



## Research Report

## Shared Heritage; A Balinese Gift in A Dutch Museum

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### Abstract

Indonesia and The Netherlands share heritage. Collections of Dutch museums consist of looted items, specifically the Lombok treasure and the collections gathered after the *puputan* Badung and Klungkung. Those collections are officially marked as war booty. Other parts of the collections are gifts towards the colonial ruler, a token of appreciation and respect.

Dewa Gede Raka, the King of Gianyar, requested his Kingdom to become a protectorate of the Dutch. He was installed as *stedehouder* in 1900 and with that cooperated close with the Dutch. He gave a gift to the Governor General, Resident and Controleur of the Dutch Indies. Parts of this gift are nowadays in Museum Nasional, and parts are in Museum Volkenkunde. A perfect example of shared heritage. This article zooms in on the historical context of this collection (RV1436) in Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden, The Netherlands.

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### 1. Introduction

The events of *Puputan* Badung in 1906 and *Puputan* Klungkung in 1908 lead to a total Dutch occupation of the island of Bali. Both *puputans* led to a large increase of artefacts in Dutch and Indonesian museums as a result of looting the palaces and even corpses of Balinese royalty after the *puputan* took place.

The Bali treasure (the collection of *Puputan* Badung and *Puputan* Klungkung) is considered war booty, as per meeting in Jakarta 1975 between Dutch and Indonesian government officials. All other items in Dutch museums are considered purchased or gifted [1,2,3].

#### The King of Gianyar

After disputes with the King of Klungkung, in which ultimately the King of Gianyar and his family were placed under lifelong internment by the King of Klungkung in 1885. One of the sons of the King of Klungkung was sent to Gianyar to serve as regent. In 1889 two sons of the Dewa Manggis, the King of Gianyar, escaped their internment and returned to Gianyar.

In 1898, after his father died, Dewa Gede Raka became the new Dewa Manggis, King of Gianyar. Immediately he began negotiating with the Dutch to make Gianyar a protectorate under the Dutch government.

First the Dutch were hesitant to accept Gianyar as a Dutch protectorate, as they were afraid that this would influence the relationship with the Dewa Agung, the King of Klungkung, who was considered the most powerful King in Bali. After a period of negotiating Batavia decided on February 28, 1900 to install Dewa Manggis as *stedehouder* (viceroys) of Gianyar. The Dutch benefitted from this deal as the Dutch territory now was extended from North Bali into South Bali [4].



Figure 1; group portrait of the coronation of Dewa Agung Raka, where he received the coronation name Manggis [5].

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On March 8, 1900 Dewa Gede Raka was installed as *stedehouder* during an 8-day feasting and entertainment at the *Puri Gianyar*. Dewa Agung, the King of Klungkung, immediately protested claiming that Gianyar could not be alienated from the Klungkung kingdom, a claim endorsed by Badung, Bangli and Tabanan. The Dutch replied to the King of Klungkung by simply stating that the order was already carried out and was not to be reversed. The new appointed *controleur*, Schwarz, even occupied a pavilion in the *puri*, in order to be close to the King.

That the *puri* was used as a centre of Dutch power comes clear in a photo depicting the arrival of Dewa Agung, King of Klungkung, at *Puri Gianyar* in 1906. The King came to *Puri Gianyar* to negotiate with the Dutch, which must have felt as an insult for the King of Klungkung [6].



Figure 2; Dewa Agung arriving at Puri Gianyar to negotiate with the Dutch [6].

### Gifts

In 1903 Dewa Gede Raka commented his relationship with the Dutch through presentation of gifts. Interestingly the King made distinction in the three identical gifts by means of the material, ranging from silver to gold. Each gift consisted of 20 objects. The most affluent set was destined for the Governor General, as direct representative of the Dutch crown, in Batavia. The second set of gifts was destined for the *resident* of Bali and Lombok and the third set was meant for the *controleur*, H.J.E.F. Schwarz, who occupied a pavilion in the *puri* [7].

Remarkably, it is noted that the Governor General has kept the ring which was included in every set, so in total 3 rings, and one *pinang* shear with gold handles, originating from 1 set. The sets were divided among the Bataviaasch Genootschap (nowadays Museum Nasional) and the Etnologisch Museum in Leiden (nowadays Museum Volkenkunde) and the Prins Hendrik Museum in Rotterdam (nowadays the Maritime Museum) [7].

The gift consisted among others of:

- A ring
- A *pinang* shear

- Gold boxes for holding tobacco and *gambir*
- Cigar cases
- Silk cloths with gold leaf (*prada*)
- Woven *sirih* boxes

Bringkreve claims that the gift constitutes a whole, a set in which the various items complement and enhance each other, giving the whole special significance. The presents are destined for people that have a higher status than the giver. With that, Dewa Gede Raka acknowledged that even the *controleur* had a higher status than him as *stedehouder* [7].



Figure 3; RV 1436 5 two boxes for *gambir* and tobacco, destined for the Governor General [8].



Figure 4; RV 1436 6 two boxes for *gambir* and tobacco, destined for the *controleur* [9].

On figure 3 the boxes for *gambir* and tobacco are shown destined for the Governor General, where on figure 4 its equivalent destined for the *controleur* is shown. It is easy to see the difference between the materials used.



Figure 5; RV 1436 11, garment [9].

### Conclusion

The origin of items in the collections of Dutch historical and ethnological museums can be debated. Some objects are the result of war booty, other items can be debated and some items are gifted to the Dutch rulers. Indonesia has made claims to objects in Dutch museums. Those claims were occasionally successful, occasionally they were not.

While the author of this article actively advocates and researches for the return of objects as a result of war booty, such as the objects looted after *Puputan* Klungkung, the collection described above is considered to be a good example of shared heritage. Items of the collection are preserved by Museum Nasional in Jakarta as well as by Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden, serving the concept of shared heritage, a common interest in a shared history.



Figure 6; RV 1436 15, garment [10].

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