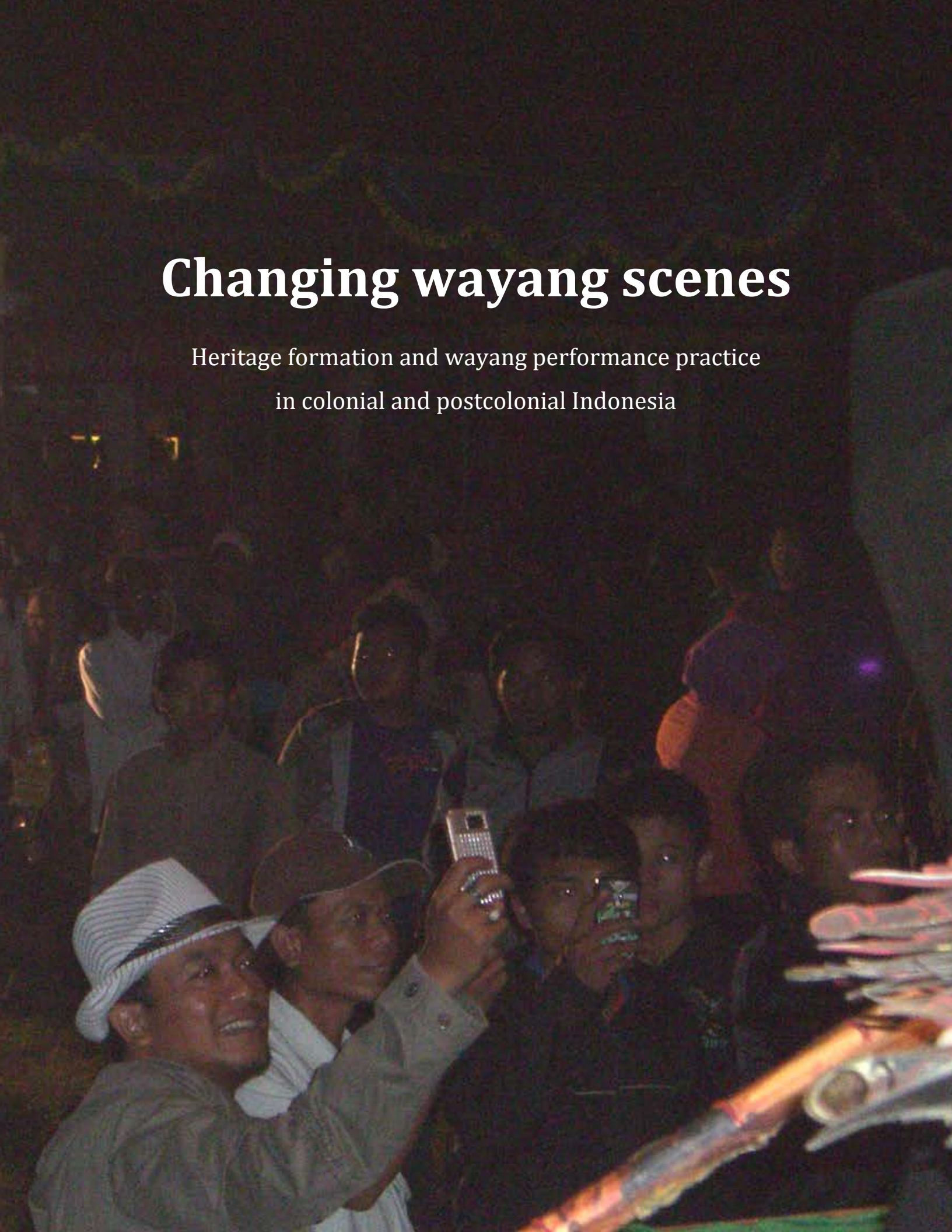


Changing wayang scenes

Heritage formation and wayang performance practice
in colonial and postcolonial Indonesia



Front page:

Spectators at Ki Enthus Susmono's *Wayang Santri*, Tegal, 14th November 2010.

By S.N. Boonstra.

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT

Changing wayang scenes
Heritage formation and wayang performance practice
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Map of Java and surroundings

Introduction

Heritage is not so much about the past as it is about the present. Heritage is a way to make meaning of the past in the present. As such, heritage does not exist of itself, but 'something' is labeled heritage. Objects and customs with roots in the past are proclaimed heritage when they are valued enough in the present to be preserved for the future. These meanings and values of both tangible and intangible dimensions of culture from the past are not static, but change over time. As a consequence, what today is claimed as heritage is the result of a negotiation over such meanings and values (Smith 2006, 3). Heritage can thus be seen as a process in which the meaning and value of the past in the present is created and re-created, authorized and re-authorized. Making meaning of the past takes place among different communities over often contested and sensitive political, national, religious, and ethnic identity issues linked to local, national and world value systems for culture. The outcome of this dynamic process – what is heritage- is thus ultimately associated with the outcome of power relations – who decides heritage - and the production of identity – for whom is heritage - and plays a crucial role in processes of appropriation, belonging, exclusion, and inclusion – why is heritage - on local, national, and international levels – where is heritage? Those in power draw the longest straw and decide or authorize what is heritage and what is not. However, power relations are always contested and changed according to the socio-political and historical context.

This thesis studies the relationship between colonial and postcolonial power structures, legacies of the colonial past en contemporary heritage formation, specifically with the concept of intangible cultural heritage. It takes the *wayang* performance practice in colonial and postcolonial Indonesia as a case study. *Wayang* made its debut in the international heritage arena when UNESCO proclaimed the *wayang* puppet theatre of Indonesia as one of twenty-eight Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity on 7 November 2003. UNESCO's international heritage discourse became the newest *wayang* frame although *wayang* has since long been regulated and preserved through the intervention of academic, governmental and cultural institutions both in Indonesia and the Netherlands. Embedded in the NWO sponsored research program *Sites, Bodies and Stories. The dynamics of heritage formation in colonial and postcolonial Indonesia and the Netherlands* the first part of this thesis investigates the construction of *wayang* as

heritage through an analysis of *wayang* discourse and its dynamics in contemporary Indonesia and the Netherlands in the context of the colonial and postcolonial past since the beginning of the nineteenth century, and into the postcolonial period in the twentieth and twenty-first century. The second part follows three of the current most famous puppeteers, *dalang*, in Indonesia to explore how and to what extent the historically constructed and authorized *wayang* discourse affects contemporary *wayang* performance practice.

Various protagonists battle in the *wayang* heritage arena: academics, cultural institutions, such as museums and *wayang* organizations, policy makers, politicians, *dalang*, their managers and audiences. This thesis aims to investigate the relation between heritage discourse and practice. I intend to address the questions of the extent to which *wayang* discourses from colonial times, through postcolonial to contemporary times influence current *wayang* performance practices to see how and to what degree *dalang* are impacted by discourses of *wayang*. This thesis seeks to find answers to sub-questions as to how authorized discourses of *wayang* have been shaped over time and how *wayang* was defined and made into heritage. Who the agents are and what the driving forces are behind the discourse will also be explored. To go beyond the authorized heritage discourse I will look at current *wayang* performance practices of three famous *dalang* to examine how *dalang* support, contest, resist and recast authorized *wayang* discourses, and to what ends.

Attention for the practitioners of heritage came with the development of the concept of intangible cultural heritage as the result of an important anthropological shift in the concept of heritage. For decades attempts were made to define what was previously, and sometimes still is, called folklore. The concept of intangible cultural heritage is a reaction to criticism on the *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (World Heritage Convention) of 1972. The World Heritage Convention defines heritage as physical tangible, monumental, grand, universally significant, imposing and based on something 'authentic' (Smith 2006, 27). The World Heritage List that accompanies the World Heritage Convention enumerates the most important monuments, buildings, and sites of humanity that are part of the cultural and natural heritage that the World Heritage Committee considers to contain so-called outstanding universal value. At first the UNESCO heritage list was meant to give examples of different kinds of heritage that should be protected, but it developed into a list on which every self-respecting nation-state

wanted to have 'its' heritage enlisted in order to gain status as heritage protector and to open up possibilities for tourism and funding.

The World Heritage Convention grew out of a nineteenth and twentieth century discourse about protection and conservation management of material remains from the past. It focused on West-European architecture and archaeology, including anthropology, and developed especially in Britain, France and Germany. This discourse evolved alongside the institutionalization of museums as repositories and manifestations of national identity and cultural achievement. When architecture and archeology were able to claim professional expertise over material culture the concepts of conservation and protection were institutionalized. It was the professional expert who was responsible for the care of tangible remains from the past and for passing on aesthetic values and conservation ethics. The aim was to disseminate these values to the public at large, and to ensure greater conservation awareness and appreciation of a nation's cultural heritage (Smith 2006, 18-19).

In the twentieth century, the institutionalization of the heritage concept continued with the development in the West of all kinds of charters, conventions, and agreements concerning the preservation and management of cultural heritage on both national and international levels. In these charters and conventions, conservation ethics were standardized, based on the conviction that the cultural significance of a site, building, artifact or place must determine its use and management. It was still the expert who identified the innate value and significance, which are often defined in terms of historical, scientific, educational, or more generally 'cultural' significance (Smith 2006, 26).

Since World War II, UNESCO, as one of the United Nation's agencies striving to overcome international conflict, has developed into the major player in the global heritage arena. UNESCO supported a series of world heritage initiatives and worked towards the standardization of a set of procedures and techniques. These standards were further institutionalized in member states through national legislations, national charters, but also on the international level through charters, conventions, and agreements that concerned the preservation and management of a whole range of heritage sites and places. These processes of standardization and regulation of preservation and conservation of material remains from the past culminated in UNESCO's adoption of the World Heritage Convention

in 1972. This standardizing tendency went hand in hand with debates about the problematic implications of these processes. Objections concerned the inescapable process of selection and evaluation based on the subjective idea that some things are more important than others (Nas 2002). The questions of who decides what is heritage and who has the power to define meanings of the past, continue to be relevant. In *The Invention of Tradition* E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger described (1983) how the past was selectively constructed to support power regimes. D. Lowenthal's *The Past is a Foreign Country* (1985) reinforced this view. L.J. Smith also argued that 'the idea of heritage' is to construct, reconstruct, and negotiate a range of identities and social and cultural values and meaning in the present (Smith 2006, 3).

Such academic debates led to the expansion of UNESCO's notion of heritage and the criteria for 'outstanding universal value' that had to be present in order to be declared heritage. Since the late 1980s UNESCO expanded the number of listed sites and attempted to make the list less Eurocentric and more representative of its member states (Askew 2010, 30). To this end, the notion of tangible heritage was expanded to natural heritage. Tangible heritage is defined as a 'monument, groups of buildings or site' that is 'of historical aesthetic, archaeological value'.¹ The World Heritage list includes sites such as Notre Dame (France), Borobudur (Indonesia), Angkor Wat (Cambodia), Robben Island (South Africa), and Machu Picchu (Peru). Natural heritage is defined as 'outstanding physical, biological, and geological features; habitats of threatened plants or animal species and areas of value on scientific or aesthetic grounds or from the point of view of conservation' and includes sites such as the Great Barrier Reef (Australia), Mount Kenya National Park (Kenya), and the Komodo National Park (Indonesia). Initially, natural heritage referred to special places untouched by humans, i.e. wilderness. However, as most places on the natural heritage list have been shaped or at least affected by people they are now incorporated on the World Heritage list (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 53).

The rearrangement of the heritage lists shows the shift in UNESCO's conceptualization of heritage. The process of establishing what is now labeled intangible cultural heritage is regarded as the 'anthropologization' of heritage and referred to as the

¹ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext>, accessed 24th November, 2012.

anthropological heritage discourse or the alternative heritage discourse. The start of this discourse dates can be traced back to a few decades prior to the adoption of the World Heritage Convention. South American, Asian, and African countries criticized and questioned the relevance of the heritage concept that culminated in the World Heritage Convention for indigenous heritage practices. In 1952 attempts were already being made to develop an alternative idea of heritage with the drafting of the Universal Copyright Convention. None of the alternatives explored seemed feasible until UNESCO established the first international normative instrument in 1989: the Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore. This recommendation was influenced by academic debates that called for an 'anthropologizing' and 'humanizing' of cultural heritage. This resulted in a more anthropological approach to the notion of culture and gave the development of the concept of intangible cultural heritage an impulse. The Recommendation of 1989 focused on sustaining traditions by supporting practitioners - shifting from products (tales, songs, customs) to producers (performers, artisans, healers), their knowledge and their skills (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 53).

The *Living Human Treasure* system was established in 1993, which acknowledged 'persons who possess to a high degree the knowledge and skills required for performing or re-creating specific elements of intangible cultural heritage'.² In 1998, the *Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* (hereafter Masterpieces) was launched. This program was a listing system similar to the World Heritage List, which was to be the driving force behind the drafting of a new convention for intangible cultural heritage. On May 2001, UNESCO announced the first nineteen Masterpieces. Before an international normative instrument could be developed, fundamental elements were to be resolved such as definition, terminology, and objectives. Important for the draft were the principle of flexibility and the predominant role of actors, practitioners, and communities (Aikawa 2004, 141-142). Whereas the earlier folklore model supported scholars and institutions in documenting and preserving a record of vanishing traditions, the intangible cultural heritage model seeks to sustain a living yet endangered tradition by supporting the conditions necessary for cultural reproduction. This means assigning value to the

² <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/?pg=00061>, accessed 24th February 2014.

practitioners of tradition and culture, as well as to their habitus and habitat, or their entire life space and social world. Intangible heritage is culture like tangible heritage, but as natural heritage, it is very much alive (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 52-54). The anthropological heritage discourse recognized intangible cultural heritage as expressed in memory, performance, and oral culture, and therefore supported alternative ways to interact with the past. It was acknowledged that cultural heritage is not a dead relic from the past, but rather 'a corpus of processes and practices that are constantly recreated and renewed by present generations effecting a connection with the past' (Alivizatou 2008, 103).

The World Heritage Convention of 1972 provided the model for this new convention. In October 2003 the General Conference unanimously adopted the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* at the 32nd session. The Convention of 2003 was put into force on 20 April 2006, and by 2008 more than 100 states had ratified it. The Convention of 2003 defined intangible cultural heritage in Article 2 as '...the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the objects, instruments, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups, and in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage...' ³ It describes intangible heritage as oral traditions and expressions, such as epic tales, music, song, dance, puppetry and theatre, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe.

The Convention of 2003 was launched in accompaniment with the List for Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. Despite its aim to raising awareness for neglected communities and traditions, UNESCO's list of Masterpieces was severely criticized for continuing to admit 'elite' forms of culture, associated with royal courts and state-sponsored temples, as long as they were not European or American (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 57). This criticism resulted in the termination by UNESCO of the Masterpiece program and its accompanying list in 2005. It was replaced with the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008, which incorporated the previously proclaimed ninety Masterpieces. The Representative List is

³ <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00022#art2>, accessed 29th January, 2014.

made up of those intangible heritage practices and expressions that help demonstrate the diversity of intangible cultural heritage and raise awareness about its importance.

Although UNESCO's heritage concept has changed and continues to change under influence of political and academic debate, UNESCO's dominant role in the global heritage arena remains a topic of debate and discussion, and has been widely criticized as disseminator of homogeneous cultural values in name of preserving diversity against the destructive forces of globalization. Awareness of the arbitrariness of heritage categories and their interrelatedness continues to increase. Turtinen (2000) regarded UNESCO as a cosmopolitan political project that advocated essentialism through the concept of outstanding universal value. In this, according to Logan (2001), UNESCO was Eurocentric and propagated a cultural hierarchy emphasizing the value of material remains of the past, while excluding other cultural expressions. That the concept of outstanding universal value requires selection and valuation according to a certain constructed hierarchy of value is widely acknowledged by now (among others Askew 2010 and Smith 2006). Debates concerning the power and influence of UNESCO on heritage policy and practice continue. Some see UNESCO's power as omnipresent. Among these Smith advocates for community involvement in heritage. She simultaneously reaffirms the authorized heritage discourse by participating in drafting international charters. Askew argues that UNESCO's power is only relative and soft because it has no legal power. He thus regards heritage as the product of the power of nation-states (Askew 2010).

This thesis aims to contribute to debates about how heritage is constructed. I will add a more dynamic and historical approach by analyzing the historical creation of heritage and how it works in the present. I will do so by giving insight in the dynamics of heritage formation focusing on the *wayang* performance practice and the concept of intangible cultural heritage, which will show the reach and limitations of authorized heritage discourses. I intend to investigate what is made into intangible cultural heritage, who decides what intangible cultural heritage is, and for whom intangible cultural heritage is constructed. Furthermore, I aim to address the rationale behind the proclamation of *wayang* as intangible cultural heritage, and to find out how the process of constructing intangible cultural heritage takes place, while taking the socio-political circumstances of this process into account. I then want to explore to what extent UNESCO's concept of

intangible cultural heritage influences heritage practice, and lastly I want to address the question to what extent the concept of intangible cultural heritage achieves its aims.

The *wayang* puppet theater provides an interesting case to explore these questions. It is an excellent example to analyze the emergence of a colonial canon of Indonesian culture, and its impact on dynamics of appropriation and belonging, inclusion and exclusion, during the process of colonial and postcolonial state formation. *Wayang* has been incorporated in a western body of scientific colonial knowledge and has come to refer to an 'authentic' indigenous past. It has become a symbol of Java or Bali or Indonesia or the East Indies. *Wayang* puppets can be seen on the covers of books about Indonesia, on posters of exhibitions about Indonesia that might not have anything to do with *wayang*. *Wayang* puppets can be seen on the walls of Indonesian restaurants, in oriental antique and food stores. *Wayang* has been regulated and preserved through the intervention of political and cultural institutions both in Indonesia and the Netherlands. On 7 November 2003 UNESCO proclaimed the *wayang* puppet theatre of Indonesia as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. With the submission and proclamation of the *wayang* puppet theatre as a Masterpiece both the Indonesian state and UNESCO confirm the connotation of essentialism in the context of the nation. *Wayang* thus provides an excellent case to explore the aforementioned questions of heritage. As a living performance practice it is also an interesting example to investigate to what extent UNESCO heritage policy actually affects performance practices.

***Wayang* discourses**

The word *wayang* is a general word that is applied to many kinds of traditional theatre in Java, Bali, Lombok, and some other parts of Indonesia and other countries of Southeast Asia. *Wayang* can mean a (*wayang*) performance, (*wayang*) puppet, or (*wayang*) character. The two most familiar forms of *wayang* are *wayang kulit* and *wayang golek*. *Wayang kulit* is the most widespread form and tells stories through the use of carved and painted flat puppets that are usually made of water buffalo hide. It is played against a screen that is illuminated by a lamp throwing shadows and is watched from both in front and from behind the screen. *Wayang golek* uses wooden doll-like rod puppets without a screen (Mrázek 2002, 1). The telling of *wayang* stories is supported by music of the *gamelan*

orchestra and singers. A large variety of *wayang* forms exists next to *wayang kulit* and *wayang golek*, such as *wayang wong*, which uses actors instead of puppets and *wayang beber*, which makes use of painted scrolls. Even cinema has been called *wayang hidup*, and various other closely related theatre genres exist that are not called *wayang*, such as *kethoprak* (Mràzek 2002, 8).

The most popular *wayang* stories are the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. The *Mahabharata* tells the stories of the great conflict and war between the five *Pandawa* brothers and hundred *Korawa* cousins. The *Ramayana* is the account of Rama's battle to regain his wife Sita who was abducted by the demon king Rawana. By the middle of the first millennium C.E. these stories were already travelling from the Indian subcontinent to Java along the trade routes. By the tenth and eleventh centuries, the stories were sung in Old Javanese poetic meters and performed as shadow plays. The stories may be religious, exorcist, political, or purely entertaining, but *dalang* always turn stories into formulaic plots (*lakon*) during performances (Sears 1996, 1-2). Besides *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, many other story-cycles exist. Stories about the late Hindu kingdoms in Java, Singosari, and Kediri are told, as well as stories of Prince Panji and Damar Wulan. There are also stories of Amir Hamza that are related to the advance of the new religion Islam in the sixteenth century (Buurman 1991, 11-12).

Despite *wayang*'s long performance tradition, detailed Javanese, Dutch, and English descriptions of *wayang* date from only the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The historian L.J. Sears writes that 'What is known as the Javanese shadow theatre comes into focus in this moment of the Dutch-Javanese confrontation. The shadow theatre existed before the early nineteenth century, but little is known of its contours, its performance practices, its role or position in Javanese communities. The shadow theatre cannot be separated from the colonial moment and posited as an essential, unchanging part of Java waiting for Europeans to uncover, interpret, document, or eventually reconstruct it. The shadow theater, as it is known today, developed within an atmosphere where 19th century discourses of science and progress were percolating, both contributing to and drawing from Javanese and Dutch intellectual exchanges' (Sears 1996, 13).

The study and development of *wayang* is thus very much related to the political context of colonialism and its power relations. *Wayang* was incorporated into a Western

body of scientific colonial knowledge that aimed at making meaning of *wayang*. Scholars tried to describe and interpret it to the benefit of the colonial administration and the public in the mother country. Making sense of *wayang* took place mainly within the context of the political relation between the Netherlands and colonial Indonesia, in elite circles, in scholarly writings, and in museums. The earliest article on *wayang* dates from 1779 (Clara van Groenendael 1987). Sir Stamford Raffles's (1781-1826) account of *wayang* in *The History of Java* (1817) describes various aspects of Javanese culture and served as a blueprint for following publications on *wayang*. Studies of *wayang* really speeded up around the middle of the nineteenth century when Dutch scholars became dominant in the field of *wayang* studies.

Early *wayang* scholars were mainly Dutch philologists, such as J.A. Wilkens (1813-1888), G.A.J. Hazeu (1870-1929), professor of Javanese language and literature, L. Serrurier (1846-1901), director of the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde in Leiden, and missionaries, such as C. Poensen (1836-1919), who was also an ethnologist. They tried to make meaning of the *wayang* performance tradition hoping that it would teach them something about the nature of the people in colonial Indonesia. Learning *wayang* was equated to getting to know the colonized people. *Wayang* came to be seen as a reflection of the nature of the Javanese. This process of essentialization was continued and reinforced with studies by Hazeu (1897), Rassers (1922), Van Hinloopen Labberton (1912), and the Javanese Mangkunagara VII (1933), who were regarded as Java experts and interpreted *wayang* as a mythological world representing the human one, but was magical, wondrous, distant, and full of hidden truths. This approach to *wayang* deprived the performance tradition of historical change and dynamics, but portrayed it as static, eternal, and never-changing.

The expert was not the only authority in making meaning of *wayang*. The museum as a public institution was shaped in the first half of the nineteenth century (Bennett 1995, 92). Museums had been established as a means to share what had previously been private. From the start their function was twofold, that of a temple of the arts and as an instrument for education (Hooper-Greenhill 1989, 63). The arrangement of objects had to be based on organizational principles. Attention focused on observable differences between things rather than on resemblances; the common or ordinary object had priority over the exotic or unusual; and objects were arranged as parts of series rather than as unique items. The

birth of the museum coincides with the establishment of the institutionalization of a set of emerging knowledge systems like geology, biology, archaeology, anthropology, history, and art history. Each of these categorized and arranged objects as parts of evolutionary sequences, the history of the earth, of life, of man, and of civilization. In their interrelations they formed a strict and historicized order of things and peoples. In presenting this historicized order of objects and man, museums became producers of power and knowledge (Bennett 1995, 95-96).

Colonial museums also produced power and authorized knowledge in their function as a showcase for the colonies. They displayed products from the colonies and items intended to show the ways of life of indigenous people living in the colonies. Objects on display were anthropological evidence of indigenous people, a term which referred to cultural communities and collectables without any apparent historical or artistic merit (Boonstra 2009, 29). The Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam, a department of the Royal Tropical Institute founded in 1910, was a center of expertise for entrepreneurs and government in the area of colonial trade, tropical medicine, and physical and cultural anthropology (Van Dijk and Legêne 2010, 10). *Wayang* puppets were among the earliest objects collected from the colonies. Raffles brought hundreds of *wayang* puppets back to his mother country, and among the earliest objects acquired and collected by the Tropenmuseum were *wayang* puppets from Java. Scholarly writings by both Dutch and Javanese and museum displays in the Netherlands contributed to a static idea of *wayang*, a never-changing performance tradition. Academic writings came to emphasize philosophical, mystical and religious elements in *wayang*, as I will discuss in the first chapter.

Approaches to *wayang* changed after Indonesia's independence in 1945. The Dutch lost their pre-eminent position in the field. *Wayang* was no longer studied by mainly Dutch philologists or civil servants who were part of the colonial system, but by observers from outside the colonial frame in a postcolonial situation. Making meaning of *wayang* shifted to an exchange mainly between the United States and Indonesia. The postcolonial situation resulted in a greater variation of approaches to *wayang*. In the United States after World War II, social anthropology became the methodology for studying Indonesian society and culture, including *wayang*. In Indonesia *wayang* entered nationalist discourse as it was

framed in terms of nation and the state. It was accordingly appropriated and utilized by various political figures and parties for their own ends.

Scholarly interest in Indonesia in *wayang* showed a great variety. It focused on the recording of particular regional traditions in the form of general introductory studies, detailed biographies of the best known *wayang* characters, the publication of plays in the form of synopses, the preparation of study material for students at *dalang* training courses, theatrical texts, the publication of journals devoted to *wayang*. There are studies that focus on technical aspects, such as the techniques of the manipulation of the puppets (*sabetan*), the instructions of the *dalang* to his musicians, the iconography of puppets (Mellema 1954) and many other topics. Some consider the puppets as central to *wayang* and regard them as reflections of human characters (Anderson 1965). In line with this, *wayang* is often seen as a guide for human conduct, e.g. the influence of Bima – the second of the *Pandawa* brothers - on the politics of the first Indonesian president Sukarno (Dahm 1966, 220 note 18, Adams 1965, 49). There are issues of repertoire, theory, and history. By now hundreds of publications, and perhaps thousands if one were to count articles in magazines and newspapers, have been written on *wayang* since the start of *wayang* studies in colonial times.

Wayang gradually became a matter for scholars around the world, although its center of gravity remained to be the United States, Indonesia, and the Netherlands. Since the 1980s secular aspects of *wayang* are increasingly studied and discussed in scholarship: the aesthetics and social experience and function of *wayang* as performance (Cohen 2007), entertainment (Mràzek 2002 and 2005), an enterprise and business in the context of mass media (Weintraub 2004), politics (Arps 1985, Sears 1996, Schechner 1996), audience participation (Curtis 1997), academic study and so on. The attention given to power relations reenacted in *wayang*, a recurring theme in this ‘new scholarship’, was started with the work by V. Clara van Groenendael (1982). Although in the 1980s Clara van Groenendael addressed colonial influence on the *wayang* tradition only to a limited extent, her work became the starting-point for more attention on the influence of colonialist discourse on *wayang*.

The American historian L.J. Sears examined the various political discourses that shaped *wayang* along with the motives and relationships of the people who created and

participated in these discourses in her book *Shadows of empire: colonial discourse and Javanese tales* (1996). She analyzed 'textual communities of patrons, performers and the scholars who study and, in the past, governed them' (Sears 1996, 21) and showed the dialectical relation between the political context and the standardization of a performance tradition. Before her, B. Arps (1985), professor of Indonesian and Javanese language and culture, wrote about the institutionalization and standardization of *wayang* performance practice at the Javanese courts in Surakarta. He argued that as a result of colonial politics, the Javanese courts greatly influenced the performance tradition through the codification and standardization of performance practice.

Professor of Performance Studies, R. Schechner, in line with both Arps' and Sears' argument states 'that the construction of the normative expectation is a colonialist story and that the persistence in scholarship of the dominance of the normative expectation is a colonialist story written first by the Dutch and later by liberal-thinking Western scholars' (Schechner 1993, 223). The ethno-musicologist S. Weiss (2006) followed both Sears and Schechner in this point of view for *gamelan*, a musical discipline that supports the telling of *wayang* stories. Thus the political influence on *wayang* of what Sears calls 'the colonial encounter' that led to a 'normative expectation' in Schechner's words, is by now acknowledged, but also criticized, sometimes quite severely, for a one-sided view, assigning too much influence to political aspects (Mrázek 2002 and Keeler 2002). Their main criticism is that these studies, especially Schechner's, assigned too large an agency to colonialism and do not pay attention to the agency of indigenous people. This thesis aims to provide a more dynamic perspective on colonial writings through a discourse analysis of *wayang* writings, what has been said about *wayang*, and adds to that analysis an investigation of the agency of the *dalang* in the shaping of contemporary *wayang* practice.

Since the 1990s attention for the actual performance practice, the work of the *dalang*, and the way in which *dalang* maneuver in the field of various powers and interests, including e.g. people's desire for easy entertainment, has significantly increased. R. Curtis focused on the dialectic relation between the *dalang*, his audience, and the extension of that relationship between *wayang kulit* and contemporary society in his unpublished thesis *People, Poets, Puppets: Popular Performance and the Wong Cilik in Contemporary Java* (1997). Curtis, writing from a Marxist-perspective, assigned a large role of agency to the

wong cilik or subordinated classes by recognizing that they have a larger role in cultural production than is generally recognized. Analyzing the audience and performances of Ki (the Honorable) Enthus Susmono (b. 1966), who is also the central figure in the last chapter of this thesis, Curtis showed that processes of cultural production, including the construction of meanings are extremely fluid and changeable. As such, he argues, it is perilous to analyze cultural production according to categories such as modern/traditional, elite/popular, rural/urban, or even local/national (Curtis 1997, 311).

The American ethnomusicologist and anthropologist A.N. Weintraub in *Power plays, wayang golek puppet theatre of West Java* (2004) argued that new discursive frames for *wayang* created new forms of cultural texts. He described how *dalang* were involved in power plays, especially between the state and *wayang golek* audiences. During Suharto's New Order regime (1966-1998), *dalang* were turned into 'information officers' for the government, which was one of their major sponsors. Yet the *dalang's* popularity and appeal, which they needed to become successful, rested largely upon their ability to represent the voices of ordinary people (Weintraub 2004, 12). His work showed that the state is not the only, and sometimes not the dominant, agent in shaping *wayang* as the *dalang's* and sponsor's interests are often commercial to such an extent that the mass media is an important agent in shaping *wayang*. Plays in *wayang* cannot be fully understood in terms of power alone, Weintraub argued. Commercialization in combination with the development of new technologies emerged as a new discourse and created new cultural texts and forms for *wayang*.

Many studies have been published about *wayang* in the context of President Suharto's culture politics and the association between essentialized notions of Javanese innate culture and Suharto's centralized government. Most of this work and the range of essays compiled in Mràzek 2002 were based on research carried out during the Suharto era. The research for this thesis has been carried out after Suharto's downfall in a totally different political setting. One trend that spread to Indonesia was the international heritage boom. In the field of *wayang* scholarship the attention for the actual performance became a trend, which is a central point of attention in both Weintraub's work and in the work by Mràzek (2002 and 2005), who first and foremost regarded *wayang* as a performance tradition. In the edited volume of 2002 Mràzek notes that there were already too many

standard and authoritative works on *wayang* that remained uncritical, which only presented recycled views on *wayang* as a static study, object or text, or a limited, authoritative, self-referring body of 'old scholarship'. To open up new ways to think about *wayang* Mràzek compiled essays by leading *wayang* scholars and performers. The central concept of his approach was the necessity of experiencing *wayang* as a whole performance event through the direct experience of the writer. 'Watching *wayang*, experiencing *wayang*, talking to performers and audiences, being present at *wayang* performances' was in his view, to which I concur, essential for good *wayang* scholarship (Mràzek 2002, 36).

Mràzek's *Phenomenology of a Puppet Theatre* (2005) is a highly theoretical book on multiple elements that make up the *wayang kulit* tradition, and how they function together in a *wayang* performance. Mràzek combined technical observations with sharp and thoughtful attention to the experience of a *wayang* performance. Very interesting is his chapter on *wayang* in times of comedy in which he described how the emphasis on entertaining aspects of *wayang* developed in interaction with film and television. These entertaining elements put technical aspects of the *wayang* performance, which he described in previous parts of the book, under pressure. The role of the *dalang* in putting all the performance elements together is undermined when the *dalang* 'takes a break' and the performance is taken over by guest stars, comedians, and pop singers during the clown scenes. Mràzek regarded this type of show – popular during the Suharto era (1965-1998) – as expanding the nature of the traditional comic clown scenes, turning the whole *wayang* event into one big clown scene. His approach challenged conventional ideas of *wayang* that emphasized philosophical, mystical and religious elements of *wayang*.

It was not until the 1980s that the *dalang* was recognized as an individual and agent in the *wayang* performance. Until then, the *dalang* was anonymous. This changed with the work *Er zit een dalang achter de wayang* by Clara van Groenendael (1982) – later translated in English as *The dalang behind the wayang* (1985) and in Bahasa Indonesia as *Dalang di balik wayang* (1987). She was the first to draw attention to the role of the *dalang* and assigning agency to the *dalang*. Since then many scholars have written about *dalang* as individuals. Curtis (1997), Weintraub (2004) and Cohen (2007) – among others – all wrote about the performances and lives of particular puppeteers. This attention for individual *dalang* and the emergence of the superstar *dalang* seems to have developed more or less

parallel to the anthropologization of heritage discourse, which resulted in a crucial role assigned to the master, the person behind the tradition in the concept of intangible cultural heritage.

Despite these new, more dynamic approaches, standard or conventional ideas of *wayang* still exist. To the general foreign public *wayang* remains the logo for Java, and to a lesser extent Bali or the (Dutch) East Indies, and it is still regarded as the ultimate national cultural expression of Indonesia. *Wayang* puppets continue to be published on the covers of books about Indonesia, as the symbol for an exhibition, on the walls of Indonesian restaurants, in souvenir shops, and in many Dutch and Indonesian homes. The standard discourse of *wayang* is still repeated in popular literature, in textbooks that mention *wayang*, in (anthropological) museums that display *wayang* puppets, and even in some very recent publications on *wayang*, both Indonesian and Western (Bondan 1984 and Katz-Harris 2010). It is also found in the nomination file that Indonesia submitted to UNESCO to have *wayang* proclaimed a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2002. This information is often taken from general *wayang* discourse, apparently standard and authoritative sources, of which many, often published many decades ago, are products of a different kind of scholarship and a different intellectual atmosphere than that which has developed since the 1980s.

The *wayang* arena

Standardized and authorized discourses about *wayang* seem quite far from the actual performance practice. The *wayang* performance is often something strange to Westerners: it is shaped according to principles or in ways different than those taught about Western art, performance, and literature (Mràzek 2002, 4). *Wayang's* diversity almost invariably causes both puzzlement and fascination as it unites seeming contradictions. Performances are rooted in the past and in local traditions, the audience hardly understands the language that is used (*Kawi*, the dead Old Javanese language). At the same time the show is adapted to the modern world; and it works very well. *Wayang* continues to attract sponsors, audiences, scholars, museum curators, politicians, but also pickpockets, and street vendors. It is popular on radio and television, in comic books, and is commercially produced on cassettes, VCDs, and DVDs. Next to the great variety of forms of puppet theatre, every

wayang performance is different than the next, and there are as many different performance styles as there are *dalang*.

People are usually fascinated with the performers, the musicians, the beautifully dressed female singers (*pesinden*), but above all with the *dalang*. The first question people ask about a *wayang* performance is: 'Who is the *dalang*?' People are greatly attracted to the *dalang* and admire him as a person and artist, with the variety of his skills, his stamina, his charisma, the gossip that surrounds him and the singers, as well as the researcher following the *dalang*. The numerous *wayang* performances I watched between 2009 and 2011 by various *dalang* all had their own character and were always overwhelming in their loudness, scale, sounds, smells, sights, tastes, colors, and audience numbers. Often the performance was a dazzling spectacle revolving around a large stage on which an enormous screen was set up, a large *gamelan* orchestra, invited guests smartly dressed and seated on chairs, and a large audience of uninvited, sometimes hundreds or even thousands of spectators, who all enjoyed watching and listening to *wayang*, while strolling around, sitting or lying down on the ground, talking, drinking, eating, smoking, or even napping. The performances are always extremely alive, entertaining, and filled with energy.

Experiencing and watching *wayang* makes one wonder how the static and standard image of *wayang* has survived, and how discourse and practice can seem so far removed from each other. As Mràzek already pointed out we need to get beyond 'the unquestioning recycling of past representations of *wayang*' (Mràzek 2002, 4). In order to do so I propose to look at the underlying dynamics that I expect to find through an analysis of *wayang* discourses and the interaction between various discourses of different groups involved with *wayang*. I want to continue the line of academic work started in the 1980s and am indebted to J. Pemberton and Sears in acknowledging the influence of the political, i.e. colonial context on discourses of *wayang*. Clara van Groenendael, Curtis and Weintraub functioned as examples, because of their focus on individual *dalang* and their performance practice, to investigate to what extent authorized discourses influence *wayang* performance practice.

The contemporary *wayang* world is both big and small at the same time. There are academics, museum curators, private collectors, sponsors, *wayang* enthusiasts, fans, academic institutions, (national) *wayang* organizations, and of course the numerous

dalang. In one way or another they know each other either directly or through mutual friends. They are colleagues, friends, and competitors at the same time. The national *wayang* organizations, Sena Wangi (*Sekretariat Nasional Pewayangan Indonesia* or the Indonesian Wayang Secretariat) and Pepadi (*Persatuan Pedalangan Indonesia* or the Indonesian Puppeteers/*Pedalangan* Union) are powerful institutions that are nationally organized. They are regarded as two sides of the same coin. Sena Wangi is the think tank and focuses on policy. Pepadi is the more practice oriented branch and has an office in every municipality throughout Indonesia. Although membership of Pepadi is not compulsory, most *dalang* are members because many performance requests go through Pepadi. The influence of both Sena Wangi and Pepadi goes beyond the regional and national because they prepared the nomination file for *wayang* for the UNESCO Masterpiece program.

The Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) is the Indonesian Institute for the Arts and was founded in 1950 under Indonesia's first president Sukarno. In those years it was called *Akademi Seni Karawitan Indonesia* (ASKI) and in the 1960s it was called *Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia* (STSI). ISI is an important player in the *wayang* arena and will be discussed in chapter 4. ISI had branches in Bandung, Yogyakarta, Surakarta, and Denpasar (Bali) that all have a department of *pedalangan*, the art of the *dalang*. Here students are educated in becoming a *dalang* or a critic of *pedalangan*. Many *dalang* are in one way or another affiliated to the institute, as a teacher, as a student, as a *wayang* expert, or collaborate with other departments of the institute such as *karawitan* (*gamelan* music) or dance. As a knowledge and resource centre all offices of ISI collaborate with national and international museums, *wayang* collectors, Sena Wangi and Pepadi, and *dalang*.

