup> Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO (2003) )

<sup>36</sup> UNESCO (2022k)

<sup>37</sup> UNESCO (2022l)

pects. In this regard the entry in 2015 of *Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining*<sup>38</sup> prepared by Japan caused intensive discussions in the World Heritage Committee due to the occupation of forced labour workers from Korea and China in the past at these sites (this discussion – contrary to the intentions of the nominating party – added to those sites their distinctive quality of “dark heritage”).

The entry of the coal mining heritage of Sawahlunto took place in 2019. The mines constitute a site with European background forming part of Indonesia's colonial history. The discussions at the World Heritage Committee in Bonn in 2015 (with regard to the above-mentioned nomination from Japan) were in all likelihood known to the initiators of the nomination and might have helped them in dealing not only with the tangible, but also with the intangible aspects of technical heritage in the context of working conditions. In this regard, the description of the site at UNESCO's website refers not only to the technical infrastructure, technological achievements, and economic importance of the mines, but also to social aspects of that heritage: “The many skilled and unskilled workers included local Minangkabau people, Javanese and Chinese contract workers, and convict labourers called ‘chained people’ or orang rantai from Dutch-controlled areas within present-day Indonesia.”<sup>39</sup>

However, the test of authenticity is based on the European understanding of authenticity: “Form and design, materials and substance, location and setting” (as known since 1977) thus highlight the European di-

mension of the site:

*Ombilin Coal Mining Heritage of Sawahlunto is a technological ensemble consisting of twelve components. Despite the deterioration of many disused elements, the technological ensemble of mines, mining town, railway, and port facilities meet the requirements of authenticity in relation to their original form and design, materials and substance, location and setting.*<sup>40</sup>

## Conclusions

The notion of authenticity represents an important aspect of the overall framework of restoration concepts. Introduced in the Charter of Venice in 1964, its broad notion is linked with the “outstanding universal value” of World Heritage. The assessment of whether a proposal for the entry of a cultural (not natural) heritage site on the World Heritage List is justified must be undertaken through a “test of authenticity”, a procedure laid down in the Operational Guidelines of UNESCO. However, the “globalisation” of the term “authenticity” thanks to World Heritage challenged the Eurocentric concept of authenticity. The “Nara Conference” in 1994 with its “Nara Document on Authenticity” broadened the meaning of authenticity to a considerable degree by linking it with the cultural context of the heritage and establishing its close relation to intangible heritage. Since 2005, proposals for entries on the World Heritage List have to follow this broad concept of authenticity.

The development of the notion of authenticity is closely linked with UNESCO's World Heritage. However, the broadened concept itself also exerts some influence on the

<sup>38</sup> <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1484> (accessed 14 February 2022)

<sup>39</sup> UNESCO (2022i)

<sup>40</sup> UNESCO (2022i)

nomination and entry practice as it enables proposing sites that would not have fulfilled UNESCO's criteria some years ago.

Indonesia's five cultural World Heritage sites provide an example of an evolving notion: its first World Heritage sites: the temple compounds of Borobudur and Prambanan, were included in the List in 1991 by applying a material-based concept of authenticity. On the contrary, the nomination (and entry in 2012) of the cultural landscape of Bali opened new dimensions of World Heritage in several aspects: the significance of a cultural landscape (consisting of rice terraces and temples) was defined by social practices (common water management system) on the basis of spiritual values. Following this broad concept, authenticity was not based on material evidence, but on the acceptance of the management system and the historical evidence of the underlying spiritual values. However, with the nomination of the coal mining sites of Sawahlunto and their entry on the List in 2019, the European-oriented approach returned somehow to Indonesia.

Indonesia's contributions to cultural World Heritage constitute a good-practice example of how to expand ideas which reinforce – after many years of domination of Eurocentric concepts – the global dimension of the World Heritage. Indonesia's participation in the discourse about World Heritage underlines its commitment which was formulated already in the “Cultural Development Programme” from 1973: The “development of Indonesian national culture under the Five-Year Development Plan” will be undertaken by “counteracting the possible negative effects of certain foreign cultural influences.”<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> UNESCO (1973), 12

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# Wayang Beber Preservation: Towards an Indonesian Conservation Theory

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*Keywords:*

Deletions

Wayang Beber

bark cloth conservation

Indonesian puppet conservation

Wonosari

Pacitan

Leiden

conservation concept

DOI: 10.48341/5hkw-8c67

## **ABSTRACT**

Striving to suggest elements of a particular Indonesian conservation theory to be implemented by the new department of conservation of Cultural Heritage at Indonesian University of the Arts Yogyakarta (Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Yogyakarta<sup>1</sup>) in particular, and for the future use in Indonesia's conservation activity in general, the team of scholars used one of the two Wayang Beber sets of scrolls still existing in Indonesia, one of the most important surviving Indonesian cultural heritage items, to get a thorough understanding of Indonesian culture, thinking and value system.

At the same time, the step-by-step approach towards building a concept for conservation of tangible heritage demonstrated here may serve as a role model for teaching conservation at ISI. While the Wayang Beber is considered one of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO, they are accompanied by bark cloth scrolls with their paint layers, mounting sticks and boxes, which are tangible items and need conservation treatment.

Finally, a deeper understanding of Indonesian bark cloth material and the particular philosophy relevant for conservation might be a useful tool for conservators dealing with such items in museums all over the world.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on this topic please read *Why Indonesia* p. 5

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## 1 Introduction

Wayang (*wayang* in modern Indonesian means “puppet”), handed down from the ancestors of the current generation of Indonesian people, is a very important element in the Javanese culture, designated one of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2003.

The performance presents different stories, many of them originating from India, such as *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, however they were and are constantly modified and updated even today.<sup>2,3</sup> The stories convey moral values and are used for both education and entertainment purposes. The puppets used for the presentations may be made of dried skin, wood and cloth or – as in the case of wayang beber – of bark cloth. The story is told by a *dalang* (puppeteer), the “actors” are the puppets, which are depictions of characters, rather than people. A *keprak*, which is a percussion instrument used by the puppeteer, a *blencong* which is a light source and a *kelir*, which is the light screen, make the set-up complete.

Only three sets of wayang beber scrolls (*beber* means “rolled”) survive to our days, of which two are in Indonesia and one in the Netherlands.

This contribution focuses on the first steps to preserve the two wayang bebers in Java. It is still a work in progress.

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<sup>2</sup> Brandon (2009).

<sup>3</sup> There are four theories about the origins of wayang (Indigenous of Java, Java-India, India, and China), but only two of them stand out as the most authoritative: 1st, the indigenous origin (Java), 2nd, the Indian (see also Brandon 2009) “Regardless of its origins, Brandon writes, wayang developed and matured into a Javanese phenomenon. There is no true contemporary puppet shadow artwork in either China or India that has the sophistication, depth, and creativity expressed in wayang in Java, Indonesia.” (*ibid*)

*Wayang Beber* Wonosari was chosen as a first case study in building up an Art Conservation Department at Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI), Yogyakarta.

The idea of this work was to

- Bring together a substantial amount of already published literature on the topic of Wayang Beber, its material and its conservation
- Make a close survey of all the three Wayang Beber still existing
- Collect knowledge still existing in Indonesia concerning the material used to make the Wayang Beber, both the *daluang* (bark cloth) carrier and the colours and binding media of the painting by conducting interviews with the old craftsmen and puppeteers
- Bring together a collection of reference material in Indonesia to enable future instrumental analysis by providing material of known composition
- Develop a conservation concept for the Wayang Beber Wonosari
- To make first steps towards an Indonesian conservation theory.

## 2 Etymological Background

To find a distinct Indonesian conservation theory, alongside with the identification of the conservation concept for the Wayang Beber, it seemed appropriate to understand the linguistic meaning of the works to be preserved, as language often expresses the spiritual meaning of an artefact and might serve as a source of deeper understanding, at least for the non-Indonesians in the team, who had to find their way towards this completely foreign art.

According to the old Javanese, the word *wayang* comes originally from the words "wod" and "yang", meaning repetitive and non-permanent movements<sup>4</sup>; "walking hither and thither, not being calm or remaining like shadows"<sup>5</sup>.

According to *Serat Centini*, one of the important pieces of Javanese literature, wayang was originally created by King Jayabaya from the Mamenang Kediri Kingdom on the island of Java in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. In this text, we learn that King Jayabaya created a spirit image from the ancestors and etched it on a leaf, a *lontar*, in English called "palm leaf", as text carrier<sup>6</sup>. The development of wayang after that did not recede or get eroded over time; in fact, wayang progressed gradually towards perfection and even new types of wayang emerged that were increasingly complementing the traditional cultural treasures which had already existed in Indonesia.

The "walking hither and thither" might somehow reflect the agility of heart, intellect and spirit of the people, the open-mindedness that comes with it and can be seen in the numerous influences integrated by Indonesian<sup>7</sup> cultures into their pre-existing habits and rites without giving up the original traditions.

Mair<sup>8</sup> and *Merriam-Webster*<sup>9</sup> refer to the translation of *wayang* as shadow or "imagination" and link it with Bahasa Indonesian word "*bayang*", meaning "shadow". However, the interpretations are not mutually exclusive.

Deeper studies of the semiotic mean-

ing of the language around Javanese puppets are well worth undertaking. In this context we would only like to point out Inna Solomonik and her comprehensive studies of wayang.<sup>10</sup>

### 3 Types of Javanese puppets

There are various types of puppets in Indonesia, however, this contribution will focus on puppets developed and used on the island of Java. While the stories in their core elements are the same, the puppets differ. Their names - in many cases - correspond to the sort of puppet used:

"The oldest known record that concerns wayang is from the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Around 840 AD, Old Javanese (Kawi) inscriptions called "Jaha Inscriptions", made by Maharaja Sri Lokapala from Medang Kingdom in Central Java, mention three sorts of performers: *atapukan*, *aringgit*, and *abanol*. *Aringgit* means wayang puppet show, *Atapukan* means mask dance show, and *abanol* means joke art. *Ringgit* is described in an 11<sup>th</sup>-century Javanese poem as a leather<sup>11</sup> shadow figure.

In 903 AD, an inscription called Balitung (Mantyasih) inscription was created by King Balitung from Sanjaya dynasty, of the Ancient Medang Kingdom. It reads: "*Si Galigi Mawayang Buat Hyang Macarita Bima Ya Kumara*", meaning: "*Galigi held a puppet show for gods by taking the story of Bima Kumara*."<sup>12</sup>

As mentioned above, *Wayang Beber* is made of bark cloth and was invented in

4 Mertosudono (1994), p. 28.

5 Mulyono (1982), p 9.

6 Ra'uf (2010), p 22.

7 Today's territory of Indonesia was and is a vastly heterogeneous area, both in tradition and the current cultures.

8 Mair (1988) p. 58.

9 Merriam - Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/wayang> [04th Jan. 2022]

10 Solomonik (1983), pp 184; (1992), pp 312; (1992); (1993), pp. 160; (2001), p. 78; (2004); (2006).

11 "Kulit" is often translated as „leather“, however, the puppets are not made of what we call leather, meaning tanned skin. It is actually dried skin, but also different from parchment in many ways.

12 Keragaman Wayang Indonesia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wayang#cite\\_note-indonesia.go.id-19](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wayang#cite_note-indonesia.go.id-19), and <https://www.tribunnews.com/pendidikan/2021/11/17/>

the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Unlike the other puppets, its name does not refer to the material it is made of, but the unrolling and rolling up action which comes with any performance.

*Wayang Kulit* is made from dried, smoothed buffalo skin<sup>13</sup> and was performed as early as the 11th century.

*Wayang Wong* or *Wayang Orang* is acted out by people, not with puppets; it appeared in 1760 and was first performed by K.B.A.A Mangku Negara I<sup>14</sup>.

*Wayang Topeng* is also acted out by human actors, but in contrast to the former, people wear masks.

*Wayang Golek* involves three dimensional wooden puppets with textile clothing and was most probably imported from China in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

*Wayang Klitik* comes from East Java and the figures are also made of wood, however they are flat, mimicking the *Wayang Kulit* puppets and also used, like them, with sticks as shadows against the light. Their name comes from the sound they make while played.

*Wayang Suluh* is a modern sort of puppet with figures of today's appearance.

There are other terms with "wayang", which do not refer to the material of the puppets such as *Wayang Kancil*, which is performed with animal figures or *Wayang Purwa* (Javanese for "ancient" or "original" wayang refer to wayang that are based on the stories of Hindu epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*). They are usually performed as *wayang kulit*, *wayang golek*, and *wayang wong* dance dramas.<sup>15</sup>

The list of *wayangs* in Java is much longer and would require much attention, however, in the context of this contribution the authors only wanted to point to the fact that there are numerous ways in which the stories have been played over generations and give a timeline of different material used for puppets.

#### 4 Characteristics of Wayang Beber

While each and every sort of wayang has its own puppet style, the shape of *Wayang Beber* is unique insofar as there are no individually handled puppets used but the characters are painted onto a flat carrier.

