Image-forming in the Indonesian Exhibition

An anthropological analysis of the decision making process at the Museum of Ethnology in Leiden

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The exhibition about the Queen Wilhelmina dolls in Palace Kneuterdijk, 1894.

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Word of thanks

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Chapter 1. Introduction to my research and internship

Indonesia and the Netherlands have a long history of relationship with one another. Only since 7-8 years this is a positive relationship, but before it was a negative one. The Dutch state had colonized Indonesia for 146 years (1799-1945). Long before that the Dutch trading company the "Dutch East Indies company (VOC)" had trading relations with the East Indies: since the beginning of the 17th century. When the VOC got bankrupt in 1799 the Dutch state took over their property and from then onwards Indonesia was actually colonized. Indonesia has declared themselves independent in 1945. Only after a 4 year war in 1949 the Dutch recognized the independence of Indonesia. Until the Shared Cultural Heritage Project in 2005 there was almost no connection between the Dutch and the Indonesians. With the start of this project a bond was created again between the Volkenkunde museum and the Museum National in Jakarta. This time it was not based on colonization, but on mutual respect and interest. How does the Volkenkunde museum deal with the colonial Indonesian collection? What has changed in the last 25 years in the permanent and temporary Indonesian exhibition at the Volkenkunde museum? What kind of image is shown? Does the museum display the present-day Indonesians or does the museum displays Indonesia with a connection to our colonial past?

This thesis is a result of my anthropological research that I conducted at the Volkenkunde Museum (Museum of Ethnology). The research was about the changes of the organization at the museum and the image-forming in an Indonesian exhibition that is a result of this organization. The aim of this thesis is to explain how image-forming is been done through a decision making process behind exhibitions in the last 25 years at the Volkenkunde museum. Specifically I will do this in relation to permanent and temporary Indonesian exhibitions at the museum. In the next paragraph I will clarify why it is important that anthropological research should be carried out in a museum. Later I will discuss a change in the organization of the museum in the beginning of the 1990's and a complete redecoration of the museum between 1996 and 2001. As an example of the present-day decision making process I will describe a case-study about the inclusion of the Queen Wilhelmina dolls collection into the permanent Indonesian exhibition.

§1.1 Anthropology and the museum

Currently anthropology is connected to the university and not to the museum, but there was a time when this was different. Between 1840 and 1890 anthropology was connected to the museums and not yet to the universities (Gonzalez 2001, 108). The museum displayed the collections that the anthropologists collected and educated the visitors about non-western cultures which the anthropologists studied. With the introduction of the evolutionist idea of Charles Darwin in 1859 museum exhibitions were used by anthropologists to support an evolutionist view. For the anthropologists people evolve from savagery to civilized and every culture finds itself on this linear line. However, at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century till the 1960s anthropology moved away from the museum and towards the universities (Gonzalez 2001, 106 and 108). The separation started when the idea of evolutionism in anthropology got rejected. The separation between Anthropology and the museum was final when the idea that an anthropologists should study the immaterial culture like kinship or identity and not only the material culture started to spread. Objects were no longer to be seen as signs of culture (Segalen 2001, 84-85). When anthropology was still connected to the museum the emphasis was on the collections, but when anthropology separated from the museum the emphasis was more on exhibitions (Bouquet 2001, 178).

The definition of a museum according to the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in 2007 is as follow:

"A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the *tangible and intangible heritage* of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment (International Council of Museums, from 2007)."

The definition of a museum according to the ICOM in 1989, 1995 and 2001 is as follow:

"A museum is a non-profit making, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, and open to the public which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, *material evidence of people* and their environment (International Council of Museums, from 1989, 1995, 2001)."

It looks at a glimpse as if these two definitions are the same and have not changed between 1989 and 2007, but there is one important change in the definition of 2007. The ICOM added the word intangible heritage. A museum not only protects the tangible heritage

(material culture), but also the intangible heritage (immaterial culture). Since the separation of anthropology and the museum this is a sign that the museum moves towards anthropology again. Even in 2001 the part about the intangible heritage was not yet added in the definition of the ICOM. Segalen wrote in 2001 "the ethnographic museum is […] a space for exhibiting anthropological investigation rather than a site where anthropological knowledge is produced (2001, 92)". Apparently in 2001 the idea was still that the purpose of a museum was to deal with immaterial culture, at least this was the case in Europe. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century a lot has changed. It is for instance more and more common to work together with so-called 'source communities': the communities from which the objects in a museum (probably) derive from. It is sometimes difficult to trace back the communities from which the objects were obtained. Many objects are in museums since colonial times and the documentation of the acquisition of objects was not always very specific. Also since colonial times communities have changed a lot, because they are not static entities. Consequently it is sometimes difficult to trace back the original community. The advantages of the relationship between museums and source communities is that source communities can tell the story behind objects in the museum collections for scientific research and the museum can ask how certain objects should be displayed. The emphasis is not only on exhibitions anymore, but also on the collections again (more information, see chapter 3). The scientific status of a museum is important again.

Not only the museum moves more towards anthropology, anthropology is also moving towards museums again. Anthropologists can, for instance, study the decision making process behind an exhibition. Bouquet says that "if anthropological theory […] involves transforming something that is unknown into something that is possible to know, then such theory has an intrinsic part in the practice of exhibition making (2004, 194)". Anthropologists should transfer the unknown practice of exhibition making into a practice that is known to the museum public. The way a culture is displayed is a judgment of the museum staff who is incorporated in this process. There are as many displays of a culture as there are people involved into the decision making process; even one person can have many ideas about how to display a certain culture. Therefore, it is important to study this process and to make clear what these decisions are and by whom they are made. Curators are aware of the decisions they make and therefore they say that their opinion is only one of many (Karp 1991, 4). It is not only the curator who makes decisions (because he or she knows the collections) also designers and the communication department are part of the decision making staff. The designer knows how to make the collection accessible and visible to the visitors and the

communication department knows how to attract the visitors. A conservator as well has a say in the inclusion or exclusion of objects. He or she makes decisions based on the condition of objects. The exhibition is an end product of all the decisions that are made before an exhibition is finished. There are a lot of different ideas which do not get incorporated into the final exhibition. The museum staff struggles in deciding which idea would become a success and which one does not (McDonald 2001, 118). The fact that an exhibition is the sum of all the decisions means that there is not one right exhibition, there are many. The result of this will be that some visitors will not like the exhibition and others will. They hold or does not hold the same view as the museum staff about what to display (Karp 1991, 1). Most of the time visitors do not have the same idea as the museum about how an exhibition should look like.

Bouquet argues that the backstage of an exhibition is most of the time overshadowed by the exhibition itself (2001, 179). The museum staff makes decision about what to include and they gives meaning to the objects in an exhibition, but these decisions and meanings are not shown in the exhibition. By analyzing the production of an exhibition the social practices of giving cultural meaning can be investigated. Changing an exhibitions will mean that the messages that are being shown can change. Cultural intermediaries, like curators, influence the character of an exhibition and thus the meaning of the exhibition (Newman and McLean 2006, 61). Visitors are active and therefore the museum staff has to imagine how objects, images and sounds can be used to produce a meaning. According to Handler a museum is a social arena; it is "an institution in which social relationships are oriented in terms of a collection of objects which are made meaningful by those relationships – though these objects are often understood by museum natives to be meaningful independently of those social relationship (Handler in Bouquet 2001, 179)". A study of this backstage process would make the complexity of a museum visible (Bouquet 2001, 179) and makes an exhibition more comprehensible.

§1.2 Methodology of research

I carried out my research and internship at the Volkenkunde Museum in Leiden. As I explained earlier my research was about the decision making process behind an exhibition; in particular about the Indonesian exhibition and the Queen Wilhelmina dolls. My research question was: "By whom and why are decisions made about what to include or exclude in the Indonesian exhibition at the Volkenkunde Museum in the last 30 years?". The internship would the way to be a 'participant observer' by becoming part of the decision making

process. I was ‘going native’. Being a participant observer was the most important method for me to acquire my information. It gave me a rich amount of information about how and by whom decisions are being made nowadays, but not how this was done in the past. However, the experience let me understand how the museum works and with this in mind I could conduct interviews. During these interviews I came to know how the museum organization changed in the last 25 years. I have chosen to focus on the last 25 years for the reason that a lot has changed in this period.

In the beginning of the 1990s the museum went through a re-organization. During this reorganization a complete power change took place. In the 1980s curators could do what they wanted, but after the re-organization they suddenly had to work with newly formed departments. These new departments wanted to prove themselves and some frictions occurred between different interest of the different departments. The way exhibitions were made was as a result very different than in the 1980s. The curators became one of the negotiators in the decision making process instead of the one who decided almost everything. The re-organization and the abandonment of the old organization of the museum had therefore a big impact on the museum. To understand what changed during the re-organization, the situation of the museum in the 1980s should be explained. Five years after the reorganization the museum re-decorated its exhibition halls. This is a lot for a museum to handle within a short amount of time. Having such a big project after a major reorganization can cause some problems. To comprehend what went wrong during the re-decorating, I will explain the effects of the re-organization on the museum staff (see §3.3 and 3.4). The museum is nowadays again in a small redecorating phase and through my internship I was part of the re-decoration of the Indonesian exhibition.

My internship was about the East-Indies doll collection of Queen Wilhelmina. This collection consists of 348 dolls and 35 of them will be included into the permanent exhibition about Indonesia. Francine Brinkgreve is the curator of the Insular South-East Asia region and my supervisor at the museum. The big majority of objects of the Insular South-East Asia region came from Indonesia. I was lucky that I got the offer to include the dolls, because this would be a way for me to become part of the process that I was researching. I was also lucky that the meetings (called workgroups) in which the Indonesian exhibition, and thus the Wilhelmina dolls, would be discussed would start two weeks after I spoke with Francine Brinkgreve. I was at these workgroups from the start and as a consequence I was incorporated into almost the whole decision making process. Except for the very beginning when was decided that these dolls would be included.

The persons that I worked with the most and who are most important in the decision making process were Francine Brinkgreve (the curator), Anne Marie Woerlee (head of the public department) and Margrit Reuss (the conservator). Also the design company, Opera Design, plays an important part in the decision making process. I conducted an interview with the director, Lies Willers, and I saw the designer, Boaz, who drew the design for the showcases ones. They are an external designers office located in Amsterdam and therefore they do not attend the meetings. The former director (director till the 1st of May 2012) of the Volkenkunde museum, Steven Engelsman, and the director of Opera Design, Lies Willers, were important figures in the redecorating of the museum. Pieter ter Keurs, the former curator of Insular South-East Asia, was also an important source for my research. Besides these individuals I interviewed museum personnel who already work at the museum for around 20 years or longer. I will not mention their names, because I promised them that I would keep it anonymously. I refer to them as "personal communication anonymous". I will sometimes use the distinction between non-curator and curator or the communication department and the research department.

During my internship at the museum I went through a whole learning process. I came to the museum with a certain idea in mind about the organization and about the roles of the different departments during an exhibition process. Anthropologists are never neutral, neither was I. Seymour-Smith says that "he or she may not always be able to conserve neutrality or may under certain circumstances feel that neutrality is not an ethically acceptable position (Seymour-Smith in Sluka en Robben 2007, 9)". Because I cannot be neutral I will have to be reflexive about myself so I can show what my influences were on the research. This means that I have to make myself an object of study (Seymour-Smith in Sluka en Robben 2007, 9). When I will discuss my case-study about the Wilhelmina dolls, I will position myself within the decision making process.

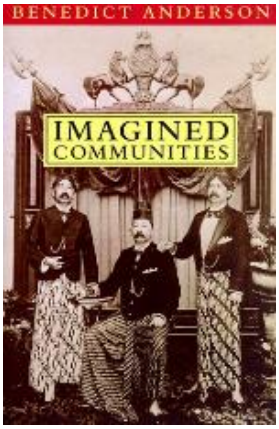
During my research and internship I faced some ethical problems. During the meetings I made notes all the time and sometimes I felt uncomfortable doing this. This however did not stop me from making the notes. Everybody was making notes, although not as much as I did. When I conducted an interview I always asked if I could record it and most of the time the interviewee agreed. A few times I was asked not to record the interview and those interviewee's were the most critical of all. However the recording did not stop other interviewee's from being critical. Maybe they would have been more critical if I would not have recorded them, but it seemed as if they were very open about everything. It even

appeared as if people were pleased to tell their story. Sometimes people asked me to not use certain information and I will keep this promise.

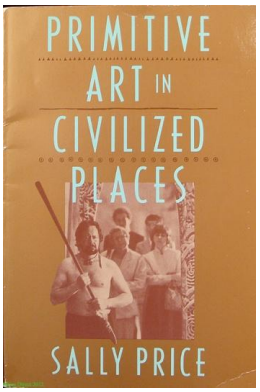
The ethical problems I face are connected to a difficult period that the museum had gone through in the 1990s. The research department had problems with the communication department and the collection department during the reorganization. During the re-decoration of the exhibition halls the research department had some conflicts with the director, communication department and the designers. Throughout my internship I came to a milder conclusion than I initially thought I would have about the decision making process of the re-decoration of the museum. This is because I did not face these big problems that I had heard happened during the 1990s. During my interviews I heard different point of views from different departments of the museum and the external designer. They had conflicting point of views, but I could understand their point of views. I was therefore planning to give a nuanced picture of this period, until I read the book of Gert Staal: "In Side Out, On Site In". The book is about the design and the process behind the re-decoration of the exhibition halls of the Volkenkunde Museum. It is written from the point of view from the director of the museum and the designer. I read some statements in this book that, in my opinion, seems to be false. At least it goes against what I noticed during my interviews. This led me to change my initial assumption of giving a nuanced picture about the decision making process of the re-decoration period of the museum towards a more critical point of view. I want to give the point of view of the curators.

§1.3 Design of the thesis

The second chapter will be a theoretical chapter about image-forming in a museum.



Herein I will discuss the different layers of image-forming and what the consequence is of these layers on an object. The different image-forming layers are: the producer of an object, the collector, the museum staff and the visitors. I will discuss them separately. In the last part of chapter 2 I will argue that the objects on display within an ethnology museum are an "imagined community": a term that Benedict Anderson introduced. I will also discuss the sharp distinction between an art museum and an ethnology museum that Sally Price formulated in her book "primitive art in civilized places". Benedict Anderson and Sally Price wrote their book in a period (the



end of the 1980s) in which museums gradually started to change their approach about collections, organization and exhibitions. In this period the idea of critical museology started. I will use these two books for analyzing the display of the Volkenkunde museum.

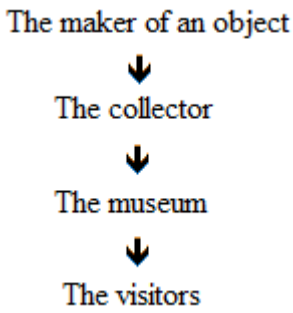
In the third chapter I will make use of my theoretical chapter to discuss the Volkenkunde museum. First I will discuss the history of the museum and then I will explain the situation of the Volkenkunde Museum in the 1980s. Regarding the 'little kingdom structure' (each curator ruled his own little kingdom), the organization of the museum staff and the changes that the director, Willem van Gulik, wanted for his museum. The government did not give subsidy for these changes, because of the price-tag connected to them. In the face of privatization things changed in the beginning of the 1990s. There was an abrupt end to 'the little kingdom' structure and there was a change of power together with the formation of new departments. The old power block of curators lost almost all its power and the new departments came under the control of a new power block: the director and the communication department. Before the curators got used to the new organization a large-scale re-decoration of the exhibition halls of the museum was planned. This lead to some conflicts. The role of the curator in the making of an exhibition had diminished from the executor to the role of advisor. The new executors were the designers, an external interior designers office (Opera Design). An external company had the new design of the museum almost solely in their power. I will explain how the discussion in Sally Price's book about art and ethnology can be applied to the design Opera had in mind for the new permanent exhibition in the Volkenkunde Museum.

In the forth chapter I will discuss two permanent Indonesian and three temporary Indonesian exhibitions. The three permanent exhibitions are the one from the 1980s, the one between 2000-2011 and the current exhibition (2012-). The three temporary exhibitions are "Beyond the Java Sea" from 1992, "Indonesia: the discovery of the past" from 2005 and "Sumatra tercinta" from 2009. I will focus on the image-forming of Indonesia and how this image can still be connected to our colonial history. For the exhibition "Beyond the Java Sea" I will use the discussion about the transformation of ethnological objects into art pieces described in Sally Price her book. The other two temporary exhibition were projects between the Volkenkunde museum and Museum Nasional Indonesia in Jakarta. I will illustrate how these exhibitions came into being by describing how the Volkenkunde Museum worked together with a 'source community' (the Museum Nasional). The three temporary exhibition all have a catalogue and Mary Bouquet said about catalogues that they are 'extending the life of an exhibition beyond its physical form (Bouquet 2004, 194)'. I will therefore analyze these catalogues and see what has still survived of these exhibitions.

In the last chapter I will describe my case-study: the Queen Wilhelmina doll collection. The chapter starts with an explanation of the doll collection and thereafter an analysis of two catalogues. The catalogue that is written by the Ladies of the Dutch East-Indies gives a complete view of all the dolls from the collection. The Ladies gave the local people of the Dutch East Indies the assignment to make all these dolls. The other catalogue has been written by the former director of the Volkenkunde museum, Lindor Serrurier. His introduction is very interesting, because it gives an insight into the thoughts of the Dutch on their colony. After this I will explain the process of including the collection into the permanent Indonesian exhibition and how this collection differs from all the other objects in the museum. Finally, I will discuss the image-forming of the Queen Wilhelmina doll collection. For this paragraph I make use of Susan Legêne's boek "spiegelreflex" and the book of Marieke Bloembergen "De koloniale vertoning". I will also describe how the concept "imagined community" from Benedict Anderson is applicable to the doll collection.

Chapter 2. Theoretical framework: Image-forming in a museum (Inclusion/exclusion)

Image-forming has everything to do with inclusion and exclusion. According to Baxandell the active agents within an exhibition who add to the image-forming of an object are the maker of an object, the exhibitors and the visitor; they all interact with each other but with different values, purposes and ideas (1991, 32). We should not forgot that the collector also adds to the image-forming of collections, because he is the one who collects the objects and decides which objects not to collect or which object he wants to collect (exclusion/inclusion). Sometimes collectors did not even have a choice and they took 'what was available in the field (Durrans 2007, 250)'. The exhibitors on their turn need to choose between objects from the collections of the collectors and give a certain message by exhibiting those objects. Visitors try to make sense of the message that the museum tries to convey; this is called consumption (Newman and McLean 2006, 59). In the past, before mass media and good transportation (like an airplane), the curator was almost the only expert in his own specialization. Nowadays the curator is not the only expert anymore, the visitor can also relate to and interpret the exhibition (Leonard 2010, 172). People come into contact with other cultures through travelling or through the internet and television. The knowledge that people have about other cultures through mass media makes it possible for them to have their own ideas about a certain culture. People can relate to exhibitions about certain countries, because they visited the country or they read a lot about these cultures on the internet. Therefore people can interpret an exhibition better because of the knowledge the people already possess. Museum audience are hence active, productive and sometimes experts in the knowledge of the subjects of an exhibition (Leonard 2010, 172). Without the maker of an object, a collector, an exhibitor or a visitor a museum could not exist. Durrans uses the term museological code which means 'how things were thought to express the ways of life of those who originally made and used them (Durrans 2007, 249-250)'. The collector, the museum and the visitor all have an idea about how objects express a ways of life. He uses the term in the context of museums, because it was the institution where these thought prevailed about previously colonized communities. Here are the layers of image-forming within a museum:



After every step one or even many layers are added. Every step can consist of many people and every person in the chain can add one or even more layers to an object.

§ 2.1 The producer of an ethnographic object

The maker of an ethnographic object makes his object most of the time for purposes other than displaying in a museum: for personal use or trading purposes. On the other hand, in some cases objects were made for the purpose of displaying, for instance in the world exhibitions from the end of the 19th century till the beginning of the 20th century (Pieter ter Keurs). Natives knew how to make money out of the foreigners so they produced local goods for sale. Nowadays this way of making money still exists in a certain way: in places where tourists are coming natives will produce objects for the purpose of making money. Many times the objects produced for the tourist market are connected to classifications museums make. The museums have more influence on a society than normally thought (Shelton 2007, 17). The way societies are portrayed in museums, is the way the visitors, and subsequently other people who did not visit the museum, view these societies and this is not always the correct image of a culture. Hudson (1991, 459) argues that this as a problem, because ethnographic museums display cultures as being more traditional than they actually are. The ethnographic museum does this for the reason that visitors seek authenticity in an exhibition. Nobody would think that the Romans are the same as the Italians, but the way Africans are displayed in a museum assumes that they still live the same as a few hundred years ago, which is not the case. Displaying a country as being backward or traditional can be a complicated matter, especially if those countries try to become less backward (Hudson 1991, 463). Since museums keep the traditional cultures alive, tourists expect the culture to be like this when they visit the country or region. When natives, on their turn, face tourists they behave like the tourist expect them to behave. The natives also sell traditional objects, because tourists have money and tourism can be their income. The problem that arises from this image is that those culture cannot ‘develop’ and adapt to new technologies (Hudson 1991, 464).

This is not completely true, because of what Goffman calls impression management: "verbal and nonverbal practices we employ in an attempt to present an acceptable image of ourselves to others (Goffman in Appelrouth and Edles 2008, 480)". Within this impression management people have a front and a backstage. The front stage is "the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance (Goffman in Appelrouth and Edles 2008, 486)". This is the stage that those cultures use for their performance towards tourists. In the back stage performances are constructed which will be used in the front stage. This back stage is private: he can be himself, he does not have to perform.

§2.2 The collector:

The objects that now define those 'authentic traditional cultures', where collected by collectors, mostly during colonial times. Objects collected during colonial times now form the basis of ethnographic collections. Therefore ethnographic collections say more about the contact between the Europeans and the other cultures than about the cultures itself. The content of a collection gives an image about which objects were collected or which were not collected. These collections illustrate the interest of collectors or maybe an important historical event. Different types of collecting exist and collectors all have their its own arguments of why they collect certain objects. The following types of collecting existed during colonial times (Ter Keurs 2007, 2):

- Scientific expeditions: for investigating local communities or flora and fauna.
- Archaeological sites: out of interest for the cultures that have been lost.
- Individual collectors: out of interest, prestige, status etc.
- Colonial exhibitions: some objects were specially bought and even made for the display in a colonial exhibition.
- Gifts: to create relationships, for instance between different ruling houses (a sultan and the Dutch Royal house).
- Military expeditions: for instance in the Dutch East Indies a famous military expedition is the one in Lombok. The Dutch looted the Lombok treasures and burned the palace of the monarch down.

It is essential to keep in mind the context in which the collector accumulated his objects: there is an "hybridity of colonial culture and the paradoxical interdependency of colonizer and colonized (Ter Keurs 2009, 149)". It is also important to keep in mind the profession or the

nationality of the collector (Durrans 2007, 250). For instance anthropologists collected objects partly because they thought that the culture would soon disappear. They thought that the objects had to be preserved, otherwise the cultures would completely disappear. As I explained in the previous paragraph, nowadays ethnographic museums help those traditional cultures to survive (Kurin 1991, 317).

Collections in the nineteenth century were divided into categories. This was done by looking at characteristics or typical styles of objects. The categories construct hierarchies and thus different forms of exclusion or inclusion. The exclusion and inclusion of objects is seen in the gaps of ethnographic collections from Dutch colonial times, which neglect Islamic meanings of objects or neglect certain groups in the East Indies (Legêne 2010, 159). These hierarchies in the collections are grouped among others into geography, material, style, age or religion. The categories were explanatory guides for knowledge about the group on display. The displays on world exhibition were essentializing (showing the most fundamental/basic part of a culture) and totalizing (a single object referred to a whole group of more or less the same objects) (Legêne 2007, 225). When keeping in mind hybridity the constructed categories become blurred. Hybridity is also seen in single objects, because the meaning of an object is changeable and fluid. An object does not have only one meaning, instead the meaning is created through personal and social processes of interpretation (Leonard 2010, 177).

§2.3 The museum

Visitors may look for authenticity in an exhibition, but this does not exist; authenticity is authority (Crew and Sims 1991, 163). The persons who are in control of a museum have the power over the representation of a community and they also have the power to define and rank people (Duncan 1991, 101-102). The result of this power determines who should be included or excluded during the formation of an identity and thus that certain meanings dominate in exhibitions (Newman and McLean 2006, 57). The museum staff has the power to give a certain object a cultural value (Clavir 2002, 27), even though the object had originally less cultural value than what the museum staff ascribes to it. These meanings or opinions are being formed in the process of making an exhibition. The museum thus decides which groups have a greater share in a common heritage than others; therefore museums can be powerful-identity machines (Duncan 1991, 101-102). Kurin describes why a museum has the legitimacy to do this:

"Museum offer a somewhat unique social and intellectual platform that can be used to represent cultures. Museums are empowered with the discourse of scholarship and science. This discourse is potent, for while it supports, advertently or inadvertently, overtly or covertly, positions that are broadly political, it also allows museums to represent themselves as neutral, apolitical. This discourse, combined with the social position of museums, empowers the museums as an institution to publicly confer legitimacy – of knowledge, of an aesthetics, of a sense of history, of cultural value (Kurin 1991, 317)".

If visitors do not trust the authenticity of an exhibition, the relationship between the visitor and the museum disappears. It can lead to the downfall of a museum. Crew and Sims suggest that in some historical museums objects themselves have no intrinsic value anymore, objects only mean something because the museum staff gives it meaning (1991, 162). Newman and McLean use the definition of Lidchi to analyze the meaning that is been given by the museum staff (through representation). Lidchi illustrates museums as systems of representation, where meaning is produced through classification, a framework of knowledge and display (Lidchi in Newman and McLean 2006, 57). This framework of knowledge is been called discursive formation and it is transferring the meaning of the exhibition to the individual objects (Newman and McLean 2006, 57). However, this does not mean that the object will lose its original meaning.

Meaning is produced through classification and the classifying of objects within exhibitions make them narratives of the category into which the objects are classified. For example, choices that are being made to classify objects into geographical areas and time periods make exhibitions narratives of time and space (Newman and McLean 2006, 57). Consequently, a museum and its collections are more than the society which they need to present. That does not mean that the original meaning loses its value. The object holds an "extra-societal/subjective surplus, accumulated from distant historical and geographical realities (Shelton 2007, 17)", because the life of an object continues when it is been taken from its original place: it has a whole life history. An object within a collection is therefore a signifier and a signified: they mean something, but they also refer to something (Shelton 2007, 17). Pearce also argues that the intrinsic link with the original context continues in the present:

"Objects have a brutally physical existence… This means that objects… always retain an intrinsic link with the original context from which they come because they are always stuff of its stuff no matter how much they may be repeatedly reinterpreted (Pearce in Clavir 2004, 53-54)".

"The politics of regulation determines the meanings that are being encoded into displays and therefore the nature of the dominant form of regulation applied (Newman and McLean 2006, 56)". Regulatory forces consists of internal and external forces. Internal forces are the professionals working in a museum. However, not only the museum staff has the power to control the representation. The internal forces interact with the external forces. The external forces are imposed on the museum. External forces are for instance the designers, the source communities and the government. In the Netherlands the government wants to cut budget on subsidy for the museums and the museum now has to generate 17,5% of their own income, otherwise they will not get subsidy and they will have to close.[1] The way to make money is to search for funding and have their own income through visitors (entrance fees, the museum shop and a restaurant). The museum needs to become more attractive for groups who previously did not go to the museum.

The external regulatory forces were not always so powerful. Before the 1980s the curator was the one to make decisions about what to display. Then the designer packed these decisions into an exhibition and after that the educators tried to make the whole exhibition understandable for the visitors. This was a one-way conversation and the problem that it created was that the curators were too much fixed on scholars of the academic world (McLean 2004, 197). In the 1980's the one-way conversation changed into 'team work' in which all three (curator, designer and educator) worked together to make a better exhibition and attract more visitors.