There are countless *wayang* museums within Indonesia and elsewhere. Within Indonesia there are many private initiatives, museums set up by *wayang* lovers and enthusiasts, of which the Kekayon museum in Yogyakarta and the House of Masks and Puppets in Bali are just two examples. The Wayang Museum is the most important *wayang* museum in the Special Region of the Capital (*Daerah Khusus Ibukota*, DKI) and will be discussed in the third chapter of this thesis. Internationally, the collection of W. Angst in Switzerland is famous. He is known to travel to Indonesia every summer to collect individual puppets and sets, both antique and modern. Many international museums also

carry collections of *wayang* puppets. Just two examples are the British Museum in London, which is known for the Raffles collection, and the Museum of International Folk Art (MOIFA) in Santa Fe, New Mexico in the USA, which bought a set of puppets from Purbo Asmoro in 2010. Within the Netherlands every museum that deals with colonial history carries *wayang* puppets in its collection: Museum Nusantara in Delft (closed since 2013), Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden, Wereldmuseum in Rotterdam, and the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam.

As mentioned above, colonial museums functioned as showcases for the colony and as meaning makers of *wayang*. The Tropenmuseum is a special case in point. Curator of the Southeast Asia department at the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam, P. Westerkamp, suggested Enthus Susmono for research when he was working on an exhibition on this particular *dalang* in 2007. At the opening of the exhibition *Wayang Superstar. The theatre world of Ki Enthus Susmono* curated by Westerkamp, he was kind enough to introduce me to Enthus in January 2008. The Tropenmuseum continues to maintain its role as meaning maker of *wayang* to a Dutch and international audience. A few months afterwards Enthus performed in the Tropentheater, another department of the Royal Tropical Institute. The collection policy and display practices of the Tropenmuseum will be traced throughout this thesis.

Then of course there are the *dalang*. He (rarely she) is the storyteller, the singer of the songs that set the atmosphere of a scene called *suluk*, he conducts the *gamelan* orchestra giving the *gamelan* players cues with the hammer-like *cempala* and the metallic *kepyak* plates. But above all, the *dalang* brings the puppets to life, by bringing them into motion, manipulating them, and placing them in the banana log. As mentioned above, there are as many styles as there are *dalang*, but *dalang* play in a certain style that is determined regionally, esthetically, and personally. For example, the dominant style is the Surakarta style, but there is also a Yogyakarta style, Bali style, Pasisir style, typical for the style of the north coast of Java, and so on. *Wayang golek* is mainly associated with Sunda, the region of West Java. Sena Wangi in 2002 estimated the number of *wayang kulit dalang*, playing in the Surakarta style, the style associated with Surakarta and surrounding areas, at approximately 1,500. That is almost three times the number of *wayang golek dalang*, which in the same year did not exceed an estimated 560.

The majority of *dalang* in Indonesia is voluntarily registered with Pepadi, but *dalang* remain largely anonymous in *wayang* studies. Although in the 1970s Clara van Groenendael interviewed many *dalang* in the regions of Yogyakarta and Surakarta, including court *dalang*, most recent attention in *wayang* scholarship has been drawn to well-known *dalang* such as Ki Nartosabdho (1925-1985) (Petersen 2001), Ki Asep Sunandar (1955-2014) (Weintraub 2004), Ki Manteb Soedharsono (b. 1948) (Sears 1996) and Ki Anom Suroto (b. 1948) (Arps 1985, Sears 1996). Due to his major innovations in dramatization and musical arrangements in the 1970s, Nartosabdho has by now gained iconic status, and has become an inspiration and example for all *dalang*.

I chose to focus on superstar *dalang* who represent *wayang* to a mass audience, and on their understanding and representation of *wayang* to their audience, their sponsors, and to me as a visiting scholar. Like heritage, the *dalang* themselves are a representation of a cultural expression, and their fame is the result of a process of selection and valuation. It is their discourse and performance practice I am investigating; what they say about *wayang*, about themselves, and how this works in their performance practice. This thesis takes the *dalang* as the central figure of the *wayang* performances as a starting-point to explore the relation between heritage discourse and *wayang* performance practice. *Dalang* are involved in local and global contemporary culture, and society, and adopt new trends. The differences between the *dalang*, and their visions and performances constitute lively and important dynamics rather than being deviations that scholarship should ignore. It is important to assign agency to the *dalang* to understand how the local and global, the past and the present are linked in the *dalang*'s recreation of *wayang* performances. Superstar *dalang* embody and represent *wayang*, and sometimes have become symbols of *wayang* as it has become a symbol of Indonesian culture. An examination of their practices opens up the opportunity to critically question historically constructed *wayang* discourses and explore how these discourses influence their performance practice. In turn, it shows to what extent the *dalang* as artists are able to influence and change those discourses.

This means that I do not analyze *wayang* shows on a textual level, unlike Sears, who translated and analyzed texts: nor do I attempt to define *wayang* or discuss the variety of *wayang* forms or stories. My aim is to explore the understanding and performance practice of the *dalang* himself about *wayang*. It is not only performances that reveal something

about *wayang* and the struggle over *wayang*. The image the *dalang* creates for himself connected to his choices in shaping his performance practice gives insight in dynamics over the struggle over heritage as well. To explore the variety in perspectives, in voices, and notions of *wayang* in present-day Indonesia I focus on *dalang* Ki Purbo Asmoro, Ki Manteb Soedharsono and Ki Enthus Susmono, who interact with other players in the *wayang* arena as they shape their performance practice.

Methodology

During two months of preparatory fieldwork in 2009 I tested to what extent academic *wayang* discourse reflected *wayang* discourse on Java's streets. At random, I asked people on the street, shopkeepers, waitresses and waiters, taxi drivers, *becak* drivers, friends, actually everyone I met - if they liked *wayang* and which *dalang* was their favorite, if they had one, or in case they did not like or watch *wayang* whether they could name a *dalang*. Not everyone watched *wayang*, but *dalang* most often mentioned were Ki Anom Suroto and Ki Manteb Soedharsono. Most people told me that Manteb Soedharsono was innovative, but managed to remain traditional at the same time. It was frequently mentioned that his *sabetan* (puppetry manipulation) skills were extraordinary. The people who mentioned Anom Suroto told me that he was the master or even the king of *wayang*; he was the most traditional of all well-known *dalang* and in possession of a unique voice. Both these *dalang* are known also to people who do not like or do not know *wayang*. When I enquired after Enthus Susmono, everyone seemed to know him, and they always smiled politely, and I had to guess what their smile meant. Sometimes they were pleased I had heard about Enthus because they appreciated his humor. Enthus is a *dalang* who arouses strong reactions, both positive and negative. He is widely regarded as an extreme innovator who has caused and still causes many discussions about what is and what is not allowed within the tradition of *wayang*. This animosity surrounding his work discloses implicit and unwritten values and rules about what *wayang* is and should be.

The popularity of these *dalang* was confirmed with sales figures of REM Rekords, producer of VCDs since 2005. The sales figures of this company revealed Enthus Susmono as the bestseller in 2010, followed by Manteb Soedharsono and Anom Suroto (Interview REM Rekords, 29 January 2011). Professors of *wayang* at Universitas Gajah Mada (UGM)

Yogyakarta recommended that I incorporate Ki Purbo Asmoro (b. 1961) in my research. The rationale was that he is a so-called 'academic' *dalang*, which means that he is a *dalang* who has enjoyed an academic education (S2, equivalent to MA degree) in Performing Arts from UGM. For twenty years Purbo Asmoro has worked as teacher in the Department of Pedalangan at ISI in Surakarta. Based on these considerations and practicalities - Anom Suroto for example, was not available for this research - I was able to work with Purbo Asmoro, Manteb Soedharsono and Enthus Susmono. They all allowed me to follow them to their performances and related activities for the purpose of this thesis. Although each *dalang* views himself as an individual, these three *dalang* also each represent a certain style, here categorized as traditional, traditional and innovative, and innovative. Consequently, this thesis looks at Javanese *dalang* who dominate *wayang* representation. *Dalang* from Bali and other parts of Indonesia are not included.

As this thesis falls into two distinct parts, I apply different methods to address the different research questions. The method used in the first part is discourse analysis. The rationale behind this method is that social and physical structures exist independent of the discourse, but only gain meaning through the discourse. In other words, discourse, that what people say about something, shapes reality. Through discourse we make meaning of the world around us, which consequently becomes real. An example given by Lawrence, Philips and Hardy (1999) is the discourse around whales. These animals exist independent of discourse. However, whales only gained a place in our social reality through the discourses on them. A century ago whales were regarded as human eating monsters, the 'Moby Dick discourse'. Now, whales are regarded as animals facing extinction with a cuddly image, like the killer whale in the 'Free Willy discourse' (Lawrence, Philips and Hardy 1999, 487). The impact of this construction of discourse is thus explicitly bound up with notions of selection, power, and ideology, and the shaping of identities. Heritage policy can be approached through questioning how power relations interact, come together, clash, and decide which discourse becomes dominant. As a consequence it excludes, marginalizes or renders other discourses silent (Smith 2006). Smith and Waterton applied discourse analysis to heritage discourses, and I here propose to do the same for *wayang*.

An earlier example of discourse analysis is the work of E. Said in *Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993). Said argues in both works the idea that both the body

of western scientific and political study of oriental literature and art in the nineteenth century constructed a discourse in which the East was represented by the West, i.e. Europe and the United States, as the 'Other' and as subordinate. Unequal power relations between West and East developed an ever more negative image of the East, as 'the weaker, helpless', and 'morally lower' in contrast to the Western self-image. This is what Said called the Orientalist system, which maintains itself and consequently also the unequal power relations. Said argued that claims of knowledge about the non-Western world and attempts to 'represent' its peoples were exercises of power (Said 1978).

According to Said, culture is a 'weapon of power', a Western style for domination that created guidelines for taste, texts and values, and consequently gave rise to institutions to exercise that power, such as schools, and libraries (Said 1978, 3). Said inspired many researchers of the (history of) non-Western cultures to take a more critical stance towards the nature and meaning of their sources and methodologies. I concur with Said's approach, but think it problematic that the exact agency in establishing the connection between the discourse of Orientalism and the acts that made the empire remains unclear. The result is that his work turns into a search for stereotypes of the Eastern 'Other' in an inflexible stereotype of Western imagining. Indebted to Said's work, both J. Pemberton (1994, 42, 75) and Sears adopted a more dynamic approach to their analyses of the construction of Javanese culture. Pemberton made an analysis of the dialectical relation between Javanese and colonial powers as a 'prefiguration, even anticipation of what would become a properly Orientalist subject' (Pemberton 1994, 24). Both Sears and Pemberton make use of textual analysis, and combine historical and anthropological research in their studies.

Building upon these works this thesis aims to take a more dynamic approach by critically examining the dialectical relation between various agents in the construction of discourses. I focus on the representation of *wayang* in texts written about *wayang*, rather than focusing on the documentation of *wayang* stories, because an analysis of the representation of *wayang* tells us how *wayang* discourse is constructed and utilized. To analyze which discourses of *wayang* became dominant and why, by exploring what was included and excluded in these discourses I apply discourse analysis in the first part of the thesis, chapters 1 through 3. I will examine *wayang* discourse to explore how meaning was

created by whom, and why *wayang* was assigned particular significance that created and recreated images of *wayang* that were authorized and re-authorized in discourses of *wayang*, which eventually led to the incorporation of *wayang* into the international heritage discourse. By applying this method I aim at an understanding of the effects that historically constructed *wayang* discourses have on performance practice. For the second part of this thesis in order to investigate how heritage discourse influences actual performance practice I borrowed methods from ethnography. I carried out extensive fieldwork, the results of which I present in chapters 4 through 6.

Fieldwork

I conducted fieldwork over two months in July and August 2009 and eleven months from April 2010 until March 2011, mainly on Java as the players in the *wayang* arena and the *dalang* central in this thesis are Java-based. I applied Mràzek's credo 'watching *wayang*, experiencing *wayang*, talking to performers and audiences, being present at *wayang* performances'. I attended as many *wayang* shows as possible, talked to performers, sponsors, audiences, policy makers, and many others, and I went to as many adjacent activities as possible to gather data for this thesis on heritage dynamics. I became a participant observer to explore how *dalang* deal with discourses of *wayang* and heritage.

In the first period of fieldwork I travelled around Java without a home, but based myself in the second period in Yogyakarta in the proximity of UGM. In cooperation with graduate students Martinus Dwi Prasetyo, Aditya Kusumawan, Listya Kusumastuti, and Dian Fadlan from UGM, I gathered information on museological discourse, academic discourse at educational institutions, held interviews with policy makers and people in the media, as well as interviews with the *dalang* and their audiences. I attended many *wayang* performances by the three *dalang* of my choice, and met with their managers, artists, sponsors, spectators, critics, academics, media producers, and governmental and heritage officials in museums and *wayang* organizations. Due to the busy performance schedules of the *dalang* we sometimes split up so that I could attend one performance and my assistants another. Choice of these performances was either through practical considerations or importance of the performances as indicated by the *dalang*.

As mentioned above, my choice of *dalang* was based on my research in identifying popular *dalang* through holding interviews with random people. The second, more crucial, step was to become acquainted with them and persuade them to participate in this research. It was when I started fieldwork in Indonesia that a combination of a planned and unplanned research proved to be the most effective and fruitful. My research interest concerned the historically constructed discourses of *wayang* which sometimes required formal and official methods that were difficult to follow, but sometimes necessary to be introduced to the right people and gain access to mainly (semi) governmental institutions, and to be able to interview people at for example Sena Wangi and Pepadi, and ISI Surakarta.

B. Anderson asserted that scholarly analysis can be heavily influenced by the interrelationship between the scholar's own class based interests and social position of the scholar: 'academics are not simply specialists in particular fields of knowledge but also members of specific cultures and social orders ... [and] invariably share the dominant assumptions and values of their societies ... academics as a group tend to be bound more or less tightly to the power structure in their society, partly because of their class origins, but also because of the technological and institutional order within which most of their work is carried out ... [through reliance on the] heavily capitalized infrastructure ... which only large and powerful institutions can furnish' (Anderson 1982, 115).

What Anderson means is that all research is influenced by the researcher's own perspective and interests, which is informed by his or her social position that in turn is made up of class, gender, and citizenship. The social position of the researcher thus influences the outcomes of the research because the collected information is shaped in the dialectical relation between the scholar and the informants. Previous *wayang* researchers were mainly white men. Well-known exceptions are Clara van Groenendael and Sears, who were white women, who all enjoyed a privileged status in Indonesian society. Being a Dutch woman of Indonesian descent and appearance, a foreigner in Indonesian disguise, meant that my status was more unclear. Every fieldwork situation thus required a renegotiation of my own position in terms of physical appearance - Indonesian or Dutch -, gender - always a woman-, class - researcher/cultural professional or student -, and culture - again Indonesian or Dutch.

In 2009, during the first two months of fieldwork I spent two weeks at Enthus Susmono's home in Tegal, travelling with him to performances, rehearsals, and meeting his family, friends, and frequent guests who came to the house to chat or to ask advice. He would treat me as a guest, offering me a seat in his car or his own seat in the car if he travelled by plane. Enthus Susmono would have me sit next to him and tell the people that I was a researcher from Amsterdam, which people usually did not believe until they heard my Dutch accent. Every time I met him, he greeted me by giving me a kiss on the cheek and a hug, demonstrating that he was cosmopolitan.

In April 2010 I returned to Indonesia and was introduced to Manteb Soedharsono by Honggo Utomo, who is Enthus Susmono's manager, and who had just become Manteb Soedharsono's manager as well. I also had the opportunity to spend two weeks at his home in Surakarta. As in the case of Enthus Susmono, I travelled with Manteb Soedharsono to performances, rehearsals, and spend time particularly with his wife Erni Susanti (b. 1976). Manteb Soedharsono let me travel with him in his car, eat with him on the way, but in contrast to Enthus Susmono Manteb Soedharsono let me stay with the female singers, and he preferred me to accompany his wife during *wayang* events instead of him.

Working with Purbo Asmoro again provided a totally different setting as he was hesitant about allowing me into his house and personal life. I was introduced to him and his manager through the Indonesian Heritage Trust (BPPI, Badan Pelestarian Pusaka Indonesia). I usually met Purbo Asmoro at the more institutional setting of ISI Surakarta or at his performances. This gave me an opportunity to do research at ISI Surakarta and attend some classes as a student.

Being aware of these totally different settings, reflecting each *dalang*'s projection of me as a researcher, as a woman, as a foreigner, as an Indonesian shifting in each context, I had to uphold a professional relationship with my informants and preserve a certain distance as a female researcher. I observed the *dalang* closely in their (daily) routines; I socialized, and was a participant observer. During *wayang* performances I would usually sit on the stage amongst the *gamelan* musicians behind the *dalang*, shuffle between both sides of the screen to mingle with the audience, walk around to take pictures and make video recordings. Because the *dalang* already knew me and because I was a foreigner, my presence would invariably be incorporated into the performance. Often, the *dalang*

involved me in the clown scenes of the performance by asking me to explain why I was researching *wayang* and why I had chosen to incorporate the *dalang* in question into my research. Sometimes Purbo asked me to sing a Dutch song, which I felt I could not refuse. I would usually sing a short song in the genre of Sinterklaas and Christmas songs. Being the foreigner also made me the victim of the *dalang*'s jokes. Besides providing the audience with a treat, the incorporation of a foreigner enhanced the *dalang*'s status and the sponsor's prestige. Being acquainted with the *dalang* often worked to my advantage; it frequently got me to meet the sponsor, guests, and spectators that would help me better understand the overall context of the performance. In some instances there were discussions immediately before a performance, or radio interviews discussing the *dalang* and forthcoming performances, in which I sometimes gave a short interview as well.

At the *dalang*'s home I was something between a guest, friend, and professional relation. I had to answer endless questions, such as why I looked Indonesian while being Dutch, if I was married, had children, and why I travelled alone. When I interviewed officials I took on a formal role. As is common practice, I kept detailed notes of my fieldwork, which formed the basis of my data. I collected information by combining various methods. I set up formal interviews with officials involved in heritage management and heritage policies, but preferred talking more informally to people involved in *wayang*, to see what they would come up with spontaneously. I had informal conversations and listened to what people around me were talking about. I used survey forms to conduct research among the audience, assisted by the graduate students from UGM who took turns in conducting interviews with the audience. I always carried my notebook and people would never object to me taking notes although I often felt hesitant using a recorder.

I adapted to the busy and heavy work and travel schedules of the *dalang* of two, three or up to four all-night performances a week. This meant that I spent long hours on Java's bad roads, sometimes driving up to ten or twelve hours, watching the *wayang* show, usually from 8 PM until 4 AM and then travelling back or onto the next venue. Attending two or three performances in a row occurred regularly. I learned to seize each opportunity to take a nap in the car, bus or whatever other vehicle I was travelling on, and travel as lightly as possible with my research equipment and a set of clean clothes. I became used to the different ways of dealing with time and learned to 'go with the flow' and take situations

as they came. I came to realize that my observations were greatly influenced by my mood when suffering from lack of sleep. I strove to minimize personal elements but at the same time had to acknowledge that one can never be objective.

Outline

This thesis falls into two distinct parts. The first part consists of three chapters that are chronologically organized. In these chapters I analyze the history of the discursive construction of *wayang* through an analysis of shifting meanings from colonial times that culminate in current international heritage discourse in the Netherlands and Indonesia. This authorized *wayang* discourse is confronted with the *wayang* performance practice of the abovementioned *dalang* in the second part. This second part studies the dialectical relation between the authorized discourse and *wayang* performance practice through an examination of current performance practices. Each of the last three chapters deals with the *wayang* practice of one particular *dalang*: Purbo Asmoro, Manteb Soedharsono and Enthus Susmono, and the distinctive social worlds in which they operate and the power relations with which they deal in shaping *wayang*. Each of these chapters trace how, to what extent, and in what social arenas the *dalang* constructs and shapes heritage. I will examine what the impact is of local traditions and global practices on his shows, and how this is perceived by various audiences. I further intend to investigate to what extent his performance practice is influenced by national and international heritage policies and practices. All *dalang* relate to each of these issues, but as each of the *dalang* discussed is situated in different socio-cultural contexts they each develop different strategies to cope with these themes that recur in *wayang* discourses.

The first chapter traces colonial writings from about 1800 until Indonesia's independence in 1945. It explores how these writings discursively produced standards for *wayang* performances and were consequently institutionalized and authorized in various ways, such as in museum displays of the Tropenmuseum, formerly the Colonial Institute in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and in the Javanese courts in Surakarta and Yogyakarta. I will look at how Dutch *wayang* scholars shaped *wayang* discourse in dialectical relation with the Javanese elite and *wayang* performance practice. I will discuss how they described *wayang* was described and constructed *wayang* discourse. Loosely following M.

Bloembergen's periodization in *Colonial Spectacles. The Netherlands and the Netherlands-Indies at the world exhibitions, 1880-1931*, I distinguish three periods for *wayang* discourse- the years in which Dutch scholars attempted to discover Javanese culture from the early 1800s until 1870, the years between 1870 and 1920 in which Dutch scholars started to revalue Javanese culture as a result of the discovery of Indo-Javanese roots of contemporary culture, and the final period in which a preservationist attitude towards Javanese culture prevailed from the 1920s until 1945 (Bloembergen 2006, 32). Every period shows a dynamic in attitudes towards *wayang*, which resulted in the production of an authorized *wayang* discourse that became a model for reality.

In the second chapter I explore to what extent colonial *wayang* discourses influenced discourses of *wayang* after independence starting with Sukarno until Suharto's downfall in 1998. I will look at continuities and change in *wayang* discourse and to what extent discourse of *wayang* link and break with the colonial past in this period. I will discuss who were involved in creating meanings and reproducing old meanings for *wayang*, and the rationale behind these creations and reproductions. I intend to analyze who the agents were that interacted in this process and how they explored, institutionalized and authorized *wayang* discourse. I will show how ideas about *wayang* developed during colonial times were re-authorized, but were framed in new discourses of the nation under both Sukarno and Suharto. *Wayang* discourse not only developed under the influence of the political context, but notably also under influence of innovations in technology and the emergence of mass media that became an authorizing force as well.

The third chapter deals with *wayang* as incorporated in national and international heritage discourse. It seeks to examine representations of *wayang* in national discourse in the Wayang Museum in Jakarta and in Indonesia's nomination for UNESCO's Masterpiece proclamation, and traces continuities and changes of previous *wayang* discourses therein. I will analyze the way in which *wayang* is exhibited in the Wayang Museum and to what extent this exhibition practice links or breaks with previous authorized discourses of *wayang*. I also intend to look at how *wayang* is presented in the Candidature File that was submitted to UNESCO, the agents involved in writing the Candidature File and the rationale behind it.

The second part of this thesis confronts and questions these historically developed and authorized discourses with contemporary *wayang* performance practice. In this part of the thesis I investigate the influence and impact of *wayang*'s Proclamation as a UNESCO Masterpiece. Chapter four focuses on Purbo Asmoro, who has enjoyed formal university education and has been teaching at ISI Surakarta for over twenty years. This chapter explores the interaction between various discourses as institutionalized and authorized at ISI Surakarta, the Wayang Museum, Sena Wangi, and Pepadi, and international heritage discourse. I will address the questions how and to what extent Purbo's performance practice relates to the authorized discourses discussed in the first part of this thesis.

In chapter five the focus is on Manteb Soedharsono, who is recognized in both authorized and popular discourse. His performance practice will illustrate how alternative *wayang* discourse developed under influence of technological innovations and commercial opportunities. In this chapter I will analyze how commerce and innovation set new and popular standards for *wayang*. Also, I will address the extent and the manner in which this affected *wayang* performance practice, but in addition want to address the influence of performance practice on discourse. Manteb Soedharsono's performance practice developed under the influence of authorized discourses and mass media, but reciprocally also influenced authorized discourses of *wayang* as heritage.

The last chapter focuses on Enthus Susmono, who is widely regarded as a radical innovator. Enthus Susmono's performance practice shows how *wayang* performance practice is in continuous dialogue with authorized discourse. As a controversial *dalang* he is an excellent case to discover where the limitations of the performance practice lie. I will explore how far Enthus Susmono is allowed to innovate in *wayang* performance practice by various audiences. Who authorize these innovations, and who resists? I will also look for whom these innovations are intended, and what the rationale behind them is. I will show that Enthus is not influenced by authorized discourse, but that audience appreciation is the rationale behind his performance practice, and that in the end it is (and always has been) the audience that authorizes *wayang* performance practice.

The conclusion brings all these findings together and emphasizes how politicized the process of heritage formation is. I argue that discourse and practice are entangled and shaped and developed in a dynamic way. With this I mean that discourse and practice

equally draw on, rely on, refer to and influence each other. Because much attention is usually paid to the dominant heritage discourse institutionalized in UNESCO's policies the performance practices of the *dalang* provide a counterweight to this authorized discourse. They show the reach and limitations of authorized discourses. As we will discover, heritage, despite its associations with preservation and fixing 'something' from the past, is a dynamic process in the present.

Chapter 1

In search of *wayang* (ca. 1800-1945)



The Java department in the museum of the Colonial Institute, Amsterdam 1935, inv.nr. 1003 6000. Courtesy of Tropenmuseum.

A Dutch context for *wayang*

The existence of *wayang* back can be traced back as far as the ninth century. As early as the eleventh century *wayang* must have existed in more or less the same form of *wayang* today (Ras 1976, 50). In addition to Javanese sources, *wayang* was very briefly mentioned in a small number of travelogues (Sears 1996, 5). Clara van Groenendael mentions an article by J.C.M. Rademacher and W. van Hogendorp (1779) in her bibliography as the oldest description of *wayang* (Clara van Groenendael 1987, 11). The start of detailed descriptions of *wayang* however, is generally ascribed to the British Sir Stamford Raffles (1781-1826). He included a five-page account of *wayang* in his *The History of Java* (1817) and writes: 'The interest excited by such spectacles, connected with national recollection, is almost inconceivable. The eager multitude will sit listening with rapturous delight and profound attention for whole nights to these rude dramas.' (Raffles 1817, 338). In addition, after the British interregnum (1811-1816) he brought back home what is now known as the oldest *wayang* puppet collection in Europe

The start of scholarly interest in *wayang* thus coincides with a new era in world history that the historian C.A. Bayly referred to as the era of 'world revolutions'. It is in this time that new forms of state, economy and ideology emerged. From the end of the nineteenth century the dominant trend around the globe was industrial revolutions connected to the growth of world trade. The Enlightenment had led to the idea that Europe had made progress as a result of rational thinking about issues such as economy and society. In contrast, other parts of the world, such as Asia and Africa, were characterized by a standstill (Bayly 2004). In line with these observations, P. Fritzsche notes that contemporaries increasingly relied on what he called 'the dramatization of difference', describing and understanding the world more and more in dichotomies like past vs. present, pre-modern and modern, nation and empire, west and non-west (Fritzsche 2010, 4-5).

The British temporary displacement of Dutch power (1811-1816) saw the beginnings of scientific interest in native culture and literature, and the initiating of institutional changes. Dutch administrators acknowledged the use of this new knowledge after they regained control and saw how 'understanding the natives' could facilitate both the civil administration and the generation of profits of what was becoming a true colony

(Florida 1995, 23). Another critical event was the end of the Diponegoro War (or Java War) in 1830 that marked the final defeat of the indigenous Javanese royal power. This five-year long war made the colonizers realize that the indigenous population were capable of rage when they were mobilized by their elite under the banner of militant Islam. To prevent a repetition of such anger and the maintenance of supreme Dutch authority, the indigenous elite was held in colonial service and at the same time isolated from both the masses and the threatening forces of 'fanatical' Islam. A colonial cultural policy was implemented that resulted in a sense of cultural remove on the part of the Javanese elite. This resulted in the holding of the Javanese within an ideological construct that would later become 'traditional Javanese culture' (Florida 1995, 23-24).

Between 1870 and 1910 the whole archipelago was brought under colonial rule as the Netherlands East Indies, whereas for the greater part of the nineteenth century, the colony had comprised not much more than Java (Elson 2008, 4). Dutch philology started in the same period. It was part of the idea that gathering knowledge to govern a colonial state was central to the building of it. In this endeavor local customs and laws, as well as old buildings, ruins, sites of ancient settlements, collection of family histories and genealogies were located and described. This aimed at collecting information was considered necessary and useful to the state (Cohn 1996, 81).

Connected to these developments in the colony, philologists in Europe searched for signs of the true nature and soul of a people or '*ware volksziel*' in traditions, folk tales, myths and sagas that were collected from all corners of the country to build a 'national identity' (Leerssen 1999, 80-81). In search of sources that could feed nation building, philologists and historians produced a new past that became a point of identification and part of the growing sense of nationality. The collected knowledge was shared and disseminated in archives, libraries, collections, and museums (Leerssen 2010, xv-xvii). The establishment of ethnological museums is a result of the Enlightenment and the nineteenth century colonial situation that led to the urge to document and categorize. Museums of ethnology, of natural history, of *Völkerkunde* or *Volkskunde* were the home for any field whose research produced and required collections, including archaeology, biology, and geology (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 2005, 1). Although ethnology or anthropology was often seen as a sideshow of

scientific activities, from the beginning of the nineteenth century ethnographic collecting was always part of it (Ter Keurs 2007, 9).

It is in the of the relation between the colony and the motherland, between the Javanese and the Dutch, that in this chapter I explore the ways in which discourses of *wayang* evolved. *Wayang* was shaped in the interchange between *wayang* as a performance practice, and colonial studies with their collecting practices in the field and exhibition practices in the Netherlands. I will discuss who influenced and controlled discourse about *wayang*, what they wrote about *wayang* and why they wrote in this particular way. In addition I want to go into the consequences of these specific discourses. We can discern three time-frames in which *wayang* was unlocked, revalued, and preserved and codified. This thematic division is based on Bloembergen's, but deviates slightly in time-frame. This chapter aims to offer a dynamic perspective on the historical construction of *wayang* as heritage through an analysis of scholarly and institutional discourse in *wayang* in the localized context of colonial Indonesia and the Netherlands from the early nineteenth century until the proclamation of Independence in 1945.

***Wayang* unlocked (ca. 1800 – ca. 1900)**

Nineteenth century colonial scholarship was dominated by the discipline of philology. Language and literature enjoyed a favored position in the emerging image of Javanese high culture. In 1823 a colonial Institute of Javanese Language and Literature was established in Surakarta where a small group of Dutch philologists with strong ties both to the colonial government and to the *kraton* of Surakarta gave shape to the discipline of Javanology. As a classical discipline, colonial Javanological philology was preoccupied with the quest for golden ages (Florida 1995, 25-26). They also set to document *wayang* performances, hoping that this would contribute to an understanding of the indigenous people. In doing so, they were informed by their own language and mind frame, shaped by the Enlightenment, the rise of nationalism, historicism and romanticism. As a result, the Dutch established standards and guidelines informed by a European mindset that reasoned along lines of progress, dichotomies such as “Us” and “Them”, written and oral, history and myth. Describing and documenting *wayang* provided the intangible and seemingly elusive *wayang* performances with tangibility through the creation of texts. The description of

wayang framed it as a phenomenon that captured the essence of the Javanese. As tangible texts, these descriptions are precious sources as well as collection items today.

The first publication of a Javanese *wayang* text with a Dutch translation entitled *Pregiwo* was documented by the philologist J.A. Wilkens (1813-1888) in 1846. He informed his readers that with the translation of this Javanese story he hoped to contribute to an understanding of *wayang* as a performance, to the knowledge of practitioners of the Javanese language, and to an understanding of the Javanese in general (Wilkens 1846, 6). Wilkens's introduction to the text revealed that he regarded *wayang* as folk entertainment and worthless as an art form. It was valuable only to get acquainted with the nature of the Javanese, which had an essentializing effect on *wayang*. 'He who wants to assess the value of the Wayang play in comparison with our drama performances will not find anything that is worth watching, however he who wishes to get to know the Javanese people from up close will find the Wayang performances will serve as an excellent way to characterize the Javanese people' (Wilkens 1846, 6-7).⁴

Wilkens was one of few experts on Javanese language, who made major contributions to the famous Javanese-Dutch dictionary of J.F.C. Gericke (1798-1857) and T. Roorda (1801-1874). He spent three years in Leiden in the Netherlands as the assistant to Roorda, and taught at the institute for Javanese language in Surakarta (Sears 1996, 83). Before the texts of Raffles and Wilkens, Javanese poetic and prose texts had transmitted *wayang* tales in both written and oral, as well as stylized and non-stylized, forms. As a result of his authority as a Java expert his work on *wayang* was very influential. Wilkens's publication started up the production of concise and extensive summaries of *wayang* plays in Javanese and their translation into Dutch that contributed numerous texts to the body of written *wayang* literature (Sears 1996, 84-85). Another effect of Wilkens's publication was the establishment of standards for the documentation of *wayang*. 'Platitudes' as Wilkens calls them were regarded as not worthwhile documenting: 'We have written down the following account of *Tjarang* [fiction of the *Dalang*] *Pregiwo*, in accordance with the verbal

⁴ 'Die de waarde van het wajangspel naar onze dramatische voorstellingen wil beoordeelen, zal er niets in vinden, dat de moeite der toeschouwing beloont, maar wil men den Javaan van naderbij leeren kennen, dan gelooven wij, dat eene wajangvertooning daartoe eene geschikte gelegenheid aanbiedt, waarin het volk op het uitstekendst wordt gekarakteriseerd.'

reproduction by the court-*dalang* Redhi Soeto, with the omission of platitudes that would not have been left out of the performance of the same account.’ (Wilkens 1848, 5).⁵

Philologist and missionary C. Poensen (1836-1919) spent 27 years in Central Java (1862-89) and wrote extensively on *wayang* and Javanese Islam. He gave an early description of a *wayang* performance in an article briefly entitled ‘De Wajang’ (1872). He expresses disappointment with Wilkens’s choices, but at the same time is pleased with his translation because ‘By the omission the example that he had wished to give has not remained faithful and complete reflection of such a *wayang* performance, yet with what he presented, Mr. Wilkens deserves credit; and we would have liked to have seen more wajang-stories published and elucidated by him’ (Poensen 1872, 243). Poensen informs his readers that ‘It would be very difficult, if not impossible, to provide a literal account of a performance to the reader; we would not be allowed to write down what the Dalang can deliver from time to time. For this reason, and others, we have chosen to provide the most accurate translation of a manuscript of a Lakon that Prof. Roorda had received from Java in manuscript form and had published in print for a few years. We have chosen the Lampahan Palasara. We shall initially present this story word for word and leave out all those parts that could be insulting or somewhat less fit for showing.’ (Poensen 1872, 246-247).⁶

Like Wilkens, Poensen hoped to contribute to the knowledge of the indigenous people with his description. In contrast to Wilkens, he contextualized his remarks and valuations and continuously repeated that western standards are not applicable to *wayang*. He valued *wayang* in the context of European progress as opposed to the static culture of Asia. For example, he sees no signs of development in the songs sung by the female singers (*pesinden*): ‘We deliberately use the word “Melodies” because singing or songs would be an inappropriate term. As soon as she knows the melody and is able to sing, she comes up

⁵ De hierop volgende *tjarang* [verdichtsel van den *dalang*/fiction of the *dalang*] Pregiwo, hebben wij uit den mond van den hof-*dalang* Ki Redhi Soeto opgeschreven, met weglating echter van de platitudes die bij derzelver vertooning niet achterwege zouden zijn gebleven.

⁶ Het zou ons moeilijk vallen, zoo niet ondoenlijk zijn, den lezer thans een letterlijk verslag van eene voordragt mée te delen; ja, wij zouden ook niet eens alles op papier mogen brengen, wat de *dalang* van tijd tot tijd kan voordragen. Het is ons om deze en andere reden verkieselijkst voorgekomen, eene gedeeltelijk zoo getrouw mogelijke vertaling te geven van ééne der lakon’s, die Prof. Roorda in manuscript van Java ontvangen hebbende, voor een paar jaar in druk heeft uitgegeven. Wij kozen voor de Lampahan Palasara. Wij zullen dit verhaal aanvankelijk woordelijk en verder in korte trekken mēedelen, al datgene achterwegen latende, wat ons eenigszins kwetsend of minder oorbaar voorkomt.

with her own words' (Poensen 1872, 217).⁷ On the other hand, Poensen realized that the musicians did have a certain knowledge and that the reader would be mistaken 'if one would think, that the indigenous musicians, who one saw playing without a choirmaster holding a conducting staff, or sheet of paper in front of them, would be completely devoid of any talent or skill!' (Poensen 1872, 219).⁸ Nevertheless the European model of valuing *wayang* as defined in terms of progress prevailed when Poensen contemplated: 'But what is it? There is no progress, no development in the art! Once understood, once figured out, having come to grips, one is finished for the rest of his/her life. One will not know of new plays or rehearsals. It is not a science but more a skill or ability and playing the wrong tone every once in a while, well! It is not very much of an issue!' (Poensen 1872, 220).⁹

These early descriptions set standards for the documentation of *wayang* - leaving out the 'platitudes' and characterizing *wayang* as static without any signs of progress or development. In addition, it set standards for valuing *wayang*. Wilkens, e.g. documented the *wayang* story of a court *dalang* but valued *wayang* as folk entertainment. Poensen recognized knowledge but does did not appreciate development. In a dialogical relation Dutch ideas about *wayang* influenced the Javanese elite. The extent to which Javanese individuals were influenced depended on the amount of exposure they had to Dutch ideas, and consequently to the Dutch language. A Dutch-language education of the Javanese elite reaffirmed this process and radically changed *wayang* discourse. Dutch scholars, with their colonial fascination with documentation and categorization, touched on ideas that had little meaning within Javanese society (Sears 1996, 90).

In support of Dutch claims to superiority was the Javanese lack of proper written histories. The dichotomy of written vs. oral and history vs. myth was informed by changing ideas about history and temporality. This dichotomy immediately concerned *wayang* as the Javanese started to attempt to historicize their *wayang* stories. Enlightenment had developed a European idea of a scientific linear history to be an objective approximation of

⁷ 'Met opzet zeggen wij melodiën, want van gezangen of liederen kan eigenlijk geen sprake zijn. Als zij de wijs eenmaal weet en kan zingen, maakt zij zelve er de woorden op.'

⁸ 'als men meende, dat die inlandsche muzikanten, welke men daar zonder een' orchestmeester met een' dirigeerstok in de hand, of blad papier voor zich, ziet spelen, geheel en al van kennis en bekwaamheid ontbloot waren!'

⁹ 'Maar wat is 't? Er is geen ontwikkeling, geen vooruitgang, in de kunst! Eenmaal er achter, eenmaal het gevat, de slag beet hebbende, is men dan ook klaar voor zijn geheele leven. Men weet voortaan van nieuwe partijen noch repetities. 't Is of wordt geen wetenschap, maar veelmeer een slag, eene vaardigheid, en een enkele maal een' verkeerden toon aan te slaan, och! 't Hindert zoo heel veel niet!'

reality. This differed from Javanese perceptions of the past in which history tales of the ancestors of the Javanese nobility were written, sung, and told for aesthetic, didactic, and political purposes. As Javanese literati were increasingly exposed to Dutch conceptions of history, they increasingly arranged *wayang* stories in what they believed to be a chronological order (Sears 1996, 91).