This results in a set of scrolls, each having a length of about 3.5 meters and carrying a picture "on it", meaning that the characters are physically painted onto the bark cloth scrolls. This particular bark cloth is called "Javanese paper" or, in Bahasa Indonesian, *Dluwang* or *Dlancang* Ponorogo (Ponorogo paper) because the paper is made in Ponorogo, East Java. *Dluwang* is not made from pulp in a vat and formed with a mould, although the term "Javanese Paper" might suggest this, but is made of the bark of the *Gedog* tree (*Broussonetia Papyrifera*) – for example, in Ponorogo area of East Java by cutting it into pieces and subsequently beating it flat, so that it becomes thin, evenly wide and smooth. *Dluwang* is not only widely used as a medium for writing manuscripts in Javanese and Arabic on the Indonesian island of Java<sup>16</sup>; any visit to a museum of Indonesian Art would reveal that other items were also made of bark cloth.

The name of this wayang refers to the way it is presented, namely by "unfolding"

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keberagaman-jenis-wayang-di-indonesia-ada-wayang-beber-hingga-wayang-wong, [04th Jan. 2022]

13 Indonesian heritage (2002), p. 52.

14 Mulyono (1982), p. 156.

15 *Wayang Purwa Puppets* (1980), pp. 482-497.

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16 Indonesian heritage (2002), p. 16.

(*beber* meaning rolled) the scroll containing the image in front of the audiences. When the scroll is unrolled, the puppeteer begins to tell the story in chapters, each chapter corresponding to one sequence of images presented in the unrolled scroll. When the chapter has ended, the scene, i.e., part of the scroll is rolled up and the next scene is unrolled. The sequence of the pictures presents a certain story which the puppeteer tells accompanied by gamelan (Javanese traditional musical instrument) orchestra using *Laras Slendro* (a type of scale in Javanese gamelan).

The performance starts with a prayer, then the *dalang*, who sits in front of the scroll with his back to the audience and the musicians starts to tell the story separating each scene acoustically by hitting wood with a stick and presenting the scrolls scene by scene to the audience.

One play takes several hours and is followed by a ceremonial meal.

## 5 History of Wayang Beber

The manuscript of Javanese literary work entitled *Serat Sastromirudo* states that its history begins with the king of the Jenggala Kingdom<sup>17</sup> in the eastern part of Java named Prabu Suryamiluhur. After being on the throne for three years, he moved his kingdom to Pajajaran in western Java where<sup>18</sup> he then performed a Wayang Purwa image which was from the Jenggala royal style but with higher

<sup>17</sup> The Kingdom of Janggala is one of the two Javanese kingdoms that were formed when Airlangga abdicated his throne in favour of his two sons in 1045. The other Kingdom was Kediri. The Kingdom of Janggala comprised the northeastern part of the Kingdom of Kahuripan.

<sup>18</sup> As a pre-note to the following chapter, it should be emphasised that the utmost was done to distinguish between characters, stories, history and puppet, but it

and larger paper. The paper used was Javanese paper, or bark cloth. The *sengkalan* (writing of the number of years encoded in a sentence where each word or object represents a number) of the puppet is '*wayang magana rupaning janma*' (wayang in the form of a human) or the year 1166, corresponding to 1244 AD<sup>19</sup>. At that time there was power struggle going on. The Jenggala kingdom was conquered by the Kediri kingdom, then the Kediri kingdom was conquered by the Singasari kingdom and, finally, the Singasari kingdom surrendered to the Majapahit kingdom. There is no information related to wayang beber during those power struggles. But during the Majapahit kingdom, wayang beber reappeared. Majapahit Kingdom was a Javanese Hindu thalassocratic empire in Southeast Asia that was based on the island of Java and existed from 1293 to about 1527. In this kingdom, according to *Serat Sastromirudo*, it is stated in the manuscript that Raden Jaka Sesuruh, who has the title of Prabu Bratana in Majapahit, created Wayang Purwa on Javanese Dluwang, and that this newly created wayang was called Wayang Beber. If this puppet was performed in the palace, the gamelan to accompany the performance played on the Javanese musical instrument and used the *Slendro* tuned gamelan, while when it was performed outside the palace, it was only accompanied by the Rebab, one of the musical instruments in the Javanese gamelan. At that time, Wayang Beber was used for Ruwatan Murwakala, a traditional ceremony to save oneself from disaster. The development of Wayang Beber was still continued by the next king, King Brawijaya. This king had a son who

seems as if it is inseparable in the world of Indonesian cultural heritage.

<sup>19</sup> Pustaka Wisata Budaya (1981), p. 11.

had expertise or talent in drawing, so his father assigned him to draw clothes of knights, courtiers, and kings on wayang beber. Raden Sungging Prabangkara did this using colorful paint and the new story which came from it received the *sengkalan* “without disappearing Gunaning Atmaja” (not removing the benefits of children) or the year 1300<sup>20</sup>. (The sequence of words can be decoded as numbers.)

From the time of the Majapahit Kingdom, we still have texts written by Ma Huan (1380–1460), a Muslim Chinese voyager and translator for Admiral Zheng He, whom he accompanied on the occasion of three of his seven expeditions to the Western Oceans. In the 1413 (the 4<sup>th</sup>) expedition he visited Java.

In his report entitled *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan* (1416) Ma Huan notes that there were people who painted humans, birds, animals, insects and so on, on paper; the paper was a roll glued between two wooden sticks three feet high; on the one side, a spindle is set at the same level as the paper, while on the other side two rollers stick out. The puppeteer sits cross-legged on the ground and places the pictures in front of him, unrolling one scroll at a time and facing them to the audience, giving all the while in a loud voice explanation to pictures in his native language; the audience sits around it and listens, laughing or crying depending on the storyline<sup>21</sup>. With Mills, we may conclude that Ma Huan describes wayang beber paintings and thus it seems obvious that wayang beber is the oldest of the Indonesian puppet styles.

In a later period when Majapahit collapsed, wayang beber and its accompanying devices (gamelan and other elements) were brought to Demak in Central Java. The Islam-

ic kingdom of Demak (1475-1548) was the first Muslim state in Java, had once dominated most of the northern coast of Java and southern Sumatra and was ruled by Raden Patah who had the title of Sultan Syah Alam Akbar. Sultan Syah Alam Akbar, the king of Demak, was very fond of puppet shows, and would occasionally take the role of the wayang beber puppeteer himself.

At that time wayang beber became a common performance, both in the villages and in the cities. This is demonstrated by the Babad Tanah Jawi, a Javanese manuscript containing the history of the kings who once ruled on the island of Java, in which Ki Ageng Pengging is reported to have held a wayang beber show when his wife gave birth to a son<sup>22</sup> at the time of the Demak Kingdom. The wayang beber shown at that time were three scrolls from Panji to Majapahit. These three rolls of wayang beber were clearly not the same as the eight scrolls of the Wayang Beber Wonosari or the six scrolls of the Pacitan Wayang Beber. However, the way of playing it was basically the same, which was by spreading the scroll in front of the audience. Presumably what needs to be explained is that the character appearing in the scroll was Jaka Karebet from the time when he was a commoner to the king of Majapahit. Then the newly born child was given the name “Mas Karebet” according to the name of the wayang beber that was staged, so that it would be lucky like the characters in the story. At that time, there was also one of the Walisongo (nine Muslim men who spread Islam on the island of Java and are considered saints today) named Sunan Bonang who made the Wayang Beber Gedog with the story of Panji<sup>23</sup>. This Wayang Beber Gedog image

<sup>20</sup> *Pustaka Wisata Budaya* (1981), p. 14.

<sup>21</sup> Mills (1970), p. 97.

<sup>22</sup> Olthof (2008), p. 46.

<sup>23</sup> Sayid (1980), p. 10.



refers to the Purwa Shadow Puppet created during the Demak Kingdom which no longer used realistic human images. The *sengkalan* Wayang Beber Gedog was "*Wayang wolu kinarya Tunggal*" (eight puppets made into one) or in 1486<sup>24</sup>. The word 'Gedog' in wayang beber at that time was added to distinguish it from wayang eber which existed in the era before Islamic Mataram, where Wayang Beber was Hindu in style. 'Gedog' refers to the form of the image that is different in style (not realistic) and also because this wayang tells the Panji story and not another story in a Hindu style like it was done during the Majapahit Kingdom. At this time, the word 'Gedog' is no longer mentioned, only Wayang Beber.

There were three kinds of Wayang Beber brought from Majapahit. The first was the old wayang beber containing the Wayang Purwa story (featuring Arjuna Wiwaha, Bharatayuda, and Arjuna Sasrabahu), while the other one had two sets of scrolls containing the story of Panji in Jenggala, and another set of scrolls containing the story of Jaka Karebet when he was young until he became king of Majapahit - this story was called Damar Wulan. The wayang beber image that was brought from Majapahit had a human-like<sup>25</sup> character so that Walisongo at that time disapproved of the human image in Wayang Beber because using a realistic human image was not in accordance with Islam teachings<sup>26</sup>.

Sultan Syah Alam Akbar really liked the wayang entertainment, and he often performed wayang beber. However, because the kind of wayang beber that was brought from Majapahit was against the Islamic law, efforts

had to be made so that wayang beber was not destroyed. The Walisongo then discussed some way out and came up with a solution which was to deform and elongate the shapes of the human characters on the scrolls to get from the more realistic depiction of the human images to a form symbolizing the nature of the particular character. This way the new character sets could not be interpreted as human-like and the guardians of the faith, especially Sunan Giri, allowed the puppet theatre to be performed<sup>27</sup>.

At that time the first wayang kulit puppets appear to have been made from animal skin and then colored. However, some wayang beber were still preserved<sup>28</sup> and performed by royal servants.<sup>29</sup>

In the next period, wayang beber appeared again in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom when it was ruled by Amangkurat II. At that time, there were six scrolls of Wayang Beber made by Gedhog Dluwang/Daluwang telling the story of Jaka Kembang Kuning. The *sengkalan* of *Wayang Beber Jaka Kembang Kuning* was "Gawe srahi jinamah ing wong" (making Srahi cakes touched by people) in 1614. Then during the reign of Paku Buwono II, another Wayang Beber was made to accompany the story of *Wayang Beber Jaka Kembang Kuning* which already existed. The reason was that there was only one-story play, namely *Wayang Beber Jaka Kembang Kuning*. Therefore, it was deemed necessary to create a new play, which was different from *Wayang Beber Jaka Kembang Kuning*. This new Wayang Beber was made from Dluwang Ponorogo with the story of Remeng Mangunjaya. *Wayang Beber Remeng Mangunjaya* had the *sengkalan*

<sup>24</sup> Sayid (1981), p. 15.

<sup>25</sup> This means all three Wayang Beber brought from Majapahit had human like images – all puppets before the Islam had human-like appearances.

<sup>26</sup> Sayid (1980), p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> Rahimsyah (2000), p. 61.

<sup>28</sup> Sayid (1980), p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> Pustaka Wisata Budaya (1981), p. 15.

"Without the wayanging queen" (the queen does not move) or the year 1660<sup>30</sup>.

During the time of the Islamic Mataram kingdom, foreign records about wayang beber also appeared through the publications by Thomas Stamford Raffles, British governor of Java from 1811-1815, in his book entitled *History of Java*, published in 1817<sup>31</sup>. Raffles noted that the description of original entertainment in the Javanese area was the adventure story of Menak Jingga and Damar Wulan. This entertainment was performed in an unusual way, by drawing in hard folds of paper, while the puppeteer then told the story of the picture complemented by the dialogue of the characters. Such entertainment shows were known as wayang beber<sup>32</sup> (Table 1<sup>33</sup>).

Around 1902, the Wayang Beber Wono

sari (the name of the wayang beber stemming from the region where it is kept today) performance was successfully documented by Kassian Cephas, the first Indonesian professional photographer. At that time, Wayang Beber was performed at Dr. Wahidin Soedirohoesoedo's residence in Yogyakarta. (Fig. 1) Dr. Wahidin Soedirohoesoedo was a doctor and education reformer sometimes considered an early figure in the Indonesian National Awakening and declared a National Hero of Indonesia in 1973. In the photo of the documentation, it can also be seen that Dr. G.A.J. Hazeu witnessed the event. Apart from Kassian Cephas, photographer O. Kurkdjian, an Armenia-born photographer who established a studio in Surabaya also documented the Pacitan Wayang Beber (Pacitan, again, indicating the place).