This did not have the expected results. In order to attract more visitors the need of the public had to be more incorporated into the decision making process. Therefore the public services/communication department became more and more important. There was a "shift of power away from the curator, registrar and conservator towards those more directly involved in public services (Ames 2004, 87)". To attract more visitors a museum needs to make the exhibition accessible to a wide range of visitors (Leonard 2010, 176). The public service thinks they know better what the visitors want. If the museum is looking at what visitors want a problem is caused, because the policy of the museum exhibitions are therefore more audience-oriented instead of trying to create a better representation of a culture. This

[1] http://www.nu.nl/binnenland/2582103/musea-uiten-bezorgdheid-voortbestaan.html

marginalizes the role and professional identities of the curators (Tlili 2008, 141). The consequence of this shift is that the museum became commercialized in the beginning of the 1990s and that there is less and less money for the backstage activities, for instance for research by the curators (Ames 2004, 87).

There is one specialism within the museum that is hardly being mentioned in the articles: this is the conservator. Clavir argues that conservators are hardly mentioned, because they normally do not actively take place in the exhibition making process. This is probably the case, because this job has to do with the objects and not with the public (Clavir 2004, 36). I think this job is being underestimated, because without a conservator collections are not being preserved and there is thus no exhibition or museum. And in a certain way conservators are part of the decision making process. If objects are not in a good condition for display or it is very expensive to restore the object, they make the decision to not include certain objects in an exhibition.

§2.4 The visitors

In my research I did not include the image-forming among visitors, because the Indonesian exhibition was not yet on display. It was therefore not possible for me to conduct a survey among the public. I will however discuss the visitors shortly in this paragraph, because visitors are an important element in the decision making process. The public services tries to create an exhibition around the visitors, so the exhibition will attract as much visitors as possible. In order to achieve this the museum has to include the needs of a varied public.

Exclusion does not necessarily have to deal with the exclusion of objects or groups in an exhibition, it can also be used in the sense of the exclusion of visitors. For Tlili exclusion, or social exclusion, has to do with people who have several obstacles to access a museum. The excluded visitors are perceived as "those who do not visit and/or cannot access the museum and its messages and activities for a number of reasons (Tlili 2008, 132)". The museum has to try to overcome the barriers that the excluded visitors have. The idea goes that this should be done by making the museums, exhibitions and collections more accessible for the general public. According to Hood (2004) the museum has to look at how those excluded visitors spend their leisure time if the museum wants to make itself more accessible for the excluded visitors. Time is precious and people want to get as much fulfillment from it as possible.

Visitors who do visit the museum can be divided into two groups: the frequent visitor who visits a museum at least 3 times a year and the occasional visitor, who resembles the excluded visitors the most when it comes to how they spend their leisure time. There are six

major characteristics in how adults would like to spend their leisure time (Hood 2004, 151). Adults want to (Hood 2004, 151):

- be with people, or have social interaction.
- feel comfortable and at ease in one's surrounding.
- be active in their participation.
- have the chance to learn something.
- experiences something new.
- do something worthwhile.

The excluded visitor finds the first three characteristics the most important, just like the occasional museum visitor. The occasional visitor sometimes visits a museum most of the time for a special occasion. The frequent museum visitor finds the last three characteristics the most important (Hood 2004, 153). If the museum wants to attract more visitors it has to appeal to what satisfies the excluded or occasional visitors. On the other hand, the problem that many museums face is that its policies are based on the expectations of the included visitors (Tlili 2008, 135-136).

It is difficult to attract all three kinds of visitors, because frequent visitor expects something else than the non- or occasional visitor. In order to attract more visitors the museum can let the visitor make use of all the senses, for instance through music or smell. Every visitor has a different learning pattern (Heumann Gurian 1991, 184). Some want to be more active and some more passive. If the museum wants to attract all three kinds of visitors, it has to incorporate more active and more passive learning strategies. Incorporating more active learning strategies can be done through the use of label writing strategies that encourage interaction (Heumann Gurian 1991, 185) or by the use of workshops, audio and video.

§2.5 Temporary and permanent exhibitions and the representation of 'imagined communities'

Nelson Graburn described three phases in the history of communication of exhibitions, which still exist today (Graburn in Gonzalez 2001, 107-108):

- Since the sixteenth century: the display of European power and status. The objects were classified according to the then dominant scientific thoughts. Two common issues were: hierarchy and linear evolution.

- Since the beginning of the twentieth century: the education of the masses. The museum displayed non-western people in local contexts to educate the visitors about their culture.
- Since the 1960's: the empowerment of native people and the visitors. The museum displayed historical events and material culture of a certain group.

Durrans devided the present-day communication of exhibitions into (2007, 250):

- An evolutionary narrative;
- An exoticising or an aestheticising of the culture on display;
- An exaggeration of the museum own power, importance or reputation.

In 1960 Frese stated that there are conflicting factors in making an exhibition (1960, 130): it needs to be a stimulating instructive display, but at the same time a fair representation of the collections. The problem is that there is always a permanent shortage of room and a limited endurance of the public. Sometimes it is thus not possible to keep the attention of the public long enough, because the museum has a shortage of rooms. The museum does not have the money to change its exhibitions every few months. Most of the time a museum has a permanent exhibition and some rooms for temporary exhibitions. These temporary exhibitions need to keep the endurance of the public (see further below). It think that this still counts today. Curators are the people to watch over a fair representation of a culture and the communication department at the same time wants to have a stimulating display so the museum can attract visitors. This can create some conflicts between the two: what attracts visitors may not always be a fair representation of a culture (see chapter 3,4,5). Nowadays, museums still face a permanent shortage of rooms, because its collections are too big. Many old museums have such a big collection that no museum building would ever be big enough to display all of its collections at ones. The museum still faces a limited endurance of the public. To keep the endurance of the public temporary exhibitions are created a few times a year.

There are differences in representing a temporary exhibition and a permanent one. A permanent exhibition needs to be relevant the whole time it is on display. A temporary one can deal with current issues and it is possible to experiment with them (Ames 2004, 206). It can also be much more detailed than a permanent exhibition. In a permanent exhibition about a country, the museum tries to display the most important aspects of the country as a whole. A temporary exhibition can be focused on only a region of this country. This can give two completely different views on one and the same country. When a museum begins to

generalize all the regions in a country into one whole, the country will lose regional variety. The creation of a local, regional and national concept is therefore important for the display of a country: an 'imagined community' is constructed (Newman and McLean 2006, 63). The display is not only a simplified view on a modern complex life, mostly museums shows complex skillfully-made object and not the more simple ones, because they are not attractive enough (Durrans 2007, 256). An example is a description about a Jimat (amulet) from 1879: "It does not look very appealing (Wiener 2007, 57)". In a temporary exhibition regional varieties can be displayed and it can therefore give a 'more fair' representation of a culture than a permanent one. Temporary exhibitions are at the same time the exhibitions who will attract recurring visitors to museums. For most people seeing a permanent exhibition ones is enough; they do not have to see it a second time.

Newman and McLean used the term 'imagined community' to illustrate what a culture on display is. They borrowed the term 'imagined communities' from Benedict Anderson. Anderson says that the people living in a nation will never know most of the other people living in that nation, but they still perceive this nation as one community and therefore it is an imagined community (1991, 6). According to Anderson predominantly three institutions "shaped the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion (1991, 164)". These three institutions were the museum, the map and the census and they could be utilized to bring the colonies closer to the country that wass colonizing them. It made the colonies part of the Dutch 'imagined community' (Bloembergen 2002, 14). The mapping of the population of the Dutch East Indies was done through physical anthropology as a qualitative understanding of who lived where (Legêne, 2007, 233)

The display of a certain culture within a museum is an imagined community. The museum staff who displays a country creates an imagined community, because they will never know most of the people living in that country. Most of the people of the museum staff are not even insiders into that country. The curator of an ethnology museum is most of the time the only one who can say that he or she can be an insider, because they are 'specialists' about a certain country. It is thus the curators job to be a representative of the country on display. The museum can also make use of a source community. Although when source communities are consulted only a few representatives of one community are actually consulted. Those representatives do not know all of the people living within their community. In addition it is an imagined identity that is constructed in exhibitions, because "collections are embedded in politics and therefore do not give us an objective, value free picture of the cultures they originate from (Ter Keurs 2011, 181)". Collections are thus no pure

representations of a culture, although in the nineteenth century objects were collected with this idea in mind.

§2.6 Ethnological objects and (non-) Western art pieces

I also want to include a debate that Sally Price started with her book 'primitive art in civilized places'. She wrote about the inclusion of non-Western art in Western art museums and how this is done through the eyes of westerners instead of from a natives point of view (what should be the case in her opinion). Her book caused as one critic explains:

> "rattled glass cases throughout the art world with its bracing attack on the myth of the connoisseur as a genius whose inborn eye instantly--and reliably--distinguishes masterpiece from kitsch, the authentic from the forged." Lingua Franca[2]

I do not want to discuss the inclusion of non-Western art in a Western art museum, but I want to make use of the distinction that was common in the art world between objects in an art museum and a anthropology museum. I want to argue that the way the art museum displays its art pieces is also the way the Volkenkunde Museum wants to exhibit its ethnological objects (see chapter 3). However that does not mean that the displayed objects suddenly became art pieces. This is the distinction made in Price's book:

- *(Western) art piece/art museum*
    - Perceptual-emotional experience
    - Aesthetic quality of the work important
    - Object speaks for itself
    - Made by a named individual
    - Placing it within a documentable historical framework
    - Motivated choices while making an art piece
- *Ethnographic object/ethnology museum*
    - Cognitive-educational experience
    - Erasing an aesthetic quality
    - Explained by information about the religious, technical and social function
    - Made by a people of a certain culture; anonymous
    - Emphasis on the object's cultural distance

[2] http://www.richandsally.net/primitive_art_in_civilized_places_8372.htm

- Spontaneously; less reflexive; less artistic intentionality

A perceptual-emotional experience is that the visitor should be amazed by what he is seeing and make a judgment about the object without a necessity to read the explanatory text about the object. The aesthetics of the object speaks for itself. A cognitive-educational experience is that the visitor needs an explanatory text about religious, technical and social function to understand the object. The aesthetics of an object is then less important than the educational part of the object.

An (Western) art piece is made by a named individual who can be placed within a (Western) documentable historical framework. Therefore it is possible to make a chronology of an 'evolving history of artistic styles, philosophies and media (Price 1991, 83)'. This named individual is thought to make motivated choices during the production of an art piece. Ethnographic objects are made spontaneously by anonymous individuals who represent a certain non-Western culture. However if an individual makes a mask for family purposes and uses family designs who are already in the family for generations, what is spontaneously about it? Taylor and Aragon also agree that the creator of an art piece is not anonymous, but an individual even though it is not know what the name of the artist is (1991, 16). Many times artist play central roles in native societies. Some pieces cannot be made by everybody, but only by persons with a certain role in the society. The thinking goes that ethnographic objects are made spontaneously because the object stands for a certain culture, not for a named individual. The anonymous individual also does not know that he produced an art piece is, because the art piece is not made for aesthetic purposes (Price 1991, 89). Maybe an ethnographic object is not made for aesthetic purposes exclusively, but it does however contains local aspects of aesthetics. These local aesthetics are however not recognized in the western art world (Price 1991, 93).

Why should an ethnographic object be an art piece? Why is it not possible to see the intrinsic value of an ethnographic objects? Westerners should not judge an ethnographic object for its possibility of being an art piece or not. They should respect it, not judge it. Saying that an ethnographic object is made spontaneously is an offend to the individual who made it and put a lot of time and effort in it. It not the case that art pieces are made by named individuals and ethnographic objects by anonymous people? Does this not mean that not enough respect can be given to the maker of an ethnographic object, because his name is not mentioned? There is a duality here: the westerners say that not enough respect can be given to the artists of ethnographic objects, because the names of the individuals are not known. But at

the same time it is apparently possible to offend these artists by saying that these artists produce their objects spontaneously.

Chapter 3. Image-forming at the Volkenkunde Museum

Image-forming in exhibitions at the Volkenkunde Museum is connected to the organization of the museum. Which image is being formed has to do with who makes which decisions. During the 1980s the museum was organized different than from 1992 onwards. In the 1980s the curators were in control of the museum. They were the ones who decided how many and what kind of objects would be included or excluded in an exhibition. The curators decided themselves how big a text would be and they could choose their own theme's and designers (if they already got hired, because most of the time the curators made the design themselves). This resulted into a variety of design within one museum. A big re-organization in 1992 has changed the power relations at the museum. In 1992 the museum had to become more professional with a management team which had to transform an old-fashioned structure into a modern structured company. The power was taken away from the curators and given to the communication department. Between 1997 and 2001 the exhibitions halls had to be renovated: the inside of the museum had to be transformed into one unifying design. The change of power changed the way exhibitions were produced considerably.

In this chapter I will first give a short introduction to the history of the Volkenkunde Museum. Then I will discuss what the situation was in the museum in the 1980s. After this I will continue with the situation of the museum from the beginning of the 1990s onwards. I will explain about the change of power and the creation of new department. Next I will discuss the redecoration of the museum and I will argue that a lot of problems occurred during this whole process. Finally, I will discuss the new design of the exhibition halls.

§3.1 History of the Volkenkunde Museum

The Volkenkunde Museum was the third museum that came into existence in Leiden. The first two museums were: the National Museum of Antiquity in 1818 and the National Museum of Natural History in 1820 (van Wengen 2002, 12). The three museums still exist in Leiden and they grew considerably since the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century there were some problems between the Antiquity Museum and the Royal Cabinet of Rarities. The director of the Antiquity museum, Casper Reuvens (1793-1835), had a dispute with the director of the Royal Cabinet of Rarities, R.P. van de Kasteele, about Hindu and Buddhist statues from Java, the Singasari statues (Halbertsma 2003, 36-37). The Singasari statues were among the first objects which arrived

in the Netherlands and they consisted of three statues: Bhairawa, Ganesha and Nandi (Lunsingh Scheurleer 2007, 87). Kasteele assumed they belonged to his Cabinet, because the statues belonged to still existing people and were thus ethnological. Reuvens on the other hand believed that they belonged to his museum, because the people who made the objects did not exist anymore and were thus archaeological. He explains this by referring to the old Greek and Roman remains. The Greeks still exist, but the people who made the old Greek objects did not. Reuvens said that if there was a complete transition to another religion, the objects of the old religion or believes belonged to an Antiquity Museum (Halbertsma 2003, 36-37). The Javanese had made a transition to Islam, thus the statues belonged to an Antiquity Museum. For decades Reuvens ideas about the division between collections among museums prevailed, but in 1903 the Singasari statues were given to the Museum of Ethnology (Ter Keurs 2007, 177). In the present day these statues welcome the visitors when they enter the exhibition hall of Indonesia. Nowadays there is not much discussion on the different museum categories that exist in the Netherlands, because it is more a difference among disciplines than it is a difference between objects. These disciplines think, see and order differently (Vaessens in Bouquet 2001, 178-179).

The predecessor of the Volkenkunde Museum is the Royal Cabinet of Rarities in The Hague, founded in 1821. The predecessor of this museum was the Cabinet of Chinese Rarities, founded in 1816. The Volkenkunde Museum was founded in Leiden when the Dutch government bought the Japanese collection of Philip Franz von Siebold (1796-1866). Von Siebold wanted to sell his collection only if his collection would fuse with the collections of the Royal Cabinet of Rarities, because he plead for one big scientific ethnographic museum. The purpose of the Ethnographic museum in the eyes of von Siebold was that it had to expand its knowledge about countries and tribes in general. The Volkenkunde Museum calls itself therefore the first ethnology museum based on scientific principles in the world (van Dongen et al. 1987). This was not completely true, because the Batavian Society for Art and Sciences was the first to conduct scientific ethnographic research while at the same time collecting ethnographic objects (Ter Keurs 2005, 16).

The von Siebold collection was bought in 1837 and in that year opened to the public at Rapenburg No. 19 in Leiden. Because of a lack of space in this building, the museum could not fuse straight away with the Royal Cabinet of Rarities. This did not happen until 1883. In 1933 the museum got a new building to exhibit their collections; this was the old academic hospital in Leiden (van Dongen et al. 1987). Until the present-day the museum is still housed in this building. At the end of the twentieth century the building was renovated and the

exhibition halls were reorganized; it reopened in 2001. Currently (2011-2012), the museum again has to be renovated because the windows have deteriorated and the roof has to be replaced.

Until the end of the nineteenth century the museum was accommodated mostly about China and Japan, but at the end of the nineteenth century collections from the Dutch East-Indies were sent to the museum (van Dongen et al. 1987). In the beginning the museum was called "Museum of Japan", but because of the increase of objects from the Dutch East-Indies it was renamed in 1864 to "'s Rijks Ethnographisch Museum (National Ethnographic Museum)" (van Wengen 2002, 20-22). In 2005 the name changed into "Volkenkunde Museum (Museum of Ethnology)", because it became privatized.

§3.2 The little kingdom structure of the 1980s

As I already explained in the previous chapter the organization of museums was very different in the 1980s than it is nowadays. It is however important to see everything in its context of time. In general it was the curator, the designer and the educational department that had a say in the making of an exhibition during the 1980s (McLean 2004, 197). The same counts for the Volkenkunde Museum. The educational department had developed in the museum and the curators made use of a designer more and more, but the curators were still the executives and end responsible on the exhibitions. The power of the curators in the museum during the 1980s and earlier is called 'the little kingdom structure ('kleine koninkrijkjes')'. This term was introduced in the museum already at the end of the 1980s, because the museum staff realized that something had to change about the old structure. The curators were each ruling their own little kingdom without almost any interconnections between them. The curators were not accountable to other departments because the only person they were accountable to was the director and he let everybody be free to be creative in their own ways. Consequently the curators did not have a deadline to finish certain tasks (source: anonymous). As a result of that a lot of things got left behind. The curators had a lot of tasks and not enough time to give enough attention to all of these tasks. They could do what they wanted or do what they though should be done first. As a result of that certain things were not done because of the lack of time or maybe the lack of interest. As a consequence the museum did not really have a long-term planning. Sometimes the secretariat went at war to push the curators to finish certain tasks (source: anonymous).

With some nostalgia a few people look back at how it was in the 1980s (and not only the curators!). They call it a time in which the museum worked together as a 'family', a period in

which there was more sympathy for co-workers or a period where there was more freedom (source: anonymous), even though this period is called the little kingdom structure. The term "little kingdom structure" implies a negative meaning, because it includes the idea that curators were ruling their own little kingdom without incorporating other people in their decisions. Apparently we should consider the definition of this term more nuance. The curators did have the end responsibility of their collection and research, but they were not excluding others who worked at the museum. It was not as if it was not possible to talk to curators about the design or content, it was sometimes possible to persuade or negotiate with a curator if somebody wanted to change something about a certain design or content (source: anonymous). There should have been some kind of cooperation within the museum according to some people looking back to this period with some nostalgia. The fact that some people look back to this period with some nostalgia is probably a consequence of what happened after the reorganization and the re-decoration and the tensions that gave between the departments involved. Everybody had their role written down after the reorganization and they had to defend their position. While in the 1980s the roles had not been formally defined, everybody knew their supposed role within the museum (source: anonymous).

The curator had a servant. Some people would rather like to call them assistants. The servants had the task to assist the curator and to take care of the collections (on a physical and administrative level); although they were not qualified for that role (source: anonymous). They may not have had the right people to take care of the depot but they did have restorers (source: anonymous). Object description were most of the time done by interns. The job of the servant was very broad, just like the rest of the museum employees. As a consequence people did what they wanted or where they were good at. The servant had to assist the curator and thus he had to listen to him, but in reality this was not always the case. Sometimes the servant said that he had other things to do, or he delayed things so the curator had to do it himself because that was much quicker (source: anonymous). A curator even said that he would rather make use of volunteers, because they would at least do what he asked them to (source: anonymous).

Some people, who had previously worked at private companies, say that because of the wide range of tasks a museum staff member had, the museum was in a kind of chaos (source: anonymous). Already in 1947 the former director G.W. Locher had noticed that there was a lack of organization within the museum (van Wengen 2002, 127). He did not do anything about it, neither did his successor, Dr. P.H. Pott. Many people said that it was as if time had stood still at the museum during the directorate of Dr. P.H. Pott (director between 1955-

1982). After he retired a new director had to be chosen and at that time the curators were the one who agreed on the appointment of the new director. In 1982 they all agreed that Willem van Gulik would be the new director (van Wengen 2002, 171). With the appointment of the new director education would play a bigger role in the creation of a storyline within exhibitions. Gulik wanted: "a balanced teamwork between the research tasks and the public aimed tasks of the museum (van Wengen 2002, 171)". The curators would now have to work together with the educational department. The educational department started to consider what the public wanted and consider the level of the visitors. Most visitors were high-educated and the museum wanted to be more accessible to the common people. As a consequence of these new considerations the exhibitions became more public-oriented and the level of the exhibition went down to make it more accessible for everyone (source: anonymous). It was not only from the point of view from the curator anymore, who would prefer to consider what would be nice to display. Previously it had been more of a scientific research center which mostly attracted high educated people; now it started to become a museum for the common people (source: anonymous). The museum even had a program for blind and visually impaired people who were allowed to touch objects, but it was an expensive and time-consuming program for such a small group.

A problem that arose soon after the introduction of teamwork was, because of austerity measures from the government, that the museum was not allowed to hire new people for open vacancies at the educational department (van Wengen 2002, 171). This led to a lesser capacity at the educational department and more pressure on the people working there. At the end of the 1980s only 2 out of 5 original staff members were left. A consequence of this was that the program for the visually impaired and blind people was cancelled. Another problem that arose from the austerity measures was that the planned rebuilding of the museum in the second half of the 1980s was mostly cancelled; although a whole master plan had already been made for the rebuilding of the museum. For instance the former building of the Boerhaave museum would become part of the museum just like the part of the main building which previously belonged to the University of Leiden.

In the 1980s it was much easier for a curator to make changes in his own permanent exhibition. He was the one in charge and if he wanted to circulate more objects instead of having the same objects for 10 years, it was his decision. It might have been easier to make a temporary exhibition: some were better at that than others because they were more creative (source: anonymous). Some also made more exhibitions than others. As a result of that there

were more temporary exhibitions about certain regions than there were about other regions. The curators were their own designers and storytellers in some way and not everybody was good at this; not everybody was creative enough. The museum had somebody, Theo Hakkaart, who sometimes made a design, for instance the exhibition ”Bazaar, market cities in North-Afghanistan”. But he also had a lot of things to do and he tried to professionalize the designers part. Since 1984 external designers were sometimes hired and in the end of the 1980s the designers would get a stronger position (source: anonymous). But these designers were more architects instead of specialized in interior design (source: Lies Willers). Interior design was not a profession yet. The former director, Stephen Engelsman, said that it was as if there were 10 museums in 1 because of the different views each curator had on an exhibition and the different designs. Though with different designers it was possible to have more variety between the design of different exhibitions and therefore also more different points of view. From time to time when a temporary exhibition opened the media were informed and sometimes posters were made (source: anonymous). The idea of advertising started in the 1980s but it was not common yet.

It was very common in the 1980s to display in an evocative way; to visually tell a story. It was a context-aimed way of displaying. The objects within the showcases had to have a relation to each other. This idea of displaying had developed in the 1950s. Before that time it was common practice to have an object-aimed way of presenting; the focus then was on the individual object (van Wengen 2002, 149). An example about an evocative way of displaying is the exhibition called ”Bazaar, market cities in North-Afghanistan”. The visitor could really feel as if they were in Afghanistan: a complete market was built were Afghani music played and where the visitor could smell the herbs from a bazaar in Afghanistan. There are people, curators and non-curators, in the museum that consider this an old-fashioned way of displaying, but there are also people, including me, who would still like to see this a little more nowadays (source: anonymous). With the ways and means and the amount of money available to make an exhibition these were good exhibitions (source anonymous).

Some curators said that in the 1980s a curator knew their collection much better than nowadays, because the objects were stored in the museum itself and the TMS (The Museum System) was not in use yet. Nowadays the collections are stored at ‘s Gravenzande and the use of TMS made the curators be less curious to get to know their own collection physically (source: anonymous). The curators think that it is enough to see the object on a picture instead of seeing it in real life (source: anonymous). They also do not know how to recognize object materials anymore (source: anonymous). In the 1980s it was the job of a curator to know the

type of material, but nowadays this is the task of conservators. It was also much easier for curators to give objects on loan to other museums, because the curator was the one who controlled his collection and the curator knew which museum to trust and which not. This is not possible anymore and not only because of the changed organization of the museum. It is nowadays much more difficult to travel with any archaeological or ethnological object and the insurance on objects has grown considerably.

In 1988 the Netherlands Court of Audit had a devastating report about the Dutch National Museums and their depots, among others the Volkenkunde museum (van Wengen, 128). The Volkenkunde museum had one of the worst depots in the Netherlands. The collection was stored in congested conditions in the attic and in the basement of the museum. In the basement it was too humid in summer and in the attic it was too hot in summer (source: anonymous). The depots were even open to everybody in the museum and everybody that knew somebody in the museum, because there was no strict security (source: anonymous). The curators had the task to conserve and register the collections, but the problem was that the collections were too big to be positioned correctly in the attic and basement and the curators had too much work to do to keep up with the registration of the objects (source: anonymous). Gulik had asked, before the report of 1988, for a climate installation in the depot, but it was too expensive in the eyes of the ministry (van Wengen 2002, 128). The government changed its mind in the very end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s when the Deltaplan came into being (see more §3.3). Gulik tried to change the organization of the museum, improve the conservation methods and to renovate the museum (van Wengen 2002), but the government did not want to spend money on museums and therefore he did not have enough money to turn his plans into reality. As a result he resigned in 1989/1990.

Another problem that Gulik faced was that at the end of the 1980s the government saw the director's post more and more as an occupation for someone who has management qualities and could think of a long-term planning. Previously the directors had been curators, just like Gulik, and being a good curator does not necessarily mean that you are a good director. This can be an example of what somebody said to me: that a lot of people were hired because they knew somebody within the museum instead of being hired for the good qualities somebody possessed for a certain job he or she applied for (source: anonymous). This person also said to me that most of these persons had connections with The Dutch East Indies/Indonesia (source: anonymous). The curators were allowed to choose a director and of course they would choose somebody in favor of them. The director is the one who stands above the curators and the one who 'runs' the museum and defines the route a museum is

heading. If a curator would be chosen as a director this would always be in favor of the curators: this director would run the museum from a curators' point of view. All of this would change in the course of thoughts of privatization within the government. National Museums would soon be run like companies with a management board at the top, not with curators at the top. After Gulik the museum got an interim-director between 1990-1992, Ernst Storm.

§3.3 A change of power and the founding of competing departments in the 1990s

The ministry gave the new interim-director Storm the task to reorganize the museum. He had to transform an old-fashioned museum into a modern company. Storm was working externally for the museum and he also had other projects to lead, beside the museum (source: anonymous). A curator said that he is a good manager and that the reorganization on paper succeeded. Also other people would agree that the professionalization of the museums organization was an improvement (source: anonymous). But Storm had thought his idea out solely in theory, not in practice. This was the task of the new director, Steven Engelsman, who recently resigned (april 2012) from his post as director of the Volkenkunde museum and he became the new director of the Museum für Volkenkünde in Vienna. He had to implement the ideas of Storm. The first thing that had to be done was to form new departments (source: anonymous):

- The communication department: it evolved out of the educational department.
- A collection department: this was formerly the tasks of curators and servants.
- The research department: the curators and their assistants. The assistants were previously the servants.
- A management department.

The designers are missing in this list, because the museum hired an external designers office, Opera Design. One that is specialized in interior design instead of architecture. Most temporary and all permanent exhibitions were designed by Opera. The downside part of this is that there is not much variety in the design within the museum. Nevertheless the use of one designer can show to the outside world that there is unity within the museum. Although within the process of making an exhibition this is not always the case.

