FIELD COLLECTING AND MUSEUM EXHIBITING:
THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF REPRESENTATION IN MUSEUMS

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Abstract

This thesis consists of an exhibit on Indonesian shadow play figures called wayang kulit presented at the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology (MOA) in May 1991, and a written document which discusses the processes and political issues involved in exhibiting and collecting wayang kulit in Indonesia during the summers of 1989 and 1990.

Wayang kulit are flat, cut-out parchment figures, finely painted and perforated, used to cast shadows on a screen during a night-long performance also called wayang kulit. Some figures, made by well-known Indonesian artists, are also isolated from the context of the performance and appreciated in their own right for their formal qualities.

Establishing criteria for selecting and exhibiting the figures and determining an appropriate terminology were the core issues addressed during the processes of field collecting and museum exhibiting. The necessity of addressing these issues arose from the realization that there are political implications, in each of these aspects, for the representation of the cultures with which museum objects are associated.

The quasi-exclusive presentation, in the European and American literature on the wayang kulit, of the royal court style, has generated detrimental stereotypes concerning Indonesia. This singular portrayal has denied the existence of contemporary varieties of wayang kulit production and has contributed to projecting this art form into the past. To counterract this situation, this thesis investigates the variations in wayang as understood from the artists's point of view, which has not been adequately explored in academic research. Discussions with well-known and recognized wayang artists revealed that wayang vary according to islands, according to cities in
Java, and also according to the artists' preferences, ranging from classical to experimental. This thesis provides examples of these variations and stresses, for instance, that, while rooted in an ancient heritage, *wayang* can also express the actuality of contemporary life; the tensions between conservative and progressive views, collective and personal identities; religious and secular values; popular and elitist concerns; humorous and serious expressions; and Indonesian and Western influences. These contrasted views aimed at showing the multiplex nature of *wayang kulit* and therefore of the Indonesian cultures with which it is associated.

The way the objects are presented in museums also has an impact on their signification. The intention of pluralizing the contexts in which the *wayang kulit* are displayed was to blur such single and detrimental labelling as "craft" or "traditional art". Rather, this thesis conveys the idea that contemporary *wayang kulit* can be appreciated as art at the same time that they may be functional. Presenting *wayang kulit* as art is necessary if the continuing marginalization of Indonesian art within the larger world of contemporary art is to be avoided. On the other hand, in order to establish a bridge between Indonesian and other cultures, it is also essential to provide an understanding of the context in which *wayang* takes place, including the context and meaning of the performance, the rationale underlying its iconography, the values and world views *wayang kulit* synthesizes and the range of characters and stories it utilizes.

To create a reciprocal relation, the power of the words used in evoking the lived and thought experiences of non-Western societies could not be neglected. This thesis presents a reflection on the choice of the terminology which aimed at providing a dignified status to *wayang*. 
This thesis explores, therefore, means of challenging hierarchical relations between cultures and promotes the use of images and metaphors that museum visitors can relate to as well as the members of the original culture in order to promote the ideal of cross-cultural dialogue.
Field Collecting and Museum Exhibiting:
The Political Implications of Representation in Museums

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Chapter One. Introduction

It has been argued that field collecting (Schlereth, 1984) and exhibiting in museums (i.e. Clifford, 1985; Dominguez, 1987; Parezo, 1988) are not neutral acts but involve interpretation of what is relevant to "represent" categories of objects. The interpretation begins in the selection process itself when the collector in the field discriminates between what is valid for representation and what is not, and later when the curator decides which of the collected pieces should be exhibited. These selections yield representations of categories of objects (e.g. the masks of the Northwest Coast) and, more important, of the human cultures with which they are associated (e.g. First Nations: Haida, Kwakiutl, etc.). "Anthropologists sit in judgment about what constitutes a proper artefact, a proper price, a proper potlatch and, by implication, a proper Indian" (Ames, 1986: 57). Scholars affiliated with post-modernist thinking (Clifford and Dominguez among others) have stressed how this kind of representation might have political implications (that is in establishing relations of power, hierarchy and status) in creating or perpetuating images of "others" (the members of cultures outside Western mainstream societies, the "others" in relation to this culture). Museums, for instance, have been criticized for concentrating on the past of non-Western societies in an effort to symbolize vanished moments of glory experienced by these cultures before they were engulfed by the modern world. One of the results of this selection process was to freeze these societies in the past and to present them as if they were disappearing or already gone, thereby denying their contemporary lived experience. As Blundell has stressed:
The contemporary cultures of others are, however, not only distorted with such representations, but they are often devalued by reference to their own so-called "authentic" but "dying" forms. In reality, critics argue, cultures rarely die as such; instead they undergo transformations that involve both accommodations and resistance. By freezing a people in time, their own history of such transformations and the true nature of their contemporary lives are ignored (Blundell, 1988: 7).

Furthermore, a selection repeatedly favouring objects from the past to stand for non-Western cultures while contemporary objects are chosen mostly for Western art production might very well be evidence of our ethnocentrism. This perception of our own "superiority" could in fact be implicit in this selection (not necessarily conscious) implying that the present and the future exist nowhere else than in our society. Museums would therefore promote our society to the detriment of others.

Thus arises the problem of how non-Western cultures will be represented to Western society, in museums.

... our awareness of our active role in "creating"/constructing the people and objects we tend to believe we are just studying does not -- cannot -- make the people we objectify or the "objects" we materialize simply GO AWAY. Awareness cannot by itself ever resolve the question of HOW to relate to, signify, employ, and dispose of tangible things associated with human culture(s), just like it cannot by itself ever resolve the question of how to relate to or what to say about people we construct as Other (Dominguez, 1988:2).

I have been concerned with the issue of representation since these two museum methods, field collecting and exhibiting, have been used in the acquisition of 21 wayang kulit for the Museum of Anthropology (MOA) at the University of British Columbia, as part of my Master's program. I have made two trips in Indonesia to acquire this collection during the summers of 1989 and 1990. The wayang kulit were purchased with the intention of
displaying them in an exhibit at MOA which I curated in May 1991 entitled *Wayang: From the Gods to Bart Simpson*.

*Wayang kulit* are flat, cut-out parchment figures, made of water buffalo skin which are finely perforated, gilded and intricately painted and supported by water buffalo horn handles. They are used to cast large shadows on a screen during a night-long performance also called *wayang kulit*. Although *wayang kulit* designates what has been called in English "shadow play", the shadows are of secondary importance to the figures themselves, as I will explain in this text.

The necessity of answering this crucial question therefore emerged in my work: considering the political implications of both these museum practices, how can field collecting and museum exhibiting be used to represent the contemporary production of Javanese *wayang kulit*?

In order to provide an answer to this question, the second chapter delimits those aspects of the vast and central problem of representation in anthropology and museums which this research has dealt with, by presenting criticisms on representational practices in museums of anthropology. A broad outline of the alternative strategies I favoured during my field collecting in Indonesia and the exhibit I organized at MOA will be discussed.

The third chapter develops at greater length the application of the principles discussed in the second chapter, to field collecting. It also discusses the original reasons for deciding to collect *wayang kulit*, how the knowledge of *wayang kulit* was gained, how the pieces were collected, who the main informants were, and finally, what was purchased.

The collection methods resulted from an awareness of abuses of power that had marked collecting in the past (Cole, 1985; Nason, 1981; Price, 1989). Ethical guidelines for collectors where the respect of other cultures was not
the priority had led to a mistrust of museum collectors and to the delicate question of repatriation of objects. These are issues that museums must now address.

Deciding what to collect was determined by the perspective I favoured during my research: the artist's point of view. This vantage point has not been adequately explored in academic research on wayang kulit. Instead, most studies of wayang kulit have investigated the point of view of the dalang, or puppeteer, and have thereby contributed to an understanding of the wayang kulit primarily as a performance. In Indonesia, however, some figures by well-known artists are also isolated from the context of the performance and appreciated in their own right for their formal qualities. The artists whom I consulted discussed, for instance, the particularities of their own wayang style and those of their city and have contrasted them with others artists' and cities' productions. Accordingly, my research was concerned with the aesthetics of the figures. It was therefore appropriate to focus on the artist's point of view, allowing access to a more detailed knowledge of the figures and their iconography.

The American and European literature on wayang mainly describes the royal court-derived style referred to by the term "traditional" (Schechner, 1990). My observations in Indonesia indicated that this style was only emulated by a small portion of the wayang producers. The artist-informants with whom I discussed wayang stressed that this style was considered a rather obsolete form. Collecting only classical style figures would inevitably project the production of wayang into the past (with all the implications mentioned earlier). The main problem in my field collecting was therefore to depart from the court-derived style and to find alternatives which would reflect the variety of the contemporary wayang kulit production.
The fourth and fifth chapters discuss the exhibit itself, whose text and photographs have been put together in Addendum 3. The fourth chapter concentrates on the description and the principles underlying the conception of the showcase which presents six versions of the same character, Betara Guru, the most prominent among the Gods of the wayang world. These representations were chosen with the objective of highlighting the variations of style in Indonesia. These variations are discussed in Chapter Four. The fifth chapter describes the photo-exhibit accompanying the showcase which consists of five parts presenting a variety of wayang figures and performances, and particularly illustrating two poles: the classical and experimental wayang.

These chapters present the methods by which I organized the exhibit and synthesized the data obtained from my field collecting concerning the performances, the repertoire, the iconography, and the variations of style in wayang kulit. I discuss the reasons which motivated the display as well as the display's underlying principles. The ultimate aim of the exhibit was twofold. First, I wanted to search for a representation which would be non-stereotypical through the presentation of a large spectrum of works. Secondly, I wanted to promote an appreciation of the high quality and expressiveness of the selected wayang pieces and to show that this genre can also be appreciated as art while contextualized in its production and performance environments.

Finally the essay ends with a recapitulation of my approach to the collection of wayang kulit in Indonesia and their display in the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia.
Chapter Two. Theoretical Frame for Field Collecting and Exhibiting in Museums

Issues of representation, ethnographic authority, appropriation, authenticity and "otherness" are themes which have been stressed regarding museums, the discipline of anthropology and beyond, within the range of post-modernist critical thinking. Representation is central for an anthropology museum if not its *raison d'être* (Dominguez, 1988:1). Post-modernist critiques have raised crucial issues relevant to this thesis (discussed in Clifford, 1988; Dominguez, 1987; Errington, n.d.; Parezo, 1988).

The first of these issues which will be discussed concerns the reasons underlying the perceived need to represent "others", such as the problematic search to rescue "disappearing societies". Evolutionary conceptualizations (these societies disappear while ours stay alive and continually improve, suggesting an evolution from their societies to ours) and hierarchical relations are necessarily indissociable.

The second theme highlights the forms used in museums to represent "others". The danger in creating stereotypes resulting from the pretension of holism through the selection of a single category of objects (i.e. the "traditional") and from the search for "authentic" objects is first identified. I then point out that the ways in which the pieces are presented in museums affect the meaning the pieces will have for visitors. Two main modes of museum presentation are discussed: the contextualist and the formalist perspective. In order to break away from a single portrayal of the Indonesian art scene, I have suggested a pluralist perspective in the choice of the objects and a pluralization of the contexts used to show them.
The chapter ends with a reflection on the implications of the selection of the objects and the labels used to categorize them (i.e. art, artefact, craft, etc.). To break with the detrimental etiquette of "traditional art" which has been affixed to wayang kulit and which has contributed to downplaying its position in the contemporary art scene, this last section explores means of valourizing wayang by showing the dynamism of this art form, its multiple forms, the creativity of its artists and by stressing the fact that wayang is contemporary with Western art forms.

1.0 Reasons for Representation

According to Dominguez, the "salvage paradigm" lies at the heart of most forms and practices of representation.

Salvaging what and for whom? When we assert the need to salvage, rescue, save, preserve a series of objects or forms, we announce our fear of its destruction, our inability to trust others to take appropriate action and our sense of entitlement over the fate of the objects (1987: 131).

The need to collect and display in order to salvage from destruction, to rescue objects and history, affirms our power and control over the "other". Extracted from their social contexts, these objects would be used in a new system of meaning "to confirm the knowledge and taste of a possessive Western subjectivity" (Clifford, 1985: 244). By locating "others", we situate ourselves. This representation is nevertheless necessarily asymmetrical.

The perception of otherness is not just one of difference but inherently one of hierarchy. Whom do we identify as others? Not those we identify with, but those we believe inferior or
superior to us, or potentially subservient or dominant. Others are significant to us, even if our rhetoric seeks to deny that significance, because it is through our construction of them precisely as significant others that we situate ourselves. ... But it is not just that otherness invites forms of representation that are inherently appropriative; otherness itself implies representation. The other is a representation (Dominguez, 1987: 131-132).

If the idea of otherness necessarily involves hierarchy and representation, and if both invite forms of appropriation, is self-representation the only viable option? I do not think so, but the critique of the "representation of others" certainly encourages a break with the binary relation: our representing them, our speaking for them, them being represented and being spoken for. It challenges the unique authority, rights and responsibilities that museums have taken to represent others. Instead there arises the need to search for new forms where the authority would be shared in order to transcend the salvage paradigm. The same applies to anthropology: "It becomes necessary to conceive ethnography [or representation in museums], not as the experience and interpretation of a circumscribed "other" reality, but rather as a constructive negotiation involving at least two, and usually more, conscious, politically significant subjects" (Clifford, 1983: 133). It is therefore necessary to seek a sharing of the task of representation in museums in order to avoid "speaking for" or "speaking about"; to search for ways to reach the ideal of "speaking with". I believe that such a dialogic or polyphonic (or polyvocal1) process can take

1 See Tyler in Clifford (1986: 126-127). Dialogue is opposed to the monologue and "emphasizes the cooperative and collaborative nature of the ethnographic situation in contrast to the ideology of the transcendental observer". Polyvocality (the expression of many voices) or "Polyphony is a means of perspectival relativity and is not just an evasion of authorial responsibility or a guilty excess of democracy, though, as Vico might say, it articulates best with that social form, and it does correspond with the realities of fieldwork in places sensitive to the issue of power as symbolized in the subject-object relationship between he who represents and she who is represented".
place when the authority over the representation is not only in the hands of one anthropologist but also in those of the "informants", who become "speaking subjects". (Writing Culture [1986], presents some experiments utilizing new writing conventions to achieve this objective.) In these views, informants are not passive objects but actively decide how they want to be represented, their voices becoming as important as the voice of the anthropologist. Furthermore such a type of exchange involves also a bi- or multi-directional exchange of knowledge. Not one exclusively informing the other, but both exchanging knowledge and lived experiences.

1.1 Reciprocity and symmetry

The experimental project of collecting wayang kulit in Indonesia and displaying them in an exhibit was conceived with the idea of exploring the use of alternative strategies to put in place a representation which would be reciprocal and symmetrical. But in order to find an appropriate form, it is first necessary to proceed to a brief examination of practices which have sustained hierarchical relations and the devaluation of non-Western cultures.
2.0 Forms of Representation

A critique of the pretentious notion that one should seek to synthesize a culture is the principle which has informed the origin and the development of my field collecting and exhibit. This notion, still used in anthropology museums, is founded on "[t]he ideal of ethnography [to] present ... a complete description of a culture" (in the *Guide to Field Collecting of Ethnographic Specimens* by Sturtevant, 1977:2, the only detailed guide I could find on field collecting).

This ideal of cultural synthesis is also linked to the search for "the authentic". The question of authenticity, a much-debated topic, has been discussed by Clifford (1985), Dominguez (1988) and Errington (n.d.) among others. Rubin (1984:76 fn 41) summarizes the dilemma:

The question of "authenticity" is too complicated to deal with here at length, but the following formula is useful: An authentic object is one created by an artist for his own people and used for traditional purposes. Thus, works made by African or Oceanic artists for sale to outsiders such as sailors, colonials, or ethnologists would be defined as inauthentic. The problem begins when and if a question can be raised -- because of the alteration of tribal life under the pressure of modern technology of Western social, political, and religious forms -- as to the continuing integrity of the tradition itself.

Beneath the idea of authenticity lies the idea of the purity of a tradition which can be reconstructed as something ordered, integrated and timeless. As Clifford has stressed (1985:242), the search for authenticity "has as much to do with an inventive present as with a past, its objectification, preservation, or revival". This idea of authenticity is much contested because it is restrictive, simplistic and often oriented toward the past. It also implies that contact (particularly with the West) contaminates and spoils the original quality,
which goes back again to the "salvage paradigm" discussed earlier and to the appeal of the so-called "pristine" culture. Parezo (1988:16) has stressed the need to go beyond this view and show how contact does not necessarily pollute the non-Western culture although it may create some change. In fact, contact does not necessarily imply degeneration but also may become a catalyst for innovation by creating interesting syntheses with previous cultural elements. In the exhibit, I have shown, for instance, that artists such as Heri Dono are influenced by icons of Western culture, but these forms are not merely copied. They are, rather, fused with Indonesian elements to produce original, and still Javanese-rooted wayang.

The illusion of holism, created by the desire for authenticity and by the ideal of collecting series of objects which could reconstruct the reality of non-Western cultures in the past, inevitably produces the problem of stereotyping cultures. Museums have been criticized for this type of presentation since it denies the complexities, diversity, ambiguities and changeability of cultures.

She [Susan Stewart] shows how collecting -- and most notably the museum -- creates the illusion of adequate representation of a world by first cutting objects out of specific contexts (whether cultural, historical, or intersubjective) and making them "stand for" abstract wholes -- a "Bambara mask," for example, becoming a metonym for Bambara culture (Clifford, 1985: 239).
2.1 A multiplex\textsuperscript{2} view of culture

I have been particularly concerned with the critique concerning the possibility of authentic objects standing for a whole culture. The literature on Javanese \textit{wayang kulit} led me to believe that such a pure, quintessential, authentic \textit{wayang kulit} could be found in the style which has flourished in the royal courts. During my first visit to Indonesia, I realized the absurdity of reducing the richness of \textit{wayang} expressions to a single style -- the classical one -- held as "the" authentic \textit{wayang} by the American and European scholars whose works I have consulted.

To support my collecting, I searched for alternative views of culture to those promoting a culture as a whole, as something which can be reconstructed, the view implicit in the structural-functionalist assumption:

"It is a truism of anthropology that cultures are integrated, that is, that various cultural traits are interrelated, functionally interdependent to varying degrees" (Sturtevant, 1977:1). In contrast, Burridge (1979: 31) mentions:

"The intellectual aspiration to the elegance of order as well as its repugnance for a disorderly mysterium and the flux of events are overcome in the perception that truth lies closer to the currently unordered than to the currently ordered".

In agreement with Burridge, I favoured a vision of the anthropological concept of culture which would be more flexible, open to the "unorderliness" of culture and taking into account its multiple sides with its ambiguities and contradictions. This view of culture has been suggested by the post-

\textsuperscript{2} "Manifold, multiple"; "being or relating to a system of transmitting several messages simultaneously on the same circuit or channel" (Webster's, 1981: 750). An appreciated suggestion from Virginia Appell.
modernist\textsuperscript{3} collective (and used by anthropologist such as Paul Rabinow) who participated in the collection of essays entitled \textit{Writing Culture} [1986]). In this thesis, the analogy for culture is a "collage" in which each feature does not necessarily have to make sense, or to be logically connected to the whole. Similarly, noting the diverse leadership in the production of this art form (i.e. Sukasman for experimental style, Sagio for Yogyanese court style, Bambang Suwarno for the Academy of Art of Solo style, etc.), I sought to find a collecting strategy for the collection and display which would reflect, or at least suggest, the multiplicity of existing figure styles. This is why I did not search for "the" best form of \textit{wayang} which could synthesize the variety of \textit{wayang} (a mistake I made in my first field collecting) but rather forms which would show the diversity and the contrast in \textit{wayang} production. The collection strategy (which is not necessarily new, it has been used also for the study of kinship according to Dr. Ames, personal communication) was to present poles or extremes in the production of \textit{wayang} instead of the "average" or "representative" \textit{wayang}. Confronted by two or more completely different images of the same category of object, the visitor is offered a decentralized view of \textit{wayang}. This collecting strategy could therefore considerably reduce the risk of presenting a singular vision and suggests a larger range without the need to show many pieces.

Similarly, the presentation of "Indonesian cultures" would not be reduced to a single portrayal, instead, there would be multiple views, with the suggestion that many more exist. In order that these portrayals attain some level of representativity, I searched for examples which would reflect the

\textsuperscript{3} It is necessary to stress that there is no consensus among these authors on the appellation. Some even claim to belong to "modernism". Furthermore, it is necessary to keep in mind that this group is characterized by pluralism and eclecticism, and is therefore not a monolithic group.
variations in *wayang kulit* configurations discussed by my artist-informants (see Chapter Four section 3.0).

2.2 Pluralizing contexts

Along with the necessity of showing a variety of pieces to suggest a multiplex view of Indonesian cultures, there arose the need to pluralize the contexts in which the figures become meaningful. By "context" I do not mean only the original context since museums are an important context where signification emerges. "The museum, and the museum exhibit, must ... be considered as one of the important contexts through which we come to an understanding of the works of people from other cultures" (Welsh, 1988:3).

In fact, scholars such as Vogel (1988:11) have stressed how the environment surrounding the pieces affected their reading: "Most visitors are unaware of the degree to which their experience of any art in a museum is conditioned by the way [the exhibit] is installed". The colour of the wall, the type of lighting and rugs are not neutral. Duncan (1980) has used the term "iconographic program" to discuss how the museum space and collection function, stressing the ideological role played by the museum context:

What in our approach appears as a structured ritual space -- an ideologically active environment -- usually remains invisible and is experienced only as a transparent medium through which art can be viewed objectively and without distraction (Duncan, 1980: 451).

Thus, the meaning of the objects arises not only from its intrinsic characteristics but also from what surrounds it, the context in which the
object is placed and the understanding and preconceptions which people bring to what is being presented.

Two ways of presenting objects have traditionally dominated museums: the contextualist and the formalist perspective\(^4\). In the contextualist\(^5\) approach of organizing displays used by modern anthropological museums (i.e. the Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria; the Harvard Peabody Museum in Boston; the American Museum of Natural History in Washington and the Tropen Museum in Amsterdam) the exhibited objects are placed in a designed setting supposedly simulating the original cultural context. In this artificial context the object is shown as an "artefact" among many others, that is, as an object with stress on its meaning within the original context and on its role in explaining the culture presented.

For most displays presenting objects as *ethnography* [or artefact], information about technical, social, and religious functions is elaborated, thus erasing the notion that the aesthetic quality of the work is able to "speak for itself"-- or rather, erasing the entire notion that the object possesses any aesthetic quality worthy of transmission. In this mode of presentation, the viewer is invited to form an understanding of the object on the basis of the explanatory text rather than to respond through a perceptual-emotional absorption of its formal qualities (Price, 1989: 83).

The object is not valued for its own sake but in relation to the whole context. The concern here (in the contextualist approach) is with the "normal", the "representative". The value of the objects and the display is measured in terms of how well it evokes the culture being represented and adds to its understanding.

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4 See Clifford, 1990, for examples outside this western dominant "art-culture system". He provides the example of two "tribal" institutions: the U'mista Center and the Quadra Island Museum.

The second perspective— the formalist one— has traditionally been associated with art museums. The object is presented in a context exalting its visual qualities and showing it as "art" (according to the Western-centred view of "art for its own sake" — although, as I stress below, my understanding of the term is extended to include functional aesthetic objects), promoting its contemplation (instead of the understanding of its utility in the original context), and isolating it from its surroundings so as to focus on the formal qualities of the object. Price (1989: 83) mentions that this type of display is "conceptualized first and foremost as a perceptual-emotional experience, not a cognitive-educational one". Objects are presented in isolation, in an environment using neutral colours which encourage the observer to view the object as something precious and unique (i.e. the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Museum of Modern Art in New York). This approach highlights the unique quality of the pieces instead of their representative or typical character.

The formalist perspective works in the opposite direction to the contextualist perspective: instead of allowing a movement from the object to the simulated cultural context, the eye is directed from the neutral, ideally invisible surroundings, to the object. Therefore, while the focus of the contextualist perspective is the whole, for the formalist one, it is the part, the object. Within this perspective there have also been differences in the ways in which Western and non-Western art have been presented, with Western art presented by named individuals in historical context, while the identity of the artist and the dating of the pieces has often been absent for non-Western art.

The differences mentioned above between formalist and contextualist perspectives in the display of objects, traditionally associated with art and
anthropology museums have nevertheless recently decreased as Vogel states (1988:13):

During the four or five decades that art museums have been dealing with ethnographic art, however, the separation between the anthropological and the art historical approaches has narrowed. Anthropologists are increasingly sensitive to the aesthetic dimension of the objects in their care, as art historians have become alive to the vast amount of anthropological information that they can use to understand art.

The UBC Museum of Anthropology provides an example of how traditional views on anthropological museums have changed. This museum expresses the view that objects can be displayed "in ways that emphasize their visual qualities, treating them as works of fine art" (as mentioned in the printed Museum guide). Using the formalist approach, this museum stresses that form can also become more important than context. Furthermore, it also stresses that "tribal works are part of an ongoing, dynamic tradition. The museum displays its works of 'art' as part of an inventive process, not as treasures salvaged from a vanished past" (Clifford, 1990: 10).

In the exhibit I curated on wayang, there is not one authoritarian model which is promoted but a mixture of the traditional contextualist and formalist perspectives of displaying objects. Ideally, I would also have liked to have had a third, more reflexive, perspective to make explicit for the visitors the particular points of view shown in the exhibit by suggesting a distance and reflection on the ways the objects are displayed. This perspective

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6 It is striking to realize that the difference between the arts and science is relatively new (from the end of the 18th century but dominating only by the end of the 19th century). Before this period: "most sciences were arts; the modern distinction between science and art, as contrasted areas of human skill and effort, with fundamentally different methods and purposes, dates effectively from mC 19" (Williams, 1976: 34).

7 I make no pretence of being original here. For instance, the MOA's Visible Storage presents objects as artefacts or specimens with whatever information is available on their origin and use. The synthesist perspective parallels the dominant aestheticizing approach to the display of objects.
has been used in the "Art/Artifact" exhibit (1988) at the Center for African Art in New York. To attain a multiplex perspective, it would have been ideal to have worked in collaboration with specialists in the anthropology of art, on wayang kulit and related disciplines.

Interdisciplinary work, so much discussed these days, is not about confronting already constituted disciplines (none of which, in fact, is willing to let itself go). To do something interdisciplinary it's not enough to choose a "subject" (a theme) and gather around it two or three sciences. Interdisciplinarity consists in creating a new object that belongs to no one (Roland Barthes quoted in Clifford, 1986: 1).