30 Sayid (1980), pp. 11, 12.

31 Raffles (1830).

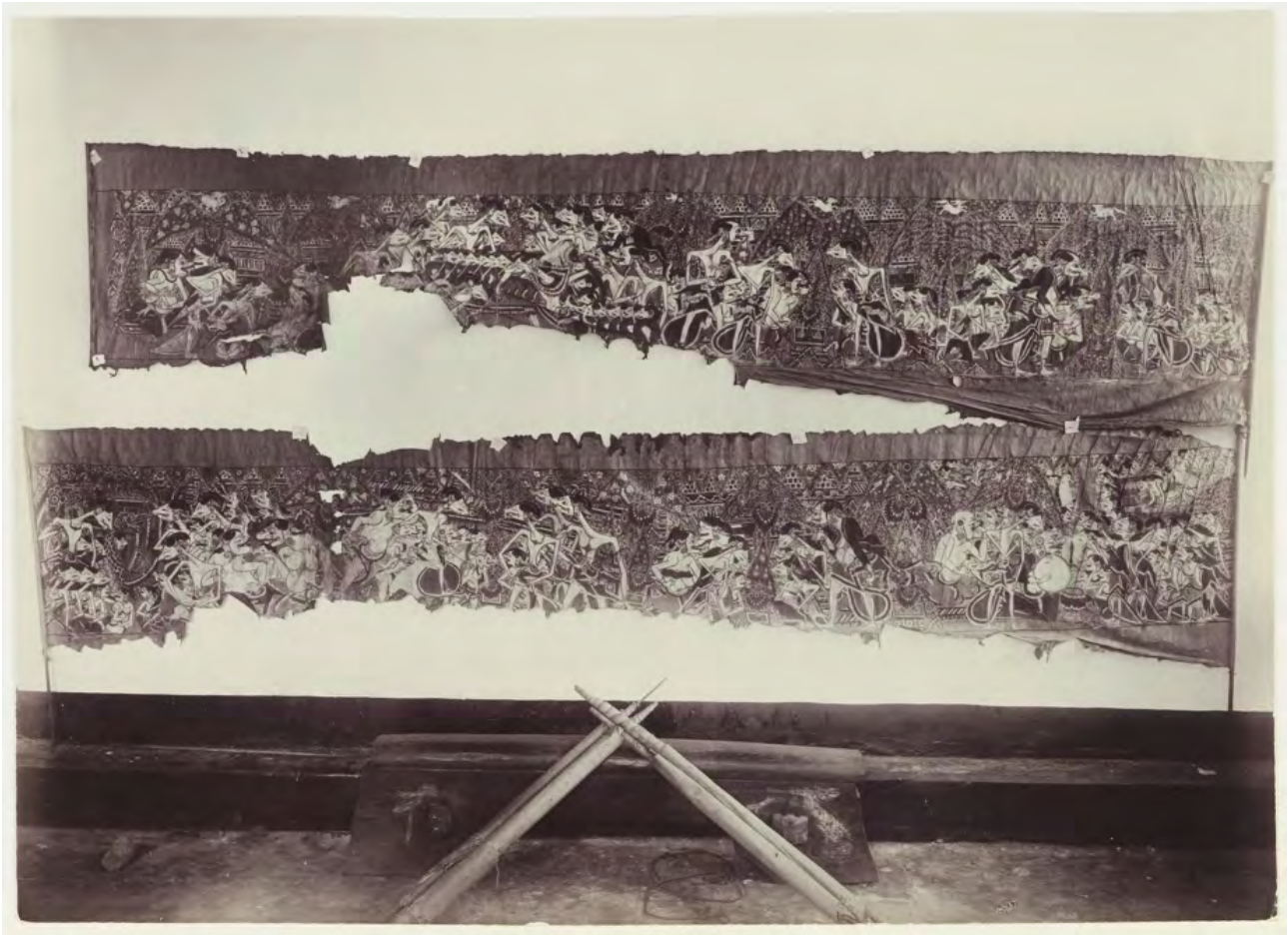
32 Raffles (2008), p. 234.

33 Links where the photo or table isn't on the same page as the referenece in the text

**Fig. 1** Wayang Beber Wonosari performance at the residence of Dr. Wahidin Soedirohoesoedo in 1902 in Yogyakarta (<https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl>).

The six scrolls of Pacitan Wayang Beber were exposed and well documented. In the photo taken around 1880, it can be seen

that the condition of Wayang Beber Pacitan was no longer good. Some parts were missing (Fig. 2).



**Fig. 2** Two Scrolls of Wayang Beber Pacitan documented by O. Kurkdjian in 1880s (<https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl>).

**Table 1**

An overview of dates mentioned in the text and the related events

1244 AD	1293	1300	1416	1475-1548	1486	1614	1660	1817
The king of the Jenggala Kingdom in the eastern part of Java performed a Wayang Purwa image in the Jenggala royal style.	A new Wayang Purwa is made on Javanese Dluwang, and called Wayang Beber	King Brawijaya's son Raden Sungging Prabangkara was asked to re-design the figures, doing so he used colorful paint and the new story which came from it.	Chinese Ma Huan documents the tradition of wayang.	First Muslim state in Java: Islamic kingdom of Demak	Shape if the wayang figures changed from depicting to characters	Six scrolls of Wayang Beber made by Gedhog Dluwang telling the story of Jaka Kembang Kuning.	New Wayang Beber made from Dluwang Ponorogo with the story of Remeng Mangunjaya. Wayang Beber Remeng Mangunjaya	Thomas Stamford Raffles noted that the description of original entertainment in the Javanese area was the adventure story of Menak Jingga and Damar Wulan.

## 6 The three sets of scrolls of Wayang Beber which have survived

Three sets of scrolls have survived to our days; one in Gelaran II Bejiharjo, Karangmojo, Wonosari, Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta (Fig.3), the second in Karang Talun Gedompol Pacitan, East Java (Fig.4) and the third in the collection of the National Museum of World Culture, Leiden in The Netherlands (Fig.5). It is possible that both the Wayang Beber in Wonosari and in Pacitan were formerly the heirloom of the palace which from generation to generation belonged to kings in Java. During the reign of Susuhunan Paku Buwono II, there was a rebellion called "Geger Pecinan. In this rebellion, Susuhunan Paku Buwono II was forced to flee to the Ponorogo area of East Java because of riots and the Kraton Kartasuro (kings palace) was captured by the reb

els. Then the servants and relatives of the king tried to save the heirlooms belonging to the palace, including boxes containing Wayang Beber. Some of the boxes were rescued and brought to Karangtalun, Pacitan and also to Wonosari, Gunung Kidul<sup>34</sup>.

Wayang Beber Wonosari contained eight scrolls, four of them telling the story of "Remeng Mangunjaya", while the story of the other four is unknown. The owner suggests that two scrolls could be a popular story in Java, named *Jaka Tarub*. He concludes this from one of the scenes on the scroll. The remaining two scrolls have not been opened: according to Wisto Utomo, opening of the scrolls could cause bad events to occur in the environment, so these two scrolls have stayed in rolled form till today. In Pacitan there are six scrolls which tell the story of "Jaka Kembang Kuning".



**Fig. 3** One of the scrolls of Wayang Beber Wonosari (photo: Indiria Maharsi, 25<sup>th</sup> July 2011).

<sup>34</sup> Pustaka Wisata Budaya (1981), p. 50.



**Fig. 4** One of the scrolls of Wayang Beber Pacitan (photo: Indiria Maharsi, 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012).



**Fig. 5** One of the scrolls of Wayang Beber Leiden (photo: Indiria Maharsi, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020).

Wayang Beber Wonosari is currently owned by the 15<sup>th</sup> generation descendant, Mr.

Wisto Utomo, while Wayang Beber Pacitan is owned by the 16<sup>th</sup> generation descendant, Mr.

Mangun. Apart from these two sets of scrolls in Indonesia there exists a third Wayang Beber in the Netherlands, in the collection of the Museum Volkenkunde Leiden, which is a part of Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen (NMVW) under the inventory numbers RV-360-5254 to RV-360-5259. Wayang Beber in Leiden tells the story of "Remeng Mangunjaya" as the one in Wonosari.

Wayang Beber Leiden was part of the collections of the Royal Cabinet of Rarities of King Willem II and subsequently became part of the NMVW collection in 1883.

There had been a scientific attempt towards the dating of the Wayang Beber Leiden executed by two Polish researchers, Tea Škrinjarić and Marina Pretković, who collaborated with Isamu Sakamoto on a project related to wayang beber in 2018. Samples obtained from the original wayang material were subjected to radiocarbon dating at the University of Tokyo. One sample (object number RV-360-5255) was dated between 1633 and 1669<sup>35</sup>. The wayang was also recently restored by Iri-na Tsjeroenova.

## 7 The stories of the puppets

The Wayang Beber in Wonosari eight scrolls are divided into two groups. The first is the four scrolls, which tell about Remeng Mangunjaya, and the second is the other four scrolls which still have no title. According to the owner, it might be that the untitled scrolls were a complete play once as well.

The four scrolls of Wayang Beber Wonosari contain four scenes or '*pejagong*' in Javanese. This means that there is a total of 16 *pejagong* for the entire set understood as one roll.

The Remeng Mangunjaya play tells about the journey of a character named Raden Panji Asmarabangun who leaves the kingdom and his wife to meditate on the edge of a mountain, seeking to gain higher knowledge. It is during this time that the name Raden Panji Asmarabangun is changed to Remeng Mangunjaya. Having achieved high knowledge, Remeng Mangunjaya returns to the kingdom and his wife, named Dewi Galuh Candrakirana, who had been left behind for so long. However, tragically, Remeng Mangunjaya has to take part in a contest held by Dewi Galuh Candrakirana's father. The competitors have to climb a rattan walkway in a ravine at Semnang. Besides that, he also fights several powerful enemies who intended to seize Dewi Galuh Candrakirana. The powerful enemies are King Klana, *Wewe Putih*, *Resi Puyangaking*, and *Patih Gajahgurito*. Finally, by extraordinary efforts, Remeng Mangunjaya, who has changed to Raden Panji Asmarabangun, is able to get his wife back.

Each scroll of *Jaka Kembang Kuning* wayang beber has four *pejagong* which hold the same story as the one in Wonosari. The six scrolls consist of a total of 24 *pejagong*. The story begins with the disappearance of Dewi Sekartaji from the Kediri palace. To find the goddess, the king of Kediri holds a contest in exchange for being married off to Dewi Sekartaji himself. One of the contestants is Raden Panji, who is disguised as a *kenstrung* (a musical instrument) player named Jaka Kembang Kuning. Finally, Jaka Kembang Kuning and two of his servants, Nolodermo and Tawangalun, manage to find Dewi Sekartaji when they are singing at the Tumenggungan market. Their attempts to get Dewi Sekartaji are greatly complicated, however, because many of their enemies seek to get her, too. After various events

<sup>35</sup> Bakhri (2018), p. 7

and fierce battles Jaka Kembang Kuning, who had turned into Raden Panji Asmarabangun, finally manages to get the goddess.

Both stories, Remeng Mangunjaya and Jaka Kembang Kuning, have the same protagonist characters: Raden Panji Asmarabangun and Dewi Sekartaji or Dewi Galuh Candrakirana.

The six scrolls of Wayang Beber in Leiden tell the same story as those in Wayang Beber Wonosari: the story of Remeng Mangunjaya.

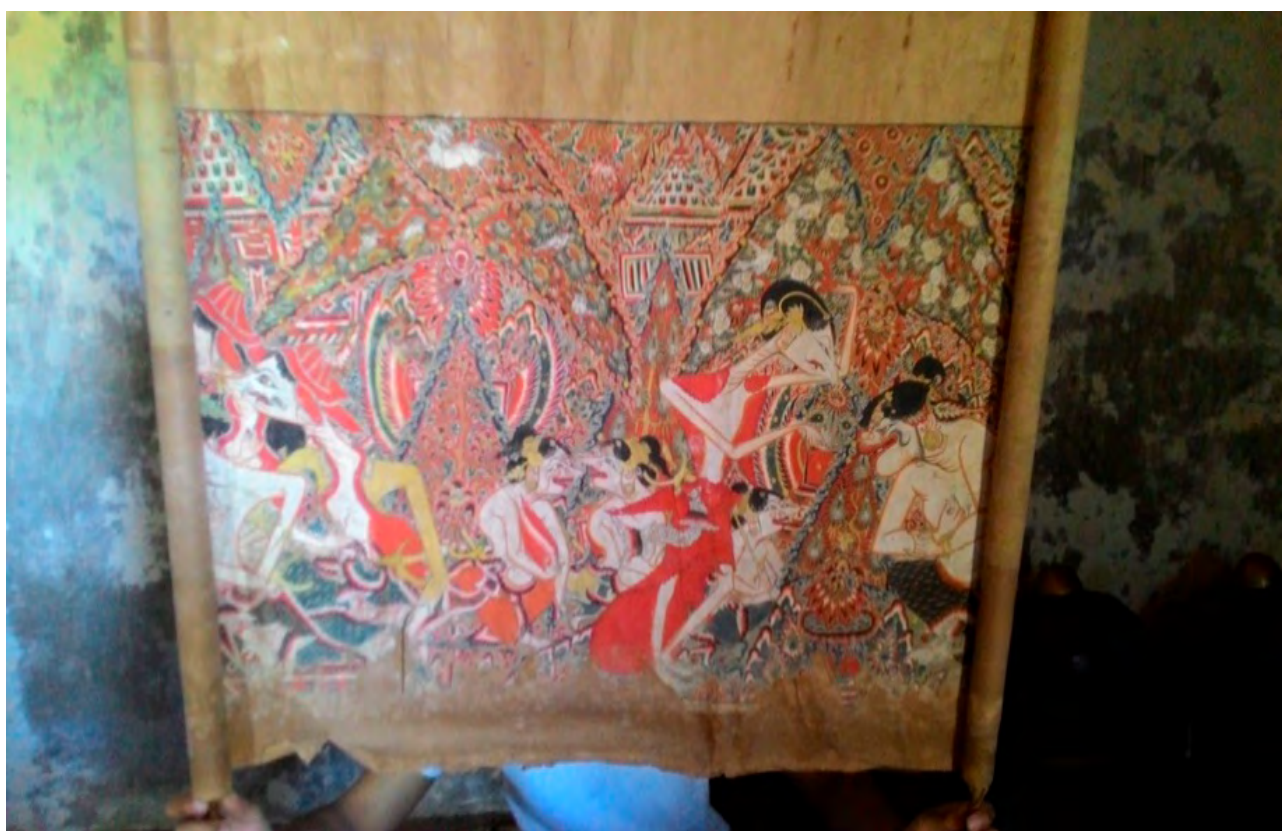
## **8 Wayang Beber Wonosari and Wayang Beber Pacitan: stylistic comparison, as well as a remark on the Wayang Beber Leiden**

Wayang Beber Pacitan, made in 1614, is older than Wayang Beber Wonosari, which was made in 1660<sup>36</sup>.