In the mid-nineteenth century the Javanese court poet of Surakarta, R.Ng. Ronggowarsito (1802-1873) wrote the *Pustaka Raja* (Book of Kings) that consisted of multiple volumes on Javanese history. Mangkunagara IV of Surakarta (1801-1881) proclaimed these texts to be both authentic and ancient. Ronggowarsito had interpreted the Mahabharata and Ramayana as historical episodes between Islamic genealogies and stories of the Javanese kings. He had dated all the prose stories as if they had really happened. The Dutch, but also Purbatjaraka (1884-1964), who received a degree in Javanese literary and historical studies at Leiden (1926), regarded Ronggowarsito's work as a failed attempt at European type of historiography. They ignored the work, and never translated it. Despite the critical reception by the Dutch, the *Pustaka Raja* texts were copied and recopied in the nineteenth and twentieth century, and came to be regarded as the major authoritative *wayang* source by Javanese intellectuals (Sears 1996, 95-97).

Another attempt to historicize *wayang* was the *Serat Sastramiruda* by B.K.P. Kusumadilaga, grandson of Pakubuwana III of Surakarta. The *Serat Sastramiruda* was a manual for *dalang* written in the mid-nineteenth century. It contains a supposedly chronological account of the development of *wayang* that is linked to various rulers. The *Serat Sastramiruda* was acceptable to the Dutch because it gave rules and definitions, rather than attempting to prove that the *wayang* stories were a type of Javanese history as Ronggowarsito had tried to do. Sears regards these two texts of Ronggowarsito and Kusumadilaga as Javanese attempts to meet Dutch scholarly standards (Sears 1996, 99-106). The European concept of history became the frame for Javanese historical writings. The Dutch authorized what could and could not be regarded as Javanese history. In their preoccupation with distinguishing myth from history, *wayang* stories could not be history because they were obviously myths. Ronggowarsito's work was dismissed because it did not fit the colonial categories and the Dutch worldview. As Sears has observed (1996, 94-

97) with the rise of Dutch philology, the documentation of Javanese *wayang* stories changed scholarly views of the connections between these stories and history.

Philology also taught that the shine of Java's literary culture was defeated by Islam in the late fifteenth century. The coming of Islam had destroyed the old high culture and had polluted the language and literature with alien sounds and senses of Arabic. As a result, the interest of the philologists focused on Javanese Hindu-Buddhist origins (Florida 1995, 26-27). A.B. Cohen Stuart (1825-1876) published the first systematically prepared philological edition and annotated Dutch translation of the *Serat Bratayuda* (stories recounting the great war of the Mahabharata) a late eighteenth century Javanese version of a twelfth-century Old Javanese text. This work showed how far the Javanese stories had degenerated from the 'correct' versions found in the original Indian texts. Cohen Stuart apologized for presenting such a decadent, confused, and bastardized text. He explained that he would have preferred to prepare an edition of the superior prototype from the twelfth century. In addition, he complains of the ignorance of his 'native informant'. After Cohen Stuart, Dutch philologists turned their attention away from Modern Javanese to Old Javanese literature (Florida 1995, 28).

The focus was thus on the Javanese character of *wayang* despite resemblances with the Indian stories. J.L.A. Brandes (1857-1905) argued against an Indian origin of *wayang*. He was of opinion that *wayang* was not borrowed from India like Hindu-Javanese architecture and sculpture, but was a Javanese creation of great antiquity. He saw proof for his argument in the names of various parts of technical equipment in use for *wayang*, which were Javanese and not Sanskrit (Brandes 1889, 123-124). G.A.J. Hazeu (1870-1929) shared his view and thought that *wayang* had independently developed from both the Hindus and the Chinese. An emphasis on *wayang*'s roots in ancestral ritual stimulated the interest in the religious and philosophical elements of *wayang* (Hazeu 1897). Hazeu, writing his influential study before travelling from the Netherlands to Indonesia, emphasized the religious meaning of *wayang* and its roots in ancestral ritual: '[...] the *wayang* performance was part of the ancestral ritual. [...] If the shadow performance [...] was one of the

constituent parts of the ancestral ritual, the performer, the *dalang*, was the priest of the cult...'¹⁰ (Hazeu 1897, 54).

What remained unchanged in *wayang* discourse was the idea that *wayang* was useful to learn about the nature and essence of the Javanese people. Hazeu wrote in 1897 on the origins, nature and development of various *wayang* forms and pointed out that: 'In the changes and alterations that the *dalangs* have unconsciously made, as children of their times and their surroundings, in the shape and formulation of the foreign stories and the typification of the main characters (of which, as far as the myths and symbols were concerned, they were of course unable to understand the actual meaning), the true character of the Javanese people reveals itself unmistakable, their ways of thinking, their ideals and their interests etc. In one word the nature of the Javanese people.' (Hazeu 1897, 149).¹¹

Although *wayang* continued to be seen as the essence of Javanese culture, Hazeu showed an appreciation and a more dynamic view of *wayang*. In his opinion *wayang* had a history and had changed over the years, and was no longer static or a-historic as it was in Wilkens's and Poensen's view. This dynamic approach made Hazeu remark that *wayang* always adapted to the spirit of the time: 'Ultimately, one needs to take into consideration that the *dalangs* modernized their performances and stories and, as was argued by Prof. Kern, that they were influenced by customs, ideas and practices over the course of time which led them to consistently rejuvenate their performances and stories' (Hazeu 1897, 148-149).¹²

Hazeu observed change, but in his view change does not equal progress. On the contrary, change is regarded as deviating from the original and is thus a degeneration. Hazeu's understanding of *wayang* was hugely influential even though at the time of writing he had never watched *wayang*. His book was circulated in the early twentieth century

¹⁰ 'Men kan zeggen: de *wayang*vertooning maakte deel uit van den voorouderlijken eeredienst'. "Was de schimmenvertooning – zoals we boven trachten aan te toonen – een der bestanddelen van den voorvaderlijken eeredienst, de vertooner, de *dalang*, was de priester van dien eeredienst....'

¹¹ 'In de veranderingen en wijzigingen die de *dalangs*, als kinderen van hun tijd en van hun omgeving, onwillekeurig maakten in vorm en inkleding van de vreemde verhalen en in de typering der hoofdfiguren (waarvan ze, voorzover het mythen en symbolen waren, natuurlijk de eigenlijke betekenis niet konden beseffen), openbaart zich onmiskenbaar het eigenlijke karakter der Javanen, hun denkbeelden, hun liefhebberijen, hun idealen etc. In een woord de Javaansche volksaard.'

¹² 'Ten slotte dient men in 't algemeen nog in aanmerking te nemen dat de *dalangs* onwillekeurig hun voordracht en ook hun verhalen telkens moderniseerden, dat ook zij – zoals prof. Kern het uitdrukt – met hun tijd meegingen: de tijdgeest, de gewoonten, gebruiken en denkbeelden van hun tijd en omgeving leidden hen van zelf er toe hun verhalen en hun voordracht telkens als 't ware een verjongingskuur te doen ondergaan'

among interested Javanese readers through a compilation by Raden Mas Mangkudimeja in 1915 (Ras 1982, 20). Hazeu's ideas remained unchallenged until J.J. Ras (1926-2003) in the 1976 concluded that the *wayang* theatre did not develop from an ancestral ritual, but had evolved from a merging of two parallel traditions - one rural with Indonesian roots in magic-religious events that also had an entertaining character, and one aristocratic and imported from India (Ras 1976, 86-87). The appreciation of Dutch philologists thus focused on writings of Surakarta that confirmed a 'beautiful tradition' of Old Java. This essentialized image of Javanese literature and as such of *wayang* came to take on a kind of truth and impressed itself into the reality of Javanese history. Internal to the logic of this image is the assurance that colonial order was ultimately responsible for the return of Javanese writing to its 'original truth' (Florida 1995, 30). This image was in turn intellectually appropriated by the Dutch educated Javanese nationalists in the early twentieth century.

The revaluation of a tradition (ca. 1900 – ca. 1920)

Around 1900 the colonial government adopted the Ethical Policy as official policy. This policy focused on the development, care and elevation of the indigenous people of the colony while maintaining their original culture (Locher-Scholten 1981, 201). The active strive for modernization after 1900 went hand in hand with a growing interest in both the ancient and contemporary culture of the colony along with the institutionalization of this interest. The colonial state became the herd of history and groups of Indonesians increasingly showed an interest in their 'own' antiquity and civilization after 1900 (Bloembergen and Raben 2009, 12). Between 1900 and 1910, an absence of publications on *wayang* can be discerned, to be revived in 1908 with the foundation of the first nationalist movement Boedi Oetomo and the Commissie voor de Inlandsche School en Volkscultuur or Commission for People's Education and Culture (renamed Balai Pustaka in 1918). Both of these movements were founded in the context of the Ethical Policy to bring Western style education to the indigenous elite.

An emerging sense of Javanese cultural nationalism coincided with the spread of Theosophy and gave rise to a new discourse in which *wayang* was revalued and reframed. Theosophy was a religious movement that originated in 1875 in America, and quickly spread to Europe and Australia. It inextricably linked the East to the West in its teachings,

mixing several world religions. Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Judaism could all blend in harmony in the Theosophical world view although it favored pre-Islamic Hindu and Buddhist teachings (Sears 1996, 126-7).

Western style education brought the young indigenous elite in contact with Theosophy, which was especially appealing to them because Theosophy respected eastern cultures and philosophies. Many nationalists came under influence of theosophists such as D. van Hinloopen Labberton (1874-1961), who admired eastern cultures and promoted a connection between East and West. As the students generally had an elite background in which traditional culture and world view were highly appreciated they were continually trying to balance their traditional ideas with the modern and western ideas they were taught at school. Theosophical ideas combined these two cultural worlds and were therefore appealing (Van Miert 1995, 342).

Van Hinloopen Labberton's wife Mrs. C. Van Hinloopen Labberton (1875-) was one of the first to write about *wayang* in a different way. She published her ideas in an article in English dated by Sears as from 1912, and which was republished in the Netherlands-Indies in Dutch in 1921 in *Wederophbouw* 8-9 with introductory notes by Sutatmo Suriokusumo (1844-1924). Van Hinloopen Labberton expressed a fascination with the perception of *wayang* as mystical knowledge, *wayang* as essence of the Javanese people and Javanese culture. She ties it to Javanese nationalist ideas and in her view it should provide education for moral life: but for her too *wayang* had degenerated, because the stories deviate from its Indian originals. There was still hope because *wayang* could be restored through the education of the *dalang*.

According to Van Hinloopen Labberton, 'The Wajang is a mystery-play, pure and simple' that contains a secret knowledge that has to be unlocked. 'We are taught that there are seven keys which unlock the secret gate of knowledge' (Van Hinloopen Labberton 1912, 1). She sees *wayang* as the essence of the Javanese is reflected in her emphasis on *wayang's* local origins that 'The consensus of opinion among the Javanese is that the different tales given in the plays are purely of local origin, and have no relation to the great Hindu poem, the Mahabharata'. She expressed the hope that 'the Wajang will never vanish from Java, for it has value in expressing the people's artistic nature, and it has grown together with the Javanese, their dreams and ideals, until it has become part of their racial

life.’ (Van Hinloopen Labberton 1912, 1). Van Hinloopen Labberton related this essentialism to Javanese nationalism: ‘In order to understand the people of Java we must appreciate their national ideals. This can best be done through the Wajang.’ ‘The Lakon Purvo gives us a conception of the Javanese standard of morals’ (Van Hinloopen Labberton 1912, 1).

The article reflects the spirit of the Ethical Policy, as Van Hinloopen Labberton is convinced that development in *wayang* must come from the Javanese, but should be guided: ‘Changes in the Wajang must come spontaneously from the people, and must be guided in such a way as to lead to real development of power, thus appealing to the leaders among the Javanese and allowing the play to take a more effective and elevating position in the community. The aristocracy of the Javanese have taken the Wajang as a model of life. [...] As the Javanese race is now probably in its decadence, the new forms that have been added to the Wajang are much inferior to the originals’ (Van Hinloopen Labberton 1912, 2). Indeed, ‘The ancient sacrifices are no longer correctly observed’ (Van Hinloopen Labberton 1912, 3). She also acknowledges change, but in her eyes this was not the right sort of change. The Dutch would guide the Javanese in the right direction of change.

In Van Hinloopen Labberton’s view *wayang* should be educational ‘The more moral, learned and original the teacher, the more instructive will his play be for the public’ (Van Hinloopen Labberton 1912, 3). As she is convinced that ‘Apart from all the lighter side of the performance, the main object of the Wajang has always been that of instruction. But not only guidance, as it was also mystical. While I sat there, quiet, subdued, and filled with a peaceful contemplation of the wondrous and graceful scene, the soft voice of the Dalang, floating through the night, brought home to me the mystic meaning of the play. What is the mystic meaning of the shadows? They portray the changeable that is inherent in all forms. All Nature is constantly changing, and men also are subject to the same law. Continents, and even worlds, come and go; also our feelings and emotions change as do the shadows in the Shadow Play. We are told that in ancient days the races were as these shadows’ (Van Hinloopen Labberton 1912, 4). Theosophy emphasized mystical and philosophical meanings that could only be understood by the Javanese. It opened up the possibility of regarding *wayang* as a vehicle of higher wisdom. This discourse implied various contradictions: if the *wayang* tradition was high culture, but degenerated or spoilt, it could

be restored. Restoration could be carried out in 'modern' ways through the setting up of schools for the puppeteers.

Suriokusumo was a Theosophist and the driving force behind the Committee of Javanese Nationalism (Comité voor het Javaanse Nationalisme) (1917-1923), which strove for a moderate, regional based nationalism and was the intellectual core of cultural Javanese nationalism. Under influence of Theosophy, the Indian nationalist poet and novelist Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) and the Indian nationalist Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948), the Committee of Javanese Nationalism advocated the moral superiority of Javanese civilization, and pleaded for the restoration of the glorious Javanese autocracy of pre-colonial centuries (Van Miert 1995). The ruling elite, called *priyayi*, tried to reinforce interest in the Javanese culture through the Committee and used the monthly journal *Wederopbouw* as a mouthpiece. Suriokusumo was editor-in-chief and the journal's most productive writer. The journal published many articles in which various aspects of Javanese culture were featured and admired, and displayed the orientalist outlook of the indigenous elite. Stereotypes of Dutch Theosophists, in which the East was described as sensitive, mysterious, pure and contemplative were copied and adapted with counter-clichés about western society. Suriokusumo, like many other *priyayi* was convinced of the moral superiority of the Javanese civilization over the European (Van Miert 1995, 344).

Suriokusumo had written an article on Theosophy and Javanese nationalism entitled 'Theosofie en Javaansch Nationalisme' in *Wederopbouw* in 1920. He wrote that 'The Javanese nationalism, which is based on the Javanese individuality and on the Javanese Personality, has a completely different meaning from Western nationalism, which stems from love for the fatherland. The Javanese nationalism is the unavoidable color of the Javanese culture and could not possibly be at odds with the theosophy, which means "godly" in this context. This higher nationalism can only be truly understood and felt by those whom the Javanese culture has permeated deeply in their hearts.' (Suriokusumo 1920, 75).¹³

¹³ 'Het Javaansch nationalisme, dat gebaseerd is op de Javaansche individualiteit, op de Javaansche Persoonlijkheid, krijgt dan een gansch andere beteekenis als het nationalisme van het Westen, hetwelk voortvloeit uit de liefde voor het vaderland. Het Jav. nationalisme is de onvermijdelijke kleur van de Javaansche kultuur, en kan dus onmogelijk strijdig zijn met de theosofie, die hier "goddelijk" moet beteekenen. Dit hogere nationalisme kan uit den aard der zaak alleen worden waargenomen, begrepen en gevoeld door degenen, die in het wezen van de Jav. kultuur tot het hart zijn doorgedrongen.'

This shows that Suriokusumo differentiated sharply between Western nationalism and Javanese cultural nationalism. He put culture at the heart of Javanese nationalism, understanding culture as “godly”. *Wayang* was presented as pivotal in the nature of the Javanese, containing knowledge that could only be understood by the indigenous “wij Oosterlingen” or “we Easterners” to which “Westerlingen” or “Westerners” do not have access. Suriokusumo’s reasoning confirms the arguments of the American anthropologist J. Pemberton. Pemberton discussed how lines of distinction were drawn between Dutch style and *cara Jawi*, Javanese style ‘to articulate a world of difference in terms of customs, language, literature, and so on, all the essential lines of an identity that by the early 20th century would be recognized, in retrospect, as a typically cultural identity.’ (Pemberton 1994, 23-24). The idea of “Java” and Javanese culture, he says, was ‘not simply an issue of imitation and incorporation of foreign logics, but a prefiguration, even anticipation, of what would become a properly Orientalist subject’ (Pemberton 1994, 24).

Ideas and values about *wayang* developed in line with Pemberton’s argument about “Java”. The Javanese elite appropriated *wayang* and used it ‘to articulate a world of difference’ and create a Javanese identity that was fundamentally different from the Dutch. According to Suriokusumo the “Westerling-theosoof”, such as Van Hinloopen Labberton, could understand the psyche of the indigenous people to a certain extent which Van Hinloopen Labberton had proved with her account on *wayang*. However, Suriokusumo thinks that ‘Way too little recognition has been granted by the Javanese people to the deeper meaning of the Wajang. (...) If one wants to understand its meaning, one must first familiarize oneself with the so called languages of symbols.’¹⁴ He also pleaded in his article for the development of *wayang* to prevent its disappearance, pointing out that ‘When we participate in making the Wajang more understandable for the youth, this stems from the belief that with the disappearance of the Wajang, the Javanese would no longer be a culture-people. (...) We are aware that we are living in a world that is constantly changing and developing. Although we understand our art must also change at some point, we will never trade our Wajang for a cinema. Although our art may once change, we hope that this change

¹⁴ ‘Er is door de Javanen nog veel te weinig bekendheid gegeven aan de diepe betekenis van wajang. [...] Wil men de betekenis er van begrijpen, dan moet men zich hebben vertrouwd gemaakt met de z.g. taal der symbolen.’

will also be an improvement.’ (Suriokusumo 1921, 122).¹⁵ Suriokusumo’s call to develop *wayang* echoes the spirit of the time which defined development in terms of progress.

The idea that *wayang* was as a source of symbols and hidden meanings can also be found in the thesis entitled *De Pandji-roman* published in 1922 by the Dutch W.H. Rassers (1877-1973). Rassers argues that the Panji-stories contain elements of Indonesian sun and moon mythology, and that *wayang* was a symbol of the ancestral marriage; it was the initiation ritual of a bride and groom into society performed in a dramatized form. He wrote that: ‘(...) de oldest core of the Pandji-story is a myth that, (...) tells the story of the Javanese world with her exogamic marriage and the initiation rite that serves as an introduction to it.’ (Rassers 1922, 369).¹⁶ Rassers also focused on *wayang*’s prehistoric roots and regarded *wayang* as an age-old tradition that had developed over centuries. He acknowledged change and acknowledged *wayang* as culture that is not primitive, but he disliked that something “original”, “*het eigene*” has been mixed with all sorts of strange elements: ‘...these bizarre, kaleidoscopic stories, with their endless developments and countless episodes, have come to us in a shape not at all primitive; they are clearly the product and work of many generations, and it is obvious that many external aspects blend in with the inherent elements’ (Rassers 1922, 14).¹⁷

In 1923 J. Kats’s (1875-1945) discourse in *Het Javaansche Tooneel* is a clear summary of the *wayang* discourse up until his time. Drawing heavily on Hazeu’s work, he gave Hazeu new authority and new publicity. Both writers were hugely influential in both Indonesian and Dutch ideas of *wayang*. *Wayang* was important in order to know the Javanese: ‘Whoever wishes to study the character and spirit of the Javanese people, must not fail to take the Wajang literature into account.’ (Kats 1923, I).¹⁸ He also searched for a deeper meaning of *wayang* and though it was not merely entertainment. In this Kats quotes Hazeu: ‘All those who have studied the Javanese shadowplay beyond the mere surface agree that this was

¹⁵ ‘Wanneer we meedoen om het wajangspel voor de jongeren begrijpelijk te maken, dan is het voortgesproken uit de overtuiging, dat met het verdwijnen van dit spel, de Javaan ophoudt een cultuur-volk te zijn. [...] We zijn ons bewust, dat alles vooruitgaat. Ook onze kunst zal eenmaal vervormd worden, [maar] we danken er hartelijk voor om onze wajang te ruilen met de bioscoop. Doch eenmaal zal onze kunst anders worden, maar we hopen dat die verandering tevens een verbetering zal zijn’

¹⁶ ‘[...] de oudste kern van het Pandji-verhaal een mythe is, die [...] ontstaan verhaalt der Javaansche wereld met haar exogamie regeling van het huwelijk en haar initiatie-ritus als inleiding daartoe.’

¹⁷ ‘dat deze bizarre, caleidoscopische verhalen, met hun eindelooze verwickelingen en ontelbare episoden, niet in een ook maar enigszins primitieven vorm tot ons zijn gekomen; zij zijn klaarblijkelijk het product van het werk van vele generaties, en het springt terstond in het oog, dat met het eigene zich hier allerlei vreemde elementen verenigden’

¹⁸ ‘Wie karakter en zieleleven van den Javaan wil bestudeeren, zal dan ook niet mogen nalaten, kennis te nemen van de wajang-literatuur.’

originally more than entertainment and had a distinct religious meaning. (...)’ (Hazeu as quoted in Kats 1923, 38).¹⁹ In search of *wayang*’s origins, the comparison of the Javanese stories with the Indian originals in Kats’ view was necessary. To this end he incorporated ‘A short summary of the original Indian story...’ (Kats 1923, II).²⁰ In his approach to change in *wayang*, Kats follows Kern. Change had happened as a result of miscopying Javanese texts, and *dalang* modernized *wayang*. In this change, he believed the true Javanese nature could be discovered (Kats 1923, 49).²¹

Theosophical ideas had elevated *wayang* and emphasized the idea that it contained secret knowledge to which only indigenous people had access. In elevating *wayang*, these studies focused on its pre-Islamic past, because it was believed that Islam had influenced *wayang* detrimentally (Kats 1923, 48). Sears argued that the Theosophical discourse of *wayang* as an essential element of Javanese life, which contained higher knowledge, was used by the Javanese to convince the Europeans of the contemporary elegance and classical heights of Javanese performance traditions and of the Javanese people themselves (Sears 1996, 215). Discourse of *wayang* had thus become a prefiguration, even an anticipation of the Javanese, and was turned into a properly Orientalist subject: *wayang* had become the essence of the Javanese that reflected both their history and unfathomable soul. Writings of *wayang*, embedded in a Western knowledge system, influenced Javanese ideas about *wayang* to which the Javanese elite anticipated. It is through the interaction of Dutch scholars and administrators, and the Javanese intellectual elite that *wayang* took shape in discourse in colonial times. This had a lasting impact on the way in which it is perceived nowadays both inside and outside Indonesia.

Preservation and codification (ca. 1920 – 1945)

¹⁹ “Allen, die de Javaansche schimmenvertooning wat meer dan oppervlakkig beschouwd hebben, zijn ’t er over eens dat deze oorspronkelijk meer was dan een louter vermaak, dat ze een religieuze beteekenis had [...]”

²⁰ “Een korte samenvatting van het oorspronkelijke Indische verhaal is, ter vergelijking, bijgevoegd.”

²¹ “[...]dat – zooals prof. KERN zegt – juist de grofste van die metamorfozen, misvattingen etc. *niet de uitvloeisels* zijn van gebrekkige overlevering in den mond des volks, maar ontstaan zijn uit *verknoeide geschreven teksten*.” Ten slotte dient men in ’t algemeen nog in aanmerking te nemen dat de dalangs onwillekeurig hun voordracht en ook hun verhalen telkens moderniseerden, dat ook zij – zooals prof. KERN het uitdrukt – met hun tijd meegingen. [...]Deze laatste omstandigheid is vooral van gewicht voor de kennis van den Javaanschen volksaard: in de veranderingen en wijzigingen, die de dalangs, als kinderen van hun tijd en van hun omgeving, onwillekeurig maakten in vorm en inkleeding van de vreemde verhalen en in de typeering der hoofdfiguren (waarvan ze, voorzoover het mythen en symbolen waren, natuurlijk de eigenlijke beteekenis niet konden beseffen), openbaart zich onmiskenbaar het eigenlijk karakter der Javanen, hun denkbeelden, hun liefhebberijen, hun idealen etc., in een woord: de Javaansche volksaard

The 1920s and 1930s show the emergence of Javanese cultural nationalism in circles of elite *priyayi* that served as the local branch of Binnenlands Bestuur (domestic government) from the nineteenth century onwards. These elite circles were seen to be more concerned with mysticism and the enactment of ritual than with the hard exercise of power (Sutherland 1979, vii). They cherished the wish to restore the grand Javanese culture of the past, i.e. the culture of the courts of Surakarta and Yogyakarta and of the *priyayi* themselves. In associations they engaged with the Javanese language, *wayang*, *gamelan*, dance and literature. They talked about the Javanese nation that consisted of the indigenous people of the island, and felt that it should be based on the culture and social world of the Central Javanese *priyayi* (Van Miert 1995, 341). Javanese nationalism refers to the cultural/political strife for a renaissance of Javanese culture and a powerful, independent Java, ruled by Javanese, according to elite Javanese political and social conceptions (Van Miert 1995, 15). At the start of the twentieth century *priyayi* were convinced that Java went through both a cultural and political crisis; it was a *Zaman Edan*, a Time of Frenzy, on which they based their wish for the restoration of its former glory. The cultural benchmark was the east-Javanese kingdom of Majapahit (thirteenth until fifteenth century). The boundaries of Majapahit would be a prelude to later Indonesian boundaries and its idealized image was based on oral myths and texts in Old-Javanese that were translated and published by Dutch philologists at the start of the twentieth century. Javanese studies, including *wayang* studies thus contributed to the revival of Javanese cultural nationalism in the 1920s (Van Miert 1995, 344).

By the 1920s school attendance had become a familiar phenomenon throughout the Dutch East Indies, under the influence of the Ethical Policy. The establishment of court schools for *wayang* coincided with the opening of elementary schools from around 1907 for the purpose of educating the elite as a consequence of the colonial government's Ethical Policy. The Pasinaon Dhalang ing Surakarta, Padasuka in short or Surakarta Dalang Course, was the first *dalang* school to be opened in Surakarta in 1923, at the instigation of Paku Buwono X (Susuhunan from 1893-1939). In 1925 Habirando was the second *dalang* course, set up in Yogyakarta on the authority of Hamengkubuwono VIII (Sultan from 1912-1939) with support of the Java Institute. A few years later, in 1931, another *dalang* course was established at the Mangkunagaran in Surakarta, the Pasinaon Dhalang ing Mangku-

Nagaran, now known as PDMN (Pamulangan *Dalang* Mangkunagaran) (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 57).

The search for restoration implied a search for originality and authenticity and a presumption of a cultural peak that had been long gone. Clara van Groenendael remarks that these schools strove to educate people who could preserve and pass on the court tradition in its purest form (Clara van Groenendael 1985). She writes that there was widespread dissatisfaction with the quality of performances of many *dalang* as a result of their lack of education, and with the failure of the *dalang*'s presentation to keep up with social developments. The result was a decline in the ability of the *dalang* to capture the imagination of more intellectually inclined Javanese (Clara van Groenendael 1985). In 1921 in a letter to the Java Institute the *dalang* Sutapa (dates unknown) spoke of the 'deterioration' of *wayang* as many *wayang* performances degenerated into 'a banal display of continually the same battle scenes over some princess, stale jokes and tedious panegyrics on rulers and wealthy personages' (Sutapa 1921, 129 quoted in Clara van Groenendael 1985, 52-53), and called for the training of *dalang* and musicians to render their performance more harmonious. Sears regards the establishment of these schools as a 'creative Javanese adaptation to Dutch scholarly attitudes and the aesthetic preferences of Dutch-educated Javanese' (Sears 1996, 150). It could also be argued that the founding of such schools was in line with the emergence of nationalism and the emergence of a nationalist movement that was culturally oriented.

The preservation of "pure" *wayang* and speaking about its deterioration implied striving to return to a certain standard that remained unclear. The courts now seized the opportunity to assert their authority in setting standards for *wayang*. However, this conservationist approach to *wayang* denied development in performance practice as developments would only cause *wayang* to stray further away from its origins. Change did not equal progress, but was regarded as deterioration. By setting up *dalang* schools the Javanese courts appointed themselves protectors of Javanese culture and used *wayang* to display their powers over changes and developments therein. This is endorsed by the general recognition of the huge impact of the establishment of the court schools on *wayang* (Arps 1985, Van Groenendael 1985, Schechner 1996, Sears 1996, Weiss 2006 et.al.).

On the outset the courses at the court schools were merely intended as upgrading courses for *dalang* and as such were not planned as training courses for young people wishing to become *dalang*. Gradually however, they developed into regular training courses. *Pedalangan*, the *dalang*-craft, was taught in combination with *karawitan*, the musical arts, because *wayang* and music are inseparable in Java. The establishment of these *dalang* courses form the basis for the dominant position of the Surakarta style (Ras 1976, 70). It was reinforced by the dissemination of the teaching materials developed for the pupils of these courses. The *Serat Sastramiruda* for example was printed and published in Surakarta in 1930, but earlier, Mangkunagara VII had provided Kats with materials for his book on *wayang*. He had used the materials to list rules for the *dalang* and also mentioned what they were strictly forbidden to do (Kats 1923, 33-34). The materials from the Surakartan court schools became the standard for good *wayang* performances (Ras 1976, 70-72).

Within the courts *wayang* performances were codified and education of the *dalang* institutionalized. Arps argues that the most important concept for *wayang* practice introduced by the courts was what in Javanese is called the *wewaton pedhalangan*, meaning the codification of *wayang* practice in rules and its normative use. New developments in *wayang* performances were condemned as they deviated from the rules. These rules were widely recognized as ideal patterns, but decreased the liveliness of performances. They nevertheless became inescapable rules at the courts (Arps 1985, 24). Another important concept was the use of just one correct version of a *lakon* that emerged in court spheres, the *pakem*. These *pakem* were deduced from Javanese texts or oral versions that were documented. Nowadays the use of one correct *pakem* is generally accepted, but outside court circles the use of *pakem* is not obligatory, and not always applied (Arps 1985, 35).

Arps and Ras point to the role of mystical and philosophical notions in the standardization of performances although emphasis on mystical and philosophical aspects at the courts was more popular with a small circle of people than with the larger audiences (Arps 1985, 33-37). This suggests that discourse about *wayang*'s mysticism was an interest of the elite who utilized this discourse in the strife for Javanese nationalism. This meant that the courts could uphold some of their prestige and status as cultural experts, and present themselves as protectors of Javanese culture. The courts used their authority as

cultural experts to say something about *wayang*, which was seen as the core of Javanese culture. As cultural authorities, the courts decided what was to be restored and preserved. The Javanese courts established themselves as protectors of ‘true’ Javanese culture in the 1920s and 1930s. As a result, *wayang*’s status as ‘high’ Javanese art was institutionalized.

A speech held by the Theosophist and Javanese nationalist Mangkunagara VII (1885-1944) mentioned earlier, illustrates this point. Mangkunagara VII ruled the princely court in Surakarta, and was a pivotal figure in the campaign for Javanese cultural nationalism. His intellect, vigor and financial support made him the most important driving force behind the Committee of Javanese Nationalism. Like many *priyayi*, Mangkunagara VII was convinced of the moral superiority of the Javanese civilization over the European (Van Miert 1995, 344). Mangkunagara VII was a key figure in Javanese nationalism. He was mentor, advisor and sponsor of three organizations that sought a moderate, regional nationalism (Committee of Javanese Nationalism, Young Java, and *Boedi Oetomo*).

Taman Siswo was another nationalist movement founded in July 1922 in Yogyakarta by Raden Mas Suwardi Surjaningrat (1889-1959). Suwardi was a Javanese nobleman who would later change his name into Ki Hadjar Dewantara. During his exile in the Netherlands, Suwardi had become convinced that raising the cultural consciousness of the Javanese people through education would be a powerful instrument in the struggle for self-government. Taman Siswo was an organization that wanted to emancipate the local population by means of education, but also preserving the Javanese identity. These ideas were influenced by the Italian education expert Maria Montessori (1870-1952), the Indian nationalist poet and novelist Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) and probably by the self-aware Central- Javanese rulers, who from 1900 were striving for emancipation. Suwardi set up several hundred so-called *wilde scholen* (unlicensed schools, literally ‘wild schools’) where Javanese students were made conscious of their history and background and where the germ of a developing Javanese self-awareness was cultivated (Drieënhuizen 2012, 251).

Mangkunagara VII’s speech ‘Over de wajang koelit (purwa) in het algemeen en over de daarin voorkomende symbolische en mystieke elementen’ (On the *wayang kulit* (purwa) and its symbolic and mystical elements) was delivered in Dutch to the Solonese Cultural-Philosophical Study Circle in 1932 and published a year later. His contemporaries considered it to be the key representation of *wayang*. Mangkunagara VII used theosophical

and mystical ideas to assign value to *wayang* that in turn raised the image of the Javanese people by situating *wayang* in such a way that it contained something valuable no one could understand except the Javanese. He followed and reaffirmed the discourse of *wayang* of the time: 'In my view, to those who love the Javanese people remains, in my view, the greatest national duty even in a foreign language not to become detached from the essence of social life and customs: the Javanese culture that we are connected to with our every fiber and of which the Wajang is an extremely important and highly esteemed means of expression' (Mangkunagara VII 1933, 79).²² He elevated not only *wayang*, but Javanese society at large by stating that '... the Wajang is not merely a play or entertainment, but rather a reflection of the spiritual life and soul of an entire people. (...) This is why the Wajang stories, (...) are the accounts of a very special and highly developed society' (Mangkunagara VII 1933, 80).²³

To legitimize the value he assigns to *wayang* Mangkunagara VII used theosophical ideas that focus on mysticism and symbols 'Many wajang lakons contain a doctrine that rests on a secret, from supernaturally derived knowledge of God, the world, and nature' (Mangkunagara VII 1933, 88).²⁴ Mangkunagara VII argued that every *wayang lakon* is a quest for mystical knowledge, for true inner meaning. Every performance is a representation of an effort to establish a mystical relation with the higher powers within oneself, a spiritual search of mystical knowledge (Mangkunagara VII 1933, 89-95). To the prince the mystical knowledge of the *wayang* is the reason that *wayang* still has meaning to the Javanese people: 'I hope I have contributed to the solution of this wonderful riddle with this lecture, why for centuries the Wajang has been rooted in the soul of the Javanese people and why she is still widely loved, admired and honored even in modern times where the true Javanese national spirit in the good sense of the word remains to be present' (Mangkunagara VII 1933, 89-95).²⁵

²² 'Op hen, die het Javaansche volk liefhebben, rust m.i. de groote nationale plicht om zelfs in de vreemde taal, ... niet los te raken van de kern van het geheele volksleven: de Javaansche cultuur, waaraan wij met alle levensvezelen verbonden zijn en waarvan de wajang een uiterst belangrijke en zeer voornamelijk uiting is.'

²³ '...de wajang niet louter spel en vermaak is, doch de reflex van het geestelijk en ziele-leven van heel een volk. [...] Daarom zijn de wajang-verhalen, [...] de getuigenissen van een zeer bijzondere en een zeer hooge beschaving.'

²⁴ 'Vele wajanglakons bevatten een leering, die op een geheime, aan bovennatuurlijken invloed ontleende kennis omtrent God, de wereld en de natuur berust.'

²⁵ 'Naar ik hoop heb ik met mijn lezing het mijne bijgedragen tot de oplossing van het wonderlijke raadsel, waarom de wajang reeds eeuwen wortelt in de ziel van het Javaansche volk en waarom zij ook nu, in den modernen tijd, nog overal wordt bemind, bewonderd en geëerd waar de echt-Javaansche nationale geest in den goeden zin des woords nog heerschende is.'

Mangkunagara VII's speech in Dutch revealed that Dutch and Javanese ideas of *wayang* had meshed or 'prefigured' Dutch ideas of *wayang*. According to Florida this speech by Mangkunagara VII is a famous product of the early twentieth-century circles in which *priyayi* and Dutch Javanologists worked together towards the creation of a 'spiritualized codification of elite culture' (Florida 1995, 32). This is in line with Sutherland's observation that the *priyayi* elite was associated with mysticism and the enactment of ritual. They were the native group closest in contact with Europeans and had relatively easy access to Western education. Their activities were equally affected by the Europeans, but aspects of their lives that were of less interest to the Dutch remained their own. Likewise, drawing on Javanese sources for their houses, food, clothes, language, wives and entertainments, European officials were greatly influenced by the *priyayi* in both their professional and personal lives (Sutherland 1979, 13, 18, 36).

Mangkunagara VII's speech could also be viewed in light of discussions that explored the concept and forms of nationalism in colonial Indonesia that had grown more vehement since 1925. Indonesian nationalism was a political striving to unite all inhabitants of colonial Indonesia in one independent Indonesian state (Van Miert 1995, 15). It had emerged in the circles of *Perhimpunan Indonesia* (P.I.), the Association of 'Indonesian' students in the Netherlands, and quickly grown in the late 1920s. P.I.'s nationalist campaign was based on ethnic and cultural similarities that were left unspecified. Students of the Indonesian elite who returned from the Netherlands transmitted the concept to students in the colony. In 1926 and 1927 two new student associations based on Indonesian nationalism were founded, the *Perhimpunan Pelajar-Pelajar Indonesia* (PPPI) and *Pemuda Indonesia* (Young Indonesia). In 1928 the famous second Youth Conference took place in Batavia. The resolution that closed the conference came to be known as the *Sumpah Pemuda*, or Youth Oath, in which conference attendees promised to unite as one Indonesian country, one Indonesian people, and one Indonesian language. In addition a national anthem '*Indonesia Raya*' (Great Indonesia) was adopted (Elson 2008, 65).

The exploration of cultural nationalism formed the basis of debates about the direction culture had to take in the changing world of the 1920s and 1930s. Many of the politically most radicalized nationalists were at the same time culturally the most

Westernized through their Dutch education. For many indigenous intellectuals, total rejection of Western culture was no longer possible. This resulted in an ambivalent attitude towards the Dutch government and its culture, but also to their 'own' society and its values (Sutherland 1979, 112). There were basically two positions in the culture debate on becoming both Indonesian and modern. There were those who thought it necessary to discard Indonesia's cultures 'of the past', and those who saw Indonesia's culture as symbol of its indigenous identity. The choice came to be described in colonial terms of 'East' versus 'West', with 'the West' representing Europe, the future, education and technological progress, and 'the East' indigenous knowledge and non-Western identity, the past and tradition (Lindsay 2011, 13. See also Holt 1976, 211-212). Sanusi Pané (1905-1968), writer, journalist and historian made the comparison between the West as Faust, abandoning his soul for material authority, and the East as Arjuna, seeking spiritual truth (Sutherland 1979, 121).