By multiplying the contexts in which the objects are presented, the intention was to blur the single label "art" or "artefact", suggesting that the same object can be both, and to counteract the possibility of stereotyping and under-appreciating of non-Western objects. As Jacknis and Dominguez suggest, the role of anthropologists has been expanded:

Jacknis and Dominguez are suggesting that anthropologists need not limit themselves to studying the first or original meaning of the objects (that is, to the makers and first users) ... They can, additionally, explore the evolution of meaning over object careers and the history of the institutional mechanisms that produce and reproduce those meanings (Ames 1989:7).

These authors have shown that understanding objects solely in their cultural context is not sufficient. They have shown that we need to move away from static conceptions of context and to present objects from the multiple perspectives by which they can be understood.

In order to work out a satisfying strategy of presentation, it was necessary to first be aware of the critiques of the formalist and contextualist approaches.
The main critique of the formalist perspective in museums of anthropology lies in the accusation that they present objects in a different function than in their original context and exhibit them according to a Western conception of art, that is to be looked at for its own sake (aesthetic appropriation). Minimal explanation is often used in such a display, thus preventing the visitor from understanding how the pieces are used in their original context and how the pieces are perceived according to those who made and use them. Furthermore, it can be argued that the tensions and the relations of power between cultures can be ignored in order to promote a unifying universal element: that of "beauty".

The contextualist perspective of displaying the object, on the other hand, has been criticized on the basis that it neglects the role of the museum setting in the creation of meanings. For instance, the kinds of galleries, the lighting, the shape of the building, the type of person working in the museum, the visitors, also contributes to the overall meaning of the exhibit. Artefacts cannot retain their original cultural meanings, because of the surroundings and because of the different cultural knowledge of the visitors. Utilizing only this perspective for museum displays can therefore be misleading, in that it creates the illusion of realism. It has also been criticized for the way it can act to freeze people in an apparently timeless presentation (particularly with the diorama and the life group mode of display where people seem to be frozen for eternity in their traditional activities even though in reality those might have changed to adapt to contemporary reality and contact with alien cultures).

The presentation of objects solely as "artefacts" (in which the function, meaning and relation to its original context are emphasized) instead of "art"
(in which the esthetic is exalted) has been sustained by such rationales as the one expressed by Maquet (1986: 65) that these objects are made out in our society to be art "for us... They were not meant to be art objects by destination [the distinction between art by intention and by appropriation is from Malraux (1949) Museum Without Walls]." Maquet privileges the term "aesthetic" over "artistic", because according to him, speaking of aesthetic has a more universal application, while the use of "art" applies mainly to Western capitalist societies. Often quoted differences between Western and non-Western art are synthesized in an introductory anthropology text book (Rosman and Rubel, 1989: 222):

Only in the Western world is art produced for art's sake, to be hung in museums and galleries or to be performed in concerts before large audiences. In the societies that anthropologists typically study, art is imbedded [sic] in the culture. It is actively used in the performance of ceremony and ritual, and the meanings the art is communicating relate to the meaning of the ritual and the mythology associated with it.

Three considerations have to be brought to such a statement. First, it denies the function played by art in our society of reproducing a social order

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8 Traditionally the label art has been applied to painting, sculpture, drawing and etching (see Williams, 1976: 33; Maquet, 1979: 9) even though in its modern usage it is broadly defined, and includes textiles, body painting, and happenings among other things. Errington (n.d.) provides an interesting guideline on how objects become "art" in our societies. She mentions, for instance, how the object must be "portable", "durable" and "palpable". It must also have history and be made to be contemplated. Maquet (1979:9) also stresses: "In our society a first criterion, crude but fairly accurate, of art is access to the art market. Objects belonging to that network are art objects". Haberland (1986: 118) mentions how the identity of the artist is often a decisive factor as well as the material in which the object is made: it must be noble. Faris (1988) opens an interesting debate when she asks if the fishing net exhibited at the "Center for African Art"(in 1988) is a work of modern art or not.

For the purpose of cross-cultural application these Western rooted conceptions of the term have to be broadened. The first component of art is the purely aesthetic (Hatcher, 1985: 9). Art can also be seen as "result[ing] from the application of knowledge and skill to a particular medium delimited by the canons of taste held as artistic in a culture" (Dark, 1978: 36). I use this term in its large and encompassing meaning in order to avoid the hierarchical nuances involved in the distinction between "high art", "craft", traditional art", "folk art", etc.
(Bourdieu, 1979). Secondly, it implies that there is a pure society exempt from contact with Western views and values concerning art; and thirdly, it neglects to consider the political implications of labeling objects in categories such as "aesthetic" instead of the highly valued one "art". It is, for instance, striking to note how Sukasman, a well-known Javanese experimental artist, wrote on the "Aspects of the Fine Arts in Wayang Kulit and its Development" (n.d.). One of the aims of the article is to show how wayang can also be considered a "modern art". He criticizes Western scholars who perceive wayang "merely as an ornament" and stresses that it is also a form of expression. Therefore, it seems that there is an awareness on the part of the Javanese themselves of the political implications of the ways their art form is identified and discussed in the literature.

Furthermore, Haberland has shown that presenting objects only for the meaning they hold in their context has an impact on how the objects will be perceived by the museum visitors: "The effect on the public of this lack of formal attention to the art of non-literate peoples [I believe it could be applied also for non-Western art at large] is to invalidate it as art" (1986:130). In fact, it is important to be aware that the categories used in museums are given value and interpreted in a Western context.

Taking into account these critiques I have presented, I formulate the problem of the display I curated at MOA in these terms (borrowing from Duffek, 1989): how can an anthropology museum present wayang kulit figures without classifying them in purely ethnological terms, that is, only for their functions and meaning in their original context, and thereby further entrenching the marginal position Indonesian art holds within the larger world of contemporary art?
The solution I have found consists first in showing that the formal qualities of *wayang kulit* can be shown in a museum exhibit, as is the case in their context of origin and performance. During the performance people will sit on the same side as the *dalang* allowing them to see the figures. The importance of the figures therefore is not only in the shadows they produce. Formal attention to the pieces is also found in Indonesia (which might be linked with the relatively recent introduction of museums in Indonesia and the development of individualistic art for its own sake in the academy, i.e., painting and sculpture): there are exhibits which are put together in Java promoting observation of the iconographic characteristics of the figures and appreciation of their formal qualities (i.e.: review of exhibits in Jakarta Post, Sept. 1988; pamphlet "*Pameran dan pergelaran wayang*", exhibit on *wayang* in Solo, 1989). The figures are isolated from the original context of the performance, to be looked at for their visual qualities. This corresponds to the way I have shown the pieces particularly in the showcase. It might also have been useful to provide lesser quality *wayang* to emphasize the particularly high quality of the pieces presented in the display. Lack of time and funds prevented the creation of a larger exhibit which could have further elaborated the context.

Secondly, I have accompanied the *wayang kulit* with photographs of the figures, highlighting the high formal quality of the pieces, with explanations of the characters being represented and information on the performances in which the figures are used. Providing this contextual information could therefore intensify the experience of the visitor. To strengthen the contextualisation of *wayang*, I have also provided information on the repertoire of the figures and stories; on the person who manipulates the figures; on the range of figures and on contrasting forms, in order to put
what is seen into perspective. Finally, using data describing the context also allowed me to show that this art form is continually changing and that the *wayang* genre can take multiple forms.

By combining the two perspectives of museum display described in this section, the formalist and the contextualist, I have tried to convey what Duffek has clearly expressed (1989:3): "Contemporary works can indeed be appreciated as art at the same time that they may be functional".
3.0 Representational Categories

It follows from the previous chapter that the way the pieces are displayed is directly linked with the categories of objects which have been selected to be displayed. In this section, I will discuss the importance of selecting a variety of *wayang kulit*. I also discuss the detrimental use of labels such as "traditional art". In order to present a more valorizing view of *wayang*, and to show its dynamism, creativity and contemporaneity, I have dated the pieces, named the artists and purchased contemporary figures.

3.1 Choosing a variety of *wayang kulit*

I have alluded earlier to the contextualist and formalist perspectives on displaying objects in museums. Haberland (1986: 118), discussing Navajo blankets, describes the kinds of collections which illustrate the differences between the rationales underlying the collections of anthropology museums and of art museums.

These collections are almost exclusively ethnological, not art oriented, and there is a critical difference between the two. When ethnologists and anthropologists collect representative examples of a given object, their concern is with the "normal" product, not with artistic masterworks. The telling object is one that is considered to be, whether rightly or wrongly, average, not outstanding or perfect. Contrariwise, art museums collect—or at least exhibit—only objects of the best quality, the products of established or promising artists. Until recently, anthropologists, rather than art connoisseurs, have dictated importance within non-European art. The result is that even poorly made Navajo rugs and blankets from the turn of the century are not only exhibited but are sold dearly at auctions to museums and collectors alike. The same is true of all North American Indian works of art, with the exception of the most modern ones. Poorly executed or conceived European paintings of the same
period, on the other hand, scarcely sell, since no museum and few collectors will buy them. Apparently, ethnologists are not yet discriminating enough with regard to quality and artistic value.

Since the Museum of Anthropology at UBC already had average quality pieces, it was appropriate to diversify the way the wayang kulit could be seen by purchasing a collection which would highlight the formal qualities of the pieces. This would allow one to see the figures not only for their functional use but also for their artistic component.

Furthermore, in an effort to challenge the idea of "authentic wayang" (see Section 2.0) I purchased examples of tourist wayang or what Welsh (1988:2) describes as the "Don't keep" museum category:

[Tourist art] corresponded with other kind of evaluative comments recorded from the specialists such as "terrible," "fake," and "junk" [for example, "tribal art", "tourist art", "craft"] ... While these pieces may not have reflected established internal standards of the makers' societies, they are not necessarily junk. We may view them, in fact, as successful products in the market for ethnic and tourist arts.

Graburn (1976) and Jules-Rosette (1984) have also described this category. James Peacock (quoted by Welsh, 1988:3) has written: "Tourist art ... is not merely a set of simplified messages derived from some richer and more elaborate code, but it consists of performances and displays that are part of a creative process that enjoys an authentic existence".

I have particularly emphasized the high quality pieces since, as I have suggested earlier, the frequent presentation of average quality pieces has contributed to the undervaluing and neglect of non-Western art.
3.2 Beyond the traditional stereotypes

In addition to the use of the label "artefact" on Indonesian art, the label "traditional art" has also been detrimental to the wayang production.

Viewing wayang only as "traditional" has overwhelmingly promoted the focus of one style only, the royal court's wayang which is recognized as "the" example of traditional wayang. It would nevertheless be very misleading to simplify the richness of style by presenting only one style. Furthermore, Schechner (1990) has characterized the idea of a "traditional wayang", as a "living fiction". Along with Sears (1989), he has also stressed how this tradition has been "improved" and more or less created by Dutch scholars in search of a quintessential wayang kulit form:

Western scholars, then as now, "improve a tradition" by privileging early or presumed originary elements. There is an investment in singularity and hierarchy, a denial of multiplicity and equivalence. Plural styles or traditions are reduced to one "best," "original," "primary" model or ideal from which the others derive or deviate; a tradition is invented9 (Schechner, 1990: 33).

Collecting only classical figures would therefore reinforce once again the "normative expectation"10 and the ideal search for the authentic which I have tried to deconstruct in the first part of this thesis. Choosing only what

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9 "'Invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past' (Hobsbawm, in Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983: 1).

10 A "living fiction" according to Schechner (1990:27), is a "collation of desires and expertise sustaining a performance and its reception ... a performance said to embody "the tradition" (another slippery idea suggesting a stable transmission from past to present). The normative expectation is an agreement, spoken and unspoken, among artists, scholars, publicists, bureaucrats, patrons, students, and spectators (some individuals belong in more than one category) to maintain a specific kind of performance" (Schechner, 1990: 31-32).
has been labeled as "traditional forms" would also locate the production of the wayang kulit in an "ethnographic present", that is:

... an eternalized past which locates others "in a time order different from that of the"\textsuperscript{11} anthropologist, and inscribes their cultures as static (until, of course, the inevitable deluge, after which they survive only as dying remnants of their prior "authentic" forms) (Blundell, 1988: 6).

In my selection, based on emic characteristics of figures learned from the artists I have consulted, and presented in the following chapter, I have searched for pieces which show a full range of figures, instead of a single ideal type.

Furthermore, the problem with the word "tradition" is that it can easily become an encapsulating concept which tends to confine non-Western artists to the "copyist" stereotype in which formal schemes are perceived as being simply transmitted integrally from one generation to another. The corollary of this label is that it is something static if not fossilized.

The object and characteristic of 'traditions', including invented ones, is invariance. The past, real or invented, to which they refer imposes fixed (normally formalized) practices, such as repetition (Hobsbawm in Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983: 2).

In order to disconnect wayang from the image of something static, non-creative and anonymous, and to counteract the negative associations of the term "traditional", I will present in the following sections the strategies which I used in the field collecting and the organization of the exhibit.

\textsuperscript{11} The author quotes from Mary Louise Pratt's "Fieldwork in Common Places" in Writing Culture (Clifford et al, 1986).
Because of the connotations of the term "traditional", I have also decided to replace it with the word "classical", intending thereby to emphasize the simplicity, proportion and excellence of the form enduring through the centuries. I am aware that the term "classical" could also be used to refer to the past (wayang also is rooted in history), and in this sense it is used as a pisaller; that is, the best of the poor choice of terms available. I have favoured "classical" because it has been synonymous with quality and authority when applied to art held in great esteem in Western societies, such as Greek and Roman art. The term suggests similar great artistic accomplishment, and therefore gives a more dignified status to this art form.

3.3 Showing the dynamism of wayang kulit

As Duncan (1980) and Haberland (1986) have stressed, the lack of historical data on objects considered "traditional" in museums has resulted in the exclusion of these objects from the category of "high art".

The neglect of native art [or Indonesian art] as a branch of art history is methodologically inexcusable ... What is most urgently needed, then, is to establish native art history firmly on art historical grounds (Vastokas, 1987: 13-14).

Haberland (1986), Price (1989) and Vastokas (1987) have indicated the consequences of not dating the objects in museum collections and how this acts to exclude various cultures in museums from the category of high art. "Our very conceptualization of art is inseparable from its historical chronology" (Price, 1989:56). This absence of chronology has also had the consequence of excluding non-Western societies from the status of "civilization" since, as Duncan has pointed out quite clearly, art museums
proclaim the great moments of civilization and universality. "As the Louvre and the London National Gallery attest, nothing better than the genius of Leonardo certifies the claim to civilization and universality" (1980:467).

It was therefore important for an appropriate representation of wayang kulit to shed light on the fact that this thousand-year-old art form is continually changing through time. To mark the presence of these works in history I therefore dated the pieces I have purchased and have photographed wayang kulit from different time periods.

Bambang Suwarno, professor at the Institute of Art of Solo, has described in metaphorical terms how the classical wayang continually evolves and changes. He compared wayang to a river which always flows in one direction but is continuously changing course. Thus, even though there is a shared set of patterns which is transmitted from one generation to another, it is the task of the artist to bring the style up to his/her time and to improve it.

A.L. Becker (University of Michigan professor emeritus of linguistics and one of the main authorities on wayang) discussed wayang in these terms: "It is old and continuous, yet lively and politically free ... It's full of vitality, yet it's high art, not folk art or archaic art; it's one of the world's great art forms " (quoted in Schechner, 1990: 28). Showing change in styles through time would demonstrate the dynamism of this art form, breaking down the stereotypical view of a static tradition presented by the literature (and not corresponding with what I have observed in Indonesia, and what my artist-informants reported to me).
3.4 Emphasizing the creativity of the artist

Linked with the use of the label "traditional art" is the lack of creativity implied in the "copyist stereotype".

Above all, native art is neglected because Western critics, theorists, and historians of art adhere today to the idea of art as innovation. Since craftsmen are interpreted as merely repeating traditional forms, then those who work in ceramics, basketry, textiles, and hides in any society would, by definition, not be artists (Vastokas, 1987:9).

A more adequate presentation of this art form would therefore highlight the characteristics of innovation and originality often denied in conventional museums. One of the ways I favoured was to present a norm in showing similarities among a certain body of works, then proceed to show the second step: how these works vary among themselves according to the artists' different interpretations of the norm. That the norm continually changes necessarily involves innovations by the artists. In Chapter Four (section 3.0) I illustrate this idea by discussing how the same character, Betara Guru, varies according to different artists.

3.5 Naming the artist

The label "folk art" has also been imposed on wayang because of the anonymity in which the pieces are often presented.

The popular image of Primitive artists as the unthinking and undifferentiated tools of their respective traditions -- as people who are essentially denied the privilege of technical or conceptual creativity -- raises interesting questions about the ways in which "exotic" peoples are used to legitimate Western
society and culture. Labeling such portrayals racist or patronizing would oversimplify, but I believe a case can be made that the "anonymity" (and its corollary, the "timelessness") of Primitive Art owes much to the needs of Western observers to feel that their society represents a uniquely superior achievement in the history of humanity (Price, 1989: 60).

This absence of any mention of the artist's identity in museums holds true for the wayang production, despite the fact that wayang kulit makers are recognized in Indonesia for their own style, and that some have gained higher status than others and are called seniman (more or less "artist" in English). It is therefore necessary to contribute to a change of category of these artists and pieces by identifying the artists. Furthermore, in order that the artists be recognized as such it is necessary to represent the characteristics entitling them to this status, such as those identified by Haberland (1986: 124): "Besides practicing art as a full-time occupation, two other criteria are often named for professional artists: formal training, and a critical attitude toward one's own and other artists' creations".

3.6 Selecting contemporary pieces for a representation of the Javanese art in the present

In order to break down the association: wayang kulit=traditional art=the past, and to stress the "actuality" of the wayang, thereby taking into account the criticism (Blundell, 1988; Clifford, 1988; Dominguez, 1987) that museums "freeze people into the past", I chose to purchase only contemporary objects (see Schlereth [1984] for more details on the advantage of this practice). This strategy had the advantage of not only reducing problems of conservation (i.e. new wayang do not have the problem of
flaking and fading paint, deterioration due to moisture, etc.) but also of allowing one to identify the artist and date the pieces.

In this chapter, I have presented some of the theories that determined my reasons for selecting, purchasing and exhibiting wayang kulit figures. The underlying principle was to search for a representation which would break with hierarchical relations which have traditionally existed between museums and the cultures represented and to establish a more symmetrical and reciprocal relation. I developed a strategy for collecting by taking into account critiques of museum practices which were participating in the creation of a detrimental vision of a non-Western culture. I focused particularly on the importance of how the objects are presented, on the criteria used to select the objects in the field and on the terms used to designate them. Concerning the organization of the display, I have stressed the necessity of presenting a multiplex view of Javanese culture through a pluralization of the contexts in which the objects would be shown (using contextualist and formalist modes of display) and by presenting various styles of wayang kulit. In order to raise the status of wayang in museums, I have discussed my decisions to name the artists and stress their creativity; to date the pieces and show how they have changed; and to purchase contemporary pieces to express the idea that, even though wayang kulit making is more than a thousand years old, it remains a popular and dynamic form today.
In order to see how the guidelines for the two museum practices sketched in the previous chapter were applied, I will describe in the following sections the particular circumstances surrounding my collecting of wayang kulit in Indonesia.

The collecting was spread over two trips of two months each in Indonesia during the summers of 1989 and 1990. The collection was to be purchased on behalf of the Museum of Anthropology. It consists of 21 figures made by well known Indonesian artists predominantly from Java but also from Bali. The collection is also accompanied by a video and audio documentation, as well as various objects used during the performance and the making of the figures (see conclusion of section 2.0 in this chapter).

Following the order of the themes developed in the previous chapter, I will first mention the reasons behind the collecting processes: how the project of purchasing pieces in Indonesia arose and why this type of art -- and particularly Javanese wayang kulit --- was collected.

Then, I will describe the processes involved in obtaining information on how to collect the pieces and the criteria I used in selecting them.

Learning how to collect involves preparation before departure, an awareness of previous field collecting and establishing rapport with informants. Establishing the criteria for selecting the pieces requires familiarization with the literature on wayang and with the particular perspective sought in this research, the artist's point of view. Since my core principle was to highlight the multiplicity of this Indonesian art and by
implication Indonesian culture, the main problem of the field collecting was to represent the variations of wayang kulit in Indonesia today.

1.0 Reasons for Collecting

The idea of purchasing a teaching collection of wayang kulit in Indonesia arose two years ago when my supervisor, Dr. Michael Ames, suggested this possibility to me in order to find the pieces (unavailable in Canadian museums) which I needed for my Master's research project. Wayang kulit are considered the most prestigious art form in Indonesia, having reached the status of a national art. The wayang performance has also provided the theatrical parameters of many Indonesian theatre and dance forms. It was important to obtain an appropriate representation of this art form for a Canadian museum.

The Museum of Anthropology (MOA), which provided financial assistance for the purchase of the pieces, had twelve Javanese wayang kulit figures before the addition of the twenty-one pieces I collected in Indonesia. Little information was available on this initial collection and its makers. After verifying the Collections Policy of MOA, I discovered that the museum nevertheless had an interest in expanding their Southeast Asian collection and a priority in developing their collection of figures. Acquiring a wayang kulit collection was therefore in agreement with the development policies of MOA.
A search on the Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN) national inventory of museum collections, made me aware that the Glenbow museum (in Calgary) has the biggest collection (apart from MOA) of Javanese figures, consisting of 10 pieces collected between 1954 and 1964 by a New York dealer. The figures are old, estimated to have been made between 1900 and 1930, and very little information is available on them (none had character identifications). There is also the Musée canadien des civilisations/Canadian Museum of Civilization which owns more than one hundred Balinese wayang kulit. This last resource made me question whether I should buy Balinese or Javanese wayang kulit. A Balinese collection could have been purchased to add to the CMC collection but I decided otherwise for three reasons.

The first reason was that there was a need to fill gaps in Javanese shadow play figures in Canadian collections, particularly since Java is considered the cultural and political centre of Indonesia and is the most populated island and seat of the capital, Jakarta. Javanese wayang is the one most often considered by the literature. Also, the wayang kulit is considered the national art of Indonesia (as testified by the wayang figure, the gunungan, engraved on the rupiah, the currency) and the Javanese form is the one used as the model to emulate (which is not without ideological motives from the government, mainly Javanese ruled).

The second reason is that there is a need to make Indonesian arts more visible in Canadian museums. In fact, an interest in Indonesia is rapidly growing. Our neighbour, the United States, is now organizing an 18-month

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12 "I would maintain that knowing precisely what your institution has and what similar material culture in your research and interpretation area exists in other museums and repositories are essential information to secure before determining any plan for collecting additional contemporary materials" (Schlereth, 1984:24).
Festival of Indonesia which "celebrates the cultural heritage of the world's largest archipelago and fifth most populous nation through major art exhibitions, a performing arts program which will include 300 dancers and musicians from Indonesia, film festivals, television programs, and other affiliated events in over 50 cities throughout the United States" (Calendar of Events, Festival of Indonesia 1990-1991). In Canada, there are particularly strong interests in Vancouver and Montréal where two gamelan, Indonesian percussion orchestras, were given to universities after Expo 1986 by the Indonesian government\textsuperscript{13}. These universities regularly organize various events around their musical ensembles. Furthermore, the University of British Columbia (UBC) has recently hired two specialists in Indonesia and was the centre until 1990 of a three year Indonesia CIDA project.

Finally, the third reason is that acquiring a Javanese wayang kulit collection would provide the possibility of not only displaying the figures in a museum but also of creating performances in Vancouver (therefore moving away from a static mode of presentation). As I have mentioned, there is at Simon Fraser University (SFU) a gamelan orchestra (which accompanies the wayang kulit performance) named Gamelan Kyai Madusari. A dalang (as the puppeteer is called) Pak Bono, hired by this university, came from Indonesia in early 1990 to teach and lead the group during a performance of wayang kulit at the Western Front gallery (in Vancouver). The SFU group, however, had to borrow a wayang kulit collection from the United States since no puppeteer's figures-chest was available for use in Vancouver. Another dalang is coming in July 1991, Anom Suroto (one of the most famous dalang in Indonesia). The exchanges between Vancouver and Java offered the

\textsuperscript{13} A Balinese one to Université de Montréal and a Javanese one to Simon Fraser University.
possibility of performing wayang kulit in Vancouver and purchasing a teaching collection would therefore enhance the possibility of Vancouver becoming autonomous and becoming a centre for Javanese arts in Canada.

Therefore, the decision to purchase a Javanese teaching collection was motivated by a gap in the Canadian collection, by the resources available in Vancouver and by the necessity of representing the cultural and political centre of Indonesia, Java.
2.0 Processes Involved in Deciding What to Collect.

First Field Collecting: July and August 1989

2.1 Preparation

I spent approximately two years actively seeking information on *wayang kulit*.

Connoisseurship is not a gift from God; it is learned skill based on extensive research and experience and a visual databank (Hunt, quoted in Museum News Round Table, 1989:57).

My first sources of information were the literature and the specialists on Indonesia I have met in Vancouver. Among those were Mr Willy Van Yperen, a very knowledgeable collector of *wayang kulit* with whom I had continuous conversations during my two years of research on *wayang* and from whom I received advice and comments on my research; Dr Peter Richard, who was Director of the Indonesia CIDA project; Dr Tineke Hellwig, professor of Indonesian history and *Bahasa Indonesia* at UBC (Department of Asian studies); and Dr Michael Howard, a specialist in Southeast Asia who was a visiting professor at UBC (Department of Anthropology and Sociology).

Through introductory books on *wayang kulit* (Van Ness, 1980; Scott-Kemball, 1970), I acquired a first general glimpse of the performance. Then, the preparation of a proposal for the purchase of figures for MOA a few weeks before my departure led me to focus on the various characters in the *wayang* repertoire. I learned how to differentiate the characters, which at first might all look the same. In order to distinguish their singular features, I proceeded

14 I had known about *wayang* since my first trip to Indonesia in 1984 and had briefly discussed its characteristics in my B.A. Honours thesis on Balinese painting.
to do a "mise en condition", that is an abundant observation of illustrations of wayang kulit. I brought together all the photos and drawings of characters I could find (Anderson, 1965; Ras, 1985; and Ulbricht, 1970 were particularly useful) and produced a visual catalogue with this documentation. These images were accompanied by information on the characters. I learned their names and became familiar with the details of personality and temperament of approximately sixty characters. This was the maximum number of characters on which I could obtain information in Vancouver. It is very small considering that a whole set can contain as many as three hundred to four hundred characters (see Claire Holt, 1967). Some characters also have multiple representations, for instance Arjuna, a hero of the Pendawa family, is represented differently when he is happy, going to war, in the palace, in love, etc.

I also studied the relationships between the characters, and their position in the genealogy, as well as their status (i.e. Demons, Gods, Princesses, Queens, Kings, ministers, etc.) and their relations to each other—whether they are brothers, enemies, advisers, etc. The description of the characters was available through the abstracts of the stories used during the performance (Holt, 1967; Ras, 1985; Ulbricht, 1970), that is, mainly the Hindu mythological epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. Since the proposal for MOA also included the purchase of associated material accompanying the figures and the performance, the abundance of details on these matters in Bondan et al (1984) was particularly useful in gaining this information.