Many people agreed that this new structure could be a good one (source: anonymous), but in practice it did not work out as good as on paper. With the formation of the different departments new jobs were created and new people had to be hired. A few people said to me that not always the person who had the best qualities for the job got hired, but that a person

who was more humble had a higher chance of getting accepted (source: anonymous). The working environment is more formal than in the 1980s and the different departments did not always communicate very well with each other. Everybody wanted to defend their own newly created position: narrow-mindedness ('hokjescultuur') had the upper hand (source: anonymous). Therefore the new departments were less willing to listen to other departments. This led to a lot of problems, among others because, although the curators knew that a reorganization would come, they never expected it to really happen (source: anonymous). Certainly not this abrupt. In the past more plans were shaped for a reorganization of the museum, but it never came into being since the ministry at all times thought it was too expensive.

For the building of better teamwork, courses were and are given which take a whole day. These days are there for the improvement of communication between the different department and individual people so they can work together better (source: anonymous). The person who told this to me said that these days are useless, because the museum staff needs to listen to nonsense all day. At the end of the day when they are back at the office people go on with their business and treat other people the same as before the course (source: anonymous). These days costs a lot of money, paid by the tax payer, and they are useless (source: anonymous).

Instead of the curators, the communication department is now fully in control. Just like the curators during the 1980s who ruled the museum as kings over their own little kingdom, the communication department now has complete power over the museum. The museum wanted to get rid of the little kingdom structure because of the power that the curators used to have. This same power was now executed by another power block. It should never have been like this: going from one power block to another. Somebody told me that they ruled the museum in a reign of terror (source: anonymous). Steven Engelsman has told me that it took 15 years before the museum staff was willing to work together. A curator told me that this was because one of the most powerful persons in the museum, Agniet van der Sande, had passed away (source: anonymous). Steven Engelsman said that this was because most of the older generation of curators had resigned or were retired and a new generation of curators now works at the museum. It seems likely that it will be a combination of both with the fact that there will be a matter of adaptation to the new structure for the older generation.

It should have been an organization with the power more equally shared. But maybe there was such a deep aversion towards the curators that the communication department now wanted to overrule them completely. Although I did not got the image that there was such an

aversion towards the museum. As I already stated some non-curators looked back at that time as seeing the museum as one family or as a time in which people had sympathy for each other. In the 1990s decisions were made by people who had almost no knowledge about the content and the history of the specific collections at the museum (source: anonymous). If they would obtain the knowledge from the curators and listen to them instead of reshaping their words into their own words, it could be a cooperative power. This could result in better exhibitions and messages that are clearer to the public.

The big power block was the case in the 1990s, but during my own experience at the museum I got the idea that this has changed a lot. It shifted to an approach which is more in the middle in which the different departments work together much better. The different points of view between the curator and the communication department are however still there but are now recognized as a game of give and take. The communication department listens to the curator, but they are still the ones who make the final decisions, whether the curator likes it or not. This change of responsibilities has shifted the museum from a research centre to a more public-oriented museum (source: anonymous). The negative thing about this is that it is now more important what the communication department thinks the visitor wants to see than what would be appropriate to show. They want for instance the Queen Wilhelmina doll collection inside of the permanent Indonesian exhibition, while Francine Brinkgreve did not want it inside, because the accessories of the dolls are incomplete and the colors of the cloths are faded or the cloth are worn out (see more in chapter 5).

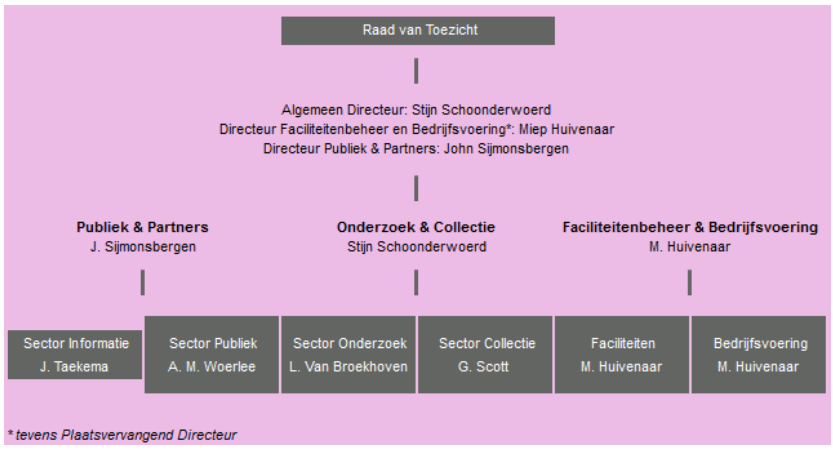
The curators felt left behind after the reorganization. I even heard from a curator that the director wanted to close down the research department, because he thought it should be part of the university (source: anonymous). A complicated story lies behind this[3]. The idea that the research department should go to the university came from an external research office (Andersson, Elffers and Felix) that was hired to investigate the problems between the director and the Works Council (in Dutch: ondernemingsraad). The director said that he had nothing to do with the Works Council. The Supervisory Board (in Dutch: Raad van Toezicht) wanted to put a stop to this, because the director has to listen (most of the time) to the Works Council. Therefore the office Andersson, Elffers and Felix was hired. The research office said that if the museum wanted to get rid of the problems, the research department should be move to the university. They went to the university to ask if the university wanted to have good researchers. In the end of 1996 – beginning 1997 the Council of Culture (in Dutch: Raad van

[3] This story was told by an anonymous person.

Cultuur) said that a research department is needed in a museum. This ended the idea of the director to move the research department to the university. The question if the research department should be closed down, should not even be a question. The Volkenkunde museum is all about people from other cultures and curators are the intermediaries between the museum and the other culture. The curators are the ones to watch over the content of an exhibition, although the communication department does not always listen to them.

The Counsel of Culture investigates the research department every 4 or 5 years. The research department is the only department that has an external council to investigate if the department is organized well (source: anonymous). The director, on the other hand, is also supervised by an external council: the Supervisory Board. He is held accountable to the supervisory board, while in the 1980s he could practically do what he wanted because there was nobody checking him. The Council of Culture not only saved the research department in a certain way for their existence at the museum it also changed the collaboration among the curators (source: anonymous). Although, this could also be partly explained by the change of curators: some curators retired or resigned. New and younger curators took their place who were not used to the old system, only the new one. This made them better malleable. The Council of Culture also saved the existence of the Volkenkunde Museum: the government wanted to close the museum, because the museum did not generate enough money themselves (source: anonymous). The council could show, because of their investigation on the research department, that the research department is a unique one which should not be threatened with closure. At the end of May 2012 the council advised the ministry about subsidies in the cultural sector and the Volkenkunde museum gets only 5% less subsidy than before.

The previous 4 departments can currently be organized in 6 departments within the following structure:



3.1 Organogram of the internal organization of the Volkenkunde museum.

The communication department is under the supervision of the director 'Public and Partners' John Sijmonsbergen, just like the information department. The collection management and research department is under the control of the general director, Stijn Schoonderwoerd. The management has split into two departments: facilities management and operational management. These two departments are under the supervision of the director 'facilities management and the Operational management', Miep Huivenaar. I will not mention the new director Stijn Schoonderwoerd in my thesis, since during my research the general director was still Steven Engelsman. The tasks of the different departments are[4]:

- The *Information department*: Their responsibility is the provision of digital services to the public and to the museum staff. They take care of the development and maintenance of the museum's website and its digital collection database. For the museum staff they provide ICT-services. The registration of the objects has now separated from the collection department and became part of the information department.

- The *Communication department*: The task of this department is connected directly to the public: organizing public activities, guide groups through the museum and provide PR and marketing. Apart from this they also organize temporary exhibitions and are end-responsible on the permanent exhibitions. This department works together with the research and the collection departments on exhibiting the collections and taking care of the information centre at the museum.

- The *Research department*: The curators conduct research for exhibitions and for scientific reasons. They document and represent in the light of a changing society. The cooperation with other museums in- and outside of the Netherlands is an important task for them: for joint exhibitions or cultural heritage projects. The curator is still the one who is responsible on the content of exhibitions, they need to provide object information in TMS (The Museum System) and they give advice about loans to other museums.

- The *Collection department*: This department is responsible for the collections, the documentation of the objects and the incoming and outgoing loans. They are responsible for providing photographs of the objects in The Museum System. In the process of making an exhibition they are responsible for the approval of objects which the curator, together with the

[4] Taken from the website of the Volkenkunde museum: http://www.rmv.nl/index.aspx?toplevel=over%20het%20museum&identifier=763&parent=organisation&pid=675

communication department, has chosen. If objects are in a bad condition, the conservator have to decide if the items are not suitable to go into exhibition. Most of the time they are heard.

- The *Facilities management*: This department provides among others security for personal and technical security in the museum. The technical service takes care of the maintenance of the building and the installations, supervise the building and the breaking down of exhibitions and they offer technical support to other departments.

- The *Operational management*: Their task is to provide services to other departments. They consist of the finance departments who, among others, give financial information to the management team and the Personnel and Organization department who watches over personnel administration and helps the management team with recruitment, selection and training of personnel. The secretariat and the reception are also part of this department.

In 1998 the Boerhaave building (see fig. 3.2[5]) was renovated, because during WWII part of the building had been destroyed (source: anonymous). This became the office building for the museum staff. The curators where housed on the attic. If you look from the outside of the museum the attic is almost invisible and you ask yourself the question how it is possible that the curators are situated there. It however looks bigger from the inside than expected. Nevertheless it can be a metaphor for the way the museum saw the position of the curator. They were placed in a dusty attic where a lot of households would normally store their rubbish. The attic has a small number of windows and it can get very hot in summer, while the other floors have big glass windows that look out over the streets. The newly created departments still had to profile themselves so they wanted to give the curators a minor position within the museum. Housing them on the attic would give them this minor position. The head of the communication department who has the end responsibility on exhibitions, Anne Marie Woerlee, is placed in the room closest to the street on the ground floor where everybody passes by the museum, together with the head of PR and an exhibition maker who works on the visual aspect of exhibitions. On the same place at the first floor the director is situated. So for the outside world you could say that they are the most important people, because they are the ones most visible for the outside world. There is however one thing that is good about the attic and that

3.2 Boerhaave building

[5] http://sketchup.google.com/3dwarehouse/details?mid=6806a98cd890495f50ed80ee29199bc1

is that almost every curator has his own room. This is probably a result of the 1980s when the curators ruled the museum in their little kingdoms. The geographical distinction within the collection of the museum is still used and thus in a way divides the curators. They mostly work on their own geographical area and they do not work together on a large scale. This seems logical: the rest of the museum works for all of the geographical areas, not for a specific one, while the curators still have their own geographical specialization. This is their job and this is how the collections are divided. The people working for the communication department work together in one big room, just like the people who work for the facilities and general management and for the information department.

The collection management is situated in the museum building itself, even though the depot of the museum is in s'Gravenzande. In 1993, just after the formation of the new collection department, the museum obtained a new depot for their collections. It was part of the Delta-plan for cultural preservation of the ministry to improve the storage facilities in the National Museums. Better storage facilities were necessary to professionalize the collection department and in the end privatize the whole museum. A good working and professional management is needed for privatization (Staal 2002, 28). The delta-plan consisted of two phases. Phase one was to make an inventory of all the individual objects within the collections, register the objects, clean and transfer them to the new depot. Phases two, which started in 1997, consisted of the collective preservation of all the objects. TMS became an important tool for registering the objects, digitalizing the collections and to choose objects for an exhibition. This system made is easier for all parties involved in an exhibition-making process to have an overview of what kind of objects a collection has and which objects are chosen for the exhibition. The Volkenkunde museum became the first Dutch museum to work with this system. The former servants of the curators could be transferred to the newly created collection department, because it related to their former job: the registration and physical care of the collections (source: anonymous). Some did make the transition, but others took on a different job at the museum or left it altogether.

These days a curator hardly gets a chance to make an exhibition because it is the communication department who decides which temporary exhibitions should be on display. Curators can give an idea about an exhibition, for example Luit Mols, the curator of the Near Eastern region, and Francine Brinkgreve saw the Hajj exhibition in the British Museum and they would like to bring the exhibition to the Volkenkunde museum. The exhibition needed some changes, for example the exhibition in the British museum was very historical and for

the Volkenkunde it should be more focused on the person behind it. But this exhibition is different than most other temporary exhibitions at the Volkenkunde Museum. Temporary exhibitions are usually focused on families with younger kids and are very interactive. The target group for the Hajj exhibition on the other hand is more the older high-educated visitor. The communication department finds this exhibition an interesting idea, but they do not know yet that the target group is not the usual one for temporary exhibitions. The target group for the Hajj exhibition is the same kind of visitor that is also attracted to the permanent exhibition.

Temporary exhibitions are a way to give more contexts and to let it be about one issue instead of a country or continent, like in the permanent exhibitions. There is more depth inside temporary exhibitions and it is more about inclusion. The permanent exhibition is about the object itself but temporary exhibitions sometimes do not have a lot of objects on display: it is more about the story within the exhibition (source: Lies Willers). It is more interactive and lively than the permanent one. The education department plays a key role in these exhibitions, because it is more focused on children than the permanent one.

Sometimes the designer uses models in the temporary exhibitions, because this will be more interactive for the children, but they do not make use of dioramas anymore. The designers also do not use dioramas anymore in the permanent exhibitions (source: Lies Willers). Staal describes this as "nowhere do you get the sense of a lifelike illusion (2002, 61)". Dioramas are seen by a lot of people as an old-fashioned way of displaying and a little dusty, but I think that sometimes it gives a better context to the objects than to display them in a showcase without context. For instance the Afghan market would never have been giving the same feeling or experience if the objects would have been displayed in a sterile way inside showcases. The market gave the idea that you were part of the whole exhibition, placing everything in a showcase creates a certain distance. Is it not the aim of museums to be more interactive?

§3.4 The re-decorating of the museum between 1997 and 2001

After the reorganization it became clear that the museum should also renovate its buildings and redecorate their exhibition halls. The governmental architect Cees Rijnbout paid the museum a visit in 1992 and he immediately saw the urgency to renovate the whole museum. The architect OD 205 would initially have been the architect to renovate the outside of the buildings as well as design the new permanent exhibitions (Staal 2003, 28). In the end the museum choose an interior designer to refurbish the permanent exhibition. Because Opera

Design had already made a few temporary exhibitions for the museum they were acquainted and Opera had the time to take on this large-scale project.

Opera Design is an interior design company founded in 1981. Their first real exhibition was at the Antiquity Museum (RMO) in Leiden in 1986 (source: Lies Willers). Back then exhibition designer was not yet an actual occupation, but the curators wanted their interior designer's expertise for the creation of an exhibition. Opera Design also designs for retail and the catering industry. Lies Willers sees a lot of similarities between shops and a museum. Their natural rules/perspectives are mainly the same: people need to be seduced to enter a shop like they have to be 'seduced' to enter a museum. Tony Bennet also made a comparison between the nineteenth century department store and the public museum. These comparisons were that they are both open spaces for the general public and both function as a place of emulation (Bennet, 2002, 30). This first comparison is still important nowadays: the museum and a store are both open to the general public and should attract as much people as possible. Currently the ideas have changed from those of the nineteenth century in which the museum and the department stores also had to educate the mass public. Nowadays only the museum still has the function of educate the public. The things that museums and shops have in common these days is that they are both mainly about profit.

Opera Design got a list with demands of the museum about the design of the exhibitions in 1996. A few of these demands were (Staal 2003, 43):

- *The museums mission was that the exhibitions would provide an insight into the history and development of non-western cultures and the interaction between cultures*. The idea that followed out of this demand was the theme: a ribbon around the world. This ribbon around the world should demonstrate the influences that cultures had and have on each other. However, it was not the idea to make a museum about the world, but to make it about the Volkenkunde museum and its collections (source: Lies Willers).
- *The design had to be timeless, yet interesting*. Opera had chosen large glass cases who would tie the objects together within the exhibition. The design of each exhibition hall had to be different, because of the different collections (source: lies Willers). The collections have a whole history behind them together with the geographical differences of the regions from which the collections derived and this should be included into the exhibition. The display for the arctic region was supposed to show a barren and flatten land, with only the glass cases in which the textiles were displayed would stand up. The rest of the glass cases would be much lower, so the public could look down on it. The glass cases followed

the geography of the arctic region. The glass cases for the Indonesian exhibition for instance were supposed to show a rain forest. The way the glass cases were arranged depended on the content of the display (source: Lies Willers). In an exhibition were different regions would be on display, the glass cases would be arranged one after the other, like Indonesia and the arctic regions. However in an exhibition were one theme was central and the rest was connected to this theme, the central theme was displayed in the middle of the hall and the rest was built around it, like China and Japan & Korea (see appendix A).

- *It would be all about the aesthetics in the new design*: the object had to be the center of the exhibition and not the story. The object had to speak for itself and stand on its own beauty (See more in §3.5). But at the same time the objects were placed in connection to each other by using glass cases. The visitor can look through it and see the next theme and objects already through it. This creates relationships among the different themes and objects (Staal 2003, 104).
- *The communication within the exhibition had to be layered*. This was achieved for example by having two different texts: one for adults and one for children. For the visitor who wanted to know more about an object it would be possible to read about the object description in a touch screen in front of each showcase.
- *The collection had to be the focus point of the exhibition*: the nature of the collections should be taken into account. The museum wanted to display stories and collections that were exclusively for this museum. The collections might differ from each other, but the design had to unify them all. To get to know all the collections Opera asked the curators to write a textual sketch on their collection which Opera then dissected into their basics and schematized after that (Staal 2003, 57-58).

3.3 Entrance hall of the museum

In the hallway Opera made a screen that had to get the visitors all exited for a voyage through the museum (see fig. 3.3[6]). This screen displayed a movie about ships departing from Dutch harbors to faraway countries (Staal 2003, 143). The museum wanted the visitors to do the same thing. The visitor would depart from the entrance of the museum and go on a voyage through the museum to see foreign countries. It is possible to see this as a metaphor for the colonial voyages that the Dutch made to foreign countries where they collected a lot of the objects on display. The visitor needed to enter an exhibition and be amazed by what he is seeing, just like the colonial traders, missionaries, soldiers etc. when they entered unknown places. Visitors can get the ultimate colonial experience when visiting the museum. There are no object labels inside of the display cases, so the only things that is visible are the objects. Just like colonial times, when the Dutch saw strange objects without any tag on them. However the purpose of the museum was that visitors would see the objects and then they had to become curious about the meaning of the objects. For this the visitor would have the object's descriptions in the touch screens. This was not available for the Dutch during colonial times. For the understanding of what a showcase is about there are small texts on the showcase. The creation of this emotional experience (see §2.6) will let the visitor reflect on the objects and the collections of the museum, because it gives the feeling as if you are the one who is exploring and collecting them. The ribbon around the world theme would be the connection between the different geographical regions.

Stephen Greenblatt considered this way of exhibiting the objects as: "The knowledge that derives from this kind of looking [at museum objects] may not be very useful in the attempt to understand another culture, but it is vitally important in the attempt to understand our own (Greenblatt in Staal 2003, 143)". This is a clever way of letting people be reflective about their own history and the collections of the museum; the problem is that the people did not understand the message. They go to an ethnology museum with the idea in mind that they will see objects from another present-day culture and learn something about them. They do not go to an ethnology museum to try to understand their own culture (in connection to other cultures). If the museum seeks to give visitors what they want, the exhibitions should be about the display of present-day cultures. Or the museum should be called differently so people would expect something else. If its desire is to attract as many people as possible from all levels of society, then a design should not have such a complicated idea behind it. The way objects are displayed is the way art pieces are displayed in an art museum (see §3.5). Art

[6] http://www.opera-amsterdam.nl/projects.php?pro_id=24

museums are the most exclusive museum of all (source: Mariana Françozo), because visitors have to be insiders to understand the art pieces. When a museum wants to be as inclusive as possible, they should not try to mirror the most exclusive museum.

Since other cultures came so close to our world by the extensive use of mass media nowadays, museums do not have to translate the other cultures anymore to the public. They could now focus on interdependence between cultures. Therefore the following design was chosen:

"Opera concluded that openness and transparency were essential to express interwoven cultures with rich histories and lively presents. Architect elements - walls, tables and display cases whose clear and matted glass makes them almost neutral - were used to create a universal and definitely modern environment. In this environment the objects are given all the space they need to draw the viewer into the tales they tell (Staal 2003, 138)."

When a visitor only looks at an ethnographic object it will tell its story to the visitor, just like an art pieces (see more §3.5). For people who are curious what the story of the objects is there are touch screens in front of the glass cases were the stories about the individual objects can be read. But the connection made between the individual objects through general texts is very limited:

"Several display cases have texts on them; some of them enlarged to huge dimensions. But everywhere the same rule applied: only when it strengthened the impact of the exhibited objects, could such typography be considered (Staal 2003, 106)."

I wish to sketch the environment in which the whole re-decorating project took place. After the problems that arose during the reorganization between the curators and the other departments, likewise the redecorating did not go over a bed of roses. This was not very surprising considering the fact that the redecoration of the museum started 4 years after the reorganization. The reorganization had such a big impact on the structure and consequently on the decisions that were made during the production of an exhibition, that it would have been almost inevitable that problems would occur. The curators had lost their voice almost completely and they were still trying to cope with the new organization. Suddenly they also had to deal with a large-scale renovation and redecoration of the exhibition halls.

The biggest problems again occurred between the communication department and the curators. This time the designer was also part of it. The director, Steven Engelsman, and the acting director, Agniet van der Sande, gave Opera a considerably amount of freedom to do what the designers thought would be necessary to make a first-class design. One curator described the position of Opera Design as almost a monopoly (source: anonymous). This goes against the plan of Engelsman since he did not wanted to give the designers the full power over the project. This would have, implicitly, produced a hierarchy leading to disagreements about a good organization (Staal 2003, 96). I think that he created what he wanted to avoid. Staal also writes in his book that "the museum did not quite know what it wanted, it outsourced its authority… as indeed was partly true (2003, 54)". He gave the designer way to much responsibility in which they could even overrule the curators.

Take for instance the next example: one curator said that on the day that his exhibition would open he went to have a look in the hall and he saw somebody from Opera Design taking out objects from the showcases without consulting him (source: anonymous). The objects had to be removed, because there were too many objects within the glass case. Was the content not the work of the curator? Should the designer not have consulted the curator about the removal of objects? When agreements are made you should not break them that easily. The knowledge of the curator about the objects is crucial in this case. He should have been the one to decide which objects were less important than others. According to Agniet van de Sande this should have been the case. It was her role to make sure that everybody was doing what his or her role was in the whole project (Staal 2003, 99). Curators would decide on the content and designers on the design. This did not happen in the example I just described. In Agniet van de Sande's opinion it then had to be a cooperation between the two. The curator had to decide which objects had to be removed and the designer should have reorganized the showcase.

One curator would describe the situation as hostile: during a discussion there was always an imaginary knife on the table (source: anonymous). Other curators would say that the communication between the designer and the curator was dysfunctional. Staal described the situation as "people were at each other's throats (2003, 95)". This was maybe the case because there was almost no direct communication between the designer and curator. The communication department was always the intermediary and as I have explained earlier, they wanted to proof themselves. They thought they were now in charge of the museum and exhibitions. It seems like there was some political game going on. The museum is now run by a management board who wants to make as much profit as possible. To make enough profit

the museum had to attract enough sponsors and visitors with a good design. To make this become reality the museum trusted an external company, the designer, to be almost in charge of the whole project more than they trusted their own personal and curators. What is behind this?

The director brought external specialists to assess the plans of Opera Design. The specialists were two (ex-)directors of other museums and two civil servants for the government (Staal 2003, 97). These non-anthropological-specialists had to asses a design of an anthropology museum. If the museum did not trust their own curators, should they not have, beside the other specialists, asked specialists in Anthropology to consider if the plans would be appropriate for an Ethnological museum?

The meetings about the redecorating started in 1997 and Pieter ter Keurs and Rogier Bedeaux were representing the curators at these meetings. It was sometimes difficult for them to be heard because the others overturned them most of the time. There were four people who formed a solid block and it was very difficult for the curators to get between them (source: anonymous). At one time the director decided that they should go on a last-minute trip to America and Canada to visit some museums to see how they arranged their exhibitions. This trip had to be a reconcilement between the different parties involved, but it became a break between the curators and the communication department. The curators did not attend any more meetings after this visit, because they were not invited anymore. During the trip some things have happened that made the relationship between the departments explode. I cannot elaborate on this further. Staal however quotes Steven Engelsman who said: "Things had quieted down by the time the design project started (2003, 96)". As I explained just now I think this was not the case. Maybe things had only quieted down because the curators were excluded from these meetings: they now were almost completely silenced.

The problem that many curators had with the design was that it seemed as if the design was more important than the actual collection (source: anonymous). This does not come completely out of blue, since the designer was very powerful during the redecoration. Curators could contribute the themes and objects they wanted to include but they had to defend every choice they made (source: anonymous). The curators could no longer decide the amount of objects to be included, the number of themes in the exhibition and how the showcases would be organized (Staal 2003, 40). They were also not allowed anymore to decide how big the texts would be to explain the theme of a showcase. It was only allowed to choose 8-10 themes so the visitors would not get lost in them (Staal 2002, 132). Only half the amount of objects used in the previous permanent exhibition at the museum were now used

"allowing for more focused presentation of the collection itself (Staal 2003, 144)". It was 'fashion' in those times to stick to minimalism and somebody told me that this was Agniet van de Sande's choice (source: anonymous). The designers thus seemed to have free game. They did not make sketches to show to the museum how it would look like because this would do more harm than good. By doing this they prevented judgment about the design. To show what their plans were, they explained it with words and with some abstract representations (Staal 2003, 60). The curators could not help but notice that it seemed as if it was all about the design and no longer about the expertise of the curators. What was left for them to decide? The collections were supposed to be at the core of the exhibition, but the decisions of the experts about these collections were brought down to the bare minimum.

During the redecoration of the museum the process of the selection of objects was based on beauty, interest and uniqueness (Staal 2003). The narrative of a showcase was of relevance to the object chosen for this showcase. As much masterpieces as possible had to be included into the exhibitions. A masterpiece can be described in many different ways and it can be very personal. These are a few examples of why people chose an object to be a masterpiece[7]:

- The beauty of an object
- The sophistication of an object
- The association of an object with a special person, time, place
- The rarity of an object
- An authority deciding that a certain object should be a masterpiece.

The first point shows that the decision to ascribe the label masterpiece to an object can be connected to the subjectivity of a person. Beauty is a subjective thing and not shared by everyone. The following three points illustrate that before it is possible to ascribe an object as a masterpiece, knowledge is necessary. If a curator would ascribe the title masterpiece to an object within his own collection he would more likely choose an object that is connected to his own specialization. A curator at the Volkenkunde Museum is maybe a curator over a whole geographical area, but within this geographical area he has more knowledge about certain aspects of that area than about others. He knows which objects are rare, sophisticated or associated with a special person, time or place. The last point demonstrate that nor someone's opinions neither someone's knowledge is necessary for the appointment of masterpieces: it can be decided by an authority.

[7] http://masterpieces.asemus.museum/what.aspx

In 1987 when the museum had its 150th birthday a catalogue about the masterpieces at the museum was published. This year (2012), 25 years later, another catalogue is published with masterpieces at the museum. Masterpieces were already on display in the 1980s but they were not as visible (source: anonymous). In the former permanent exhibition the top pieces of the museum were the main theme. The communication department and the curators looked at their own collections to see what kind of masterpieces the museum contains. These masterpieces would then be incorporated into the exhibition. Instead of looking at the culture from which the collection derived and create an exhibition from that point of view, the point of view came from within the museum collection. This is related to the idea behind the design of the museum: the design was built around the collections. The museum thus kept in mind the history of their collections.

The choice to look at one's own collection instead of from a more native point of view is an example of an image-forming layer at the museum. Appointing objects as being masterpieces is another image-forming layer. The museum looks at its own collections and appoints the most beautiful objects as being masterpieces. The curator sometimes raps the communication department over their knuckles, to say that certain themes should really be included into the exhibition although they may not include a masterpiece. Most of the time the idea of what should be included into the exhibition differs per curator. This has to do with their personal interests and specialization. The curator of Mid- and South America Laura van Broekhoven, for instance, did not agree on the previous display of the Mid- and South Americas from 2001 and she changed the whole exhibition.