Some attempted to revive and adapt traditional values. Particularly the cultures of Yogyakarta and Surakarta continued to be meaningful even to an elite that was geographically and mentally far removed from these cultural centres. These intellectuals used European techniques of organization and communication to adapt the form and content of traditional cultures to a changing world. As a result, Javanese cultural congresses were held; classical dance was even taught outside the *kraton* in public schools; and associations for the promotion of indigenous art forms were established (Sutherland 1979, 115). The outbreak of World War II (1940-1945) brought an abrupt halt to the culture debates, which would continue afterwards. For *wayang* a certain discourse had crystallized in which *wayang* was seen as the essence of the Javanese people and culture, it was high culture, because of its great age, its mysticism, and the higher knowledge it contained. However, over the centuries *wayang* had become corrupted and changed in the wrong direction. In the context of great social, political and cultural change, it needed to be restored to its original form.

***Wayang* on display**

The outbreak of World War II not only halted discussions about culture and nationalism in Indonesia, but also heralded the loss of the colony. This had consequence for the discourse

of *wayang*, for instance as conveyed in the display in the museum connected to what had previously been called the Colonial Institute in Amsterdam. How closely ethnology and museums were connected is exemplified by the work of L. Serrurier (1846-1901), director of the Ethnographical Museum in Leiden. In 1896 Serrurier wrote the first doctoral thesis in the field of *wayang* for which he used data collected through the distribution among civil servants in the colonial administration infrastructure. In this way Serrurier collected information about the various forms of *wayang* present in Java and Madura, with which he made the collection of the museum more readily accessible to the public. Serrurier was the first to acknowledge a Javanese account on the origin and development of *wayang* by including the *Serat Sastramiruda* in his thesis (Sears 1996, 106-108).

The Colonial Institute in Amsterdam was founded as a museum of the East and West Indies Natural Resources in Haarlem in 1864, but was soon renamed Colonial Museum (Koloniaal Museum). It functioned as a showcase for the colony from 1871 onwards and presented products from the colony, such as coffee beans, rattan and paraffin. Ethnographic objects were initially regarded of lesser importance (Van Dijk and Legêne 2010, 9-10). The collections from Haarlem merged with the Colonial Institute Association (Vereniging Koloniaal Instituut), founded in 1910, that also incorporated the collections from the Amsterdam zoological society *Natura Artis Magistra* (Artis) in 1920. These collections were opened to the public in the Colonial Institute in 1926 in what was the largest building in Amsterdam at the time.²⁶ Van Dijk and Legêne view the opening of the museum in the context of the Ethical Policy as the Koloniaal Instituut 'was meant to be a centre of expertise for entrepreneurs and government in the area of colonial trade, tropical medicine and physical and cultural anthropology.' (Van Dijk and Legêne 2010, 9-10).

Already from the foundation of the Colonial Museum in Haarlem *wayang* puppets entered the collection and were put on display. In theory, museums strove to collect 'objectively' in line with eighteenth century rationalist principles, but accidental circumstances usually determined collecting practices in the field (Ter Keurs 2007, 1). The collection of the Tropenmuseum seems to have followed this pattern. The earliest *wayang* collection consists of six *wayang golek* puppets donated to the museum in Haarlem by Mrs.

²⁶ After the World War II the museum was renamed Indisch Museum (Indies Museum) and renamed Tropenmuseum in 1950. As part of the Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen (Royal Tropical Institute) the museum profiled itself as a postcolonial museum.

P. Delprat in 1883.²⁷ Thereafter puppets (mainly *wayang kulit*, *wayang golek* and *wayang kelitik*) entered the museum's collection usually in small numbers, in most cases donated by individuals. There are some extensive collections of paper *wayang* puppets²⁸ and even a more or less complete performance set made out of tinfoil.²⁹

There is very little information available on the provenance of the collection in the museum registration system TMS (The Museum System).³⁰ There is no direct information about the way in which the puppets were acquired, the reasons for donation to the museum, or why they were accepted for the collection. However, Cohen observed that puppets and puppet artists, who offered *wayang* puppets for sale, came to Europe and America for colonial exhibitions. Many Dutch colonial civil servants and travelers returned from their journeys to the East bringing *wayang* puppets as souvenirs (Cohen 2007, 340). C. van Driënhuizen argued that this was the result of an increased historical awareness, and of feelings of loss and fear of forgetting that were widely felt at the end of the nineteenth century. Such sentiments stimulated people to collect souvenirs as objects that incorporated the past in the present (Driënhuizen 2012, 16).

Cohen views the transfer of puppets as fitting in a pattern of colonial exploitation tied to exhibition practices. Asian products were transported to Europe as a display of the colony, stripped of direct connections to the people and cultural conditions from which they arose (Cohen 2007, 350). The conclusions Driënhuizen draws in her PhD thesis *Koloniale Collecties, Nederlands Aanzien* (2010) provide a valuable insight in larger patterns of collecting and donating objects from the colony. Driënhuizen argues that new networks and knowledge were created by the Dutch elite through the collecting of tangible objects. The relation between objects and people and the exchange of objects in colonial networks

²⁷ Inventory nrs. H-751 until H-757. The puppets are identified as Arjuna, Bima, Gatot Kaca, Anjasmoro, and Krata Wyogo. One character remains unidentified.

²⁸ Wayang puppets made of cardboard entered in 1906 inv.nrs. A-4601-1 until A-4601-13 donated by J.H. van Eeghen to Natura Artis Magistra; in 1906 A-4604a until A-4604d were donated by Th.F.A. Delprat to Natura Artis Magistra, as well as A-4605-1 until A-4605-17; in 1902 H-353-1 until H-353-6 were donated by J. Oudemans, resident to Magelang and later Bandung, to the Colonial Museum Harlem as well as H-767a until H-767z and H-768-1 until H-768-32.

²⁹ A whole set of *wayang* puppets made of tinfoil H-354-1 until H-354-197a were donated by J. Oudemans, resident to Magelang and later Bandung, to the Colonial Museum Harlem in 1902.

³⁰ For example, before 1900 seven *wayang golek* puppets H-751 until H-757 were donated by P. Delprat in 1883; *wayang kulit* puppets A-4602a until A-4607z-1 were donated by Artis in 1887; six *wayang kulit* puppets A-4606a until A-4606f were donated by Artis in 1889; thirteen *wayang golek* puppets A-4609a until A-4609m were donated by J.R.N. van de Poll in 1892; nine *wayang* puppets made of tinfoil H-759-1 until H-760-10 were acquired by the Colonial Museum Haarlem in 1896 from J. van Moll, Terning, Modjokerto; in 1900 one *wayang kulit* puppet 15-750b was donated by the Vereeniging voor de Stichting van een Museum voor Land- en Volkenkunde. This and more information can be obtained from <http://collectie.tropenmuseum.nl/Default.aspx>, accessed 10th February, 2014.

illustrate how colony, motherland and other regions were linked in an imperial space. Collecting tangible objects provided an opportunity for collectors to gain and maintain a certain social standing in both the colony and Dutch society. Nowadays the Tropenmuseum pursues an active acquisition policy of *wayang* puppets. The most recent acquisition was a set of puppets by Enthous Susmono purchased in 2009. I will discuss this topic more in-depth in chapter 6.

Like the collecting practices of the museum, the display of *wayang* in the early museum history seems arbitrary too. The earliest photograph of an exhibition in the collection of the Tropenmuseum is a display of *wayang golek* puppets in Batavia in 1883. They were presented among *krisses*, *rattan*, and *angklung* (a musical instrument made of bamboo) (inv.nr. 6002 3370). Another photograph (inv.nr. 6002 5176) shows a room in the Bataviaasch Genootschap in Batavia in 1896. Two panels of *wayang kulit* puppets are hung on a wall in three rows one above the other. The room is further filled with coins in table showcases and weapons on the wall. In the early displays *wayang* puppets were decontextualized and presented without any relation to the performance practice. They were presented as just one example among many others of what the colony had to offer. In 1915 a *wayang* display was temporarily mounted in the Reading Room of the new City Museum in Amsterdam. Thereafter, in an unchanged form, this display became the *wayang* display of the Colonial Museum/Tropenmuseum until the 1950s. It travelled not only to Arnhem in the Netherlands in 1928, but it was also put on display in other places in Europe, such as in the Dutch exhibition in Copenhagen in 1922. Collecting *wayang* puppets and putting them on display in museums had the same effect as documenting the *wayang* performance practice. Collecting and displaying the tangible side, the *wayang* puppets, was another way of creating a tangible form of the performance practice. This resulted in a static representation of a dynamic performance practice. This museum practice did not offer much room for change, which in turn led to the dissemination of a superficial and essentialized image of *wayang*.

The *wayang* display was incorporated in the Java exhibition on the ground floor of the Volkenkundig Museum [Ethnological Museum, one of the galleries of the Colonial

Museum] and opened to the public on 18 October 1926.³¹ The archivist C. Lekkerkerker (1931) meticulously described the display in *Gids in het Volkenkundig Museum V. Java en de Koperkamer* (inv.nr. 1003 6000, see page 39). Kast 1, showed Tooneel en muziek (Display case 1, Theater and Music) of which a large part was dedicated to *wayang*. Kast 1 was a large display case that was divided into two distinct parts. In the left part a life-size arrangement of a *wayang kulit* performance was displayed, whereas the right side showed *wayang golek* puppets in five rows above one another, which contained either eleven or ten puppets. These rows of *wayang golek* puppets were in turn surrounded by *wayang kelitik* (flat wooden) puppets.

Lekkerkerker describes the display as follows: ‘On the right side of the display case a row of flat wooden puppets is on display in the extreme right and left, these are the *Wayang kelitik*. The remaining puppets are the round wooden puppets, the *Wayang golek*. In the front are the dolls representing the *panakawan*’s, in the middle are the demons with their big heads and at the top are the royal princes and the monkeys, like Hanuman. These puppets come from Western Java and the northern shore of Western Java. In the front are also the models of the *Gamelan* instruments. Next to the *Dalang* to the left stands the *rebab*, a string instrument, and to the right the *kendang*, the drum. On both sides of them stand the *bonang*, a rack with pots. To the right under the *Wayang golek* puppets stands a large gong with a *gong agung* and a smaller gong, the *kempul*. Between these hanging gongs stand two *kempul*, two large gongs on a rack. To the far right stands the *gender*, a xylophone like instrument with copper keys. To the left of the rack stands the *gambang*, a similar instrument with copper keys.’ (Lekkerkerker 1931, 32).³²

Lekkerkerker explains the function and use of the puppets and attributes used in *wayang kulit* performances as displayed in the showcase, and briefly describes the role and

³¹ The department remained in the same location until the end of the 1950s and was adapted in 1939, after the Jubilee Exhibition of 1938 in honor of Queen Wilhelmina’s 40 year reign. In 1960 ‘Java’ was incorporated in the Indonesia department at the ground floor (TMS information for inv.nr. 1000 0086).

³² ‘De rechterkant van de vitrine is ingericht met geheel links en geheel rechts een rij platte houten poppen, de wayang kelitik. De overige poppen zijn de ronde houten poppen, de wayang golek. Vooraan de poppen die de panakawan's voorstellen, in het midden de demonen met hun grote koppen en bovenaan de edele prinsen en de apen, zoals Hanuman. Deze poppen zijn afkomstig van West-Java en de noordkust van West-Java. Vooraan staan modellen van gamelaninstrumenten. Naast de dalang links de rebab, een snaarinstrument en rechts de kendang, de trommel. Aan weerskanten van hem de bonang, een rek met ketels. Rechts onder de wayang golek poppen staat een gongstandaard met een gong agung en een kleinere gong, de kempul. Tussen deze twee hangende gong, staan twee kempul, grote ketels op een rek. Geheel rechts staat de gender, een xylofoonachtig instrument met koperen toetsen. Links van het rek staat de gambang, een soortgelijk instrument met houten toetsen.’

function of the *dalang* in the performance (Lekkerkerker 1931, 33). In addition he gives an impression of the *wayang* show: 'Using these the *dalang* gives his performance, which begins at sunset and continues through the entire night, yes sometimes they last two or three consecutive nights. The audiences come and go, watch or sleep and have themselves awoken for their favorite passages. One must imagine that the screen is set up between the open „*pendâpâ*” (reception porch) in front of the house and the interior of the dwelling or in the „*pendâpâ*” itself' (Lekkerkerker 1931, 33).³³ Lekkerkerker's description relates to the current *wayang* discourse which focuses on religious, ancestral and mythical elements of *wayang*: 'As is the case with all expressions of the Javanese spirit where mythological figures and ancestors play a role, the *Wajang* is also subject to religious representations and rites.' (Lekkerkerker 1931, 32).³⁴

Lekkerkerker devoted one paragraph to an explanation of the right side of the display case. He briefly explains to the reader/viewer what '*wajang kelitik*' and '*wajang golek*' are and their repertoires. Lekkerkerker is very appreciative of *wayang*, especially *wayang golek*: 'The most elaborate repertoire counts over a 100 puppets. (...) One could argue the *Golek* is the most complete staged representation of all stories that existed amongst Javanese people until the time of the Islamization of Java.'³⁵ He furthermore mentioned *wayang golek*'s historicity: 'This *Wajang* is the youngest and has been subject to the greatest amount of external influence:³⁶ and 'for the sake of completeness' he sums up other *wayang* forms, like *wayang klitik* (Lekkerkerker 1931, 39-40).

The display of *wayang* puppets and the museum displays discussed above presented a static and ahistorical image of *wayang* to the Dutch public. Lekkerkerker makes an effort to balance this static display by describing the performance, but is unable to fully grasp the dynamics of a *wayang* performance because he focuses only on the tangible and visual side of *wayang*. Lekkerkerker seems to be aware of *wayang* discourse among experts because

³³ Met deze hulpmiddelen geeft de *dalang* zijn vertooningen, die na zonsondergang aanvangen en den geheelen nacht worden voortgezet, ja soms twee of drie nachten achtereenvolgende duren. De toeschouwers gaan en komen, waken of slapen en laten zich wekken als hun geliefkoosde passages komen. Men stelle zich voor, dat het scherm is opgesteld in de ruimte tusschen de open „*pendâpâ*” (ontvangpaviljoen) vóór het huis en het interieur der woning of wel in de *pendâpâ* zelve.

³⁴ 'Zooals aan alle uitingen van den Javaanschen geest, waarbij mythologische figuren en voorouders een rol vervullen, zijn ook aan de *wajang* religieuze voorstellingen en riten verbonden.'

³⁵ 'het meest uitgebreide repertorium en telt wel 100 poppen. [...] Men kan wel zeggen dat de *golèk* de meest volledige toneelmatige in beeld bringende is van alle verhalen, die onder de Javanen loopen, tot in den tijd van de Islamiseering van Java toe.'

³⁶ 'Deze *wajang* is de jongste en heeft het meest vreemde invloeden ondergaan.'

he briefly points to religious and ritual roles and the function of *wayang*. The display case showing *wayang* and Lekkerkerker's description demonstrate that the museum indeed did serve as a showcase of the colony and did not incorporate expert discourses of *wayang*.

On the photograph of the display we can discern a clear addition to the stage setting. Five separate scenes are depicted with children's *wayang* puppets that would not be on the screen during a *wayang* performance. The museum display is thus a distorted representation of the *wayang* performance practice. It is not only the addition of the added depicted scenes that causes this detachment of reality. As Kirschenblatt-Gimblett pointed out, objects become special when placed in a museum setting. At the same time, the museum experience itself becomes a model for experiencing life outside its walls (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 1998, 51). In other words, what is presented in museums becomes a model for reality. The museum display might suggest the reality of a *wayang* performance, but reduces the multisensoriness of the performance by representing and offering only the visual and tangible element. This choice for display is ideologically charged, and presents *wayang* in a static and ahistorical manner, suggesting that it contains a fixed and unchanged meaning or value that has been there from the moment of its origin.

This detachment from (political) reality reinforced the static and ahistorical aspect of the display in the museum. The *wayang* display case remained largely unchanged from 1915 until the 1950s when the Tropenmuseum was refurbished.³⁷ The museum display made tangible the *wayang* performance in the same manner as the documentation of *wayang* stories did. The result of this was a set image and the fixation of the *wayang* performance practice. In turn this was reinforced by the fact that the display remained unchanged for forty years. The Dutch public was then presented with a permanent and unchanging image of *wayang*, which did not allow for change.

The idea of a static and unchanging museum display is also observed by Van Dijk and Legêne. They note that 'Regardless of developments overseas, the building and exhibitions contained a reassuring message of great things to be achieved in the sphere of economic and cultural knowledge, development, exchange and progress' even when the Netherlands were confronted with an emerging and growing Indonesian nationalist

³⁷ TMS inv.nr. 1002 1976.

movement both in the colony and the mother country in the early twentieth century. The Ethical Policy had adopted a conservative and more openly repressive nature, but nevertheless persisted in being the dominant discourse, and continued to be appealing to Dutch audiences' (Van Dijk and Legêne 2010, 10). While the political contexts in both the colony and at home were changing drastically, the Institute continued to organize activities such as lectures, publications, movie screenings, gamelan performances, and museum courses.

In 1940 the Germans occupied the Netherlands and two years later colonial Indonesia was occupied by the Japanese army as allies of the Germans. Despite these drastic changes, the Colonial Institute tried with all its might to continue its activities and keep the colony alive for the Dutch public. Maintaining contact with the Netherlands East Indies, Suriname and Curaçao became so difficult that contact was entirely lost. Alternatively, the Colonial Institute sought cooperation with organizations within the Netherlands that housed knowledge and information on various areas in the Netherlands East Indies. However the occupying German forces gradually increased control on cultural life in the Netherlands with the establishment of the Kultuurkamer in 1941 that had the task to control, and if necessary suppress cultural life in the Netherlands. In 1942 this led to the decision that 'exhibitions, lectures and performances, displays of East- and West-Indian films and lantern plaques, that aimed at focusing attention on the spread of knowledge regarding the overseas areas – to the extent they were not covered by the general educational system – should be omitted' (Jaarverslag Koloniaal Instituut 1942).³⁸

Despite the increasingly controlled circumstances, in 1943 the Colonial Institute managed to stage a *wayang wong* performance, the genre which makes use of human actors. It was entitled *The capsized boat (Tangkoeban Prahoe)* and was based on a Sundanese legend.³⁹ The performance was an initiative of the Bureau Pers en Propaganda, the Bureau for Press and Propaganda, of the Institute and of the writer Dr. C.W. Wormser (1876-1946).⁴⁰ Eight 'young Indonesian intellectuals' were involved in the performance

³⁸ 'tentoonstellingen, lezingen en voordrachten, vertooningen van Oost- en West-Indische films en lantaarnplaten, welke zou zijn gericht op het wekken van belangstelling voor en het verspreiden van kennis omtrent de overzeesche gebieden – voor zover niet strikt behorende tot het terrein van het algemeen vormend onderwijs – behoorden te worden nagelaten.'

³⁹ S. Vredenburg wrote a BA-thesis entitled 'De Omgevallen Prauw. Het succes van een koloniale voorstelling tijdens de Duitse bezetting' on this performance.

⁴⁰ KIT, inv.nr. 613: Dagelijks Bestuur, 1943.

from various regions in the Dutch East Indies, such as Aceh, West-Sumatra, Java and Sulawesi, and who had never performed before.⁴¹ The performance aimed at bringing the activities of the Institute to a broader audience and impressing that audience in order to generate awareness and renown for the Colonial Institute. Another rationale for staging the play was that 'All that reminded us of, and connected us with the very important Dutch-Indies had to be kept alive and strengthened where possible.' In addition, the performance aimed at establishing a closer cooperation with Indies people in the Netherlands, which, according to the Institute, had not occurred enough in the previous years.⁴²

The play was staged three times on 5th, 10th and 12th August 1943 in the Amsterdamse Stadsschouwburg (Amsterdam Municipal Theatre), and was considered an enormous success in terms of audience numbers and reception. In a letter to the Colonial Institute a former planter and official, J. Sibinga-Mulder (1866-1944) expressed how he had had a nostalgic experience; the performance had given him the feeling 'of being back in that beautiful country' ('terug te zijn in dat heerlijke land'). The performances were a failure from a financial point of view, because the whole enterprise ended making a loss of fl. 6418 (KIT, inv.nr. 2901: R. Slauerhoff, map 4). Nevertheless, the overall feeling was one of success, which led to the decision to produce a commemorative medal that was presented on 19th June 1944 at the Colonial Institute. Fifty-one gold-plated and silver medals were distributed to participants and contributors (KIT inv.nr. 2901: R. Slauerhoff, map 5).

C. Steinmetz (1884-1953), archivist in the Colonial Institute from 1941 to 1949, reviewed the performance in the journal *Cultureel Indië*, which was a publication of the Institute. Steinmetz drew a parallel between the Dutch adaptation of the Javanese story by Wormser and Western/Greek myths in its topic and style: 'The tragedy of the catastrophe invoking passion between son and mother that can also be found in the classic example of the Greek King Oedipus.' (Steinmetz 1943, 200)⁴³, and concerning vocabulary and style the play reminded the spectator of 'the enduring language of Virgil's Aeneid' (Steinmetz 1943,

⁴¹ 'Mevrouw C.J. Loebis-Soemakil; mevrouw L. Soesilo; Raden Mas Soetarjo; Raden Mas Soegeng Notohadinegoro; Raden Rozai Koesoema Soebrata; Teungkoe Adnin; Mas Djalal and Raden Mas Mr. Abdoel Madjid Adhiningrat.' Archive of the Royal Tropical Institute, inv.nr. 2901: R. Slauerhoff, map 3.

⁴² 'alles wat herinnerde en ons bond aan het zo belangrijke Nederlands-Indië levendig gehouden moest worden en zo waar het kon versterkt diende te worden.' Archive of the Royal Tropical Institute, inv.nr. 2901: R. Slauerhoff, map 4

⁴³ 'de tragiek der onheilbrengende hartstocht van zoon en moeder ook terug te vinden is in het klassieke voorbeeld van de Griekse koning Oedipus.'

205).⁴⁴ With his review Steinmetz suggested that the adapted version of the Javanese play elevated the story to the level of European myths.

According to Steinmetz, the success of the performances was twofold in nature. First it was a welcome distraction in war time, because 'In times of a western grim mood and scant rations it is good to be relocated to a colorful eastern world of unrestricted possibilities, prosperity and peace, even though in a legendary and imaginary world.' (Steinmetz 1943, 198).⁴⁵ Second, it was valued as a hybrid cultural expression, as a Dutch adaptation of a Javanese story. The attitude of the Colonial Institute, as well as the positive reception, reflect the attitude of the Dutch audience at large: a longing to hold on to something that was changing. The show enabled the audience to imagine being back in the Dutch East Indies. In a way, the performance reflected the inability to deal with changing and changed political scenes both in Indonesia and the Netherlands. The performance acknowledged change by seeking to adapt an Indonesian story for a Dutch audience and establishing cooperation with the Indonesian community in the Netherlands: but at the core of its success and the rationale behind the production of the commemorative medals lay the longing for fixation, preserving and conserving of something that was already gone.

Legêne and Waaldijk observed the same sentiment in their analysis of texts and cultural performances produced from the 1910s onwards in the Netherlands. In these cultural productions the link with the colony was represented in metaphors of childhood and youth. The Netherlands East Indies were seen as the childhood of the Dutch, of a period of growing up and having to leave. It was associated with homesickness and youthful fascination. There existed a Dutch self-image that consisted of interest in and knowledge of the cultures of Indonesia linked to a sense of responsibility and good intentions of the Ethical Policy to uplift the indigenous people. This rethoric and self-image was completely detached from political reality and as we saw in the case of the *Tangkoeban Prah* continued to exist even after the Japanese occupation of the colony in 1942 (Legêne and Waaldijk 2009).

⁴⁴ 'de gedragen taal der Aeneis van Vergilius.'

⁴⁵ 'In een tijd van westerse grauwe stemming en karige rantsoenering doet het goed verplaatst te worden in een Oostersche kleurige wereld van onbeperkte mogelijkheden, welvaart en vrede, zij het ook in een legendarische en imaginaire omgeving.'

Conclusion

In this chapter I have analyzed key publications in *wayang* discourse to discover dynamics and developments in *wayang* discourse. We have seen that *wayang* discourse emerged within the power structures of the nineteenth century and by the 1930s had been firmly established and taken on some kind of reality. Discourse of *wayang* developed through the dialectical relation between Dutch philologists and the Javanese elite, the *priyayi*. Under influence of German romanticism, looking for historical roots philologists used *wayang* to gain knowledge of the nature of the Javanese. Europeans started to document *wayang* stories in detail and used the Javanese elite as a source of information. Documentation of these stories and interpretations of the performance practice for a larger audience was based on the rationale that knowledge of the indigenous culture was useful for ruling the colony; it would provide insight in the indigenous people. Because of its popularity *wayang* was regarded to contain something typical Javanese which mirrored the nature of the Javanese people. However, besides this advantage, *wayang* had little else to offer; it did not appear to develop, and in the eyes of the Dutch no development equaled no progress. The documentation activities established rules and guidelines for the *wayang* performance practice, which resulted in the fixing of oral stories into texts, tangible forms of a performance practice. From now on everyone could pick up a book of *wayang* stories, read it, judge it, and use the text as standard for good performances.

Wayang discourse in colonial times was a complex process of interactions based on Dutch conceptions of history, and on *priyayi*'s convictions that *wayang* contained symbolic and mystical meanings and a deeper knowledge. Under influence of the interaction between Dutch and *priyayi* in theosophist circles, the Dutch gradually started to increasingly appreciate *wayang*. *Wayang* came to be regarded as philosophical and mysterious with a deeper knowledge and meaning under influence of *priyayi* ideas. Values and attitudes already present in *priyayi* circles were appropriated and assimilated by both the Dutch and the intellectual Javanese elite. As a result of this, *wayang* discourse came to focus on the mysterious knowledge it contained which gave it educational value. There seemed to be more room for discourses of change as a result of the discovery of *wayang*'s Indian roots. *Wayang* was acknowledged to have a long history, but the idea that *wayang* had not developed lived on. It was acknowledged that *wayang* had changed over the

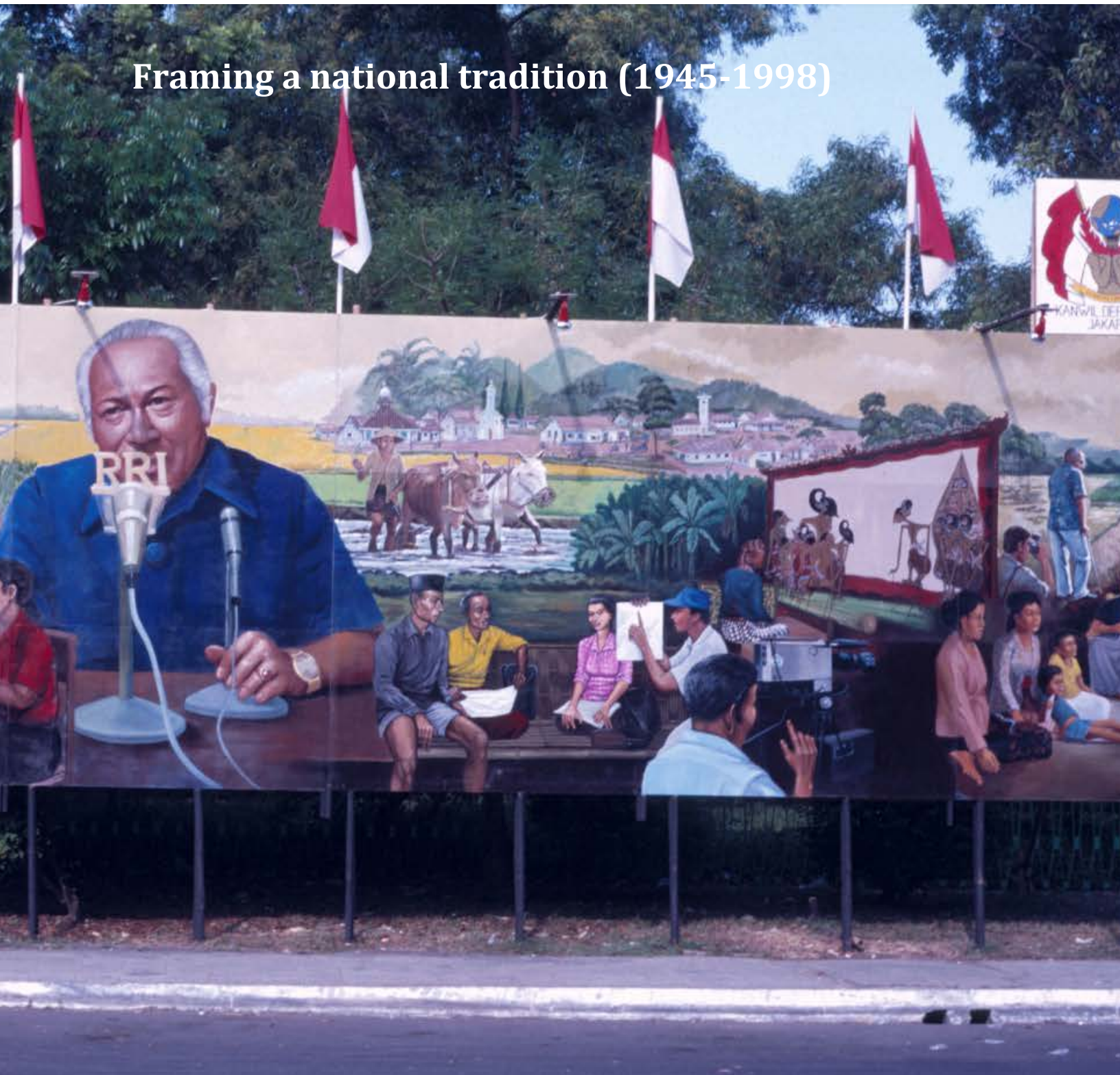
centuries, but *wayang* stories had started to deviate too much from the originals. The additions were not positively judged by the Dutch and some of the Dutch-educated *priyayi*. Change could be positive if it went in the direction of development and progress. Otherwise, change meant decline and deterioration. It was believed that *wayang* had changed for the worse since its had come into existence, but could be restored to its original form by means of education.

The established discourse defined *wayang* as mystical, philosophical and psychological with a ritualistic and educational function and gradually took on some kind of reality. *Wayang* was thought to reflect the nature of the Javanese and could therefore be easily tied to nationalism, which in the first place was a cultural nationalism. Through Javanese nationalists, such as Mangkunagara VII, whose view of *wayang* was accepted as the key representation by his contemporaries the discourse that had developed about *wayang* was even firmer fixed. The courts in an attempt to maintain their social and political standing, committed themselves to control the discourse and meaning of *wayang*. They institutionalized the protection, conservation and restoration of *wayang*, for which strict codes were established at the *dalang* schools.

The ahistorical and unchanging image of *wayang* was strengthened by the museum practice of the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam. Collecting *wayang* puppets meant a focus on the tangible and visual side of *wayang*. As a result, the intangible and sensory side of the performance practice was rendered invisible both in the museum collection as well as in the displays. Exhibition practice of *wayang* also focused on the visualization of the performance practice. The effect was a very static representation of a dynamic performance practice, which secured an undynamic and ahistorical image of *wayang*. As Kirschenblatt-Gimblett (1998) argued, museum displays serve as a model for reality. This process was reflected in the representation of a static image of *wayang* in a display that remained unchanged for forty years. Dutch visitors saw the same representation of *wayang* for almost half a century, which became a model for the *wayang* in the real world. By the 1940s the discourse of *wayang* that was thought to reflect Javanese nature, age-old and for centuries unchanged, was interpreted as mystical, psychological, and philosophical with a ritualistic and educational function. To what extent this discourse of *wayang* continued and changed in post-colonial Indonesia will be explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

Framing a national tradition (1945-1998)



Billboard painting in Jakarta on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Indonesian Independence, inv.nr. 2001 9413. By J. de Jonge. Courtesy of Tropenmuseum.

A national context for *wayang*

The decade of the 1940s profoundly altered the long-established political and cultural order. The Japanese occupation (1942-1945) had drastic effects: Dutch officials disappeared behind fences and everyone was ordered to use the Indonesian language. Soon thereafter the Indonesian national revolution led to the proclamation of the Indonesian Republic on 17th August 1945. Sukarno (1901-1970) and Mohammed Hatta (1902-1980) became the first president and vice-president respectively. On 27th December 1949 the Indonesian struggle for independence and diplomacy merged when the Dutch finally agreed to hand over sovereignty to Indonesia. By 1950 the Indonesian state was a legal fact and on an international level officially recognized as a nation among other nations, but the country was not yet unified. The nationalists were still a small minority who had to translate the nationalist spirit into the form of a state (Vickers 2007, 112).

State and nation building became the prime concern of the new ruling elite, the majority of whom belonged to a new nationalist class. There were still a few aristocrats in power because they had stood up to the Dutch, such as Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX of Yogyakarta, but he and the others of the new nationalist class had received Western education and had rejected government service in favor of professional activities (Vickers 2007, 116). The 1950s and 1960s was 'a heady time of nation building', as J. Lindsay puts it (Lindsay 2011, 6-7). Culture became so pivotal in the process of building an Indonesian nation that even during the chaotic struggle for independence the government organized the first Cultural Congress in Magelang in August 1948. President Sukarno, Vice President Hatta and General Sudirman (1916-1950) all attended both the opening and closing ceremonies. The Minister for Education, Training and Culture Ali Sastroamidjojo (1903-1976) participated throughout the conference. There was a consensus that 'being Indonesian' was an issue of culture, but conflicting ideological approaches continued to exist (Lindsay 2011, 1-7).

Pre-war discussions about the various approaches and cultural models carried on about whether Indonesian culture had to develop as part of an 'Eastern world' and Asian culture, or as belonging to 'world culture'. Was it to be inspired by Europe or the West, Muslim sources, or other cultures? Important in the context of this chapter was the issue of what had to be done with cultural forms associated with the past (Bogaerts 2011, 232).

This chapter will explore how and to what extent *wayang* discourse was influenced by the new political context from 1945 until Suharto's downfall in 1998. I will examine how and to what extent *wayang* discourse in international scholarly discussion and museum practice continued or broke with the colonial past. I want to investigate how nationalist discourse influenced debates about *wayang* performance practice and vice versa. Furthermore, I intend to look at continuities and change from Sukarno to Suharto and how they related *wayang* differently to the colonial past and the nation.

Colonial paradigms reproduced

After decolonization, discourse of *wayang* developed in colonial times not only continued in museum practices in the Netherlands. With the loss of the colony, the former Colonial Institute had to redefine its attitude towards Indonesia. Shortly before the declaration of independence on 17th August 1945, the Executive Board of the Colonial Institute in Amsterdam decided to remove the word 'colonial' from its name. The term was deemed inappropriate to the Institute's 'Indies friends' and Indonesian counterparts. The institute was renamed Indisch Instituut and the museum became the Indisch Museum. During the years of conflict in Indonesia the Indisch Institute remained neutral, which meant that it did not explicitly support the Dutch government. After the transfer of sovereignty on 27th December 1949 the geographical focus of the Institute was widened and the institute and the museum took on names that are currently still in use, the Royal Tropical Institute (Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen) and Tropenmuseum (Van Dijk and Legêne 2010, 11). Changes in the political situation affected museum exhibition practices. The permanent displays of the colonial era grew increasingly obsolete, and ethnographic objects were gradually removed from the museum's displays to disappear into the storage rooms (Van Dijk and Legêne 2010, 12).

During World War II many citizens had given objects on loan to the museum hoping that the museum's storages would be a safer place for their treasures than their homes (Frank 2012, 69). The *wayang* collection had not benefitted much from this sense of preservation. During World War II the collection was supplemented by only fifty-eight

puppets from G. Tillmann (1882-1941).⁴⁶ Although *wayang* was presented in various exhibitions, including a travelling presentation, the display on *wayang* in the Tropenmuseum remained unaltered between 1926 and 1950.⁴⁷ This means that for decades the representation of *wayang* was static and unchanged, which resulted in a fixed image of *wayang* in the museum's representation and the public's mind. The *wayang* display was used for unspecified educational purposes, and was changed only with the refurbishment of the museum in the 1960s.

The museum's exhibition practice followed political relations with Indonesia. By the end of the 1960s the Tropenmuseum embarked on a complete refurbishment, fully supported with government finances. The result was a modernized Tropenmuseum in 1979 that presented information about developmental processes and the frictions and tensions in societies in what was then called the Third World. The renovation of the museum had ignored the colonial reliefs, murals, motifs and ornaments part of the building and an integral part of the context of the museum's display. The museum's exhibitions were now displaying a story about change around the world. People could walk around in a slum in Delhi, a house in the *desa* (village/countryside) in Indonesia and visit an African market (Van Dijk and Legêne 2010, 12).

The Java department, which contained the static *wayang* display, was incorporated into a department on Indonesia. The familiar display case representing a *wayang* performance disappeared to the museum's storage, never to return. As a result of the shift in museum exhibition practices colonial ideas and values disappeared from sight, which made revisiting the objects and their assigned meaning impossible. The colonial image of *wayang* and its performance practice thus remained fixed as it was, and continued to slumber out of sight in the storage rooms.

After World War II the Dutch lost their pre-eminent position in the study of *wayang* to Indonesian and American scholars. Discourse of *wayang* developed in colonial times however, continued to gain new authority. In 1957 C. Holt translated Mangkunegara VII's

⁴⁶ Inv.nrs. 1772-439, 1772-465, 1772-528, 1772-562, 1772-613, 1772-614 until 1772-616, 1772-692 until 1772-717; 1772-775 until 1772-784; 1772-865; 1772-866 until 1772-872; 1772-2360.

⁴⁷ 1928: Indische Exhibition in Arnhem; 1931: Colonial World Exhibition in Paris; 1939; World Exhibition in New York; 1941: Indische Exhibition of the Colonial Institute at the Provinciaal Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen in Noord-Brabant (travelling exhibition); 1950: TISNA exhibition in Zaandam; 1952: Tropenkracht en Tropenkracht. Information obtained from TMS.

article written in 1933 “Over de wajang koelit (purwa) in het algemeen en over de daarin voorkomende symbolische en mystieke elementen” into English. This gave the discourse developed in colonial times emphasizing mystico-philosophical interpretation of *wayang* new publicity and new authority. Three years later, the American anthropologist C. Geertz developed the most durable cultural model for Java in his *The Religion of Java* (1960). This book was the result of extensive field research he carried out in Modjokuto, pseudonym for Pare, on Java, in the early 1950s. Geertz was part of a larger research team of sociologists and anthropologists, who each studied a segment of ‘a highly complex society’, and attempted to show ‘the reality of the complexity, depth, and richness’ of the spiritual life of the Javanese (Geertz 1960, 7).

Geertz’s model of Javanese society was based on the identification of three cultural ‘currents’ (*aliran*) of belief and practice: *abangan*, *santri* and *priyayi*. Geertz described *abangan* as having a village background and blending Hindu, Islamic and animist elements in their beliefs; *santri* are described as a variety of Islamic class and religious groupings; and *priyayi* are described as a traditional bureaucratic elite imbued with values derived from Hindu-Javanese tradition. He justified his model with the argument that ‘They are not constructed types, but terms and divisions the Javanese themselves apply’ (Geertz 1960, 6). His model of Javanese society in the three *aliran* received criticism from among others Kuntjaraningrat (1963) and Cruikshank (1972). Kuntjaraningrat for example, discerned just two *aliran*: *abangan* and *santri*, and proposed a distinction between vertical and horizontal stratification in Javanese society. Geertz regarded the three *aliran* as a horizontal division only. In Kuntjaraningrat’s model, Geertz’s *abangan-santri* should be seen as horizontal only and a modified occupational framework would be vertical. Cruikshank sided with Geertz in regarding the *priyayi* together with *abangan* and *santri* on a horizontal plane. According to Geertz these *aliran* could partially be vertical as well, to which Cruikshank concedes (Cruikshank 1972, 40-41).