In order to improve my contacts with my informants, I also studied Bahasa Indonesia (the official language of Indonesia) from audio-cassettes.

The fact is that an unprepared cross-cultural art collector is like a poor linguist trying to judge which are the finest works in a
foreign language. Hence a cross-cultural collector must in effect learn foreign languages of art before he or she fully understands the values prevailing in other societies' art traditions (Alsop, 1981:83).

2.2 Awareness of past field collecting

As I was preparing for my first trip to collect pieces a question arose: how do anthropologists collect pieces in the field? Very few authors have addressed the issue of field collecting for an anthropology museum. The most detailed document I found was William C. Sturtevant's (1977) Guide to Field Collecting of Ethnographic Specimens. This book is outdated in many ways and tinted with a colonialist attitude where exchanges are not necessarily reciprocal. For example, "Useful trade goods vary widely, but among the most acceptable are glass beads of specific types and colors, silver coins of specific types or sizes, and specific sorts of sea shells" (1977: 10). I just can not imagine the reaction of the Javanese if I were to offer such things! The structural-functionalist approach used in Sturtevant's book also has to be considered critically, but overall it provided a useful reflection on the objects in general, their functions and properties, and insight on the process of collecting.

Most other books or articles on field collecting I consulted (Carpenter, 1976; Clifford, 1985; Cole, 1985; Price, 1989) criticize the colonialist attitude associated with field collecting in the past, where cases of power abuse often prevailed. Since, as I mentioned in the first chapter, I was searching for a representation which would take into account the political dimensions of collecting, an awareness of past hierarchical relations was of crucial importance.
The ethics of the collectors have been particularly criticized. The Canadian West Coast is a noteworthy example of collecting being equated with a real *tabula rasa*, in which hardly any valuable objects were left in the hands of the original makers and users of the objects.

"The possibilities for further collections on the Skeena are much smaller now" he [Marius Barbeau] wrote of 1929 prospects. "I have collected there since 1920 and have pretty well carried away whatever was available." Yet there still remained a small number of valuable and expensive specimens in the hands of a few natives. He expected to find little on the Nass "since I may have removed most of what there still was in 1927" (1985:269).

By the 1920s, as a result of private and museum acquisition, natural decay, and occasional wanton destruction, the British Columbia totem pole had become an endangered specimen (Cole, 1985: 270).

Price provides other examples where "nowhere is there any mention of such matters as appropriate compensation, native opposition to scientific collecting, or other issues touching on the personal relations or ethics of the enterprise" (1989:70). The French Dakar-Djibouti expedition in 1931-33 provides the ultimate example of such an attitude. Journal entries of one of the group's members, Michel Leiris, written in 1934, exemplify the ethical problem (quoted by Price, 1989: 73):

16 November
Apama's "little" brother didn't want to sell [a certain mask], because he got it from his older brother, the hunter who died on October 20. Today he agrees to, on the condition that we go to steal the object ourselves so he can say that he was coerced ...
laws that prohibited the removal of specimens. In short, the common belief that a group's cultural and historic patrimony was alienable was the direct outgrowth of the customary and usual practice of scientific research, and few governments took legal steps to the contrary. That this did not prevail is seen in the fact that by 1940 some third of all laws that now exist to protect national patrimony had been passed, with the remainder of such laws enacted shortly after the Second World War. ... It is no accident that the passage of the majority of national laws coincides with the period in which colonial rule ended and new nations were formed. Active foreign concern about the alienation of cultural and historic works from their place of origin was intimately linked with the precepts of nationalism in a majority of new countries.

Ethical codes which did not respect the original owners and producers of the objects also led some groups to claim back objects carelessly taken from them. For this reason too it was important to become familiar with ethics, so as to avoid in the future the delicate question of repatriation of objects with which museums are now being confronted with.

Basic ethical principles for collectors now include:

It goes without saying that items should never be obtained from illegal sources ... No items should ever be collected by taking advantage of others, and this caveat applies to many kinds of circumstances, including the out-bidding of more deserving institutions in the auction room, and using persuasion to obtain material from members of the public who have no special knowledge of the worth or cultural value of what they offer. The curator, moreover, must not acquire material at the cost of depriving the nation of a part of its heritage (Duggan in Thompson 1984: 99-100).

Before departure, I verified whether I could legally export the pieces I intended to purchase under the UNESCO Convention. The only restriction, however, concerns archaeological objects. The purchase of contemporary pieces (see Chapter Two, section 3.6) allowed the identification of the source
laws that prohibited the removal of specimens. In short, the common belief that a group's cultural and historic patrimony was alienable was the direct outgrowth of the customary and usual practice of scientific research, and few governments took legal steps to the contrary. That this did not prevail is seen in the fact that by 1940 some third of all laws that now exist to protect national patrimony had been passed, with the remainder of such laws enacted shortly after the Second World War. ... It is no accident that the passage of the majority of national laws coincides with the period in which colonial rule ended and new nations were formed. Active foreign concern about the alienation of cultural and historic works from their place of origin was intimately linked with the precepts of nationalism in a majority of new countries.

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of the sale (it ensures that the object has not been stolen) and attests to the legality of the transaction. "To acquire a work of art from a dubious source is to run the risk, consciously or otherwise, of becoming an accomplice in misappropriation" (Clamen, 1974: 18).

Concerning the price of the figures, there were many factors to take into account in order to avoid exploitation: the market value obtained by comparing them to other objects of the same quality; the reputation of the artists; the style of the figures (the modern pieces tended to be more expensive than the classical ones) and the sophistication of the chiseling and painting; the materials used (those covered with gold leaf were on average two times more expensive than those covered with gold paint), and the people to whom the artists normally sell their pieces.

The main difficulty was to obtain a fair price, neither too low (to avoid exploitation and unwillingness of the informants to participate in the research), nor too high, since that would participate in raising the price of art pieces and might create a gap between the artist and his community, and be disruptive for the economy in the society where the artists live. Also, "[t]he rapid rise in prices of works of art encourages speculation, and is, as we have seen, one of the main factors contributing to illegal trafficking" (Clamen, 1974:18). In order to find the appropriate price, I bargained without buying for the first month and a half, and asked for advice from people not interested in the transaction. I also inquired about the standard prices paid by Indonesian museums.

Since my contact with the artists was not limited to an economic transaction (they became my main informants), it was necessary to establish a relationship of reciprocity. For instance, in exchange for permission to photograph the pieces, I gave them a copy of all the photos taken of their
work. This was useful for them since most did not have a camera. It also provided the artist with an image of the figures purchased and taken away. This image could later be used by the artist to reproduce or keep in memory a particularly successful piece. I also provided them with information on the museums and photos of MOA where the pieces would be exhibited and they received a T-shirt with the MOA crest (among other gifts, most of which were purchased in Indonesia). In order that they could also follow the process of organizing the exhibit, I have sent them copies of my proposal throughout the year. I found it important to maintain contact with the artists to avoid the perception that I was there only to take and then go away without leaving any news.

2.3 *Wayang* in the literature

In the literature consulted before my departure (i.e. Bondan et al, 1984; Geertz, 1960; Scott-Kemball, 1970; Van Ness, 1980) the court-derived classical style had clearly been privileged and held as "the" *wayang*:

Many artistic ideas, motives, and expressions of folk art were taken over by court artists, choreographers and composers, and subsequently improved and transformed into more refined and sophisticated forms of artistic expression. Some of the creations of court art may subsequently spread outside the court circle, and degenerate again into simpler forms of folk art... The art of the Central Javanese courts, however, has set the standards of artistic excellence, at least in the Negarigung region itself, in Bagelen, Banyumas, and the Mancanegari region, and has therefore had a unifying effect upon the large local variety of forms in those areas (Koentjaraningrat, 1985: 201-202).

That is why my meeting with Pak Cokro (K.R.T. Wasitodipuro) who offered to put me in contact with puppeteers in the *kraton*, the Yogyakarta
Sultan's court, was so fortunate. Pak Cokro was giving a *gamelan* course at Simon Fraser University during the summer of 1989 when I met him. He is a famous *gamelan* composer who was teaching for a year at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia when I contacted him. (He had also previously taught at the Universities of California in Berkeley, Wisconsin and Michigan, according to my information.) Pak Cokro, a well respected man in the Sultan's court of Yogyakarta (where his family lives), is a member of an aristocratic family which belongs to the younger branch of Yogyakarta royal family from Paku Alam, and therefore seemed the perfect informant for such a collection. (This perception of what type of *wayang kulit* to collect changed, from exclusively-court-derived to other forms and styles, as I will indicate). That is why my first proposal to MOA (see Addendum 1) was to purchase classical style figures from the court, which I thought then would represent "the" best and finest *wayang kulit* made.

A very common error of collectors is to search for the "best" examples, defined according to the esthetic notions of the collector. Ethnographic collections should document the culture they sample, not that of the collector (Sturtevant, 1977:28).

It was important for me to understand that even though I could learn a great deal about the *wayang*, I could never get the knowledge the Javanese connoisseurs had of the domain. Therefore, an essential aspect of my work was to obtain the support of Javanese connoisseurs to ensure judicious and well-informed choices for the MOA collection. It was nevertheless also necessary to maintain a critical stance on the received information, in order to be able to differentiate between what was economically motivated (the
transaction was of importance according to Indonesian standards) from what was not.

Learning the aesthetic notions of the Javanese involves knowing the significance of the object for its makers and users and the concepts used by them. It requires learning the criteria by which the quality of wayang kulit are judged; knowing the processes of fabrication and the characteristics of the medium (so as to know how to best preserve the parchment figures according to museum standards) and details of the iconography. I have found very few sources in English or French\textsuperscript{18} which discuss the iconography (Solomonik, 1981; Van Yperen, 1986 are two I consulted). The only book which discusses this aspect at length is Mellema, \textit{Wayang Puppets, Carving, Colouring and Symbolism} (1954), but unfortunately it is incomplete and, in many respects, outdated. It is also based on the literature and not on direct experience with the pieces.

2.4 Arrival in Indonesia

To find the needed information on the pieces, during my first stay, I visited several private and public collections such as the Museum Wayang and the National Museum in Jakarta, and the Museum Sono Budoyo in Yogyakarta. These visits allowed me to observe how the museums were exhibiting these pieces and which pieces they privileged. I also visited those centres emphasized in the literature: the \textit{kratons} (royal courts) in Surakarta and the Sultan's palace of Yogyakarta, where I had the unique opportunity of viewing the Sultan's sacred collection of wayang kulit. I also received

\textsuperscript{18} I could not verify these matters in other languages. Clearly, knowing Dutch would have been particularly useful since a lot has been written in this language.
permission to photograph the musicians of the *gamelan* of the court of Yogyakarta in an area not usually accessible to tourists (see fig. 16a).

Furthermore, I have visited 10 *wayang kulit* workshops (mainly in Yogya, Solo, Gendeng and Pucung\(^\text{19}\), concentrating on those famous for their *wayang* production) and met various *wayang kulit* makers. I had discussions with them in order to help me make the most judicious choices for obtaining the collection for the MOA.

Furthermore, I attended 10 to 15 *wayang kulit* performances, mainly at the *kraton*, where I had the opportunity to witness the week-long student *dalang* (puppeteer) examinations. For this occasion, I received permission to take photographs without restriction in the area behind the screen where the *dalang* and the *gamelan* (percussion orchestra) musicians are seated and where tourists are not normally allowed. I also saw the Javanese New Year’s performances of *wayang* at Parangritis (a city in south-Central Java), as well as other performances in small villages. In order to strengthen my decisions about the MOA collection, I also took three weeks of intensive study at STSI\(^\text{20}\), the famous Art institute at Solo, in order to learn more about the various aspects of the *wayang kulit*: the criteria of quality used, the main characteristics of their iconography, the general overview of the processes involved as well as the tools used.

A few months of study was nevertheless very little time in which to gain information which takes years for Indonesian puppeteers and *wayang* makers to acquire. Even though I first thought the limit of my knowledge from books was an handicap, I soon realized it had some advantages since it

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\(^{19}\) At the time of my visit, the Pucung workshops were making lesser quality *wayang*, among which were tourist *wayang*.

\(^{20}\) Acronym for *Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia* (Fine Arts Institute of Indonesia). It is also well known as ASKI (unfortunately, I could not find the exact words this acronym stands for).
forced me to get the information needed to purchase the pieces from the Javanese themselves. That is why I sought Javanese informants to help create the new collection for the MOA. Collaborating with local people and seeking their participation in the research process was an important aspect of the collection. It is essential to get to what the Javanese judge appropriate to represent their own production, and therefore to represent themselves. This approach allowed a more symmetrical representation (see Chapter Two, section one). Olot Pardjono, a guide at the Museum Sono Budoyo at Yogyakarta, who has been a wayang kulit maker and had participated in building the collection of wayang kulit of the museum where he worked, appeared to be an ideal informant. A relation of trust had first to be established between us before he started showing the works of artists among the most praised in Java. It is, in fact, easier to collect sensitive materials after having established a bond of mutual trust with local people. Many other Javanese had offered to show me wayang, but sensing their avidity for gain by speculating on my tourist ignorance, I turned down those offers. It took about one and a half months before I could establish a sufficient relation of trust with Olot Pardjono to allow me to find the quality pieces I was looking for.

Olot Pardjono helped me to find Pak Sagio (see fig. 1) who made most of the figures for the MOA collection. Sagio also made the figures for the collection of the Museum Sono Budoyo where Pardjono is working. This museum, located in Yogyakarta, had opened in 1935 with the help of Sultan Hamengkubuwana VIII. In 1954, it was taken over by the local government and in 1974 was turned over to Culture and Education Department of the Central Government of Indonesia.

\[21\] Information from Olot Pardjono.
2.5 The Javanese artist-informants

The artists were selected not in reference to any reading but according to the recognition they had received in their own country. They have either been selected to represent Indonesia abroad, to exhibit their works publicly in various art centres, received special titles or honours, or have won prizes acknowledging the quality of their pieces.

In 1989, my main artist-informants were Sagio (fig.1), master of the classical style of the kraton of Yogyakarta; Sukasman (fig. 2), an experimental artist from Yogyakarta who developed a new wayang based on the tradition called Wayang Ukur; and Bambang Suwargo (fig. 3), who was a professor at the Akademy of Arts of Indonesia in Surakarta (STSI).

During the first trip, I collected only three pieces: Srikandi (fig. 35a), Arjuna (fig. 37a) and Betara Guru (fig. 1a), which I received by mail (sent by Olot Pardjono) later during the year. I have already explained the reasons why I focused on the classical style during my first visit (chapter Three section 2.3). I should now mention why I purchased mainly from Yogyakarta.

Yogyakarta is famous for the crucial role played by Sultan Hamengkubuwana IX during the revolution in the middle of this century. He opened the doors of his kraton (Sultan's palace) to the Indonesian revolutionaries who were fighting the Dutch invasion and three hundred years of colonial rule, while other rulers such as the Susuhunan of Surakarta were siding with the Dutch (see Kleden, 1978). This resistance led to the Independence of Indonesia in 1949. Because of this role in the revolution, the court of Yogyakarta became a symbol of nationalist passion and resistance to alien rule. It was also the only court which kept its partial autonomy after the war.
My first field collecting, even though not informed by a particular theoretical frame, nevertheless allowed me to obtain a general view of the context surrounding the wayang kulit. It allowed me to obtain information on the iconography, on the criteria used to judge the quality of the pieces, and on the processes of making the figures (I learned these aspects from Bambang Suwarno and Sagio, and collected further information by visiting and photographing the workshops in Pucung, a village of wayang kulit making near Imogiri). To illustrate these processes, I have acquired materials from which the puppets are made: the raw water buffalo skin; to the hide from which the fat has been removed; the draft from which the design is made on the hide; and the drawn, carved and finely painted hide. As well, I have purchased the various tools (chisels, brushes, pigments, and special glue). Since I believe that art consists not only of the end product, but also of the creative process involved in its emergence, I had intended to highlight these processes in the exhibit, but because of lack of time and budget I had to omit this from the project.

The first collecting trip in Indonesia helped to familiarize me with the context of the wayang performances, classical as much as experimental ones. I attended two performances of Sukasman's Wayang Ukur and brought back a video of one of his performances, as well as 15 audio-tapes of classical performances. With the hope of evoking the context of the wayang performance in Vancouver, I also purchased objects used by the dalang: the keprak, metal plates hung on the chest which are kicked by the puppeteer and the cempala, an iron rapper held between his toes. These objects are used for non-verbal signals to lead the musicians (see the explanation on dalang in the section on the classical performance in the exhibit).
Furthermore, this first trip to Indonesia enabled me to establish contacts with artists and other experts such as dalang. It familiarized me with the general context of wayang and how it relates to other art forms of the wayang tradition to which wayang kulit has provided the theatrical parameters. These forms include the wayang golek, using three-dimensional, dressed wooden puppets (I observed and documented a performance at the Museum Wayang in Jakarta); wayang wong, classical theatrical dance performed with human actors such as those used by Sukasman in his theatre (also observed in the art centre Pujokusuman) and wayang topeng, a dance performed with masked dancers; wayang klitik, a wooden version of the wayang kulit with leather arms (photographed from the collection of the Museum Sono Budoyo); and wayang beber where the stories are illustrated on cloth or paper which the puppeteer unrolls as he tells the stories (photographed from the Kasunanan kraton in Solo).
3.0 Second Field Collecting: July and August 1990

3.1 Reflection prior to the second field collecting

A paper I wrote on wayang kulit for Dr. Tineke Hellwig and a reflection on my first field collecting done for Dr. Michael Ames made me see the gap between what was usually described in the literature on wayang and what I had observed during the summer of 1989.

In fact, I had noticed by the end of my first stay that the court-style of the two court cities of Yogyakarta and Solo (both cities competing for the status of capital of the traditional art), is only emulated by a small part of the wayang producers. Many artists I talked to (including Pak Sukasman and Pak Bono) mentioned how the court form was now considered rather obsolete. They informed me that the artistic hegemony of the kraton had been challenged particularly since the Indonesian revolution (1949) by artists outside the kraton. This is confirmed by Koentjaraningrat (1985: 233):

After the war, the Javanese courts lost their administrative power and also their positions as the main repository of cultural values, mores, and folkways, as well as their position as the main centre of excellence of Javanese artistic expression. Consequently the nobility have totally lost their previous exalted status.

That is why in my second proposal to the museum (see Addendum 2), I sought a strategy which would pluralize and diversify the view of wayang. For comparison purposes, I had planned to purchase a common body of pieces in three islands where the Hindu-Buddhist civilizations have flourished, and with which the development of wayang is associated; that is Java, Bali and Lombok. In each of the islands I was planning to choose pieces
according to the nature of the public for which they are destined (tourists, the academy and collectors, villagers and the Sultan's court).

I discovered, however, that according to the artists I consulted these categories would not be valid. They would account for qualitative differences but not for variation in style.

3.2 Variations according to cities within Java

Discussions with my artist-informants revealed that the styles vary according to cities (see Sukasman, n.d.; and Sagio, n.d.). They mention a "Yogyanese style", "Solonese style", "Kerdu style", and "Cirebon style", among other well-known city styles.

That is why I decided to focus on the production of two cities particularly famous for their artistic production, Yogyakarta and Solo, to

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22 I refer to the finess of execution of the work and the ability of the artists to accurately represent the personality of the character being depicted. See Chapter Five, section 3.4.
23 The word "style" was used by the artists, who spoke English. It is a translation of gaya in Bahasa Indonesia, the official language of Indonesia. Variations of "style" or gaya involve variations of its five components that add up to a recognizable configuration:

1- the bedhahan: the characteristics of the face of the figure
2- the kapangan: the features of the body
3- the sunggingan: the colours and the application of the paint
4- the tatahan: the type of leather used and the type of chiseling
5- the wanda: representation of the same character according to her-his different mood and psychological state; different moments in the characters' life, from youth to old age; and use in the story (i.e. the same character in love or during a fight will have different physical features).

24 "The growth of administrative towns [or cities] is one of the important consequences of the colonial administration in Indonesia. Before then, towns were either court centres, religious centres, or harbours ..... The court centre consisted of the palace where the king and his entourage lived" (Koentjaraningrat, 1985: 63). The cities which have developed distinctive styles correspond to those where court centres were influential.
highlight these differences and to find some rules of variation. Ideally, collection should have taken place in other cities as well, but limited time and budget prevented me from reaching this objective.

Yogyakarta and Surakarta were of particular interest for their historical heritage. Both cities are the seat of royal courts which claim to be the heirs of the great Mataram empire, "the most powerful and the longest of modern Javanese dynasties" (Ricklefs, 1981: 37). The military expansion of the Mataram kingdom began early in the XVIIth century, after the invasion of the Islamic Demak. The Mataram kings were to perpetuate the Hindu heritage, which according to earlier inscriptions describing the celebration of ceremony and religious structure, would have been present in the fourth century A.D. (Koentjaraningrat, 1985: 37). The Mataram kingdom also took its roots in the period of one of the greatest of Indonesian empires (Ricklefs, 1981: 18), Majapahit, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries A.D. The Majapahit, before the Islamic Demak empire took over, corresponds to the golden age of Hindu-Buddhism in Indonesia. The rulers of the Mataram courts established their legitimacy and sacral authority by tracing their descent in a straight line not only to the great rulers of the Mataram kingdom (such as Sultan Agung) and to the last king of the previous Majapahit empire, but also, according to Javanese chronicles, back to the Gods.

Yogyakarta and Surakarta were also the centres of the Javanese nobility, the para bandara, who were the members of the kin groups at the heads of the four principalities (royal houses) of the Negarigung region, i.e., Yogyakarta, Surakarta, Mangkunegaran, and Pakualaman. The court nobility who gained power, particularly during the 19th century under the Dutch colonial regime, lost their administrative power after the second World War (see section 3.1).
3.3 Finding more Javanese artist-informants

During the second period of field collecting, in 1990, I worked with three more Javanese informants than in the first year: Balai Agung (fig. 6), a classical artist from one of the royal courts, the Kasunanan kraton of Solo; Hajar Satoto (fig. 7), an experimental artist from Solo; and Pak Ledjar (fig. 8), a wide-ranging artist from Yogyakarta who makes classical and experimental figures. Later I became acquainted with Heri Dono through Astri Wright (a Phd candidate at Cornell University). I carried on a correspondence with this experimental artist from Yogyakarta who was exhibiting in Germany, Holland, Switzerland and France during the winter of 1990-91. He had a temporary workshop in Basel, Switzerland.

In Yogyakarta and Solo, I started to photograph samples of comparable artists (i.e.: comparing artists from the court of Yogyakarta with those from the court of Solo). This method allowed me to observe the striking and systematic differences between the two cities and the consistency of representation of characters in the same city.

3.4 Balinese artists: a step toward decentralizing the wayang from Java

In order to complement my information, which focused mainly on Javanese production, I worked with two Balinese artists (from the village of Sukawati). Even though I renounced the systematic comparison of the productions among the islands as too ambitious a project for such a short time frame, I considered it important to include at least an overview of the Balinese production. In fact, studies on wayang kulit have often been accused of excluding the production of other islands.
Both Balinese artists, I Wayan Nartha and I Wayan Wija, are teachers at ASTI, the Academy of Indonesian Performing Arts. I Wayan Wija was selected for his surprising Wayang Dinosaurs.

3.5 Reflecting artists' preferences: from classical to experimental

Further discussions with artists led me to the discovery of two poles in the production within one city. These extremes were referred to by the terms (possibly originating from English): "klasik" (classical) or "traditional" styles and "moderen" (modern) styles. Since, as I have stressed in the first chapter, the use of the term "traditional" has, in the West, been detrimental to non-Western art, referring to a "copyist" stereotype, I preferred using the expression "classical" because it suggests a more dignified status. The terms "classical" (see Chapter Two, section 3.2 for more explanations) and "experimental" appeared ideal because they are descriptive of styles and allow us to perceive them both as contemporary. The term "experimental" conveys the idea of process, of canons which are not fixed, and is appropriate to describe the characteristics of the works shown in the exhibit.

There are, on the one hand, classical artists seeking the continuity and preservation of the classical tradition embodied in, among others, the court style. On the other hand, there are artists whose works explore the possibilities of experimentation within or outside these inherited formal schemes for representing characters. They centre their production around novelty and experimentation with colours, techniques of fabrication and the medium. Some even create their own original characters. As well, these artists search for ways to continually adapt the performances to the pressures and influences of contemporary Javanese life.
3.6 Comparative method

In order to obtain a body of works allowing me to generate hypotheses on the variation of style among cities and according to the classical and experimental poles, I compared the works of these artists by:

1. Purchasing common characters from my informants. Betara Guru was the character which was the most readily available among the artists I selected. He also represents a key character, being the highest in the wayang hierarchy. He is the epitome of the highly elaborate and iconographically intricate Javanese style. I have also purchased five representations of Arjuna (two classical from each city, two tourist versions and one classical Balinese example), as well as examples of the classical and experimental Duryodana (see figs. 27a and 28a).

Figures were also acquired to show the range of characters in the wayang, in order to put this analysis of variation into a wider context.

2. Photographing representations of common characters by each of the artists (i.e.: I photographed the character Arjuna done by each artist).

3. Obtaining a photocopy or drawing of characters not readily accessible in Vancouver. For instance, I photocopied 35 plates of figures of the Mangkunegaran kraton style and 124 pieces of the Kasunanan kraton style, both in Solo. This material allows for a comparison between the classical Yogyanese and the classical Solonese styles. I also obtained a photocopy of a book used at the Academy of Indonesian Arts in Denpasar (Bali), presenting a whole range of South Balinese style figures (179 pieces).
4. Photographing classical and experimental performances to show the context in which these figures are used.

In total, I have obtained the following photographs\(^{25}\), figures\(^{26}\), drawings and photocopies\(^{27}\):

- Sukasman: 104 photographs (including photographs of the performances), 2 figures (puppets)
- Ledjar: 20 photos, 2 figures
- Sagio: 16 photographs, 10 figures and 25 drawings
- Hajar Satoto: 41 photographs, 1 figure
- Bambang Suwarno: 70 photographs, 1 figure
- Balai Agung: 11 photographs, 1 figure
- I Wayan Nartha: 32 photographs, 2 figures
- I Wayan Wija: 17 slides

The selected photographs for the exhibit were drawn from this pool. In order to put these figures and photographs of figures in the larger context of the range normally used in a dalang chest, I photographed the entire collection of figures from one dalang chest at the Museum Sono Budoyo.

This set is used every night for performances in this museum.

\(^{25}\) MOA received a body of 225 photographs of the context surrounding wayang (from the first field collecting) including the classical and experimental performances, the processes of manufacture, the characteristics of the iconography (i.e. the different types of wanda or representation of the character), the types of characters, the sacred collection of the kraton of Yogyakarta, the various types of art among the wayang traditions (wayang beber, wayang golek, etc.) and others directing attention to specific elements of the performance (i.e. dalang and gamelan).