§3.5 The idea behind the new design of the exhibition halls

The new design of the Volkenkunde Museum was all about aesthetics. The ethnographic objects were displayed as if they were art. Therefore the distinction Sally Price wrote about between the differences of an ethnology museum and an art museum do not count for the Volkenkunde Museum. The museum does not want to convert an ethnological object into an art piece, but they do want to the object to speak for itself. That is to see the beauty of the object and not only the story it tells or the culture it stands for. Therefore, the Volkenkunde Museum wants its visitors to feel a perceptual-emotional experience when they first encounter the displayed objects. At first the visitor needs to be amazed by what he is seeing when he is entering the exhibition hall. This experience should make visitors reflect on the displayed objects. They need to be provoked to form their own idea about the exhibition and its objects only by looking. When this thought made them curious a cognitive-educational experience

should evolve. The visitor then wants to know more about what he is seeing. For those who want to know more small texts are present about the different themes of the showcases or about individual objects on the touch screen, which is placed in front of the showcase. There are no objects labels placed next to the objects; the only things placed inside the showcase are objects. The idea behind this is that the object should speak for itself.

The 'no-object-label-inside-the-showcase' should add to the perceptual-emotional experience, because the visitor is drawn to the objects itself instead of the object label. The negative thing about no objects labels inside of the showcase is that visitors do not know what they are looking at. They have to go to the touch screen if someone else is not using it. Then they have to establish the coordinates of the object before they can choose the right picture on the touch screen. Staal states that visitors would immediately know about which object they wanted to know more by only looking at the little drawings on the touch screen: "it requires little imagination (2003, 123)". Is a visitor supposedly dumb if he cannot make that connection? The touch screen is sometimes too far away from the object and when there are for instance a lot of small Buddha statues who all look almost the same in the drawings; it is sometimes hard to find the one you need. Then you can only use the counting system. Sally Price states in her book that the reduction in labels makes ethnographical artifacts into masterpieces of art that stand out on their own aesthetic value (1989, 86) and will thus speak for themselves. As I already stated the museum does not want to redefine the object but they do want to define it as a masterpiece, however, not into a masterpiece of art but an ethnographical masterpiece. By leaving out the object labels the museum sought to let the object speak for its own aesthetic value. The Wilhelmina dolls are an exception to the idea of displaying masterpieces. In chapter 5 I will elaborate further on the case study.

The touch screen is not a negative thing, the opposite. However, it should be an addition to labels inside the showcase not a replacement. Because of the touch screen it is possible for curators to tell more about an object than only what it is, where it comes from, which culture it represents, how old it is and what the material of the object is. The curator can now form a context for the object. This can be important for objects collected in colonial times. It is now possible to tell, if the museum knows, from whom and how the item was collected. At the same time it should also explain what the original purpose of the object was. The touch screen is in this perspective a very positive thing. Behind the perceptual-emotional experience the educational purpose of an ethnological museum is undoubtedly still important.

However, if the cognitive-educational experience would be central, texts for establishing an overall context of the exhibition and the showcases within this exhibition

would be very important. This is not the case in the Volkenkunde Museum. Sometimes I had the idea that texts are more of a necessary evil than a thing that can educate people about the context of the collection. The policy is: less is better. There are restrictions on the amount of words that are allowed to be used. This can give a headache to the curators who need to count the words for their explanatory texts. They need to blot out whole sentences which are less important than other sentences, but which are still important for the formation of a context. All of this because the communication department thinks the visitor does not like to read long texts. I think it is up to the visitors to decide themselves. The most important information can be written in the introduction and 'extra' information can be provided below the introduction. Visitors can then decide themselves if they want to read more information or not. This should also be the case for the object texts. The object labels should be there to create a general idea of the objects inside of the showcase, just like the introduction for the texts. Visitors who want to know more about the object can use the touch screen, just like people who want to know more about the showcase can read further than only the introduction.

I think that it is not only what the visitor wants or does not want, but also that long texts from a designers point of view are not the most beautiful things to display; take for instance the 'no-object-label-inside-the-showcase' policy. If texts would become more important, an exhibition would become a more cognitive-educational experience. What they wanted to create was a perceptual-emotional experience: it is all about the object not the story. To illustrate how short the text should be: the amounts of words allowed to be used are:

- For the general introduction text about the exhibition itself: around the 100 words.
- For the theme texts about the showcase: around the 150 words.
- A more detailed text about a theme inside the showcase: around the 150 words.
- About object information: around the 150 words.

The only positive thing in this list is the fact that objects can have a description of 150 words. In most museums this is not possible. In the permanent exhibition of 2000-2011 object texts were a little longer, but people had problems with scrolling on the touch screen. As a consequence in the renewed permanent exhibition of 2012 it cannot be longer than one page so people do not have to scroll anymore.

Another thing that shows that the communication department and the designer wanted to let the objects speak for themself is that fewer objects were allowed in the showcases after the redecorating of the museum. Some curators wanted more objects inside for two reasons: they wanted more different objects or more of the same kind of objects. The museum has so many

objects in its depot; it is a shame that only so little is on display. Some curators think that objects will only catch somebody's attention if they have other objects to compare them with, for instance a few vases instead of only one (source: anonymous). Visitors will then look at the vases and start to compare them for differences or similarities. This can be very stimulating. Other curators have the opinion that the museum should not display too many of the same kind of objects, because this is something of the past (source: anonymous).

Sally Price (1989, 90) made a distinction between the production of a piece of art and an ethnological object. A piece of art is made by a named individual and an ethnological piece is made by a person of a certain culture. The displayed objects in the Volkenkunde Museum still present a certain culture and not a named individual. It is however possible if the museum knows who made it, to write the person's name in the touch screen. This might well be true about recent purchases than it is for objects from for instance the colonial period. The fact that ethnological objects are still representatives of cultures is also visible in three catalogues of temporary Indonesian exhibitions who were on display at the Volkenkunde Museum: 'Beyond the Java Sea', 'Indonesia: the discovery of the past' and 'Sumatra tercinta'. A catalogue about an art exhibition shows a picture of the object and information about the artists (and maybe a little bit of information about the art piece itself). The three catalogues from the Volkenkunde Museum do not describe certain objects, but they tell the story behind the exhibition. The story is about a culture, not about specific individuals who produced the objects. In these catalogues displayed objects from the temporary exhibition are used as examples to illustrate a culture.

Sally Price (1989, 83) also mentioned that with an ethnographic object the emphasis is on the objects cultural distance instead of its place within a documentable historical framework. Most of the time it is true that the emphasis is on the objects cultural distance, certainly for older ethnographic objects. The museum does not know who made the object or when exactly it was made. The object belongs to the other culture and not ours. It is however not completely true that an object cannot be placed within a documentable historical framework. When an art piece is placed within an 'evolving history of artistic styles, philosophies and media (Price 1991, 83)' it can be placed within a documentable historical framework. Ethnographic objects can also be placed within an 'evolving history of artistic styles'. Newman and McLean argue that the choices a museum makes to classify objects into geographical areas and time periods make exhibitions (and its objects) narratives of time and space (2006, 57). Objects can thus be placed within a documentable historical framework.

As I explained in the previous chapter: there are more layers of image-forming within one object. Before the object ends up in a museum the layers of meaning given to the objects are from the producer and user of an object and from the collector. The history of collecting is much better known than the history of an individual producer or user of an object. For an ethnology museum the history of collecting is also important and this can be placed within a documentable historical framework. In a colonial collection it is important to know when, by whom, where and how the objects were collected. If this is known it is possible to tell the story about colonial collecting within a documentable historical framework.

The thinking in the art world goes (Sally Price 1989, 89) that ethnographic objects were made spontaneously and less reflectively. Ethnographic objects are not made spontaneously; they were made with specific purposes in mind. Many objects were produced for the purpose of religious, ancestral, technical or social functions. The art world however thinks that the local artists did not see the aesthetics of the object and that ethnographic objects are thus made with less artistic intentionality. Ethnographic objects are made with aesthetics in mind, however not with Western aesthetics in mind and not solely for their aesthetic values. The art world thinks it should rescue the art pieces among the ethnographic objects (Price 1991, 87). We should not look at every object in this world through the eyes of Westerners and think 'it is not an art piece and thus not valuable'. Is the value of an object less when it is an ethnographic object and not an art piece? No, but in the art world it does. In the art world everything has a monetary value and the moment an ethnographic object becomes an art piece the monetary value rises and it becomes interesting for art buyers. Steven Engelsman doubts that the reevaluation of ethnographic objects into art pieces is of much relevance to the ethnographic objects themselves (Staal 2012, 39). He thinks that it is more a case of strengthening someone's owns position. The museum wants to show that the issue 'can an ethnographic object be an art piece?' is not important. If ethnographic objects are not seen as art that does not mean that they do not have any aesthetic value. The objects they display posses aesthetic values without being transformed into art pieces. The museum does not judge the objects for being art. As Lies Willers said (Staal 2012, 40): "the quest for beauty was indeed the logical result of a principle we always abide by: the respect for the objects is paramount, not the question as to whether or not something is art."

Chapter 4: The Indonesian exhibitions

The Volkenkunde Museum in Leiden is one of the oldest Ethnology museums in the world and it encompasses a big collection that consists of 220,211 objects[8]:

- Africa collection: 22,433 objects
- Asia collection: 126,424 objects
- Oceania collection: 33,584 objects
- America's collection: 34,457 objects
- Eurasia collection: 3,313 objects

Of all the sub-collections, the Indonesian collection is by far the biggest, with 58,885 objects. After Indonesia the sub-collections of Japan (32,468), New Guinea (27,886)[9] and China (14,003) are the biggest. As already explained in the previous chapter the Volkenkunde Museum originates from the Cabinet of Chinese Rarities and the Royal Cabinet of Rarities. Japan and China are so big, because the two cabinets of curiosities were mostly focused on China and Japan. Indonesia and New Guinea are major collections, because of the Dutch colonization of the Dutch East Indies and New Guinea. The majority of objects for these two collections were acquired during colonial times. The Indonesian exhibition contains almost no present-day objects and most objects displayed in the permanent exhibition derive from colonial times.

Considering the fact that the Indonesian collection is almost twice as big as Japan, it would be logical if the Indonesian exhibition would be much bigger than the others in order to show more objects, but this is not the case. Willem van Gulik wanted a redecoration of the museum in the 1980s and he wanted to emphasize Asia in this re-design, but he did not got subsidy from the government (Staal 2002). In the redecoration of the 1990s the government wanted the museum to not only focus on Asia, but on all its collections from non-western countries. Objects from Europe are mostly missing: there are maybe a few objects from Greenland in the exhibition about the arctic regions. Also objects from the Near Eastern region are mostly missing, except for objects from Afghanistan and Iran who are on display in the Asia exhibition.

[8] The numbers are taken of the catalogue from the digital database at the site of the Ethnology museum http://www.rmv.nl/collections/home.aspx at the 28st of May 2012.
[9] Was also part of the Dutch colony in the East Indies, just like Indonesia.

The Indonesian collection is the biggest collection of the museum and this causes some problems. The collection covers one complete storage building out of four the museum has. Even one of those four is more a work place than a place where items are stored. Steven Engelsman said that having such a big collection is really a burden sometimes, because of the attention it requires and the big depots for good conservation. The museum could lend the stored objects to other museum, but they only have around the 100 loans a year. Another problem with such a big collection is that curators will always search for object in the depot to display in the museum instead of having loans from other museums, because the museum owns enough different objects. The only time when loans come to the museum is when there is a temporary exhibition and the exhibition is a shared project between the Volkenkunde Museum and another museum or source community. For instance with Indonesia during the Shared Cultural Heritage Project and the Sumatra exhibition.

A third problem of having such a big collection is about collecting present-day objects. The policy of the museum is that new required objects should have an added value for the already existing collections. The curators of small collections like India or the Artic region still actively collect objects, because a lot of objects will have an added value to their collection. The problem with a big collection like Indonesia is that it is difficult to find objects that have an added value to the collection. This does not mean however that the Indonesian collection does not contain gaps; this is for instance the case for present-day objects. Pieter ter Keurs (the former curator of Insular South-East Asia) collected on Enggano and Francine Brinkgreve (the current curator of Insular South-East Asia) bought objects at Bali in the 1980s for the museum, but nowadays it is more difficult to acquire new objects. Francine Brinkgreve would like to buy present-day objects so she can make a connection between the old objects and the new objects in the exhibition. The museum got a legacy from Fritz Liefkes (1930-2010) in 2011. Fritz Liefkes was a former curator of the National Museum in Amsterdam and he was an active collector of Indonesian objects. Althought, mostly of older object from between 1850-1950. The museum got (golden) objects, books, textiles and 1 million euro to make an exhibition with a catalogue and to collect new objects. However, Francine Brinkgreve does not know exactly what the museum is going to do with the money. The value of his complete legacy is around the 3 million euro and it has a big importance for the museum, because it contains a few masterpieces which are unique[10].

[10] Source: http://www.rmv.nl/

In this chapter I will first shortly discuss collecting in the Dutch East Indies during colonial times. For a better understanding of the Indonesian collection it is important to know how objects were acquired in those times. After that I provide some background information about the religion of the Indonesians, because in paragraph 4.4 I will discuss religious objects in the permanent Indonesian exhibition. In this paragraph I will also discuss the influence of the Dutch colonization on the image-forming of the permanent Indonesian exhibition at the Volkenkunde Museum. The Volkenkunde Museum is an ethnology museum from which the visitor would expect that present-day cultures would be displayed. But is this really the case with Indonesia? Does the museum display present-day Indonesia or are there still references to our colonial history? I will also discuss three temporary exhibition. "Beyond the Java Sea" is an interesting exhibition. The exhibition was an art exhibition about Indonesia's outer island and it was on display in America in 1990, one year after Sally Price published her book about native art in western museums. The catalogue about this exhibition however, is published two years after Sally Price published her book. The exhibition came to Leiden in 1992. During the two other temporary exhibitions called "Indonesia: discovery of the past" and 'Sumatra tercinta' the Volkenkunde Museum has worked together with the Museum Nasional in Jakarta. Does working together with a "source community" has an influence on the image forming of Indonesia? What is the difference between a permanent and a temporary Indonesian exhibition?

The Volkenkunde Museum does not really work together with Indonesian source communities in the sense that theses source communities are local Indonesian communities. The museum works together mostly with Museum Nasional in Jakarta and sometimes with some regional museums. These are museums not local communities. If the museum would work together with regional or local museums it would already be closer to working with a "source community". These museums probably have a better connection with the local/regional Indonesian population than a big national museum. During the making of the Sumatra exhibition the Volkenkunde Museum worked together with Museum Nasional and with regional museums. Regional museums are just developing in Indonesia whereby it is difficult to only work with a regional museum. Another problem is that most of the existing regional museums do not have a good security system (source: Francine Brinkgreve). For example a museum in Yogyakarta got robbed a few years ago, but they did not have any photo's or documents to trace the objects back (source: Francine Brinkgreve). They are now lost forever in the illegal trade business. When the Volkenkunde Museum gives objects on

loan to another museum, the security system of that museum should be of good quality. Otherwise there is a chance that the objects can be stolen.

§4.1 Collecting in Indonesia during the colonial times

The Dutch founded the VOC (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie) in 1602 and in 1619 they founded Batavia on a burned down Harbor city (Vlasblom 2005, 13). In 1799 the VOC got bankrupt and all their property became Dutch state property: the colonization of the East-Indies began. Only when the Dutch were under the rule of Napoleon between 1806-1815, the East-Indies were British property (Ter Keurs, 2009).

The nineteenth century was a century of discovery in which the European powers used the colonies "for discovering, experimenting with and exploiting man and landscape to their full extent", because "extensive discoveries led to complete dominance" (Lunsingh Scheurleer 2007, 98). This was possible because of the founding of scientific organizations. The VOC founded the Batavian Society for Art and Sciences in 1778. In 1952 the society was abolished, but the museum kept on existing. After the independence of Indonesia the name was turned into Museum Pusat (Central Museum) and in 1979 the name was changed into Museum Nasional Indonesia (ter Keurs 2005, 24). The British and the Dutch King Willem I also stimulated scientific research. Willem I founded the Natural Science Committee in 1820 to improve knowledge about the Dutch colonies (Ter Keurs, 2009). Lunsingh Scheurleer argues that collecting antiquities of the newly discovered Buddha-Hindu civilization on Java is part of the knowledge which should lead to complete dominance of the island: each colonial power has his own ancient civilization (2007, 98).

In the East Indies the Natural Science Committee documented and mapped isolated areas during scientific expeditions. The members had little contact with the local people and thus they needed help from the colonial officers and traders. The members collected ethnographic objects, but this was not their main goal; that was collecting animals and plants. The ethnographic objects were probably more souvenirs or collector items. Because of the little contact with the local people it was not possible to systematically collect ethnographic objects (Ter Keurs, 2009). Therefore, collecting in the East Indies said a lot about the relationships between the Dutch and the local people and not only about the local material culture. The objects are at the same time an expression of the process of collecting as well as the local material culture. The same can be said about a museum, only another image-layer can be added. The objects on display say something about the producer of an object, the collector and about the museum staff. Handler (see §1.1) states that the objects in an exhibition say more

about the relationships between members of a museum staff than about the culture it needs to express, because they are the ones who give the objects a meaning (Handler in Bouquet 2001, 179). However this does not mean that the original meaning of an object is not important anymore. The context is maybe created by the museum staff, but in the object descriptions the original purpose of the object can be explained. The different image-layers lead to a certain hybridity in the collections and exhibitions.

The scientific expeditions in Indonesia, together with individual collectors, gifts and military expeditions brought a lot of objects to the Netherlands (Ter Keurs & Sedyawati 2005). The military expeditions are a special story: they could end up in violence. The soldiers looted objects from those places; a famous looting was the looting of the Lombok treasures. The percentage of objects obtained by the military is not so big, only a few percentage of the collection (Wengen 2002, 26-27).

Before 1862 the Dutch had free access to take ethnographic/archaeological/geological objects with them to the Netherlands (Lunsingh Scheurleer 2007, 89), but in 1862 Conrad Leemans, the director of the National Museum of Ethnology and the Batavian Society for Art and Sciences, made an end to the freedom of taking Indonesian objects to the Netherlands. Pieter ter Keurs explained in a lecture (30-11-2011) that all the objects collected had to be checked by the board of the Batavian Society for Art and Sciences. The board decided which objects would stay and which should go to the Netherlands. Most people in this board were white Dutch men, but this did not mean that they gave the nicest pieces to the Netherlands. They lived almost all their lives in the East Indies and felt more connected to the Dutch East Indies than to the Netherlands. They thus kept many beautiful pieces in the East Indies.

§4.2 Religion in Indonesia

In paragraph 4.4 I will discuss religious objects in the permanent Indonesian exhibition between 2000-2011. For a better understanding of this paragraph I will give a short introduction to religion in Indonesia.

In the third century Hindu and Buddhist states emerged in the area of present day Indonesia (Vlasblom 2005, 7), because of the influences from India. During the thirteenth till seventeenth century Islam spread over the area. This was not because of a conquest, but because of trade. Muslims from South Asia and the Near East rather traded with fellow Muslim traders, than with traders of other religions. Islam was also popular, because of its egalitarian character, no force was used during conversion, there was almost no ceremony that people had to go through to become Islamic and the Islam tolerated the pre-Islamic cultures

(Widyastuti 2009, 109). This expresses itself in the fusion of Islam and the Hindu-Buddhist material culture: the pre-islamic cultures were inspired by Islam. The Islam was and still is not the same as the Islam of the Near East region, because of this fusion (Vlasblom 2005, 11). Concepts of cosmology and pre-Islamic cultures still exist. Art changed, because it was prohibited to display living creatures. This did not mean that art became less creative, on the contrary, it developed an Indonesian Islamic culture (Widyastuti 2009, 118).

The last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom on Java fell in 1527 (Lunsingh Scheurleer 2007, 78), while Bali was the only island were Islam set almost no foot ashore. The process of Islamization in the archipelago can be divided into 3 phases (Widyastuti 2009, 109):

- The presence of Islamic traders from the seventh-eighth century: in this phase the local society came into contact with Islam through trade.
- The formation of Islamic kingdoms in the thirteenth-sixteenth century: the Islamization of the local society grew.
- The growth and expansion of Islam from the sixteenth century onwards: Islam could spread easily, because the Islam was not seen as a threat by the Indonesians.

In 1511 Portuguese came to the island and soon afterwards also the English, Spanish and Dutch. The contact between the East Indies and the European nations brought the arrival of Christianity to the Archipelago. The Portuguese brought Catholicism to the archipelago and the Dutch Protestantism. In the beginning of the twenty-first century most of the people were Muslim (87%), the rest are Protestant: 6%, Catholic: 3%, Hindu: 2%, Buddhist: 1% or other: 1% (Vlasblom 2005, 28).

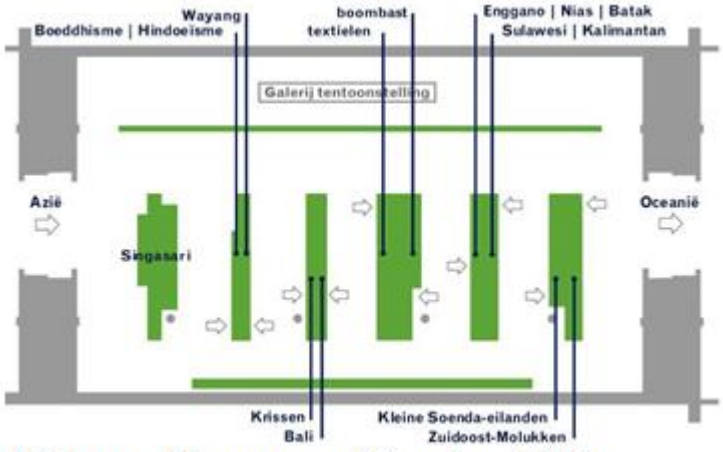
§4.3 The permanent exhibition in the 1980s

Indonesia had a lot of rooms, more than the other collections. However, the rooms were smaller than after the renovation between 1997 and 2001. The museum consisted of a lot of small rooms and sometimes very narrow. The Indonesian collection was the biggest collection of the museum and got therefore the most space to exhibit its objects. The first room consisted of Hindu-Javanese statues, among others the Singosari statues. Anne Marie Woerlee is currently the head of the communication department, but during the 1980s she was part of the education department. She says that she can remember that in the 1970s the santri's of the Queen Wilhelmina doll collections were displayed in the narrow room following the Hindu-Javanese statues. She cannot remember if they were still on display in the 1980s. Other themes were Bali, Gamelan, fishery/agriculture, hunting and objects used by smiths.

These themes were chosen by Jan Ave, the curator of Insular South-East Asia before Pieter ter Keurs. The themes were connected to his interest. Jan Ave was an Indonesian himself and he was a Marxist anthropologist. Jan Ave wanted to emphasize the economic material basis of the Indonesians. This is the result of his Marxist background. However to me the image that is being formed about Indonesia here is of an undeveloped country in which the people live an old-fashioned way of life. Nevertheless, it is important to see everything in context. This means that we need to take the background of the curator into consideration and also the period in which the exhibition was put on display.

§ 4.4 The permanent Indonesian exhibition 2000-2011: the redecoration

The Indonesian exhibition is most of the time the first exhibition visitors see when they enter the museum: it is the first exhibition hall on the right when entering the museum (see lay-out appendix). Pieter ter Keurs, the former curator of Insular South-East Asia, choose themes that were connected to symbolism and religion. The exhibition can roughly be divided into two parts: the first part is focused on Kingdoms/Sultanates and the second part about traditional cultures and ancestry worship. When entering the exhibition hall the visitor is immediately welcomed by the big statues of the guards of Singosari Mahakala and Nandishvara (the darker and the milder appearances of the god Shiva), and the three other statues of Singosari that the museum possesses. Singosari is a Hindu-Buddhist temple. During the colonial times the Dutch took the statues which were situated in the temple with them to the Netherlands. After entering the hall the visitor needs to go on adventures through the rainforest (this is symbolized by the big glass cases one after the other, see fig. 4.1[11]) to discover Indonesia. After the big Hindu-Buddhist statues the visitor is drawn to the influences from India where smaller statues of Hindu- and Buddhist gods are displayed. The path after the influences from India are the wayang and the krissen. The wayang dolls represent figures from the wayang theater, gods, (legendary) kings or wayang



4.1 Layout of the permanent Indonesian exhibition

[11] Source: www.rmv.nl

from divine descent. The glass case about the krisses has the title “magic powers”. Wiener (2007, 46) argues in her article about the ‘magical life of things’ that many Dutch people know Indonesia as a place of magic. This magic is connected to Indonesia’s past; their Hindu-Buddhist past. Besides the Dutch, also Europeans idealize the Hindu-Buddhist past of Indonesia (Lunsingh Scheurleer 2007, 97). The aim of the museum is to attract as much visitors as possible and to give them what they expect. Therefore the museum emphasized the ‘magical’ past of Indonesian culture in the exhibition. Curators normally resist presenting an association of magic with an object, like the kris, in an exhibition. This was also the case in the Volkenkunde Museum. Pieter ter Keurs protested against this decision of the communication department, but the department did not pay attention to his protest (Wiener 2007, 46). There was a power play going on between the two, which I have described in the previous chapter. The journey continues to the island of Bali and the textiles (see picture below[12]). Bali is the only island left where the Hindu- and Buddhist religion has the upper hand. Bali knows thus a minimum of Islamic or Christian influences. The textile glass case bears the title “textiles full of symbolism”. The textiles on display are decorated with a variety of different techniques.

4.2 Bali

The part that was focused on kingdoms continues into a journey through traditional cultures and ancestry worship. Bark clothes is shown in the exhibition in a separate showcase instead of together with the other textiles. These cloths are made out of bark and nowadays only used during ceremonies. This way of producing cloths for daily use is finished, because of the introduction of modern cloths. The glass case with the theme Sumatra is about Enggano, Nias and Batak. Enggano was the field of study of Pieter ter Keurs. The traditional Enggano has almost completely lost, because diseases in the nineteenth century have wiped

[12] Source: http://www.opera-amsterdam.nl/projects.php?pro_id=24

out most of the original population[13]. Besides some elderly people who heard stories from their grandparents the old traditions are almost completely lost, except for objects in museums. On the island Nias warlike nobility isolated Nias for centuries[14]. The Batak consist of 6 groups living in the North of Sumatra[15]. During the colonial times they were converted into Christians, but they never lost their traditional believes. The use of the Batak magic staff is an example of such a traditional believe. In the next showcase the Dayak of Kalimantan got a place (see fig. 4.3[16]). The Dayak are people who mostly live of agriculture[17] and even though some are converted Muslim or Christian, they did not lost their traditional cultures. In the same showcase also the island of Sulawesi is displayed. With the introduction of Islam Sultanates began to emerge in the coastal regions (among others Makassar and Bone). The highlands were isolated from the coastal areas whereby Islam did not spread so easily and whereby the traditional believes could continue to exist[18]. In the exhibition both the Sultanate of Bone as well as groups from the highlands are represented, but in the text the term Kingdom of Bone is used instead of the Sultanate of Bone. The use of the term Kingdom implies a connotation with Christianity. In Europe Christian Kingdoms were founded, in countries were Islam is the major religion Sultanates were founded. In the last two showcases the smaller Sunda-island and the South-East Moluccas are displayed. Lombok and Timor are among others part of the smaller Sunda-islands[19]. The greater Sunda-islands consist of Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan and Sulawesi. These four islands have already been addressed, just like Bali who is part of the smaller Sunda-islands. Objects chosen for the Moluccas display case are connected to ancestry instead of for instance Christianity on Ambon or Islam.