Geertz sees a continuous cultural dialogue between gentry and peasants, but also discerns a class distinction between the two that is only sporadically bridged. He admits that if the *priyayi* are seen in terms of ‘great’ and ‘little traditions’ they can be regarded as either a ‘vulgarization’ or as a ‘refinement’ of the other (Cruikshank 1972, 41/Geertz 1960, 227). Although Geertz observed that the *gamelan* and *wayang* are not absent from peasant

life he categorizes *wayang* as a *priyayi* art because 'the refined politesse, the high art, and the intuitive mysticism all remain highly characteristic of Java's social elite. And although somewhat attenuated and adjusted to changed conditions, the *priyayi* style of life remains the model not only for the elite but in many ways for the entire society' (Geertz 1960, 6).

Geertz placed *wayang* within the category of *Alus* (Refined) Art and observed that 'The center of the complex is the *wajang*, the world-famous Javanese shadow-play'. The *Alus* Art cluster also contained *gamelan*, *lakon*, *joged* (Javanese dance), *tembang* (Javanese poetry) and *batik* (Javanese wax-resist textile dying). Geertz tied this cluster to the *priyayi aliran* and viewed it as 'the most widely spread throughout the culture, the most deeply ingrained, and the most philosophically and religiously elaborated'. According to Geertz, this art complex expressed largely *priyayi* values, the 'heart of which was always in the courts, where they were cultivated and perfected and, from which center they flowed outward and downward as political and spiritual power to the masses, increasingly ineptly performed as they descended' (Geertz 1960, 261-262).

Geertz made a distinction between the *priyayi* versus the *abangan* interpretation of *wayang*. He sees *wayang* both as part of the *priyayi* mythical-panteistic-speculative religious pattern and as part of the *abangan* ritualistic-polytheistic-magical religious pattern. On the *abangan* side, he said, '*wayang* is a popular drama of legendary heroes, not so different from other less pretentious dramas, but also part of the *slametan* complex'. For the *priyayi* the ritualistic aspect of *wayang* was still important, although it had become a 'fairly secularized art-form'. The secularization of the ritualistic aspects did open up opportunities for interpreting the meaning of *wayang* to lean closer to the *priyayi* religion than to the *abangan*. In Geertz's view, *wayang* was the material form of an essentially spiritual content, a symbolization of an inner *rasa* (Geertz 1960, 268-269). According to Geertz, the *priyayi* gave the *wayang* stories a philosophical and psychological, almost psychoanalytical interpretation, because they conveyed the message that understanding of the self brings power and peace in the world (Geertz 1960, 272-274).

By placing *wayang* in the *Alus* Art complex and tying it to the *priyayi* and the courts we see a continuation and a re-authorization of the discourse developed in the colonial period. We recognize the discourse of the 1920s and 1930s in which the *priyayi* elite was leading in assigning meaning to *wayang*. Mystical and philosophical elements were

emphasized by for example Mangkunagara VII in 1933. Geertz's observation also reflects the idea of a degenerated *wayang*, which once was refined at the Javanese courts, centers of 'original' *wayang*. In Geertz's view *wayang* was an elite art, an essential ritual of the Javanese people, which became increasingly secularized, but essentially unchanged. As such, he regarded *wayang* as a foundational element of Javanese culture and had received his ideas and applied categories from scholars that had preceded him. Geertz followed the outlines and structures of *wayang* discourse developed in colonial times lending it new authority and was unable to approach critically the historical constructs on which the culture he was researching was based.

Relations between Indonesia and the United States evolved in all kinds of fields in the 1950s (Day 2011, 135). In the 1960s, intercultural exchange between the two countries continued to increase. In the context of *wayang*, a major influx of Indonesian puppetry entering the United States can be discerned. A decade later, in the early 1970s, a whole generation of American puppet artists received direct tuition from Indonesian *dalang* at California summer schools. Many of them went to Java and Bali for lengthy periods of time to study *wayang* and take apprenticeships with *dalang*. Some of these artists crossed traditional Indonesian puppet forms with other modes of practice to create complex hybrids (Cohen 2007, 338). In the intercultural exchange in the field of puppetry, a continuation of preoccupations of colonial scholars can also be discerned. International artists and companies were mainly interested in telling idiosyncratic myths and the celebration of the sacred and supernatural. *Wayang* discourse developed in colonial times and preoccupations of colonial *wayang* scholars are more clearly illustrated by Cohen's observation that the primary interest of some of these American artists was not in *wayang* innovations, but rather in the careful study, recreation, and documentation of the classical legacy of *wayang* (Cohen 2007, 353).

The discourse of *wayang* developed in colonial times was not only prolonged by scholars and cultural institutions outside Indonesia. In 1974 Museum Radyapustaka in Surakarta published a brochure written by S. Santoso in English 'to remind Indonesian youngsters not to neglect their *Wayang* Art, and that they should love and understand better their own culture, which bears the national identity' (Santoso 1974, 3). *Wayang*'s Javanese roots are emphasized by stating that 'all scholars agree that the shadowplay as it

is found in Indonesia today is the product of the Indonesian people'. And 'the most important role of the *wayang* since olden times till nowadays seems to be in the field of education and information.' (Santoso 1974, 5). 'Still the government feels the necessity of another kind of *wayang* which can be used to give information to the people concerning the Indonesian struggle of independence and other matters concerned with the Indonesian history after independence. As it is used merely for information purposes, this kind of *wayang* then is called *wayang suluh*' (Santoso 1974, 6). In the short bibliography we see that Santoso lends new authority to (among others) Kats, Kusumadilaga, Mangkunagara VII, Mellema, Rassers, Geertz and Holt.

In the mid-1980s, this discourse of *wayang* was reiterated in *Lordly Shades. Wayang Purwa Indonesia* (Bondan et al 1984). The book was sponsored and published by H. Probosutejo (b. 1930), a business person and half-brother of President Suharto, who gave Javanology a high profile through prominent articles in the print media (Curtis 1997, 174). The book is a collaborative effort calling on the resources of government officials, the Javanese courts in Surakarta and Yogyakarta, and established *dalang*, such as Anom Suroto from Surakarta and Timbul Hadiprayitno from Yogyakarta. The book is 'not a scientific treatise, but is intended to give a popular explanation and to stimulate interest among foreign readers' (Bondan 1984, 5).

Wayang Purwa is defined as 'a form of theatre. It is ancient [...]; it is very beautiful, both to ear and eye, and it has a spell-binding effect upon millions of Indonesians. *Wayang Purwa* is a mine of the ethical teaching inherent in Indonesian culture, and it is a medium of communication capable of acting as an agent of change in the fast-changing world of modern Indonesia'. It emphasized the Javanese roots of *wayang* and that it had technically developed independent from India. The book recognized changes in *wayang* over time and stated that there are over seventy different types and styles of *wayang* in Indonesia. The Government Directorate for the Arts used the term *wayang* to refer 'to any kind of theatrical performance in which the director plays an active part on stage' (Bondan 1984, 7). 'The point of the entire performance is ethical education and character-building' (Bondan 1984, 13). A lot of effort was put in the book, 'particularly in the pictures, to portray *Wayang Purwa* with correct detail. The present wide diffusion of the art has led to

some rather frequent inaccuracies in presentation that have nothing to do with experimentation and change, but simply lead to distortions' (Bondan 1984, 18).

This shows that both *wayang* enthusiasts as well as state institutions emphasized *wayang* as a communication tool for the 'ethical education' of Indonesian society. *Wayang's* unchanged 'ethical heart' is centrally located in the elite Javanese philosophy. The understanding of *wayang* is an amalgam in which it is viewed as essentially static and elitist. Both the idea that *wayang's* roots in ancestor worship or refined Javanese philosophy and mysticism resist the idea of social influences on its *wayang*. The purity and authenticity of *wayang* as indigenous (rather than Indian) and having undergone no fundamental change over thousands of years also carries a concern that it needs to be preserved, like other national cultural treasures. As a national symbol and the bearer of Javanese philosophy *wayang* must be cultivated in the right way and kept in immaculate condition.

Florida writing in the context of Javanese literature discerns the same sentiment in 1995. Florida argues that this classical image that existed belongs to a modern discursive formation she calls 'the cult of the *adiluhung*'. *Adiluhung* translates as 'the beautiful sublime'. It idealizes a refined Javanese culture through the lenses of what is taken to be the culture of the traditional elite, the *priyayi*. According to Florida, the *priyayi* in Java in the 1990s were preoccupied with the deep symbology they imagined underlying Javanese life. This concern involved the alleged 'high' arts, 'traditional' rituals, linguistic etiquette, and the like. The *adiluhung* view monumentalized Central Javanese culture and was hardly interested in analyzing the history and diversity of that culture. Florida too, sees the emergence of this modern cult in the theosophical circles of the early twentieth century. In her view, conservative *priyayi* and Dutch Javanologists developed a spiritualized codification of elite culture (Florida 1995, 32).

The New Order *adiluhung* rhetoric resonated and re-authorized the late colonial discourse. What is imagined as the super-refined and spiritualized ways of traditional *priyayi* was highlighted and contrasted with the so-called vulgar and material West. According to Florida, the New Order Javanese elite invented a vision of their own *adiluhung* heritage as the somewhat endangered peak of cultural development, the preservation of which they see as a sacred duty. Like the colonial discourse, the *adiluhung* view of the New

Order imagined that it was in the exceptional world of nineteenth century royal courts that Javanese culture attained perfection, a perfection which can never again be achieved. The literature promised nothing less than the keys to life's deepest mysteries (Florida 1995, 33-34).

Wayang for the nation (1945-1967)

During the period 1945-1949 the Indonesian Ministry of Information experimented with *wayang* as a tool for communication and education. Because conventional mass media such as radio and the press were in the hands of the Dutch, the Ministry sought alternatives to rally the people's support and turned to *wayang*. In 1947 *wayang suluh* (*suluh* means torch or information) was developed to disseminate information. The puppets appeared realistic and recognizable, depicting figures of the time, such as Sukarno, Hatta, soldiers, and Dutch officials. The short and easy to understand stories told of national leaders and guerrilla soldiers who fought for independence. The language used was not only Javanese, but Indonesian, the new national language, as well. In 1949, after the recognition of sovereignty by the Dutch, the genre ceased to exist as it had lost its usefulness (Brandon 1967, 286-287).

In the 1950s different cultural approaches towards the development of a national culture continued to be explored. Indonesia's first minister of the culture portfolio (September-November 1945) was Ki Hadjar Dewantara, who as Suwardi had founded Taman Siswo. Dewantara thought of Indonesia's national culture as a collection of 'peaks of regional cultures' (*puncak puncak kebudayaan*) (Lindsay 2011, 17). He intended the concept of cultural peaks to be a guide to selection: 'The national culture of Indonesia is all the peaks and essences [*sari-sari*] of culture that have value, throughout the archipelago, both old and new, that are national in spirit. In this connection, do not hesitate to: a) stop supporting any old form of culture that hinders the advancement of humanistic life [*hidup perikemanusiaan*]; b) continue to support old forms of culture that have value and utility for humanistic life; where necessary, this support may involve changing them, improving them, or adapting them to the new world and era.' (Dewantara as quoted in Yampolsky 1995, 704, note 11). Dewantara's idea was that national culture would eventually replace

regional culture and that regional cultures would fuse into a unified Indonesian culture (Yampolsky 1995, 706).

Sukarno envisaged 'modernizing' cultural forms that were associated with the past by means of incorporating them into the modern Indonesian nation. In his view, these forms could be modified for the national stage where they were shown in juxtaposition in performances Sukarno sponsored at home for state events, and also for the national cultural missions he commissioned to promote Indonesia abroad. Troupes that were sent abroad largely concerned performing arts, such as dance and music (Lindsay 2011, 207). *Wayang* does not seem to have been part of such cultural missions. Reasons for this could be sought in problems of language, as the stories were told in *Kawi*, the old Javanese language. Another reason could be the duration of all-night *wayang* shows. It is notable that despite Sukarno's experimental attitude towards 'modernizing' cultural forms from the past, *wayang* was not adapted to be incorporated in such missions.

Although *wayang* may not have been used to promote Indonesia abroad, Sukarno used *wayang* symbolism, mythology and language to present himself, his ideas and his political program to the Javanese, who, in his eyes, were the ultimate Indonesians. He compared and identified himself with the *dalang*, but also with various *wayang* heroes, such as Arjuna and the great warrior Bima, synonymous with bravery and heroism, both important characters in the Mahabharata. He also identified with his namesake, the less well-known hero Karna. Sukarno's father had told him: 'It has always been my prayer for my son to be a patriot and great hero of his people. You shall be a second Karna.' 'Thus' says Sukarno, 'Sukarno means the best hero' (Sukarno in Adams 1965, 26).

About *wayang* Sukarno said: 'The Wayang or 'Shadow Play' is the most popular art form in Indonesia. [...] It is Indonesian sacred drama' (Adams 1965, 101). He stated that he alluded to *Mahabharata* stories because 80 percent of all Indonesians were familiar with them. He claimed that Indonesians know the five Pandawa represented good and that their kingdom was falsely taken in a great war. Each of the Pandawa brought to mind a human character. Arjuna was a figure of self-control. Bima or Werkudara is one who is truthful. By mentioning Gatotkaca everybody thought of Sukarno. The invaders represented evil; Buto Cakil is a demon. In *wayang* good figures sit on the right, evil on the left. Gold, white, or

black faces are good men, red are the villains. To the Indonesian mind it was clear that this meant that Indonesia was united in a desire to end aggression (Adams 1965, 178-179).

To appeal to his public, Sukarno made small concessions to Islam in *wayang* discourse. It still is popularly thought that the Wali Songo, the legendary nine saints believed to have brought Islam to Java, adapted the *wayang* form to Islam as far back as the fifteenth century and used it to propagate the new faith. Although Islamic elements in classical *wayang* are scarce, pseudo-historical Islamic story cycles such as *Wayang Menak* portray the propagation and victory of Islam. In one of Sukarno's speeches analyzed by Sears, he mentioned the widespread belief that it was Sunan Kalijaga, one of nine Wali Songo, who introduced *wayang* to Java. However, Sukarno did not attempt to harmonize *wayang* with Islam to incorporate it in nationalist discourse. Instead, he relied on colonial discourse of *wayang* to appeal to his audience. To legitimate *wayang*'s history and its essence to the Javanese, and therefore Indonesians, Sukarno relied on Dutch colonial scholarship: '*Wayang kulit* in fact, was here before the Hindus came. Just read Brandes. Brandes said that *wayang kulit* was authentically Indonesian. [...] It has been clearly proven by Brandes.' (Sukarno as quoted in Sears 1996, 223).

In Sukarno's view, *wayang* needed to be modernized and nationalized, for example with the creation of new *wayang* genres. By the 1960s, *dalang* were used to promote the messages of his PNI (*Partai Nasional Indonesia*); but other political parties like the PKI (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*) also used *dalang* for dissemination of their political ideas (Sears 1996, 230). On 1st June 1945 Sukarno laid out his doctrine of *Pancasila*, the Five Principles that became the official philosophy of independent Indonesia - belief in god, nationalism, humanitarianism, social justice and democracy. These principles contained something for everyone, and were sufficiently unobjectionable and ambiguous to receive general acceptance (Ricklefs 2008, 246).

To disseminate this ideology, *Pancasila* was molded into a new *wayang* genre called *Wayang Pancasila* by Harsono Hadisuseno, *dalang* and leader of a government information unit. This genre staged the five Pandawa brothers, each representing one of the five points of *Pancasila*. Yudistira became 'Belief in God,' Arjuna 'Nationalism', Bima 'Humanity,' and the twins Nakula and Sadewa 'Sovereignty of the People' and 'Social Justice' (Brandon 1967, 287). Such new forms never became mainstream *wayang*, and were never performed

after Sukarno. Brandon states that '*Wayang Pantja Sila* [...] disappeared as quickly as new propaganda needs pushed it aside' (Brandon 1967, 289). However, sets of *Wayang Pancasila* and *Wayang Suluh* ended up in museum and private collections.

Leftist cultural organizations, such as LEKRA (*Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat*), linked to PKI, strove to make cultural forms of the past '*revolusionar*' and '*progresif*'. They hoped to include revolutionary messages in existing popular performance forms, from *keroncong* music to *ludruk* and *wayang* (Lindsay 2011, 16). R. McVey (1986) has described in detail how *wayang* discourse became a theoretical problem for the cultural and doctrinal policies of the Communist Party in the 1950s and 1960s. The PKI shared Sukarno's modernizing ideas and had started to create new *wayang* forms in the late 1940s. They had hoped that these new forms would be taken up in mainstream *wayang*. The PKI was also interested in the role of the *dalang* in activating the mass for political goals (Clara van Groenendaal 1982, 219).

LEKRA's attitude towards *wayang* was ambivalent as it was closely associated with the Javanese courts. LEKRA considered high arts of the past only if indigenous and aesthetic advantages could be separated from feudal content. As a consequence, LEKRA tended to focus more on popular entertainment than on high art but recognized *wayang*'s didactic potential. *Wayang* was moral and its worlds of knights, gods, clowns, could easily be adapted to class conflict and competing social philosophies. More important, the popular clown scenes (*goro-goro*) in particular could be used to comment on current affairs. Although the clowns (*punakawan*) are the lowliest of the low, Semar is also a god. When the Pandawa consult him, they will succeed; if they ignore him they will fail. The clowns thus represent not only courtly values and feudal relations, but also convey the idea that the apparently vulgar may be divine, that a peasant may be higher than a king, and that the poor may be wiser than the rich. *Wayang* therefore could be used, but only in an adapted form. One suggestion was to perform *wayang* in Indonesian instead of Javanese which would nationalize it and also make it more democratic by circumventing Javanese speech levels and archaic language (McVey 1986, 23-29).

The people leading the campaign to Indonesianize and reform *wayang* to convert it into a didactic instrument of the PKI were mainly Javanese and Sundanese. The result was that many Outer Islanders within the party saw their efforts not as nationalizing *wayang*,

but rather as a form of Javanese cultural imperialism (McVey 1986, 29-30). Despite the many high posts occupied by non-Javanese, the PKI was in many ways culturally oriented on Java. Not only the PKI, but Javanese people in general, including Sukarno and Hamengkubuwono IX, were convinced that being Javanese was the best way to be Indonesian. Member of the Politburo, Sakirman (1911-1967?) was also of opinion that being Javanese was the perfect expression of being Indonesian. Like Sukarno, Sakirman pointed to *wayang* as Javanese essence, with reference to Dutch scholarship on the indigenous origins of *wayang*. He also pleaded for the Indonesianization of *wayang* because in his view *wayang* was part of Indonesia's cultural treasury and so had to be cherished, but he thought that it could be improved (McVey 1986, 30).

A more general problem in Indonesian politics was the frequent use of *wayang* references in everyday communication, such as Sukarno's use of *wayang* language and imagery mentioned above. This was a reminder to Outer Islanders that they were outsiders. Javanese domination of politics more generally meant that Outer Islanders had to adjust to Javanese ways. This cultural imbalance increased under Sukarno's Guided Democracy (1957-1966) (and would do so even more under Suharto's New Order), when the Indonesian political vocabulary became imbued with Javanese images and words. Those who wanted to participate in the national elite had to conform, but as a result non-Javanese identified Javanese culture with 'feudal' values (McVey 1986, 25-27).

McVey argues that, in practice, the ideas for innovation had but marginal effect. Formal efforts at revising *wayang* did not get beyond the experimental stage during PKI's legal existence (McVey 1986, 36-37). Sears sees it differently and recognizes the influence of LEKRA's technical changes in *padat* performances developed at ISI Surakarta in the 1970s. Examples of this are the shortening of the performance, the use of an electric light bulb, and the abandoning of dress requirements for the *dalang* and his musicians. In Sears's view, more general changes are the making of *wayang* more accessible to other cultural groups than Javanese, and the creation of new *wayang* stories to enhance political messages, and expanding the role of the clowns (Sears 1996, 245-246). Some of these changes like the use of the electric light bulb and the expansion of the clown scenes have become mainstream in current performance practice (Mràzek 1999, 2002, 2005).

Because *dalang* were used to promote the messages of Sukarno's PNI and the PKI, *wayang* became increasingly associated with Sukarno's socialist program and the growing support for him by the communists in the 1960s. The power struggle between the right (army and Islamists) and the left (PKI and leftist nationalists) escalated in 1965. *Dalang* who identified themselves with the PKI and its cultural organization LEKRA suffered at the hands of the Indonesian army and government, as well as from groups of village youths (Sears 1996, 212, 230). If they were not murdered or imprisoned, many *dalang* were no longer allowed to perform. They were obliged to register and to hand in a summary of the story line when performing (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 219). Even in the 1980s and 1990s, *dalang* who were suspected of involvement with the Communist Party in the 1960s were forbidden to perform. Sears notes that *dalang* were not eager to give information on this subject (Sears 1996, 227). Since then few *dalang* have opened up about their life and work in this period, such as Tristuti Rachmadi (2005), but my experience was largely similar to those of Clara van Groenendael and Sears during the time of my own fieldwork in 2010.

A continuation and re-authorization of discourse developed in colonial times can be discerned, but at the same time *wayang's* form and function was experimented with to be able to use it for political interests in the 1950s and 1960s. In line with the central role that was assigned to culture in building the new nation, institutional structures were set up to develop a national culture. Academies were founded for Central Javanese and Balinese gamelan music and dance on the understanding that they would contribute to the development of nationalism and the Indonesian arts. By 1953 there were four state-sponsored art academies operating within Java, of which three were under the control of the Fine Arts Section of the Ministry for Culture and Education. The Indonesian Academy of Fine Arts (*Akademi Seni Rupa Indonesia*, ASRI) in Yogyakarta was the first arts college in Indonesia, established in 1949. The second, the Indonesian Karawitan Academy (*Akademi Seni Karawitan Indonesia*, ASKI), was established in 1950 in Surakarta. It would be renamed *Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia* (STSI) and got its current name ISI Surakarta (*Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta*) in 2006.

According to Els Bogaerts, the establishment of ASKI was an example of how cultural heritage could be preserved and simultaneously adapted to contemporary circumstances.

Here, traditional music was taught and studied in conjunction with contemporary methods (Bogaerts 2011, 233). Such academies also provided a pool of performers for selection for government-sponsored performances, and provided a source of government employment as teachers who usually enjoyed the status of civil servants (Lindsay 1995, 663). Today, ISI offers courses in a wide range of the arts, such as *karawitan* (*gamelan* music), dance, and also has a department for *pedalangan*, the art of the *dalang*, as *gamelan* music was inextricably linked with *wayang*. The third institution controlled by the Cultural Office was the Western Music School (*Sekolah Musik Barat*) in Jakarta (Jones 2005, 111).

These institutional developments show that Clara van Groenendael's statement about the limited institutionalization of *wayang* in the 1950s needs some modification. With the founding of art academies at a national level, the centralized cultural policy of the government started to overshadow smaller, more locally situated initiatives, such as the *dalang* courses at the courts of Surakarta and Yogyakarta. Clara van Groenendael discussed a series of these *dalang* courses established in 1951. Initiatives for *dalang* courses were not new, we have seen their establishment at the Javanese courts, but the Japanese had also gathered groups of *dalang* to educate them about the political situation and the role they were supposed to fulfill in society. These courses were primarily aimed at disseminating a Pan Asian idea under the guidance of Japan. In the 1950s the goal changed to educating the *dalang* about the new nation and society, and the way in which he could contribute to teaching and developing the Indonesian people (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 210-211).

Although courses by the Dalang Association Kulon Progo (*Persatuan Dalang Kulon Progo*, PDKP) were meant for performing *dalang* in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (*Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta*) they were also open to *wayang* enthusiasts in the region. The two month curriculum focused on the theory of manipulating the puppets (*sabetan*), the theory of *pedalangan*, the art of the *dalang*, and specifically its history, various parts of the performance, such as the different episodes (*cariyos*), dialogue (*pocapan*), the songs and performance practice. In addition, social issues were discussed daily, each time by a different department of the organization. The second part of the course focused on education and development of *wayang*, political science, social creed, the upbringing of children, moral and religious law, and law and order (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 212-213). In my view Clara van Groenendael's observation that two years later this course

focused only on the development of the *dalang* and his performance practice endorses the argument that centralized discourses of *wayang* as institutionalized in art academies became dominant in *wayang* discourse.

The establishment of *dalang* courses at national institutions reveals a sense of urgency in developing the *dalang* as a *guru* in accordance with the new nation. In line with these efforts to create a national discourse for *wayang* are the ideas for the establishment of a national *dalang* organization. The first Congress for the art of the *dalang* of Indonesia (*Konggres Pedalangan Indonesia Ke-1*) was held in Prangwedanan in Central Java. It aimed at being a national conference, but was mainly a Javanese event that was dominated by *dalang* from Yogyakarta and Surakarta. It was nevertheless a first step towards a national approach. The conference was to establish an 'Association of *Pedalangan* of Indonesia' (*Lembaga Pedalangan Indonesia*, LPI) for *dalang*, experts and *wayang* enthusiasts. Although the proposal was positively received, the Association was never founded. After 1958 activities for the *dalang* and *pedalangan* seem to have come to a halt (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 215-219) to be taken up again under Suharto.

Centralization and education (1967-1998)

In 1965-66 a violent power shift took place in Indonesia. After an alleged communist coup, President Sukarno was pushed aside by general Suharto. Hundreds of thousands - some sources speak of more than one million - Indonesians who were accused of communist sympathies were murdered. Tens of thousands others ended up in prison or exile. PKI and all its mass organizations, including LEKRA, were banned and a new order under Suharto's presidency began - an order in which the army was the single most powerful, political, economic and administrative power (Ricklefs 2008, 318-328).

Suharto's ruling power derived primarily from the army, an extensive bureaucracy, the state party Golkar, and economical development that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. Golkar held a majority in both national and regional parliaments and gained a comfortable majority in every five-year election. Two other parties, the Islamic PPP and the nationalist PDI divided the rest of the votes. *Pancasila*, the five principles designed by Sukarno, ideologically connected these five pillars and society at large to the New Order. The ideological ideas of *Pancasila* were designed by Sukarno as a compromise to unite the

nation, but under Suharto *Pancasila* became a straitjacket to be endorsed by all (Ricklefs 2008, 338-343; Schulte Nordholt 2008, 24-28).

Suharto replaced Sukarno's emphasis on political messages and mass mobilization with messages about national development and a call for stable and ordered development. Culture was used as a cover; the past had to be glorified rather than critically assessed (Jones 2005, 187). Under Suharto it was used to produce order and sameness where chaos and heterogeneity previously existed. Pemberton argues that Suharto's policy was to routinely refer explicitly to 'traditional values' (*nilai-nilai tradisional*), 'cultural inheritance' (*warisan kebudayaan*), and 'ritual events' (*upacara*), and other expressions that carry a sense of social stability. This strategy had to suture the social fabric that had been ruptured and fragmented by the violent events of 1965-66. Cultural discourse turned attention to the concern for 'authentic' (*asli*) Javanese culture, with a 'tradition' (*tradisi*) that must be preserved at all costs. It focused on recovering the past within a framework of rediscovered origins that would efface a history of social activism for the sake of cultural continuity (Pemberton 1994, 9). The slogan 'Unity in Diversity', comprising Dewantara's concept of 'peaks of regional cultures', in the national discourse was meant to submerge ethnic differences, power inequalities, and class relations in an image of harmony and social cohesion (Pemberton 1994, 12-16).

The concern with regional art forms, such as *wayang*, cultural objects, sites and knowledge was part of a broader concentration of the focus on indigenous cultural practices within the Directorate of Culture. Under the title 'Saving and Caring for the Historical and Cultural Heritage,' the New Order regime made indigenous culture a focus of research and data collection and announced its intention to publish the information to 'spread' knowledge of Indonesia's cultural heritage (Jones 2005, 186-190).

Suharto, like Sukarno was of ethnic Javanese origin from Central Java, and to some even more truly 'a son of rural Java' than Sukarno. Like the *priyayi*, he was devoted to the mysticism and the spirit realm of Java, in which Islam exists only in its more esoteric form. He admired Sultan Mangkubuwono IX of Yogyakarta and desired the kind of supernatural legitimacy which Javanese rulers claimed. He is said to have brought some holy regalia (*pusaka*) from the courts of Surakarta to surround him in Jakarta in 1966 (Ricklefs 2008, 325). Surakarta was for many New Order Javanese a city of origins, a situating of the past in

place, a privileged locus for much that is thought being 'Javanese'. Although Surakarta is not the only court city in Central Java, it remains particularly attractive for those dedicated to recovering a sense of what might be 'authentically 'Javanese' (*asli Jawa*) (Pemberton 1994, 25). *Wayang* could be seen almost as the embodiment of this cultural discourse. It fitted perfectly in the range of culture that needed to be neat and orderly, disciplined, inoffensive, attractive or impressive to look at, and pleasant to listen to, just as some other, closely related, performing art forms, such as the dance and *gamelan* music of the Central Javanese courts and Balinese temples (Yampolsky 1995, 712).

The government organized the first Indonesian *Wayang* Week in Jakarta in July 1969. One of the topics discussed was the function of *wayang* and the role of the *dalang* in Indonesian society, specifically in this period of national development. It was decided that efforts should be made to improve the social and economic position of the *dalang*. What until now had largely been a local art should be developed into a functional part of national Indonesian society. During the second Indonesian Wayang Week in March 1974 the first topic on the agenda of the congress was the 'Indonesianization' of *wayang*. Secondly, the function of *wayang* as an educational tool was discussed. The congress unanimously accepted the claim that a Javanese *wayang purwa* performance conveyed philosophical messages besides entertainment. It also had to be regarded as an esthetical event. When entertainment was the dominant element in *wayang*, such as in the Sundanese *wayang*, the danger of excesses lurked, which was harmful to the artistic achievement of *wayang* (Ras 1982, 19). These statements show that *wayang's* meaning was defined as philosophical, but its function was discussed as a tool of education and persuasion.

It is in this light of attempting to exercise control over the development of *wayang* and the *dalang*, the *pedalangan* department at ASKI (later ISI) was founded in 1971 in Surakarta. It aimed at training students as artists, who could critically reflect and lead Indonesian art policy. All facets of *wayang* were discussed, such as story cycles, styles, and experimentation with performance practice. Theory was emphasized, including the position of art and the artist in contemporary Indonesian society and the variety of approaches to culture, among which those from the west. Graduation from the five year program gave the students a Bachelor degree (*sarjana muda*) and they were given the title of artist (*seniman* or *senawati*). Such new educational institutions eased *pedalangan*, the art

of the *dalang*, from its traditional context in the same way as music and dance. At these institutes *wayang* was regarded as an expression of art of the Javanese people. As such, *wayang* did not necessarily have to meet the norms and standards of society, but primarily had to answer to the laws of esthetics (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 61-64).

Students at ASKI were confronted with a variety of approaches and were taught to value them according to artistic criteria. This led to the development of a whole new genre at ASKI, called *pakeliran padat* or compressed performance. In *pakeliran padat* the function of the performance as a whole is the most important aspect, supported by performance techniques (Arps 1985, 43). Founder of ASKI, S.D. Humardani (1923-1982), who remained director until his death, had started to develop *wayang padat* in the context of cultural students' activities at Universitas Gajah Mada in Yogyakarta in the 1950s, together with Sri Mulyono (1930 - ?). *Padat* performances generally last between an hour and an hour and a half, and make use of written play scripts, which are either memorized or read in performances (Sears 1996, 246). Traditional elements irrelevant to the content should be omitted, such as repetitions, clichés, and episodes that do not relate to the content of the story, such as the *perang kembang* (battle between a knight and a large demon). In principal, the *pakeliran padat* is not tied to tradition (Arps 1985, 43-44).

Humardani had spent several years in Europe and paid a number of visits to America where he got acquainted with new performing arts and performance styles. Sears sees a connection between the novelties developed at ISI, and LEKRA's innovations in *wayang* forms and technology, such as creating new *wayang* stories to enhance political messages, and expanding the role of the clowns (Sears 1996, 245-246). Arps admits that it is tempting to view the creation of *pakeliran padat* in western terms, but has a slightly different opinion. He points to the description of *pakeliran padat* in Javanese mystical terms - *wadhah* and *isi*, and striving to unite the two, *unio mystica*. Arps also considers the role of national and Indonesian ideas - working to adapt traditional art forms to the new circumstances of the modern Indonesian society (Arps 1985, 44). ASKI and related organizations promoted the *pakeliran padat* outside its walls, usually by gathering *dalang* in congresses. At every event in which ASKI participated, such as the Wayang Week in Jakarta, Buddhist festivities, *pedalangan* congresses and television shows, *pakeliran padat*

was performed, and performing teachers of ASKI also used *pakeliran padat* elements in their regular performances (Arps 1985, 45-46).

As an organization associated with and supported by the New Order, ASKI and later ISI promoted New Order values and programs among students and faculty staff. These values permeate the *padat* plays in turn (Sears 1996, 246). Apparently, it was at such institutions that *wayang* was developed for a new, modern and national audience. To me, the development of *pakeliran padat* and the attempt to implement this new form widely are attempts to control and develop acceptable esthetic and cultural changes in *wayang's* meaning. As such it is illustrative of the authoritative force that governmental institutions had for new *wayang* forms and creations.

With the centralized institutionalization of the *dalang's* education in government sponsored academies, the government not only promoted its values and programs to its students, and authorized *wayang* performance practice, but it developed additional tools to control the *dalang* as well. Clara van Groenendael has already remarked that with the emergence of formal *dalang* education, the appreciation of the *dalang* changed as well. The central government had clear ideas about *wayang* as an educational tool and the *dalang's* role in modern Indonesian society. However, the violence surrounding the power shift from Sukarno to Suharto had seriously affected the *dalang* community and had damaged the relationship between *dalang* and the government. Soon after Suharto took power the government started to make attempts to restore cooperation with the *dalang* out of concern with the fate of *dalang* and their art. The new government also wanted to mobilize all available forces in society for the realization of their own political ends. Accordingly, the *dalang* was increasingly involved in the attempts of the government to socially and culturally develop Indonesia (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 140).

The regional administration for Cultural Affairs strove to commit *dalang* to New Order's social and cultural ideals. The changes in the status of the *dalang* under Suharto were reinforced by the fact that *wayang* was the most effective way to gather a lot of people at an event without a governmental function (Weintraub 2004, 195). As a result the government was interested in institutionalizing *wayang*. To be able to utilize *wayang*, it had to be modernized, and consequently the *dalang* had to be educated in conveying the correct governmental message and developing his artistic skills. This was to prevent degradation

of the *wayang* performance without ignoring the unique character of the *dalang*'s art, and simultaneously aimed to perfect his performance technique (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 221-223). The Ministry of Education and Culture concentrated on ensuring that performers incorporated government messages into their speeches and song lyrics, such as urging audiences to practice birth control or pay taxes. Yampolsky also notes that performers were often instructed to use the Indonesian language (Yampolsky 1995, 711). In practice, modernizing *wayang* and developing the *dalang* resulted in a gradual tightening of the grip of the government on the *dalang* and his performances through the organization of meetings and conferences.

The Ministry of Education and Culture also controlled and authorized wayang performance practice by organizing *wayang* competitions. Writing about *wayang golek* in West Java, Weintraub observes that in addition to technical skills and ability to entertain, the *dalang* had to incorporate themes of 'mental and spiritual development', encompass information, education and entertainment that is healthy and useful for the masses. He was to correctly communicate development messages and use 'good and correct' language (Weintraub 2004, 92-93). *Wayang* discourse thus emphasized the role of the *dalang* in society. He was seen as an artist and a *guru* who provided popular guidance in order to contribute to the moral education of the people. In this he was not supposed to follow the taste of the people (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 220-223). The *dalang* was assigned the new task of information officer (*penyuluh*) in the context of the Five Year Plans that were designed to develop Indonesia economically. Out of lack of a national organization, the *dalang* community of Central Java responded that they would willingly fulfill the function as artists and information officer to the people, protect and uphold the prestige of culture, and specifically of the art of the *dalang*, commit to the development of Indonesia together with the Indonesian people in general, and specifically the Five Year Plans, and to act as one in a sphere of mutual cooperation (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 227-228).

The establishment of a national *dalang* organization was another instrument to increase governmental control over the *dalang* and the performance of his new task. Surono (1923-2010), major-general and commanding officer of the armed forces in Central Java and the Special District of Yogyakarta, took the initiative and founded Ganasidi (*Lembaga Pembina Seni Pedalangan Indonesia* or Institute for Cultivating the Art of the

Dalang in Indonesia). It was argued that the organization was to protect the *dalang* community against future 'political errors', with reference to the events of 1965 in which many *dalang* had fallen victim. In addition, it was claimed that it would improve the level of the art and performance style of the *dalang*, so that they might make a positive contribution to the development of the Indonesian people. Ganasidi was not intended solely for *dalang*, but for all persons committed to the art of the *dalang*, as well as for other performing artists, such as the members of the *dalang*'s ensemble (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 230-231). This discourse reveals the explicit aim to control the *dalang* in his political orientation as well as a mouthpiece for political messages.

Ganasidi was set up as a semi-governmental institution and was initially restricted to Central Java and the Special District of Yogyakarta, the area Surono supervised in his capacity as commanding officer. The army firmly controlled the organization because its statutes and regulations required Surono's approval. Ganasidi sought to increase control over performing artists in various ways. One measure was the standardization of the mode of issuing licenses for performance by artists under the guise of protecting Ganasidi's members. Another important controlling instrument was the development of Ethical Rules for *Dalang* (*Sad Satya Darma Dalang*), a code of behavior that developed into a set of guidelines for *dalang* all over Indonesia. The code prescribed the way in which the *dalang* was to view his duty in society as a responsible citizen of Indonesia:

1. In the fulfillment of his duty as counselor and educator, the *dalang* is the servant of the people. As a provider of healthy entertainment, it is his duty firstly to support the people in their struggle to achieve social well-being and security, and secondly to boost the morale of the Indonesian people;
2. As the servant of his country, it is the *dalang*'s duty to give precedence to the National Interest by honoring the *Pancasila* and the Constitution of 1945 and obeying and observing their injunctions in conformity with the government's policy;
3. As a servant of the Indonesian culture, as someone devoted to the preservation of its originality and purity, the *dalang* is bound to do his utmost for and assist in the development of his arts, in harmony with the advancement of the Indonesian people;

4. In his private life, it is the *dalang's* duty to guard the dignity of his office and put his art into practice, as well as to devote his energies to the mastering of all facets of his art;
5. As leader of the performance, it is the *dalang's* duty to watch over the morals of his company, in addition to honoring and defending his culture;
6. It is the *dalang's* duty to promote cooperation and harmony between artists and to avoid all that is likely to lead to conflict.