\(^{26}\) From the MOA collection.

\(^{27}\) Private research document.
This second period of field collecting was therefore spent searching for artists and figures which would show the diversity of contemporary wayang production. On this trip I sought to fill the gaps in my first collecting, which had focused almost exclusively on court styles.

Presenting a multiplex view in the MOA collection was important since this collection was intended for study and for public exhibition. As I mentioned in the first chapter, privileging certain pieces rather than others predisposes a museum towards certain images of other cultures outside mainstream Canadian society. This is why it was particularly important to reflect upon the criteria I would use to select the pieces. In fact, as Schlereth (1984: 23) has stressed: "Collecting [is] an extremely important museum enterprise, an activity fraught with methodological consequences and cultural ramifications".

Having described the processes of collection of the pieces used in the exhibit and articulated the principles underlying their selection, I now move to a discussion of the exhibit itself and an explanation of the reasons why I privileged some pieces over others in the display I curated.
Chapter Four. Anatomy of the Exhibit

"Wayang: From the Gods to Bart Simpson": Showcase

At the entrance to the exhibit (see Addendum 3 for text and photographs of the exhibit), visitors face a showcase presenting six versions of the same character, the God Betara Guru ("Divine Teacher"), the most prominent among the Gods of the wayang world and one of the manifestations of the Hindu god Siva.

Immediately to the left of this showcase appears the title of the exhibit: Wayang: From the Gods to Bart Simpson. This deliberately incongruous title is aimed at attracting the curiosity of visitors to the Theatre Gallery in the Museum of Anthropology where the second part of the exhibit takes place. This part consists of eighteen frames presenting photographs and accompanying text. This title stresses quite clearly the two poles discussed in the exhibit: the classical and the experimental.

The showcase, focus of this chapter, sets the tone of the exhibit by stressing the variety among the exhibited wayang, a recurrent theme of the exhibit. The showcase also contextualizes the polarities in the classical-experimental themes developed in the photo-exhibit, since it places these poles within a still more encompassing variety: the differences between island and city styles in Java.

The text in the showcase has been reduced to a minimum to allow the viewer to appreciate the formal quality of the figures. Attention to the aesthetic of the objects is reinforced by six photographs and small labels.

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28 According to I Wayan Nartha, teacher at the Institute of Performing Arts in Denpasar, the styles vary between South and North on the island of Bali.
orienting the viewer to particular formal characteristics and stylistic differences between the pieces. This formal presentation of the showcase is compensated for by a contextualist perspective dominating the photo-exhibit in the Theatre Gallery where the pieces are placed within the context of the performance and within the range of existing characters. Thus, there is an interplay between the exhibit and the showcase, which enhances the dynamism of the whole exhibit.

The six examples of Betara Guru were selected because the character was easily obtained from the artists I consulted, and also because he represents a key character, being the highest one in the wayang hierarchy. As has been pointed out by one of my artist-informants, Sukasman (n.d.: 9), Betara Guru is the focus of much attention by the artists. The higher the character is in the wayang hierarchy, the stricter and more sophisticated the aesthetic norms become, and vice versa. Therefore Betara Guru's representation is governed by stricter standards than that of lower characters, such as the punakawans (the servant-clowns, see Semar in the exhibit, figs. 33a and 34a), who are said to be "formless". That is, they do not embody aesthetic standards as rigorous as those of the higher characters: more freedom of execution is accepted in their representation. According to Sukasman, "This phenomenon of exceptions to the rule [such as in the case of the clowns] can also be observed in the art forms of ancient Egypt: kings, warriors and holy men are depicted according to strict standards, whereas the people, slaves and enemies are free-form" (n.d.: 9). Comparing various examples of Betara Guru, therefore, allows us to observe more clearly how the aesthetic rules in the depiction of the character remain constant and how they vary.

In order to sustain this comparison and formulate a hypothesis concerning rules of variation in the depiction of this character, I have
photographed representations of Betara Guru in other collections (i.e. Museum Sono Budoyo and Yogyakarta’s kraton, see figs. 13 to 20).

1.0 Betara Guru, the Supreme God

Betara Guru is the supreme ruler over the three wayang worlds: the upper world, governed by the gods and goddesses, the middle world, where humans live, and the netherworld, dominated by evil and malicious spirits. He is the son of Sanghyang Tunggal and Dewi Wirandi and brother of Semar and Togog. Semar is the main servant-clown for the Pendawa family who is also a powerful God despite his grotesque appearance, and Togog is also a servant-clown and councillor but sides with the enemies of the Pendawa, the Korawa. Betara Guru, a manifestation of the powerful Hindu God Siva, occupies a role comparable to Zeus in Greek mythology in terms of importance.

[Moreover, Betara Guru's] behaviour is contradictory, quite unlike that of the gods of modern monotheisms, and is the outcome of an ancient belief that Good and Evil arise from a single source. He indulges himself in cruel actions which he bitterly regrets later; he allows the evil god Kala to prey upon children for food and turns his own beloved daughter, Tisnawati, into a rice stalk because she dares to love a mortal (Van Yperen, 1986: 79).

He is assisted by Betara Narada who always reminds him of the necessity of instituting justice in the world.

2.0 Formal Characteristics of Betara Guru

As the exhibit points out, Betara Guru can be recognized primarily by his four arms (the only figure with this feature), two of them folded across his chest, and also by his fine nose, "almond-like" eyes, fine body and praba, (wing-like ornaments on his back. Praba are possibly a remnant of fighting gear according to W. Van Yperen, personal communication). He is also often represented mounted on a cow (Andini), and more rarely on a snake (for example see the photograph of Betara Guru in the sacred collection of the Yogyakarta kraton in fig. 17).

Even as the Indian Siva is often portrayed with Nandi, the bull, Guru may be found standing on his mount which, rather capriciously, has turned into the cow, Andini. (Some exceptional Guru puppets stand on chthonic serpents) (Van Yperen, 1986: 77).

According to Hajar Satoto, one of my Solonese artist-informants, Betara Guru is often seen carrying symbolic objects or attributes: the trisula or cis, a trident which has the shape of a pointed stick used to control elephants; tesbeh, beads held in the right hand, the usual attribute of a priest; the camara, a whip used to symbolize that he is a destroyer god (Siva), and small kayon or gunungan shapes (a gunungan, also called "Tree or Mountain of life" is shown in figs. 30a and 32a - it is leaf-shaped) around his legs. He is depicted with or without shoes.
3.0 Different Representations of Betara Guru

3.1 Variations according to islands: Java and Bali

The exhibit stresses the differences between the Javanese and Balinese depictions (see fig. 7a). It could be argued that the differential uses of the shadow play figure during the performance in Bali and in Java could account for the formal differences of the figures in both islands. The Javanese Betara Guru is represented in a stylized fashion, and very intricately carved and painted, while in Bali he is more naturalistically depicted and not as finely made. I would argue, based on my observations in the field, that it may be because the figures are used mainly to create shadows in Bali. This does not mean that the colours of the figures are not important; in fact, Hobart (1985:33), in an essay on the Balinese shadow play figures, has stressed that it was universally agreed to be its most significant iconographic feature. In Java, on the other hand, the intricacy and abundance of ornamentation of the figures might be linked to the usual location of the audience: on the side of the dalang, allowing it to see the dalang’s movements and the intricate design of the figures. It is also from the side of the dalang (and not of the shadows) that the figures take all their mystical meaning: most good characters are placed at the right of the dalang who is seated in the middle of the screen (from the other side of the screen it becomes the left side which does not agree with the symbolic meaning of the figures) and the bad ones at his left side. This could indicate that the figures are primarily made to be seen from the dalang’s side (therefore not only for their shadows) in order to have access to the full meaning of the play. This view is in contrast with the one held by most Westerners (particularly tourists) who, when they attend these
performances (according to my observations), invariably sit on the side of the shadows. A written comment on the preparatory exhibit I installed at the Asian centre at UBC (fig. 41), entitled Wayang Today: Through Five Indonesian Artists (April 1991), confirms this view: "This exhibit could not be any worse. The puppets' value is the shadow they cast. But no shadows exist and as a result no value exists in this exhibit" (anonymous).

But clearly most Javanese prefer to sit on the other side of the screen and see the puppets themselves and follow the movements and expressions of the dalang (they call this side the "front side" while we say it is the "back side"). Therefore, the name "shadow play figures" might be misleading (as I have stressed in the introduction of the exhibit) and this is why I prefer to use the term which refers to the leather figures (instead of the shadows) since kulit means "leather" (more particularly "parchment").

It follows that the shadow thrown on the screen is only a matter of secondary importance. If attention should be called to the fact that the derived form of "wayangan" has not only the meaning of "shadow" but also of "shadow picture", then, on the other hand, it should be pointed out, that the puppet itself always represents a materialized silhouette of a ghost of one of the Javanese ancestors (Mellema 1954: 5).

The importance of the figures and the dalang's movements becomes quite obvious in performances such as the the rebo legi (Sweet Wednesday), described by Laurie Sears (1989:128), held every 35 days at Anom Surata (a Solonese puppeteer's house).

Other customs are displaced in the rebo legi performances. To begin with there are no shadows. Since the main emphasis is

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30 Sears has added a note concerning the use of shadows: "When I was in Java between 1982 and '84, the positioning of the screen against the wall at these performances rarely enabled the audience to see the shadows. When there were shadows, there were often seen only by the crowds outside, the opposite of traditional performances where the invited guests see the
on the puppeteer and there is no ritual ceremony connected with the event other than Surata's Javanese birthday, a certain foreshortening of the tradition takes place, both in the texture of the unseen dimensions of the performance -- the ritual and mystical side -- and in the texture of physical possibilities. One can only sit in back of the puppeteer, as the screen is most commonly placed against a wall ... At these performances, the audience is displaced and invited and uninvited guests share the same space. At village wayang performances, the invited guests sit watching the shadows inside or near the home of the host of the performance, while uninvited people from the neighborhood gather in back of the puppeteer and musicians.

The difference between Javanese and Balinese figures can also be accounted for in term of the differences in their historical development.

Balinese puppets are relatively naturalistic and have a lingering affinity in appearance with figures on reliefs of temples in east Java from the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries. The Javanese puppets are, on the other hand, highly stylised. This change in their form is thought to have taken place in the last three hundred years, since the arrival of Islam on Java (Hobart, 1985:2).

There is a basic sociological difference between the Balinese and the Javanese art of dance, drama, and music. The Balinese art of dance, drama, and music [it could include wayang] is rural-based, and has developed highly complex and technically sophisticated forms in the village communities. The villages are the places where the artists receive artistic education and training, and where they are organized into artistic associations. Balinese royalty invites the artists to perform in their courts, who return to their respective villages after the performance. In Bali the art performed in the courts is therefore basically folk art. In Java, on the other hand, court art is based on the courts themselves, and a wide gap separates court art from folk art (Koentjaraningrat, 1985: 228 note 172).

shadows and the uninvited onlookers see the puppeteer. It is interesting that at radio station RRI performances, held once a month in Solo in a Western-style theatre, audiences are denied access to the puppeteer rather than to the shadows".
A commonly cited theory is that stylization developed in Java with the prohibition of human representations by Islam\textsuperscript{31} (Ulbricht, 1970: 30).

Some narrators hold the view that the creators of the wayang were the Islamic religious teachers of the Demak era, but this is almost certainly a mistake. Because before the Demak era, even before the time of Airlangga, the wayang existed as a punched leather puppet.

It is quite likely, however, that the religious teachers [Islamic 	extit{waalis}] adapted and developed the stylisation of the puppets and gave them their present appearance as can be seen in Java (Moerdowo, 1982: 28-29).

The Balinese, however, strongly resisted the Islamic infiltration and remain a bastion of Hindu culture in Indonesia, which might explain why they have kept the most naturalistic treatment.

3.2 Variations according to cities, within Java

Within the island of Java, focus of the study which sustained the exhibit, variations can be observed mainly in terms of cities (remnants of the regencies of the 19th century). My discussion of these variations focusses on neighbouring cities in Central Java, Yogyakarta (commonly called Yogya) and Surakarta (commonly called Solo).

For instance, the Yogyanese Betara Guru (see figs. 1a and 2a; and also figs. 17 to 20) wears a turban (\textit{songkok}, fig. 36.1) usually worn by the priests which might be used to emphasize the wisdom of the character, in his role as "Divine teacher" (see fig. 8a). He has mobile arms (according to Sukasman, this allows him to take a more active role in the stories) and bent shoulders

\textsuperscript{31} According to Ricklefs (1981: 4), evidence of the spread of Islam in Java dates from the 14th century. This theory explaining the stylization is nevertheless contested on the ground that naturalistic depiction of the human body is also found within Islam rooted art such as in the \textit{wayang golek} (see Wickert and Purbaya, 1987)– suggestion from Willy van Yperen, personal communication.
(particular in Yogyanese figures, according to Sukasman, which make Betara Guru appear to be in motion). His feet are turned in the same direction (see fig. 9a) and the cow underneath him, which looks more like a calf in most examples, faces in the same direction. It is striking to observe that the Yogyanese Betara Guru (in most cases) do not hold anything in their hands.

On the other hand, the Surakarta depiction (see figs. 3a to 5a in the exhibit, and fig. 36.2) shows him wearing one of two different types of crowns with the three-tiered diadem appropriate to his rank. This choice might be used to emphasize the role of Guru as supreme ruler of the world. The type of crown varies according to the wanda or representation of the character. In the examples provided in figs. 13 and 4a, the crown can be, respectively, either a makuta (the high crown) or a topong (low crown) such as the one worn by Karna, refined and proud hero siding with the Korawa family despite the fact that he is the half-brother of the Pendawa. Furthermore, the Solonese style figure has straight shoulders and the feet are turned outward (see fig. 9a), so that the toes point in opposite directions. According to Ulbricht (1970: 24), this would demonstrate his inability to walk (some Javanese stories mentioned that this handicap fell on Guru after he doubted the divine descent of Jesus Christ who could not walk when he was a baby, contrary to the gods of the wayang at this age). Another reason mentioned by I Wayan Nartha, one of my Balinese artist-informants, lies in the holiness of Guru which prevents him from touching the ground. That is why he is always shown mounted on something: either a bull, a throne or, more rarely, a snake.

The existing variations between the wayang style of the cities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta could be explained by the difference of political affiliation which has historically distinguished these two cities. The
competition to become the centre of the arts might have also resulted in the need to create a distinctive identity.

The cities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta were created officially in 1755 by the Treaty of Gianti which divided the ancient Central Javanese state (Mataram) into these two kingdoms. Already the political divergence in the origins of these cities can be observed. In fact, they arose from the rebellion of the leader Mangkubumi (who would become the founder of Yogyakarta) against his brother, Pakubuwana II, king of the Mataram dynasty (whose son would later govern Surakarta). This rebellion took place after Pakubuwana II signed away one of the richest parts of his kingdom to the powerful Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie, referred to as the VOC)\textsuperscript{32} to cover a debt he had contracted to this company in exchange for its help in regaining the throne (taken by the Madurese king, Cakraningrat IV, in 1742). This treaty was signed without consulting his dignitaries, thereby offending a basic principle of Javanese kingship (Ricklefs, 1981: 92). Mangkubumi, resenting the malleability of Pakubuwana II in the hands of the Dutch, mounted a rebellion, and the Third Javanese War of Succession (from 1746 to 1757) began. In 1749, Pakubuwana II died and the VOC gained sovereignty over the kingdom. As control of Mataram was passing from Pakubuwana II to his son (Pakubuwana III), Mangkubumi was declared king by his followers and set up a rival court in the village of Yogyakarta, near the early Mataram courts of Plered and Kota Gede. The VOC could not ignore the most powerful ruler they had ever faced and had to accept the power of Mangkubumi who became, in 1755, the first ruler of the Yogyakarta dynasty and of half of Central Java. Mangkubumi took the distinctive name of

\textsuperscript{32} Started in the beginning of the 17th century, it was followed by Dutch colonial rule until the independence of Indonesia in the middle of this century.
'Hamengkubuwana I' and the title of 'Sultan'. The ruler of Surakarta, Pakubuwana III, took the title of "Susuhunan" and moved his court from the city of Kartosura to Surakarta.

From 1946 to 1950, both cities could be clearly opposed by their allegiance: Yogyakarta was the headquarters of the Indonesian revolutionary forces and became a symbol of resistance to alien forces while Surakarta remained loyal to the Dutch. Because they sided with the enemy, the Solonese royal court lost their authority after independence, while the Yogyakarta court remained semi-autonomous. Separate crests, colours and styles (fig. 25) have developed through time and now identify the courts of each city.

An example of Betara Guru (fig. 19) from the period of Sultan Hamengkubuwana 6 or 7 (who reigned approximately 150 years ago) testifies to the changes in the Yogyanese style. Curiously, this earlier form shares formal similarities with the Balinese and Solonese forms. This could suggest a common root for these forms (wayang is said to have entered Bali with the invasion of the Javanese Majapahit empire, although this explanation is contested in Bali). Clearly, more data is needed to sustain this hypothesis.

... with the passage of years dalang at the courts of Surakarta and Jogjakarta developed somewhat different styles of wajang [y replaces y in the old spelling] performance. Jogjakarta-style wajang is considered more vigorous, direct, and simple; Surakarta-style wajang more delicate, refined, and complex in structure. Jogjakarta wajang is considered the more orthodox, the more conservative; there is more innovation, more interest in keeping up-to-date in Surakarta style. Jogjakarta battles are livelier and contain more kinds of puppet movements; Surakarta music is richer in nuance and broader in range, with

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33 An Arabic word used after the Indonesian kings converted to Islam, which facilitated the linkage of Mangkubumi to the greatest of Mataram rulers, Sultan Agung, 1613-46.
34 In the Museum Sono Budoyo, Yogyakarta.
more melodies to choose from. The proportions of Surakarta puppets are smaller than those of Jogjakarta. The types of scenes performed differ. *Differences between the two styles are not great, but the usual wajang devotee is passionately fond of one and disdainful of the other because of them* [my emphasis] (Brandon, 1970: 8).

Although one could disagree with the value-laden adjectives used in this description of styles, it nevertheless stresses quite clearly that differences exist between the two cities. It shows how style is a matter of preference (a factor which explains why some Yogyanese artists borrow from the Solonese style and *vice versa*), and how differences were established through time. I particularly want to argue with this author's nonchalant sweeping aside of the stylistic differences between cities. Obviously, the ideological implications of the differences matter for the makers and most Javanese. Arguments such as Brandon's have been used by other authors who similarly avoid the difficulty of the subject: "Differences between Solonese and Yogyanese puppets are mostly matters of details of faces and costume" (Van Ness and Prawirohardjo, 1980:16). As I have argued earlier, they are rather a matter of style (see footnote 12, Chapter 3), everything is different: the stance, the symbols used, the position of the body (i.e. shoulders, feet, hands), the type of carving, the colours and the representations of the cow in characterization of Betara Guru (see figs. 13 to 20, and 1a to 6a).

Although these city style differences might seem minor to non-Indonesian observer, for most Javanese, these differences between city styles are important and are immediately recognized. The Solonese style is now the most widely distributed in Indonesia while the Yogyanese style is restricted mainly to Yogyakarta. Part of the reason might lie in the restricted access, to non-Yogyanese, to knowledge about making the classical Yogyanese style. According to my artist-informants, the Yogyanese style constitutes the
purest expression of this art form and should not be readily available to non-
Yogyanese for fear of "pollution".

3.3 Variations according to artist's preference: classical and experimental

Differences between the classical and the experimental examples are
rarely mentioned in the literature. Experimental artists often change their
representation of the characters in order to fit their new interpretations of the
character and stories.

The figures by Hajar Satoto (fig. 5a) and Sukasman (fig. 2a) provide
examples of experimental styles\textsuperscript{35} still within the traditional repertoire of the
Mahabharata. Nevertheless, they vary from their classical counterparts by
their use of vivid colours and the artists' personal depictions of the
characters' ornaments. In Hajar Satoto's Betara Guru, the design of the figure
has been simplified because he believes it makes the form more expressive.
For instance, Satoto believes that the inner design should follow the outer
shape while classical artists such as Balai Agung and Bambang Suwarno
represent the inner and outer shape autonomously. Compare, for instance,
Satoto's depiction of the \textit{kayon} (tripartite leaf-shaped forms which frame the
lower part of his body), and the \textit{praba} (the wing-like ornaments on the back)
with the more classical form, such as Bambang Suwarno's representation of
Betara Guru (fig. 3a). Satoto's innovations include the addition of new
symbolic elements such as a snake\textsuperscript{36} (\textit{Naga}) under the cow stressing that Guru

\textsuperscript{35} These figures were emphasized in the exhibit by placing a screen behind them, thus isolating
them from the other figures. This design also allows the viewer to see the shadows created by
the figures.

\textsuperscript{36} The snake is also present in the Betara Guru from the sacred collection of the \textit{kraton} (fig. 17)
but not under the cow.
is also ruler of the underworld. Sukasman has added a halo around the
colorless's head. Haryanto discusses the changes made by Sukasman in
emphasizing horizontal and vertical lines (Haryanto, 1988, translated for me
by Sudharto). The tail of the cow is curved differently from the classical form
in order to create a formal balance with the position of the head and of the
trisula, trident, the singular attribute of Guru. Finally, the position of the
head has been lifted upward in Sukasman's portrayal of Guru to suggest that
he is a little bit arrogant (Sukasman's interpretation).

The showcase exemplifies the differences according to islands, cities (in
Java) and between the experimental and classical forms. It nevertheless does
not impose this information, which could be considered heavily didactic, on
the visitor. On the contrary, the display allows visitors to simply contemplate
the pieces at leisure. This space expresses my preoccupation with a multiplex
perspective to counteract the creation of possible stereotypes by presenting six
different artistic interpretations of the same character, Betara Guru. To see
how this multiplex perspective is articulated in the rest of the exhibit, I will
now describe the photo-exhibit.
Chapter Five. Anatomy of the Exhibit

"Wayang From the Gods to Bart Simpson": Photo-Exhibit

The second part of the exhibit, consisting mainly of photographs taken in Indonesia (as well as photos provided by Heri Dono among others), runs the length of the wall on each side of the Theatre Gallery. The photo-exhibit is divided into five sections.

The first section presents the introduction which explains the title "Wayang: From the Gods to Bart Simpson" and describes each of the two poles presented in the exhibit: "the Gods" corresponding to the Court (classical) Wayang and "Bart Simpson" corresponding to Wayang Legenda (experimental wayang).

The second section presents the performances corresponding to the poles presented in the introduction, as well as an intermediate type of performance, the Wayang Ukur. The essence of this latter performance is inspired by classical art but differs in its promotion of change and experimentation, although it is not as extreme as Wayang Legenda.

In the following section, the court form is compared with the intermediate form, Wayang Ukur, the only experimental form I documented which shares a common range of characters with the classical form. Common characteristics are identified -- such as the range of figures and stories -- and differences are pointed out, such as stylistic divergences.

The fourth segment presents four more experimental forms which do not share formal similarities with the classical forms: these are Wayang

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37 Each part is separated by wider gaps between the frames (see fig. 27).
Suluh, Wayang Dinosaurs, Wayang Kancil and Wayang Legenda. The last section of the exhibit aims at expanding the definition of wayang kulit. The fifth section presents information on Indonesia and the acknowledgements.

I will now describe in greater detail each of these sections as well as present complementary information such as the values linked with the classical and experimental performances, principles of Javanese aesthetic and the criteria used to judge the quality of the pieces.

1.0 First Series of Panels: Introduction

The exhibition title might at first appear slightly sensationalistic and gratuitous but it becomes understandable throughout the exhibit and especially after reading the second label in which the theme of the exhibit is stated. This label describes the two poles discussed in the exhibit. Around the idea of "Gods" are associated the classical styles: the high art, the religious, the serious, the sober, the Javanese-centred art issuing from a collective heritage. On the other hand, "Bart Simpson" strikingly evokes the opposite, that is the experimental styles: popular art, the secular, the humorous, the exuberant, Western-influenced and the individualistic art forms.

Furthermore, using a character as well known as Bart Simpson allows one to establish a bridge between two seemingly different cultures. It provides a useful parallel to understanding how one immediately recognizes a character such as Semar, with his big belly and buttocks, and Bart Simpson, with his blond porcupine style-hair and massive overbite. More important, it allows one to relate to the wayang in contemporary terms. Bart Simpson is popular now, as is the wayang kulit in Java. This is why a title change has occurred. The previous title was Wayang: From Gods to Dinosaurs. Even
though it might have appeared more elegant and conveyed the idea of something popular now, dinosaurs are still prehistoric creatures. An accusation of locating the Javanese production in the past (moreover in prehistoric times) could have arisen from such a comparison. I therefore preferred using a title which would be unequivocal.

2.0 Second Series of Panels: The Performances

The first three introductory panels are followed by a second section consisting of four panels (see fig. 27). It provides information on three types of performance (each section is separated by a wider space between the frames). A classical form from the Sultan's court of Yogyakarta appears first (see fig. 13a). Then, the Wayang Ukur of Sukasman (see fig. 14a), whose figure range and stories are drawn from the classical style, but whose experimentation departs from the tradition. Finally comes Heri Dono's Wayang Legenda (see fig. 20a), which clearly departs from the tradition. His repertoire is taken from outside the traditional epics and drawn from stories of the Batak people of Sumatra (a small Catholic group within the orthodox Muslim population of Sumatra). The formal aspects of his figures are drawn from his imagination and fantasy and are inspired by what surrounds him, including Western popular art. The performances associated with these two extremes (the Gods and Bart Simpson) are found again in this section but separated by the intermediate range form of Sukasman's Wayang Ukur. This tripartite view of the performance accentuates the idea of "range" and is used to break the simple binary opposition to suggest a multiplex perspective. This strategy is underlined at the end of the exhibit (section 4) by the presentation of three additional experimental forms (Wayang Suluh, Wayang Kancil and
Wayang Dinosaurs). These three performances differ in the stories they use, the length of their performance, the language used, the number of dalang and the setting of the performances. Other characteristics could have been included but these synthesize the striking ones I observed during my trips to Indonesia. There is an obvious limit to my knowledge of Wayang Legenda, since I have not seen Heri Dono's performance and knew of it only through articles written by Astri Wright38 and the articles written in German39 by Urs Ramseyer, curator of an exhibit of Heri Dono's art in Basel (sent to me by Heri Dono with the photos of his works). I have nevertheless decided to include this form in order to offer a wider scope on wayang. Heri Dono's views offer a vivid contrast to the other forms and his Western influences may appeal to visitors. Moreover, his work presents a view from a younger generation of Indonesians (he is 30 years old).

The diagram below (fig. 27) illustrates the logic which informs the exhibit. The arbitrary numbers 1, 2 and 3 refer respectively to Court Wayang, Wayang Ukur and Wayang Legenda.