4.3 Kalimantan showcase

The theme "traditional cultures and ancestry worship" for this part of the exhibition was chosen, because it is the specialization of Pieter ter Keurs. Francine Brinkgreve (the current

[13] Source: the exhibition text on the display case about Sumatra
[14] Source: idem
[15] Source: idem
[16] Source: www.rmv.nl
[17] Source: the exhibition text on the display case about Kalimantan and Sulawesi
[18] Source: idem
[19] Source: the exhibition text on the display case about the Lesser Sunda-islands.

curator of Insular South-East Asia) would have chosen other themes, for instance the focus on Islam/Sultanates in the Sumatra display case or the influences of Christianity in the Moluccas display case. The difference between the choices of the two curators illustrates that image-forming about a certain country can differ significantly. Many times it is connected to a curators interest or specialization. It influences the way a certain country is displayed. This does not mean that one person is wrong or another person is right. There is not one right image in the displaying of a culture. There are as many ways as there are people living in the world and even more, because one person can have different ideas about how to display a country. A country on display is therefore always an imagined community. The cultures within a country are too complex and divers to be displayed as one unified culture. A way of dealing with this problem is given by Newman and McLean. They state that there should be at least a creation of a local, regional and national concept (2006, 63). In this way it is possible to show more variety within one country instead of only generalizing all the local cultures into one national culture. A few national themes should be highlighted together with some local and regional cultures. However, this does not mean that it is not an imagined community anymore. Pieter ter Keurs showed this variety in the Indonesian exhibition. He created a few national themes which are the influences of Buddhism and Hinduism, wayang, krissen, textiles and bark clothes. These national themes, were displayed in the first part of the exhibition. Besides this Pieter ter Keurs constructed regional and local themes. The regional themes (some island of Indonesia like Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Sumatra) were the themes of the second part of the exhibition. Within the theme of a certain island of Indonesia local cultures are displayed. The local cultures are mostly connected to ancestry worship.

The museum used the title “the influence of India” on a display case in which Buddhist and Hindu statues were placed, but there was no display case which showed influences of Europe or the Near Eastern region with Christian or Islam objects. Even though in present-day Indonesia more people are Christian or Islamic in Indonesia. Why was there no display case about the influences from Europe or the Near East rergion? Does the museum have Christian or Islamic objects? It was a choice of the curator and the communication department to not devote a display case to the Near Eastern and European influences. Anne Marie Woerlee said that the Indonesian exhibition was connected with the Asia exhibition across the hallway where they displayed Islamic objects (see appendix A for lay-out). The connection was part of the theme “Ribbon around the world”. Pieter ter Keurs argued that the first part of the exhibition was all about the sultanates. Most of the objects used for the first part of the

Indonesian exhibition were Islamic. However, people would not recognize these objects as such. Indonesian Islam is different from the Near Eastern Islam; this is also visible in the material culture as explained in paragraph 4.2. The material culture of Indonesia was and until a certain point still is very connected to their Hindu-Buddhist past. However, it was not very visible that the objects in the display case were actually Islamic. Visitors would connect a Quran and a Quran standard immediately as Islamic, just like the plant- and flower decorating motifs and Islamic inscriptions and calligraphy. A visitor would not connect wayang to Islam, because in the Islam anthropomorphic images are avoided. Texts could help to clarify if an object is Islamic, certainly when it is not clearly visible. It is known that the part in the brain that processes visual information is evolutionary older than the part of the verbal information (Harper 2002, 13). It is therefore easier for a visitor to process visual information instead of texts. For this reason, if the magical and Hindu-Buddhist past is visually more clear than the Islamic religion, visitors will remember the magical and Hindu-Buddhist past better.

Texts could help to make clear which object belongs to which religion. However, the texts did not explain clearly which objects are Islamic. In the text of a display case the word Kingdoms was used. This word can be connected to any religion. Many objects exhibited in the display cases came from sultanates, but again in the object description the word that is used is king, not sultan. If it would be very clear through texts that what is shown is Islamic, visitors will besides the visual maybe also remember the texts. The visitor who is uninitiated into the Indonesian material culture does not recognize that these objects belong to a Sultan. If the visitor connects Indonesia with magic and a Hindu-Buddhist past, the visitor is more likely to associate the word King with a Hindu-Buddhist King instead of a Sultan. Many object are maybe Islamic, but the uninitiated visitor does not recognize them as such. Not through the visually or the textual information given. This illustrates how important text can be for understanding another culture. The reduction of texts after the redecoration is thus not a very positive thing. It also demonstrates how important it is to choose the right words. Maybe not all of these objects in a certain display case were from sultanates but also from other kingdoms and therefore the word Kingdom was used in the theme text on the display case. But most of the time one object does not belong to a Hindu-Buddhist Kingdom as well as to an Islamic Kingdom. In the individual object descriptions it could have been possible to clarify the religion.

Another argument that Anne Marie Woerlee uses for the absence of clear visual Islamic objects is that there are no Islamic objects from Indonesia. This is not completely true. There are maybe not a lot of clear visual Islamic objects which would immediately be connected by

a visitor to Islam, but the museum has these kind of objects. Francine Brinkgreve says that the Volkenkunde Museum has around the 100 clear visual Islamic objects. The museum only has so little for the following reason. Early anthropologists did a lot of 'rescue research'. They wanted to preserve what was still there, because soon it would disappear since development occurred in an evolutionist way (Barnes 2007, 211); from savagery to civilized. It was thought that the Indonesians were at a lower stage of development than the Europeans. Because of the European influence they would develop into a more civilized group and their traditional cultures would disappear. Islam was the religion of the great majority of the East Indies and would thus not disappear very soon. From this perspective it is not surprising that the Europeans collected objects from the traditional Hindu-Buddhist cultures. The Dutch were also searching for the authentic/pure local traditions. They thought that Islam was just a peel over the true nature of the native Dutch East Indies population: Hinduïsm (Shatanawi 09-02-2012). Islam was not a lively power, only a karpet (Shatanawi 09-02-2012). The investigation, protection, collection and study of antiquities were thus more important than that of the living Islamic Javanese (Lunsingh Scheurleer 2007, 91). However from the beginning onwards the old traditions were incorporated into the new Islamic religion (Lunsingh Scheurleer 2007, 75). This was still the case in the nineteenth century during the colonial times when the Dutch collected many ethnographic objects and it still continues nowadays. Islam in Indonesia is therefore different than Islam in the Near East. The fusion of the old traditions with the new traditions is visible in the material culture of Indonesia. As a consequence Islamic objects are not always recognized as such and it should thus be written in the texts. People however come to a museum to look at objects and not to read texts alone. If it is not shown visually like the Hindu and Buddhist past of Indonesia in the exhibition, people will probably forget what is been written very soon, because the images of objects stay with them and not the texts.

As I explained before the objects displayed in the Indonesian exhibition date mostly to the colonial period or before. The exhibiting of present-day cultures with objects mostly collected during colonial times is maybe good for the message that the museum and the designers wanted to display: reflect on your own culture or being on a voyage to a far away country and discover it. This idea can be connected to the history of the colonial voyages, because most of the objects on display were collected during colonial times. A visitor is thus really re-living these voyages. To make this feeling stronger they made a projection of Indonesia on the gallery wall with routes that ships have sailed. They also connected ships to

the gallery wall (see fig. 4.4[20]), to emphasize the voyage and influence of cultures on each other. If the museum really wanted to display the colonial voyages they should have made an exhibition like "the Dutch East-Indies: a colonial history" in the Tropenmuseum. This exhibition makes the message very clear that they display the colonial history instead of the present-day culture of Indonesia. An ethnology museum should display present-day cultures. Otherwise the museum should call itself something like "the historical voyage museum" or a name that can be related to it.

4.4 Ships on the gallery wall

Wayne Modest is the head of the curators at the Tropenmuseum and on April the 17th he was a guest lecturer for the critical museology course at the Leiden University. He spoke about the reflection of museum on its own history in exhibitions. He said that a discussion is going on in the Tropenmuseum about the display of the former colonies. It is been argued that a museum with a colonial history should leave its colonial past behind, because it places the collectors or the Western world in a bad light (source: Wayne Modest). On the other hand, some visitors of the Tropenmuseum said that the exhibition about the Dutch East Indies in the Tropenmuseum was to nuanced (source: Wayne Modest); the museum should have taken a stronger point of view on the subject. During the guest lecture of Wayne Modest somebody in the classroom said that 'showing is acknowledging'. I completely agree on this. The Volkenkunde Museum also acknowledges the history of its collections and reflects on them. As I explained in paragraph 3.4 the museum wanted to create an emotional experience by leaving out labels inside of the display cases. In this way the visitor would reflect on the objects and its collections. The visitor would have to feel how it is to explore and collect the displayed objects. If the museum would not reflect on the collecting history of the objects, the museum would hide it and then it would seem as if the museum would feel ashamed. Colonialism was a national and a European problem. However, this national shame that arose after the decolonization is now the problem of museums, because they own the colonial collections (source: Wayne Modest). The museum should not hide this shame like the nations did. It should provoke a discussion about the shame we might or might not feel.

[20] Source: Gert Staal: In Side Out, On Site In

In the museum masterpieces are displayed. That means for the Indonesian collection that masterpieces are shown that are mostly collected during colonial times. Some of these objects got the status of masterpiece because of what they represent or the rarity of the object. Other objects are one of a kind objects which were looted during the colonial times. These objects are the Singosari statues and the Lombok treasure. The objects will always represent what happened during the nineteenth century in Indonesia and its history will always be connected to the museum. The Lombok treasure is the symbol of one of the most violent and bloodiest fights in the Dutch colonial history. The museum cannot eliminate the meaning that the objects got after they had been looted. If the objects would never have been looted, it would have never gotten the context it has nowadays. It would not even be on display in the Netherlands. In the object description about a Lombok broche (see fig. 4.5) a connection to the colonial history is made. The connection that it does not make is the connection between the object and the rightful owner. The only connection that the description makes to the person to which the treasure belongs is from whom the Dutch looted the treasures and the monarch did not even got a name only the title 'the monarch of Lombok'.

4.5 Lombok Broche, RMV 4905-129

The objects in the museum that were collected during the colonial times were not only signs of the collecting history, they were part of a society and the objects were used. A museum should reflect on its collection, but this reflection should not be the only one. The collected objects still derive from other societies where they meant something for the natives. The displayed objects do not only have a meaning through their collecting history. Most objects had a life before that. This layer in the image-forming process should not be overseen and it is not overseen in the permanent Indonesian exhibition. There are no labels inside of the display cases, but there are individual object descriptions that tell the story behind the object. The message that the museum wanted to give was however not very clear for the visitors. The objects that were on display could therefore be seen as representatives of present-day Indonesia. However, the created Indonesian imagined community is connected to the colonial past and not to the present. The colonial period in Indonesia was a time when Islamic objects were excluded from ethnographic collections, because collectors emphasized the Hindu-Buddhist past (or more generally the pre-Islamic cultures). This same image is continued in the Indonesian exhibition from 2000-2011. I heard from Pieter ter Keurs that the communication department wanted to make the Borobudur, a Buddhist masterpiece, as the

centre theme of the Indonesian exhibition. This idea was stopped by Lammert Leertouwer. He was a professor in theology at the Leiden University and rector magnificus for 6 years[21]. After his university career he became an interim manager during the re-decoration phase where he worked next to Steven Engelsman. Lammert Leertouwer was present during the meetings about the re-decoration of the museum and during one of these meetings he prevented the idea of making the Borobudur the centre theme of the exhibition from becoming a reality. If this idea would have become reality, the emphasis would have been even more on the Hindu-Buddhist past of Indonesia.

§4.5 Beyond the Java Sea

"Beyond the Java Sea" was a big exhibition about the art of Indonesia's outer islands. Indonesia's outer island are defined in the catalogue "Beyond the Java sea: art of Indonesia's outer islands" written by Paul M. Taylor and Lorraine V. Aragon as all the islands of Indonesia except Java and Bali. The catalogue consist of two parts:

Part one is called "appreciating outer-island art" and it is an introduction to the exhibition. It discusses the art of Indonesia's island, the indigenous aesthetics and design, the indigenous purposes and functions and the indigenous artists from the beginning of the 1990s.

Part two is called "outer-island art: a catalogue" and it is thus the actual catalogue part. It consists of 10 parts in which 8 different groups/regions are discussed: Nias, Batak, Lampung, Dayak, Sulawesi, Lesser Sunda islands, South East Moluccas and the north coast of Irian Jaya. The other two parts are about the prehistory of Indonesia and the courts of the outer-islands. The catalogue followed the exhibition (source: Pieter ter Keurs) and therefore the themes which were discussed in the catalogue were also the themes used in the exhibition.

"Beyond the Java Sea" was part of three major Indonesian exhibitions produced in America to focus more on Indonesia, because of the developing importance of the country (Taylor and Aragon 1991, 9). This exhibition was about the art of the outer islands. The displayed artworks are "exemplars of indigenous Indonesian aesthetics as well as masterpieces defined by a Western collector's aesthetics (Taylor and Aragon 1991, 15)". The art works are examples of indigenous Indonesian aesthetics, because the objects derive from these indigenous cultures. The selection of what should be an art masterpieces is however defined only with western connoisseurship in mind (Taylor and Aragon 1991, 27) and not by the indigenous people themselves. This Western definition of what should be indigenous art

[21] http://www.schweitzer.nl/viewer/file.aspx?fileinfoID=248

or even masterpieces was criticized by Sally Price in her book 'Primitive art in Civilized places'. She argues that the Westerners think that they have to define primitive art of indigenous people, because the indigenous people "do not even consider that what they are producing is art (Price 1991, 89)". Taylor and Aragon do not say that the indigenous people do not know that what they produced is art. They do say that not one object chosen for the exhibition is produces with the purpose in mind of creating an aesthetic response solely; all the objects have a combination of an aesthetic and a functional value (Taylor and Aragon 1991, 27).

The exhibition is interesting, because Sally Price wrote her book a year before this exhibition was on display in the Houston Museum of Natural Sciences in 1990 and two years before the catalogue was published in 1991. Taylor and Aragon even used her book in the catalogue to explain about the anonymity of the authors. On this point they agree with Sally Price that not every object is made by an anonymous person. They say that Indonesian artists played central roles in their societies and are therefore not completely anonymous (Taylor and Aragon 1991, 15). Taylor and Aragon do recognize that they do not know the names of those artists. However, it is possible to know the place of the artists in a certain society and what kind of objects he produces for what purposes. They also recognize that to name the art of indigenous people primitive, tribal or archaic is not the right label, because it "perpetuates a post-colonial view of this art as evolutionary antecedent to, rather than just different from, Western art forms (Taylor and Aragon 1991, 19)". Taylor and Aragon do not give another term that can be used to classify these art pieces, they only say that museums have to look at a regional level and not to socioeconomic development. They argue that the same material can have different meanings for two villages in close proximity to each other (Taylor and Aragon 1991, 27). The socioeconomic development has thus no influence on the meaning or aesthetics of objects. Aesthetics are regionally or even locally defined.

The catalogue illustrates that there was a change in the view of how primitive art should be defined after Sally Price had published her book. Taylor and Aragon say that the selection of objects was still done with western ideas in mind, but at the same time the whole catalogue is about Indonesians themselves and their objects: how the different native Indonesian groups are organized and what the meaning of the objects are for them. It is visible that the producers of the exhibition and at the same time the writers of the catalogue are in a struggle of how to combine the western definition of art and the local importance of objects. The objects are still selected by Westerners, but at the same time they also explain the objects from the point of view of the Indonesians. The same object can mean two different things for different villages

and it is therefore important to show regional differences. Apparently the curators did not know how to handle the point of view of Indonesians, and therefore they again selected the objects from the Western point of view. Nowadays museums work much more together with 'source communities' and can therefore try to incorporate the position of the indigenous community better (see §4.7). This was still in a development phase in 1991. The National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) of the Smithsonium Institution was founded in 1989 and since then source communities were consulted (Rosoff 2003, 72). This was the beginning of the consultation of source communities on a more regular base.

In 1992 "Beyond the Java Sea" came to the Netherlands and it was the biggest exhibition the museum had known until then. Interim manager Ernst Storm wanted to leave the museum with a big hit. He had heard of a big Indonesian exhibition in America and he had sent Pieter ter Keurs to America to try and get a hold on this exhibition for the display in Leiden. In the beginning of the 1990s there was no internet yet, so curators had to travel much more in the negotiation phase than currently is being done. Before the exhibition went to the Netherlands the exhibition also went to the National Museum of Natural History (part of the Smithsonian Institution) in Washington, which produced the exhibition and the catalogue, and also to the M.H. Young Memorial Museum in San Francisco. The whole exhibition came to Leiden, including the display cases. It was therefore difficult to make any changes in the content or the layout. Pieter ter Keurs wanted the exhibition to be more about the people instead of placing the emphasis on the art pieces. Consequently a lot of photo's were added to create a context. The Hindu-Buddhist past was not incorporated into the exhibition about "Beyond the Java Sea" and for that reason a second smaller exhibition was placed next to the bigger one. The museum had never before so many Indonesian objects on display. Until now these two exhibition are the biggest temporary Indonesian exhibitions the museum has put on display.

§4.6 Indonesia: the discovery of the past: Shared Cultural Heritage

The colonial past of the Dutch East Indies is part of the Indonesian history and the Dutch history. During the colonial times the Volkenkunde Museum and Museum Nasional in Jakarta were connected to each other, because objects were divided between the two. After de-colonialism the relationship between the two became frozen. The Volkenkunde museum had repatriated a part of the Lombok treasures and the Prajnaparamita to Indonesia in the 1970s. These objects are now in the Museum Nasional in Jakarta instead of given back to the places where the objects came from. In Indonesia the cultural heritage is nationalized, it is not of the people anymore (source: Francine Brinkgreve). Take for instance the Lombok treasures. The

objects are not returned to Lombok or to the family to which the treasure belongs, it is now a national treasure. The objects are now property of the state of Indonesia and can therefore not be given back to the regional or private individuals (Golder-Miedema 2012).

After the repatriation of the Lombok treasures and the Prajnaparamita it took another 30 years before the relationship between the two museum could really grow again. Almost no Indonesian had ever seen the collection of the Volkenkunde Museum and they wished to see this part of their cultural heritage (Sri Hardiati and ter Keurs 2005, 7). As a consequence Indonesia asked the Volkenkunde Museum if some of these objects could be exhibited in the Museum Nasional in Jakarta (Sri Hardiati and ter Keurs 2005, 7). This resulted in the first project between the Museum Nasional and the Volkenkunde Museum since the end of the colonial times. The project started in 2004. The name of the project was "Shared Cultural Heritage". This name was chosen for the project because of sponsoring reasons. It is a prominent name that helps to attract funds. Moreover the idea behind the name is as follow:

"The expression 'shared cultural heritage' may be interpreted in two ways: as possessions shared between two parties, or as a joint cultural inheritance. Here, the expression has consciously been used in both its senses. The collections were of course once divided up between Batavia and Leiden. Yet at the same time they both share one and the same source: a collector, a donor, or an archaeological site. The collections constitute an inheritance that Indonesia and the Netherlands hold in common, and they must consequently be approached as a collectivity. Studying their collecting contexts is essential to this approach. There is a great deal to be learned from the history of the collections.[22]"

In 2005 there was a cooperation between the National Museum of Indonesia, the Volkenkunde Museum and the "Nieuwe Kerk" in Amsterdam to present the first results of a research on collecting and distribution within a colonial context in a joint exhibition (Sri Hardiati & Ter Keurs 2005, 6). The aim of the exhibition was to reunite the collections again following a long separation after they got divided by the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences. The museums wanted to exhibit objects that were collected by the same collector and from the same site, for instance the Lombok treasures.

The Indonesians called their exhibition 'Shared Cultural Heritage', after the name of the project. The exhibition was on display in the Museum Nasional in Jakarta. One day after Indonesia celebrated its 60 year independence on the 18th of August 2005 the exhibition was

[22] http://masterpieces.asemus.museum/stories.aspx?id=b47fff1f-764f-45d7-8558-07ba4895c9c4

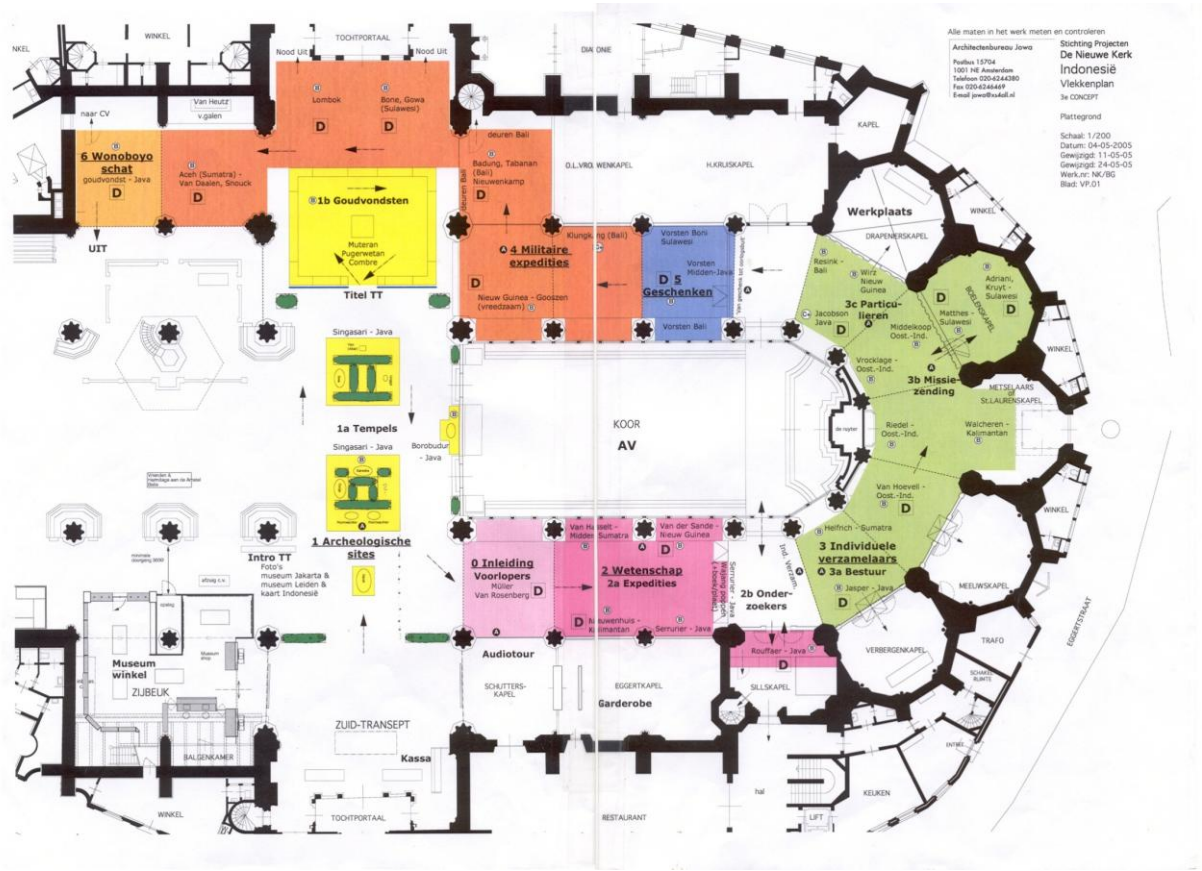
opened by the president of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.[23] For the first time a Dutch minister, B. Bot of Foreign affairs, was present at the celebration of Indonesia's independence. He declared that also the Netherlands would recognize the 17th of August 1945 politically and morally as the date for Indonesia's independence (ter Keurs 2005, 1). The Dutch had been 'oost Indische doof (east Indies deaf)' long enough. East Indies deaf means that someone acts like he is not listening. The Dutch did not wanted to face reality during the Indonesian independence war between 1945 and 1949: that they lost their colony (Meijer 1995, 12-13). They knew what was going on, but they did not acknowledge it yet. Bert Meijer argues that "the colonial state after the second world war became a definite untenable construction and it exposed what the Dutch could not and still [in 1995] cannot admit: there is no reason to suspect that they are better than the rest (1995, 10)". During the colonization of the Dutch East Indies the Dutch thought that they were better and much more powerful than the natives of the Dutch East Indies. After the de-colonization this image fell apart.

The Dutch called the exhibition 'Indonesia: the discovery of the past' and it was on display in the "Nieuwe Kerk" in Amsterdam. Pieter ter Keurs did not have to deal much with the communication department of the Volkenkunde Museum during the decision making process, because it was not on display in the museum. The management team of the "Nieuwe Kerk" saw Pieter ter Keurs as a specialists and therefore he had more freedom than he would have had at the Volkenkunde Museum (source: Pieter ter Keurs). He also worked closer together with the PR department of the "Nieuwe Kerk", because the PR department was more focused on the content of the exhibition than Leiden (source: Pieter ter Keurs). The themes in the exhibition were (see fig. 4.6[24]):

- In yellow. Archaeological sites: Tempels (Singosari (see fig. 4.7) and Borobudur) and gold discoveries
- In lila. Introduction: forerunner
- In purple. Science: expeditions and researchers
- In green. Individual collectors: authorities/government, missionaries and private individuals
- In blue. Gifts
- In red. Military expeditions: badung (Bali), Bone and Gowa (Sulawesi), Lombok and Aceh (Sumatra)
- In orange. The Wonoboyo treasure

[23] http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2005/11/01/cultural-heritage-exhibition-sees-few-visitors.html
[24] Source: Pieter ter Keurs

Most of the theme's were connected to the colonial history of the Dutch East-Indies. The only exception was the Wonoboyo treasure. This treasure was found in 1990/1991 in Wonoboya, 20 km. from Yogyakarta (Lunsingh Scheurleer 2005, 62). The difference between this treasure and for instance the Lombok treasure is that this treasure was not split between Leiden and Jakarta, because it was found after the colonial history. The whole Wonoboyo treasure was transferred to the Museum Nasional in Jakarta. The Islam is missing in this picture, but this was because the Dutch were not interested in collecting Islamic objects during the colonial times as I explained in §4.4. The catalogue of the exhibition is divided into three sections: history, archaeological collections and ethnological collections. All the themes of the exhibition can be grouped into one of these three sections. It is in our favor to have a book that is dedicated to the combination of the divided collections. They combine the divided collection by showing pictures of both of the collections and tell the background story of them. The exhibition lives on in the catalogue.



4.6 The lay-out of the exhibition in the Nieuwe Kerk.

Before the project, the Indonesian curators of Museum Nasional thought that the Volkenkunde Museum had the better pieces, but this was not the case. Rapti Golder-Miedema

said at the Symposium "controversial history" on the 9th of February 2012 in Bronbeek that when the objects had to be divided between the two museums during the colonial times the Volkenkunde Museum most of the time got the double or less valuable pieces. When the Indonesian curators came to the Netherlands they were jealous of the Singosari statues, but they also sometimes said that they had better pieces than Leiden. For instance, Leiden had a silver bowl and Indonesia had the same one, but then in gold. The two museums worked together very well (source: Pieter ter Keurs). During the project the curators of Leiden and Jakarta were mostly in the depot and the archives. The library of the Museum Nasional was transferred to the National Library in the 1980s (Sri hardiati 2005, 14). Francine Brinkgreve said that as a result of this the Museum Nasional had difficulties accessing their archives. During the project the archives from Leiden who were relevant to the collections of the Museum Nasional were copied so the Indonesian curators would have the documents themselves again.

The Indonesian curators did not have resentment towards the Volkenkunde Museum (source: Pieter ter Keurs). Pieter ter Keurs had the idea that he and the other people of the Volkenkunde Museum who worked on the project, had sometimes more problems with the colonial history than the Indonesians. Probably because the Dutch felt embarrassed about their own colonial history, while the Indonesians made peace with the situation. Until the point that that is possible of course. An Indonesian curator from Museum Nasional will however look with a different eye to the collections of the Volkenkunde Museum than a common Indonesian will do. The curators may see it as shared cultural heritage, but the common Indonesian might see it as their cultural heritage.

The newspaper, the Jakarta post, wrote that the exhibition in Museum Nasional did not attract so many people, because of the low enthusiasm of the Indonesian people[25]. The newspaper also wrote that the museum is either way not so popular and this problem is ascribed to the lack of promotion. Another museum in Jakarta "Jakarta historical museum" was unpopular until it had launched an "intensive and effective promotion aimed at young Jakarta professionals"[26]. Pieter ter Keurs said that mostly the cultural world and the elite of Indonesia gave good reactions to the exhibition. Maybe for a lot of Indonesians their colonial history is maybe too far away or it is still too difficult to face their colonial history. The Museum Nasional originated from a colonial society and it houses a lot of object collected during the colonial times. Suddenly it even housed an exhibition about colonial collecting.