This code of behavior clearly reveals the role assigned to the *dalang* by the government in the process of developing society. The close cooperation between Ganasidi and the government was sealed in the decision of Ganasidi to join the government party Golkar (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 231-233).

When Surono was promoted to commander of the armed forces with Jakarta as basis, the organization got a national character under the name Indonesian Association for the Art of the Dalang (*Persatuan Pedalangan Indonesia*, or Pepadi for short). Pepadi established headquarters in each province, and where *dalang* organizations already existed, they automatically became affiliated with Pepadi. The shift of Pepadi to Jakarta was a transfer of *wayang's* base from the traditional Javanese court center to the Indonesian center, just as had happened with the establishment of centralized educational institutions for *wayang* (Clara van Groenendael 1982, 234).

Today Pepadi is closely linked to Sena Wangi (*Sekretariat Nasional Pewayangan Indonesia* or National Wayang Secretariat), which developed out of Ganasidi. The basic task of these organizations is the coordination of activities for conservation and development of *wayang* and the art of puppet performances in Indonesia. Its members are the various *wayang* and puppetry artists, artists, and cultural experts, as well as prominent members of society (Interview Ekotjipto, 26 August 2009). The link between Sena Wangi, Pepadi, and New Order discourse is illustrated by the location of both national *wayang* organizations on the premises of *Taman Mini Indonesia Indah* (TMII, *Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Park*) in Jakarta. This entertainment park represents the idea of beautiful Indonesia in miniature and was opened in 1975. The primary aim of the park was to promote a cultural model of state ideology, which was initiated by Suharto's wife, Siti Hartinah Suharto (1923-1996), better known as *Ibu* (Mother) Tien. Today the boards of Pepadi and Sena Wangi still consist

predominantly of a Javanese elite with political ties to the former Suharto government. Sena Wangi's current mission statement tells us that it aims at being a *pedalangan* organization that is professional and that contributes to the preservation and development of the art of puppetry, as well as improving welfare for its members. It wants to develop the art of puppetry as a pillar of national culture, which can be a vehicle for cultural discourse and to enhance the dignity of the nation.⁴⁸ In the next chapter we will explore how Sena Wangi's current discourse is linked to New Order nationalist discourse when I will discuss *wayang's* Candidature File for the UNESCO Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Besides authorizing official *wayang* discourse, the government was also a popularizing force of *wayang* by raising *wayang* from a local or regional Javanese practice to a standardized national cultural art form with the added function of enlightening the masses on national policies and ideologies (Ras 1982, 19). With the emergence of mass media and commercialization alternative *wayang* discourses arose. Already under Sukarno RRI (*Radio Republik Indonesia*), a state-run radio network, was founded. It gave rise to the genre of music then known as *hiburan daerah* ('regional entertainment [music]') of which RRI commissioned numerous recordings for broadcast, and later for publication and sale as well (Yampolsky 1995, 706). By the 1970s, listening to traditional performance genres, including *wayang*, were the main rationale for listening to the RRI all over Java except for the capital Jakarta (Arps 2002, 315). RRI thus played, and still plays, a major role in the dissemination and representation of *wayang* and other performance traditions.

The mass media became one of the authoritative forces for shaping *wayang*. The American ethnomusicologist and anthropologist A.N. Weintraub has demonstrated how the *dalang's* and sponsor's interests are often commercial to such an extent that the mass media started to shape *wayang* performance practice. He observes that during the Suharto era, *dalang* were always involved in power plays, especially between the state on the one hand, and *wayang* audiences on the other. The government was one of the major sponsors

⁴⁸ Seni pedalangan sebagai salah satu pilar budaya bangsa, yang dapat menjadi wacana dan wahana budaya untuk mempertinggi harkat dan martabat bangsa, <http://www.pepadri.com/page/view/11/visi-misi>, accessed 8 October 2012.

of *wayang* performances and turned *dalang* into 'information officers' for the government's policy. Yet a *dalang*'s popularity and the appeal that is necessary to become successful in the art rested largely on his ability to represent the voices of ordinary people (Weintraub 2004, 12).

Because the *dalang* as individual performer and *guru* was made pivotal in New Order discourse, the state became an important source of capital for a *wayang* event. Of course, the investments of the state were not equally divided between performing *dalang*: certain *dalang* performed more often than others. With Suharto - and many who belonged to his inner circle - being from Central Java, and Surakarta being regarded as the cradle of Javanese culture, *dalang* from the Surakarta area tended to be favored. This resulted in a limited field of privileged performers who started to dominate *wayang* performances. The emerging mass culture of the 1970's added to the distinct fame and dominance of these privileged *dalang*, and their image and reputation became an issue of mass circulation and commodification. Before the 1970s most *dalang* had a job as farmer, teacher or government official; not even the most successful *dalang* could live from his income as a performer. The emergence of a real mass audience became the crucial difference between ordinary *wayang* stars, who appeal only to a relatively small economic and intellectual elite, and superstars who have meaning for a real mass audience. The superstar *dalang* became a new phenomenon as distinct from the majority of 'ordinary' *dalang*. Consequently, the *dalang* became a new frame for *wayang* and its representation (Weintraub 2004, 12-14).

Technology played an important role in the process of the emergence of the superstar *dalang* and the commercialization of *wayang*. Weintraub showed how cultural technologies influenced *wayang* representation. Media production and distribution of cassette recordings and television broadcasting decreased the variety of forms for *wayang* performances, but also the ways in which they were received by the audience and the meanings available to the public (Weintraub 2004, 9-15). This process evolved in the same way as certain *wayang* discourses that had been privileged in colonial times. Writing about *wayang* resulted in the creation of tangibility and fixed ideas of the performance practice. Media productions of *wayang* performances and their circulation had the same result: a

new kind of fixation of *wayang* emerged that was represented by a handful of superstar *dalang*.

The result, Weintraub argues, was a decrease in the diversity of performance styles, which led to a standardization of the performance practice. At the same time, he observes that the variety of musical experiments and forms increased. Only a few *dalang* were recorded, and they felt forced to innovate and experiment to avoid boring the audience and to ensure being invited and recorded again. The process of standardization, which Weintraub calls homogenization, continued when 'ordinary' *dalang* began to imitate the superstars. Innovation became the privilege of the superstars because their status and authenticity required that their talent was based on innovations and originality. Gradually, superstar *dalang* started to enjoy greater status and wealth, whereas less popular *dalang* gained less attention (Weintraub 2004, 166-173).

Television broadcasts of *wayang* reinforced this process because only well-known *dalang* were broadcast. Only famous *dalang* could afford travel expenses and other costs connected with a televised performance. Directors of television stations chose the *dalang*, applying selection criteria that were set by competition with commercial private television stations. Consequently, the nature and production of *wayang* performances in mass media helped to create a field of representation that privileged certain *wayang* forms and simultaneously excluded others (Weintraub 2004, 200). The commercial control over *wayang* performance practice mirrors the pattern of control by the Suharto government, something pointed out by Sears. The government controlled radio and television programming and used *wayang* characters to support its messages on television (Sears 1996, 272-273).

The emergence of the superstar system turned the *dalang* into a new frame for *wayang*, and turned him as an individual into a representation of *wayang*. In this context Weintraub calls to mind Keeler's observation (1987) that *wayang kulit* should be viewed as a set of relations: 'These relations are multiple; relations between performers, between performers and sponsors, between sponsors and audience. The most important are the relations between the artistic illusion itself and its audience and implicitly, the relation between artist and audience.' (Keeler 1987 as quoted in Weintraub 2004, 14). It is in the context of the pivotal role of the *dalang* in politics, the emergence of mass media and the

commercialization of the cassette industry that the *dalang* was given both a name and a face. Ki Nartosabdho (1925-1985) was the first superstar and transformed the way the Javanese understand *gamelan* music and *wayang* (Petersen 2001, 105). Although his manipulation skills were basic, his oral talents allowed him to capitalize on radio broadcasts and the emerging cassette recordings. Despite the radical nature of his practice when he started, Nartosabdho's innovations have become mainstream (Petersen 2001, 107), and are now regarded as classical. Two other omnipresent *dalang* with popular roots in the New Order era are the Surakarta-based peers Ki Anom Suroto and Ki Manteb Soedharsono. Both *dalang* still perform and Manteb Soedharsono's performance practice and strategies of coping with dominant *wayang* discourse is the topic of another chapter in this thesis. The 1990s also gave rise to a young *dalang*, Ki Enthus Susmono, from Tegal, who refused to be a mouthpiece of the government, but nevertheless managed to rise to superstar status. He will be discussed in the last chapter of this thesis.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have traced continuities and change in *wayang* discourse after independence. The idea that *wayang* was essentially unchanged and static was reinforced by the museum practice of the Tropenmuseum in the Netherlands. The display of *wayang* remained unaltered since the opening of the museum in 1910 until the refurbishment in the 1960s. The display case representing *wayang* was a tangible representation of the performance practice, but deprived of all liveliness as a result of the focus on the tangible puppets and instruments. The unchanging display of the performance tradition reaffirmed this static image and fixed a fossilized image of *wayang* in the minds of the Dutch public. The result was that the gap that already existed between presentation and reality increased.

After independence, the Dutch were pushed aside in the field of *wayang* studies, which was taken over by mainly Indonesian and American scholars. *Wayang* discourse as developed in colonial times was lent new authorization both inside and outside Indonesia. The discourse of *wayang* developed in colonial times remained the basis of making meaning of *wayang* after independence. Like colonial scholars, both American and Indonesian works emphasized the philosophical, religious and mystical nature of *wayang*

and it continued to be regarded as the essence of the Javanese and as an *alus* refined and elite art. By the end of the twentieth century, New Order discourse of *wayang* closely resembled the discourse of *wayang* that was developed in colonial times. As Florida (1995) argued in the context of Javanese literature, the New Order Javanese elite invented a vision of their sublime heritage that was somewhat endangered and needed to be preserved. This idea was based on the conviction that Javanese culture had achieved perfection at the Javanese courts in the nineteenth century, containing the keys to the mysteries of life. This perfection however, could never again be accomplished, but continued to be the benchmark for cultural expressions. The focus on refined and elite art worked to exclude alternative or contradictory interpretations.

That discourses of *wayang* drew on and re-authorized discourse developed in colonial times does not necessarily mean that the *wayang* discourse after independence did not acquire new meanings. In the 1940s and 1950s, *wayang* was more closely incorporated into the political domain in which experiments were carried out in creating new genres, and new meanings, utilizing *wayang* and the *dalang* in his capacity of a teacher and conveyor of political messages. The rationale was that culture was pivotal in nation building. The discourse of *wayang* developed in colonial times was framed in discourse of the nation: *wayang* as the essence of the Javanese deserved to be national culture. To this end, we see the foundation of educational institutions, such as ASKI, later STSI and ISI, for *wayang* and the *dalang* on a national level. These developments made private institutions, such as the *dalang* court schools, increasingly obsolete. It was also at this time that the central role of the *dalang* started to be recognized and his role as a teacher utilized. The idea of the *dalang* being a teacher could already be discerned in *wayang* discourse in colonial times, for example by Van Hinloopen Labberton, but now the *dalang* was assigned a more central role who had a responsibility to the Indonesian society. By the 1960s, the *dalang* was used by the PNI and PKI to voice their political messages.

Under Suharto the tendency to authorize *wayang* discourse at the central national level continued. Cultural policy developed to achieve national growth and worked through various ways and interventions such as governmental institutions, semi-governmental organizations, educational institutes, museums, all aiming to control the representation and practice of *wayang* as a cultural expression. Developments in *wayang* took place in the

name of the nation at ASKI, which ensured that *wayang* changed in a controlled and proper way. New *wayang* forms created outside these institutional realms were not acknowledged, but seen as a potential threat for official *wayang* discourse. The establishment of national *wayang* organizations Ganasidi, later Sena Wangi, and Pepadi, are other attempts to control the *dalang* and his performance practice. *Wayang* competitions were organized to manage *wayang* performance practice, and a code of ethics was set up to control the *dalang* even further. As an authorizing force, the state had a standardizing and fixing effect on *wayang* discourse and *wayang* performance practice.

However, the power of the state was not all-encompassing and the mass media emerged as an alternative force of authorization. The influence of mass media evolved parallel to political discourse of *wayang* and centered on the pivotal role of the *dalang* in *wayang*. The *dalang* became increasingly an individual with a name and face that could be sold to a mass audience through broadcasts on the radio, television, as well as on registrations on radio cassettes, DVD's and VCD's. The result was a decrease in the representation of *dalang* and their *wayang* performance practice in exactly the same way as the documentation of *wayang* had worked in colonial times. It created standards for *wayang* performance practice to which everyone, both audience and fellow *dalang*, related. *Dalang* learned from *dalang* with exposure in the mass media, copying their performance practices and styles. This made just a handful of *dalang* increasingly visible in the mass media, which led to a decrease in the representation of *wayang* practitioners. Weintraub (2004) has called this process the development of the superstar system. The superstar system meant that the mass media produced *wayang* superstars, a handful of privileged *dalang* who managed to become meaningful to a broad mass audience. This resulted in an unprecedented wealth and status of *dalang* who managed to become a superstar.

Chapter 3

Wayang as world heritage (1998 – the present)



Ki Manteb Soedharsono performing in a duel with Ki Enthus Susmono called 'Duel Dua Dalang', Surabaya, 30th October 2010. By S.N. Boonstra.

An international context for *wayang*

Suharto's New Order saw expressions of discontent, social protest, and violence against the existing order of power across the country, which increased in the 1990s. Elson notes that there were more than 1300 protest incidents in the first seven months of 1997 alone. Suharto's grip weakened, but he still managed to gain a resounding electoral victory in 1997. The regime disintegrated with the outbreak of the Asian currency crisis in the same year. Violence, and political and social chaos in Jakarta in May 1998 resulted in the collapse of the New Order. Indonesian society was left behind demoralized and without a sense of what its core values should be or how they might best be institutionalized, but there was a clear sense of a need for fundamental, far-reaching reform (Elson 2008, 276-280).

The idea of Indonesia remained of central importance. Indonesians had become attached to their nation to such an extent that a sense of national pride re-emerged. The idea that they were citizens of the fourth largest country in the world, whose political and strategic significance could not be underestimated, was appealing to many. As a result, those who dared to suggest they might have a better future under different border arrangements, such as Achenese and Papuans, were rejected. However, faith in a single all-encompassing national project had diminished (Elson 2008, 312). Even more, the sense of local autonomy was enhanced and as a consequence of the political and institutional vacuum, long-suppressed ethnic identity was expressed in different, sometimes violently, ways (Elson 2008, 283-284). To some, non-national expressions of identity were primarily religiously based, but the local ethnic and religious sentiments did not question Indonesian national belonging and identity. It rather sought to renegotiate the terms of what belonging to the state meant in ways that gave greater importance and privilege to expressions of cultural specificity (Elson 2008, 292-293).

The decentralizing shifts and attention for ethnic identity and cultural specificity also affected cultural policy. Since 1998 national governments have not provided or adopted strong discourses of cultural heritage. Although at sub-national levels of government had always interpreted New Order's regime's cultural discourses in accordance with their local situations, the new situation gave room to greater cultural differentiation. Local arts communities now have more access to lower levels of government and can more easily influence cultural policy change. Decentralization has also

created a healthy climate for innovation in cultural policy because increasing numbers of jurisdictions shape their own cultural policy (Jones 2005, 229-231).

Another consequence of the decentralization of politics and culture is the increase in grass-roots initiatives. Simultaneously, a more global orientation is emerging, such as that towards the concept of cultural heritage. Since the 1990s a heritage boom has been taking place that has taken root in Indonesia as well. Indonesian cultural professionals have long been in contact with international heritage platforms, such as ICOM (International Council of Museums) or ICOMOS (International Council of Monuments and Sites). Having expressed many concerns about the government's neglect of urban heritage in particular, under Suharto these heritage professionals had already assumed the role of public heritage custodians. Many of them founded heritage societies, such as the Bandung based Society for Heritage Conservation founded in 1987, the Jogja Heritage Society in Yogyakarta, *Bali Kuna* (Old Bali), and the Indonesian Heritage Trust or BPPI (*Badan Pelestarian Pusaka Indonesia*). Such organizations are largely modeled on professional heritage organizations in Australia, the United States and Europe, and aim to raise 'public awareness and influence policies through high-profile campaigns, advisory service, assertive lobbying and other strategies' for urban heritage (Sastramidjaja 2011, 193).

As mentioned before, Indonesia quickly responded to the development of the new heritage concept of intangible cultural heritage. The first proclamation of nineteen Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by the Director-General of UNESCO took place in 2001. The Indonesian *Wayang* Puppet Theatre was one of twenty-eight Masterpieces at the second proclamation on 7th November 2003, shortly after the adoption of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage on 17th October 2003. The third Proclamation in 2005 included the Indonesian *keris* and *batik* as two of forty-three Masterpieces. This means that even before the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage came into force in 2006, Indonesia was already firmly engaged with the concept of intangible cultural heritage.

This chapter explores the consequences of the changed political and cultural context for *wayang* discourse within Indonesia, and especially how the concept of intangible cultural heritage affected this discourse. It examines how, after 1998, *wayang* discourse links and breaks with the discourses developed in colonial times as well as discourses of

wayang during Sukarno and Suharto. I intend to investigate what lies behind the continuities and changes in *wayang* discourse. To this end I will briefly sketch changes in *wayang* practice and discourse within Indonesia. This will be followed by an analysis of the Wayang Museum in Jakarta and a discussion of the discourse in Indonesia's Candidature File for *wayang* to UNESCO that Sena Wangi and Pepadi prepared and submitted in 2002.

Wayang post-1998

In the field of *wayang* practice the decentralization and increased possibilities for cultural differentiation finds expression in grass-roots initiatives. The founding of Watak (*Wayang Tradisi Kreatif*) on 25th June 2010 is a notable one. One of the initiators, *dalang* Ki Slamet Gundono (1966-2014), told me that Watak aimed to connect *wayang* and society because interest for *wayang* from both government and society is declining.⁴⁹ Slamet Gundono hoped to create a *wayang* community with the organization of regular activities in the form of *wayang kulit* as a performing art. The starting-point of the initiative was the idea that people should not connect to *wayang* based on esthetics alone, but also through the participation in performing arts activities. Watak thus organizes *wayang* workshops for children in cooperation not only with *dalang*, but also with dancers, musicians and singers. The organization was set up in various places in Java, such as Surakarta, Bandung, and Semarang. Slamet Gundono emphasized that Watak was an independent initiative and not linked to national *wayang* organizations, such as Pepadi, because in his view, such organizations applied a *wayang* discourse that has no connection with society. According to him, the government's perception of *wayang* is different than that of society (Interview Slamet Gundono, 5 July 2010).

Perhaps the most obvious consequence of Suharto's downfall in the context of this research project is that the government no longer acts as a major commissioner of *wayang* performances. A sharp decline in sponsorship for *wayang* performances was the result of the large decrease in the flow of capital from government and private patronage. The

⁴⁹ Latar belakang dibentuknya Komunitas WATAK adalah bertolak dari ralitas minimnya perhatian terhadap kesenian Wayang, baik dari pemerintah maupun masyarakat pada umumnya. menginginkan adanya komunitas yang melakukan kegiatan rutin dalam bentuk seni pertunjukan Wayang Kulit maka dibentuk Komunitas Watak (Wayang tradisi kreatif. Gagasan dan pernyataan tersebut akhirnya berkembang menjadi bagaimana kreatifitas tidak berkembang pada wilayah estetik semata, melainkan berkembang ke wilayah sosial juga, Interview Slamet Gundono, 5 July 2010.

consequence was a large drop in frequency of public *wayang* performances, which caused people to turn to *wayang* recordings instead. People did not have enough funds to sponsor *wayang* shows, but could afford cassettes and VCD's (Video Compact Discs). This resulted in a growing demand for these types of media. From 1999 illegal VCD's made by individuals with camcorders at performances started to be sold on the streets (Weintraub 2004, 209).

The sound of *wayang* also changed on cassette recordings after 1998: live audiences were now audible so that listeners could hear the interaction between the *dalang* and the audience. VCD recordings took this even further, featuring long uncensored, unedited all-night performances in front of live audiences. Unlike the studio recordings of *wayang* made during the New Order, the live cassettes and VCD's produced in the years thereafter, captured a sense of time and place (Weintraub 2004, 226). Developments in the *wayang* performance practice thus reflect the political situation in the post-1998 context. It shows a tendency towards a multiplicity of cultural interpretations with the emergence of grass-roots initiatives to present the public with alternative understandings of *wayang* as performance practice. It also shows a new form of creating tangibility. We have seen the creation of tangibility in texts, museum displays and cassette recordings that all lacked a sense of place and time. VCD's offered a technology that could capture the multiplicity in voices; those of the *dalang*, the singers, the musicians, but also the audience. However, as mediation, this technology still fixes a certain performance at a certain time and place.

Wayang has also become a more open and critical space for *dalang* to address national and global politics, relations between state and civil society, and religious issues in post-*Reformasi* Indonesia. Weintraub argues that *wayang* became a place to reflect on Suharto's New Order regime in a way that was unthinkable during the New Order (Weintraub 2004, 213). Another way in which *dalang* 'actualized' or 'topicalized' political issues was by telling stories that represented actual figures and events (Weintraub 2004, 221). The attention to diversity and multiplicity of voices is also discernable in academic studies in *wayang* as discussed in the introduction. Increasingly scholars from around the world became involved in the study of *wayang*, which can also be observed in *wayang* performance practice of the post-1998 era. It is mainly manifested in the increasing Anglicization of *wayang* vocabulary. Weintraub notes an interweaving of anglicized terms into *wayang* language, poetry, and music, such as *globalisasi* (globalization), *Reformasi*,

intimidasi (intimidation), *kolusi* (collusion), and *korupsi* (corruption) (Weintraub 2004, 213). Another effect of the more global orientation of Indonesia towards the heritage discourse is, as said, the proclamation of the *Wayang* Puppet Theater of Indonesia as a Masterpiece.

Next to initiatives by *wayang* professionals, there are many *wayang* enthusiasts with private collections, such as the Kekayon Museum in Yogyakarta by Sujono Prawirohadikusumo (b. 1928) in 1967. A recent example of private *wayang* initiatives is the House of Masks and Puppets in Bali of Mr. Hadi Sunyoto (b. ?). Sunyoto is a businessman and cultural enthusiast, who collected masks and puppets from different regions in Indonesia and around the world. His collection includes more than 1,200 masks and 4,700 puppets and has been open to the public since 2006. In 2010, a new museum in which the collection is on display and is stored was opened in Ubud, Bali. These private initiatives now increasingly refer to international heritage discourse to promote their collection. How the Wayang Museum in Jakarta deals with regional, national and international *wayang* discourses will be discussed in the next section.

The Wayang Museum

9AM, April 2010, Fatahillah Square, Old Town Jakarta. It was one year after I visited the Wayang Museum for the first time. After an hour-long taxi ride from central Jakarta to Old Town the driver had dropped me at the wrong corner of the square, unaware that the surroundings of the square had become a pedestrian area. I knew my way, but noticed a lot of changes in the quarter. The alleys were cleaned-up and newly cobblestoned, and ‘antique’ street lamps were installed. Food stalls with seats under red Coca-Cola umbrellas were set up, alternating with souvenir stalls that sold the usual tourist stuff, like sunglasses, hats, wallets, and key chains. Finally, I arrived at the square that lay quietly in the scorching sun. I noticed changes on the square too. Dozens of antique looking bicycles were lined up in front of a bicycle driver who clearly waited for tourists to hire one of his bikes for a ride around the square. Just a year before, there had only been a few bicycle drivers, who rented out their single bike, but they had clearly scaled their businesses up. In contrast to the year before, when the square seemed quite secluded, the whole area now screamed tourist

destination. The refurbishment of the Fatahillah Square is another manifestation of changes in the heritage field in the post-1998 era.

In imitation of the success of other postcolonial nations such as Singapore in exploiting their colonial heritage, the Indonesian government gradually came to recognize Old Town's value for heritage tourism. Within this frame, the Old Town had already been officially designated as tourist destination and conservation zone in 1972, the year in which the World Heritage Convention was adopted. The Dutch City Hall at Fatahillah Square was restored and turned into the Jakarta History Museum. Little else happened until 1991 when steps were taken to create a tourism infrastructure for the Old Town. Various master plans were issued, but none of these materialized, until after Suharto's downfall, local property owners and heritage experts took control and founded Jakarta Old Town Kotaku (My City) in 2004. This organization sought revitalization and preservation of the area in a responsible manner (Sastramidjaja 2011, 196-198).

The master plan of Jakarta's former Governor Fauzi Bowo, who grew up in Old Town and holds a degree in Urban Planning, is currently being realized. His plan aims at the historical conservation and economic revitalization of an 845-hectare area, divided into five zones, among which is Fatahillah Square. The plan envisioned tree-lined pedestrian streets, small parks, boutique hotels and shops, wine bars, apartments in restored Dutch-era buildings and office space in renovated warehouses. To start the project, 'antique' streetlamps and cobblestones were installed at Fatahillah Square and adjacent alleys in 2007. Since then, antique bicycles are on show that visitors can use for paid rides around the square. Fatahillah Square has been turned into the perfect image of a visitable city, including a historical-colonial quarter that caters to the taste of tourists and investors. Fauzi Bowo's conservation plan foresees the maintenance and development of 283 buildings listed in the conservation zone (Sastramidjaja 2011, 197-198). This includes the building in which the Wayang Museum is housed at Jalan Pintu Besar Utara 27 at Fatahillah Square.

The Wayang Museum is housed in a historical building known as The Old Dutch Church (*Oude Hollandsche Kerk*). The history of the building as a museum started when the *Koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* (Royal Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences) bought it in 1937. It was handed over to the *Stichting Oud Batavia*

(Foundation Old Batavia) that turned the building into the *Oude Bataviaasch Museum* (Old Batavian Museum). In 1957, the building again changed ownership to *Lembaga Kebudayaan Indonesia* (Institute of Indonesian Culture) after which it was transferred to the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia in 1962. Six years later, the building was given to DKI (*Daerah Khusus Ibukota*) Jakarta on 23rd June 1968 to be turned into Museum Wayang. In 1972, the building became listed as a monument, and finally the Wayang Museum was officially opened by the Governor of Jakarta of the time, H. Ali Sadikin (1927-2008) on 13th August 1975 (Interview Ibu Kusumawati, 14th July 2009).

Since the Dutch established the first museums in their colony in the second half of the nineteenth century, concerns with methods of museum management and display have remained present in Indonesia, as have their didactic role, in particular their mediating role between different ethnic populations. Museums expanded as part of the growth of government beginning in the early 1970s. By 1976, there was a plan and government support to build a museum in the capital city of every province (Taylor 1994, 115-6). The establishment of the Wayang Museum can thus be regarded as part of the New Order's interest in museums as educational institutions to serve the development goals of Suharto's regime. The concern was to represent national unity (Jones 2005, 188-189). Museums combined lessons in conduct with attention to professionally-correct displays, viewing and behavior to ensure that lessons were correctly conveyed and absorbed. Museums were viewed as caring for culturally valuable objects that could contribute to building national identity (Jones 2005, 187-188).

This concern was sustained throughout the New Order regime, which is illustrated by the statement of the second Director of the Directorate of Culture, Edi Sedyawati (b.1938): 'As an educational instrument, a museum in Indonesia should also have a presentation strategy that is in line with Indonesia's national development policy. The ideas of nationality, of national unity, and of the supporting position of different ethnic groups within the Indonesian nation are basic ideas that should underlie any strategy of presentation' (Sedyawati 1995 quoted in Jones 2005, 189). In addition to museums, monuments, shrines, the visual and performing arts or, as Lindsay puts it, 'the material and expressive heritage of the nation' were also part of the culture portfolio, as well as 'traditional values' and 'local beliefs' (Lindsay 1995, 660), which in current heritage

discourse would be referred to as intangible cultural heritage. By 1990 there were 140 mainly state-sponsored museums in Indonesia. The centralized system of museum development was also reflected in design and exhibition practice. Exhibits followed standard formats that reinforced the New Order state's ideas about the essential sameness of cultures within Indonesia (Taylor 1994, 115-6).

After 1998, the Wayang Museum became part of Fauzi Bowo's refurbishment plans for Fatahillah Square. In 2003 the Wayang Museum received a donation from Probosutejo, who also sponsored the previously discussed *Lordly Shades* (1984), to build an extension to the original building (Interview Dachlan, 25th January 2011). In 2009 the museum was preparing the renovation of the original building as part of the refurbishment plan for Fatahillah Square, which was planned for 2010. The museum seized the renovation of the building as an opportunity to refurbish its exhibitions, improve their storage rooms with a donation from the American embassy, while making innovations in their displays by developing an educational 3-D film for children (Interview Kusumawati, 14th July 2009). An enlarged copy of the certificate of the UNESCO Proclamation welcomes the museum's visitors, which marks the global tourist view of the museum. Kusumawati also informed me that the museum was already benefitting from the development of the Fatahillah Square in terms of the number of visitors: these had quadrupled from 21,000 in 2005 to over 80,000 visitors in 2009, and ticket prices were to be raised the year after from 2,000 Rp. to 5,000 Rp. (Interview Kusumawati, 14th July 2009).

The shift of the portfolio of culture into the Department of Tourism and Culture in 1997 made it possible to tie cultural development to tourism and profit making. This immediately affected not only visitor numbers, but also Wayang Museum's policy. It strives 'to turn the Wayang Museum into an educational tourist destination with an international standard for all layers of society'.⁵⁰ The museum is thus expected to educate the tourist coming to Old Town in *wayang* as an example of Indonesian culture by means of displaying the variety of *wayang* in Indonesia. This policy indicates the continuation of New Order cultural discourse as defined as a collection of cultural peaks reflected in the slogan 'Unity in Diversity', through regarding *wayang* as Indonesian culture, made up of all its local

⁵⁰ Menjadikan Museum Wayang sebagai tempat wisata edukatif bertaraf Internasional untuk semua lapisan masyarakat.

variations. This discourse is formulated in the museum's mission in five objectives: to communicate the *wayang* collection as proof of the wealth of Indonesia's cultural history,⁵¹ to provide information on *wayang* from all regions in Indonesia and from abroad,⁵² to organize educational and recreational activities,⁵³ to provide an enjoyable experience for all levels of society,⁵⁴ and to cater to all levels of society⁵⁵ (Interview Kusumawati, 14 July 2009).

The plans also show an international oriented professionalism in the field of heritage and museology. The tasks of the Wayang Museum were assigned by the Provincial Governor of the Special Capital City District (*Daerah Khusus Ibukota*) of Jakarta in 2002 with basic museum tasks to conserve and serve the community and visitors,⁵⁶ and to organize, store, care, hold in custody, research the collection, exhibit and develop it for the benefit of education, history, culture, recreation, social, and economy in both a direct and indirect way.⁵⁷ Its function is defined in ten points consisting of programming and operational plan, procurement proposal and the examination of the collection, the implementation of efforts for publication, exhibitions, collections and marketing, describing and registering the collection, as well as storing, organizing and maintaining it. These ten points also encompass researching the collection and its ethnography, providing guidance and services of cultural education to the community, implementation of management of the museum library, service information about the ethnographical history and the implementation of administrative activities⁵⁸ (Interview Kusumawati, 21 April 2010).

Interestingly, professionals of the Wayang Museum have participated in capacity building projects of the Tropenmuseum in the Netherlands. Since the late 1960s the Tropenmuseum reports to the Dutch department of Foreign Affairs in the portfolio

⁵¹ Mengkomunikasikan koleksi wayang sebagai bukti kekayaan sejarah budaya Indonesia.

⁵² Memberikan informasi mengenai wayang dari seluruh daerah di Indonesia dari luar negeri.

⁵³ Menyelenggarakan kegiatan edukatif dan rekreatif.

⁵⁴ Memberikan pengalaman yang menyenangkan bagi semua lapisan masyarakat.

⁵⁵ Memberikan pelayanan bagi semua lapisan masyarakat.

⁵⁶ Museum Wayang mempunyai tugas melaksanakan konservasi, melayani masyarakat dan pengunjung.

⁵⁷ Museum ini mempunyai tugas mengadakan, menyimpan, merawat, mengamankan, meneliti koleksi, memeragakan, dan mengembangkan untuk kepentingan pendidikan, sejarah, kebudayaan, rekreasi, sosial, dan ekonomi baik langsung maupun tidak langsung.

⁵⁸ penyusunan program dan rencana kegiatan operasional; pengusulan pengadaan koleksi serta sarana; penyelenggaraan usaha-usaha, publikasi, pameran, koleksi dan pemasaran; pelaksanaan pembuatan deskripsi dan registrasi koleksi; penyimpanan, penataan dan perawatan koleksi; penelitian koleksi dan etnografi; pemberian bimbingan dan pelayanan edukasi cultural kepada masyarakat; penyelenggaraan pengelolaan perpustakaan museum; pelayanan informasi tentang sejarah etnografi; pelaksanaan kegiatan ketatausahaan.

development cooperation. One of its tasks in the context of this portfolio is to build capacity in the museum and heritage field with professional partners abroad. The museum thus developed courses in museology, collection preservation and exhibition practices for museum staff in various countries in Africa, Latin America, as well as in Indonesia. In 2000, cooperation between the Tropenmuseum and Jakarta's Municipal Department for Museums and Conservation started. The Wayang Museum is one of Jakarta's municipal museums. The staff of the seven municipal museums, including the Wayang Museum, were trained both in Jakarta and Amsterdam (Van Beurden 2005, 47-50).

Another manifestation of a continuing relation of the Wayang Museum with the Netherlands and the embedding in international heritage discourse is illustrated by the long-term loan of a collection of *Wayang Revolusi* puppets from the World Museum in Rotterdam in 2005. In the Netherlands, *Wayang Suluh* is often referred to as *Wayang Revolusi*, which is not commonly used in Indonesia. Since 1965 the museum had kept the *Wayang Revolusi* set of over 150 puppets made by Raden Mas Sayid, with which stories of the struggle for independence are told, in its collection. Among the set, puppets representing VOC (East Indian Company) officials, Dutch governors, and Indonesian leaders such as Sukarno and Hatta can be recognized. On 23rd April 2005, the mayor of Rotterdam, I.W. Opstelten (b. 1944), symbolically transferred the collection to the then governor of Jakarta, Fauzi Bowo. This was followed by the official transfer on 16th August in Jakarta, the day before the celebration of Indonesia's 60th independence day.

S. Bremer (b. 1952), director of the World Museum, says about the long-term loan: 'In this way, we are exhibiting our common past and strengthening the ties between the twin towns Rotterdam and Jakarta'. The World Museum answered the call of the ambassador for international cultural collaboration, J. Hoekema (b. 1952), for shared cultural heritage. Using the argument of the poor air conditioning system in the Wayang Museum, the World Museum previously had rejected Jakarta's requests for restitution. The long-term loan of the *Wayang Revolusi* set was thus accompanied with climate-controlled showcases to protect the puppets from humidity and heat. The project was part of a broader economic and cultural collaboration between the two cities and was financed by

Dutch and Indonesian funds.⁵⁹ Similar efforts towards sharing heritage were made in the mounting of *Indonesia. The Discovery of the Past* in the same year. This exhibition was a joint-cooperation of the National Museum in Jakarta and the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden, the Netherlands, and held in both Jakarta and Amsterdam (Ter Keurs and Hardiati 2005).

Despite the penetration of international expertise in the field of heritage and museology into museum policy and practice in the Wayang Museum, the displays remained largely unchanged, and continued to display the New Order slogan Unity in Diversity. In 2009 the first room was dedicated to Masterpieces and contained valuable collections of *wayang kulit*, including diamond inlaid puppets from Surakarta. The exhibition then led to a long hallway that displayed *wayang golek* from Bandung and *wayang beber* with some life-size *wayang golek* puppets as decoration. The third exhibition room showed replicas of the *Wayang Revolusi* collection on long-term loan from the World Museum in Rotterdam, as the original ones were still being treated for harmful substances. The replicas were displayed in the climate-controlled showcases funded by the World Museum. In the next room *Wayang Kulit Betawi* (Batavia) was exhibited followed by a room that housed various *gamelan* sets from Betawi and Banyumas.

The exhibition route continued to the second floor where six *wayang* paintings on glass were on display. Room 7 contained an old Chinese *gamelan*. The next room contained a *gamelan* set from East Java, and showed the variety in regional *wayang* forms in Indonesia. It displayed Batak puppets from Sumatra, *Wayang Banyumas*, *Wayang Surakarta*, *Wayang Betawi*, *Wayang Sumatra*, *Wayang Kaper* from Surakarta, and small *wayang kulit* for children. International puppetry was the topic of the next room, where Chinese puppets, Punch and Judy from Great Britain, puppets from India, the United States, Poland, Vietnam, Malaysia, Suriname, France and Myanmar were exhibited. The rest of the museum (two more rooms) continued to show the variety of puppetry within Indonesia taking a topical approach. It contained Amir Hamza, *wayang golek lenong Betawi* with many puppets representing white people, *wayang kulit Madya*, *wayang kulit Sadat*, *wayang*

⁵⁹ <http://www.krachtvancultuur.nl/en/current/2005/may/puppets.html>, accessed on 6 November 2012.

Kancil, wayang Suket, wayang Bambu, wayang Kardus for children, *wayang Wahyu* and so on.

After the renovation in 2010 the exhibition route scarcely changed, but was visually more appealing. The last two rooms containing the international puppetry and various *wayang* genres were now displayed in the renovated building. Other additions were a 3-D film on *wayang* in a special room, and educational explanations on *wayang* iconography were given visual form on the floors of the new building. Everything that is on display is a representation of Indonesian *wayang* that is made up of the variety of local *wayang* forms, which reflects the New Order slogan Unity in Diversity. The exhibition practice in the Wayang Museum is oriented towards the tangible side of the *wayang* performance practice exhibiting puppets, paintings and instruments. The exhibitions focused on regional styles and variations, and puppet theatre around the world. However, the displays gave hardly any context of the performance practice and sense of place or time lacked. Like the display in the colonial period in the Tropenmuseum the exhibition of *wayang* in the Wayang Museum was static and gave a fixed image of a dynamic performance practice. There is no place for the *dalang* in the museum, and as such shows a tradition of anonymous performance, which contrasts sharply with the rise of the *wayang* superstars outside the museum walls. The exhibitions are complemented with one-hour performances on Sundays.

The more global orientation of the Wayang Museum's policy and practice is reflected in the professionalization and the incorporation of international museological standards in the field of education, preservation and display. Activities of the Wayang Museum continue to rely on national and local knowledge and performance practice. For the two-hour *wayang* performances on Sunday the museum draws on a pool of local *dalang* and musicians linked to Pepadi. There are some thirty *dalang* Betawi, some hundred in the Jabotabek region (comprising Jakarta, Bogor, Tangerang and Bekasi), and some forty *wayang golek dalang* in West Java, who take turns in giving the Sunday performances. The Wayang Museum turns to a national network for the programming of the annual Wayang Festival, which stages four nights of *wayang* performances in front of the museum on Fatahillah Square. The objective is to stage various forms of *wayang* every night during one week. Every year lack of funds makes it a challenge to persuade *dalang* from all over the

archipelago to come to Jakarta to perform at the Wayang Festival. For its documentation and research activities the museum cooperates with Sena Wangi, Pepadi and the ISI Academies, mainly those from Surakarta and Bali (Interview Dachlan, 25 January 2011).