The differences between classical and experimental performances can be understood in terms of the values and functions they fulfill. The following information can be useful in understanding some of these differences.

2.1 Classical performances: reflections of priyayi values

The classical wayang kulit (the expression has been extended to include the plays performed with these figures), particularly the court performance,
expresses to a great extent the values of the *priyayi*, the Javanese cultural and political elite. Geertz has discussed the *priyayi* in this terms:

*Priyaji*⁴⁰ originally referred only to the hereditary aristocracy which the Dutch pried loose from the kings of the vanquished native states and turned into an appointive, salaried civil service. This white-collar elite, its ultimate roots in the Hindu-Javanese courts of pre-colonial times, conserved and cultivated a highly refined court etiquette, a very complex art of dance, drama, music, and poetry, and a Hindu-Buddhist mysticism (1960: 6).

Geertz ([Ibid.]) mentions that the *priyayi* are one of the three main social-structural nuclei in Java, the others being the Javanese village associated with *abangan* (the indigenous religious tradition), and the market, associated with the Purer subtradition of Islam, called *santri*.

The use of *priyayi* by Geertz has nevertheless been criticized:

Koentjaraningrat has pointed out that Geertz’s *santri-abangan-priyayi* taxonomy confused a legitimate division between two religious traditions (syncretist abangan, Muslim santri) by treating priyayi as a comparable category, when essentially it refers to a social class. In actuality, priyayi could follow either abangan or santri religio-cultural traditions ... (Sutherland, 1975:57).

⁴⁰ Old spelling.
In the same vein, Van Niel suggests:

In practice the most usable criterion for distinguishing the prijaji is social function -- they provided cohesion to Javanese society above the local level and provided the intellectual, cultural and cosmological basis of Indonesian society. In a word, they fulfilled the functions of an elite (1984:23).

According to Sutton, the *priyayi*, who live mainly in the cities, espouse syncretistic religious beliefs (*Agami Jawi*) "forged from indigenous animism and veneration for ancestors combined with Hindu-Buddhist and Islamic influences along with relatively little European influence" (1987: 31).

This group has undergone many changes in the course of Javanese history and has known how to transform itself to maintain its hegemony.

Originally the term was *para yayi*, meaning "younger brothers" (of the king), and by extension it came to include the governing aristocracy. Nobles and officials, court-based administrators and local chiefs could all be classed as priyayi. Ideally speaking, a priyayi was a well-born Javanese holding high government office, thoroughly versed in the aristocratic culture of the courts. He should be familiar with classical literature, music and dance, the *wayang kulit* (puppet shadow play), and with the subtleties of philosophy, ethics and mysticism (Sutherland 1975: 57-58 ).

Associated mainly with the nobility and the military service (*satrya*), under the Dutch the *priyayi* became bureaucrat-administrators and white-collar civil servants. The aristocratic *priyayi* were also deprived of their economic and political leadership and retained their hegemony only in the domains of art and culture.

*Wayang* has become a tool to sustain the power and legitimate the position of the *priyayi* elite by propagating their world views and values to all.

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41 The association of the *priyayi* with the court is also relatively new. Before the Dutch colonial regime the *priyayi* played the role of mediator between the ruler and the peasants. This group was not unified either. But through the extension of Dutch education and the systematization of a more uniform civil service (Sutherland, 1975:65) this group became a lot more homogeneous, and more closely associated with the centre.
level of societies. And although new modern values emerged among this group in the beginning of the 20th century, they did not completely replace the traditional values; rather, they coexist with them.

I will present in the following section characteristics of some of these world views and values. Among them are the mystical and religious values, the *batin-lair* division, the idea of status and hierarchy, the *alus-kasar* code of behaviour, and the expression of legitimacy.

2.1.1 Mystical and religious values

At the centre of the *priyayi* belief system is a mystical and religious teaching which permeates all aspects of the *wayang* which is an "attempt to explore poetically the existential position of Javanese man, his relationships to the natural and supernatural order, to his fellow-men-- and to himself" (Anderson, 1965: 5). In fact, the *wayang* exposes "a higher knowledge, a gnosis, not destined for the common people. [It strives] to give to one who is striving after perfection the final answers to the all-important questions about the meaning of life and existence and the end of man" (Zoetmulder, 1971: 85). The search for union with the Divine is the aim of the mystical teaching. The classical *wayang* shows that it can be achieved through the practice of meditation and asceticism. To illustrate this idea, the story of *Dewa Ruci* has often been quoted by scholars (Geertz, 1960; Holt, 1967; Ulbricht, 1970 among others). It tells of the search for invulnerability and esoteric wisdom of Bima (one of the five Pendawa brothers around which centre the *Mahabharata* stories).
He told me a *wajang* story. Someone tells Bima that if he gets a special kind of water and bathes in it he will be invulnerable and thus will certainly win in the Bratajuda war against Sujudana (the leader of the Korawa, cousin of the Pendawa who have usurped their right to the throne, see section 3.1). As he doesn't know where this water can be found, he goes off to see a *guru* to find out where to get it. The *guru*, however, has lately been given lots of gifts by the Korawas, and so the *guru* aids evil and tries to send Bima to his death. (There are *gurus* like that, the informant said; some use their knowledge for good, some for bad.) The *guru* tells Bima to go and get the water at the top of the mountain—although he knows that two very powerful giants are meditating there and that they will be infuriated when they are disturbed by Bima looking for the magic water to make him powerful and invulnerable. Bima goes, and indeed the giants become angry and fight with him. He is nearly beaten, but finally he manages to strike the giants' heads together, and lo, they turn into gods. Sometimes the gods themselves do evil; and these two had done something wrong and had been incarnated as giants by Batara Guru, from which state Bima removed them by knocking their heads together. Grateful, they tell him that he has been deceived and there is no water there. Angry, he goes back to the *guru* and says that he has been deceived; but the *guru* explains by saying that he had sent Bima up to the mountain as a test of his bravery and strength to make sure that he was able to undergo the actual journey he must take. Then he tells Bima that he will find the water in the middle of the sea, hoping that Bima will be drowned there. Bima leaves for the sea, single-mindedly, while his older brother, Judistira, and his younger brother, Ardjuna, plead with him not to go telling him that he is being deceived again. He pays no attention to them but marches straight to the sea. When he reaches the sea, after great struggles with monsters, he finds a god who looks exactly like himself except that he is only as big as his little finger. Bima, astonished at this midget replica of himself, tells him his quest. The little god says "Enter me"; and Bima does, through the mouth, the big man entering the little. Inside, he sees that the whole world is there, contained inside the little god. Then he emerges again, the god telling him that there is no water, that his power is within himself, and that he must look into himself, for that is the source of his strength. "If God is everywhere in the world, then he is in you too, and you must look into yourself and see the world there, and then you will have the power you seek." And so Bima goes off to meditate. Sudjono (the informant) was quite conscious of the symbolism of all this and kept saying that the midget-god replica of Bima represented his
inner self (quoted by an unnamed informant in Geertz, 1960: 273-74).

The practices of meditation and ascetism are said to allow one to learn about his inner reality, the spiritual reality which allows him to be united with God. Various episodes in the wayang express this quest for esoteric wisdom.

2.1.2 *Batin* and *lair*

The cultivation of the inner self through asceticism brings spiritual excellence which is, for the Javanese, equated with political eminence. "The higher one's status, the stronger one's batin is assumed to be" (Keeler, 1987: 40). The *batin* refers to the inner life which has to be coordinated, ordered with the *lair*, the outer life. The two concepts of *lair* and *batin*, central to the Javanese philosophy, have been explained by Geertz:

*Bat in* means "the inner realm of human experience," and *lair" the outer realm of human behavior." The immediate temptation is to equate them with body and soul, but this would be a serious mistake. *Bat in* refers not to a separate seat of encapsulated spirituality detachable from the body but to the emotional life of the individual taken generally -- what we call "the inner life," or the "subjective"; it consists of the fuzzy, shifting shapes of private feeling perceived directly in all their phenomenological immediacy. *Lair*, on the other hand, refers to that part of human life which strict behavioral psychologists limit themselves to studying -- the external actions, motions, postures, and speech of the individual (1960: 232).

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42 The masculine use here refers to men since, as will be stressed later, this art form is oriented toward males.
The understanding of the self, the *batin*, is said to bring power. Concerning the "Javanese idea of power" which differs from our Western notions, Anderson writes:

Power is that intangible, mysterious, and divine energy which animates the universe. ... In Javanese traditional thinking there is no sharp division between organic and inorganic matter, for everything is sustained by the same invisible power (1972: 7).

The control of the inner life is reflected externally in the expression of restrained behaviour by the refinement and control of one's own behaviour, by the use of politeness, phlegmatic poise, use of the proper level of language and etiquette. Arjuna (figs. 37a and 38a) epitomizes this ideal man (note the physical correspondence between these representations and the dancers incarnating a Javanese hero in fig. 19a).

2.1.3 Status and hierarchy

This control of the exterior affects and even regulates social relations. In fact, every encounter begins with an agreement by both parties as to the level of formality to be employed. The level is determined according to one's status. "The relationship is not personal but 'of status' " (Keeler, 1975: 102). The *priyayi* ethic show a strong sense of status difference which is a crucial element in self definition. Underlying their ethics is the "calm assertion of spiritual superiority" (Geertz, 1960: 231).

Status, regardless of style, is also critical to interaction in wayang, and its signs are another essential aspect of the differentiation of characters. No matter what the lakon⁴³, the status and style of character should be respected at all times. The structure of

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⁴³ Plot or scenario.
authority is apparently quite straightforward. The gods have superior position and power to those of the knights (satriya) and servant-clowns (punakawan), and within each of these sets there are further gradations according to rank and age (Keeler, 1987: 205-206).

2.1.4 Codes of behaviour: the *alus* and *kasar* scale

A person's speech and actions indicates his or her status and inner temperament, and are closely related to the opposition between *alus* and *kasar*. Being *alus* is the hallmark of the *priyayi* whose values correspond to those of the ideal person: one who is self-controlled, polished, learned, and spiritually refined. *Kasar* on the other hand characterizes the popular, the vulgar, the unrefined, the controlled passion (as opposed to the controlled spirit). The peasant incarnates the *kasar* according to the *priyayi*. These two qualities are also used to evaluate all aspects of Javanese experience such as language, the arts, physical appearance and behaviour.

Similarly, the *wayang kulit* is said to be part of the *alus* art complex in opposition to the popular art complex called *kasar*. As Geertz (1960: 232) points out: "Alus means pure, refined, polished, polite, exquisite, ethereal, subtle, civilized, smooth ... Kasar is merely the opposite: impolite, rough, uncivilized". The classical *wayang kulit* characters are also classified in terms of these two qualities of *alus* and *kasar* (as is discussed in the third section of the exhibit). Being *alus* is the focus of *priyayi* ethics, and the expression of their power. *Priyayi* values are presented as the model for the peasants to

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44 Anderson (1972: 38) has stressed the connections between *alus* and power. But as Keeler (1987: 41) mentions: "I should note, however, that a man concerns himself with his potency more than a woman does. A woman's social status and her relative status in any exchange depend for the most part on the status of her father and her husband. She must watch out for the impression of her sexual purity, however, as a man must watch out for the impression of his potency ... ".
emulate, and are expressed in wayang through the emphasis on the characters incarnating their ideals of behaviour. The peasant is seen, according to the priyayi point of view, as "both a disturbingly barbaric parody of his own carefully controlled behavior and an attractive spontaneity and animal power ... " (Geertz, 1960: 228). Peasants are depicted through the punakawan, servant-clowns which are "grotesque in appearance, crude in behavior, and comic in effect" (McVey, 1986: 23). Semar (figs. 33a and 34a) is the leader of this group. The punakawan correspond to the loyal and obedient subject, a position due to his or her "kasarness". As McVey points out, the wayang therefore becomes an important means of transmitting social messages and courtly values. Through the punakawan the idea is conveyed that:

... a peasant may be ultimately higher than the king, the outwardly coarse may be divine [as in the case of Semar, physically kasar but of divine origin], and the poor wiser than those placed above them. The celebration of such principles in the wayang purwa relieves the tensions of a highly stratified social structure, reminding common folk of their value but also of their duty of service, and those in power of their fallibility and their dependence on the loyalty of their retainers (McVey, 1986:23).
2. 1.5 Expressions of legitimacy

The court has gained legitimacy not only through the attitudes of its members and their pretension to a higher potency but also by tracing the origin of its members' genealogy to the Gods. The main story used, the *Mahabharata*, has offered this legitimacy to the court since it covers a span of twelve generations beginning with the god Wisnu, the Pandawas' ancestor and ending with Parikesit, who is thought to be the ancestor of the king of Java (Brandon, 1970: 11—see fig. 28). The name Hamengkubuwana ("The one who hold the world in his lap") and the title Pakubuwana ("honoured lord" or "the nail of the world"), taken by the rulers of the court of Yogyakarta and Surakarta, indicate quite strikingly the Hindu-Javanese conception of the king symbolizing the centre of the universe (Koentjaraningrat, 1985:39) and legitimized on the basis of divine incarnation. The legitimacy of the actual president, Suharto, has also been based partly on his relation to this divine genealogy (Anderson, 1972).

This legitimacy has also been supported by the concept of *wahyu*, which is the divine radiance acquired by a ruler which can sometimes be recognized by a halo around the face and by his sexual prowess (the *wayang* is very much concerned with the sexual conquests of its heroes). The importance of a traditional state defined by its centre is also a pivot to affirm legitimacy. This centre symbolizes the unity, central symbol of power of the rulers. That is why most of the action of the *wayang* revolves around the court, which symbolizes this power to which the population owes obedience and loyalty.
2.2 Experimental performances: Modernization values

Even though the most popular and widely disseminated form of *wayang kulit* is still the classical version (*wayang purwa*), which draws its repertory from Indian mythological epics, there are, increasingly, new interpretations given to the *wayang*, as well as new forms of *wayang* emerging. Some artists experiment with the shape of the leather figures, others change the setting, the content or the length of the performance. These forms have emerged particularly since the independence of Indonesia in 1949. Nevertheless, they still have not acquired the popularity of the classical version.

At the beginning of this century, the traditional social order began to weaken and Java slowly switched “from a traditional, cosmologically oriented, hereditary elite to a modern, welfare-state oriented, education-based elite” (Van Niel, 1984: 2). Similarly the patronage of the *wayang kulit* passed from the court to the government and modern institutions.

With the emergence of a new elite educated in Westernized schools, the growth of urban centres, the spread of nationalism, and the influence of Western civilization, the *wayang kulit* has taken on new functions and has come to embrace new values. Among these are the growing movements of secularization, democratization, materialism and to a certain extent individualism. I will briefly describe each of these in the following section.
2.2.1 Secularization

According to my informants (particularly Pak Bono, a dalang who taught at Simon Fraser University in 1990) and the literature on wayang I have consulted (Anderson, 1965; McVey, 1986; Sears, 1989) the emphasis of wayang kulit seems to be shifting from a religious and mystically-oriented role to a more secular one. "The wayang purwa is fast becoming straightforward entertainment; even in rural areas, performances on traditional ritual occasions become more matters of custom and enjoyment than of spiritual significance" (McVey, 1986: 41). "Wayang itself seems, in the more metropolitan centers, to be changing rapidly from an education to a mere entertainment" (Anderson, 1965: 27).

Parallel to the growth of wayang kulit as entertainment (a role which it has always had but accompanied by a religious aspect, an aspect which now seems to be fading), there appeared as well criticism of the traditional "philosophizing" role of the puppeteer (Anderson, 1965: 27). The dalang is losing his traditional role of guru (spiritual teacher) in society and takes more and more the role of a stage performer loved for his flashy movement and humorous comments. As Pak Bono mentions, the audience attends the performances more and more to appreciate the technical ability of the dalang, his capacity to manipulate the puppets -- particularly during the battle-scenes -- and to hear his comments and jokes. Nevertheless, Sudharto Hadi (a PhD. student in community planning at UBC whose father was dalang in Klaten, a village between Yogyakarta and Solo) believes that this emphasis on entertainment (which is not the norm according to him) does not make wayang a secular art. He thinks that most of the population still consider the
dalang as having spiritual power, however good his talent as a performer might be.

According to Laurie Sears, professor in the Department of History at the University of Washington, and Umar Kayam\textsuperscript{45}, professor in the Cultural Studies Department at Gaja Mada in the city of Yogyakarta, the shifting role of wayang can also be noticed in the appearance of "super dalang", who are puppeteers who surround themselves with specialists (for instance to control the lighting effects, the creation of musical accompaniment, etc.). This fragmentation of the role of the dalang is new, since the dalang used to control all aspects of the performance by himself. The super dalang can also receive as much as three million rupiah a night, roughly two thousand dollars, which is, needless to say, a fabulous sum in Indonesia.

Furthermore, the setting of the super dalang performance has undergone drastic changes:

Here the influence of the cinema is unmistakable, since fighting, comedy, and sentiment are the essentials of most films that Indonesians see. The current pressure to shorten a wayang performance from a whole night to two or three hours reflects again the assimilation of wayang to modern commercial entertainment (Anderson, 1965:27).

The pressure to reduce the length of the performance also arises from the emergence of a new middle class who work during regular office hours and therefore cannot afford to spend a whole night watching a wayang performance. According to a young dalang at the kraton, named Agus, the reduction of the length of the performance would have an impact on the mystical and philosophical values permeating classical wayang. These could

\textsuperscript{45} In the conference "Change, Identity and Justice" at the University of Washington, Seattle, October, 1990.
attain their full development and meaning only within the long performance.

The secularization process is also visible in the recognition of the possibility of transmitting messages to the people. During the nineteen forties, when the revolution was taking place against the Dutch, new wayang forms emerged which were much more politicized and overtly propagandistic, such as the Wayang Suluh presented in the last part of the exhibit. Another form is Wayang Pancasila (not mentioned in the exhibit), created by Empu Hadi. The latter was used to glorify the history of the new Republic and the five principles at the foundation of its constitution: (1) Monotheism; 2) a Just and Civilized Humanity; 3) Nationalism 4) Democracy, guided by the wisdom of unanimity arising from discussion (musjawarah) and mutual assistance (gotong royong) and 5) Social Justice.

The wayang also played a part during the communist expansion in the beginning of the 1960s. Even after Suharto came to power in 1965, defeating communism and establishing the "New Order", wayang continued to be used for legitimating purposes: "military wayang aimed at conveying the importance of the army's role and values, wayang for popularizing the regime's birth control program ... " [McVey, 1986: 38], as well as for the implemention of the first Five-year Plan (Clara van Groenendael, 1985: 3), and so on. Nevertheless these new forms never gained the popularity of the traditional forms and were short-lived.

The emergence of new character models, often for ideological purposes, has also occurred. Traditionally, the emphasis of the stories was on Arjuna and Judistira, who correspond to the ideals of refinement and high spirituality of the court order. Under Sukarno, the first President of Indonesia (who took over after Independence until 1966, when Suharto took his place),
a shift of values occurred and the models for "the new Indonesian man" became Kresna, Wrekudara and Wrekudara' son Gatakaja, praised for their loyalty and patriotism (Anderson, 1965: 28).

2.2.2 Democratization

With the ideology of instituting unity in Indonesia (the first credo of the Pancasila, see preceding page), efforts were made to democratize and nationalize wayang kulit. This can be seen in the new experimentations (i.e.: Wayang Ukur, Wayang Legenda, Wayang Padat; see Sears, 1989), using Bahasa Indonesia, the national language; in the extensive diffusion on radio of wayang scenes and performances and its accessibility on audio-cassettes; and the creation of modern schools teaching wayang kulit, which have taken over from the patronage of the court, thus providing wider access to the population.

With the process of "Javanization" over the island, the wayang kulit has been raised to the level of national art. This new status appears to be ideological since the wayang kulit is linked mainly with the Javanese elite and aimed at promoting the interests of this elite. I included Balinese forms in the exhibit to suggest alternatives to the Javanese-centred representation of this art form.

2.2.3 Materialism and individualism

Materialistic and individualistic values were being injected into Java particularly with President Suharto's opening of the Republic to western
capitalism. The effects of this opening to western influences are easily distinguished in the *Wayang Ukur* of Pak Sukasman and *Wayang Legenda* of Heri Dono, both of whom are preoccupied with the popularization of their theatre. They have made many creative and personal innovations. Sukasman has introduced transparent colours (obtained through the use of colour felt pen covering the translucent water buffalo skin) which become vivid when light is shone through them (fig. 29). Heri Dono, on the other hand, is experimenting with cardboard instead of water buffalo skin. Each artist's highly individualistic treatment is immediately recognizable (figs. 29 and 30).

These dynamic changes in the *wayang kulit*, made in order to compete with the theatre and other forms of Western entertainment, have resulted in a preoccupation with form slowly dominating the spiritual aspects. There is a growing interest in the *wayang kulit* as "art for its own sake" and personal rather than only collective expression can be identified. Heri Dono even signs his *wayang* (fig. 30) which is very unusual and Sukasman has created *wayang* on which writing appears such as on the figure he uses at the beginning of his performance showing the name of his theatre (see fig. 23a).

2. 3 A male art form

There is one consistency between the classical *wayang* and the experimental forms such as the *Wayang Ukur*. Both styles, according to my observations and information received, are very androcentric. They represent essentially male characters and the narrative is mainly concerned with exalting men's pursuits (i.e. asceticism, wars, and love conquests where women are objects).
It is noteworthy that the female characters are very small compared to male ones. This is indicative of their importance or status in the play. Laurie Sears has also pointed out that the number of female figures contributes to minimizing their presence in this theatre. The figure sets she examined had 184 characters; of these only 25 to 30 were female (5 were androgynous). In the Museum Sono Budoyo’s dalang set that I photographed consisting of 155 pieces, only 17 were female.

In the feudal order of the classical wayang, women had a very narrowly defined code of acceptable behaviour (which is, however, different if we compare the options in the village with those in the court). The wayang mainly portray the elite women, the ones most willing to accept male dominance (Sears). These aristocratic women are either represented as wives or mothers, and other female characters appear as nymphs who are tempting men who try to meditate, or as forest demons. Women rarely play major roles in the stories. The epitome of the elegant, aristocratic woman is Sembadra, one of Arjuna's two wives, symbol for generations of the good wife and mother, submissive and passive. She holds her head down and has a black face. Her counterpart is Srikandi (figs. 35a and 36a), one of Arjuna’s wives who is one of the few female characters not looking downward as a sign of submission.

Furthermore, the audience, the dalang and the wayang kulit makers are almost invariably men (according to my field work observations and

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46 For example I have purchased two characters for the museum: Srikandi (the size of an average woman) and Arjuna, the husband of Srikandi (from the smallest male character). Srikandi's height is 46 cm and Arjuna’s, 65 cm which means that Srikandi is one third smaller.  
47 Sears made this point during the conference, “The Evolving Relationships Between State, Society and Village in Southeast Asia”, organized by The Northwest Regional Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies on Nov. 4th., 1989 at the Asian Centre at UBC.  
48 Ibid.
W. Keeler, 1987). According to my knowledge, only Keeler (1987) and Sears have pointed out that the audience at a wayang performance is mainly constituted of males. "Women, in contrast, are thought little interested in seeing wayang, and many men say it is disgraceful for them to do so" (Keeler, 1987: 240). According to Keeler the main reason for their lack of interest (others are enumerated in the same page) would be that the wayang kulit is concerned with potency and power and that these are not considered a woman's domain.

Women do not possess, exercise, or really understand potency to any appreciable degree. They are said, by Javanese men and women, to be flighty, incapable of concentration, and self-control. How could they then appreciate the significance of an art form that plays upon these nuances of consciousness and power? Better that they stick with the sex, slapstick, and accessible language of kethoprak. As everyone knows, they chat all through the important scenes in a performance anyway, and pay attention only when the hero and heroine or the clowns are on stage together (Keeler, 1987: 241).

Unfortunately, Keeler has thought it irrelevant to present the female perspective. According to Laurie Sears (at the same conference mentioned above), the women she met said that they, rather, "tolerate wayang as a frivolous man's pursuit".

Even though this art is said to be recognized by all as the most prestigious in the country, it is nevertheless quite striking to notice the absence of Javanese women's voices as informants not only in Keeler's book but also in the academic literature in general. It would be important in further research to provide the female point of view in order to give a more complete presentation of this art form. It was my intention to explore the

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50 According to my information as well.
perspective of the women during the summer of 1990, but my lack of fluency in *Bahasa Indonesia* prevented me from reaching this objective and I could not find female informants who could speak English to answer my questions. In order to stress the androcentric nature of *wayang* I wanted to compare it with another kind of performance oriented to women such as the *kethoprak*, which is a popular theatre-like form performed in *Bahasa Indonesia* (see the proposal given to MOA in Addendum 2). My limited time to document the *wayang kulit*, the lack of literature on *kethoprak*, the difficulty of finding female informants who spoke French or English, and the fact that these plays were performed in a language I was not fluent in made me decide otherwise.

3.0 Third Series of Panels: Comparison Between Court *Wayang* and *Wayang Ukur* Figures

In distinction to the second series of panels, the third focuses strictly on the figures. It is constituted of eight panels. The first panel of this series stresses the stylistic differences between Court *Wayang* and *Wayang Ukur* and provides information on the artists whose works are being compared, that is Sagio and Sukasman. The information given on the artists includes their art training, their current occupation and the places where they have exhibited their works (criteria often named for professional artists, see section 3.4 Chapter One). This emphasizes the view that the presented figures are made by "artists" (*seniman; seni*, art and *man*, as in English) and not by "anonymous craftsman" (the implication of anonymity has been discussed in the first chapter). It should be noted that the original version of the exhibit
also included a photograph of each artist (see figs. 1 to 3, and 6 to 11), but the subsequent decision to increase the number of exhibited artists made me decide against this.

The choice of words such as "artist" and "art form" was used to promote the figures to a status valorized in our society: that is as art. This point of view also reflects how the pieces shown (not necessarily wayang as a genre) made by these particular artists (not all wayang makers are artists) are perceived in their own countries.

It is for the same reason that I have favoured the term "figure" over "puppet". "Figure" is more respectful and breaks with the quite unfortunate lower status associated in our society with objects for children (a view which I do not share but which I had to be aware of in the presentation of this art mainly targeting adults).

The second frame of this series presents the stories, some elements of Javanese aesthetics and the range of characters. Since the exhibit has provided only a glimpse of these three aspects, and considering their importance, the following sections will develop them at greater detail.

3.1 The stories

The classical characters in Java are mainly drawn from the wayang purwa\textsuperscript{51} or "original" wayang plays. The wayang purwa is said to be the oldest wayang repertory (Moerdowo, 1982: 20). The cycles of the wayang purwa include an Indonesian version of the Indian epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana (dominant stories, but others exist as well, see Ras 1985 and Holt 1967: 124).