[25] http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2005/11/01/cultural-heritage-exhibition-sees-few-visitors.html
[26] http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2005/11/01/cultural-heritage-exhibition-sees-few-visitors.html

That maybe does not make the museum very popular. Although I heard from Francine Brinkgreve that at least up until the cooporation with Leiden not much was mentioned in the museum about the colonial connections to the objects on display. So the visitor would have seen only the history and present-day culture of their own country.

The enthusiasm under the Dutch about the exhibition was much higher. The Netherlands had its heyday during the colonial period and these collections are the only physical thing left of this period. Nostalgia towards this period has probably created enthusiasm for this exhibition. For once the Dutch could see with their own eyes a complete picture of the great collections the Dutch collected during these times. Not only the part of the collections the Volkenkunde Museum received, but also the part that stayed in Batavia. This was the time to see them reunited again. The visitor would probably also felt guilty when they arrived at the part of the exhibition about military expeditions.

4.7 The singosari statues in the Nieuwe Kerk

§4.7 Sumatra tercinta

With the "Sumatra tercinta" exhibition I want to illustrate how a temporary exhibition is being produced in cooporation with a "source community". The exhibition was not like "Indonesia: the discovery of the past" exhibited in the "Nieuwe Kerk", but in the

Volkenkunde Museum itself. This had influences on the way the exhibition is produced. The project was started with Pieter ter Keurs als curator, but after already a few months he took on a job in the Antiquity Museum. Francine Brinkgreve took over Pieter ter Keurs' job, but she was not yet the new curator, she was only the project leader for the Volkenkunde Museum. During this whole project Francine Brinkgreve was thinking "what will Jakarta think of this or that". She says that this was probably the case because she was not the curator yet, only the project leader. The museum was in the process of finding a new curator and she applied for it, therefore she was afraid of being too pushy towards the communication department and the designers.

After the Shared Cultural Heritage project, the Museum Nasional in Jakarta and the Volkenkunde Museum were willing to have a second project together. The theme this time would be "Sumatra Tercinta" (Beloved Sumatra). In the very beginning when the two museums came up with the plan to have another project together it was still Pieter ter Keurs who was the curator of Insular South-East Asia. The wish of the Museum Nasional was that this time it would be in cooperation with provincial museums in Sumatra (source: Francine Brinkgreve). In the end not all of the provincial museums worked on this project, but most did. The storyline was produced in collaboration with every museum that was part of the project. When Francine Brinkgreve took over the project from Pieter ter Keurs they started with the storyline. In order to work good together and to make a good storyline, it is important to know each other's museum. Therefore the staff of each museum that participated in this project saw each other's museum.

The idea was to have a big exhibition, but suddenly the exhibition got cut in half. The NOS dedicated a show to Maya 2012 and the museum had quickly to come up with a show about the end of the world that the Maya's have predicted in 2012. There was no exhibition hall empty so as a result the Sumatra exhibition had to give away half of its rooms. Three (or actually 2,5) rooms were left: one introduction hall (see fig. 4.11), one for the archaeology about "the old kingdom Sriwijaya" (this room was more a big niche between the other two rooms, see fig. 4.12) and one for the main exhibition (see fig. 4.14-4.17). The reduction of rooms did not have a consequence for the amount of objects included into the exhibition, but there was less space for the story of the exhibition (source: Francine Brinkgreve). The objects had to be placed closer to each other in one showcase and the showcases had to be positioned differently in the one room that was left. This room had 6 big columns which stood in the way for arranging the display cases in a good way. Opera Design, the designer for this exhibition, placed the showcases around the columns, but the showcases were placed too close to the

column. As a result people could not walk around the showcase and thus the objects were not very visible (source: Francine Brinkgreve).

The theme of the exhibition was "crossroad of cultures". Sumatra was on the trade route between the west and the east. Therefore Sumatra was influenced by a lot of cultures from outside of Sumatra and from within Indonesia itself. The message of the exhibition was the kind of influences on Sumatra and what the reaction of Sumatra was on these influences; actively as well as passively (source: Francine Brinkgreve). The head themes were the influences of Hindu-Buddhism, Islam, China and Europe on Sumatra. The other two themes were how the Sumatran people influenced each other and what the effect was of the rest of Indonesia on Sumatra. This exhibition was mostly a cultural historical one instead of an ethnographic one. The storyline and the objects were picked together, but the design, the texts and the graphics were specific for every museum (source: Francine Brinkgreve). At the end of this paragraph I included pictures of the exhibition. The idea behind the design of the Volkenkunde museum was as follow:

"OPERA Amsterdam provided a serene backdrop against which to present the many masterworks. The island atmosphere is created by floor to ceiling images of endless horizons, accentuated by the warm colors of the Sumatra sunrise and sunset. Visitors are temporarily transported to the island where they can experience Sumatra and their treasures. An Av program provides a range of historical information without breaking the spell created in the exhibition[27]."

Each theme had his own showcase situated around a column. Some pictures were included in the whole exhibition and some projections on the showcases (see fig. 4.13). Jakarta had negative comments on the projections, because the projections were not connected to the themes inside of the showcases. Also Francine Brinkgreve did not agree on these specific projections, but she had nothing to say about it. The museum has a special person for the graphics. The Museum Nasional was stronger in its graphics, because they had a graphic designer for the design of the whole exhibition. Therefore the design was not as good as the graphics. The design was more old-fashioned. The Museum Nasional did not have a choice, because it just did not have so much money for the design and the purchases of new display cases as the Volkenkunde museum had. Both of the museums had arranged their display cases according to the influences, but Jakarta included more of its own objects since more space was available in the Museum Nasional than in the Volkenkunde Museum.

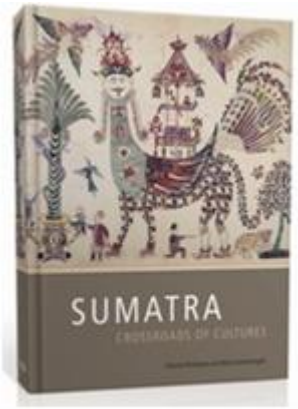
[27] http://www.opera-amsterdam.nl/projects.php?pro_id=100

The museum staff of the Museum Nasional liked the design of the Volkenkunde museum, beside the fact that the showcases were placed too close to the columns and the objects too close to each other. This was not a mistake of Opera Design; it was just a matter of a lack of space. One thing that had to be changed in the design was the position of some sacred objects. These objects were placed too low while the visitor had to look down on them (source: Francine Brinkgreve). Most statues were elevated, but it was however not possible for the statue of Shiva to be positioned higher, because the statues was too heavy. The museum had promised to try and do something about it after the opening, since there would be no time to do it before. This never happened though. After the opening the statue was not placed higher and no Indonesian came to visit the museum who could say something about it (source: Francine Brinkgreve).

Francine Brinkgreve did not agree on the texts that were written and the amount of texts written. The museum had an external writer who thought he had the knowledge himself to write the texts. Francince Brinkrgeve sat down with him and told him what had to be written. In his turn the writer had to construct her story into an exhibition texts. However, he wrote what he wanted to write, not what Francine Brinkgreve said he had to write. Another problematic thing that went wrong was the poster for the exhibition (see fig. 4.8); this was a case of miscommunication. The communication department thought that Francine Brinkgreve had already agreed on the poster, while she had not even seen the picture before (source: Francine Brinkgreve). A picture was choosen of a Malaysian couple instead of a Sumatran couple. Francine Brinkgreve does not know how it was ever possible that this picture was chosen, because it was even written that it was a couple from Kuala Lumpur. In those times Indonesia and Malaysia had political tensions with each other (source: Francine Brinkgreve), so this was the worst picture chosen for the advertising of a shared project between Jakarta and Leiden. It was already too late to change. However, with such a blunder was it not possible to delay the distribution of the posters?

4.8 Poster of the "Sumatra tercinta" exhibition

Since a catalogue is ‘extending the life of an exhibition beyond its physical form (Bouquet , 194)’, I will discuss the two catalogues about the exhibition shortly. These are the shared catalogue of the Volkenkunde museum and Museum Nasional “Sumatra: crossroads of culture” and of the Museum Nasional “Treasures of Sumatra”. The two have a complete different structure, but they both represent the exhibition in its afterlife.



4.9 Catalogue "Sumatra, crossroads of culture"

The purpose of the catalogue “Sumatra: crossroads of cultures” (see fig. 4.9) was to show the cultural history of Sumatra behind the objects on display. The catalogue is a good example of the ongoing existence of an exhibition. The texts is accompanied by pictures of the objects on display, paintings and photo’s of monuments and Indonesian (Sumatran) people. The objects are described in the general texts as examples. When I look at the photo’s of the exhibition in Leiden, I do not see so much photo’s in the exhibition only projections. Certainly not as much as in the book. I guess that the photo’s in the book are therefore an addition to the texts, to portray a context in which the objects were used or found when written about Archaeological objects. One painting I saw in the catalogue stroke me. It was a painting of the attack on Palembang by the Dutch in 1821 made by an Indonesian (p. 23). This painting belongs to Mahmud Badaruddin II Museum in Palembang. It looks quite the same as paintings I saw on the walls of the first exhibition hall. However these were not paintings, it was a movie. The movie was made by Herman de Boer and Ferlian Putra in Palembang and surrounding areas (source: Francine Brinkgreve). It is about Sumatran people, buildings/monuments and nature in and around Palembang. It also showed images of the harbor in Palembang, which is currently and during the colonial times one of the most important harbors in Indonesia (source: Francine Brinkgreve). The incorporation of the modern harbor illustrated a continuity between the old and the modern Palembang.

Also the catalogue of the Museum Nasional is extending the life of the exhibition, since the objects and the themes who were on display are described in the book. Each of the sub-chapters give background information about the different themes that were on display in the Museum Nasional. What surprises me is that this catalogue provides lists with objects at the end of every sub-chapter. These lists make it very clear which objects were on display and this is not always visible in the other catalogue. The objects are all accompanied with some background information. The lists of objects and their associated texts are the surviving image of the exhibition. The amount of texts is less than in the shared catalogue, but it was immediately clear what the exhibition was about. The catalogue of the Museum Nasional writes the story both in Indonesian and English.

4.10 Entrance

4.11 Introduction

4.12 Archaeology

4.13 Projections on showcase

4.14 Exhibition hall

4.15 Exhibition hall

4.16 Exhibition hall

4.17 Exhibition hall

Fig. 4.10 All of these pictures are taking of the site:

http://www.opera-amsterdam.nl/projects.php?pro_id=100

Chapter 5: My case-study: The Queen Wilhelmina doll collection

My case study will be about the Wilhelmina doll collection. I did my internship about these dolls and together with Francine Brinkgreve I had to include them into the permanent Indonesian exhibition. This internship was a chance for me to be part of the decision making process through participant observation. I observed from close by who and why certain decisions were made. The internship took me 7,5 month. During the first 6 months I was at the museum twice a week on average. The last 1,5 months I was at the museum only a few times to finish what I started.

In this chapter I will first give some background information about the dolls. Then I analyze two catalogues that were written solely about these dolls. These catalogues give an insight into the thought of the Dutch about the Indonesians during the colonial times. These thoughts were sometimes very ethnocentric. By discussing the background information and the analysis of the catalogues I will create a context for the dolls. This context is an image-layer that is part of the doll collection which is formed by the makers of the collection, the Ladies who gave the assignment to produce the collection and the director of the museum (Lindor Serrurier) at that time (1894). In the next paragraph I discuss the wider context of the dolls in colonial times. I use some ideas of Marieke Bloembergen on World exhibitions to implement on the doll collection and I will use the term 'imagined communities' which was introduced by Benedict Anderson. I will also utilize a Dutch East Indies quartet game which Susan Legêne describes and I compare it to the doll collection. The last two paragraphs are about the context the present-day museum is given to the collection. This will be about the inclusion of the Queen Wilhelmina doll collection and of clear visual Islam and then about the decision making process.

§5.1 Background information about the Queen Wilhelmina doll collection

In 1893 an exhibition was organized for the thirteenth birthday of the Queen Wilhelmina. This exhibition was called 'landbouw, nijverheid en veeteelt in Batavia (agriculture, industry and cattle-breeding in Batavia)' (Harmsen 1893). With this exhibition the bond between the Dutch East Indies and the Netherlands had to become stronger (Legêne 2010, 135). The exhibition contained a collection of 350 dolls which afterwards were given to the crown princess. The doll collection was assembled by the 'Ladies of the Dutch East-Indies' to show the different regional attire of the parts in the Dutch East Indies where the Dutch were

stationed, among others Java and Sumatra. By using different native wood carvers from those regions which the dolls represented, the Ladies also wanted to show the different types of population of the East-Indies. Most dolls were made by two Javanese wood carvers: Kerto and Werioningrat.

This doll collection was a chance for the women of the colonial elite to make themselves known to the Queen (Legêne 2010, 135). Madam Th. Pijnacker Hordijk supervised all this, together with European and native civil servants of the Dutch government. The Ladies wished to show a 'zoo getrouw mogelijke voorstelling te geven in het bijzonder van de kleederdrachten Harer Inlandsche onderdanen van den hoogsten tot den laagsten in rang (Bakhuizen van den Brink-Raedt van Oldenbarnevelt 1894, 3)' ('true and fair exhibition, in particular the regional attire of the crown princess subjects of high and low social position'). The regional attire also showed different garments worn in daily life and in special occasions (Serrurier 1894, 5). Every decoration, jewelry and sarong was made in the right proportions and every sarong was on a small scale 'gebatikt' (Serrurier 1894, 14).

After the collection was given to the Queen, Queen-regents Emma gifted the collection to the Museum of Ethnology, because the collection would add to the knowledge about the Dutch East Indies. The Queen-regents gifted it under the condition that the museum would exhibit the dolls (Wassing-Visser 1995). Serrurier (1894, 6). The director of the museum, Lindor Serrurier, did not have enough space inside his museum to house the collection. Therefore, he got permission to exhibit the collection at the 'Gothic hall' in the palace of the Queen at the Kneuterdijk for two weeks (see fig. 5.20 and 5.19). The funds the exhibition raised by entrance fees were used for a scientific expedition to Central Borneo. In this way the exhibition would contribute to more knowledge about the Indies (Serrurier 1894, 6). Serrurier also wanted to give the exhibition a more scientific anthropological background. He did this by exhibiting paintings of Antoine Payen (1792-1853) about the Indies landscape in which the regional attire belong and by displaying plaster casts of dead and alive individuals (Wassing-Visser 1995). One of his paintings was about the bay of Ternate (see fig. 5.1[28]), an island of the Moluccas. Serrurier also displayed plaster casts that had to complete the exposition about the population of the Dutch East-Indies. These were plaster casts of death and living individuals.

[28] http://www.amazon.com/Ibu-Maluku-Story-Jeanne-Diejen/dp/1877059080

 5.1 View on the Bay of Ternate: Antoine Payen

§5.2 Analysis of the catalogues about the Wilhelmina doll collection

Herein I will analyze the catalogues about the doll collection. I want to establish how the Dutch viewed the dolls and the population of the Dutch East Indies at the end of the nineteenth century. In this I will acknowledge the Dutch thoughts about the dolls and the population of the Dutch East-Indies, contextually; geographically and in time. The colonial and evolutionist thoughts of the Dutch were common in Europe. Even though I must see these thoughts in context, I provide some criticism because they are not common anymore. There are three catalogues in which the dolls are mentioned:

- Bakhuizen van den Brink-Raedt van Oldenbarnevelt, H.M. (1894) *Catalogus van de verzameling poppen, weergevende verschillende kleederdrachten van de volkeren van den Nederlandsch Oost-Indischen archipel, aangeboden aan Hare Majesteit, de Koningin der Nederlanden*. Batavia: G.Kolff & Co.
- Serrurier, L. (1894) *Tentoonstelling van Kleederdrachten in Nederlandsch Indië voorgesteld door poppen. Geschenk van de Dames in Nederlandsch Indië aan Hare Majesteit de koningin*. Leiden
- Harmsen, L.K. (1893) *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van landbouw, veeteelt en nijverheid te Batavia 1893*. Batavia: G.Kolff & Co.

5.2 Henriëtte Maria Raedt van Oldenbarnevelt[29]

5.3 Raedt van Oldenbarnevelt catalogue

5.4 Lindor Serruries[30]

Fig. 5.2.2

5.5 Serruriers catalogue

The catalogue of Bakhuizen van den Brink-Raedt van Oldenbarnevelt (see fig. 5.2 and 5.3) describes in detail which dolls were given by whom, from which region the dolls originate and it sometimes gives more detailed information about the regional attires, matching jewelry and decorations. It is mostly ordered on object number, with a few

[29] Source: http://dziewon.home.xs4all.nl/stamboom/bb007.htm

[30] Source: http://www.museumboerhaave.nl/object/portret-serrurier-lindor-p07586/

exceptions. Serrurier's catalogue (see fig. 5.4 and 5.5) provides a better insight into the thoughts of the Dutch about the Dutch East Indies population at the end of the nineteenth century. His catalogue consists of two parts: part one is a kind of introduction to the doll collection and the second part provides a summary of the dolls. In contrast with the catalogue of Bakhuizen van den Brink-Raedt van Oldenbarnevelt the catalogue of Serrurier is not ordered by object number. He classifies the dolls; a common practice in those days. He divides his catalogue into two parts: the island of Java and the island of Sumatra collectively with the other islands. These two parts are split into themes, for instance regional attires and brides and grooms. The catalogue from Harmsen is not very useful. Harmsen presents a list of objects which were displayed in the exhibition 'landbouw, veeteelt en nijverheid' in which the dolls were also displayed. Therefore I will only analyze the catalogues of Bakhuizen van den Brink-Raedt van Oldenbarnevelt and Serrurier.

The catalogues of Serrurier and Bakhuizen van den Brink-Raedt van Oldenbarnevelt demonstrate a rather colonialist view of the Dutch East Indies subjects. In the catalogue of Bakhuizen van den Brink-Raedt van Oldenbarnevelt (1894, 4) is written that the 'Ladies of the Dutch East Indies' (the head committee) were flattered that they added to the improvement of the arts and crafts among the native people. Given that the natives made all the cloths and jewelry especially for this collection in miniature. The ladies did not keep in mind that the arts and crafts of producing cloths and jewelry and woodcarvings in the Indonesian archipelago was already hundreds of years old. The native population only reproduced the cloths and jewelry in miniature. Bakhuizen van den Brink-Raedt van Oldenbarnevelt (1894, 3) also states that the Ladies had a hard time finding 'skilled workers' who could make living images, because the wood carvers were only skilled in making wayang dolls. The 'unskilled' workers had to be guided by Europeans. To use the word 'unskilled' is highly underestimating, because the woodcarvers might not have known how to carve dolls European style on demand, but they were highly skilled in carving wood into the smallest detail. The Ladies did not consider buying European dolls, because that would have been too expensive (Wassing-Visser 1995). If the Ladies would have bought European dolls, the dolls would all have looked the same and this is what they did not want. The Ladies wanted different dolls to show local variety.

In the end of the 1890's it was common to have an evolutionist thought about social development. After the publishing of "On the origin of species" by Charles Darwin, his idea of evolutionism was also applied to the social sciences. His idea about the evolution of species was used in the social science to support the idea that the European countries were

higher on the social ladder than other less developed countries like the Dutch East Indies. Countries were classified into different stages that range from being barbarian to being civilized. The civilized countries should teach the more undeveloped countries on how they should manage their lives. In the case of the Dutch East Indies it would be the Netherlands that should teach the natives of the Indonesian archipelago on how they could climb up the ladder to a more civilized society. The Dutch considered it their mission to bring civilization to this region (Legêne 2010, 161). The idea of the 'Ladies of the Dutch East-Indies' that they could improve the arts and crafts of the natives is part of this evolutionist thought. But the Ladies did not contribute anything; it was the native population who made the doll collection with native techniques.

Serrurier had a less ethnocentric view on the natives of the Dutch East Indies. He states that the Dutch East Indies ethnology depicts different stages of social development (1894, 7), but this is not all true because of the Dutch domination! The different stages in social development were written on the walls of the exhibition in Kneuterdijk as follow (1894, 7):

Nudity next to gorgeous attires
Stone Age next to Art industry
Savageness next to civilization
Cannibals next to vegetarians
Nomads next to urbanites
Rebellion next to law books
Barbarianism next to literature
Fetishism next to philosophy

By these contradictions Serrurier did not mean to compare the population of the Dutch East Indies to the Dutch but the differences within the Dutch East Indies population, for instance between the savageness of the Papua's from New Guinea and the Royal Court (the princes and princess') of Sulawesi. He, on the other hand, asserts that the Dutch do have a big influence on the development of the natives. With some melancholy he states that all of the diversity among regional attires will sooner or later disappear and make way for the trivial European cloth (Serrurier 1894, 11). Acoording to him this would happen fastest in places where the people have no history and no old culture, like New Guinea. Those people have nothing to hold on to and are therefore more willing to be influenced by the Europeans than for instance Javanese or people from Sumatra. The idea that Papuans did not have a history or old culture is very ethnocentric and fits in the evolutionist thoughts of those times. In the eyes of the Dutch they were just barbarians.

The cover of Serruriers catalogue depicts three figures; a female regent, a papua and a Hajji (see fig. 5.5). This image too illustrates the contradictions between the civilized and the barbarians. The woman is a female regent and she symbolizes the civilized form of the Javanese society (1894, 24) and the Papua in the middle symbolizes the savageness and the barbarism (1894, 10). The Hajji on the right symbolizes intellectual life on Java (1894, 20). Hajji's are people who completed the hajj to Mecca and in the end of the 19th century those people held a high rank in society. The Hajj cost a lot of money, so most of the time, they already had a higher status in society than the common people (Kern 1947, 57). The fact that Serrurier uses a Hajji to symbolize intellectual life on Java is surprising, because the Dutch in general were ignoring Islam in Indonesia. They saw it as a threat for stabilization in the region. The Dutch colonizers thought that the Hajji's had a bad influence on the native population, because they were more violent and aggressive than the passive locals (Shatanawi 2009, 237). The Hajj was the time for East-Indians to talk to other Muslims from colonized areas to come up with resistance strategies (Shatanawi 2009, 237). Serrurier maybe depicts an Islamic figure, but he does this incorrectly. The Hajji has a Quran in front of him, while the Hadjji's in the doll collection are having a slametan, a religious meal. They do not have a Quran in front of them. The dolls who do have a Quran or other Islamic books in front of them are the santri's, students from a Pesantren (a Quran school). Serrurier uses the term priest school instead of Pesantren or Quran school. The goal of a Pesantren was not to teach their students how to find an occupation within the Islamic religion, but to give them an advantage in finding a job in which knowledge about the Islam is important (Kern 1947, 91). In this light, the santri's should symbolize intellectual life on Java. I do not know why Serrurier has chosen a Hajji instead of a santri. Maybe because the kyai, teachers at a Pesantren, were seen as leaders of resistance groups against the colonizers, because these were people with authority (Shatanawi 2009, 237). Serrurier does also not explain why he had chosen to depict a Hajji as a symbol of intellectual life on the cover. Apparently the museum did not share the ideas of the Dutch colonizers about the Muslims from the East-Indies. Maybe the Dutch East Indies were just too far away to share this idea.

In the end of part one Serrurier (1894, 14) emphasizes that we (I assume Serrurier means the Dutch) should be astonished that even the most far inland regions and thus the most far away from European authority and resources, succeeded in making everything in miniature. Serrurier did not expected that everybody would succeed, but he credits the natives for what they achieved themselves. He does not state that the natives achieved all of this because of the

help of the Dutch, like the Ladies did. Serrurier even states that the natives who were the most remote from the Europeans accomplished this without their help.

§5.3 World exhibitions, imagined communities and a quartet game

The Netherlands was a small country with a big and old colonial empire and it could profile itself among the other big European powers by organizing big colonial world exhibitions (Bloembergen 2002, 12). The same idea can be said about the exhibition in Batavia about 'Landbouw, Veeteelt en Nijverheid', which contained the 350 dolls. It was a big exhibition with whom the Ladies of the Dutch East Indies wanted to make themselves known to the Queen. Probably behind this lays the idea that with the doll collection the Ladies could show the power they have over the native population. Just like the Dutch wanted to make their great colonial power known to the other European powers through world exhibitions.

Marieke Bloembergen writes about the Dutch and the Dutch East Indies on world exhibitions. Only once did the Netherlands have a world exhibition and this was in 1883 in Amsterdam. The Netherlands however participated in a lot of other world exhibitions in other countries. The world exhibition in the Netherlands consisted of a whole kampong (Indonesian village) which was built in Amsterdam and real Javanese and Sumatran people were living in it. The idea behind this was to have contact with another culture, through a tangible and lively 'object' from this culture: it had to be an 'anthropological sensation' (Bloembergen 2002, 13). This kampong would show the diversity of the Dutch East Indies native people. It would bring the colonies closer to the Dutch population, but at the same time also distance between the Dutch and the natives were created. The Dutch were modernized and the population of the Dutch East Indies was more traditional. The same could be applied to the dolls. This collection was a way of having tangible objects of the population of the Dutch East Indies. The Queen could now see and 'touch' her Dutch East Indies subjects, because the doll collection was supposed to 'mirror' the local society of the Dutch East Indies in the 1890s. The dolls are maybe not alive but they do, in some way or another, mirror persons during the end of the nineteenth century. The diversity among the Indonesian people was explicitly shown in the exhibition at the Kneuterdijk where the differences between the individual native groups were written on the walls. Among the different dolls themselves the positions of individuals in society or among different groups is also visible. At the exhibition in Kneuterdijk the doll collection brought the population of the Dutch East Indies closer together, but it also created a distance between the Dutch and the native population. The

Dutch could now face the 'native population' from close by, but by highlighting that the exhibition displayed dolls which were barbarian a distance was also created. After the exhibition the collection was placed in the depot of the museum as if they did not matter anymore. Considering the condition of the dolls they were completely neglected during their stay in the depot.

The world exhibition in Amsterdam could spread the imagination of the colonies among the Dutch population: it made the colonies part of the Dutch 'imagined community' (Bloembergen 2002, 14). Since the exhibition in Kneuterdijk the dolls also became part of the Dutch imagined community and at the same time they represent an imagined community. The collection itself is an imagined community, because the collection can be seen as some kind of community that represents different groups living in the Dutch East Indies during the colonial times. The collection represents communities from different levels, from general to the specific. In general the population represents the population of the Dutch East Indies. The next level is the different islands from which the dolls derived. These islands were divided into different regencies (the third level). From most dolls only this is known. However, sometimes is it know from which department (most local form) they came from. Benedict Anderson spoke of three institutions which brought colonies closer together with the country who is colonizing them: the map, the census and the museum. All three of these institutions were used in the producing of the dolls (Anderson 1991, 164). The map was used to define the different areas from which the dolls came. The known census was used in order to define for the different groups living in the East Indies. The museum is where the collection ended up in the end and where they became museumized. Museumized in a term Anderson uses to define how monuments were "repositioned as regalia for a secular state (Anderson 1991, 182)". The native population was not allowed to visit the monuments anymore, only the tourists. The collection of dolls were not repositioned as regalia for the state, because they were made for the Queen herself. The collection however became museumized as 'regalia' for a museum.

Susan Legêne has written about a quartet game from the Indies published in WWII. The quartet game was divided into different themes, among others: native groups, houses, weapons, means of transport. The maker of the quartet game, probably Tichelman,[31] had chosen 4 photo's with 4 people on it who had to stand for 4 native groups. By choosing 4 groups from the Indies as representatives of a whole region the maker emphasized the traditional cultures; as if the natives were not touched by the Europeans (Legêne 2010, 167).

[31] See appendix B. Tichelman.