The policy and practice of the Wayang Museum thus reflect a complex connection to local performance practice and national and international heritage discourses. For its museum practice the Wayang Museum relies mainly on local knowledge and the national network, but the building itself and its location on the Fatahillah Square in Jakarta's Old Town are decisive in the museum's relation to international heritage discourse. The remaining part of this chapter is an analysis of *wayang* discourse in the Candidature File for the UNESCO Masterpiece program submitted in 2002.

The paradox of UNESCO heritage

As we mentioned in the introduction, the concept of intangible heritage was developed to give room to the diversity of cultural expressions around the globe. The new heritage concept aimed to hold up living traditions that were in danger of extinction. Supporting the social environment would provide the necessary conditions for the production of intangible culture. In this process the value of what Kirschenblatt-Gimblett calls the 'carriers' and 'transmitters' of traditions was acknowledged as well as their entire life space and social world (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 52-54). To achieve attention for the diversity in cultural expressions, UNESCO launched landmark activities such as the Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore in 1989, and the Living Human Treasure system in 1993, which acknowledged 'persons who possess to a high degree the knowledge and skills required for performing or re-creating specific elements of intangible cultural heritage'.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, the concept of intangible heritage was developed (Aikawa-Faure 2009, 13).

In 2001, the development of the new heritage concept got a boost from the first proclamation of nineteen (out of thirty-two nominations) Masterpieces of traditional cultural expressions. The objective of the Masterpiece program was to encourage the identification, preservation, and promotion of traditional and popular cultural expressions

⁶⁰ <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/?pg=00061>, accessed 24th February 2014.

as masterpieces of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity. Biannually, national governments, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations could nominate for the list candidates that were endangered and deserved preservation for future generations. Nominations had to be submitted according to the extensive instructions specified in the *Guide for the Presentation of Masterpieces* (2001). This guide prescribed that nominations had to provide information about questions on identification, justification, and preservation management along with a description of the cultural expression being nominated. Additional criteria related to the significance of the cultural expression in society, such as historical roots, affirmation of identity, excellence, and uniqueness. In addition, the risk of disappearance had to be mapped and accordingly a plan of action for preservation had to be presented. Upon submission an eighteen-member jury of academic experts and specialists evaluated the candidature files, after which UNESCO's Director-General proclaimed the selected Masterpieces (Nas 2002, 139).

From the start the notion of 'masterpiece', the notion of 'universal value' and the 'method of implication of the practitioners' community' were topics of heated debates between member states. Despite this criticism the project was launched as an 'experimental' program (Aikawa-Faure 2009, 20). After the launch of the program, discussions continued from the academic field, mainly from anthropologists and ethnomusicologists. It concerned the question whether such phenomena should actually be preserved, and if so, why specifically these? Is it even possible to preserve culture and folklore? Might it not lead to fossilization and alienation of the expression from society? (Nas 2002, 139). Most of the questions posed – of which the ones mentioned are just a few - expressed concerns with who decides about heritage, for whom, and to what ends. We will discuss these issues in the Candidature File for *wayang* below. Museums' practices involve research, presentation and protection, which seemed similar to the means of how intangible heritage should be safeguarded. The new concept of intangible cultural heritage as 'living, vital and embedded in social relationships' also raised questions whether museums could actually safeguard intangible heritage. Other concerns were whether museums should be involved at all in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage and the ways in which to do so (Kurin 2004, 7).

Kirschenblatt-Gimblett in her seminal article 'Intangible Heritage as Metacultural Production' (2004) clearly formulates the problems of the concept of Masterpieces. Drawing on her previous work (1995 and 1998) Kirschenblatt-Gimblett argued that the list of Masterpieces maintained colonial discourses of culture, and as such the division between 'the West and the rest'. The Masterpiece list aimed at raising awareness for neglected communities and traditions, but the concept of intangible cultural heritage continued to be Eurocentric in essence because the list admitted 'elite' forms associated with royal courts and state-sponsored temples, as long as they were not European or American (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 57). Kirschenblatt-Gimblett observed that the candidates for recognition as Masterpieces were defined as traditions, whereas world heritage as a phenomenon was not. The consequence, she said, was that intangible cultural heritage was subject to interventions that were alien to what defined the constituent masterpieces. The list of Masterpieces was thus 'not indigenous, not minority, and not non-Western, though no less intangible' (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 57).

W. van Zanten (2004, 37) argued along the same lines that terms such as 'traditional culture' and 'folklore' evolved from 'an earlier system of colonialist thought and domination'. Smith adopted this criticism and argued that the concept of intangible cultural heritage not so much preserved heritage, but rather reproduced 'the legitimacy of certain cultural values, historical and social experiences and understandings about the world' in selecting masterpieces, as 'the assumption of universality denies the possibility of dissonance' (Smith 2006, 110-112). As stated in the introduction, such critical debates resulted in the adaptation of the concept of intangible cultural heritage and the termination of the Masterpiece concept in 2005. In 2008, the 90 previously proclaimed Masterpieces were incorporated in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity that accompanied the Convention of 2003. The Representative List is made up of those intangible heritage practices and expressions that help demonstrate the diversity of intangible cultural heritage and raise awareness of its importance.

Indeed, interventions of the kind Kirschenblatt-Gimblett mentions are actually what UNESCO aimed to avoid with the Masterpiece program as its principal purpose was 'to honor or distinguish certain oral heritage in order to prevent outside forces undermining their existence' (Aikawa-Faure 2009, 19). Arguments in favor of the Masterpiece program

were found in the ideas that urbanization, modernization, and globalization constituted a great danger for the diversity of human culture. These processes were thought to be leading to a tremendous loss of oral and cultural repertoires, traditional social identities, and skills. UNESCO argues that protection, promotion, and revitalization of cultural configuration would make it possible to conserve these elements for future generations, and would provide opportunities to exploit them and create new forms of community identification. UNESCO's rationale is thus twofold: on the one hand it aims at conservation, and on the other it wants to provide opportunities for identity construction. (Nas 2002, 142-143).

The Masterpiece program had the effect it aimed for: it sparked discussions about intangible heritage, which, as a concept, meanwhile had been further developed for a new convention, and despite the reservations, this development changed the way UNESCO thinks about heritage. This shift in the concept of heritage is often referred to as the 'anthropologization' of heritage or the 'anthropological' or 'alternative' heritage discourse. The concept of intangible heritage, previously, and sometimes still, called folklore came to include not only the masterpieces – the cultural products or traditions - but the masters, the practitioners as well. This contrasted with the earlier folklore model that supported scholars and institutions in documenting and preserving a record of disappearing traditions. Intangible cultural heritage is culture, just as tangible heritage is, but it is also like natural heritage, in the way that intangible cultural heritage is very much alive (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 52-54).

The 'anthropological' heritage discourse saw intangible cultural heritage expressed in memory, performance, and oral culture, and therefore strives to provide alternative ways to interact with the past. Consequently, cultural heritage is regarded not as a dead relic from the past, but rather as 'a corpus of processes and practices that are constantly recreated and renewed by present generations effecting a connection with the past' (Alivizatou 2008, 103). While debates continued, the General Conference of UNESCO unanimously adopted the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (ICHC) at the 32nd session in October 2003. The 2003 Convention was put into force on 20th April 2006. Article 2 of the 2003 Convention defined intangible cultural heritage as '...the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the

objects, instruments, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups, and in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage...’ The 2003 Convention describes intangible heritage as oral traditions and expressions, such as epic tales, music, song, dance, puppetry and theatre, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe.⁶¹

The strife to raise awareness and appreciation for the diversity in cultural expressions through intergovernmental cultural policy in itself is not problematic, but taking the World Heritage Convention of 1972 as a model for the 2003 Convention continues to give rise to a difficulty. The World Heritage Convention and the underlying concept of heritage was primarily focused on preservation and safeguarding material remains from the past. As a consequence of concerns to preserve West-European architecture and archaeology it acknowledged and privileged non-Western manifestations and practices of heritage. By taking the World Heritage Convention as a model, these European oriented values continue to be meaningful and embedded in the 2003 Convention. The paradoxical result is that the concept of intangible cultural heritage reproduces the ideology it aims to question. I will demonstrate this in the next section in which I will analyze the Candidature File for *wayang*.

The *Wayang* Puppet Theatre was proclaimed a Masterpiece in 2003. The nomination of *wayang* as a Masterpiece was an initiative of the national *wayang* organizations established under Suharto’s New Order, Sena Wangi and Pepadi. In the year preceding the proclamation they prepared Indonesia’s Candidature File and Addendum for *wayang* in accordance with the UNESCO Guide for the Presentation of Candidature Files (Interview Sulebar, 11 May 2010). Sena Wangi had ‘coordinated a team of researchers, experts and film production unit who have worked hard for 5 months from April until August 2002, to produce a 10 minute documentary Video Film as well as a summary research report for submission to UNESCO.’ (Candidature File 2002, 10). The result of these efforts was the submission to UNESCO of a Candidature File for *wayang* that consisted of two parts, written in English: the initial Candidature File entitled *WAYANG. The Traditional Puppetry and Drama of Indonesia*, and an *Addendum* containing ‘additional information,

⁶¹ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001325/132540e.pdf>, accessed 13th August 2013.

data and documentation' that was sent at a later stage to complete the submission (Addendum 2002, 3). Upon submission, the Candidature File was evaluated by an international jury that took into account the criteria of outstanding value demonstrated through either 'a high concentration of outstanding intangible cultural heritage or an outstanding value from a historical, artistic, ethnological, sociological, anthropological, linguistic or literary point of view' (Guide for the Presentation of Candidature Files 2001, Art. 21).

The preservationist stance towards *wayang* is mirrored in the text about *wayang* on UNESCO's website. It is stated that *wayang* should be safeguarded 'to compete successfully with modern forms of pastimes such as video, television or karaoke, performers tend to accentuate comic scenes at the expense of the story line and to replace musical accompaniment with pop tunes, leading to the loss of some characteristic features.'⁶² The conservationist attitude is also expressed in the Candidature File of *wayang* 'It is very important and useful because of the global phenomenon of the erosion of culture. Human values are beginning to be worn away because of the appearance of the culture of consumerism' (Candidature File 2002, 9).

It is argued that *wayang* should be preserved because 'Among these many varieties of *wayang*, there are those [...] which are still relatively active, as well as those which are extinct or almost extinct, mainly due to competition from modern electronic media such as TV, etc. Whatever the reasons may be, it can be said that in the past decades there has been a steady decline in the frequency of *wayang* performances of all styles, and even the more active styles are threatened with deterioration of their arts and even possible extinction, unless serious measures are adopted to ensure their conservation and development' (Candidature File 2002, 16). These quotes argue that modern media, such as video and television threaten *wayang*, but also modern forms of entertainment. Commerce in this discourse is regarded as a threat to *wayang*'s existence, whereas, as we have seen, it could also be argued that commerce was a new incentive for *wayang* and *wayang* innovation.

The action plan *Panca Krida* (Five Actions) describes the plans for the safeguarding of *wayang*. It points out that many measures have already been taken, such as the

⁶² <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/RL/00063>, accessed 10th September 2012.

introduction of Membership Cards for Pepadi members, and the establishment of a Code of Ethics (*Pancadarma Dalang Indonesia*) for *dalang*, which came into force in 1996. This means that this code was developed and came into force under Suharto. In 1999, a *dalang* explained that this code entailed that *dalang* have a responsibility to temper their criticism of political leaders (Weintraub 2004, 210). Further, 'Sena Wangi and Pepadi have also tried to exercise care and quality control with regards to groups of individuals wishing to perform *wayang* overseas, both in terms of content of the performances, as well as regarding the artists involved' (Addendum 2002, 18). To guarantee the transmission of the skill and knowledge of *wayang* Sena Wangi and Pepadi designed a plan to promote its preservation and development 'through the *sanggar* or *padepokan* (traditional schools of *wayang*), as well as through formal educational institutions such as STSI (now ISI) Surakarta, Denpasar, and Bandung etc.' (Addendum 2002, 19). The action plan *Panca Krida* shows that the measures undertaken to ensure the preservation and safeguarding of *wayang* are rooted in the institutional and controlling structures established under Suharto's New Order.

Preservation however, was not the main aim of Indonesia's Candidature File. This becomes clear from the fact that the Addendum including the action plan, was sent to UNESCO not with the initial submission, but at a later stage 'In response to M. Noriko Aikawa's letter', because the initial Candidature lacked 'a five year plan of action describing how Sena Wangi plans to preserve and develop *wayang* both locally and on a national level' (Addendum 2002, 3). The Candidature File is used to build a national identity, the other UNESCO leitmotiv of community identification. General Chairman of Sena Wangi, H. Solichin (b. ?) explicitly writes in his foreword to the Candidature File that 'Wayang has succeeded in becoming one of the identities of the Indonesian nation' (Candidature File, 7) and for that reason 'people all over the world endeavor to preserve and develop *wayang*.' This shows that *wayang*'s proclamation as a Masterpiece is utilized as an opportunity for branding Indonesia for national identity politics on an international platform. Solichin hints in this direction by dating the Candidature File on Independence Day, 17th August 2002 (Candidature File 2002, 7).

Sena Wangi is explicit about its aim to turn *wayang* into a pillar of national culture. 'The vision of Sena Wangi is the desire to make *wayang* one of the pillars of national

culture' (Exhibition Catalogue 2004, 34). It is argued that 'For the people of Indonesia, *wayang* is one of the nation's identities which can arouse feelings of solidarity towards unity. Therefore, *wayang* has a significance and a great role in the life of the Indonesian nation towards national cultural development, especially in creating the character of the nation.' (Candidature File 2002, 14). This is illustrated with the claim that '*wayang* has its roots in society because almost all areas of Indonesia are familiar with *wayang*' (Candidature File 2002, 9) 'to the extent that now there are over sixty varieties of *wayang* in Indonesia, spread among almost all the provinces of the country' (Candidature File 2002, 13).

Solichin expresses the hope that *wayang* 'may be advanced further to become a cultural asset of the world' because 'the great attention which has been directed to *wayang* by the Government of Indonesia and UNESCO is extremely useful and valuable. *Wayang* will appear and be recognized as a cultural masterpiece of the world. This appreciation is a source of great pride for all those involved in *wayang* and indeed for the entire Indonesian nation' (Candidature File 2002, 7). In Solichin's view, *wayang* should be meaningful on a global level because international acclaim is useful for domestic policies. The discourse that seeks to nationalize *wayang* thus turns to acknowledgement at an international level through the newly developed concept of intangible cultural heritage. The recognition of *wayang* as a Masterpiece would confirm its position as national culture and raise Indonesia's image at a transnational level.

The claims of *wayang*'s value as a Masterpiece, endorsed with references to western scholarship and international acclaim, bring to mind Sukarno's legitimization of *wayang* when he called on the Dutch scholar Brandes to prove *wayang* as the essence of Indonesia. The same argumentation is applied in the Candidature File: 'Western culture experts have even admired *wayang*, and stated that *Wayang Kulit Purwa* is "...the most complex and sophisticated theatrical form in the world".' The Candidature File does not indicate who is quoted here, but valorizes *wayang* by the enumeration of Western scholars who conducted research and thus valued *wayang* enough to study it in order to prove that *wayang* is and will be 'very attractive to foreign audiences' (Candidature File 2002, 13).

International acclaim is used not only to affirm nationalist discourse, but also for domestic policies. *Wayang* is used as a marker of ethnic identity through an emphasis on its

historical roots in Javanese culture. *Wayang*'s Javanese roots are legitimized with linguistic arguments: 'The originality of *wayang* may be traced from the use of words such as *wayang*, *kelir*, *blencong*, *kepyak*, *dalang*, *cempala*, etc. These words are all original Javanese words. The language of *wayang* has continued to develop slowly but surely from Old Javanese or *Kawi*, to New Javanese.' However to relate this ethnic identity to the nationalist discourse it is stated that 'it is not impossible for *wayang* to use Indonesian language. *Wayang* always uses a mixed language which is usually referred to as *basa rinengga*, which means language which has been composed beautifully in accordance with its use.' (Candidature File 2002, 15).

That the Candidature File is used to highlight Javanese identity, is endorsed by the fact that after *wayang*, the *keris* and *batik*, both Javanese cultural expressions, were proclaimed Masterpieces in 2005 and 2009 respectively. Thereafter, *angklung*, also from Java, was inscribed on the Representative list in 2010. It was only in 2011 that the first cultural expression from outside Java was inscribed on the Representative list, the *Saman* dance from Sumatra, followed by *Noken*, the woven bag from Papua, in 2012.⁶³ The first four Indonesian recognitions were thus of Javanese origin, which indicates the Javanese domination of Indonesian culture represented in intangible cultural heritage. The ethnic stance is then transferred into the nationalist frame. Javanese culture is Indonesian culture, which calls to mind the conviction many Javanese had during both the Sukarno and Suharto eras that being Javanese was to be the ultimate Indonesian. Javanese cultural nationalist discourse is now linked to the international heritage discourse.

We recognize an emphasis on the deeper, mystical, and philosophical meaning of *wayang*. It is believed that 'Philosophical values are the main content and power of the *wayang* performance. *Wayang* is not simply an entertainment.' In fact, 'The *wayang* stories and all their paraphernalia effectively express the entirety of human life. The empty arena before the *wayang* performance symbolizes the universe before God's creation. The *kelir* or screen illustrates the sky, the banana trunk below the screen is the earth, the *blencong* or lamp is the sun, the *wayang* puppets symbolize human beings and other beings who inhabit the earth, the *gamelan* or music symbolize harmony of life, [...] the *wayang* performance is

⁶³ <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00011&results=>, accessed 13th August 2013.

an illustration of a spiritual journey to understand the meaning of life and the process of approaching the Supreme God.’ (Candidature File 2002, 13-14). *Wayang* is described as: ‘[...] using symbols which contain characteristic Indonesia thinking as a hidden heritage of humanity. Following the tracks of the form of Indonesian culture reveals a pattern that is the endeavour of mankind to achieve perfection based on God. The art of *wayang* is a product of thinking, feeling and willing which are a human urge or longing to achieve that perfection. The audience enjoys that *wayang* by intuitive process, intellectual cleansing and moral perfection to achieve spiritual enlightenment’ (Candidature File 2002, 16).

New Order discourse defining national culture as a collection of local cultural peaks in the slogan ‘Unity in Diversity’ is reflected in the statement that ‘*wayang* is part of the ancient and original culture of Indonesia, and is the summit of provincial culture’ (Candidature File 2002, 14). The concept is also mirrored in the selection of just five *wayang* forms for documentation and inclusion in the ‘national candidature file’, which was made by the Day to Day Governing Board of Sena Wangi. *Wayang Bali*, Bali; *Wayang Kulit Purwa*, Central Java; *Wayang Golek Sunda*, West Java; *Wayang Banjar*, South Kalimantan; *Wayang Palembang*; South Sumatra were chosen to represent Wayang Indonesia (Candidature File 2002, 14). Five local varieties represent *Wayang Indonesia*, just as Indonesian culture was made up of peaks of local cultures, the unity of *wayang* in the diversity of *wayang*.

Upon submission, the Candidature File was evaluated by an international jury that took into account the criteria of outstanding value demonstrated through either ‘a high concentration of outstanding intangible cultural heritage or an outstanding value from a historical, artistic, ethnological, sociological, anthropological, linguistic or literary point of view’ (Guide for the Presentation of Masterpieces 2001, Art. 21). *Wayang*’s uniqueness is demonstrated with the argument that ‘The culture of *wayang* and the art of puppetry are indeed unique and advanced, because the *wayang* performance aesthetically combines many types of art, for example, the art of drama, vocal arts, carving and painting, etc. with the central role being played by the *dalang* or puppeteer’ (Candidature File 2002, 14). In addition ‘*Wayang* is present in its complete form, in aesthetics, ethics as well as its philosophy. Ethical values contained in *wayang* are not restricted to personal life, but also reach a wider target for social, community and national life’ (Candidature File 2002, 14).

The Candidature File is not a scholarly exercise, but rather represents a popular understanding of *wayang* which describes it as essential, philosophical and mystical which resembles the *wayang* discourse of Javanese cultural nationalists, who had striven for preservation of Javanese culture in the beginning of the twentieth century. It is also very reminiscent of the New Order rhetoric that was preoccupied with the refined and spiritualized ways of traditional *priyayi* whose culture had achieved perfection in the nineteenth century, but is now forever lost. The fear of loss is reflected in the current international heritage discourse, which blames this loss on the entertaining and modernizing aspects of *wayang*. This element was already present in earlier discourses of *wayang*. In the discourse in the Candidature File *wayang* is emphatically presented as something far more than mere entertainment rendering its current popular entertainment form less valuable and invisible in authorized heritage discourse. The Candidature File is thus a representation of *wayang* based on essentialized and stereotyped discourses of *wayang*, that builds on colonial and postcolonial, mainly New Order discourse and power structures. This observation endorses Jones's statement that while cultural policy in Indonesia is becoming more heterogeneous and plural, it still generally uses cultural discourses of the New Order (Jones 2005, 229).

What does the submission of the Candidature File and Addendum, and the subsequent proclamation of *wayang* as a UNESCO Masterpiece tell us about heritage? It is clear that *wayang* is supposed to boost Indonesia's reputation on the international heritage stage. As a supra-national organization UNESCO plays a key role in the global arena of status competition that centers on the multiple symbolic significance of the World Heritage List. My observations also endorse the arguments made by M. Askew (2010), who points to the 'magic' of the World Heritage List, in an anthropological sense, to indicate its power as a signifier to various actors. Listed sites are a symbol of national status for governments; the compilation and continuing elaboration of the World Heritage List and others, such as the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, validates the continuing activities of UNESCO as an authoritative force of cultural status and inclusion and exclusion. Askew argues that member states manipulate UNESCO's symbols in the pursuit of their own political agendas by appropriating globally-endowed status. This makes UNESCO complicit in nation-states' domestic projects of cultural reification and domination (Askew 2010, 41).

The proclamation of *wayang* as a Masterpiece works in the same way: it is considered as a token of prestige and is a symbol of national status for Indonesia. It is a tool to mark Indonesia's own identity on the global stage: it provides Indonesia with a sense of pride. In this way the proclamation functions like the World Heritage List as was argued by B. van der Aa (2005).

The Candidature File and Addendum endorse Sastramidjaja's observation that despite the association of globalization with mobility and fluidity, it is as much about the rediscovery and re-appreciation of a rooted self and past, whether or not from a desire to sustain old values as anchors in times of rapid change (Sastramidjaja 2010, 191). This is illustrated by my observation that the Candidature File is clearly used to mark Javanese identity within Indonesia. The *wayang* discourse in the Candidature File shows a continuation of New Order discourse of *wayang* that in turn was based on discourse established in colonial times. The heritage discourse of *wayang* thus relies on a continuation of New Order structures of power and authority. The consequence is that the discourses of *wayang* that have become dominant over time are now authorized by a supra-national organizations, which renders alternative discourses even further invisible. Over time, these understandings of *wayang* have taken on a kind of truth that has now been lent new authority by UNESCO. *Wayang* is represented in this way to frame it into the new international heritage discourse that in turn also has developed from colonial values of culture.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed how tendencies towards decentralization and democratization of the post-1998 era resonate in *wayang* discourse and practice. *Wayang* performances have become more democratic spaces in which the multiplicity of voices is reflected in the audibility and visibility of the audience, and consequently the interaction between the *dalang* and the audience in *wayang* recordings. The tendency towards cultural diversification and multiple cultural interpretations is found in grass-roots initiatives taken in the field of *wayang* that explicitly aim at providing alternative interpretations for *wayang* as opposed to the authorized discourses of the government. However, even though the dynamics of a *wayang* show are now more audible and visible in recordings, these

documentation efforts in cassettes, DVD's and VCD's are all interventions in *wayang* discourse that are alien to the performance practice itself in the same manner as the documentation of *wayang* in texts.

Policy and practice in the Wayang Museum in Jakarta show mainly a continuation of the cultural concept developed during Suharto's New Order, that of national Unity in Diversity. Local cultural peaks together made national culture. In the same way, *wayang* as a national expression is made of local *wayang* forms. The Wayang Museum relies on local resources and knowledge for the weekly *wayang* performances, but in its museum practice, the museum increasingly makes contact with and turns to international heritage discourse and practice. Through courses in museum management, conservation and exhibition practices, the museum is firmly linked to professional museum standards applied all over the world. The Wayang Museum is most distinctly linked to the international heritage discourse and practice as a result of its location in a former colonial building on the Fatahillah Square in the Old Town in Jakarta. This area is being molded into a tourist destination with global appeal, for which international standards and expectations are taken as a guideline.

Wayang is even more explicitly linked to the international heritage discourse by its proclamation as a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2003. Examination of the Candidature File reveals that the heritage discourse of *wayang* discourse is a re-authorization of all previously developed discourses. All discourses of *wayang* build on each other, refer to each other, authorize and re-authorize each other in the Candidature File. The discourse developed in colonial times that submerged the entertainment aspect of the performance in favor of the emphasis on its philosophical, mystical, and religious meaning can be discerned. Nevertheless, in the second chapter we saw that specifically the entertainment aspect provided opportunities to commercialize *wayang*, which led to fixing and standardization of *wayang* as well. The Candidature File also shows that *wayang*'s proclamation is utilized for two goals. In the first place, *wayang*'s proclamation will show the world the great cultural achievement of Indonesia. On the other hand, the proclamation of *wayang* is used as an affirmation of Javanese identity on a national level through international acknowledgement. This means that although UNESCO

has the aim to highlight global cultural diversification, it is being utilized and manipulated by the Indonesian government for its own agenda.

In my view, the heritage discourse is yet another authorization of previous discourses of *wayang*, which results in a further fixing of the already entrenched discourse that developed in colonial times, which was re-authorized in postcolonial times. As we have observed in the previous chapters, documentation of and establishing guidelines for the *wayang* performance tradition produced texts and other forms of registration, such as cassettes, video's, DVD's and VCD's. Such forms of mediation invariably create tangibility. The result of the Candidature File and the following proclamation of *wayang* is that yet another text about *wayang* has been produced and authorized by UNESCO, an organization with global authority in the field of cultural heritage. As a consequence, anyone can pick up the text of the Candidature File, read it, and accordingly judge the *wayang* performance practice based on what is written in the File. The effect is that if a *dalang* applies a different or alternative approach or discourse, somebody will say 'that's not the right version'. This is what has been happening to *wayang* since the start of the documentation of the performance practice in colonial times. Heritage discourse of *wayang* is thus reminiscent of the preservationist stance of the Javanese courts in the early twentieth century and the national cultural approach under Suharto. It seems to emanate from a concern that old *wayang* forms are vanishing and nothing new that is valuable is replacing that what is lost. To discover how *dalang* cope with authorized discourse in their performance practice, the second part of this thesis will investigate how three individual *dalang* deal with these authorized discourses.

Chapter 4

Purbo Asmoro: the performance of academic standards



Ki Purbo Asmoro, 27th June 2010, Sragen. By S.N. Boonstra.

The investigation into how authorized discourses of *wayang* affect current *wayang* performance practices revealed that performance practice and discourse are inextricably linked. I became acquainted with *wayang* performance practice and performers through reading of scholarly discourse first. The most famous *dalang*, such as Ki Anom Suroto, Ki Manteb Soedharsono, and Ki Nartosabdho, as well as many other well-known *dalang*, featured in academic publications. However, these *dalang* did not appear, for example, in the Wayang Museum in Jakarta, although many of them had also performed at the annual Wayang Festival organized by the museum. As mentioned in the introduction, I tried to verify academic discourse with popular discourses about *dalang* by the general public in Indonesia. During my first fieldwork session in 2009, I asked people everywhere I went which *dalang* they knew and appreciated, and for what reason. The most popular and well-known *dalang* turned out still to be Anom Suroto, Manteb Soedharsono and Nartosabdho, but I also got on the track of another *dalang*, who had previously escaped my attention.

In 2009, I presented my research in the academic setting of Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) in Yogyakarta, including my selection of *dalang*. A small number of established professors of *wayang* commented on my research and suggested I include Ki Purbo Asmoro. Until then I had not encountered Ki Purbo Asmoro either in academic writings or in my conversations about *wayang* on the streets of Indonesia. Soedarsono, a well-known emeritus professor of *wayang* based in Yogyakarta, has written influential studies on the subject. He explained that *dalang* could be divided into three categories: those who use the *pakem* - stories that are standard and classical repertoire, and usually, but not exclusively, derived straight from an event in the Indian version. Examples of *dalang* who make use of the *pakem* are Anom Suroto from Surakarta and Timbul Hadiprayitno from Yogyakarta. Then there are *dalang* who graduated from ISI and who therefore could be regarded as very academic. *Dalang* working outside both the *pakem* and ISI are *dalang* like Enthous Susmono and Asep Sunandar Sunarya, the *wayang golek* superstar featuring in Weintraub's work. Soedarsono pointed out that the *dalang* outside the *pakem* generally work far away from the courts of Surakarta and Yogyakarta, and are therefore freer in their interpretation of *wayang* stories and performance practice.

In Soedarsono's categorization, Purbo pre-eminently offers the perspective of ISI, the Indonesian Institute for the Arts. Purbo graduated from ISI Surakarta, holds an MA

degree from UGM in Performing Arts, and has already been teaching over twenty years at ISI where he was educated (Interview Soedarsono, 10th August 2009). A categorization similar to Soedarsono's is made by F. Katz-Harris, curator of Asian and Middle Eastern Folk Art at the Museum of International Folk Art (MOIFA) in Santa Fe, New Mexico in the USA. She distinguishes three performance styles: traditional, contemporary, and a hybrid form that combines both traditional and contemporary styles. As an example of the traditional *wayang* style Katz-Harris regards Purbo Asmoro as 'one of many *dalang* who take a traditional approach, but still incorporate new and innovative features' (Katz-Harris 2010, 11). Persuaded and encouraged by the advice of Soedarsono I decided to include Purbo Asmoro in my research. After some time trying to find a way to get acquainted, the BPPI referred me to his acting agent, K. Emerson, who is of American origin, but has lived in Java for over twenty years.

The fact that Purbo Asmoro had not come to my attention at the start of my research and the urging of university professors to include him as an example of academic *dalang* indicates that academic *wayang* scholars, both Indonesian and foreign, value Purbo Asmoro's academic background. This raises various questions, such as how his academic background relates to his performance practice, and what 'academic' means in *wayang* performance practice. In this chapter I intend to investigate to what extent Purbo's performance practice reflects academic discourse, and to what extent academic discourses affect audience appreciation.

Purbo Asmoro – *Dalang Priyayi*

I met Ki Purbo Asmoro for the first time on 27th June 2010. After a long search I finally got in contact with his acting agent and agreed to tag along to a performance by Purbo on the occasion of a circumcision (*sunatan*) in Sragen on Central Java. Sitting cross-legged on the stage between the *gamelan* musicians, I watched him perform. Next to me sat his acting agent, who began to inform me about Purbo's performance style. Purbo was born as the first child to Ki Dhamiri Sumarno and Ibu Rumiati and is the seventh generation of *dalang* in Dersana, Pacitan, East Java. His father Sumarno was a famous local *dalang* and his grandmother Painem had been a *dalang* as well. As a teenager, Purbo started to study at the *Karawitan* (classical Javanese music) High School (*Sekolah Mengenal Karawitan*

Indonesia, or High School for Karawitan) in Surakarta in 1977. He first enrolled in the department of *Karawitan*, which proved to be '*kurang mantap*' or less suitable. Therefore he switched to the department of dance after six months: after three months he realized that dance also did not entirely fitted his needs and took his chances in the department of *pedalangan* or puppetry (Interview Purbo Asmoro, 18th January 2011).

Although Purbo was already well versed in *wayang* stories and was able to make puppets and manipulate them, he only became really passionate about *wayang* when he entered the *pedalangan* department and delved further into puppetry. He started to be invited as a professional *dalang* in '*desa dekat Pacitan*', villages close to Pacitan, at the age of 19, while still attending the *Karawitan* school (Interview Purbo Asmoro, 18th January 2011). These invitations stimulated and inspired Purbo Asmoro to learn more about *pedalangan*. From then on, Purbo began to perform to earn money for his school expenses and daily needs. After graduation from High School he continued studying at ASKI, which became the STSI and finally ISI in Surakarta, and from which he graduated in 1986. The year after Purbo became a staff member of the department of *pedalangan* at ISI Surakarta. In 1988 he made his entry into the Solonese professional *dalang* community as a result of his performance at Anom Suroto's *Rebo Legen* (purboasmoro.com, accessed 10th November 2012).

From 1986 his fame spread when he performed several times at the famous *Rebo Legen* evenings at Anom Suroto's place in Surakarta. *Rebo Legen* performances were held every thirty-five days (the intersection of the five-day Javanese weeks and seven-day Julian week) on the eve of Anom Suroto's Javanese birthday, or *wetonan*. Suroto invited *dalang* from all over Java to perform in his home for payment or exchange of performance. Exchanging with Anom Suroto was a clever move as his performances were very expensive. Other *dalang* and *wayang* lovers were invited to these performances, and many students from ISI Surakarta and other art academies attended. These performances differed from other *wayang* performances in that they gathered a number of *dalang* from different areas in one place. Since so many well-known *dalang* attended these events, performers often found themselves in a position to amuse their colleagues and friends and make fun of their host in a friendly way. Thus the style of flashy puppet movements (*sabetan*), suggestive

humor, and the breaking of conventions had become dominant in these performances (Sears 1996, 240).

Rebo Legen were significant performance events in the world of Solonese *wayang*. Innovative styles from one area of Central Java were seen at these performances and then transmitted to other areas of Java. Students from the fine arts academies saw a side of tradition they do not often encounter in their formal schooling. Some *dalang* stayed away from *Rebo Legen* as they disliked the political association of the host with Golkar. *Rebo Legen* performances were dynamic and the audiences loved them. It is through the innovations seen at these performances that one knew that the *wayang* tradition was still alive and vital, and instructors from the fine arts academies might lend new types of texture to these performance events (Sears 1996, 242). Indeed, many teachers of ISI have attended *Rebo Legen* performances, and I was able to attend twice in 2009. However, Anom Suroto has not organized *Rebo Legen* events since 2010.

At performances like this invited and uninvited guests share the same space. Many other conventions are broken too. There is often interaction between the audience and the performers, and on occasion the *dalang* will turn around and say something to the host or a critic. Many modern and English words have worked their way into a tradition that in the past had frowned upon the entry of Indonesian into inappropriate parts of the plays. The *sabetan* are very innovative, and often puppets are thrown off the screen or onto the screen in unconventional and abrupt ways. Fights take place between characters who would never fight in conventional performances, and the jokes often begin in the first audience hall scene, a point when humor was usually banned (Sears 1996, 241).

Starting such a performance event has become a certain tradition and a marker of status and prestige as a *dalang*. After Anom Suroto's famous *Rebo Legen* (Monday Legi) Manteb Soedharsono, who rose to stardom in the early 1980s, established his own Javanese birthday event called *Selasa Legen* (Tuesday Legi). Indicating his success and fame, Purbo Asmoro - by some characterized as a rising young star - established his Javanese birthday event called *Minggu Paingan* (Sunday Paingan) in 2011. The first of these took place after a big refurbishment of his house, and the establishment of a cultural arts center at his home, which can also be regarded as an indication of his growing success and fame.

Purbo made his appearance on the international performance stage in 1990 at the Southbank Centre in London. Thereafter many other international tours followed to, among other places, France, Greece, Singapore, Japan, Bolivia, India and the USA. His current performing troupe Mayangkara (*Mangesthi Wayang Kagugan Rahayu*) was founded in 1992. He obtained a master's degree in performance art from Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta in 2004. His thesis discussed the influence of Tristuti Rahmadi Suryasaputra's Work on *Wayang Kulit* Performance Style in Surakarta and is entitled *The presence of puppetry in the work of Tristuti Rahmadi Surya Saputra in the performance of Wayang Kulit in the Surakarta Style (Kehadiran Naskah Pedhalangan Karya Tristuti Rahmadi Surya Saputra Dalam Pertunjukan Wayang Kulit Gaya Surakarta)*.

Purbo claims to love *Bahasa Wayang*, the *wayang* language and likes literature very much (*saya suka sekali dengan sastra*). He told me that he notes down sentences and phrases he likes or that touch him. There are times that he does not entirely understand the texts in *Bahasa Wayang* and has to translate the texts with the help of a dictionary. For the composition of his *wayang* stories Purbo likes to go find sources (*saya suka mencari sumber*) to create his own story inspired by and based on those sources. He uses a large variety of sources of inspiration, such as books, texts of Javanese literature (*tulisan sastra Jawa*), video recordings, cassette tapes, and stories by other *dalang*. He said he turns to other *dalang*, because in his heart he wants to become on his own from their teachings (*dalam hati ingin menjadi diri sendiri dari pekal mereka*) and pointed to portraits on the walls of the staff room at ISI where I was interviewing him. He claims to like all *dalang* (*suka semua dalang*), but especially looks to the work of senior *dalang* because of their unique experience (*dalang-dalang yang tua pengalaman yang tersendiri*). Purbo mentions Nartosabdho as a great inspiration due to his vocal and dramatic abilities and skills. From all the material Purbo gathers he distills what he thinks is interesting and composes a *wayang* performance (Interview Purbo, 18th January 2011).

About his performance style Purbo explained that he follows the classical track with a contemporary varnish (*jalur saya klasik yang warna kekinian*). Classical means to him the common convention since the times of the court of Kartosuro and since the times of the Wali Songo who are believed to have brought *wayang* to Java (*konvensi sejak dulu, sejak kraton Kartosuro, sejak zaman wali konvensi yang umum, wayang seperti itu*) (Interview

Purbo, 31st January 2011). On his website Purbo explains that ‘It’s [*wayang*, SB] classical because I stick to conventional stories. But I also innovate by staging episodes.’ Purbo thus remains loyal to the *pakem*, the *dalang*’s handbook, but he often adapts *wayang* by taking into account moral and educational considerations. According to the information on his website his innovative touch can be felt in the *gending* (*gamelan* melodies), dramatization and jokes he uses in his shows (purboasmoro.com, accessed 10th November 2012).

In a newspaper article Purbo explains that ‘I don’t include *campursari* [a pop version of traditional songs with *gamelan* and modern instruments]. The music isn’t bad, I just don’t find it suitable. [...] I prefer to regard *wayang* as a philosophy, oral literature and food for thought, which can be conveyed in a dramatic and entertaining way.’ (Jakarta post 2010). To Purbo, *wayang*’s meaning is to be a mirror of human life that can become a source of inspiration (*arti wayang adalah portret kehidupan manusia, menjadikan sumber inspirasi*). Every performance should contain the nature of the puppets themselves, moral values and human topics (*sifat wayang sendiri, nilai-nilai moral, pesan moral dan masalah humanisme*) (Interview Purbo, 31 January 2011). Indeed, every performance should contain a moral message, which Purbo does not specify, but in this the *dalang* enjoys great artistic freedom (artistic freedom [the English expression is used, SB] *sangat bebas*). A performance however should not be vulgar (*tidak bisa jadi mentah*) and has to be pleasing to the ear and pleasing to the senses (*enak didengar, enak dirasakan*) (Interview Purbo, 31st January and 7th February 2011).