\textsuperscript{51} There are also authors who will use the term wayang purwa to designate the figures themselves.
The stories (*lakons*) are "lofty in sentiment, aristocratic in mien. They abound in romantic episodes, royal audience scenes, fearful battles, and philosophic and mystical observations" (Brandon, 1970: 13).

There are also other repertoires such as *wayang gedog*, which is said to follow in terms of time the *purwa* stories and is based on the East Javanese Pandji legends and *wayang madya* (*madya*: middle) which was produced to make a link between *wayang purwa* and *wayang gedog*. These seldom-performed plays on the reign of Javanese prophet-king Djayabaya are based on 19th century poetry (Holt 1967: 124).

According to my information obtained in Java, and confirmed by Ras (1985:2), the *Mahabharata*52, also called the "Pendawa cycle" is the most popular in Central Java.

The *Mahabharata* tells about the conflicts between the families of two cousins (see fig. 31), the five Pendawa brother heroes (Judistira, Bima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sadewa who rule the country of Amarta), and the Korawa, consisting of 99 males and one female (all born in the same time) led by Duryodana (also called Sujudana) and guided by an affluent and Machiavellian prime minister, Sangkuni. The Korawa have usurped the country of Ngastina and it is the struggle over this disputed country which provides the major themes of the *wayang*. The struggle between these two families culminates in the great Bratajuda war in which the dissident cousins, the Korawa, will be defeated.

As Geertz has stressed (1960: 271), these stories express very strongly the ethical concerns of the Javanese, since they show the struggle between the

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52 In Bali the *Ramayana* is the most common puppet story, according to one of my informants, I Wayan Nartha, a teacher at the Institute of Performing Art at Denpasar.
Good (symbolized by the Pendawa—placed on the right side of the screen\textsuperscript{53}) and the Evil (the Korawas—the left faction). The good side (the Pendawa) never completely wins. Contrary to the Christian religion, there is an interdependency between good an evil, both poles being necessary. For the Javanese, who is concerned about controlling his or her emotions and inner life, the fight between the good and evil serves as an allegory to represent the passions that keep arising within oneself and which one has to learn to control (Geertz, \textit{ibid}).

The Javanese have nevertheless adopted only the broad outline of these Indian mythological epics. They have added other characters such as the \textit{punakawans}\textsuperscript{54}, god-clown servants, Semar and his sons (see fig. 32), Petruk and Gareng, who are said to be specific to Indonesia. The \textit{dalang} adapts these stories to his audience. Often, the first thing a \textit{dalang} will do before he gives a performance is find out what has been going on in the village. He then presents these stories intertwined with the traditional epics (Scott-Kemball, 1970: 30). The stories are handed down through oral tradition:

Puppeteers memorize bits of text which they deliver in the same manner throughout their lives. Their children inherit these patterns and in this way fixed bits of oral texts are passed on over the centuries (Sears, 1986: 2).

It is nevertheless important to note that what has been qualified as being "probably one of the oldest continuous traditions of story-telling in the world, and certainly among the most highly developed (Van Ness and Prawirohardjo, 1980:1) since "written texts were handled in oral ways and oral

\textsuperscript{53} Except for Nakula and Sadewa — placed on the left side of the screen.

\textsuperscript{54} According to Rassers, a frequently-quoted Dutch scholar, the presence of this strikingly original figure would be one of the proofs that the \textit{wayang kulit} is an independent invention of the shadow play in Indonesia (Holt, 1967: 131).
passages had stable parameters" (Sears, 1986: 3) has undergone changes under the influence of Dutch scholars.

The boundaries of the written and oral texts changed in the past also. Under the influence of the Dutch scholars in the nineteenth century, wayang traditions were codified and written down. Written texts proliferated to answer Dutch desires for more tangible evidence of the fleeting performances (Sears, 1986: Chapter 7, p. 4).

In another article, Sears mentions:

In the fine arts academies, the written texts are becoming more important than the puppeteers who perform them ... Padat texts [reduced wayang versions performed in the academies] signal a change from oral performance and oral transmission to a system dependent on written texts. Written texts are easier to standardize, easier to control (1989: 136).

According to Sears's observation, this original oral tradition might therefore be slowly shifting to a more standardized form through written text. (I could not verify this information in Indonesia).

3.2 Some Javanese principles of aesthetic

3.2.1 Stylization

If one observes the wayang, one notices that the figures are shown in profile with head, legs, and feet all facing the same direction, but the upper torso is turned so that both shoulders can be seen. The shoulders are unnaturally extended and the body is generally very narrow. According to Sukasman, the artist who created Wayang Ukur, the choice of the shape of the body would have been dictated by a rationale of efficiency: to allow the
character to be easily recognized from far away (Sukasman, nd: section 2, p. 4). He has established a parallel with advertisement graphics in which he has found that the thinner the letter, the further away it can be seen (n.d.: section 2, p.2- see fig. 33, illustrations 1 to 3, and 8 to 10). This requirement to be seen from a distance would explain the twisting of the torso, allowing the right arm to be easily discernible from the left (see fig. 33, illustrations 4-5). This principle of visibility also explains the unnaturally extended arms55 (Sukasman, nd: 6). The use of gold covering the body of many figures can also be explained by Sukasman's theory, since gold projects light far better than white. The gold would also be placed on the body or the face of the characters (such as Betara Guru).

Another principle stressed by Sukasman underlying the shape of the figures is the imperative of expressiveness (see also Holt, 1967: 136). Contrary to the human figure, where the longest line goes from the top of the head to the chin, in the wayang face the longest imaginary line crosses all the facial features, projecting these features away from the body axis (see fig. 34). This representation of the face accentuates its expressiveness (see fig. 34). A rationale of expressiveness also applies to the use of colour. In fact, the colours of the face are chosen to highlight either the psychological mood or the temperament of the characters56.

3.2.2 The lair-batin relation

Another striking feature of the aesthetic of the figures is that the formal aspects are not only the summation of external visible features but the

55 The arms are the only part in the wayang figures that can be moved.
56 See also Holt (1967: 142) and Brandon (1970: 50).
reflection of the temperament, the psychological state and the spiritual strength of the character. The inward qualities are translated into conventionalized physical traits (Van Yperen, 1986:81). The meaning of the formal attributes of the figure is recognized and understood by the audience. To explain this phenomenon, the character Bart Simpson was particularly useful. Using him as a comparison easily conveys this idea of immediate recognition by the Indonesian of the wayang characters. For instance, from the finesse of a body's character is deduced the refinement of his or her inner self. Similarly, characters with big protuberant red faces such as giants and ogres reveal a state of uncontrolled inner passion. The iconography of the wayang also sometimes externalizes hierarchical status or age (Holt, 1967:140). This is not without relation to the concepts of batin and lair (discussed in section 2.1.2 of this chapter).

There are various aesthetic rules which regularize the external appearance of the figures. In fact, even though at first glance the figures may all look alike, all characters are marked by a different type of nose, eyes, mouth, size, degree of distance between the feet, kinds of dress and ornament, colours and carving (Brandon, 1970; Holt, 1967; Mellema, 1954; Scott-Kemball, 1970; Sulardi, 1953; and Ulbricht, 1970). According to R.M. Sulardi (1953:12-13), there would be, for instance, as many as 15 types of eyes, 13 types of nose (see fig. 35) and 12 types of mouth. Solomonik (1980: 486), for the sake of his analysis, has distinguished 28 social details which can be recognized through dress and ornament. These various physical features, ornaments and dress are used to classify and identify the multiple categories of characters. I have favoured in the exhibit a classification of the characters according to their physical features, in terms of the two qualities mentioned earlier (section 2.1.4 of this chapter) at the extremes of a continuum: alus and kasar.
3.2.3 The *alus-kasar* division

The *alus-kasar* division used to describe the classical performance and the associated values of the *priyayi* can also be applied to a classification of the figures.

Expressing the ideal person -- spiritually refined, polite, self-controlled, and restrained -- the *alus* character\(^{57}\) of the wayang *kulit* (see fig. 24a) has elongated narrow eyes, as if half-closed, and a long nose often pointed down as a sign of humility and a face which can be white, black or gold (see Arjuna figs. 37a and 38a). The *kasar* characters (see fig. 37) are often considered coarse, impulsive, warlike, impolite and showing uncontrolled behaviour\(^{58}\).

A *kasar* character often has a red face with big bulky round eyes and enormous pupils and a bulbous upraised nose. The typology of the face (called *bedhahan* according to Bambang Suwarno, professor at the Academy of Art of Solo) is the most prominent and significant feature of the body.

This is related to the hero's moral qualities, his temperament and his psychological state. The height of the figure and type of his body [the *kapangan*] are related to his physical strength (Solomonik, 1980: 486).

The body of the *alus* character is delicate, with a narrow foot stance, while the *kasar* (see fig. 25a), like the ogre, has a fat and bulging body, covered with mats of repulsive hair, and a broad and aggressive foot stance. The size of the figures appears to be in direct correlation with their level of refinement: that is; the smaller they are, the more refined, while the bigger they are, the coarser, and ruder they become. There are notable exceptions

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\(^{57}\) I have, nevertheless, to mention that even if these features give strong indications of the ethical qualities of the characters they are no certain guide. For example, Bima, one of the Pendawa brothers, has a very *kasar* appearance but is *alus* in his behaviour.

\(^{58}\) During the Indonesian revolution in the middle of the century, the Dutch were represented by *kasar* characteristics.
such as Bima (fig. 31), one of the heroes of the Pendawa family, who is very big, hairy, muscular and has protruding eyes (feared for his terrible fingernail with which to tear apart his enemies), but is very *alus* in spirit. At the other extreme, Cakil (see fig. 25a on the left side) is very small (the smallest of the Demons) but very evil and vicious (he has a red face an enormous jaw full of sharp teeth).

The *alus* characters (for example the Pendawa) are in general presented on the right of the screen while the *kasar* (typified in the Korawa) are shown on the left. Here again there are exceptions. As Brandon mentions (1970: 41)

... for any given puppet, physical features are no certain guide to that figure's ethical qualities [*alus* or *kasar*]. Physical features very clearly identify a general personality type or emotional cast, but only by watching a character's actions in the plays can we know his moral qualities.

The order of the presentation of the two sets (classical and experimental) of the six characters presented in the exhibit follows their location on the banana trunk (where most figures are stuck during the performance). On the left are presented the *kasar* characters, Duryodana and Durna, in the centre are Gunungan and Semar (who is not placed on the trunk but is kept in the chest close to the *dalang* in the middle area of the performance), and finally, on the right, are two *alus* characters, Srikandi and Arjuna. Dr Tineke Hellwig asked me once why I had placed the woman character, Srikandi, before Arjuna. I answered her then that it was to respect the Indonesian conventional arrangement of the figures on the trunk in ascending size, the smallest nearer the Gunungan and the biggest further away on both sides.
3.3 Range of characters

The formal characteristics of the figures are also determined according to the main categories of the characters's configuration. There are various way to classify the figures. For the sake of simplification, I have chosen categories determined by the roles played by the characters in the stories. Among these main categories are gods and goddesses, court figures, giants and ogres, and clowns.

a) Gods or deities, called *Sang Hyang, Betara or dewa*, often wear cloaks and shoes, as do most of the ministers of the court. They also usually wear turbans (fig. 36.1). Betara Guru, presented in the showcase of the exhibit, typifies the highest God. The Gods are, most of the time, presented in an *alus*\(^5^9\) (refined) manner but there are also mean *kasar*\(^6^0\) (coarse and fiery) Gods such as Batara Kala. He is a god who eats children. He wears the turban typical of the Gods but has a very *kasar* face with fangs in his mouth. He wears long hair.

b) Court characters symbolize the stratified traditional and feudal order of Java. They correspond to the ancestor-heroes around whom the stories centre. The Pendawa (Arjuna and Sri kandi, figs. 35a to 38a) and the Korawa family members (Duryodana assisted by Durna, figs. 27a to 30a) are part of this group. Among the ancestors are kings, queens, princes, princesses and ministers. They are differentiated by the position they occupy in the hierarchy which is of great importance in Javanese life.

\(^5^9\) See section 3.2.3.
\(^6^0\) Ibid.
The type of ornaments and clothing (fig. 36) worn by the characters of this latter group is an important indicator of their rank and their social class (see Solomonik, 1980: 486-492 and Ulbricht 1970: 40-49). Among them are the dodot (figs. 36.8 and 36.9), long pieces of cloth wrapped round the hips, the head gear, ear-jewel and the praba (fig. 36.4 -- most probably a remnant of fighting gear, according to Van Yperen, personal communication). Different types of headdresses (figs. 36.1 to 36.3), ornaments (figs. 36.5 to 36.7), and clothes allow one to distinguish immediately between a king such as Duryodana (figs. 27a and 28a) who wears praba (Ulbricht, 1970: 44), the makuta (fig. 36.3) or high crown with three-tiered diadem which is ornamented by the mythological griffin garuda, and, and a minister such as Durna (fig. 29a and 30a), who wears the ketu or cap with a one-tiered diadem (Ulbricht, 1970: 45).

c) Ogres and Demons (fig. 37) called raksasa or buta, can be recognized by their big muscular bodies, and the fangs in the corners of their mouths. Among the most evil characters is Cakil (fig. 37.1). As a small-sized demon, his violent and blood-thirsty nature can be recognized by his flat head, squinting eyes and his horn-like teeth. Other ogres, such as Terong (fig. 37.3) have a nose shaped like an eggplant. Terong is often shown in opposition to character such as Bima.

d) The servants or clowns, called punakawan (fig. 32), are one of the specifically Javanese aspects of the Indonesian shadow play. They are hilarious clowns at the service of the Pendawa. Their arrival in the middle of the night signals an interlude of jokes and singing. They are renowned for their satirical comments on almost any subject, including their masters, the economy, or the nature of the corruption of the government. They challenge
the unity of the wayang style found in the other figures which are “executed in the decoratively elaborate and iconographically intricate 'wayang style' which lends their appearance a certain unity ...” (Holt, 1967: 144). Semar, Gareng, Petruck, Bagong, Togog, and Sarawita are likewise unmistakable in their extraordinary shape. “They are grotesque in appearance, crude in behaviour and comic in effect” (McVey, 1986: 23). Semar (figs. 33a and 34a), the most famous punakawan, is also a God, the guardian spirit of Java and brother of Betara Guru, despite his grotesque appearance.

Anyone who has witnessed a Javanese shadow-play will recall the wave of deep affection and respect which flows out of the audience towards Semar when he appears. It is said that one of the most distinguished professors at the University of Indonesia in Djakarta owed his unique following among the Javanese students less to his high academic attainments than to his physical resemblance to Semar and his reputation for a special combination of wisdom and comicality (Anderson, 1965:23).

e) Other figures: Apart from the figures depicting single characters there are also figures such as the kayon or gunungan (figs. 31a and 32a), used as a metaphor for the mystical "Tree or Mountain of life" which is the most important figure of the set. It is used to show that a scene has ended or that it is taking place either in a forest, in the mountains or in a palace. It expresses whether the universe is in harmony or balance or whether it is in turbulence (i.e. with a war threatening). The moment of tension which occurs in the middle of the play, just before the entrance of the punakawan, is called gara gara, On this figure is depicted in brilliant colours an enormous tree with monkeys and birds in its branches.
There are also figures for animals: horses, elephants, serpents and apes. As well there is a marching army, and an array of weapons (kriss, arrows, clubs, etc.—see fig. 39).

Other subdivisions exist, some more elaborate than others, to distinguish the figures. Because it would take too long to present them all in this section, but to avoid oversimplification, I will mention a few of them. For instance, Long (1982: 69-70) has identified seven major character types, each associated with a specific, identifiable personality and behaviour, based on the Habirandha school for dalang in Yogyakarta.

Two types are "refined" (alus) puppets; luruh (a reserved and polite personality), in which the puppet's gaze is down, and lanyap (a more aggressive type), in which the gaze is straight out. The others are gagah (muscular), gusen ("gummed" of the muscular type), danawa (ogres and giants), wanara/rewanda (simians), and dhagelan (clown-servants).

Brandon (1970: 49) uses another typology:

lijepan—a small, extremely refined, controlled character, whose manner is modest (Judistira, Arjuna, Irawan, Sumbadra, Surtikanti);
lanjapan—a small, extremely refined, but active and aggressive character (Karna, Srikandi, Kresna);
kedelen—a dignified, medium-build character of great temper and impetuosity (Baladewa, Salja, Setyaki);
gagah—a large, muscular character straightforward in manner (Bima, Durjudana, Baju, Gatutkatja);
gusen—a medium or large character with exposed gums, of rough manners and violent behavior (Dursasana, Kartamarma, Tjakil);
raseksa—a gross-featured, nonhuman ogre who acts unthinkingly and whose actions are extremely rough (Barandjana, Terong, Pragalba).
Long (1982: 69) mentions other divisions of the figures used by Indonesians according to rank, sex and generic origin. Other Indonesians differentiate the characters according to where the figures are kept during the performance. Sagio, in his unpublished manuscript on Yogyanese style wayang, mentions that the characters are classified, among other things, by the following criteria: dimensions, status in the stories, head covering and position of the legs (translation by W. Van Yperen).

3.4 Criteria by which to judge the quality of wayang

This is an aspect that I did not cover in the exhibit for fear of overloading the visitors with more Indonesian taxonomies. They correspond to the criteria by which the Javanese artists describe the quality of the pieces. These criteria were learned at the "Sekolah Tiggi Seni Indonesia" (the Institute of Art of Indonesia) in Surakarta when I took a three-weeks course in 1989 with Bambang Suwarno, professor at the Institute, assisted by Suratno, a dalang who had studied in the United States. Suratno translated for me (into English) the course given by Suwarno in Javanese and Bahasa Indonesia.

According to Bambang Suwarno, the main criteria for judging the quality of the figures are linked with the ability of the artists to accurately represent the personality of the character being depicted. In his typology, there are five points to consider:

1-the bedhahan, the characteristics of the face (the eyes and the nose are of the utmost importance);
2-the *kapangan*; the representation of the body (including the size, the body-build, the position of the shoulders, the foot stance, the clothing and ornaments);

3-the *sunggingan*, the colour and the application of the paint. It is particularly important to depict the temperament: i.e. *kasar* characters are represented with red which denotes greed, aggressiveness, impatience, anger and violence;

4-the *tatahan*, the type of leather used and the kind of chiseling. Not all characters will be carved the same way. For instance, ox hide will be used for the making of characters who need stronger and more resistant skin because they are often shown fighting and their articulated arms tend to break easily if they are too finely carved. The highly ornate carving will be reserved for *alus* characters while the *kasar* are most often coarsely executed.

5-the *wanda*, various representations of the same character according to age, mood and the location of the stories (see fig. 40).

Therefore, in order to judge the quality of the figures, one has to examine whether characteristics of the face, the body, the colour, the type of chiseling and the skin are consistent with the type of character being represented. One has to know how the figures are classified, their position in the hierarchy, their particular characteristics, and on what occasions they are used (to determine the *wanda*), and at what age they are shown. In brief, the Javanese have a very sophisticated way of judging the quality of their figures which reveals the complexity of the iconographic system sustaining the production of the figures.
4.0 Fourth Series of Panels: More Experimental Wayang

The fourth section is the last part of the exhibit. It presents photographs of wayang which will inevitably surprise any person who is familiar with wayang kulit. The images presented break with any preconceived notions of wayang. Characters in contemporary dress are used for propaganda, moveable and speaking animals, dinosaurs and a lovers scene (a theme highly taboo in Indonesian art). This section opens a window on experimental forms underrepresented in the literature, which has contributed to confining wayang to the narrow domain of "traditional". This last part is in line with the new phase of wayang scholarship begun by Clara van Groenendael (1987) and Sears (1989).

Until Keeler's 1987 book on village wayang, all monograph or book-length studies dealt with the court-derived normative style. Aside from Sears (1989a), sections of Clara van Groenendael (1985), and Mylius (1961) there are no studies of city-based, Indonesian government-sponsored, experimental, or other nonnormative kinds of wayang. Dalangs using multiple screens (or none at all), introducing new characters and lakons, and in other ways modernizing wayang are thought to deviate

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61 In a note Schechner mentions:
Clara van Groenendael's bibliography of writings about wayang in Indonesian, modern Javanese, Sundanese, English, Dutch, and other European languages tells the story. She has 564 entries; but only two, Hadisoeseno (1955) and Mylius (1961), deal mostly with modern and/or "secular" forms of wayang kulit such as suluh, pancakesila, padat, perjuangan, or wahana; or with the Catholic or Protestant wayang, wahyu and warta respectively. Hadisoeseno is the originator of wayang pancakesila. Mulyono (1979) considers various wayangs, including the rather recent wayang buddha from an Islamic and mystical perspective. Papers from the First Indonesian Wayang Week held in Jakarta in July 1969 and the Second Wayang Week held in March 1974 have been distributed in stencil. Several of these deal with the modernization process. I have not read these, Hadisoeseno, or Mulyono. Brandon in his influential Theatre in Southeast Asia (1967) spends nine pages (45, 286-93) on government wayangs and the reasons for their failure. By contrast, Brandon discusses "classical" wayang kulit from various perspectives, but not critically, in many different parts of his book, spending roughly a total of 30 pages on it.
from correct practice; they are regarded by scholars as threats to the "tradition." Even more despised is wayang used as propaganda or to incite political action either for and against the government. "Deviant" styles are attacked or ignored, not analyzed with a care approaching that lavished on "traditional" wayang. Why? Is it because such analysis might validate functions of wayang these scholars, like their Dutch predecessors, wish to prevent? (Schechner, 1990: 36).

These forms occupy less space in the exhibit to visually express the fact that they are not as widespread as the classical forms. The brief introduction to the art form is followed by a brief presentation on the artist. Because I met these experimental artists (except Sukasman) only towards the end of my second trip, I have very little information on these art forms. Nevertheless, they offer a necessary visual complement in the exhibit.
Chapter Six. Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to synthesize my approach to the collection of wayang kulit in Indonesia and their display in the Museum of Anthropology.

The main assumption of this approach is that there are political implications in the categories of objects chosen and the ways they are collected and displayed in museums for the representation of the cultures with which the objects are associated.

In order to determine how to apply the two museum practices I used during my research, I have first presented the multiplex nature of the anthropological concept of culture I utilized. The necessity of showing culture as multiplex arose from the realization that a single portrayal of non-Western cultures has been detrimental to them and has generated stereotypes. In the case of Java, these stereotypes have been perpetuated by European and American scholars (see the last note in the previous chapter) through the portrayal of Java as predominantly "traditional", sustained by the unique representation of a supposedly "authentic" style, the "traditional" wayang kulit. Rather, the alternative I have favoured emphasizes the many forms wayang kulit can take in Java, as in Indonesia, through the use of contrasted representations. For instance, I have argued that, while rooted in an ancient heritage, it can also express the actuality of contemporary life; the tensions between conservative and progressive views; the collective and personal identities; the classical and the experimental; the religious and the secular; the popular and the elitist; the humorous and the serious; the Indonesian and the Western-centred; the exuberant and the sober, the stylized
Javanese and naturalistic Balinese wayang, to name only some of the main oppositions I have used. These oppositions are aimed at showing the multiplex nature of wayang and therefore of the Indonesian cultures with which it is associated. The originality of my approach to the study of wayang also came from the vantage point I have favoured, the artist's point of view, which has not yet been explored adequately in academic research by anthropologists.

Echoing this model of culture, I have discussed the need to pluralize the contexts in which objects are viewed in museums. That is why I have suggested a synthesis of contextualist and formalist perspectives in the display of objects in the Museum of Anthropology. Ideally, I would have preferred to use other perspectives, such as a more reflexive one and one which would subvert the nature of the dominant Art/Culture distinction (see Clifford, 1990) but lack of time and budget prevented me from reaching this objective. The aim of presenting wayang for its visual qualities as well as for some aspects of its significance within Indonesian cultures and as a document to understand elements of its culture was manifold. By presenting wayang as art, I have sought to avoid the continuing marginalization of Indonesian art within the larger world of contemporary art. It might be important to recall that by art, I mean all production which has an aesthetic function. I intend to challenge the use of the categories of "Art", "high art", "fine art", "Western art" on the one side, and "primitive art", "craft", "folk art", "traditional art", "women's art", "ethnic art", "non-Western art" on the other, distinctions which I consider to perpetuate hierarchical relations. My use of the term

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62 I am conscious of the problematic nature of this category and of "non-Western art" which has been used throughout this text. But I could not find an acceptable substitute. I therefore decided to use the least offensive term.
“art” rather encompasses all these terms without distinction. In fact, I believe that any attempt to classify the arts assume the preeminence of one activity over others and only established the hierarchy I am trying to avoid.

In fact, I have always felt quite dismayed at the insignificant position accorded to non-Western art in Art History courses which aim at presenting a "world survey" of art. Since, in our society, art is conceived as an essential attribute of civilization (Duncan, 1980) and therefore cannot be dissociated from the notion of power, I believe it is necessary to redress the lack of representation. It is at this level that I believe anthropology can intervene by providing a cross-cultural perspective on art and by becoming a bridge between non-Western and Western cultures. This bridge can be built by the necessary work of cross-cultural translation done by anthropologists. I have attempted a contribution to such a translation concerning wayang kulit by providing an understanding of the context in which it is used (that is, the performance context), and by presenting some of the rationale underlying the iconography (the stylization, for example), the range of characters, the values and world views it synthesizes (i.e. the alus and kasar; the batin and lair divisions), the artists who made the figures and the criteria by which are judged the quality of the figures.

Finally, the multiplex view on culture I have used has also shaped my selection of wayang for the museum display I curated and the establishment of a collection for MOA. This selection aimed at showing the various forms wayang can take and illustrated rules for its variation. I have shown, for instance, that even though the classical forms originate from a common Hindu-Buddhist heritage, they developed differently, through centuries of collective and individual efforts (and influences such as Islamic ones) in the islands where they are found – Java, Bali and Lombok. I have stressed that in Java differences of style can be observed between major cities (where powerful
royal courts have developed) and according to the artists's preferences for the continuity of strict standards of representation of the characters (classical wayang) or for their modification (experimental wayang). Furthermore, pointing out the importance of labelling and to counterract the harmful view associated with appelations such as "traditional art", I have discussed the reasons underlying my use of the terms "classical" and "experimental"; the necessity of naming the artists and stressing their creativity; of dating the pieces and pointing out its dynamism; and stressing their actuality by the purchase of contemporary pieces.

Therefore "choosing what", "presenting how" and with "what words" were core questions which were addressed during the process of conducting my work in Indonesia and during the organization of the exhibit curated for the Museum of Anthropology.