The picture-style of Wayang Beber Pacitan is rather “crowded”: the characters are shown as the foreground, while the background is so full of ornaments that the shapes of the figures virtually disappear in the patterns and colours (Fig. 6).

Wayang Beber Wonosari is “simpler” in its pictorial style, the background only contains important elements such as houses, trees, and animals, which are not over-decorated and is otherwise empty. This makes the characters more readily visible (Fig. 7).

As mentioned above, there are six rolls of Wayang Beber in Leiden in the Netherlands featuring the Remeng Mangunjaya play. This play is the same as the Wayang Beber in Wonosari, thus the characters are the same and the painting style is the same, too; however, in Leiden we find two scrolls more than



**Fig. 6** Wayang Beber Pacitan has more complicated picture, particularly on the reverse. (photo: Indiria Maharsi, 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012)

<sup>36</sup> Sayid (1980), pp. 11, 12.

in Wonosari and the depiction of the *Remeng Mangunjaya* story in the Wayang Beber Leiden is different from that in Wonosari, in that the

scenes depicted in each scroll have a different visual presentation of the storyline from *Remeng Mangunjaya* in Wonosari (Fig. 8).



**Fig. 7** Wayang Beber Wonosari has more simple pictures. There are fewer ornaments in the background, only the supporting important elements (photo: Indiria Maharsi, 25<sup>th</sup> July 2011)



**Fig. 8** Leiden Wayang Beber showing the style and the strata of some paint layers (photo: Patricia Engel)



It would be certainly very interesting and would surely deepen our understanding of wayang beber to go into details of their style and “visualization”, how they were influenced by previous works and how they, in their turn, influenced subsequent works in this genre, beyond the lapidary explanation of the use of space on the bark cloth scrolls, however, this would go beyond the limits of this publication.

## 9 Wayang material and its resulting use

Indonesia has many types of puppets which are made of different material (see [chapter 3](#)). The material used in making Wayang Beber is the bark of the mulberry tree, *Broussonetia papyrifera*. There are two different names for this tree. In Ponorogo, East Java, it is called the *Gedhog* tree and the 'paper' made from the bark of this tree is called *Dluwang Gedhog* or *Dlancang Ponorogo* (Dlancang: Paper). While in Bandung, West Java, it is called the *Saeh* tree and the 'paper' made of this *Saeh* tree is called *Daluang* (Table 2).

**Table 2**

*An overview of names related to Javanese bark cloth material, places and trees*

Place	Tree	Name of the “paper”	Historical use
Ponorogo, East Java	<i>Gedhog</i> tree	<i>Dluwang Gedhog</i> or <i>Dlancang Ponorogo</i> (Dlancang: Paper).	Susuhunan Paku Buwono II, of the Islamic Mataram kingdom, ordered Wayang Beber made with the play <i>Panji Remeng Mangunjaya</i> to accompany the Wayang Beber play <i>Jaka Kembang Kuning</i>
Bandung, West Java	<i>Saeh</i> tree	Daluang	

then the bark from the trunk is peeled off by first removing the thin outer layer from the bark. Then the bark taken from the tree trunk is placed on a board and beaten so that it becomes flat and wide. After it is deemed sufficiently flat, it is dried in the sun and can

In English this tree is called paper mulberry tree and is known to conservators as the source of kozo fibre material.

As mentioned before, Ponorogo in East Java was the most prominent place of Dluwang production when Susuhunan Paku Buwono II ordered a wayang beber made with the *Premeng Mangunjaya* play to accompany the *Jaka Kembang Kuning* wayang beber play that had been made previously. The Remeng Mangunjaya play was also made with Ponorogo bark cloth material.<sup>37</sup>

According to Indiria Maharsi’s survey in 2019, although the last bark cloth maker in Ponorogo had discontinued his cloth-making business, since the *Gedhog* tree is still readily available in the region, the local boarding school made their own bark cloth material simply to remind of this ages-old local tradition. However, it seems that Maharsi’s research allowed the conservators to just get the last bits of authentic information so important for their understanding of the material of the artifacts. The procedure of producing daluang is a step-by-step procedure: First, the trunk of the *Gedhog* tree is cut as needed,

actually be used as soon as it is dry (Setiyono and Imam, community leaders, Tegalsari Village, Jetis sub-district, Ponorogo Regency, East Java Province, in personal interview, 9<sup>th</sup> August 2019), ([Fig. 9](#)).

<sup>37</sup> *Cultural Tourism Library* (1981), p. 22.



**Fig. 9** Indiria Maharsi, Imam, dan Setiyono in a dialogue about Dluwang Gedog, Ponorogo, East Java (photo: Indiria Maharsi, 9<sup>th</sup> August 2019).

In addition to Ponorogo, Indiria Maharsi also conducted an interview with the Daluang maker (“Toekang Saeh” in Sundanese) named Ahmad Mufid Sururi at his living place in Bandung, West Java. He explained the sequence of Daluang making process is as follows: the first step is cutting a stem of the *Saeh* tree about one meter long. The cut stem is cleaned of the thin outer bark because only the white inner bark of the tree is used in the process. After the outer skin is removed, the inner bark of the tree is peeled off. After peeling off the bark is soaked in water (“atmosphere temperature” water, not hot or cold) for 24 hours. After the soaking is complete, the “forging” process is performed by spreading the bark on a wooden plank with a flat surface and hitting it with a punch or *pemeupueh* in Sundanese. During the forging process, the bark gradually becomes thinner and wider. When it appears to be good enough in terms of thickness and width it is put into water and squeezed. The next process is the fermentation process, which involved wrapping the bark with banana tree leaves and having it stored for three to five nights. This fermentation process is to “further glue” the bark

layer. After the fermentation is complete, the bark is dried in a traditional way, by attaching the bark to the banana tree trunk until it dries. The last step of preparing the Daluang to its use – to be either written or drawn on – is to smooth the surface of the bark when it is completely dry. The smoothing is achieved by spreading the bark on a smooth ceramic board and rubbing it with a coconut shell. The side of the “mashed bark” is the side that is exposed to the sun, the other side of the bark cloth sticks to the banana tree trunk during the drying-process. After all these steps are completed, the Daluang is ready for use (Ahmad Mufid Sururi, Toekang Saeh, Jl. Bagusrangin, Bandung, West Java Province, a personal interview, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020), (Fig. 10).



**Fig. 10** Indiria Maharsi, Ahmad Mufid Sururi and Edi Jatmiko in a laboratory of Toekang Saeh Bandung, West Java (photo: Indiria Maharsi, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020).

Comparing the two descriptions makes it obvious that the West Javanese bark cloth normally differs from the East Javanese

bark cloth by three features: the fermentation, the polishing and the treatment with banana and coconut products. It would be worthwhile to see if these features can be detected with today's analytical methods. This might in fact not be too important for the conservation of wayang beber, as there are – to our knowledge – only these three sets of scrolls, but it might be of interest in the context of researching other Indonesian heritage made of bark cloth.

For establishing a department of art conservation at Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta (Indonesia Institute of the Arts of Yogyakarta), or ISI Yogyakarta, it is over important to bring together a collection of knowledge of traditional methods of making material and of samples of the material itself. This collection can only be brought together by local scholars, who not only know the language (some terms are in local language and not in Bahasa Indonesia), but are also able to cross refer some information which they collect with their background knowledge.

Such a collection is now established at ISI, Yogyakarta. Material such as the particular “kulit” (cow hide, made in the particular manner), old recipes how to make the colours out of the local plants (today synthetic paint is used, but the old people still have the knowledge which plants were used), bark cloth samples made in East and in West Java, etc. This collection especially designed for future conservation activities may be complemented with information that can be provided by the team in Austria with the mindset of a trained conservator.

While microscopic pictures were provided earlier – for example by Sue Beauman Murphy and Siegfried Rempel “A Study of the Quality of Japanese Papers Used in Conser-

vation”<sup>38</sup> – the documentation of the particular wayang beber scrolls to be preserved and their physical features seemed meaningful.

The bark cloth material brought to Krems showed the structure of the device used to rest the material on while hammering (Figs. 11 and 12).



**Fig. 11** Surface structure of the bark cloth material brought to Krems (photo: Patricia Engel, Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020)



**Fig. 12** Structure of the bark cloth material brought to Krems in transmitted light (photo: Patricia Engel, 13<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2020)

<sup>38</sup> Murphy / Rempel (1985) and Barkcloth Produktion (1990).

Bark cloth material it is found around the globe in numerous cultures and under various names, such as amate in Mexico, tapa in Polinesia or papyrus in Egypt to name only a few. In Indonesian diverse landscape of culture, it was used for numerous purpose, not only for the making of wayang beber.<sup>39</sup> In the Vienna “Weltmuseum” there exists a large collection of Indonesian bark cloth from different sources and collectors which until now unfortunately have not been sufficiently investigated or documented (personal communication with R. Zobl), (Fig. 13).



**Fig. 13** Roswitha Zobl showing a Vienesese daluang sample at Weltmuseum Collection; in particular a bark cloth piece from Indonesia (WMW, VO\_3717), which was produced in Sulawesi (photo: Patricia Engel 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019)

<sup>39</sup> Bark cloth: <https://tapa.gla.ac.uk/> and in particular <https://www.thetextileatlas.com/craft-stories/barkcloth-indonesia> [7<sup>th</sup> January 2022]; Raymond (1934), pp. 229-243; bark cloth: (1990); Bark cloth <https://anthropology.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/217/2018/02/Aragon-barkcloth-in-Sulawesi-color-Expedition-1990.pdf> [7<sup>th</sup> January 2022]

Ten bark cloth items from Java (inventory numbers: WMW, VO\_8648 - VO\_8657) appeared to be very similar to the material used for Wayang Beber. These bark cloths and many other ethnographic objects from Java were given to the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph I in 1871 by J. F. W. van der Willige von Schmidt auf Altenstadt and came to the museum in 1879. This collection comprises 108 objects.

In the catalogue lists the above-mentioned ten bark cloth items and states that they are described as samples of wrapping paper, made from the tree "Dloenang", five pieces in the first stage of processing, five smaller pieces of finer quality (personal communication with R. Zobl).

The person of the Dutch donator could be Jonkheer François Willem van der Willige von Schmidt auf Altenstadt, who was born 1844 in 's-Gravenhage (Den Haag) in the Netherlands and died in Indonesia in 1878 in Meester Cornelis, Kampong Makkassar (<https://www.genealogieonline.nl/de/stamboom-driessen/I213329.php>).

There is a French label written directly on the piece with pencil. The label is not easy to read but it seems to tell that the item comes from Tomori (Celebes), that the material is bark of a tree and that it is used for making clothes. In the corresponding catalogue list "Tomari" is noted as provenance.

It was collected in the course of the Austrian Imperial circumnavigation of the world with the sail frigate SMS Novara ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMS\\_Novara\\_\(1850\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMS_Novara_(1850))).

The Novara expedition of 1857 - 1859 was the first large-scale scientific, around-the-world mission of the Austrian Imperial navy during the reign of the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph I. The expedition was accompanied by a group of seven scientists who col-

lected a huge amount of botanical, zoological and cultural material that mostly became part of the Austrian museums, especially the natural-history museum. (Parts of the collections of the natural-history museum were separated in 1928 to found an own ethnological museum - the later Weltmuseum Vienna).

Preparation for the Novara research journey was made by the "Imperial Academy of Sciences in Vienna" and by specialized scholars under direction of the geologist Ferdinand von Hochstetter and the zoologist Georg von Frauenfeld.

Visited locations of this famous expedition included for example Singapore, Batavia, Manila, Sydney.

Some good pictures in transmitted light are also provided in Recent Advances in Barkcloth Conservation and Technical Analysis Proceedings from the symposium held at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2018<sup>40</sup> (Fig. 14).