The maker of the quartet game maybe emphasized the traditional cultures, but the natives were not so much represented as being traditional, more as being timeless (Legêne 2010, 166). The only thing that is visible on the cards are the individuals, the rest of the photo is not shown. The individuals can be seen as being timeless, because the context has disappeared. By choosing 4 ethnic groups which all are represented by only one photo, the maker of the quartet game changed the individuality of the persons into a generalized image (Legêne 2010, 171). The individuals became ideal types (Legêne 2010, 168).

The dolls can be compared to the quartet game to illustrate what kind of image of the doll collection was produced. Just like the photos on the card, which represent a certain regional group, the Ladies wanted to show the different native groups living in the Dutch East-Indies. In order to accomplish this, native people had to produce dolls which were representatives of people living in a certain area. The differences between the quartet game and the doll collection is that the doll collection consists of 350 dolls. Therefore it shows more regional diversity than the quartet game does, but they still represent an ideal type. The clothes and accessories of the dolls are shown mostly without European influences[32]: and thus, just like the quartet game, emphasized the traditional cultures. At the same time the dolls are in a certain way represented as being timeless. No context was created for them whereby nowadays we could still use these dolls to explain traditional regional attires. These regional attires are nowadays mostly used during ceremonies. Many times a couple was produced and this couple stood for one community from a certain region. Supposedly when visitors would see the dolls, they would know the whole community from which the dolls supposedly derived.

The quartet game brought the Dutch closer to the people of the Indies but at the same time kept reality at bay (Legêne 2010, 167). Just like Marieke Bloembergen she emphasizes that objects connected to the Dutch East Indies brings the Indies closer to the Dutch, but that at the same time a distance is created. The Dutch people and the Queen were able to 'see' the population of the Dutch East-Indies with their own eyes, but the real world was still very far away. For the Dutch the collection can be the surviving image of their past glory, when the Netherlands was still a big colonial empire. Nostalgia towards the colonial times can be created through the dolls.

[32] Maybe some colors on the cloths from Jepara (Java) are influenced by the Dutch flag (Scriptie Deborah Stolk). Some cloths from Menado (Sulawesi) and Ambon are European style.

§5.4 The inclusion of the Wilhelmina dolls and Islam into the Indonesian exhibition

I explained in chapter 3 that aesthetic values of objects are very important in the Volkenkunde museum and that the inclusions of the Wilhelmina doll collection is an exception to this. The collection is an exception because colors on the cloth of most dolls are faded, some cloths are even badly torn. Then why did the museum wanted to include the dolls? This has everything to do with the importance of making money and attracting visitors. The communication department is currently more in control than the curators about how an exhibition should look like and what themes should be include into the exhibition, because the people working in this department think they know what the visitors want. The consequence of this shift is that the museum, since the beginning of the 1990, became more commercialized (Ames 1991, 87). The Volkenkunde Museum thinks they attract more people when they display their masterpieces. This department also thinks that they attract people when they display dolls, because people love dolls, despite the condition of the dolls. The Queen Wilhelmina doll collection is important because it is given by Queen-regents Emma in the name of Queen Wilhelmina. The doll collection defines the bond between the Royal house and the museum. This bond has always exist since the museum originated from the Royal Cabinet of Rarities of King Willem I. The communication department thinks that the fact that it is a doll collection given by the Queen should attract a lot of people. This is the reason why the Wilhelmina dolls are included into the permanent Indonesian exhibition. The public department also thought that is was a special collection because there are not many doll collections in the Netherlands. This is however not completely true. The museum has more doll collections and also the Tropenmuseum has a doll collection on display in their exhibition about 'Dutch East-Indies' which was made for a world exhibition (source: Francine Brinkgreve).

The communication department wanted to display dolls from all of the areas that are represented in the collection and thus the area's where the Dutch had their colonies. This is a very colonial view on the doll collection: it was exactly the idea behind the production of the doll collection in the early 1890s. The communication department wanted this because it shows the variety among different areas of Indonesia. Francine Brinkgreve however did not want to include the doll collection into the permanent Indonesian exhibition, because the collection was intentionally made for the Dutch and is therefore not really Indonesian. The exhibition should display Indonesian objects who are important for the Indonesian culture. There was no showcase free and no showcase could be added to the permanent exhibition. That meant that the content of one of the showcases had to be removed. This had to be the

biggest showcase, because some doll are quite big. The biggest showcase contained textiles. Francine Brinkgreve wanted the textiles to stay in the showcase and not the doll collection. If she had a choice she would rearranged the textiles: less textiles so justice would be done to the motives and beauty of the textiles. As a compromise it was chosen that the dolls would be combined with the textiles. To make the doll collection more suitable for the exhibition Francine Brinkgreve and I tried to get away from the colonial idea of incorporating all regions and make it about the different textiles and the decorating techniques. The textiles were not completely removed from the showcase, because they function now as a background for the doll. The textiles can be connected to the textiles the dolls are wearing. The dolls would then show how the textiles were worn in Indonesia.

Francine Brinkgreve and the communication department already decided that one theme inside of the showcase would be about brides and grooms, because Francine Brinkgreve wanted to show that although the couples are Islamic, they would return to their traditional attires during special days, like a wedding. Unfortunately most cloths of the brides and grooms were badly torn or discolored. Therefore there was not really a choice but to include the couples which were in a better condition. Francine Brinkgreve and I also wanted to include dolls that were clear Islamic, for instance the Hajji's and santri's. Most dolls in this collection came from regions where Islam was the main religion, but it is not always visible in their cloths. For instance the princess' dolls from Sulawesi (from Makassar and Bugis, see fig. 5.9) are dressed in seeing through shirts, while they belonged to a Sultanate. Or a lot of women dolls do not wear head scarfs; on the contrary all the men in the collection wear headgear. This was not just an Islamic tradition, everywhere in the East Indies men wore headgear (Veldhuisen-Djajasoebrata 1972, 25). At the end of the 19th century the tradition for women to wear head scarf's was not incorporated on a big scale yet in the Dutch East Indies. In the doll collection the majority of women wearing a head scarf come from Sumatra. The Islamic women dolls with a head scarf in the showcase are from Sumatra (Jambi, see fig. 5.7, and Aceh, see fig. 5.8) and Java (Preanger-regencies and Batavia, see fig. 5.6). The Islamic women dolls from whom the visitor would not expect them to be Islamic are for instance two princesses from Sulawesi. These princesses are an example of how Islam did not entirely destroy the traditional culture of the East-Indies and that Islam is not always visible in the archipelago. To illustrate that Europeans also influenced the archipelago I included an Ambon couple dressed in European bride and groom outfit (see fig. 5.10).

5.6 Hajji couple from Batavia high society of Jambi

5.7 Couple from the common people of Aceh

5.8 Couple from the

5.9 Bugis prince and princes

5.10 Christian couple from Ambon

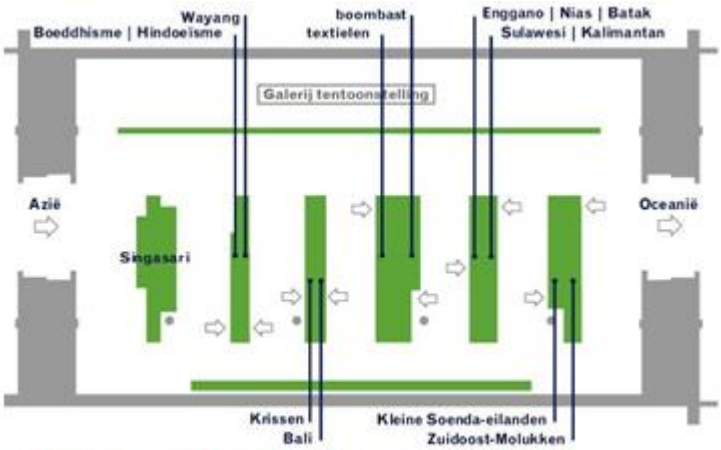
The doll collection includes a Dayak couple from Kalimantan (see fig. 5.11) and a couple who lived in a forest on Sumatra (see fig. 5.12). These couples wear different textiles (The forest couple wears for example bark cloth) than shown in the showcase and would thus add to the textiles already on display. However, Francine Brinkgreve and I thought it would be too stereotypical to include them. It could be seen as offending. If we would include them we would have to arrange the showcase differently, we would have to show regional attires of all the other islands as well (and present them like this) and this was not what we wanted. It was very important that the textiles of the dolls would be the highlight and not the region they originated from.

5.11 Dayak couple

5.12 Forest couple

§5.5 The decision making process behind the inclusion of the Wilhelmina dolls

Anne Marie Woerlee, head of the communication department, did not know if she would like the idea of the combination textile-dolls, because perhaps it would not look nice, aesthetically. This can be a very subjective opinion. If this combination would not succeed some problems would arise. Francine Brinkgreve has some themes that have to be included into the permanent Indonesian exhibition. With the combination dolls-textiles all of the themes could be included, but with only the dolls in the big showcase one of these themes had to excluded. Batak staff, wayang, batik (a textile) and krisses have to be incorporated into the exhibition, because these traditions are still very much alive in Indonesia and on the UNESCO heritage list, whereas the dolls are not. The batak staff was already included into the showcase about Sumatra, which stays the same. The krisses are part of the golden street or the display case with golden objects, which will also be included (see below). Thus, if the textiles could not be displayed together with the dolls there would be no place for or the wayang or the batik/textiles. The idea behind the theme "Ribbon around the world" was abandoned, because the visitor did not understand it. The communication department wanted the exhibitions this time to be about icons. Icons of the Indonesian culture are the four themes I just mentioned, whereas the Queen Wilhelmina doll



5.13 Layout of previous Indonesian exhibition

collections are not. If had to be chosen between which themes to incorporate, the Batak staff, wayang, batik (a textile) and krisses would have to get priority over the doll collection. It however seemed as if the dolls got priority over the other themes.

I will use the layout (see fig. 5.13) of the previous permanent Indonesian exhibition to explain what has changed. Singasari is now more spread because the communication department wanted to present Singasari as a temple where the visitor could walk through. This was however not possible, because the statues weight too much whereby they had to stand on a platform. To create a context for the statues a picture of the real location of the Singasari temple complex is added as a background. Because Singasari is now more spread the display case about Buddhism and Hinduism is removed. The wayang who was previously situated in the following showcase has to make place for the 'golden path', because this would attract more visitors. If people would walk through the path with golden objects on both sides, they would be amazed by what they would see. Singosari, the 'golden path' and the dolls had to be the themes which would attract more visitors to see the permanent Indonesian exhibition. The objects that would be part of the 'golden path' are among others krisses, the Lombok treasure and jewelry. The following path previously contained the showcase about Bali and the textiles. Bali remains unchanged, except for the change of objects, and the textile showcase becomes dolls-textiles. In the new exhibition the wayang would be on display behind the doll-textile showcase. If however, the textiles could not be combined with the dolls the textiles or the wayang would be displayed in the showcase behind the dolls. The bark clothes which were on display in the previous exhibition, would then disappear. To still have objects made out of bark, one extra object was added to the Sulawesi showcase next to another object made out of bark. The rest of the exhibition remains the same. The public department had an idea to display the wayang behind the gallery in some form of theater play, but in the end there was no money for this.

In case the combination of textiles and dolls would not be aesthetically nice there were a few other options:

The original plan: the golden path would be included, just like the doll-textile showcase and the wayang would be placed in the showcase previously containing bark cloth.

Only one showcase would contain golden objects and the wayang would stay in the old one. The dolls would be displayed in the textile showcase and the textiles would move to the display case previously containing bark cloth.

The golden path would be included, the wayang would be placed in the textile showcase and the textiles would move to the display case previously containing bark cloth.

The golden path would be included, the dolls would be displayed in the textile showcase and the textiles would move to the display case previously containing bark cloth. This means that wayang would be excluded, but because wayang has to be incorporated in the Indonesian exhibition they would be exhibited in the gallery. The gallery is a narrow path behind a wall (see layout on the previous page).

Before the public department would make a decision about the combination of dolls and textiles (option 2), they wanted a sketch from Opera to see how this combination would look like.

To give an idea about the limited amount of time we had I will summarize some important dates. The meetings about the redecoration of the wing in which Indonesia is exhibited started in the midst of November and in the midst of December there was the dilemma about which option to choose. Before Anne Marie Woerlee could send a selection of dolls to Opera Design, who would create a drawing, I had to choose which dolls Francine Brinkgreve and I wanted to display inside of the showcase. I made the selection and Francine checked on me and added one or two couples. In the beginning of January Anne Marie Woerlee sent the list of selected dolls to Opera Design and only in the second half of February the sketch of the layout was returned. This was just before Francine Brinkgreve and I had to give in the texts (which would be placed on the showcases) to the communication department. The communication department would sent the texts to somebody else (externally from the museum) who would re-write the texts. Francine Brinkgreve would then get it back to check if things had to change. This was indeed the case, because some crucial information were missing or written on a different place then were it had to stand. In the texts about the dolls quotations from the catalogues were used in order to make the message more clear. This was re-written, but the quotations had to come back. After some negotiations between Francine Brinkgreve and Anne Marie Woerlee, the texts were approved after they had been re-written again.

Around the time when we got the drawing back from Opera Design I had to hand in the final selection of which couples should be incorporated into the permanent Indonesian exhibition. There would not be much time to decide which other option than the first option would be employed if the combination of dolls and textiles would not be an option anymore. Another problematic issue was that the conservator, Margrit Reuss, needed the final selection of the dolls as soon as possible, because it would take a lot of time to restore them. Margrit Reuss estimated that most dolls will be half a day till a day of work; there are a total of 37 dolls. Two dolls needed to be fixed by a textile restorer and that could take up to almost one

week per doll (65 hours in total). The other 35 dolls needed around 4 weeks to restore (140 hours in total). This illustrates that the dolls are a lot of work and they are not the only objects that need to be restored before the opening of Indonesian exhibition on June 29. The Indonesian exhibition is also not the only exhibition that opens to the public: in April China and Japan/Korea opened.

On February the 23rd we got the drawings from Opera. The assistant of the Masterplan (Eijda Tervoort), Anne Marie Woerlee and the director of the Public and Partners department (John Sijmonsbergen) were watching the drawing (digitally) and Francine Brinkgreve was quickly called. She could not find me, because I was conducting an interview, but luckily my interview was almost finished and I was on time to see most of the drawings. We all agreed that the combination of the dolls and textiles succeeded (luckily). I do not know what would have happened if Anne Marie Woerlee and John Sijmonsbergen only wanted the dolls. Fortunately we could continue with what we were doing for the last three months instead of quickly thinking of other options. Francine Brinkgreve and I were surprised that we saw a lot of dolls inside of the showcase, because Opera and the communication department normally have a more minimalistic style. Anne Marie Woerlee wanted Opera to include as much dolls as possible and Opera obviously took her advice. John Sijmonsbergen asked if we had included dolls from all the island and we had not (see §5.3).

The next step was to make a final selection. There were 6 themes: santri's, hajji's, brides and grooms, Islamic couples, 'batiksters' (women who use the decorating technique batik) and remaining Islam. Francine Brinkgreve and I had expected that Opera would only include the first four themes but they also incorporated the 'remaining Islam'. We agreed that we had enough Islam in the showcase, so we decided to blot out the theme 'remaining Islam' and incorporate the theme 'local rulers'. The island that was not yet in the previous selection was Kalimantan and we added a crown prince and princes to the new theme, so every island, except for Bali, would be represented in the showcase. The 4 dolls from Bali looked completely different from the other dolls: their clothes were painted on the wooden dolls. This was in line with Balinese tradition, but looked a bit strange among the other dolls. Because the Indonesian exhibition would already have a whole showcase dedicated to Bali Francine Brinkgreve decided that we should leave the Balinese dolls out.

Margrit Reuss wanted to test if the dolls would fit into the showcase, because on the drawings it looked too crowded. The test arrangement happened at the end of March in the depot. In the depot tape was used to enclose the size of the display case. The designer had not taken into account a space for the textile behind the dolls, so at least 30 cm at the back of the

showcase would be lost. As a result we had to leave out some dolls, but less than we had expected. We incorporated less Hajji's and santri's and left out one couple. The santri's could not sit in a circle as in the first design of opera. The following photos are made that day:

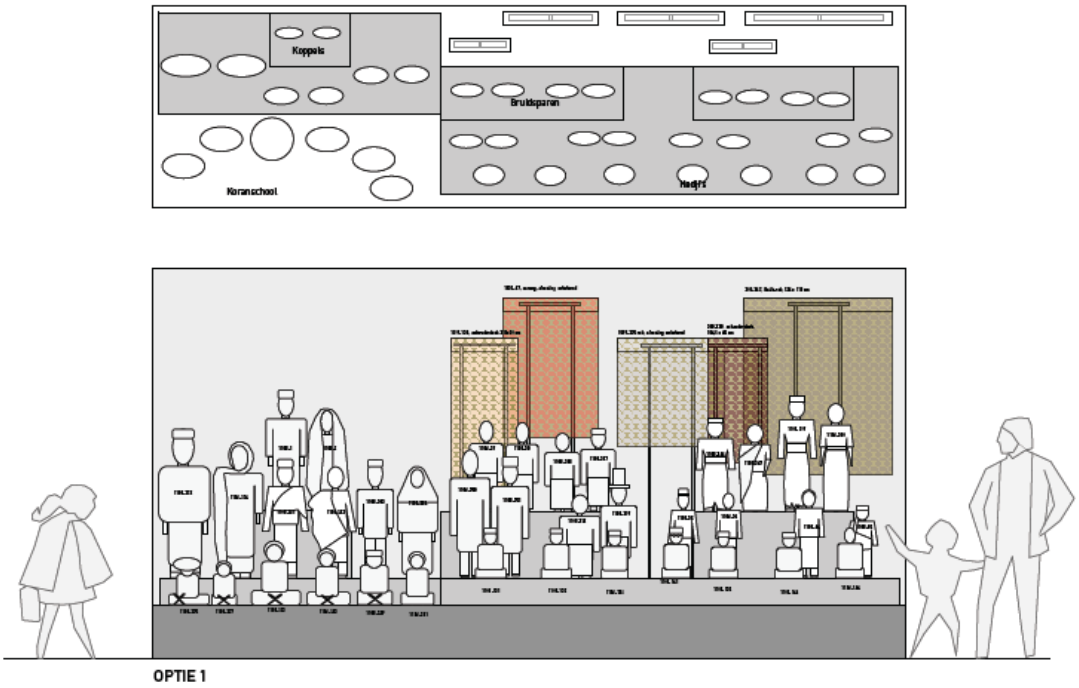
5.14 The theme Islamic couples with in front the santri's of the Quran school

5.15 The theme's brides and grooms (left) and local rulers (right), with in front the hajji's

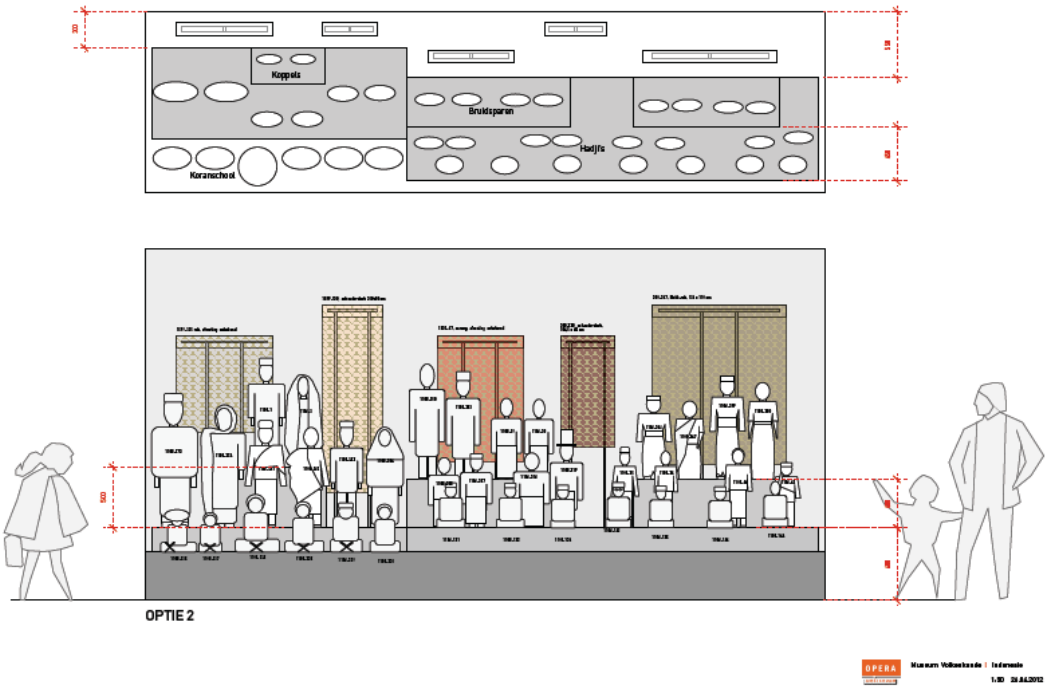
5.16 Two of the three conservators holding the textiles behind the dolls

That day also the designer, Boaz, came to look how the dolls would fit in the showcase. Francine Brinkgreve, Margrit Reuss and Boaz had decided that it was possible to have five small textiles instead of only four. Those five different textiles (Plangi, Ikat, een tapis, Songket, Batik) would be spread at the back, so the textiles would be displayed behind the dolls they belong to. When we got back the drawing of Boaz, he had changed the design. The textiles were only on 2/3 of the showcase instead of the whole back of the showcase and he drew the santri's back into a circle (see drawing option 1 below). Boaz had also drawn the textiles in two rows at only 2/3 of the showcase, while the conservators have said that this would not fit. He drew it this way because the design had more variety and would thus be more attractive to look at. The Project Secretary of the Master plan, Eijda Tervoort, heard of Margrit Reuss and Francine Brinkgreve's problems with this design and she sent these opinions to Boaz. Instead of directly communicating with the designer, it had to be done through Eijda Tervoort. Boaz drew another design, now according to the agreements made during the test day (see drawing option 2 below). After Francine Brinkgreve communicated with Anne Marie Woerlee, the final drawing became option 1. They decided that this would be the best design, because it would be more interesting to the public. The communication department and Opera wanted to take out one textile, but Francine refused because 5 textiles was what they had agreed on. So the five textiles stayed.

The drawing of how the dolls are going to be displayed, made by Opera:



5.17 Option 1



5.18 Option 2

In May the conservators and hired restorers started to clean and restore the dolls, less than two months before the opening of the exhibition. All of the dolls had been transferred from

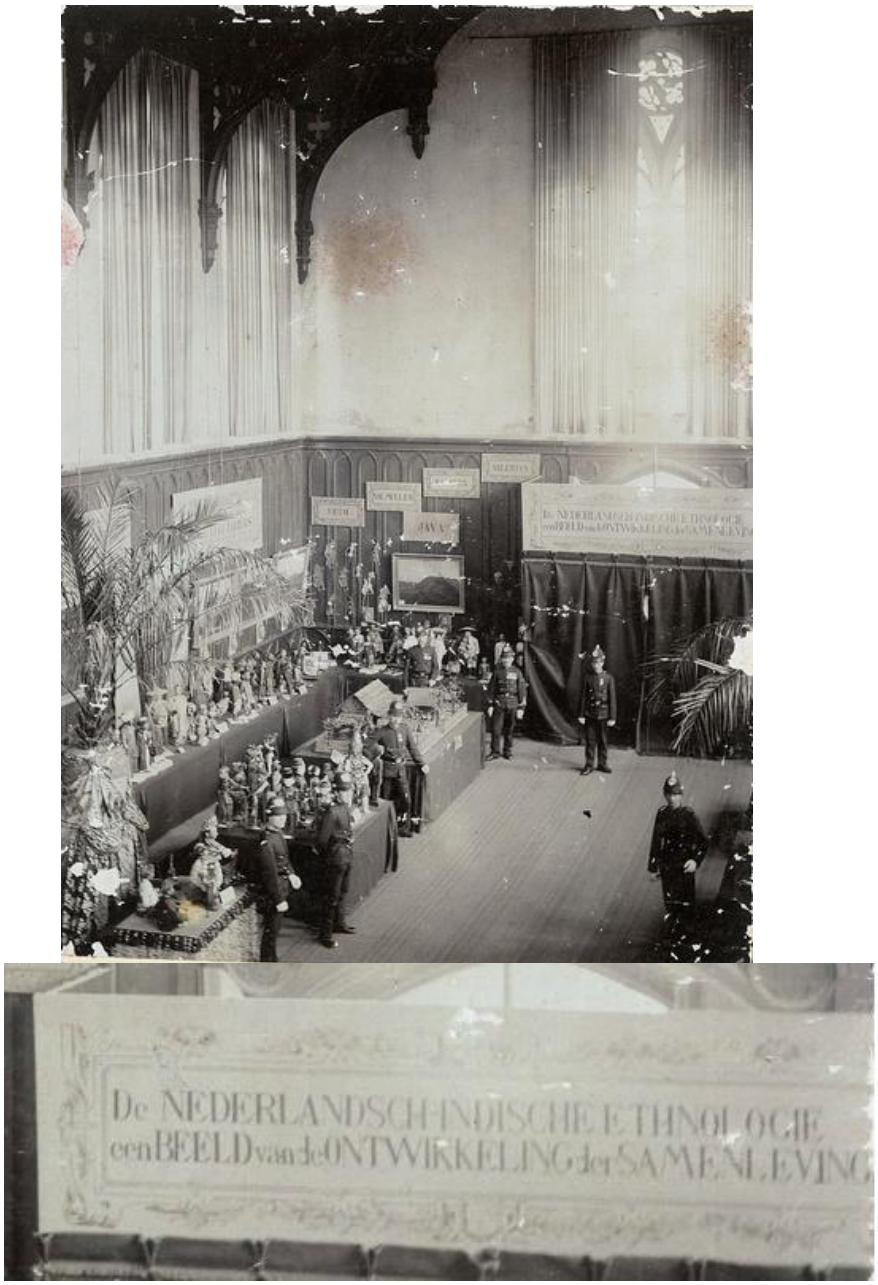
the depot to the museum. The problem with many dolls was that most were incomplete; many had lost their accessories, for instance parasols, krisses or jewelry. A few accessories were found, but most lost jewelry or krisses are forever lost. In May I also had to finish the objects descriptions, so only by then it was known what was actually missing. Most dolls lost only a few accessories, but one couples was completely robbed (see below). For the object description I used archive cards and the catalogue of Bakhuizen van den Brink-Raedt van Oldenbarnevelt which had some descriptions of dolls as well. The museum has archive cards with objects descriptions which were written in the very beginning of the twentieth century. By then the dolls were in the museum for around the 20 years. The description on the archive card are more reliable than what we see nowadays. The archive cards were thus essential for the reconstruction of the dolls. I also used other books for information about the clothes and accessories of the dolls.

By mid-May I had mentioned to Francine Brinkgreve and the conservators that a crown prince and princes had lost all their jewelry. While they were still in the depot it was already clear that they lost all their jewelry but nobody really paid attention to it. By mid-July this pair of dolls was discussed again, because Francine Brinkgreve and I had asked a few times what to do with the lost jewelry. It was tried to find the jewelry or to take it from another crown prince doll, but this was a crown prince from another island so that was not possible. It was decided to take this pair out, even after one of the conservators, Farideh Fekrsanati, had already spent a lot of time on it. Margrit Reuss said that it should be up to Farideh Fekrsanati to decide if the dolls should be included or not, because she had already spent a lot of time on it. In the end it was decided that the dolls should go out, before Farideh would spent any more time on it. Francine saw these dolls as an example of why in the first place she did not want to include those dolls: they were smudgy and incomplete. Even Anne Marie Woerlee said that the two dolls should be excluded from the exhibition (after a little bit of hesitation), because all the jewelry was missing and a crown prince without his jewelry is not a crown prince. Maybe a crown prince robbed from all of its jewelry by the Dutch during the colonial times but this is not the message the museum wants to sent out to the public.