Nevertheless, there remains a gap between my desire for a more vivid portrayal of this art form and a more accurate translation and what I was able to accomplish given time and budget restrictions, and the busy schedule of the MOA staff (who have generously assisted me in this project). Using the real wayang kulit, for instance, might have been preferable to photographs, but because the exhibit was designed to travel, it was easier and less expensive to favour the design which was utilized: the use of framed photographs accompanied by text. This format could, however, still be enhanced to create the feeling of "being there", and to fully develop the aesthetic potential and meaning of the exhibit. Such adjustments could include the installation of a showcase presenting the tools and the processes involved in the manufacturing process, accompanied by photographs of the artists. Two of the most impressive pieces in the collection, the classical and the experimental Duryodana (the leader of the Korawa) could also be placed at the
entrance to the exhibit to further underscore the title of the exhibit. A video machine could be installed to show an experimental performance of Wayang Ukur; and finally, the use of sound could enhance the installation, evoking a performance with the dalang hitting his chest with the iron rapper.

A methodological and ethical dilemma which I could not resolve was linked to the fact that I am curating this exhibit on Indonesian wayang kulit, but I am not Indonesian. This could lead to the uncomfortable position of "speaking about the other" the validity of which I questioned in the first chapter. As I have mentioned I was, rather, searching for a dialogue in order to obtain a more symmetrical and reciprocal relation with the Indonesians. The ways I have searched for this dialogue are the following: Taking photographs of the artist's wayang production (they all received a copy of these photographs) created an ideal starting point for discussions with them about art and allowed me to become acquainted with their works. My participation in a class at the Institute of Art of Solo also offered the opportunity to exchange ideas on wayang with my teacher, Bambang Suwarno. With a desire to obtain feedback so as to hear the points of view of Indonesians, I have also made presentations on wayang at events where they participated, such as the "Indonesian week" at the Asian Centre, at UBC (1988 and 1989). I also organized a small exhibit on wayang at the UBC Asian Centre (1990) where a comment books invited the viewer to express their comments and share their knowledge.

A more satisfying dialogue could take place if I were immersed for a longer period of time in Indonesia, learning the official language (Bahasa Indonesia), and establishing relationships with Indonesians. I am hoping to establish such a dialogue by going to Indonesia in September 1991 for one year
to study the making of the *wayang kulit* at the Institute of Art of Yogyakarta\(^{63}\) (I.S.I. Institute Seni Indonesia where Sukasman and Heri Dono studied). Learning how to make *wayang* will offer an ideal opportunity to establish more in-depth contact with Indonesians artists, to further learn the very sophisticated *wayang* terminology and the *savoir-faire* of the maker. This cultural knowledge is necessary to have access to the world views and ethos synthesized in this artform. Such a stay could also provide the opportunity to establish a relation of reciprocity with my artist-informants by having the exhibit I curated for MOA shown to them (the exhibit has been designed to travel). This could allow them to judge the interpretation which was made of their art and to criticize it (these comments would be taken into consideration for a later revised version of this exhibit which could be shown in Canada). Ideally, the exhibit should be translated into Bahasa Indonesia to enable wider access to Indonesians.

The sharing of the task of interpretation with the informants is essential to avoid the "speaking about the other" paradigm. In an alternative view, the exhibit is not an end in itself, but becomes rather a means to begin and pursue a cultural exchange. The spirit of dialogue it promotes starts between the researcher and the informants but does not stop at this level. The researcher must also promote this ideal beyond him or herself, by using the exhibit to encourage an exchange between cultures. Through the exhibit, a basis for communication can be suggested by providing visitors with an understanding of the culture presented. This understanding of the other culture has first to be interpreted in terms the visitors can relate to, in order to make this foreign culture accessible to them. In fact to provide only "the

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\(^{63}\) With the financial assistance of the Government of Indonesia.
native point of view" is not enough because in museums the visitors might very well have a different cultural knowledge than that of the cultures which are being presented. Therefore, the curator must evoke this culture by finding images or metaphors the visitors can relate to without distorting the reality of the culture being presented. For instance, in the exhibit I curated I have used the well-known image of Bart Simpson as a metaphor to express the idea of experimental wayang styles in Indonesia. Bart Simpson is a popular icon, well-known to most Westerners. Using Bart Simpson as a metaphor suggests that there is a subset of its characteristics which can be associated with experimental wayang. Among the features which wayang and Bart Simpson share are: the fact that both are contemporary, Western-influenced and humorous artforms. The wayang can then become accessible through a figure non-Indonesian visitors can relate to. It also expresses the idea that the figures are immediately recognized by the Indonesians as Bart Simpson is for us. In the same vein, I have also sought to find words which have positive connotations for the Western mind. That is why instead of using the terms used by the Indonesians such as "traditional" and "modern", I have favoured a terminology which would be more dignified and suggest a higher respect for the particularly high quality pieces presented.

By finding images, the museum anthropologist can participate in creating a bridge between cultures. S/he may should recognize the importance of translation by finding the appropriate words, types of object and methods of display that would appeal and interest among the visitors while taking care to not distort the cultural dimension which they evoke. One of the problems which can emerge is that by making a display more accessible to us, it might become foreign to the people with whom the display is associated. The challenge of the museum anthropologist becomes,
therefore, to find this fine balance between the lived and thought experiences of the members of a given culture and those to whom it is being presented, while still be meaningful for both cultures. The anthropologist can then become a facilitator of dialogue by assuming his or her role of cultural translator.
Illustrations
Wayang kulit Master of the classical style of the Sultan's court of Yogyakarta. Sagio has made the wayang kulit in the private collection of the famous Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX and has won second prize in a national contest for his wayang drawing (1988). He is currently teaching at the Akademi Teknologi Kulit Yogyakarta (Academy of Leather Technology) and in the Sekolah Menengah Seni Rupa (School for the Plastic Arts), both in Yogyakarta. He has represented his country in a World's Fair in Japan (Expo 70 in Osaka), in France (Paris, 1977) and in India (Bangalore, 1980). He has just completed, with his brother, Ir. Samsugi, the only available book on the Yogyanese classical style of the court.
Sukasman (1937-)

Experimental artist from Yogyakarta who developed an innovative wayang theatre called Wayang Ukur using two puppeteers (one in the front and one behind the screen) and a multicoloured lighting system. Sukasman participated as a decorator at the New York World's Fair in 1964. After studying modern art in Holland, he developed his own ideas on the wayang. His pieces were exhibited during Expo 86 in Vancouver, followed by a performance at Simon Fraser University.
Dalang and classical wayang maker from a family of many generations of dalang, he also teaches at the Academy of Art at Solo (most of the dance troupes touring in the United States during the Indonesian festival are from this institution). Well-versed in the classical traditions of the two courts of Solo, he has created new figures such as a woman character with pants, and a series of revolutionary leader figures. He has performed in England (1979), and exhibited in France (1982).
"The present kraton consists of a series of interconnecting rectangular open courtyards, with open pavilions of various sizes in each, the whole surrounded by high white-washed walls" (Smithies, 1987: 13). Sagio, whose Betara Guru is exhibited in MOA, is one of the three official makers of this kraton founded by the first Sultan, Hamengkubuwono 1 (Mangkubumi) in 1756 (Smithies, Ibid).
Fig. 5  
The Mangkunegaran kraton, one of the two royal courts of Surakarta
A classical wayang maker from the Kasunanan kraton style of Surakarta (one of the two kraton of Yogyakarta, the other being the Mangkunegaran kraton). His works, like those of Sukasman and Sagio, have been published in the book Lordly Shades, published in Indonesia by Bondan et al.
Fig. 7
Hajar Satoto

Experimental *wayang* artist and wood carver from Surakarta. He is the only artist I worked with who did not make a living from his *wayang kulit* art. He has participated in the exhibit: "*Pameran Dan Pergelaran Wayang Ke II-Th. 1989*" which displayed the works of the most prominent *wayang* artists of Yogyakarta. He travelled to France where he discovered Seurat's pointillism, a technique which he would later use in his *wayang*. 
Ledjar

Experimental artist from Yogyakarta who makes classical figures as well as figures stemming from history, everyday life and animal tales, particularly *wayang kancil* stories (centering around the adventures of a clever mouse-deer). He has performed at Gajah Mada University in Yogyakarta and in Jakarta. He has also exhibited his figures with Sukasman at the *Wayang Kreasi* held in Yogyakarta (1988).
I Wayan Nartha (1942- )

Puppeteer, musician, dancer, village priest and classical wayang kulit maker. He is also teacher at ASTI, the Academy of Indonesian Performing Arts in Denpasar, Bali. With his wayang group, he has performed in Japan (1983) and Vancouver (during Expo 86). In 1982, his figures were awarded entrance to the Third Annual Bali Festival of the Arts. His figures are housed in Hamburg (Germany), Palermo (Italy), and Tokyo (Japan).
Fig. 10
I Wayan Wija

Classical and experimental wayang maker, dalang and teacher at ASTI, the Academy of Indonesian Performing Arts. He has performed in the United States and was also part of the group who came to Expo 86 in Vancouver. I met Wija at the end of my trip so I have not been able to obtain as much information on his work as on the others.
Fig. 11

_Heri Dono (1960-)_

Experimental artist who received Studio Art training in the Institute of Art of Yogyakarta. Guided by Sukasman, he studied _wayang_ and was influenced by his teacher's creative approach. Heri Dono's works were exhibited in Switzerland (Basel), Holland (Amsterdam) and France (Paris) during the winter of 1990-91.
Fig. 12
Installation to photograph the museum *wayang* collection at the Museum Sono Budoyo, in Yogyakarta. A grey material was brought from MOA to be used as background to photograph the pieces.
Fig. 13
Classical Betara Guru
By Bambang Suwarno, from Surakarta, Java
Fig. 14
Classical Betara Guru
By I Wayan Nartha's father, from Sukawati, Bali
Fig. 15
Classical Betara Guru
By I Wayan Wija, Sukawati, from Bali
Fig. 16
Classical Betara Guru
By I Wayan Wija's father, Sukawati, from Bali
Fig. 17
Classical Betara Guru
From the sacred collection of the kraton of Yogyakarta
Fig. 18
Classical Betara Guru
From the Museum Sono Budoyo, Yogyakarta
Fig. 19
Classical Betara Guru
From the Museum Sono Budoyo (older version)
Fig. 20
Classical Betara Guru
From Ngabeyan collection, Yogyakarta
Fig. 21 Processes involved in the manufacturing of the figures

First, the hide is dried thoroughly by being stretched tightly over a large wooden or bamboo frame (fig. 21.1) which is placed under the sun (fig.21.2). When the skin is dry, the hair and fat are scraped off with an iron scraper (fig. 21.3) and rubbed off, moistened again and left to dry under the sun. When a section of the hide is fully prepared, an outline of the desired character is drawn or etched into its surface(fig. 21.4). Then, when the skin has been prepared and the silhouette has been cut out, the penatah (carver) can proceed to do the inner perforations (fig. 21.5). As many as 37 chisels, made from bicycle spokes, are used in a professional maker's set. When the carving is finished, the colour is applied (fig. 21.6).
Fig. 22
Balinese style is more naturalistic.

Fig. 23
Javanese style is more stylized.
Fig. 24
Village wayang (and details)
There is less precision in the execution of the forms and details.
Fig. 25
Yogyakarta and Surakarta court singularities.

Fig. 25.1
Yogyakarta’s crest.

Fig. 25.2
Surakarta coat of arms
"The coat of arms of the Susuhunan of Solo. The sheath of rice and the cotton symbolize food and clothing; the globe with the nail (paku) represents the Susuhunan as the centre of the world" (Van Beek, 1990).
"The stylized bird called sawat in the language of batik design, was once the prerogative of the Sultan of Yogyakarta" (Kriya, 1988: 138).
Fig. 25.4

Yogyanese and Solonese Betara Guru

The Yogyanese style has a pair of movable arms and is mounted on a bull. The Solonese one is more compact, wears shoes and holds in his hands symbols of his power.
Fig. 25. 5
Yogyanese and Solonese Ratih (wife of Kamajaya, God of love)

Typical of putren (aristocratic women), the Yogyanese Ratih has the train of the kain (a skirt-like garment) falling in the front, and a protuberant chest. Solonese style is more centered, the longer train falls in the back.
Yogyanese and Solonese Arjuna

The Yogyanese style has the *dodot* (sort of skirt worn by the male court figures) the same color as his gold skin and covered with bird motifs. The Solonese *dodot* is more colourful.
Fig. 25. 7
Yogyanese and Solonese Hanoman

Yogyanese style has two eyes while the Solonese has only one and his body is more elongated.
Fig. 26  
Historical change in wayang  
From the Majapahit (beginning in the 15th. century) to present  
Yogyakarta style according to the Museum Sono Budoyo,  
Yogyakarta.
Diagram of the Exhibit
Wayang: From the Gods to Bart Simpson

Section 1
Introduction. Explanation of the two poles discussed in the exhibit: the classical and the experimental

Section 2
The performances

Section 3
Styles and repertoire of the Court Wayang and Wayang Ukur

Section 4
Other experimental forms

Section 5
Maps and brief information on Indonesia; Acknowledgements

Legend
1 = Court Wayang
2 = Wayang Ukur
3 = Wayang Legenda
Javanese Dynastic Genealogies

The Javanese Chronicles mention that there is a direct line of
descent between the Gods and the Kings. The ancient
mythological heroes are directly linked with the Sultan and the
end of the royal line, Pakubuwana X.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wajang Form</th>
<th>Dramatic Cycle</th>
<th>Wajang Hero</th>
<th>Historic Period</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anumistic</td>
<td>Dewi Sri, etc.</td>
<td>Arjuna Sasra</td>
<td>Ancient mythology</td>
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<td>Arjuna Sasra</td>
<td>Arjuna Sasra</td>
<td>Bau</td>
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<td>Bau</td>
<td>Rama</td>
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<td>(six generations)</td>
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<td>Rama</td>
<td>Palasara</td>
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<td>Pandu</td>
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<td>Arjuna and brothers</td>
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<td>Jadajana</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(one generation)</td>
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<td>Djajabaja</td>
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<td>Legendary Javanese kings</td>
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<td>(ten generations)</td>
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<td>Lembuamiluhur</td>
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<td>Kediri-Singosari (c.1000–1293)</td>
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<td>Pandji</td>
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<td>(eleven generations)</td>
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<td>Damarwulan</td>
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<td>Madiapahit (c.1293–1520)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Brawidjaja)</td>
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<td>(four generations)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Damarwulan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Brawidjaja)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pamanahan</td>
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<td>Mataram (c.1550)</td>
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<td>Diponegoro</td>
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<td>Java War (1825–1830)</td>
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<td>(three generations)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pakubuwana X</td>
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<td>Dutch rule (c.1920)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

CAPITAL LETTERS indicate most important wajang form, dramatic cycle, and wajang hero.

Lines connecting heroes indicate direct descendant; intervening generations are also directly descended. (From Brandon, 1970:19)
Fig. 29
Sukasman's innovations
Among them are the use of a multi-coloured lighting effects

Fig. 30
Heri Dono's innovations
He signs his works and gives the title Babi (meaning "pig").
Relations among the most prominent wayang characters—the Pendawa, the Korawa, the Gods and the Punakawans

In the Mahabharata, there is a conflict between the two cousin: Pendawas (bottom centre characters) and the Korawas (bottom left). The Korawas have usurped the country of Ngastina and it is the struggle over this disputed country which provides the major theme of the wayang. The punakawans are servants of the Pendawas despite the fact that they are also gods. Betara Guru appears at the upper left side. He is the highest in the wayang hierarchy.
They arrive in the middle of the performance, usually around one o'clock in the morning, for an interlude of joking and singing.
According to one of my artist-informants, Sukasman, the choice of the shape of the body would have been dictated by the requirement for the figures to be easily recognized from far away. He has established a parallel with advertisement graphics in which he has found that the thinner the letter, the further away it can be seen (Illustrations 1 to 3—compare with the illust. 8 to 10. In Illust. 10, it is easier to distinguish the left from the right side of the character, and to distinguish these facial features). Drawing by Sukasman.
According to Sukasman the main rationale underlying the shape of the figure is the imperative of expressiveness. Contrary to the human figure, where the longest line goes from the top of the head to the chin, in the wayang face the longest imaginary line crosses all the facial features, projecting these features away from the body axis. This representation of the face accentuates its expressiveness. Drawing by Sukasman.
Fig. 35
Various type of wayang noses and eyes (according to Sulardi [1953]).
Fig. 36.1  *songkok* (turban) worn by deities

Fig. 36.2  *topong* (low crown)  
worn by kings and princes

Fig. 36.3  *makuta* worn by deities and kings  
only (high crown) with three tiered diadem;

Fig. 36.4  *praba* (back ornament)

Fig. 36  
Types of ornaments and clothing (in Ulbricht, 1970)
Type of ear-jewels

Fig. 36. 5

SUMPING SURENGPATI
used indiscriminately.

Fig. 36. 6

SUMPING SEKAR KLUWTH
used indiscriminately.

Fig. 36. 7

SUMPING WADERAN
reserved for deities and for
the members of the royal
family.

Fig. 36. 8  KATONGAN (COURTLY DODOT)

Fig. 36. 9  BOKONGAN (ROYAL DODOT)
Fig. 37.1 Cakil

Fig. 37.2 Braholo

Fig. 37.3 Buta Terong

Fig. 37

Ogres and Demons
Fig. 38 Animal figures.
Fig. 39 Marching armies and their weapons
Fig. 40
*Wanda* or the various representations of the same character according to age, mood and role in the stories. Shown here are three representations of Kresna, the spiritual adviser of the Pendawas.
Fig. 41
Exhibit on *Wayang* at the Asian Centre, University of British Columbia.
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Appendix One

Proposal for the purchase of a collection of *wayang kulit* for MOA (1989)
To the Committee Members:

I would like to present you this proposal for the purchase of a teaching collection of wayang kulit\(^1\), which is the most famous theatre form in Bali and Java and the heart of the ethical teaching inherent in Indonesian culture. As well, it is an important medium of communication facilitating change in Modern Indonesia\(^2\).

These wayang kulit and accompanying items I propose to purchase will not only complete the already existing collection of the Museum of Anthropology at UBC, but will also become the main objects presented to the public in the exhibit I plan to curate for the museum in January 1991. This teaching collection will then provide the unique opportunity for visitors and students to familiarize themselves with this rich and increasingly popular culture. This collection will also become the main data on which I will work to do an iconographic analysis, the basis of my written thesis.

I should also mention that this exhibition could also attain far-reaching goals, since we have the chance that our neighbour, the United States, is organizing for next year a national Indonesian festival. The core of the activities will be held in California (even though it will be as well in a city like New York). This festival is planned for May 1990 and will be held for one full year. \(^3\)

---

1 "The flat puppets made of parchments tooled and perforated, painted and guilded, and with beautifully polished horn supports and handles (...)" (Bondal et al., 1985: 8)

2 Which is the third country, in order of importance, which receives the most substantial bilateral help in Canada.

3 This means this is perfect timing for my exhibit.
Since nothing is planned for Seattle, this exhibit could either travel there OR it could benefit from arrangements already existent between Simon Fraser University and Californians universities. In fact, the Simon Fraser University Summer Institute (cf pamphlet included) has hired three famous Indonesian teachers of gamelan and dance, one Balinese (Nyoman Wenten) and two Javanese (K.R.T. Wasitodipuro- his honorific name- or Pak Cokro, and his daughter, Nanik Wenten). They have helped to organize some of the 50 gamelan orchestras groups (photography included of the Montreal gamelan) in California. They are also currently teaching during the year at the California Institute of the Arts in Valentia (Pak Cokro has also taught at U. Cal., Berkeley; UCLA; Wisconsin and Michigan, according to my information). From discussions with them about my project, I have found a lot of enthusiasm, not only to do representations of gamelan with the SFU gamelan group to accompany the wayang kulit performance at the UBC Museum of Anthropology, but ALSO to bring with them troupes of dancers and performers coming directly from Bali and Java, especially for this Indonesian Festival.

In order to organize this event we would need small supplementary funds if we decide to make arrangements with Simon Fraser University, which would be responsible for the group since the gamelan centre is located in this university (Martin Bartlett is in charge of the gamelan at SFU). We would also need the cooperation of the organizer of the performance aspect of the Indonesian Festival in California, Rachel Cooper. These arrangements would have the advantage of bringing to the Museum real dilettantes, and a more varied and numerous public, since the event at UBC could eventually
be publicized in the United States (UBC, then, would be part of the Festival). Since there is more and more interest in Indonesia (UBC has recently employed Dr Tineke Hellwig, a professor of Bahasa Indonesia, the official language in Indonesia; the Southeast Asian research center at UBC lead by Peter Richard is also rapidly growing; and SFU has planned to open a Southeast Asian study centre next year), the Museum of Anthropology at UBC would then be once again witnessing and leading the new wave of interest emerging for the 90's by exhibiting this crucial aspect of the Indonesian life, the wayang kulit representation.

This teaching collection could be bought during the first preliminary research trip I plan to conduct this summer for my Master's degree (departure planned for July 2nd, 1989- the second trip is planned for next year around the same date), which is already sponsored by a Ford Fellowship (from a Consortium of West Coast Universities: U. of Oregon, U. of Washington and UBC). My stay will be spent mainly in Yogyakarta, Solo and Sumarang in Central Java, which are the main city-centres of wayang kulit in Java, and also in Ubud, the cultural centre of Bali1. During this trip, I plan to visit private collections and museums and make contact with various Dalang2 and wayang kulit connoisseurs to ensure the judicious and well informed choice of the collection. Pak Cokro (earlier mentioned, teacher at SFU), well respected man in the sultan court of Yogyakarta (where he is living) since he is member of an aristocratic family, has offered to put me in contact with puppeteers in the Kraton, the Yogya

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1 Bali and Java are the main island in Indonesia where is still found this ancient and sophisticated hindu-boudhist art tradition.
2 Title given to the person who manipulate the puppets and who is playwright, director and actor. He also has the role of a spiritual and philosophical teacher, as well as a political one.
court. This would allow me to purchase one of the best quality wayang kulit made (covered with gold leaves and with the finest details) in Java, and at a quite reasonable price.

I would like also to document the various preparation processes of the wayang kulit by doing a photo-documentary. In fact, the making of these puppets, made of parchment (which is a type of buffalo leather on which the fat has been removed, making it translucent) is a very complicated and sophisticated process that requires a lot of skill. It may even sometime involve between four to five people: one preparing the parchment, one perforating the surface (with dozen of specialized tools), one preparing the horn handle (placing the horn over a fire to give it full flexibility and giving it the desired shape), one preparing the color and the guilding (These are in addition to the artist).

This teaching collection could include a contemporary1 Dalang's chest incorporating approximately 60 puppets (this is the reduced set for a representation, the complete set consisting of 200 puppets-cf. Bondan et al., 1985:10), the screen, the frame and the various other accessories (described in the following appendixes of this proposal) which are essential in recreating a performance of wayang kulit and which provide a full understanding and appreciation of its symbolic and aesthetic dimensions.

I would like also to purchase the necessary material documenting each phase of its production to make still more explicit the context from which the wayang kulit is issued.

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1 Therefore, less problem of conservation.
The estimated cost of this teaching collection is $6,050. I have included, in the following pages, a more detailed budget mentioning the approximate cost of the items I propose to buy and also some illustrations corresponding to these various sets of objects.

As you have probably realized by the length of this proposal, I have a great deal of information to convey. Therefore, I would appreciate your permission to meet with you and show you the other information I have collected.

Hoping that this proposal will stimulates your enthusiasm as much as it has mine,

Yours sincerely

Dominique Major

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1 Based on conversations with M. Van Yperen, well known Vancouver expert, referred to me by the Indonesian Embassy and the Southeast Asian research centre of UBC; and Dr. Michael Howard, former assistant teacher in the Department of Anthropology, UBC, and specialist of the Southeast Asian area.
Appendix Two

Proposal for the purchase of figures to complete the MOA wayang kulit collection (1990)
The Committee Members of the Museum of Anthropology University of British Columbia

June, 29th, 1990 Vancouver, B.C.

To the Committee Members:

Following the experience of field collecting of the summer 1989 in Indonesia (see Addendum 1 for a brief synthesis), I would like to propose this summer again a second plan for field collecting since I will be going again to Indonesia from July, 10th to August, 28th.\footnote{If no further notice.}

To contrast to my last trip in 1989, and following reflection on field collecting, I will take special care in this collecting to pluralize and diversify the strategies used by purchasing samples of different styles of wayang kulit, shadow theatre puppets. They will be purchased mainly in Java and Bali, both islands being centres of Hindu-Buddhist civilization in Indonesia with which the emergence of wayang kulit is associated. If possible, I will purchase some puppets from Lombok (a lesser known and smaller island influenced by Hindu-Buddhism). There can be found wayang deeply influenced by the Javanese style, according to Spitzig, 1981: "Das indonesische Schattenspiel"-see Addendum 3). The puppets in both islands (Java and Bali-focus of my selection) will be mainly chosen according to the nature of the public for which they are destined (according to my observations in 1989). I will base my selection on four

\footnote{See accompanying document, section 2, p.18 till end. This paper discuss some ethics principle and develop a reflexion on the importance of the criteria of selection as means of "representing the Others". The basis of my reflexion sustaining this proposal can be found on this paper.}

\footnote{The literature points out clearly differences between the two, Javanese wayang being very stylized while Balinese one more naturalistic-See section 4, illust. 2 and 3.}
categories I have observed last summer (which I would like to leave open for change dependent on further Indonesian information). They are produced for:

1) **tourists**;

2) **academy and collectors** (from what I have observed: "the urbanites" - but this will require more investigation);

3) **villagers**

4) **Sultan's court**.

Being aware of the MOA budget limitation, I am considering bringing a total of 16 puppets (8 for each island): four **examples from each of these categories** (2 for each island). The selection will be enlightened by the advice of experts such as **dalang**, puppeteers; and **wayang kulit** makers. I have made already personal contacts with some of these experts in Indonesia. I will complete this selection by **photographing** the available main characters of each of these categories in order to have a satisfying bank of data which could be eventually used for further research.

In addition, I will photograph two full sets of **wayang kulit**:

a) one from Java - from the Museum Sono Budoyo, in Yogyakarta, where the Javanese museum collection has been made by Pak Sagio, the MOA **wayang kulit** maker;

b) one from Bali - I am hoping to find an artist with as high a profile (according to Balinese standards) as Sagio. Such an artist might be found in Bali museums or working on his own (From what I understand the **wayang kulit** are almost without exception male). I believe that these documents will be invaluable for further stylistic research since no such extensive comparative data is now available (according to my information).
The selection of pieces will also reflect the stylistic variations among important cultural cities:

1) Solo
2) Yogyakarta.

Both cities are located in Central Java, and compete for recognition as the cultural centre of traditional arts in Indonesia. The collection will also reflect my preoccupation with putting the work of non-Western artists in an historical perspective that is why I will illustrate the perspective of change affecting the wayang kulit. The art of Sukasman is particularly revealing for this purpose (see article from him on the document accompanying this request—Section 5 and Section 4, p.79 and following). Moreover, if possible, I would like to purchase one sample of wayang to illustrate its various use (which will also locate its historical evolution—It goes without saying that wayang evolved and is not static art as the literature most often depicts it) such as that of political propaganda (type used, for instance, to promote nationalism during the Dutch regime).