**Fig. 14** Pattern of the bark cloth in transmitted light, fig 2 c taken from file:///C:/Users/paengel/Downloads/Collaborative-Efforts-to-Preserve-Wayang-Beber-in-Indonesia.pdf

So far, the team had strived for a deeper understanding of the carrier material, but

<sup>40</sup> Barkcloth Conservation and Technical Analysis (2018)

the paint itself was not in the focus of their research so far. One of the questions still is: was there a surface sizing applied either before or after painting the image? The answer to this question might be a significant one when it comes to consolidation of flaking colour.

Furthermore, the sticks and the box are an integral part of the wayang beber material. They are dealt with in the chapter about preservation in more detail.

## **10 First conservation approach – The study of the storage conditions of the three Wayang Beber**

Traditionally wayang beber scrolls are stored in a solid, strong, and thick teak wood box with a tightly fitting heavy lid made of the same sort of wood and in the same strong style. Teak wood is dense and hard for wood borers to come through. Both Wayang Beber sets of scrolls in Indonesia are stored this way, while the Wayang Beber in Leiden is stored in Western conservation style, rolled up on cardboard rolls protected with a smooth thin paper and kept in acid-free boxes of proper dimensions in the general climatized storage area of the museum, which is the typical cool European style storage. The scrolls in Indonesia are wrapped in cloth and incenses and peacock feathers are packed into the box together with the Wayang scrolls.

The first conservation measure is the tight rolling of the scrolls. This prevents accidental pressing creases into the material by users.

The cloth is another protection, serving against dust and light.

The use of peacock feathers has been explained in two ways. One person explained

that it attracts pests – they would eat the feather rather than the Wayang scrolls – and another person said it is a sort of spell protecting the Wayang. Both could be the case (Fig.15).

The herbs obviously serve as insect repellents. Furthermore, the donation of the herbs is a form of appreciation for the valuable material, the nature and the sur-

rounding environment. According to the Indonesian scholars it is a mixture of tree saps called frankincense (the styrax species) or benzoin. The Austrian scholar observed that it is a flower bunch which is refreshed each time the box is opened. In the exchange action the old dry herbs that had been there before are burnt. Unfortunately, she was not able to identify the names of the flowers.



**Fig 15** The segments of the scrolls and herbs are well visible: The box (kotak) of wayang beber Gelaran with open lid. Around 1902 in the house of Wahidin Soedirohoesoedo in Yogyakarta. Von Kassian Cephas - Leiden University Library, KITLV, image 3955 Collection page Southeast Asian & Caribbean Images (KITLV), <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=40512198>

The wooden box and its lid are tied together with ropes made of cloth, and finally several neatly folded pieces of cloths are placed on the box as additional protection for the scrolls stored in the box.

Apart from being a place to store the scrolls safely away, the wooden box is also used during performances as a stand for the

scrolls. On each end of the upper area there are two small holes called *ceblokan*, which serve as a place to rest the end of the sticks of the wayang beber scrolls during the play. This is actually another preservation method, because it reduces the risk of deformation, stress and tearing of the bark cloth and flaking of paint, due to the fact that the material is

kept steady. Furthermore, it leaves one hand of the *dalang* free to point at the scene with the stick (*seligi*) safely (Fig. 16).



**Fig. 16** Wayang Beber show in Wonosari. The scroll of wayang is unrolled and stuck in the wooden box photo: Kadek Primayudi: 15<sup>th</sup> December 2019)

The box with the scrolls has its own room. The room used to store the wooden box is separated from the other rooms. The room has small windows and doors which are equipped with a long cloth as a cover against sunlight. The high roof guarantees that the room has a good air circulation. Good air circulation is a simple and effective method to prevent mould growth. The roof also shades the outer walls and keeps them cool, which, again, means the room does not heat up too much. The room is kept clean permanently. Incense is burnt on a regular basis in the room to prevent insects to habitat there permanently (Fig. 17). Equally regularly, the box is opened and the Wayang Beber scrolls are carefully laid out with the aim of preserving the durability of the material. This is not only a monitoring action to check insect infestation, but most probably is, again, a measure against mould growth, because by opening the scrolls humidity within the material can escape and the dry bark cloth

does not attract as many microorganisms.

It should be added that the temperature and the humidity are high, in particular in Wonosari region, but – in contrast to places in Europe, temperature and humidity do not fluctuate so much. This is a clear benefit for the material of the wayangs, as the stress and strain caused by the change of the amount of water in the material, which is one of the biggest problems for European conservators, is virtually absent there.



**Fig. 17** Mrs. Rubiyem, the owner of Wayang Beber Wonosari (the mother of Mr. Wisto Utomo) is praying in the room where the scrolls of Wayang Beber Wonosari rest in their wooden box (photo: Indiria Maharsi: 25<sup>th</sup> July 2011).

It all shows that every effort – in terms of the construction and organisation of the place in which the Wayang Beber scrolls were stored – was traditionally put into preserving them in the best possible way. It should be said that modern boxing as it is practiced in museums is not necessarily a good conservation method in tropical countries, as the most dangerous pests, the termites, can very rapidly destroy unattended boxed works of

art.<sup>41</sup> In contrast, the use of these teak boxes combined with permanent monitoring does contribute to the preservation of the scrolls.

Another conservation aspect is the careful handling. During the Wayang Beber performance, the role of the puppeteer is to tell the story, while the one who takes the scroll, opens it, unfolds it and then closes it again is the owner of the material. This means the owner shows his care not only when the scrolls are stored but also during the performance (Fig. 18).



**Fig. 18** Handling the scroll during a performance where old scrolls of Wayang Beber Wonosari are used to entertain special guests (photo: Patricia Engel)

The method used by the owner to open and close rolls has its own technique which is very careful, very efficient, and effective, reducing the risk of damage that might occur.

This is true despite the small difference in the way of handling the scrolls in the two places in Java, which concerns the posi-

tion of the puppeteer when telling the story. In Wonosari, the puppeteer sits in front of the puppet scrolls with his back to the audience, while in Pacitan, the position of the puppeteer is behind the scroll, so that the *dalang* faces the audiences. Even though in Wonosari the puppeteer sits with his back to the audience during the performance, the audience can still see the Wayang Beber scrolls being unrolled because the position of the scrolls is quite high, as can be seen in fig. 18.

## 12 An altogether new preservation effort

Similar to the practice of using microfilms or digital images instead of handling original manuscripts in large libraries, Indiria Maharsi painted a copy of the Wayang Beber Wonosari for use in subsequent performances. This was particularly important, given that the old scrolls are already damaged, and an artefact, once damaged, continues to decay and break more rapidly.

For the duplication of the *Remeng Mangunjaya* Wayang Beber Wonosari scrolls (138 cm long, 18 cm wide and 27 cm high, with a box 13 cm wide and 8 cm high), were copied on modern paper with modern watercolours by Indiria Maharsi and handed over to Mrs. Rubiyem and Mr Wisto Utomo (Fig. 19). The copy, consisting of four scrolls of *Remeng Mangunjaya* Wayang Beber Wonosari (Fig. 20) and the wooden box as the storage device, was an exact duplicate of the original. This copy of Wayang Beber is currently being used for training and performances held in several places by Wayang Beber Wonosari puppeteer named Nony Tia Fatmawati who is the daughter of Mr. Wisto Utomo.

<sup>41</sup> Engel (2021)





**Fig. 19** The handover of four copies of the *Remeng Mangunjaya Wayang Beber Wonosari* along with a wooden box to store them – from Indiria Maharsi to Wisto Utomo, the owner of the *Wayang Beber Wonosari* (photo: Isdayani, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016)

Indiria Maharsi has also written handbooks (a set of story books of *Remeng Mangunjaya Wayang Beber*) in three languages: Javanese, Indonesian, and English. The story is traditionally told in Javanese. According to Mr. Wisto Utomo, the old handbook of *Wayang Beber Wonosari* was lost during a performance in a city, therefore its reproduction was a meaningful step. The fact that the books are now written in two languages other than Javanese allows not only persons speaking old Javanese but also international audiences to participate in wayang performances.

Efforts in the context of developing *Wayang Beber*, both *Wonosari* and *Pacitan*, have been made in the form of making *Wayang Beber* illustration books and *Wayang Beber* animation pictures (Figs. 21-23).



**Fig. 20** The four duplicate scrolls of *Remeng Mangunjaya Wayang Beber* (photo: Indiria Maharsi, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014)



**Fig. 21** The Wayang Beber illustration book (Indiria Maharsi, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2018). (Up)

**Fig. 22** Animation picture of Remeng Mangunjaya Wayang Beber Wonosari (Indiria Maharsi, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013) (left)

**Fig. 23** Animation picture of Jaka Kembang Kuning Wayang Beber Pacitan (Indiria Maharsi, 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017) (down)



### 13 Approaching a conservation concept and a condition survey

To gain a better understanding of the Wayang Beber in Indonesia the team first wanted to see the original items, so as to be able to arrive to a conservation concept for their tangible elements.

Previous publications on the conservation of Wayang Beber, in particular the one in Pacitan, targeted on the documentation of the use of the bark cloth material as such<sup>42</sup>, description of the function of the wayang beber<sup>43</sup>, provided analysis results, and a general overview of what was needed in terms of preservation<sup>44</sup> and involved a photographic documentation and re-creation by the application of 3-Dimensional Computer Graphics (3DCG) technology as a tool to reproduce and save the art digitally<sup>45</sup> and one took an artistic approach<sup>46</sup> but did not intend to identify a conservation treatment for the actual scrolls which was the core idea of the team of authors of this publication.

Therefore, it seemed advisable to complement it by bringing together information, experience and knowledge from conservators who are responsible for the preservation of bark cloth items in Vienna, Roswitha Zobl at the *Weltmuseum* and Andrea Donau working at the Papyrus Collection of the Austrian National Library and from the conservation team at Leiden collection of the National Museum of World Culture, Leiden The Netherlands. This was done by visits and personal commu-

nication in the years 2019 and 2020<sup>47</sup>.

As a next step, the team tried to compare as many data as possible brought together by their own survey, concerning

1. the material and its state and
2. the storage conditions of the three wayangs and their impact on the state of the material, if any.

Additionally, a conservator's documentation should be made: on the one hand, to show how such a work is approached in Europe and, on the other, to learn if this was a meaningful approach also for Indonesia. The documentation work started with collecting information on the dimensions of the artefacts.

As mentioned above, the two Wayang Beber in Indonesia are stored in boxes made of teak wood. The size of the wooden boxes is about 138 cm long, 18 cm wide and 27 cm high, with a 13 cm-wide lid<sup>48</sup>.

The length of the wooden box used as a place to store the six scrolls of Pacitan Wayang Beber is about 200 cm (Tri Hartanto, Dalang Wayang Beber Jaka Kembang Kuning, Gedempol, Pacitan, East Java Province, in a Personal Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021).

The size of the bark cloth found in Wayang Beber Wonosari is different in each roll and listed in detail in [Table 3](#).

It should be mentioned that it was sometimes not possible to establish where exactly the measures were taken, still the figures acquired already represent more accurate information than ever before. This reflects the general "tension" in this procedure of developing a conservation concept between the wish to understand the material by the Austrian scholar and the clear focus on the story

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42 Sakamoto (2017).

43 Sejarah (2012).

44 Misa et al. (2018) and in particular Bakhri et al. (2018)

45 Banung (2015).

46 <https://wayangbeberproject.wordpress.com/about-the-project/>

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47 The visits became possible thanks to an ASEA Uninet SP24 stipend

48 Maharsi (2014), p. 47.

(the story line itself rather than its pictorial presentation) by the Indonesian scholars. This “struggle”, even though it seemed orig-

inally to be an obstacle, proved to be an utmost important observation in the striving for a particular Indonesian conservation theory.

**Table 3**

*Dimensions of the scrolls and the image of Wayang Beber Wonosari*

Story	Scroll	Length of bark cloth [cm]	Width of bark cloth [cm]	Height of image [cm]
<i>Remeng Mangunjaya</i> Wayang Beber Wonosari	First Scroll	350	71	51
	Second Scroll	342	70	48
	Third Scroll	338	70	48
	Fourth Scroll	335	70	48
<i>Jaka Tarub</i> Wayang Beber Wonosari	First Scroll	334	64	54
	Second Scroll	334	64	54

Wayang Beber Pacitan is currently owned by the family of Mr. Mangun. As explained above, the dluwang for the Wayang Beber Pacitan comes from Ponorogo. According to the information given by Tri Hartanto, the puppeteer of Wayang Beber Pacitan who is also the son of Mr. Mangun, the size of each of the six scrolls of *Jaka Kembang Kuning* Wayang Beber Pacitan is approximately 400 cm in length and 75 cm in height. The size of the wooden box used to store the Pacitan Wayang Beber scrolls is about 200 cm (Tri Hartanto, Dalang Wayang Beber Jaka Kembang Kuning, Gedompol, Pacitan, East Java Province, in a personal interview, 11th June 2021) <sup>49</sup>(Table 4).