Another problem arose at the last week of May with a different couple, because one of the restorers said that the female was actually a male. Francine Brinkgreve backed the restorer and agreed that it was a male. The doll together with the partner of the doll were taken out. I knew it was a woman, but I was not at the museum that week to defend my argument. She looked like a female and it was even written in catalogue that she was a female. She was part of a couple, a bride and a groom. I wrote it in an e-mail but it was still agreed upon that she

was a he and that the couple had to go out. When I was back at the museum in the first week of June I brought it up again. Francine and I went to the couple and the restorer to talk about it. The restorer explained why she thought it was a male. The doll's face did not look like the other female dolls but the same as her partner. I argued that there were different wood carvers and therefore the doll looked different than the other women. The doll looked the same as her partner, because they were made by the same woodcarver. The restorer also said that the ears and feet did not look female, just like the headgear. Then Francine Brinkgreve took a closer look at the doll and indeed agreed with me that the doll was indeed female instead of male. She said that she had a lot on her mind with the opening of the Indonesian exhibition that she did not pay much attention to it and just thought that some switch had occurred with photos in the TMS. This had happened before with a couple that will be displayed. Then the right doll had to be transferred to the museum and that couple could stay. This time it was immediately decided to exclude the couple, because there would not be enough time, if the photo had indeed been switched, to include the right doll. In the end because of me the couple was included again into the exhibition.

5.19 The dolls in the showcase.



5.20 The exhibition of the doll collection in Kneuterdijk[33]. The big plate in the back of the exhibition states: 'The Dutch-Indies ethnology: an image of the development of a society.'

[33] http://www.haagsebeeldbank.nl/beeldbank/weergave/record/layout/default?id=4401411e-2a3a-4911-b0d4-e5f2f9f52738

5.21 The exhibition of the doll collection in Kneuterdijk [34]. The big plate in the back of the exhibition states: 'A tribute to the Queen brought by the Ladies of the Dutch-Indisch.'

[34] http://www.haagsebeeldbank.nl/afbeelding/054d4006-f889-4af5-9a3d-8d84f2e8502b

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Image-forming at museums is done on different levels: the producer and user of an objects is the first layer. The next layer is the collector. He chooses which object to collect or which one not. Sometimes the collector just collected what was available in the field. The layer after this one is the one the museum adds. A museum is "an institution in which social relationships are oriented in terms of a collection of objects which are made meaningful by those relationships (Handler in Bouquet 2001, 179)". Visitors are the ones who try to understand the message of the exhibition and therefore they also add another or even more layers of meanings to an object. In this thesis I was mostly focused on the layers of meaning the Volkenkunde Museums adds to the objects and exhibitions: by whom this is been done and why. In particular related to the image that is being formed in Indonesian exhibitions. My case-stud was about the Queen Wilhelmina doll collection.

§6.1 Image-forming at the Volkenkunde Museum and the design

The Image-forming in the Volkenkunde museum is done on different levels. The communication department is the executor of an exhibition and in dialogue with the curator, they decide what kind of themes should be included. The curators are responsible on the content of an exhibition. They decide which objects they want to include into the display cases and they write the texts for the exhibition. But they do not have the freedom to write as much as they want or include as much themes and objects as they want, because the communication department determines all of this. The texts are being re-written by somebody external from the museum who could change certain messages by, for instance, using different words. The education department also has a say in all of this, because they make the programs for the school children. If an exhibition changes it is impossible to write complete new programs. Therefore certain object have to stay in an exhibition. The education department also forms the image the school children get through the guided tours. The designer creates the design and decides how to organize the objects into the display cases. The graphics are chosen by someone from the museum who is specialized in audio visual material in exhibitions. This is done sometimes in collaboration with the curator and sometimes without. If the curator does not have a say in it, it can happen that graphics do not fit with what is displayed.

The cooperation during the redecoration of the museum between 1997 and 2001 between the curators, the communication department, the director and the designers did not go so well in the 1990s. The problems that arose during the redecoration were caused by a change in power during the reorganization in the beginning of the 1990s. In the 1980s the curators were the executors. During the reorganization the curators lost their power and they were placed in an advisors role. Three new departments were formed: communication department, collection department and management department. The collection department took over the conservation and registration of the collection; previously the task of a curator and his servant (nowadays called assistent). The communication department evolved out of the education department. This department is now the one in charge of the museum and the executor during an exhibition process. The change of power altered the museum from a science centre into a public-oriented museum. The museum is much more public-oriented, because it needs to attract as much visitors as possible to generate money. One designer, Opera Design, was hired to do most of the temporary exhibitions and the whole redecoration of the permanent exhibitions. The designers received the biggest freedom during the redecorating and the curators got the most restrains. This led curators believe that design was more important than the content of an exhibition. Because everybody was still defining and defending their position at the museum some conflicts occurred during the whole process.

The book "In Side Out, On Site In" by Gert Staal was about the whole re-decoration process. The book was mostly written from the point of view from the director, communication department and the designer. In the book is written that in the begin the situation was a little tense, but in the end everybody worked good together. Gert Staal wrote: "All parties concerned had room to manoeuvre and especially the curators felt they weren't forced into a prefabricated straightjacket when it came to decisions regarding their own sub-collection (Staal 2002, 107)". This is the foremost contradiction in the book in comparison to what I heard during my research. The only role of the curators was to choice the objects and themes and to write the texts and object description. Even in these tasks there were restrains: they were not allowed to choice how many texts, objects and theme's should be included and they had to defend every choice they made. The curator had almost nothing to say anymore and therefore they were "forced into a prefabricated straightjacket". This has changed considerably nowadays. Everybody works much better together and communicates better. The curators are now more incorporated into the whole process instead of being an outsider who was only allowed to give some advise.

The theme of the museum was "ribbon around the world". It was about cultures influencing each other and this had to be represented by the connection of one exhibition hall to another. These halls had certain things in common. The visitor had to go on a discovery in the museum to find out what these influences were and at the same time the visitors had to reflect on the history of the collections of the museum. More than on the cultures which were on display. The Volkenkunde Museum is an ethnology and that means that present-day cultures should be on display. The message was therefore not clear to the visitor and in the new redecoration of 2012 this theme was removed. The design is very minimalistic. It can be compared with the distinction Sally Price makes in her book between art museums and anthropology museums and the transforming of ethnographic objects into art. The Volkenkunde Museum did not wanted to transform their ethnographic objects into art pieces, but they wanted to display it the way art is being displayed in a museum. An art museum is the most exclusive museum of all and a museum that wants to be as inclusive as possible is mirroring an art museum. There was no object label inside of the glass cases, because people had to see the aesthetics of the object: the object had to speak for itself. At first sight, the visitor had to perceive a perceptual-emotional experience instead of a cognitive-educational one when visiting the museum. The designers wanted the visitor to look at the object and reflect on it instead of immediately being attracted to the labels. For those visitors who do want to know what they are looking at objects descriptions are provided in a touch screen in front of the showcase. The advantage of this touch screen is that extra information on objects can be provided. The texts about the themes of the display cases are however very minimal. There is thus still a cognitive-educational experience, even though it is not the most important anymore. The Volkenkunde wanted to express with their design that ethnological objects can be beauty in their own way regardless of them being transferred into art pieces.

§6.2 Temporary Indonesian exhibitions

Sally Price wrote her book "primitive art in civilized places" in 1989 and she discusses that Westerners from a western aesthetic point of view were the ones who decided what would be native art. In her opinion the opposite should be happening. The local aesthetics were not taken into account nor did the Westerners ask the natives anything. "Beyond the Java Sea" was an Indonesian art exhibition in which westerners decided what would be Indonesia's outer island art. The writers of the catalogue and thus the curators of the exhibition acknowledged that this was not the rightful way to do it. The whole catalogue was about Indonesians themselves and what objects mean to them, but still the natives were not

incorporated into the decision about what should be art. The preparation for this exhibition probably started around the time when Sally Prices book was published, so they could not change anything about the exhibition. The catalogue was however published in 1991 one year after the exhibition was displayed for the first time. In the catalogue some ideas of Sally Price were applied. Maybe the book was published later so it was possible to give more voice to the natives? The whole exhibition came from America to the Netherlands were it was on display in 1992 in the Volkenkunde Museum. It was not possible to change anything about the content, because even the showcases which were used in America came to Leiden. To make the exhibition more ethnological, a lot of pictures were added to create context. Nowadays it is much more common to work together with "source communities". This was done during the exhibitions "Indonesia: the discovery of the past" and "Sumatra tercinta".

The exhibitions "Indonesia: the discovery of the past" and "Sumatra tercinta" were made in cooperation between the Volkenkunde Museum and the Museum Nasional in Jakarta. Museum Nasional is not a source community in the sense that it is a local group, but the people working there are Indonesians. The exhibition "Indonesia: the discovery of the past" was an exhibition made about the colonial past and the temporary re-joining of the divided collections. The exhibition was held in the "Nieuwe Kerk" and as a consequence Pieter ter Keurs did not have to work together with the communication department at Volkenkunde nor with Opera Design. The management team of the "Nieuwe Kerk" saw him more as a specialist and therefore he had more freedom to make his own choices. "Indonesia: the discovery of the past" was the outcome of the first project between the Volkenkunde Museum and the Museum Nasional since the two museums got separated after the independence of Indonesia. The project was called "Shared Cultural Heritage". This name can be interpreted into two ways: a possession shared by two parties and as a combined cultural inheritance. The collections are divided between the two museums, but they came from the same source.

The Shared Cultural Heritage project led to another project between Leiden and Jakarta. The exhibition was called "Sumatra tercinta (Beloved Sumatra)" and this time also provincial museums were included. The exhibition was about the influences of outsiders on Sumatra (among others the Dutch influences) and the influences on Sumatra that came from inside of Indonesia. Francine Brinkgreve had to deal with a sudden reduction of rooms. This did not have a consequence on the amount of objects included, but it did have consequences for the design and the story which had to be told. Only 2,5 rooms were left: one as an introduction hall, the 0,5 room was about archaeology and the third room was the main exhibition hall. 6 columns were situated in the middle of the room and the showcases had to be built around

these columns. The space between the column and the showcase was to small and as a consequence the visitor could not walk around it to see all the objects. Because of the reduction in space the objects had to be placed closer together. This was not the fault of Opera Design, they did what was possible with only one main exhibition hall. More problems that occurred were about the texts, projections, some religious statues and the poster. The texts was not written by Francine Brinkgreve, but by an external writer who did not listen to what she told him to write. He thought he knew better. The projections on the showcases were not related to what was inside of the showcase and the museum even got some comments on that by the Indonesian curators. Some religious statues were placed too low and the visitor was looking down on them. This is an offend so they had to be elevated. The poster is the biggest blunder of all. A picture of a Malaysian couple was chosen instead of a Sumatran couple. During that time Malaysia and Indonesia had political tensions with each other. Francine Brinkgreve never agreed on this picture, while the communication department thought she had. Pieter ter Keurs has said that the PR department of the Volkenkunde Museum does not work together very good with the curators. In the "Nieuwe Kerk" the PR department was much more focused on the content of the exhibition and therefore worked together with the curator.

§6.3 The permanent Indonesian exhibition between 2000-2011

The permanent Indonesian exhibition between 2000 and 2011 consisted of two parts: the first part is connected to Kingdoms/Sultanates and the second part to traditional cultures and ancestry worship. The exhibition consists of big glass cases, which need to represent a rain forest. The visitor had to be on a journey through the museum and upon arrival in the Indonesian exhibition he was faced with a rain forest. This can be a metaphor for the scientific expedition the Dutch had into the interior of the Dutch East Indies. The collections on display mostly derive from the colonial period and therefore add up to the experience of being on a scientific expeditions. In this way the Dutch visitor could actually try to reflect on their own colonial history. The problem is that the message was not clear. The Volkenkunde Museum is a museum which should represent present-day cultures and therefore the visitor would expect to see objects which define Indonesian culture. A museum should reflect on its collections, but it should not go too far. The displayed objects derive from another culture and they have an intrinsic value. The displayed object may not form a 'totalizing' image of Indonesia, because a display of a culture will always be an imagined community. Thus, it will not represent the Indonesian culture one on one, but it can however show objects used in

Indonesian society. For the creation of some variety and not a generalization of the whole Indonesian culture, national, regional and local themes were used to display Indonesian society.

Pieter ter Keurs and Francine Brinkgreve have a different specialization and interest, but these specialization are both connected to Indonesia. Therefore they would choose different themes and different objects. There are as many images of one culture as there are people on this earth and probably even more, because one person can have different ideas. It would thus be wrong to say that an image formed in a museum is wrong, because it is only one image out of many that has been chosen. However after analyzing the exhibition I came to a conclusion that one very important theme was almost missing from the picture: Islam. It is not completely true that Islam is not represented, but it is just no visible: not in the objects nor in the texts. Islam fused with the pre-Islamic cultures (mostly the Hinddu-Buddhist culture). Indonesian Islam is therefore different from the Islam in the Near Eastern region. This is also visible in the material culture. Some objects on display in the first part are Islamic but not visible Islamic. The Hindu-Buddhist culture is present so prominent that the visitor would be more likely to connect the objects to the Hindu-Buddhist culture. Through texts it could be made clear what is Islamic or not. The texts are however not unambiguous. The word Kingdom or King is used in the texts instead of Hindu-Buddhist Monarch or Sultan. The word Islam is used only ones, while the word Hindu-Buddhist is used many times. The image that is being shown in the Indonesian exhibition is one that correlates to the Indonesian collection of the museum and the collecting history. The Indonesian exhibition consists of almost 60,000 objects and only around the 100 objects would be ascribed by the uninitiated visitor as being Islamic. During the colonial period Islam was seen as a superficial layer over a Hindu-Buddhist heart. The Dutch were much more interested in the old authentic cultures and collected therefore objects connected to the Hindu-Buddhist past. Islam was excluded from this picture, because it was not part of the authentic culture. Many people still see Indonesia as a place of magic and they would connect Hindu-Buddhism more with magic than Islam. Sometimes it is forgotten that almost 90% is Islamic. The museum gave the visitors what they expected.

The emphasis that is been placed on the colonial history of Indonesia and the Netherlands can be connected to a nostalgia the Dutch have towards their former colonies. It was a time when the Netherlands had a big and powerful colonial empire, while nowadays we are just a small country (a ‘kikkerlandje’) with little voice in the world. The Volkenkunde Museum owes its big and important collection to the colonial period. The museum can combine the

nostalgia that the Dutch have towards their colonial history with the objects the museum obtained during this period. At the same time it can also emphasize what the public expects to see in an Indonesian exhibition, because this is consistent with the collection the museum owns: an emphasize on the Hindu-Buddhist past instead of the Islam. The museum should get away from the thought of including and writing what people expect. Surprise visitors by showing what they do not know yet. The exhibition should also contain present-day objects to display present-day Indonesia. The museum does not have a lot of present-day Indonesian exhibitions. At least no present-day masterpieces that can compete with older objects. This gap should be filled by purchasing new present-day objects. The problem is that the Indonesian collection is the biggest collection of the museum and therefore it is more likely that objects for smaller collections will be bought. The smaller collections contain more gaps than the Indonesian exhibition, but that does not mean that the Indonesian exhibition does not contain gaps. The biggest gap that should be filled is present-day objects.

§6.4 The Queen Wilhelmina doll collection

The Queen Wilhelmina doll collection goes against the idea of including masterpieces, or as it been called in the renewed permanent exhibition 'icons'. In the previous permanent exhibition masterpieces had to be displayed. Objects got the label masterpieces, because they have an important status in the collection of the museum. Those who defined the masterpieces looked at the collection of the museum and defined rare, interesting, important etc. objects. Those people did not look at the Indonesian culture in order to define masterpieces. This can again be connected to the message of the museum: reflect on the collections. The new theme is "icons". In order to define an icon of a culture, a culture has to be taken in mind not the collection of the museum. The new road the museum took is thus more focused on the other culture than on its own collections. Icons of the Indonesian society are for instance batak, wayang, batik and krisses. Two icons that define the colonial relationship between Indonesia and the Netherlands are Singasari and the Lombok treasures. This time these two items get more attentions than in the previous exhibition. Singasari is more wide spread and a context is created by the inclusion of a photo of the Singasari complex as a background. More objects of the Lombok treasure are included in order to create a 'golden path'. The inclusion of the Queen Wilhelmina doll collection can also be seen as an icon of the Dutch colonization of the Dutch East Indies. The communication department wanted to include the collection because it is thought that it will attract more visitors: the collection is gifted by the Queen and this makes the collection special. Another thought is that dolls in general will attract more visitors.

Francine Brinkgreve did not want to include the doll collection, because the conditions of the clothes of the dolls have really been deteriorated in the last hundred year and a lot of accessories are missing. Another problematic issue is that the dolls are not Indonesian, they were made for Queen Wilhelmina. Francine Brinkgreve wanted to keep the textiles inside of the display case where the dolls had to be placed, but she could not persuade the communication department to keep the textiles. To meet each other in the middle, the two themes were combined. The dolls can illustrate how the textiles are worn.

The doll collection is being displayed in an ethnology museum in which present-day cultures should be displayed. If visitors would see the collection and they only try to perceive a perceptual-emotional experience instead of a cognitive-educational experience the wrong message can be given. Visitors could think, if they do not read the text, that what they are looking at are dolls which should represent the present-day Indonesian population. These dolls were produced in a colonial environment more than a hundred years ago and a lot of things have changed since then. The collection represents an 'old imagined community', not a 'new imagined community'. The old imagined community had to represent natives from the regions the Dutch were stationed. Benedict Anderson spoke of three institutions: the census, the map and the museum (Anderson 1991, 164). The map was used to define the different areas from which the dolls came. The known census was used in order to define the different groups living in the East Indies. The museum is where the collection ended up in the end and where they became museumized (a term used by Benedict Anderson in 1991, 182). The dolls were originally made for the Queen not for the museum. Queen-regents Emma gifted the doll to the museum, because it could add to the knowledge about the Dutch East Indies. When the dolls became part of the museum collection they were museumized.

The doll collection brought the Dutch closer to the population of the Dutch East Indies. The World Exhibition in Amsterdam from 1883 contained models of native houses and real Sumatran and Javanese people living in these houses. The exhibition had to show the diversity of the Dutch East Indies native people. The idea behind this was that the Dutch could be in contact with another culture, through a tangible and lively 'object' from this culture (Bloembergen 2002, 13). The dolls are maybe not alive, but they do represent an imagined community, just like the imagined community created at the World Exhibition. The dolls had to represent people from a variety of regions. Serrurier made the difference between social development of the dolls visible in the exhibition at Kneuterdijk. Through texts he made this explicit, for instance barbarianism next to civilization. Marieke Bloembergen as well as Susan Legêne emphasize that objects connected to the Dutch East Indies brought the Indies closer to

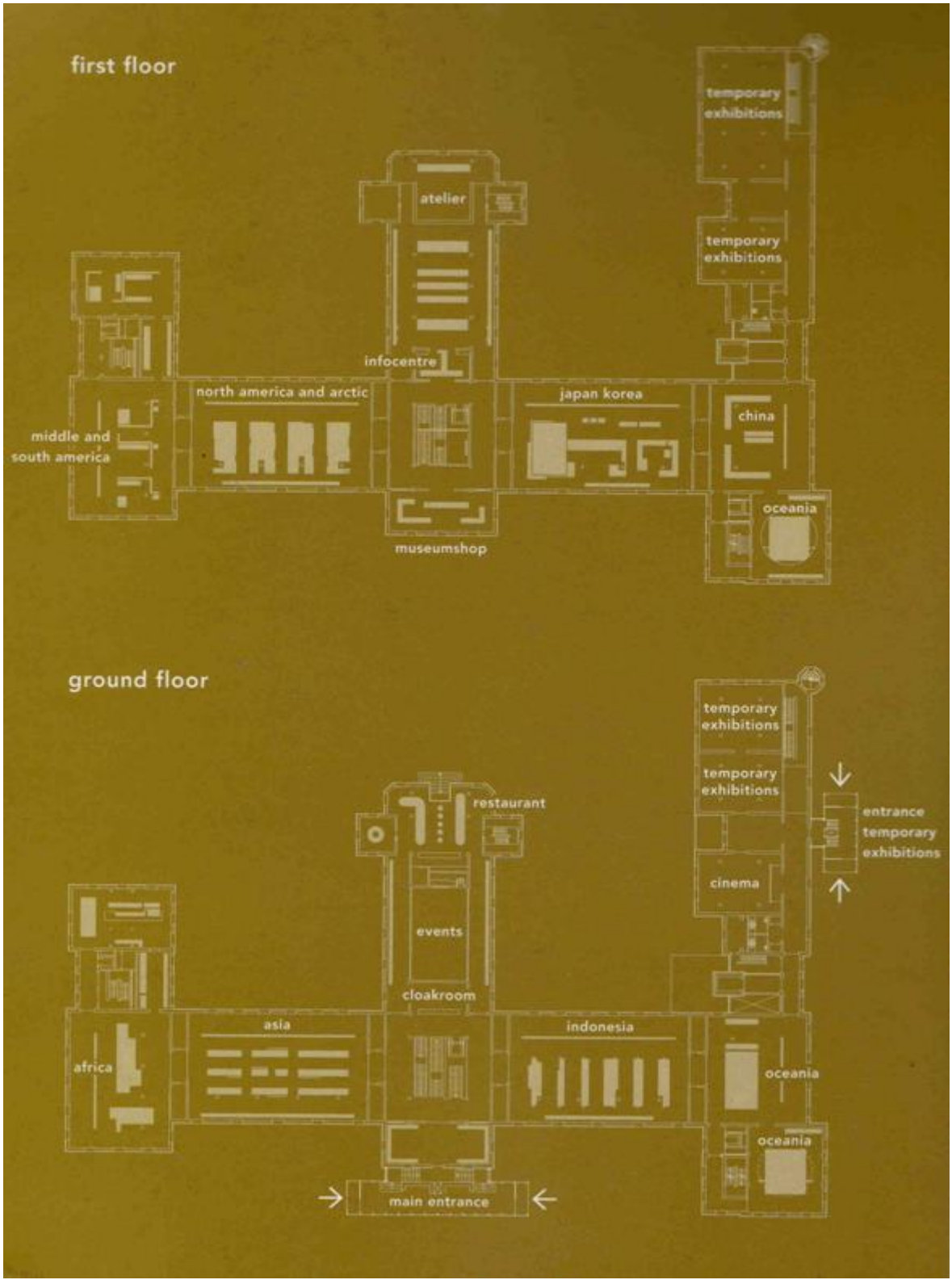
the Dutch, but that at the same time a distance was created. Marieke Bloembergen says that at the world exhibition the distinction between the modern Dutch and the traditional Indonesians was emphasized. Some doll couples (the Dayak and forest couple, see fig. 5.11 and 5.12) also emphasized this distinction. These couples would nowadays be to stereotypical and therefore Francine Brinkgreve and I did not wanted to include them. The Dutch people and the Queen were able to 'see' the population of the Dutch East-Indies with their own eyes, but the real world was still very far away.

The dolls can be compared to the quartet game Susan Legêne describes. Just like the photos on the card, which represent a certain regional group, the Ladies wanted to show the different native groups living in the Dutch East-Indies. Many times a couple was made and this couple stood for one community from a certain region. The differences between the quartet game and the doll collection is that the doll collection consists of 350 dolls. Therefore it shows more regional diversity than the quartet game does, but the dolls still represent an ideal type and a totalizing idea of the population of the Dutch East Indies. The dolls are in a certain way also represented as being timeless. No context was created for them whereby nowadays we could still use these dolls to explain traditional regional attires. Regional attires which nowadays are mostly used during ceremonies or are not even worn anymore. Supposedly when visitors would see the dolls, they would know the whole community from which the dolls supposedly derived. In order to not emphasize this in the current exhibition, the textiles were added. The dolls are therefore not representing a community, but the way textiles are worn.

The museum will always be connected to the colonial history of the Indonesian collection. As long as the museum displays objects that were collected during those times the image that is formed about Indonesia in the museum will always be connected to the shared colonial history. Even in collaboration with a "source community" Indonesian exhibitions cannot be disconnect from the colonial past. This is the case because currently the museum is only working together with Museum Nasional in Jakarta. The Volkenkunde Museum and Museum Nasional have a strong connection, because of their history and their collections. Maybe in other joint exhibition projects were the colonial history or cultural influences do not play a part, there will be no connection with the colonial past. Probably most joint exhibition projects in the future between the Volkenkunde Museum and the Museum Nasional will involve this shared connection. It is difficult to disconnect the Netherlands and Indonesia, because there will always be a connection between the two countries through the shared

colonial history. Maybe if the Volkenkunde Museum starts to work with the local Indonesian source communities (the native people of Indonesia), instead of Museum Nasional, it can be disconnect from the past and focus on the present-day cultures with present-day objects. Other countries have a different history with Indonesia or no shared history at all and this will be visible in exhibitions. The American exhibition “Beyond the Java Sea” is for instance disconnected from Indonesia’s colonial history.

Appendix A. Lay-out of the Volkenkunde Museum 2000-2011



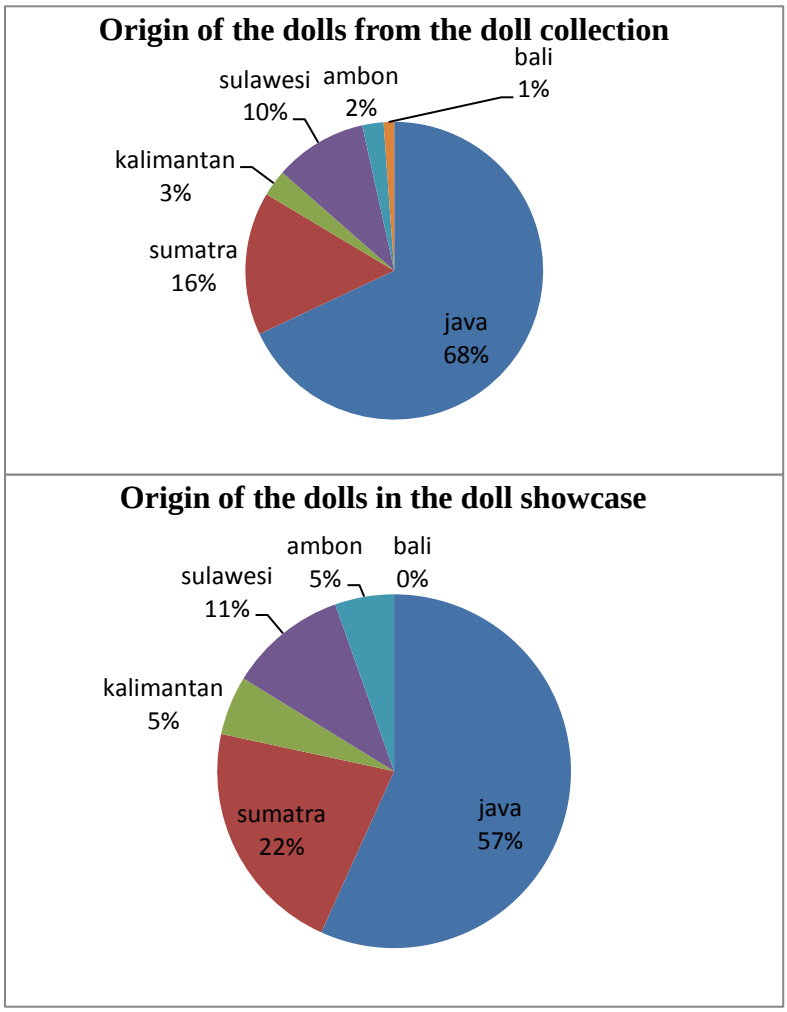
Taken from Gert Staal, 2002.

Appendix B. Wilhelmina dolls

G.L.Tichelman

Gerard Louwrens Tichelman worked at the Colonial Institute (Now the Tropenmuseum) in Amsterdam. He made a book called 'Indonesische bevolkingstypen' (Indonesian population types). He tried to classify the people who were living in the Dutch East-Indies, he says that the Anthropology did not succeeded yet to clarify the different races in the Indian Archipelago (1948, 10). He tries to explain where all the different groups came from; already from the time of the prehistory. The Papua's were odd in those times; the researchers did not know exactly how to classify them (1948, 26). He defines Anthropology as the science who distinct and classifies human races by their physical characteristics (1948, 35). His analysis of the different types is based on physical anthropology and cultural anthropology.

Percentages of the origins of the dolls in the collection and on display:



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