Furthermore, I would like to stress two considerations:

1) The first one is that I am planning to purchase contemporary pieces to accentuate the "actuality" of the wayang thereby taking into account the criticism made to museums of "freezing people into the past". This strategy also offers the possibility of knowing the identity of the puppet maker and of allowing the Museum to date

---

4 I foresee some difficulties since they have not been produced in large quantity.
5 By "art", I mean everything which is done by a human hand, by opposition to "aesthetic": every thing from nature (eg.: a nice sunset). This definition has the advantage of breaking the hierarchical nuance between "Art" (too often associated with Man and Culture) and "craft" (linked often with Woman and Nature). In fact, I do believe that "all arts are equal".
the pieces more easily (see my paper on Field collecting in the attached document, Section 2: 27-29).

2) The second consideration is that because the *wayang kulit* is a male art I would like to bring a sample of a Women favourite art (according to Keeler, 1987; and Dr Laurie Sears- personal communication), that is the *kethoprak*. *Kethoprak* is a folk drama performed by human actors. I would make every effort to purchase part of the costume used by *kethoprak* dancers.

This project is of particular interest for me since the process of field collecting will become the main focus of my Master's thesis, as well as the analysis of the iconography of objects from various sets. In this thesis, I am planning to reflect upon the means of representation of "Others" in the process of collecting. This reflection appears to be of importance for anthropology museums since collecting is probably one of the first acts of interpretation (being not passive) entering museums. Field collecting involves a selection which is necessarily an interpretation, which itself depicts a "representation of Others" (a point which will be questioned in my thesis).

This material will be used in an exhibit I plan to curate (if the exhibit committee accepts my proposal—see Section 1 in document for temporary proposal) in the spring of 1991 during the National American Indonesian festival year. These objects and data collected will allow MOA to go beyond the presentation of a "pristine *wayang kulit*" that is from the traditional Javanese court tradition (too often the only one depicted in the literature on *wayang kulit*). In fact, the material will suggest other multiple contexts, at the same time synchronic and diachronic when included in the already existing MOA collection—see Section 3 in document).
Finally, I would like to bring your attention to the document (still in process and which will belong to MOA when completed) accompanying my request. It will inform you of the work which has been done during this year on my field collecting trip and the objects purchased.

It includes:

1) information concerning the financing of the project (proposal given to the MOA and to NorthWest Consortium)
2) descriptions of the pieces: in the field; and in MOA, through cataloguing and accessioning records
3) Other documents found in the field on topics related to wayang kulit
4) two of my papers I did: for Dr Michael Ames and for Dr Tineke Hellwig. One is concerned with a reflection on my first experience of field collecting and the other is a descriptive essay on wayang kulit which details its history; the various other artforms in the wayang tradition; the values explicit in the wayang of the Priyayi elite group who has promoted this artform; and the various components of the performance. This last paper focusses particularly on the iconography of the puppets (including those in the MOA) and the steps of their manufacture.

Organized slides from my field can also be found in the document (the information on them will be computerized on my return).
Please consult the index on second page of this document for more details on its content (As the note mentions on the first page it is still in process).

The estimated sum I would like to request for my project to MOA is $4580. Details on the planned expenses can be found on Addendum 2.

I hope that this document communicates to you the great interest in wayang kulit which I have developed in this last year

Yours sincerely,

Dominique Major

P.S. Since, as you will notice in the section 1, I did not receive any research funding this year, I would be very grateful to MOA if it could consider the great expenses of such a trip, and allocate some living costs while in the field.
Appendix Three

Exhibit
Wayang: From Gods to Bart Simpson

Shadow play figures of Indonesia

Organized by Dominique Major

With the Assistance of the Museum of Anthropology at University of British Columbia

Exhibit at the Museum of Anthropology at University of British Columbia
Theatre Gallery

May 1991
Wayang from the Gods to Bart Simpson

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List of figures in the exhibit

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Variety in the Wayang Kulit Production
Variation According to Islands
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Classical and Experimental Styles

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Wayang: From the Gods to Bart Simpson

Shadow Play Figures of Indonesia

Representations of Hindu gods and characters looking like popular figures of Western culture, such as Bart Simpson, Batman and Dinosaurs, correspond to two poles of Indonesian contemporary wayang kulit production: the classical and the experimental.

Wayang kulit are Indonesian flat cut-out parchment figures used to cast large shadows on a screen during a night-long performance. The English translation “shadow play figures” might be misleading since their importance is not only in the shadows they produce but in the representation of characters they suggest.

Wayang means “representation of a person,” and kulit means “skin,” referring to the material they are made of, that is, water buffalo skin. Supported by a buffalo horn handle, they are intricately perforated, gilded (often with gold leaf), and finely painted.

The idea of "Gods" evokes classical styles where the emphasis is on the continuity of a moral, philosophical and mystical tradition and the perpetuation of prescribed ways of representing characters. This does not mean, though, that the inherited schemes are merely copied from
generation to generation. Classical artist, usually male, add their own talent to continually improve the collective heritage.

The theme of "Bart Simpson" suggests the other pole: the experimental styles. Some artists explore the creation of new characters, incorporating alien influences adapted to Javanese tastes. Others prefer making changes and experimenting with models of characters from the classical repertoire. Open to humor and experimentation with non-traditional media, these styles are nevertheless not as popular as their classical counterparts.

A large spectrum of works can be found between these two extremes, classical and experimental. This exhibit presents examples of these two poles, through the works of well known artists from the islands of Java, particularly Yogyakarta (a Central Javanese city famous for the richness of its arts), and Bali.
Variety in the Wayang Kulit Production:

Six Views on Betara Guru, The Supreme God

Indonesian Wayang kulit (Shadow play figures) are often described as if there was only one figure style. Looking closer at the figures, which at first might appear to be all the same, reveals a wide range of expression. In fact, even though the classical forms originate from a common Hindu-Buddhist heritage, they developed differently, through centuries of collective and individual efforts, in the islands where they are found - Java, Bali and Lombok.

In Java, the focus of the research which sustains this exhibit, there are striking differences according to major cities such as Jakarta, Cirebon, Semarang, Surakarta and Yogyakarta. Even more differentiation can be found within these cities according to individual preferences for the continuity of strict standards of representation or for their modification.
To illustrate the richness of styles found in Indonesia, this display presents six different representations of the same character, the God Betara Guru ("Divine Teacher"). He is the most prominent among the Gods of the wayang world. Supreme ruler of the three worlds (those of the gods and goddesses, humans and malicious spirits of the underworld), he is one of the manifestations of the powerful Hindu god Siva.

Betara Guru is recognized by his four arms (the only figure with this feature), fine nose and "almond-like" eyes and fine body.
Betara Guru
Yogyakarta kraton (Sultan’s court) classical style
Sagio, Gendeng (near Yogyakarta), Java, 1989
Catalogue Number: IB 444
Betara Guru
Yogyakarta, experimental style
Sukasman, Yogyakarta, Java, 1989
Catalogue Number: IB 442
Betara Guru
Surakarta Kasunanan kraton classical style
Balai Agung, Surakarta, Java, 1990
Catalogue Number: IB 438
Betara Guru
Academy of Arts of Solo experimental style
Bambang Suwarno, Surakarta, Java, 1990
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Hajar Satoto, Surakarta, Java, 1988
Catalogue Number: IB 436
Betara Guru
South Balinese classical style
I Wayan Nartha, Sukawati, Bali, 1990
Catalogue Number: IB 445
Variation According to Islands

In Java, Betara Guru is represented in a stylized fashion while in Bali he is more naturalistically depicted.
Variation According to Cities (Java)

In Yogyakarta (Central Javanese city), Betara Guru wears a turban and has moveable arms. His feet are turned in the same direction and the bull underneath him faces in the same direction as his own head.

In Surakarta (neighboring city to Yogyakarta), Betara Guru is shown wearing one or another of two different types of crown with a three-tiered diadem. Contrary to Yogyakarta, he has the feet turned outward, and the bull is facing in the opposite direction to Guru’s head.
Classical and Experimental Styles

Classical figures are sober in colour while the experimental ones, such as those by artists Sukasman and Hajar Satoto, use vivid colours, personal methods of carving and representation of ornaments.
Photo-exhibit:

Section one
Wayang: From the Gods to Bart Simpson

Representations of Hindu gods and characters looking like popular figures of Western culture, such as Bart Simpson, Batman and Dinosaurs, correspond to two distinct poles of Indonesian contemporary wayang kulit production: the classical and the experimental.

Wayang kulit are flat cut-out parchment figures used to cast large shadows on a screen during a night-long performance. The English translation “shadow play figures” might be misleading since their importance is not only in the shadows they produce but in the representation of characters they suggest.

Wayang means “representation of a person,” and kulit means “skin,” referring to the material they are made of, that is water buffalo skin. The figures are supported by a water buffalo horn handle and are intricately perforated, gilded (often with gold leaf), and finely painted.
The idea of "Gods" evokes classical styles which emphasize the continuity of a moral, philosophical and mystical tradition and the perpetuation of prescribed ways of representing characters. This does not mean, though, that the inherited schemes are merely copied from generation to generation. Classical artists, predominantly male, add their own talent to continually improving the centuries-old collective heritage.

The theme of "Bart Simpson," on the other hand, suggests the experimental, secular production which challenges preconceived notions of what is usually meant by wayang. It also expresses the view that wayang is, in essence, a popular art. Some artists explore the creation of new characters, incorporating alien influences adapted to Javanese tastes. Others prefer making changes and experimenting with models of characters from the classical repertoire. Open to humor, vivid visual effects and experimentation with non-traditional media (i.e. cardboard, felt pens to create transparency, etc.), these styles are nevertheless not as popular as their classical counterparts.

*Wayang*, while being rooted in ancient heritage, nevertheless can take many forms to express collective and personal identities, the actuality of contemporary life, and the tensions between conservative and progressive views. The continual experimentation and creativity of Indonesian artists ensure that the *wayang* tradition will retain its dynamism as a popular Indonesian art form.
A large spectrum of works can be found between these two extremes, classical and experimental. This exhibit presents examples of these two poles, through the works of well known artists from the islands of Java, particularly Yogyakarta (a Central Javanese city famous for the richness of its arts), and Bali.
Classical Pole: The Gods

The idea of "Gods" evokes one of the poles of contemporary wayang production: the classical royal court-derived tradition held by Western and many Indonesian scholars to be "the authentic" wayang form, even though it is only one part of the many classical styles produced in Indonesia. In fact, wayang has developed in the royal courts only on the island of Java, while in Bali, the figures have evolved in the village communities to become folk art.

Among the most prominent Gods of the wayang world is Betara Guru. Supreme ruler of the three worlds (those of the gods and goddesses, ancestors and humans), he is one of the manifestations of the powerful Hindu god Siva.
Betara Guru, the highest of the Gods.
Collection of the Museum Sono Budoyo, from Yogyakarta
Experimental Pole: Popular Characters

The creation of new characters, such as those looking like popular figures of Western culture such as Batman and Bart Simpson, have become highly controversial art forms in Indonesia. Their use reflects the importance of experimentation and artists' attempts to make wayang more popular. The creation of new characters and new meanings to adjust wayang to contemporary life, an openness to alien influences, and the exploration of new media and settings for performances, characterize these styles.

"I am not worried about Javanese culture disappearing because of the influence of Western culture. In my opinion it is not possible for a culture to fade or disappear, as long as there are people there who are actively creating. If there are no such people, why then the culture is already dead" (Heri Dono, quoted by Astri Wright, Jakarta Post, October 1988).

Marginal in Indonesia even though their number is growing, these artforms all aim at regenerating and expanding the boundaries of the wayang world. They have not yet gained popularity, however, and are the subject of much criticism.
Wayang Legenda.
Made By Heri Dono, from Yogyakarta. Photo provided by the artist.
Section two
A classical performance, such as in the royal court of Java, lasts all night, starting around nine in the evening and ending just before dawn. During the performance, a dalang (puppeteer) is seated cross-legged, facing a rectangular screen, neither eating nor rising from his place.

The dalang, usually male, holds the figures in his hand and interposes them between the lamp (often an electric light bulb hung over his head) and the screen, creating large shadows on the screen.

Until the Second World War, the courts of Central Java set the standards of aesthetic excellence for the making of the wayang kulit in Java. Following the war, the patronage of the arts shifted more to the government and modern institutions (such as the universities and academies of art).
Performance at the court of Yogyakarta.
Photo taken from Bondan et al., Lordly Shades (1985)
Wayang Ukur: An Experimental Performance

Rooted in the classical tradition but departing from it is Wayang Ukur, a newly created wayang by the Javanese artist Sukasman. Ukur means "measurement." Sukasman, having measured many classical wayang, deduced what he believes to be the ideal measurement or essence of this art form.

In Wayang Ukur, the length of the performance is reduced to two hours instead of a whole night. Two dalang perform instead of one: one seated in front of the screen, and the other one behind it, to allow the figures to be seen from both sides.

In Sukasman’s Wayang Ukur performance the single lighting source is replaced by a mobile multi-colored lighting system located in front and behind the screen, providing an intense, constantly changing color background to enhance the mood of the actions.

The stories are told in Bahasa Indonesia, the official language of Indonesia, rather than in Javanese or Kawi, the language traditionally used in classical performances.
Court Wayang: A Classical Performance

Through the night the dalang, as the puppeteer is called, evokes the presence of the various characters by using the appropriate voices, movements and personality characteristics corresponding to each of the figures. The dalang is more than just a puppeteer. He also is a singer, performer, dramatist. According to the tradition, the dalang has also spiritual power.

The dalang, who also has the role of conductor-director, leads the gamelan musicians, a mainly percussion orchestra located immediately behind him. He communicates to his musicians what pieces to play and when to play them by signalling non-verbally. The dalang signals by using a wooden rapper to hit the inside of the chest containing his puppets, or an iron rapper held between his toes to kick the metal plates hanging from the chest.

Spectators can sit on both sides of the screen. Those sitting on the dalang’s side, behind the gamelan, can observe the dalang’s movements and the intricate design on the figures. This is the favorite location in Java which indicates the importance of the figures themselves. From the other side of the screen, where Balinese prefer to sit, only the shadows can be seen.
Left photo:
The examination of a student *dalang* (puppeteer) at the court of Yogyakarta.

Right photo:
A *gamelan* orchestra located immediately behind the *dalang*.
Wayang Ukur: An Experimental Performance

In Sukasman's *Wayang Ukur*, the audience is seated on one side. By adding a second *dalang* (puppeteer), Sukasman has synthesized the setting of the classical performance by allowing the spectators to see from one side what is normally seen from two: the *dalang*'s movements and the shadows (created by a second *dalang* behind the screen). This new setting, which makes possible more action of the characters, adds dynamism to the performance. An analogy can be made with cinema with which *Wayang Ukur* competes for the attention of the Indonesian Youth.

Sukasman has introduced another *wayang* form to his theatre, the *wayang wong*. It includes dancers representing characters of the traditional repertoire.

According to Sukasman, a tacit rule emerged, since Indonesia's Independence in the middle of this century, forbidding anyone to make changes or innovations in *wayang* for fear of reducing the quality and beauty of the art considered at its apex. This is why, Sukasman says, the critics are so harsh on artists seeking changes. Sukasman praises the return to a pre-independence stage where *wayang* was considered an art form still to be improved instead of already perfected, less for an elite and more "by the people, for the people." The return to this earlier idea would result, according to him, in a higher level of public interest and a more intense creativity and innovation by artists.
Sukasman’s performance at his house in Yogyakarta, 1990.
Sukasman’s performance at his house in Yogyakarta, 1990.
Wayang Legenda: An Experimental Performance

A step further away from the classical performance of the court and the Wayang Ukur of Sukasman is Wayang Legenda, created by Heri Dono, an audacious young Javanese artist.

The distinctiveness of the Wayang Legenda lies in the highly personal visual and imaginary world in which laughter and humor are the cornerstones. According to Heri Dono, laughter permeates all levels of Javanese society and is essential as a political weapon, a greeting, a medicine for hardship, or an expression of friendship.

As in Wayang Ukur, the length of the performance has been reduced to two hours. But it differs in its unconventional use of two screens (exceptionally, the installation in Basel shown above used only one screen): a large one below a smaller one on top. The use of the two screens is employed to expand the sense of a distance between one scene and another and to produce a sense of naturalistic simultaneity between the various events in the stories. Impressionistic electronic music alternates with the rhythms of pounding drums.
Going beyond the classical Javanese and Balinese-centred heritage, Heri Dono brings to life folktales from various Indonesian ethnic groups, particularly the Batak people of North Sumatra. His objective is to make these stories more relevant to contemporary reality.

"To me, wayang is only a medium for expressing a story. And folktales, legends and various types of folklore are widespread throughout Indonesia. Why do we only perform the stories from the Ramayana, Mahabharata and Panji epics? As an Indonesian I feel a responsibility to make a contribution in the field of art. Say that each province in Indonesia has five folktales, for example, how many folktales could then be made into wayang performances in Indonesia's 27 provinces? Wouldn't wayang truly become the property of the Indonesian people?" (Heri Dono, quoted by Astri Wright, *Jakarta Post*, October 1988).

Heri Dono expresses a sharp, often cynical, sometimes political, sometimes scatological or erotic, and always absurd commentary on humans and their society (Astri Wright, presentation for Heri Dono's exhibit at the gallery Cemeti at Yogyakarta, Java, 1988).
Wayang Legenda. Made by Heri Dono.
Installation in Museum fur Volkerkunde, Basel, Switzerland, 1991. Photo provided by the artist.
Wayang Legenda. Made by Heri Dono.
Installation in Museum fur Volkerkunde, Basel, Switzerland, 1991. Photo provided by the artist.
Section three
Court Wayang Figures

The classical court style can be recognized by the intricacy of the details, the restraint in the colour palette, the high sophistication of the forms and the use of designs and colours specific to particular courts.

Sagio (born in 1951), Master of the wayang kulit classical tradition of the Sultan's court of Yogyakarta, learned about the philosophy of wayang and its making at the Sultan’s palace. He participated in workshops and exhibits in Japan (Expo 70 in Osaka), in France (Paris, 1977) and in India (Bangalore, 1980).
Arjuna in meditation. Figure from the collection of the artist. Made by Sagio, from Gendeng (near Yogyakarta), 1990.
Wayang Ukur Figures

In searching for new ways to present this thousand year-old tradition, Sukasman frequently breaks away from many of the classical conventions. Among his innovations are the use of vivid transparent colours which can be seen through the screen when light is shone through them and the modification of the silhouette to make it more expressive.

Sukasman (born in 1937) received his formal training at the Academy of Fine Arts and at the Sultan’s palace, both in Yogyakarta. After studying modern art in the Netherlands, Sukasman developed his own ideas on the wayang. His pieces were exhibited during Expo 86 in Vancouver, followed by a performance at Simon Fraser University.
Sukasman used popular idols and peasants-like characters, Semar and Togog, holding the world containing positive and negative elements, as the symbol for his performance. Figure from the collection of the artist. Made by Sukasman, Yogyakarta.
Wayang characters

The range of characters which Court Wayang and Wayang Ukur draw upon consists of as many as 300 to 400. They are mainly Gods, Heroes from the court aristocracy, Demons and Servant-clowns derived from the great Hindu epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. These characters provide models of behavior for Indonesians.

Even though there are notable exceptions, the positioning of the characters on the banana tree trunk into right (good characters) and left side (bad characters) can indicate their temperament. This symbolic division into right and left relates to Hindu philosophy which conceived the cosmos in constant interaction between positive and negative polarities. Contrary to Christian religion, there is interdependency between good and evil and neither force ultimately wins over the other. Both poles are necessary for the continuity of the universe.
The figures are stylized and represented in profile. According to the well-known contemporary artist Sukasman, this is to help distinguish them from a distance and to accentuate their expressiveness. As Westerners immediately recognize Bart Simpson, with his blonde porcupine-style hair and protruding teeth, wayang characters are recognized by Indonesians through their caricature obtained by particular position of the head, types of body, eyes, nose, mouth, stance, dress and ornaments. These physical features also reflect the status of the character, his or her temperament and spiritual strengths. The finesse of the body, for example, suggests an inner refinement of the character, while large protruding features indicate the opposite.
Alus

Many characters on the right personify the ideal of the traditional Javanese, to be *alus*, that is refined, polished, polite and restrained in behavior. This is suggested by the small body, the gold or white face and the fine facial features of the figure.
Kasar

Most characters shown at the left are said to be *kasar*, that is impolite, rough, unrefined and uncontrolled. This is indicated by their red faces, large fangs, and red eyes.
right side of the dalang

left side of the dalang
Duryodana or Suyudana

Leader of the Korawa family, who usurped the kingdom of Ngastina from the hands of their cousins, the Pendawa. The struggle over this disputed country, a theme drawn from the famous Indian epic, Mahabharata, provides the story outline for the wayang.

Court Wayang

Made by Sagio, from Gendeng (near Yogyakarta), 1990. Collection of the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia.
Wayang Ukur

Collection of the artist
Durna

Spiritual adviser of King Duryodana. The Korawa and Pendawa, the two main opponents of the Mahabharata stories, learnt the arts of war from him. An invincible warrior, he is known for his extraordinary magical power.

Court Wayang

Made by Sagio, from Gendeng (near Yogyakarta), 1990. Collection of the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia.
Wayang Ukur

Made by Sukasman, from Yogyakarta. Collection of the artist.
Gunungan or Kayon

The mystical "Tree or Mountain of life,"is the most important figure of the set. It is shown to indicate the divine setting for the play, and is used at the beginning of the performance and of each scene to indicate that the cosmic order is in balance. When agitated in the middle of the performance, creating fluttering shadows on the screen, it suggests that the cosmic order is being threatened and under turbulence.

Court Wayang

Made by Sagio, from Gendeng (near Yogyakarta), 1990.
Wayang Ukur

Made by Sukasman, from Yogyakarta, 1990. The left gunungan is inspired by the classical style but has been left unpainted, while the right one is newly-created and symbolizes unity in the world. Figures from the collection of the artist.
A hilarious clown, acting as a servant, appears in the middle of the night for an interlude of jokes and songs. He is accompanied by his three sons, Bagong, Petruk and Gareng. Grotesque in appearance, he is nevertheless a powerful god.

“He is the repository of the highest wisdom, yet this flashes from in between his gentle jokes, his clowning, and even his persistent uncontrollable farting. Anyone who has witnessed a Javanese shadow-play will recall the wave of deep affection and respect which flows out of the audience towards Semar when he appears” (Anderson, *Mythology and the Tolerance of the Javanese*, 1965).
Court Wayang

Made by Sagio, from Gendeng (near Yogyakarta), 1990. Collection of the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia.
Wayang Ukur

Made by Sukasman, from Yogyakarta. Collection of the artist.
Srikandi

Hunter and archer, she has become the symbol for the emancipated woman. She can be recognized by eyes that look straight ahead, instead of looking downward like most other female characters associated with the aristocracy.

The female characters are smaller than male figures, and they play lesser roles in this malecentred art form.

Court Wayang

Wayang Ukur

Collection of the artist
Arjuna

With his fine nose pointing down as a sign of humility, his half-closed almond-shaped eyes and his fine body, Arjuna crystallizes the characteristics of the alus characters. He represents the ideal of the aristocratic man, manifesting refinement, beauty and power.

Court Wayang

Made by Sagio, from Gendeng (near Yogyakarta), 1989. The bird shape in Arjuna’s dodot, the piece of cloth wrap around his hips, is typical of the Yogyakarta court style. Collection of the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia.
Wayang Ukur

Made by Sukasman, from Yogyakarta. Collection of the artist.
Section four
Wayang Suluh

Wayang Suluh was first created in 1947 by a Javanese educationalist named R.M. Said. The figures are more realistic and dressed in modern clothes. The Wayang Suluh was used to convey moral and nationalistic ideas during the Indonesian revolution against the Dutch, which lead to the Independence of Indonesia in 1949.

Collection of the Museum Sono Budoyo, Yogyakarta.
Wayang Kancil

The Wayang Kancil, telling the adventures of a clever moose-deer (kancil in Indonesian) and his tricks on other animals, is the only shadow theatre form designed for children. The artist Ledjar revived this idea which first emerged in the beginning of the 19th century and had then been forgotten. The kancil set includes trees and vegetable figures used to encourage children to love nature. His kancil figures were toured in Germany and are used regularly in performances in Jakarta, the Indonesian capital.

Ledjar also creates classical and historical wayang which present a panorama of early 17th century Java with Dutch barons, officials and their wives in splendid baroque costume. The Museum of Anthropology of University of British Columbia has acquired a Javanese Sultan from this last collection.

Made by Ledjar, from Yogyakarta. Collection of the artist.
Wayang Dinosaurs

Balinese Wayang maker and dalang (puppeteer) I Wayan Wija was still completing a number of dinosaur figures during the summer of 1990 for his first scheduled performance later that year.

Teacher at the Academy of Arts of Indonesian Performing Arts in the Balinese capital, Denpasar, I Wayan Wija has performed classical plays in the United States. He was selected to represent Indonesia during Expo 86 in Vancouver.

Wayang Legenda

Heri Dono, painter and a wayang kulit maker, created a humorous avant-garde wayang kulit which he calls Wayang Legenda.

In appearance, Heri Dono’s art seems divorced from the classical heritage. Unconventional techniques such as collage, use of cardboard instead of water buffalo skin, and “Picassoesque” forms characterize his highly personal style informed by his painting training. But the classical polarities of Gods and Demons and good and evil can be recognized in his characters with split faces, where each side of the face corresponds to one of these extremes. This representation serves as an allegory to express the contradictions of human existence where love and hate, peace and war, guilt and innocence, good and evil continually coexist.

Heri Dono (born in 1960) received studio art training in the Institute of Art of Yogyakarta. Guided by Sukasman, he studied wayang and was influenced by his teacher’s creative approach. Heri Dono’s works were exhibited in Switzerland (Basel), Holland (Amsterdam) and France (Paris) during the winter of 1990-91.
Section Five
Indonesia

Type of Government: A Republic.
Capital: Jakarta
Location: In Southeast Asia between Malay Peninsula and Australia.
Geography: World’s largest archipelago: 13,677 islands; 6,000 inhabited.
Population: 180,000,000, the fifth largest in the World.
Religions: Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism.
National language: Bahasa Indonesia.
National motto: Unity in Diversity.

The wayang kulit performance in Indonesia, estimated to be over a thousand years old, is associated with the Hindu-Buddhist civilizations which flourished in Java, Bali and Lombok before the establishment of Islam.
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The figures from the collection of the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia presented here are part of a larger collection of twenty-one contemporary Javanese and Balinese wayang kulit, which I collected for the Museum of Anthropology during the summers of 1989-90, with its financial assistance. The photographs presented in this display were taken by myself (except when specified) during these field collecting trips.

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