Measures of *Jaka Kembang Kuning* Wayang Beber Pacitan are as follows:

**Table 4**

*Approximate dimensions of the Wayang Beber Pacitan*

Story	Length of bark cloth [cm]	Width of bark cloth [cm]
<i>Jaka Kembang Kuning</i>	400	75

<sup>49</sup> In contrast to Wonosari, during their visit in Pacitan the team was not shown the original wayang beber but its modern copy.

The Pacitan scrolls made from dluwang are thicker than the Wayang Beber Wonosari made of daluang. Perhaps, this difference in thickness was due to the different techniques in the manufacturing process of bark cloth, or it was due to the particular features of the craft at the particular time and place (after all, the wayang in Pacitan is some 50 years older) or it was simply that the cloth maker chose to do it differently. Sakamoto<sup>50</sup> gives the thickness of 0.07mm.

According to usual European approach, not only the dimensions of the bark cloth would be identified, but the conservators would also note whether or not the cloth had been made in one piece or if it is composed of several pieces, and, if the latter is the case, how large the individual elements are; the conservators would – in case the scrolls are a collection of single sheets – understand how the individual pieces are combined, which element lays over or under another element, how wide they overlap, what adhesive was used to make them hold together. The conservator would make a series of pictures in visible light falling onto the surface of the

<sup>50</sup> Sakamoto (2018).

wayang and transmitted as well as falling at a shallow angle, which would appropriately bring out the surface texture. Also, UV examination, which is another easy-to-handle low-cost survey method, would possibly reveal various glues, varnishes and binding media as well as repairs. Furthermore, close up photos would allow for better understanding of the paint layer.

Of course, the sticks, their proportions and material and the manner in which they are made and in which they are attached to the bark cloth, would also be an object of survey.

There would be at least the question raised if it was possible to open all the scrolls. Previously it was mentioned that it was quite possible to open the scrolls that are said to hold spells, in case a priest is around.

The systematic photo documentation which accompanies any documentation of the state of the works of art to be preserved and any step of treatment as well as a detailed justification for any measure taken, also serves as a simple and effective way to observe possible further decay of the material in the future. While digitisation projects also involve taking photos of the scrolls, the conservators' eye and mindset require different kind of photos, which in particular depict what is relevant for the preservation and safeguarding of the scrolls.

To be fair, the authors should mention here that it was not only the CoVid pandemic that virtually stopped the team in the middle of their work, but it is also extremely difficult to gain access to the original scrolls, even for Indonesian scholars, let alone for Austrians: on the one hand, because the places are remote, and reaching the place where the Pacitan Wayang is stored in particular involves a challenging car ride, and, on the other hand,

the owners are wary, feeling deeply responsible for the safety of their heritage, and need to get familiar with any person approaching their treasures well before they open their scrolls to them. Therefore, P. Engel was not able to execute her survey in Wonosari which had been originally planned as a teaching activity, and the entire team did not get a chance to see the Wayang Beber Pacitan. However, Engel was shown the original scrolls in Wonosari and was even allowed to touch it, which gave her an important impression of the elasticity of the material, which she could interpret as a conservator.

Another massive shortcoming – at least for the time being – is the particular scientific analytical support for the conservator, however, this is already on the way: the team found Prof. Dr. Dwi Pranowo, at UGM, who will establish the lab needed to identify pigments, dyes, and – most importantly – binding media and varnishes of all sorts in co-operation with the team of conservation experts at ISI, Yogyakarta.

### **Colour/paint, primer and varnish**

So far, no survey of the paint layer, the possible priming or varnish could be done. An interview attempted by Patricia Engel with the puppet player in Wonosari with the help of Dona Hapsari cannot be considered useful, as information was obtained by the puppet player, but talking to other people other material was thought more likely.

However, a hypothesis could be put forward to suggest that the traditional colour used for wayang beber and wayang kulit might have been the same or at least some parts of the palette might overlap. It is almost certain that local soil and plants were used

to make them into colour for painting and they would not have varied so much over the comparatively short time span between the painting of wayang beber and that of wayang kulit. An interview Patricia Engel had with an old wayang kulit maker revealed that he still knew how to make certain plants into dyes<sup>51</sup>. However, the binding media might be different in wayang beber and wayang wulit, as the surface of the smooth buffalo skin might need another binding media than the hygroscopic bark cloth.

As wayang kulit puppets exist in far larger quantity than wayang beber puppets and as wayang kulit puppets are found in museums virtually all over the world and have received conservation treatment, more analyses were done and published on these paint layers. This information might be useful when it comes to first hypothesis about the colours on wayang beber scrolls.

In wayang kulit “pigments include vermilion, indigo, orpiment, yellow ochre, lamp black, and bone ash white.”<sup>52</sup> Lately Magdalena Szymańska submitted her thesis *Zagadnienia związane z ochroną konserwatorską pięciu, jawajskich lalek teatru cieni wayang kulit z kolekcji Państwowego Muzeum Etnograficznego w Warszawie* in three volumes at the University for Fine Arts in Warsaw. In volume I she reports on colouring rules from page 20 onward and about the pigments used from page 30 onward. Volume II gives a detailed survey of the puppets and volume III provides the stratigraphy of the paint layers and other analytical results of her pigment analysis. Also, Mellema, R. L. *Wayang Puppets: Carving, Co-*

<sup>51</sup> Language barriers did not allow for a comprehensive result of this conversation, because such interview must be lead with someone who speaks the language well and understands the topic of old painters’ recipes.

<sup>52</sup> Gowers (1975); Steward (2009), p 5.

louring Symbolism. Bulletin 315. Amsterdam: Royal Tropical Institute, 1989. 84 pages. Illustrations, index, bibliography. Paper A20.00; ISBN 90 6832 026 2.

Tannenbaum’s (Tannenbaum 2017) list of colours for wayang kulit are presented in table 5, which is in her publication’s Table 3-2. “Colors and ingredients for traditional wayang kulit painting:

**Table 5**

*Some pigments identified by Tannenbaum (Tannenbaum 2017, 65)*

Color	Ingredient/Pigment <sup>h</sup>
White	Charred animal bone
Black	Chinese lampblack <sup>i</sup>
Red	Chinese red <sup>j</sup>
Yellow	Yellow ochre <sup>k</sup> , atal stone (watu atal)
Blue	Indigo

*Pigment sources: Angst, Mantan, Mellema, Sagio, Sanjata, Sutar, Widodo.*

*i Chinese lampblack is made from burning oil, fat, or resin at a wick, generally in a shallow pan to create a ‘lampblack’ or a form of black pigment or ink for writing or painting (Winter 1983).*

*j One may assume that ‘Chinese red’ here meant red pigments shipped in from China. An assumption may also be made that this would consist of a mixture which included a fair amount of hematite, which had been used by Chinese craftsmen in decorative paints since the Neolithic age (Jin 2010).*

*k Ocher is defined as an earthy usually red or yellow and often impure iron ore used as a pigment<sup>53</sup>*

There is also a strict canon of mixtures suggestive of the European instructions in Medieval miniature painters’ manuals, which describe in detail what colours to mix in what percentages to arrive at a certain third colour. There is also a strict rule about the sequence of the application of the colours, and some sort of the latter might also have been applied in the case of wayang beber.

“Binders for the paint and white bone ash ground typically include fish glue, carpen-

<sup>53</sup> Merriam-Webster (2016); Tannenbaum (2017), p. 65.

ter's glue, ash from burned rattan (used as a lye), and sometimes egg"<sup>54</sup>.

Tannenbaum also reports on some binding media variations deriving from plants (Tannenbaum, 2017, 64), however, she does not provide detailed information on the sort of tree or the ways of making the glue and, in any case, there will be no way around a scientific analysis of the paint layer of wayang beber, in the course of the conservation because it is by no means likely that the same binding media is used for both colour mixes, the one used for painting on a bark cloth and the one on a skin. This hypothesis is supported by Christiane von Reumonts when she identified protein glue being the binding media for wayang kulit paint before the 1990s<sup>55</sup>.

In any case, both instrumental analysis and interviews with the still living old craftsmen must be done as soon as possible by the scholars of ISI Yogyakarta to preserve this old knowledge and skills and support information collected from the old people with scientific findings.

◇

Usually understanding the material is one of the pre-requirements of a condition survey. In this case we had to attempt such a survey without conclusive understanding of all material aspects.

The first striking observation was that the two sets of wayang beber scrolls still existing in Indonesia seem to be in a better condition than the scrolls in Leiden. It was suggested as a hypothesis that the humid warm climate would have led to mould and insect attacks, however, the constant care would have obviously prevented it. The big differ-

ence between the scrolls in Indonesia and those in the Netherlands is the good flexibility of the scrolls in Wonosari and the rigid stiffness of those in Leiden. Patricia Engel was not able to see the scrolls in Pacitan. Flexibility of the material, however, in general contributes to the long life of a work of art in question.

There could be several explanations, one of them being that the Wayang Beber in Leiden is older, that it was in bad condition already when it was bought and brought to the Netherlands, or, and this is the most likely: that it was restored heavily in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the dry air in Europe is responsible for the rigidity of the bark cloth material.

However, it was the poor condition of the two sets of scrolls in Wonosari and Pacitan that gave rise to the idea of developing a conservation concept for them.

The main – and quite expected – damage comes from bending the bark cloth, and rolling it open and close over centuries, which resulted in cracks and tears and losses of the bark cloth material. This might be the reason for the fact that at least the one scroll Patricia Engel was allowed to see closely was backed with a textile meant to hold it together. The handling and rolling and unrolling are furthermore the reason for some flaking off of the paint layer, in particular in the areas of the tears and cracks.

Interestingly, some tears do not go – as it could be expected – in parallel to the sticks that hold the bark cloth roll on either ends, that is, along the vertical line as one looks at the scrolls, but at a 90-degree angle to this line. A hypothesis to explain this direction is that the bark cloth material hangs loose for about a meter when handled during the performance. These horizontal tears can be seen on [Figures 24](#) and [25](#).

<sup>54</sup> Steward (2009), p. 6.

<sup>55</sup> Reumonts (2017).



**Fig 24** The example of damage found in one of the scrolls of Wayang Beber Wonosari. Some parts of the scrolls are torn. (Indiria Maharsi: 25<sup>th</sup> July 2011)



**Fig 25** A close up of the same area shows some creases but also the long fibres still reaching over them. The photo was made during the visit to Wonosari while Patricia Engel tried to feel the flexibility of the material with her fingers

Apart from the cracks, there are also some lacunae along the edges of the scrolls.

It cannot be said for sure whether or not colours also faded, as long as we do not know their composition for sure or at least find any evidence of a previous hue, for example, in areas protected from light.

The surface debris are of minor relevance in comparison to the main damage.

The condition survey of wayang beber Pacitan was done by Indiria Maharsi (Fig. 26). The scrolls in Pacitan are in worse condition than the scrolls in Wonosari. Some parts of the scrolls are torn, folded, there is dust, the



**Fig. 26** Example of the damage found in one of the scrolls of Wayang Beber Pacitan. There is a lacuna and some patches around the edges (Indiria Maharsi, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017)



colour is starting to disappear and one part of one scroll, corresponding to a large area, is missing. The part that was lost due to tearing had been patched with paper. However, it is unfortunate that the paper used for patching is not dluwang although it has almost the same colour as the original scroll. The same condition in Pacitan's Wayang Beber does indeed seem to require the same handling as Wonosari's Wayang Beber in terms of its conservation efforts.

Apart from the personal survey of the scrolls and their environment, a search for older-dated photos was meant to help understand the previous appearance and the decay rate (Figs. 27, 28).



In file:///C:/Users/paengel/Downloads/Collaborative-Efforts-to-Preserve-Wayang-Beber-in-Indonesia.pdf another picture of the Wayang Beber Pacitan taken in 2006 is shown.

Wayang Beber Leiden was lately restored by Irina Tsjeroenova who took a minimal approach in her action and focused on the state of the art in storage <sup>56</sup>.

This means we now arrive at the possibility of bringing together all information accumulated so far about the stories, the use, the material, the storage and the state of the three sets of scrolls and may compare them which is best done in a table (Table 6).

**Fig. 27** Presentation of one entire scroll of Gelaran wayang beber for the photographer. Around 1902 in the house of Dr. Wahidin Soedirohoesodo (1852–1917) in Yogyakarta. Von Kassian Cephias - Leiden University Library, KITLV, image 3954 Collection page Southeast Asian & Caribbean Images (KITLV), <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=40512192>



**Fig. 28** Wayang Beber Pacitan seems very weak, photo taken from the presentation by Isamu Sakamoto [https://grant-fellowship-db.jfac.jp/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/fs1602\\_is\\_en\\_fr\\_jp.pdf](https://grant-fellowship-db.jfac.jp/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/fs1602_is_en_fr_jp.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> E-mail communication with Margrit Reuss, senior conservator 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

**Table 6**  
Information on various aspects concerning all the three Wayang Beber

	Wayang Beber Wonosari	Wayang Beber Pacitan	Wayang Beber Leiden
Year	1660	1614	1500-1700
Story	Remeng Mangunjaya	Jaka Kembang Kuning	Remeng Mangunjaya
Number of Scroll	8 scrolls	6 scrolls	6 scrolls
Owner	Mr. Wisto Utomo	Mr. Mangun	Collection of the National Museum of World Culture, Leiden The Netherlands
Image	Remeng Mangunjaya Wayang Beber seems very simple, only important objects are drawn and this gives the impression that the scroll further emphasizes the scene of each frame	Jaka Kembang Kuning Wayang Beber has a complicated picture. This complexity is created by its rich background that is fully covered with images, especially ornamental ones.	Wayang Beber Leiden is similar to Wayang Beber Wonosari but has a different depiction or visual presentation. The background contains important supporting images, not as crowded as those on Wayang Beber Pacitan that contains a lot of ornaments.
Location	Gelaran II Bejiharjo, Karangmojo, Wonosari Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta, Indonesia	Karang Talun Gedempol Pacitan East Java, Indonesia	Collection of the National Museum of World Culture, Leiden The Netherlands
Material	Daluwang	Dluwang	Dluwang
Damages	Missing dluwang part, creasing, dust, fading color, torn, mold.	Missing dluwang part, creasing, dust, fading color, torn, mold.	Conservation has been carried out
Storage	Wooden box, cloth, incense, peacock feather and dedicated room with particular design to enable air flow against mould and good housekeeping against insect attacks	Wooden box, cloth, incense, peacock feather	Acid-free cardboard box of fitting dimensions according to the scrolls' size and rolled in acid-free paperbox climatized storage areas.
Use	Used for important occasions. Still used for shows. Since recently the scrolls have been kept in wooden boxes because their copies have been produced.	Still used for shows, even though the shows are held very rarely.	Kept with special care in the collection of the National Museum of World Culture, Leiden, Netherlands.
Puppeteer position	During the performance the puppeteer sits with his back to the audience. The puppet owner sits behind the unfurled scroll to assist the puppeteer in preparing each frame that will be commented.	During the performance the puppeteer sits behind the scroll facing the audience. He usually picks up and sticks the puppet roll himself into the wooden box.	The scroll is not displayed

## 14 Conservation concept

- Since all the elements of the so-called preventive conservation, which includes proper storage, proper handling, proper climate condition, were found to be the best possible (see [chapter 9](#)),
- since we have tried to do our best to understand the history, meaning and material of the Wayang Beber to be treated, and
- after intense discussions with colleagues experienced in the conservation of bark cloth items, we are now suggesting a conservation strategy.

The first step is to take care that no further losses occur. This means fixing of flaking-off paint layers must be the first step.

To decide on the consolidation agent to be used for this first step, we should identify the binding agent of the paint layer and understand whether there is a priming and/or a varnish of any sort under or over the paint layer. A non-invasive analysis is suggested. It is hoped that the newly established material analysis lab at UGM will take up this work.

Not knowing the composition of the binding media and whether or not there are layers between the bark cloth and the paint layer or above the paint layer at the moment, the authors nevertheless could bring forward some thoughts on consolidation. It is a general decision whether a consolidation agent similar in chemical and physical structure to the old binding media should be used or if the choice should fall purposefully on a material that is of completely different chemical structure and is therefore detectable as a conservation material. Using a similar material has the clear advantage that we know its properties are suitable for fixing the paint to the surface of the carrier, in this case the bark cloth,

because most of the paint, which was prepared together with the binding media is still in place, which means it endured the strain and stress of centuries well. Furthermore, we know that it will not get mouldy or attract insects, as we have the long-time experience from the original paint layer to that effect as well. For such a decision, however, we must know what the original binding media was.

In case we decide for a material clearly identifiable as a modern conservation material, we could suggest a cellulose ether with a degree of polymerisation of around 400. This material has been used in conservation for some 100 years and in Europe it is in particular used in the warmer southern regions, Italy, Spain and Greece and so far, no rapid degradation and damage coming from it have been reported. It is virtually inert in terms of mould and, to our knowledge, does not attract insects. The application may be done with a fine brush, possibly by pre-wetting the area with ethanol, to prepare the flow of the adhesive well, i.e., lower the surface tension of the polar medium, or use an alcohol swellable cellulose ether. However, both water and ethanol must be considered safe for the bark cloth, the paint layer and its binding media and any possibly present varnishes before it may be used.

As mentioned above, the Wayang Beber scroll Patricia Engel was able to see closer was backed with a textile. This seems to be a feature of a conservation effort; when this was done cannot be said at the moment. However, textile and bark cloth material expand and contract in opposite ways with humidity changes. Although, luckily, there are not so strong fluctuations in humidity in Indonesian outdoor or virtually outdoor climate, nevertheless, the textile should be taken off. Luckily, the textile seems to be the weaker ma-

terial and the daluang might not have been affected too much from it. Finally, luckily, the adhesive seems to be both flexible and weak. In the case of backed items we often see that the backing destroys the actual material of the artefact over time. This seems to be the case with the Leiden wayang beber, which is backed with a sort of strong paper/wrapping paper. And this is also the reason why the authors do not support the too general suggestion by Misa Tmura when she writes: “It is also suggested that daluang could be used as a backing support for wayang beber to at least provide a structurally sound object; this is possible with help from Permadi and Mufid.” Indeed, backing with a really weak material might be a help, but must be decided upon in a more comprehensive picture.<sup>57</sup> However, after the textile is removed there might still be some adhesive present which held the textile to the bark cloth originally. Its composition and condition must be surveyed and then a decision on how to remove it must be taken. But this can only be done after a close survey, most probably with the support of wet chemical or instrumental analysis.

It can be expected that the Wayang Scrolls are fragmented after the textile is taken off, therefore the table on which this work is carried out must be wide enough to allow for the entire scroll to lay face down to the table fully open and no wind flow which takes away the smaller elements can be allowed. It might also be the case that some areas of the textile are fixed with a different adhesive, which is often the case if someone repaired the repair. This means that the survey must be repeated in case the conservator comes across an area where the originally developed method for taking down the backing does not work.

After the backing material and its adhesive are removed all tears and cracks must be closed. The same conservation material as for consolidation of the paint layer may be used for this step. This is suggested being rather a conservation-philosophical or theoretical decision than a material-based one. Either you stick to material close to the original material or you decide for a distinctly different material and a time of intervention-*strata*; both can be justified, but we should stick to one decision for all conservation measures and not apply one idea for the consolidation of the paint and the other for the mending of tears unless there is a good clear-cut reason for this diverse use of conservation material.

In case a bridging material is needed to keep the tears closed, we may suggest the so-called Kozo fibre tissues. This is a material internationally used in conservation and valued because of the long fibres and their durability. And in the case of the conservation of Wayang Beber it has a particular charm, as “Kozo” is the Japanese word for a paper, which essentially means the fibres coming from *Broussonetia Papyrifera*, the very plant daluang is made of. This means we can apply the same material, which has the same properties in terms of shrinkage and expansion with humidity fluctuation, which is an essential feature in conservation material and yet the conservation material is well distinguishable under the microscope, i.e. without any probing or other costly analysis because the mode of fibre treatment in daluang and Kozo paper is different.

The actual mending action will be done by positioning the individual pieces which must be brought together on polyethylene fleece, which prevents any sticking of the Wayang Beber scroll to the table and to

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<sup>57</sup> Misa (2018)

cover the area which was mended with the same sort of fabric before a medium weight is applied to hold the mended area in place while drying. A sandbag is the best weight for the purpose, as it shapes itself nicely into the surface texture of the bark cloth and thus gives even pressure. How much adhesive must be used, how strong and for how long the pressure must be exerted, how long the drying procedure must take – all this, as well as a quick reaction in case something unexpected occurs during treatment (for example a paint layer comes off due to the humidity in the adhesive penetrating through the bark cloth in particular in the humid Indonesian environment, etc.) is the reason why only an experienced conservator or someone with adequate training (minimum 5 years of full time conservation studies) should do the treatment.

After all tears are closed, it seems a meaningful measure to close all lacunae, even if they are only along the outer margins of the scrolls.

The reason for that is that there is less possibility for distortion if the areas are filled, and this is in particular true for such large areas as the ones we observed at the outer margins of the scrolls. The best choice for the material to be filled in is, no doubt, daluang material, but it must be a bit thinner than the original. If it is equally thick it is also just possible to be used, but in no instance, it should be thicker than the original material, because then the thick strong material would start to damage the thinner, weaker original bark cloth material neighbouring the inlay over time. This is due to the fact that during any moving of the joint material the weaker material suffers strong stress and the edge of the stiffer, harder and stronger material virtually cuts the fibres of the weaker areas in the im-

mediate vicinity to the bordering area.

The adhesive for fixing the daluang material filling the lacunae should be of the same conservation material as that used for consolidation and mending of tears - possibly, in a slightly different concentration. The mending daluang material shall overlap the old material by about 1 mm and should be shaved in such a manner that it becomes utmost thin around its edges.

It is unclear so far whether the joints between the scrolls and the sticks are still functional or whether they were repaired or re-repaired. If the connection must be restored, it must be done by means depending on the way the sticks are connected to the bark cloth and the condition of the recent connection.

It might be asked why cleaning was not mentioned so far in this conservation concept. Although cleaning is often done as a first step in a practical conservation treatment, still, it is not possible in each and every case. In the case of the Wayang Beber the fact that some colour is loose hinders a general cleaning action as a first step. Most probably cleaning will be done along consolidation. However, cleaning is a highly complex conservation measure, which does not only depend on the sort of debris and soiling and its adhesion to the surface of the work of art in general and the Wayang Beber scrolls in particular, but also on the chemical and physical qualities of the paint layer, varnish, and possible old repairs which might lay under, over or between the layers of soiling. Therefore, the decision upon what cleaning method and material shall be decided on and at what stage it should be performed and in what manner can also be made only after another close survey and only by an experienced conservator. Discussion about the dirt seen as a valuable additional source

of information as it is the case lately in the European manuscript preservation seems out of reach, because the scrolls are lost if action is not taken soon and academic discussion about dirt seems out of place now.

There is another thought which was not mentioned so far: A discussion whether or not old repairs found on the wayang beber and already shown on the old photos are part of the conservation history of the wayang and whether they therefore give information of the wayang beber tradition and should be kept. Such ideas certainly shall be dealt with in the framework of the conservation studies at ISI, however having seen the situation in situ and on the basis of the years of experience in conservation it can be said that this material should not be kept on the bark cloth directly in the particular case.

### **15 Benefits of the study described so far for the establishment of the faculty of conservation at ISI Yogyakarta**

The step by step approach towards a conservation concept demonstrated here and using the example of Wayang Beber can serve as a role model for any decision-making procedure in the process of finding a conservation concept.

The entire work done by the team during the last years made it very clear that the conservation of cultural heritage items does not equal the mere repair of the item to be preserved. It requires, first and foremost, the fullest possible understanding of the work of art in all its aspects and involves an attempt at developing, if needed, quite specific and distinct theoretical approach. In particular, a university where a chair for conservation is to

be established is the proper place for developing the specific field of the philosophy of conservation.

The team of scholars have been co-operating since 2016 within the framework of ASEA Uninet, which has enabled visits of Austrian scholars to Indonesia and Indonesian scholars to Austria. During these visits Patricia Engel was brought to Wonosari to see the Wayang Beber there and Indiria Maharsi, Prima Dona Hapsari, Warsono and Wiwik Sri Wulandari did field work in numerous Austrian libraries, archives and art collections, made surveys of the state of these collections, saw the infrastructure, both in terms of knowledge and instruments/tools, needed to run a conservation university chair and were able, in particular, to visit three European experts in bark cloth preservation: Roswitha Zobl from *Weltmuseum*, Andrea Donau from the Austrian National Library, Papyrus Collection and Irina Tsjeroenova from the collection of the National Museum of World Culture, Leiden The Netherlands.

Even if the team could not yet perform all steps needed for a conclusive conservation concept in the procedure of finding a solution for the practical conservation of Wayang Beber in Wonosari, they at least theoretically learned what might constitute a comprehensive approach and it might be that the analytical instruments for the identification of the binding media can already be used when Wayang Beber Pacitan is surveyed. For this action it will be also necessary to make an analysis of the adhesive with which the patches are applied to safely take them down, because, in contrast to Wayang Beber Wonosary, old patches as repairs are already well visible on the photos of this Wayang Beber. They are so prominent that one can see even from the

photos that they are stiff and massive and will definitely harm the daluang material in its recent state more than they do it any good.

However, at UGM there is the equipment needed for the respective analysis, and Prof. Dr. Dwi Pranowo visited Prof. Dr. Manfred Schreiner at Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, who kindly shared his experience in the analysis of material of works of art.

It was a wonderful decision by ISI to bring forward a distinct case to work on it, rather than to have to explain all the conservation steps theoretically.

In the process of this fruitful co-operation, it became clear that a particular Indonesian conservation theory or philosophy is needed, as in several occasions a different worldview in general and perspective on the art in particular was not to be overlooked. (see also Patricia Engel “Reflection of European Conservation Theory on some Indonesian Thoughts“ in this issue of *Conservation Update*).

To give this procedure of reflection a starting momentum, Patricia Engel was given the opportunity to give a lecture at ISI Yogyakarta on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2017 entitled “Conservation of Cultural Heritage” and another lecture at ISI Yogyakarta on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2019 entitled “An Introduction to European Approach towards Conservation of Cultural Heritage” and, on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019, a lecture at UGM with the title “Fibre Analysis as an Aspect of Understanding a Cultural Heritage Item in the Framework of Conservation”. On 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2020, she was invited to an online workshop organised by Prima Dona Hapsari. Engel’s contribution was meant, again, to demonstrate the European mindset and to start a discussion about what of this “Western” ideas will not fit the Indonesian

setting by presenting her talk called “Cultural Heritage Preservation in Europe – some basic agreements, definition of terms, an Introduction to European Conservation Theory and Future Perspectives”. Finally, on 2nd and 3rd November 2021, Patricia Engel organised another online conference/workshop entitled “Indonesian Conservation Theory for Cultural Heritage”<sup>58</sup>.

All these oral presentations, however, aimed at stimulating the thinking process rather than “pressing” the European way of preserving works of art on anyone outside Europe.

In Indonesia the team visited not only the sights of Wayangs and the rectors and deans of the universities involved to discuss the political aspects of establishing a faculty of conservation at ISI, Yogyakarta, but also possible partners to establish an infrastructure mandatory for the training of conservators at university level: Balai Konservasi Borobudur, Prof. Dr. Sri Nugroho Marsoem, Prof. Dr. Harno Dwi Pranowo and Dr. Mahirta. A year earlier Patricia Engel had met Prof. Dr. Ikaputra and he had brought in microbiologists to join the team.

The entire procedure is a win - win situation: European museums hold countless items made of bark cloth and large collections of Indonesian heritage. So far, these artefacts were approached with a European perspective concerning their best possible preservation. Bringing in the Indonesian experts and philosophers is a promising step towards a possibly modified conservation approach.

Finally, there is nothing more fruitful for a scholar than seeing his/her ideas from outside, receiving challenges and feedback from outside and considering their own un-

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<sup>58</sup> *Indonesian Conservation Theory*

derstanding against the background of a very different way of seeing the world. This chance is given now to the European conservation theory.

## **16 An Indonesian conservation theory?**

It became clear once more that conservation is understanding. This is not only the core idea of Brandi<sup>59</sup>, but turned out to be the most obvious element the authors went for during the past years in which they tried to arrive at a conservation concept for the two Wayang Bebers in Indonesia.

Understanding the cultural background, the history, the meaning, the way of use, the aesthetic aspects and the material cost time and numerous trials and errors, not only because of language barriers, but also due to cultural differences. However, the honest wish to do something good for the cultural heritage in Indonesia and a deep human respect to each other was stronger than any difference in understanding the world around<sup>60</sup>.

It was a path covered in small steps and differences could only be understood against the background of what is already considered to be a conservation theory – and the team used the theory by Cesare Brandi as a starting point and the numerous obligatory practical habits, as both work well in Europe. Obvious differences between Europe and Indonesia, which seemed relevant for conservation, such as the different temperature/humidity data,

turned out to not be necessarily a starting point for an Indonesian conservation theory, however, led to a new understanding of what actions might be necessary.

During the seminar organised by Prima Dona Hapsari some first elements of approach towards an Indonesian conservation mindset became evident. While in Europe sacred items are restored and only then consecrated by a priest again without any problem, we learned from Mr. Sugi Lanus that he asked the Balinese families owning scrolls supposedly holding particular spells whether they could be unfolded or whether they would prefer that they remain folded even at the risk of further decay, and they opted for the latter.

During his presentation in Nov. 2021 other aspects became even more evident, in particular, the strong emphasis on the immaterial heritage aspects of heritage items in Indonesia, which are described in more details in the paper “Reflection of European Conservation Theory on some Indonesian Thoughts” in the same issue of Conservation update on page..., because these insights did not come directly from the work of the authors of this paper.

However, already during the co-operation of the authors and the preparation of this paper in particular it became obvious that the Indonesian scholars are much more focused on the stories of the Wayangs than their European counterparts who primarily address the material aspects of the scrolls. And while the Europeans tried to understand the problem at hand by splitting it into partial tasks, the Indonesians stick to their view of “it is actually all one”. What this means in practical conservation still must be understood. In this context we would like to take the opportunity to express our regret that due to the fact that this

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<sup>59</sup> Brandi (1952).

<sup>60</sup> Approaches taken by numerous museums to re-connect their belongings to the indigenous people from whom they were taken do not really apply here, because in our case the situation is different. However, a large number of publications on this topic can be found at ICOM – CC <https://www.icom-cc-publications-online.org>



article is published in an European periodical, the abundant “storytelling” writing style of the Indonesian members of the team had to be condensed into a more “sober”, scientific writing style, which was a clear loss in terms of its beauty and authenticity.

Much is still ahead, but the authors hope to foster the discussion during and by the establishment of the new conservation department at ISI Yogyakarta, which is expected to be launched in summer 2022.

## 17 Conclusion

The team of scholars started with the hope of identifying an Indonesian preservation theory by developing a conservation concept for the Wayang Beber, one of Indonesia’s most prominent items of heritage and doing so being especially attentive to what might come along which can serve as a starting point in developing such a particular theory.

Taking a practical approach, they tried to bring together a substantial amount of already published literature on the topics “wayang beber preservation” and “Indonesian conservation theory”. Although this work has been started, it certainly can never be deemed finished, in particular because new publications appear and the diversity of languages they are published in is wide and not always accessible to the small team; however, what has been collected so far served as a starting point for the establishment of an extensive stock of books and articles at the university library of ISI Yogyakarta for future students in conservation and as a first step towards accomplishing the team’s purpose.

The next step, which was to carry out a close survey of all three Wayang Beber still existing was done by Indiria Maharsi, as he was

the only member of the team, who had long access to all Wayang Beber scrolls. When revealing precious heritage items is concerned, matters of trust are, certainly, very important. Yet, some analysis is still pending.

Future will show when it is possible to also execute the analytical research needed.

An overimportant task involved in preparing a conservation department is to collect knowledge still existing in Indonesia concerning the material used to make the Indonesian art in general and the Wayang Beber in particular (both the carrier bark cloth and the colours and binding media of the painting) by conducting interviews with the old craftsmen and puppeteers, usually the owners of the puppets. This was done for the bark cloth, the interviews concerning the colours is still pending. However, Patricia Engel had an opportunity to visit the owner of a wayang kulit workshop in 2018 and found that the owner still knew how to make colours out of plants and it can be suspected that the traditional paint for the wayang kulit did not differ too much from the paint used for wayang beber paint in the old days.

As a next logical step, it would be needed to bring together a collection of reference material in Indonesia to enable future instrumental analysis. This was started too, however, it is an ongoing process.

Finally, the team sought to develop a conservation concept for the Wayang Beber Wonosari. To complete it, some steps described in this article are still mandatory.

Talking about Wayang Beber, we *ipso facto* talk about the history of Indonesian culture. Contributions in any form are indispensable and joint effort for the preservation and development of Wayang Beber is well justified. As a first conservation measure, a copy of the

*Remeng Mangunjaya* Wayang Beber Wonosari was made by Indiria Maharsi and submitted to Mrs. Rubiyem and Mr. Wisto Utomo. This copy is currently being used for rehearsals and performances held in several places by the puppeteer of Wayang Beber Wonosari named Noni Tia Fatmawati. This was also the case for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Bejiharjo Village on June 11, 2021. This performance was streamed online through the youtube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=or-Gi5AvWbcY>. Downloaded on June 11, 2021).

In this way the original Wayang Beber is not used too intensely anymore but is kept safely in its original wooden box. The fact that, besides this first step towards safeguarding of the old scrolls, they themselves also need treatment was gradually recognized during Indiria Maharsi's close cooperation with the owners of the Wayang Bebers, which was a door opener for any further conservation treatment.

Also, a handbook was written to support handing over the oral tradition of storytelling from generation to generation.

Along with all these efforts involving the Wayang Beber, we could witness the steps needed for the establishment of a conservation department at ISI, Yogyakarta, because steps needed to preserve the Wayang Beber certainly can be "widened" and serve as a role model for any work of art to be preserved.

Finally, the team hopes to have put in place another small stone in the puzzle of the particular Indonesian Conservation theory by comparing what is similar and what is different in Indonesian and European culture and environment.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Kartika Affandi and her family for the idea of cooperation between ISI Yogyakarta and Donau-Universität Krems in establishing a conservation department in Yogyakarta for the long time and sustainable way of educating conservators at university level and thus safeguard the Indonesian cultural heritage in a best possible manner.

We want to thank Prof. Dr. Agus Burhan, Dr. Suastiwi as a former Dean of Faculty of Visual Arts, and the rector and dean of the university of Continuing Education, Krems, Mag. Friedrich Faulhammer and Prof. Dr. Christian Hanus for his vital support for this idea.

We thank the owners of the Wayang Bebers for their open mindedness in sharing knowledge about their heritage with us.

We thank all colleagues, who were prepared to share experience which served to find a conservation concept for the Wayang Beber and to establish a department for conservation in ISI Yogyakarta, H. Harald Ehrl CanReg (Stift St. Florian), P. Roman Nägele OCit. (Stift Heiligenkreuz), Dr. Andreas Gamerith (Stift Zwettl), Prof. Dr. Manfred Schreiner (University of Fine Arts Vienna) and his team, Prof. Dr. Thomas Prohaska (Montan Universität Leoben, Austria) and his team, Dr. Andreas Fingernagel (Austrian National Library), Dr. Bernhard Palme (Austrian National Library), Mag. Roswitha Zobl and her colleagues (Weltmuseum Wien), Mag. Andrea Donau (Austrian National Library, Papyrus collection), the team of the TU Wien, the team of the collection of the National Museum of World Culture, Leiden The Netherlands, in particular Margrit Reuss and Irina Tsjeroenova as well as Prof. Dr. Harno Dwi Pranowo (Faculty of Mathemat-

ics and Natural Sciences, UGM), Prof. Dr. Sri Nugroho Marsoem (Forestry Faculty, UGM), and Dr. Mahirta (Faculty of Cultural Sciences, UGM), and the staff of Borobudur Conservation Centre and Oleg Filippov for his proof-reading of this English text.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to ASEA Uninet and Karl Landsteiner Foundation for their financial support in the form of grants and project funding.

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**CVs**

**Patricia Engel** holds Magister, Doctor and Habilitation degrees in conservation-restoration of cultural heritage (Universities of Fine Art in Vienna and Warsaw). She is the head of the European Research Centre for Book and Paper Conservation-Restoration affiliated to ZKGS/DBU/University for Continuing Education, Krems, Austria. Her focus is on key questions in written heritage conservation and conservation of art on paper and parchment. She has initiated and led international research projects (Getty, EU, FFG funded) on mould attack mitigation, paper-deacidification and ink corrosion treatment. She is vice president of the International Paper Historians Association, active member of the working group of conservation theory of ICOM – CC and initiator of numerous international conferences and publications.

**Prima Dona Hapsari** is an expert on legal issues and proficient in English, and had been the head of Office for Foreign Affairs at ISI, Yogyakarta. In the framework of the ASEA Uninet and SP24 projects mentioned, she was in particular in charge to understand and implement the infrastructure and mandatory co-operation in Indonesia needed to set up a chair for conservation at ISI, Yogyakarta.

**Wiwik Sri Wulandari** was Vice Dean of academic affairs during the time of the research. She is an expert on educational curricula as well as paper and printing. She was involved in the survey of collections in Austria and the development of a particular storage plans.

**Indiria Maharsi** is an expert in *wayang beber* traditional cultural heritage.

**Warsono** is an expert on textiles and the history of Indonesian art. He also was involved in the survey of collections and the development of conservation concepts.

## 2022 Bernd Rode Preis for *"From a request to help restore Affandi's paintings to the first University course for conservators of cultural heritage in Indonesia"*

The Bernd Rode Award is granted by the ASEAN-European Academic University Network (ASEA-UNINET) to outstanding scientific and higher education collaborations between its Austrian and South-East-Asian or Pakistani member universities. (<https://asea-uninet.org/scholarships-grants/call-for-bernd-rode-award/>) in 2022 University of Continuing Education Krems and Institut Seni Indonesia, Yogyakarta won a Project-based Bernd Rode award for their collaborative research conducted in the framework of ASEA-UNINET. The title of the application is "From a request to help restore Affandi's paintings to the first University course for conservators of cultural heritage in Indonesia" and was granted in March 2022. The official ceremonies will be held in summer this year. The money granted will be re-invested into the work.





Publication of ERC  
| APRIL 2022 | Vol. 9 | No. 1 |  
[conservationupdate.com](http://conservationupdate.com)