Purbo’s discourse of *wayang* thus shows an orientation towards *wayang* as philosophy, and a mirror of human life with a deeper meaning in moral messages. These messages can be conveyed in a dramatic and entertaining way. However, the understanding of *wayang* as a philosophy can be traced back to the discourse of the early twentieth century *priyayi*, and subsequently institutionalized at the Javanese courts in Surakarta and Yogyakarta 1920s and 1930s. We have also seen that the New Order elite applied a similar understanding to *wayang*. It is therefore not surprising that Purbo was given the nickname ‘*Dalang Priyayi*’ by Bapak Ismail, governor of Central Java in 1988, as a reference to Purbo’s performance style (Kayam 2001, 213). Interesting is that Purbo speaks of oral literature, which could be interpreted as creating a tangible form of an oral

performance practice, a practice applied by *wayang* scholars in colonial times who started to document *wayang* stories.

***Wayang* at ISI Surakarta**

Kayam characterizes Purbo Asmoro's performances as following the pattern of a *pakeliran padat* (shortened *wayang* performance), a concept that was developed at ISI Surakarta, as we discussed in the second chapter. This means that the performance is based on a clear message, an efficient and effective story, and that all cliché's are considered superfluous and omitted. When in the early 1990s various *dalang* experienced a break through with a variety of styles, Purbo Asmoro believed that there would be a market for his style, though it might not be as profitable as Manteb's, which we will discuss in the next chapter, or Anom's styles (Kayam 2001, 213). Since Purbo has been affiliated with ISI Surakarta, and Kayam characterizes Purbo's performance style as *pakeliran padat*, it is appropriate to take a look at ISI's curriculum and activities. Since its foundation in its current constitution in 1975, ISI has produced contemporary *wayang* in a national context, as Arps has argued (1985).

ISI's curriculum of 2009 for the department of *pedalangan* indeed points to the institute's creation of *wayang* masterpieces (*karya unggulan*), among which the concept of *Pakeliran Padat* and *Pakeliran Layar Lebar Berbahasa Indonesia* ('in Indonesian'), abbreviated to Sandosa. Professor of Performing Arts M. Cohen informs us that *Wayang Sandosa* was created in 1981 by a team of puppeteers from ISI's department of *pedalangan* under the direction of Bambang Murtiyoso. It makes use of multiple puppeteers, offstage narration, and novel *gamelan* musical arrangements. Filmic effects are achieved by the use of spotlights and multicolor lights that allow close-ups, fades and wipes. Central control rods of some figures are lengthened to maximize the use of a screen as large as a movie screen. It has been performed at national festivals such as the Wayang Festival in Jakarta and on campus for visiting dignitaries to ISI. The use of Indonesian, the national language, allows it to speak to extra-local audiences, but in Cohen's opinion sacrifices much of *wayang's* poetic resonance and poetic spontaneity. It makes use of tightly rehearsed movement sequences and musical accompaniment, demanding many hours of rehearsal (Cohen 2007, 258).

In addition to *pakeliran padat*, *Wayang Budha* (Buddhist *Wayang*), also spelled as *Wayang Buddha*, was also created at ISI in 1974 by choreographer Suprpto Suryodarmo. It presented Buddhist stories and borrowed elements from the danced puppetry of Thailand's court shadow puppet tradition. Suprpto and other ISI staff intended *Wayang Budha* to be an academic experiment in fulfilling a mandate for 'contemporary *wayang*' (*wayang kontemporer*) at the second *Wayang Festival*, a national *wayang* festival launched by Suharto in 1969. *Wayang Budha* was presented to society at large in 1975 in annual open-air performances at the ancient temple of Mendut at the Buddhist holiday of Vesak. After Suprpto left ISI in the 1980s *Wayang Budha* was not performed until he revived it for Vesak celebrations at Borobudur in 2006 (Cohen 2007, 358).

Cohen describes a few other innovative *wayang* forms developed by artists who have received a degree from ISI, such as Slamet Gundono, who created *Wayang Rumput* or *Grass Wayang*. Gundono's work is abstract, filled with comedy and at the same time serves to revitalize *wayang* and make it relevant to educated urban audiences. His work has received international acclaim as he was an Asia Pacific Performance Exchange Fellow in 2004 and received the prestigious Prins Claus Award from the Netherlands in 2005 (Cohen 2007, 358-9). Another well-known ASRI (Akademi Seni Rupa Indonesia or Indonesian Academy for the Arts) graduate is Sukasman. Inspired by puppetry he saw in New York and the Netherlands in 1964-1965, Sukasman created new *wayang* stories and dramaturgy to tell traditional stories. He uses puppeteers on both sides of the screen and dancers taking on puppet roles, and is called *Wayang Ukur* (Susilo 2002). *Wayang Ukur*'s audiences are largely limited to educated elites and non-Indonesians. Heri Dono is widely considered as one of Indonesia's most important contemporary artists. He attended ISI Yogyakarta, was one of Sukasman's *wayang* students and is a painter and installation artist associated with a group of neo-folk artists centered on the CEMETI gallery in Yogyakarta. Cohen places Dono's work between theater and visual art. Dono has used cartoonlike shadow figures, influenced by Sukasman, to tell Indonesian folk and contemporary stories from outside the *wayang* repertoire, including tales of the Batak people of Sumatra in *Wayang Legenda*. Subsequent work has been more abstract, involving painting on the puppet screen and taking apart puppets in performance (Cohen 2007, 360). With his work Dono reflects on socio-political issues on both a local and a global level which has furthered his acceptance

in the international art world. His work is worldwide exhibited in art institutions, but also in museums of cultural history. Dono's interpretation of *wayang* combines *wayang* puppetry, performance and video art (Welling 2009, 9).

Although ISI graduates apparently produce very creative adaptations of *wayang*, ISI's curriculum shows a more basic approach. Roughly 60% of the course focuses on knowledge (*pengetahuan*), such as philosophy, and 40% is devoted to *wayang* performance practice. In 2009/2010 the Department of *Pedalangan* had a staff of 35 teachers and 65 students. Students pay 650.000 Rp per semester. Purbo is head of the *wayang* studio and teaches practical subjects to students towards the end of their Bachelor education (Interview Soedarsono, 30th June 2010). The curriculum of 2009 was designed under auspices of the Department of National Education (*Departemen Pendidikan Nasional*) under the General Direktorat of Higher Education (*Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi*). The students obtain the title *Sarjana Seni* (S.Sn) in the field of *pedalangan* (Curriculum 2009, 1). The course to obtain a Bachelor degree (S1) offers four years of academic training and is designed to acquire qualitative knowledge and the best experience in learning of the art of the *dalang* (*untuk memperoleh pengetahuan seni pedalangan yang berkualitas dan pengalaman belajar yang terbaik*) (Curriculum 2009, 2).

The curriculum revolves around basic *wayang* practice (*Pratik Pedalangan Gaya Pokok*). This subject takes up 24 out of 76 credit points in four years. The focus is on conventional *wayang* performance practice in a proper and clear manner (*setelah menempuh mata kuliah ini mahasiswa dapat menyajikan pakeliran konvensional secara benar dan resiko*). Purbo teaches *Praktik Pedalangan Gaya Pokok* in the sixth semester for four credit points, equivalent to four hours of class per week. The students are educated in Conventional Performance Structure (*Garap Catur Pakeliran Konvensional*), Conventional Puppet Manipulation (*Garap Sabetan Konvensional*), Conventional *Karawitan* Skills (*Garap Karawitan Konvensional*), Integration of Performance Elements (*Perpaduan Garap Unsur-unsur Pakeliran*), and Performance (*Pergelaran*) (Curriculum 2009, 54). The meaning of the term 'conventional' is not defined, but the bibliography for this course contains story lines by Anom Suroto (1983), Manteb Soedharsono (1983), Bambang Suwarno (1997 and 2004), Naryocarito (1977 and 1983), Suratno (1981), Sumanto (1981) (Curriculum 2009, 55), reflecting a Central Javanese, mainly Surakartan orientation.

The second important subject is Theory of the Art of the *Dalang* (*Teori Pedalangan*), which is taught in four semesters in the first two years for a total of sixteen credit points. After taking this subject students are expected to be familiar with various aspects of *wayang* performance, a variety of versions and *wayang* genealogy, the characteristics of the puppets, and analysis of *wayang* performance (Curriculum 2009, 5-9).⁶⁴ Students are also educated in the Theory of Stories (*Teori lakon pedalangan*) for twelve credit points. An equal amount of time is devoted to *Karawitan Pedalangan* (*gamelan*) and Other Performance Practices (*Praktik Pedalangan Gaya Lain*). The Final Assignment (*Tugas Akhir*) takes up one semester in the last year and prepares the students to write about the Art of the *Dalang* in a responsible and academic manner (Curriculum 2009, 56).⁶⁵ Other subjects include Critique of the Art of the *Dalang* (*Kritik Pedalangan*), History of the Art of the *Dalang* (*Sejarah Pedalangan*), the *Dalang* Language (*Bahasa Pedalangan*), Literature, Writers of *Wayang* Stories (*Penulis Lakon Pedalangan*), Composition (*Komposisi Pedalangan*), Songs (*Tembang Pedalangan*), Performance (*Pergelaran Pedalangan*) and a number of minor subjects, such as Psychology (*Psikologi Dalam*), Multimedia, English (*Bahasa Inggris*), Theater Theory (*Teori Teater*), and Research Methodology (*Metode Penelitian*).

It is interesting to observe that books written in colonial times are still taught in the subject of the 'History of *Pedalangan*' and thus continue to acquire authority. The bibliography shows a focus on Central Java combined with a number of Dutch texts from colonial times that were discussed in the first chapter, such as Hazeu, Kats, and the *Serat Sastramiruda* by Kusumadilaga. In the first semester of the History of *Pedalangan*, the curriculum strives to create an understanding of the development and changes of *wayang* over time - *wayang*'s origins, the development of *wayang*'s form, the development of various *wayang* forms, and performances styles. The second semester focuses on the history of the development of the composition of performance elements, *wayang* stories

⁶⁴ After having completed the course, students can analyze the connections between the elements of performance, various versions and genealogies of *wayang* stories, the characteristics of various forms of *wayang* and the concept of various *wayang* performance practices. (*Setelah menempuh mata kuliah ini, mahasiswa dapat menganalisis hubungan berbagai unsur pakeliran, berbagai versi dan genealogi cerita wayang, karakteristik berbagai jenis wayang, dan konsep gara berbagai bentuk pertunjukan wayang.*)

⁶⁵ After having completed this course, students are able to write a thesis on the topic of the art of puppetry that can be defended in an academic way. (*Setelah menempuh mata kuliah ini, mahasiswa mampu menyusun skripsi dengan sasaran bidang seni pedalangan untuk dipertanggungjawabkan secara akademik.*)

(*lakon*), and *wayang* performance. This is complemented with Clara van Groenendael's work in Indonesian *Dalang di Balik Wayang*, and works on more contemporary *wayang* forms such as S. Nugroho's study (2002) on Enthous Susmono's performance practice. Umar Kayam's *Kelir Tanpa Batas* is also included (Curriculum 2009, 21-22). The subject 'Literature on Performing Arts in Indonesia' shows a broader perspective and requires the reading of publications by Claire Holt, James Brandon's *Theatre in South East Asia*, Jennifer Lindsay's translated thesis *Klasik, Kitsch, Kontemporer*, and also *Pertumbuhan Seni Pertunjukan* by the earlier mentioned Sedyawati, Director-General of Culture from 1993-1998. More technical subjects, such as lighting and vocal, show a more international orientation, including numerous English publications on audio and video, and stage lighting (Curriculum 2009, 63-65).

Purbo's responsibilities as a teacher are directed towards the practical aspect of *pedalangan*. He teaches *Garap Pedalangan* in the seventh semester for four credit points, and *Pergelaran Pedalangan* in the sixth semester for four points. All subjects are related to the *wayang* performance practice, adding up to a teaching load of twelve hours per week. For the subject of *Garap Pedalangan* in the seventh semester, among others two of Purbo's own scripts are studied: '*Pakeliran Padat Lakon Salya Begal*' *naskah ketikan* 2005 and '*Pakeliran Padat Lakon Ranjaban, naskah ketikan*' 2005 (Curriculum 2009, 46). Purbo's students take exams in *wayang* performance practice for which the story *Dewa Ruci* has been in use for many years. Emerson also informed me that every year the teachers at ISI write the course material for the next year. According to her, Purbo often does not agree with the course material, and thus teaches in a way he would not necessarily perform himself (Interview Emerson 29th June 2010).

The Curriculum for *pedalangan* at ISI Surakarta shows a primarily Central Javanese orientation and focuses on the academic study and the creation of the art of the *dalang* (*pengkajian seni pedalangan dan penciptaan seni pedalangan*). The aim of the curriculum is tied to national discourse and culture, which reflects the discourse applied to *wayang* during the New Order in its effort to produce scholars of *pedalangan* rooted in the values of Indonesian culture (*tujuan diselenggarakan pendidikan program Studi Seni Pedalangan ISI Surakarta adalah menghasilkan sarjana seni pedalangan yang memiliki kepribadian bersumber pada nilai-nilai budaya Indonesia*) (Curriculum 2009, 2). New Order views on

the responsibility of the *dalang* in developing and educating Indonesian society are also reminiscent of the Institute's mission and its view on the role of the student of the art of the *dalang* in society. ISI Surakarta's mission is to strive for the development of the art of the *dalang*, as well as attention for the problems in society and life circumstances (*berperan serta dalam pengembangan kehidupan seni pedalangan serta peduli terhadap permasalahan dalam masyarakat dan lingkungan hidup*) (Curriculum 2009, 2). At ISI students are thus not expected to become a practicing *dalang*, but they are trained as academic artists (*seniman yang akademis*). The institute strives to turn its students into professional, creative, adaptive scholars of the art of *pedalangan* who are able to compete in society (*untuk menghasilkan sarjana seni pedalangan yang professional, kreatif, adaptif dan mampu bersaing di masyarakat*). The course is designed to stabilize the discipline of *pedalangan* and the esthetically innovative work of the art of the *dalang* (*untuk memantapkan disiplin ilmu pedalangan serta karya seni pedalangan yang inovatif estetik*) (Curriculum 2009, 1).

This is in line with an observation made by Sears that despite the increasing opportunity for aspiring puppeteers to learn the tradition in an academic environment, a formal education does not guarantee a successful career as a practicing *dalang* (Sears 1996, 259). Stronger even, the majority of the graduates of the academies are not successful puppeteers. On the contrary, the most successful *dalang* often did not graduate from an Institute for the Arts. Anom Suroto and Manteb Soedharsono, the two most popular Solonese *dalang* since the death of Nartosabdho, are not graduates of any Institute, although they are claimed to be honorary teachers by ISI. Both Anom Suroto and Manteb Soedharsono teach four times in the first semester of the first year in the curriculum at ISI Surakarta (Interview Sudarsono, 30th June 2010). In the early 1990s Sears observed that several of the students at ISI were quite successful as *dalang* in the villages, although their success in performing already existed before they attended ISI (Sears 1996, 259). This was still the case in 2011 when out of some ten students three of them were already established *dalang*. This makes one wonder what could be the reason for already established *dalang* to enroll at ISI. A female *dalang* Wulan Sri Panjang Mas (b. 1980), who was already well-known as a *dalang*, and whom I had met many times at different events and performances in Java, had just enrolled in her first year at ISI in 2010. Wulan told me that she was

studying at ISI to obtain a degree and to become a teacher like Purbo Asmoro. She wanted to learn at ISI about what is right and wrong in *wayang*, '*yang bener, yang salah*' (Interview Wulan, 7th February 2010).

Wulan's argumentation demonstrates that *wayang* discourse, and rules and guidelines for the performance practice are further standardized and fixed in the curriculum at ISI. Wulan expects to learn the right approach to *wayang* at the arts institute, as opposed to deviant, alternative or 'wrong' forms. This affirms the observation made in the second chapter that ISI is a standardizing force. As such, ISI is an authorizing force and decisive in what are 'right' or 'wrong' directions and innovations in *wayang* performance practice. Furthermore, Wulan's motivation to attend ISI indicates that formal education is becoming increasingly important, even to those who are already successful as *dalang*. She seeks authorization for her performance practice in her education at ISI. The result is that authorized discourses and their underlying values about *wayang* are likely to increasingly penetrate popular performance practice and standards of audience appreciation.

Sears had observed this dynamic already in the 1980s. She noted that the relations between ISI and the popular domains were growing more complex. Styles passed from ISI into the popular domain with increasing frequency. She took as an example Manteb Soedharsono, the *dalang* who will be discussed in the next chapter. During the time Sears carried out fieldwork from 1982 until 1984, Manteb was a rising young star. He was popular in Surakarta and the surrounding villages because of his skillful and unconventional *sabetan*. In those days, Manteb was also one of a handful *dalang* outside ISI who was willing to experiment with performing *wayang padat*. In 1990 Manteb's popularity in Java seemed to surpass that of Anom Suroto. He performed continually all over Java. Sears believes that some of the reasons for his rise to fame illustrate the subtle connections between innovative changes in the tradition worked out at ISI and what is accepted by audiences in the popular domains outside the arts institute. At the time, Manteb's innovations were partly borrowed from ISI. He used colored light in his performances, which, according to Sears, at ISI was used in Sandosa *padat* performances. Although some proof of Manteb's reliance on innovative techniques from ISI is evident from the descriptions above, it is his use of *dalang* related to ISI as paid advisers that showed the increasing connections between ISI and Rebo Legen *dalang*. Manteb had the

best musician from the *pedalangan* department of ISI to arrange his music; he worked with the *dalang* who was best known for innovative puppet movements to help direct his performances; and Manteb continually derived ideas from talking to the scholars and performers from the Academy (Sears 1996, 262).

Framed in tradition

Manteb's case illustrates that academic innovations, values and standards penetrate popular performance. In turn, academic discourse at ISI is imbued with international heritage standards and actively seeks to connect to international heritage discourse. In its foreword to the Curriculum of 2009, ISI Surakarta positions itself clearly in discourse developed during the New Order to modernize *wayang* in a national context, and subsequently links this discourse to an international heritage discourse. It does so in a manner similar to the way in which Sena Wangi and Pepadi positioned *wayang* in the Candidature File for the UNESCO Masterpiece program. The foreword of the Curriculum of 2009 states that the art of the *dalang* is cultural heritage of the Indonesian people (*seni pedalangan merupakan warisan budaya bangsa Indonesia*). It is then pointed out that as a result of its uniqueness *wayang* has been recognized by UNESCO as world heritage (*oleh keunikan dan kanduanga nilai-nilainya yang universal, maka seni pedalangan telah diakui UNESCO sebagai salah satu warisan budaya dunia*) (Curriculum 2009, 1).

Although Purbo mentioned UNESCO's proclamation of *wayang* as a Masterpiece in all his performances that I attended, he claimed that this recognition does not directly influence his performance practice. Nevertheless, he admitted that the proclamation pushes him to prove himself and do the utmost to live up to the honor bestowed upon *wayang* (Interview Purbo Asmoro, 31st January 2011). A year later however, Purbo actively positioned himself in the international heritage discourse at a performance at the Asian Society, located on the Upper East Side in New York on 16th March 2012. Ten members of his Mayangkara troupe and thirty members of the New York *gamelan* group, *Gamelan Kusuma Laras*, accompanied Purbo for the performance. Emerson simultaneously translated the play from Javanese into English, which was projected onto a separate screen. That evening Purbo explicitly voiced his task as a *dalang* to disseminate *wayang* as a UNESCO Masterpiece all over the world. Speaking through Petruk who replies to Gareng's

question: 'Listen to all that clapping, what's going on out here? What are they clapping about?' Petruk answers: 'They love *wayang* which has been acknowledged by UNESCO as a world masterpiece. We are from the Institute of Indonesian Arts, and my task is to introduce *wayang* all over the world.'⁶⁶

The performance at Asia Society was part of a tour along the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Oberlin College in Ohio, and Cornell University, Ithaca, which all know a long tradition of Southeast Asian Studies, and have produced famous *wayang* scholars. In the second chapter we have seen how Cohen pointed to the exchange of knowledge between the USA and Java. Brandon at Michigan State University and his students of Asian theatre for example, produced a *wayang kulit* show in collaboration with Pandam Guritno (1928-2001) in the USA. Pandam, lecturer in law at UGM in Yogyakarta had come to the USA in 1962 to study anthropology and Southeast Asian studies at Cornell University. He had a general background in *wayang*, although never having performed publicly in Indonesia, but was encouraged to do so in the USA. It was regarded as a way to communicate something about Javanese culture, and Pandam thus gave short demonstrations of *wayang kulit* to the accompaniment of phonographic records.

Thereafter, Pandam and Brandon together worked on *On Thrones of Gold* (Brandon 1970) that was published by Harvard University Press (Cohen 2007, 352). Brandon had toured Southeast Asia in 1963-1964 with Ford Foundation funding, and spent much of his time studying *wayang* while living in Yogyakarta. One of Brandon and Pandam's Michigan State students, R. Long, went to Java from 1967-1969 to study *sabetan* at the Habirando *dalang* court school in Yogyakarta and take photographs for Brandon's book. They were primarily interested in performance and the documentation of classical *wayang kulit* (Cohen 2007, 352-353). Thus it seems that the *wayang* discourse in the USA generally drew on colonial discourse and colonial practices of documenting the performance tradition. In the second chapter we have seen how discourse of *wayang* developed during colonial times was build on and lent new authority by both American and Indonesian scholars and *wayang* enthusiasts. Purbo's *wayang* performance practice perfectly fits this discourse and

⁶⁶ <http://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/barack-obama-makes-cameo-appearance-indonesian-puppet-show-photosvideo>, accessed 11th November 2012.

attracts those to whom this kind of discourse appeals. Purbo's acting agent, Emerson (b. 1961), is one of them.

Emerson played the piano since the age of five. She was trained as a classical pianist at Cornell University in the early 1980s, where she became familiar with the sight of *gamelan* instruments stacked away in practicing rooms. Her focus continued to be on Western classical music and she moved to New York to study at Queens College. There, Emerson decided to take a number of ethnological courses in West African drums and Japanese flute. When she saw a *gamelan* concert in Central Park in 1986, she headed to Java to study *gamelan* in its place of origin the same summer. She immediately fell in love with *gamelan* and *wayang kulit*, and has since studied *gamelan*. For over twenty years she has lived in Java and is now married to a respected Solonese drummer and gamelan teacher, Wakidi Dwidjomartono (Personal conversation Emerson, 25th January 2011). Three times a week Emerson and her husband host *gamelan* practices at their home in South Jakarta. Since the early 2000s Emerson searched for a *dalang* she could study with, but only after a three-year search did she become acquainted with Purbo Asmoro in 2004. She was instantly impressed by his skills, because 'he is a master, a poet, he is funny and has a beautiful voice' and she shares his love for language and poetry (*Jakarta Globe*, 4th June 2009).

Since then, Emerson has intensively studied *gamelan* and *wayang* with Purbo and observed his skills as a *dalang*, following him to as many performances as her responsibilities in Jakarta allow. Sometimes she simultaneously translates his performances from Javanese into English. She acts as his agent, works with him on a documentation project, and maintains his website (purboasmoro.com) on which she reports on his performances, updates his performance schedule, writes about his sources of inspiration. Emerson also manages his Facebook fanpage, organizes workshops at Jakarta International School where she teaches, arranges and facilitates tours abroad, as well as other events both inside and outside Indonesia. She also regularly posts updates on Purbo's activities on an international mailing list for *gamelan*.

Emerson brought me into contact with Purbo. When I started attending Purbo's performances for my research, she gave me her view of Purbo as a *wayang* artist. In her opinion, it was a misunderstanding to regard Purbo as an academic *dalang*. She explains

that 'People who understand the contents of *wayang*, know about the *gamelan* accompaniment and about *lakon* interpretation; and are aware of the past two decades of innovation in *wayang*, AND have seen him perform regularly [...] They know that he is in no way mainly an 'academic' *dalang*, and that the academic elements in his personality are reflected in the intense poetry and conceptual development of the dramatic elements of his work, but that in practice his work does not come off as academic.' (Email Emerson to author, 30th June 2010).

Traces of the scholarly ideas of *wayang* as developed in colonial times can be found in Emerson's understanding of *wayang*. In her view, 'If one was to study and write about *wayang* and/or a *dalang*, one had to understand *wayang* and the recent decade of innovation in *wayang*. One had to understand the content of *wayang* linguistically, musically through *gamelan* accompaniment and dramatically through *lakon* interpretation. Understanding *wayang* could be achieved through hands-on study in at least a few of the major areas involved, which in itself would take over 10 years. In addition one had to see the *dalang* perform regularly. Studying all those elements, to understand *wayang*'s history and its current innovations was an overwhelming task that would take a lifetime. And even when one would spend lots of time, one could only scrape the surface of it and would only provide a tiny snapshot into who the *dalang* are as artist. [...] Javanese artists [are] infamously mysterious, and take a very, very long time to even begin to figure out.' (Email Emerson to author, 30th June 2010).

The roots of this understanding of *wayang* and the *dalang* go back to the discourse of *wayang* established in the colonial era. This discourse gained new authority in the postcolonial era, and was yet re-authorized with UNESCO's proclamation of *wayang* as a Masterpiece. Traces of the discourse developed in colonial times are also reflected in Purbo Asmoro's nickname *Dalang Priyayi*. Purbo Asmoro's website explains that *priyayi* can be translated as a combination of 'refined, classy, educated and gentlemanly.' The Dutch historian H. van Miert explains the history of *priyayi* and informs us that after 1900 a group of so-called 'new-*priyayi*' emerged, who used new accessibility to Western education. The 'new-*priyayi*' derived their jobs and social status from their education. They saw themselves as keepers of the Javanese arts and traditions, in which the concept of *alus* played a crucial role. One valued cultural form was *wayang*. High moral conceptions and

the sense of duty of the *wayang* heroes were made an example for Javanese children. Another cultural expression valued by *priyayi* was Javanese literature. From the mid-nineteenth century *wayang* stories and *babad* (court chronicles) were published in Javanese script by commercial publishers. In Surakarta literature with a strong didactic, moralistic nature emerged that taught readers how to live their lives along the lines of *wayang* heroes. This literary genre was popular in *priyayi* circles: but it is not just education that is of value, but Javanese, esoteric and mystical wisdom is also of importance. The popular writings reflected the ideas and values of *Agama Jawa* (Javanese religion) of mystical wisdom were of great substance. Mysticism and asceticism played a large role in *Agama Jawa*, even as a belief in supernatural powers assigned to some people and objects, such as the *kris* (Van Miert 1995, 20).

Around 1900, Western habits were the new trend for progressive *priyayi*, especially in places where there were Europeans. Emerging freemasons lodges and theosophical circles were open to new developments in indigenous elite circles. Indigenous students wore the latest European fashion, attended dance events, went to the movies and played tennis. The orientation on the West was lasting, says Van Miert (1995, 20-26), but the Western orientation on elite *priyayi* culture and values was permanent too, as we have seen in the previous chapters.

How elite *priyayi* discourse links with Purbo's performance practice and the continuation of discourse established in colonial times in current heritage discourse, is illustrated with the purchase of a *wayang* collection by the Museum of International Folk Art (MOIFA) in Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA. In 2007 MOIFA purchased a set of classical Surakarta court-style *wayang kulit* puppets from Purbo Asmoro for the permanent collection. The set was complemented with some figures from the collection of Enthus Susmono. The set contains some 230 individual puppets, painted with gold and bronze leaf and has actually been used in *wayang* performances. The set was purchased primarily from Purbo Asmoro, who provided Katz-Harris with a list of *wayang* figures, detailed documentation on the individual characters, special notes on individual *wayang* figures, place and date of manufacture, commentary on special characteristics, and examples of *lakon* in which a particular character would appear. The purchase made from Enthus Susmono was based on Purbo's original character list and his advice, and was also

accompanied by documentation material from Enthus Susmono (Katz-Harris 2010, 51). In the process of purchase, Emerson provided Katz-Harris with background information, assisted in translating *lakon* titles and facilitating the project in many ways (Katz-Harris 2010, 7).

The collection was on display in the exhibition *Dancing Shadows, Epic Tales: Wayang Kulit of Indonesia* at MOIFA from March 8th 2009 through March 14th 2010. The exhibition highlighted various aspects of *wayang kulit*, such as the performance, the skills of the *dalang*, the characters, the stories, the music, the artists who create the puppets, and the cultural context of *wayang*. A highlight of the exhibition was a double-sided screen to watch *wayang kulit* in video format to experience the way audiences in Central Java are able to watch *wayang* (Katz-Harris 2008, 53). Katz-Harris places MOIFA's collection in an essentialist discourse by regarding *wayang* as 'More than puppetry, *wayang kulit* is probably the most widely recognized material form of Javanese cultural heritage and one of Indonesia's premier art forms. As a highly refined artistic medium and performance art, it has been performed in villages, cities, and royal courts for hundreds of years. Although people of all ages make up the audiences, *wayang kulit* is not considered 'children's entertainment.' The stories contain highly philosophical contemplations and complex dialogue' (Katz-Harris 2008, 48). Katz-Harris's emphasis on *wayang*'s philosophical meaning in opposition to its entertaining aspect also reflects the preoccupation of colonial scholars. The discourse established in colonial times, which gained new authorization in postcolonial times is thus still very powerful through its dissemination in museum exhibitions and publications.

That local, national and international discourses are becoming increasingly intertwined already emerged in chapter three in the analysis of the Candidature File of *wayang* for the Masterpiece program. That this is also the case for *wayang* performance practice becomes clear from a documentation project in cooperation with Emerson. Purbo features as the *dalang* in six recording of two *lakon*: *Makathurama* (*Rama's Crown*) and *Sesaji Raja Suya* (*The Grand Offerings of the Kings*). These *lakon* have each been audio-visually recorded in traditional, *garapan*, and *padat* style with *Paguyuban Mayangkara* (Purbo's troupe) playing the *gamelan*. All recordings are supplied with English and Indonesian subtitles.

The aim of the project was to be able to compare the three styles being presented, providing an opportunity to consider them apart from individual *dalang* styles. The recordings were completed during 2007 and 2008. In the following year Javanese transcriptions were made by Emerson from all six recordings, and all transcriptions were edited by Purbo and Nugroho, affiliated with ISI Surakarta. In 2009 and 2010 the Javanese transcriptions, some 600 pages, were translated into Indonesian by Nugroho and Sunardi, also affiliated with ISI and these were in turn translated into English by Emerson. The next part of the project concerned the notation of the musical accompaniment, including the vocal parts, and put into Kepatihan Pro (a particular notation system) by Suraji, also at ISI and P. Acimovic from Tufts University, Medford/Somerville, USA. All translations were subsequently edited and revised by the translators and volunteers. In 2011 footnotes, liner notes, translations of the *sulukan*, history and literary origins of all *sulukan*, placing of the subtitles and all other production tasks were carried out (purboasmoro.com, accessed 10th November 2012).

Over the course of my fourteen-month long research in Indonesia, the Lontar documentation project was mentioned at every show by Purbo that I watched. A special presentation of the project in the context of a performance by Purbo took place on July 23rd, 2010 at Taman Budaya Surakarta (TBS). The project as described above was presented to the audience, and Emerson explained that some parts of the performances were omitted, such as the *goro-goro* or the humorous clown-scenes 'to leave the bulk out'. Although this choice is understandable from the perspective of saving a lot of work, it also calls to mind the practice of Poensen, who in 1876 also informed his audiences that he had left out certain 'platitudes'. The omission of the clown-scenes suggests that these parts of the performances are considered peripheral and not worthwhile documenting for future research. However, including the clown-scenes would have meant a great opportunity to learn more about the less formal or less central elements in a performance, such as audience participation and influence on the improvisations of the *dalang*. It would also have meant the incorporation of a multiplicity of voices, characteristic of audiovisual recordings of the post-1998 era in *wayang* documentation. The Lontar project thus shows the same effect as the documentation practice of *wayang* in colonial and postcolonial times:

documenting the *wayang* performance practice leads to guidelines for documentation, standardization and fixation because documentation creates tangibility.

Audience appreciation

Although colonial discourse knows a dynamic of excluding those who are not initiated in the mystery, Emerson has found an extremely powerful inclusive tool that makes Purbo's performances very accessible to a global audience. She regularly provides his performances with simultaneous translations from Javanese into English. Emerson first came up with the idea for translation when she kept explaining what was being said to friends who attended his performances. She decided that she might as well type what she was whispering to them (*Jakarta Globe*, 4th June 2009). The performance at Asia Society was tailored to a Western audience and lasted only three hours instead of the usual eight. An effort was made to make the performance as 'Indonesian' as possible, with the audience able to drift off during the performance to find snacks, take short naps, and react to the *dalang* and his improvisations. The audience was encouraged to stroll around the stage and look behind the screen, and also respond to the performance. The night resulted in rave reviews.

In various reviews special attention was paid to the appearance of President Obama as a *wayang kulit* puppet during the clown-scene. Bagong: 'Why haven't we met President Obama? ... There he is.' Enters President Obama. Obama: 'Good evening. Welcome to the USA.' Bagong: 'Pak Obama! He's here! Kiss his hand!' Gareng: 'My respects' Petruk: 'He's taller than I am! He's so tall!' Gareng: 'I'd have to climb to touch his head.' Obama: 'I used to live in Jakarta you know. When I was little. I went to school there and love *wayang* too.' Bagong: 'In that case, don't use your funds for war but for arts and education!' Obama: 'Alright, but I am so happy to see you here and I will offer you some small tokens of thanks.'⁶⁷ At first the clowns addressed the President with respect and awe, one bowing to kiss his hand, but then Bagong turned assertive, even urging President Obama to spend money on arts and education instead of on war and the president said he would.

In the program announcement of Asia Society Purbo is characterized as a *dalang* 'at the forefront of the modern, classical interpretive treatment' of *wayang*, which is linked to

⁶⁷ <http://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/barack-obama-makes-cameo-appearance-indonesian-puppet-show-photosvideo>, accessed 12th November 2012.

UNESCO's recognition of *wayang* as a 'masterpiece of human heritage'.⁶⁸ The Asia Society thus uses the international heritage discourse as a frame through which the audience in New York can develop and nurture appreciation for an Indonesian artist. Purbo's innovative incorporation of President Obama as *wayang* puppet, a character from outside the *wayang* repertoire, enables him to relate to his audience and make an appeal for the preservation of the arts and education. The heritage discourse combined with innovation is thus a new framework to which both Indonesian and international audiences can relate. The other side of the coin of opening *wayang* up to a wider global public through the international heritage discourse is a reaffirmation of the underlying colonial and postcolonial discourses, as we have seen in chapter 3.

Purbo's first trip abroad took place in 1990 when he travelled to the United Kingdom to perform. Emerson's English translations however, greatly contribute to the accessibility of Purbo's performance practice for global audiences. Combined with Emerson's international network this has proved to be very fruitful: Purbo's invitations to perform are increasing. This contributes to his fame and prestige on both local and national levels within Indonesia. The case of international acclaim by UNESCO has shown how international recognition adds to the prestige and status of *wayang*, and, as such, international performances increase Purbo's status at home, and consequently this rubs off on audience appreciation. Purbo Asmoro's prestige is often legitimized with foreign recognition and appreciation by drawing attention to his international performances and exhibitions. Emerson already pointed this out in positioning Purbo in the field of *dalang* at the start of my research: 'He [Purbo Asmoro, SB] has performed in 10 countries and 18 cities on 11 separate tours from 1987 to the present' (Email Emerson to author, 29th June 2010).

As Emerson has opened Purbo's *wayang* stage to a global level, he returns the favor, giving Emerson the stage in his performances to display her mastery of the Javanese language and her abilities to play various *gamelan* instruments. He also often mentions a famous Japanese *pesinden*, and expresses his appreciation for all those foreigners who come to study Javanese culture. I was also often called on the stage to be introduced to the

⁶⁸ <http://www.artsjournal.com/jazzbeyondjazz/2012/03/obama-at-javanese-shadow-puppet-show-asia-society.html>, accessed 12th November 2012.

audience as a researcher from Amsterdam working for her PhD or S-3. Purbo would ask me to inform the audience about my research and in particular which *dalang* I included in my research. He would tell the audience that I was researching four *priyayi* after which he would immediately correct himself, saying that I was researching actually only three *priyayi*, Anom, Manteb and Enthuis, as well as one more *dalang*: himself. In this way, Purbo framed himself in the international academic *wayang* discourse, which I then represented. His strategy was to humble himself by stating that he himself was not a *priyayi*, but that the other *dalang* included in my research were. At the same time my research and my presence was a means to tell the audience that Purbo was regarded and valued at the same level as the other *dalang*, on an international academic level. This also shows how academic discourse, of which I am an agent, influences *wayang* performance practice.

That academic discourse indeed is a signifier in performance practice discourse is also illustrated by the earlier mentioned fact that Purbo was recommended to me by academic circles in Yogyakarta. Sponsors of *wayang* performance take such considerations into account. I once attended a performance by Purbo in Ponorogo, Central Java. After a six hour drive on the motorbike through the rain I finally arrived at a large performance site in front of a big house in a remote area of Ponorogo. A beautifully colored covering was set up and an audiovisual crew was there to record and broadcast the performance, held to celebrate a *sunatan* (circumcision), broadcasted live on the local radio station Radio Kema Surya. The host told me that he chose the *lakon Parikesit Becomes King* (*Parikesit Jumeneng Roto*) of that night himself. He had invited Purbo as a *dalang* because they shared the same background '*background sama*'. Both he and Purbo were well educated '*banyak pendidikan*' and had the S-2 degree equivalent to the Master's Degree in common. The host also indicated that it was important to him that Purbo made use of the *pakem*, and he had invited a twelve-year old girl as a guest star so she would continue to work as a *pesinden*. His motivation to host a *wayang* performance was to preserve the culture (*melestarikan budaya*), as he saw *wayang* as originally Indonesian (*asli budaya Indonesia*). To this host Purbo was especially appealing because of his academic education as a *dalang*.

Many other hosts, also at performances of other *dalang*, indicated the wish to preserve Javanese culture. The general audience does not care about preservation of culture or heritage, but just wants to have an entertaining and enjoyable night. They

appreciate Purbo as a *dalang* because he masters all the skills required to be a good *dalang*. Interviewees particularly appreciated Purbo's characteristic manner of creating new *wayang* stories that maintained its Javanese origin in the sense of the use of language and in the way of telling the story. Contrary to concerns of many hosts, who indicated they invited Purbo because of his academic skills, the audience does not seem concerned either with his academic training or with authorized discourses of *wayang*. Audience appreciation thus reflects the observation that Purbo's performance has a traditional approach with innovative features.

Conclusion

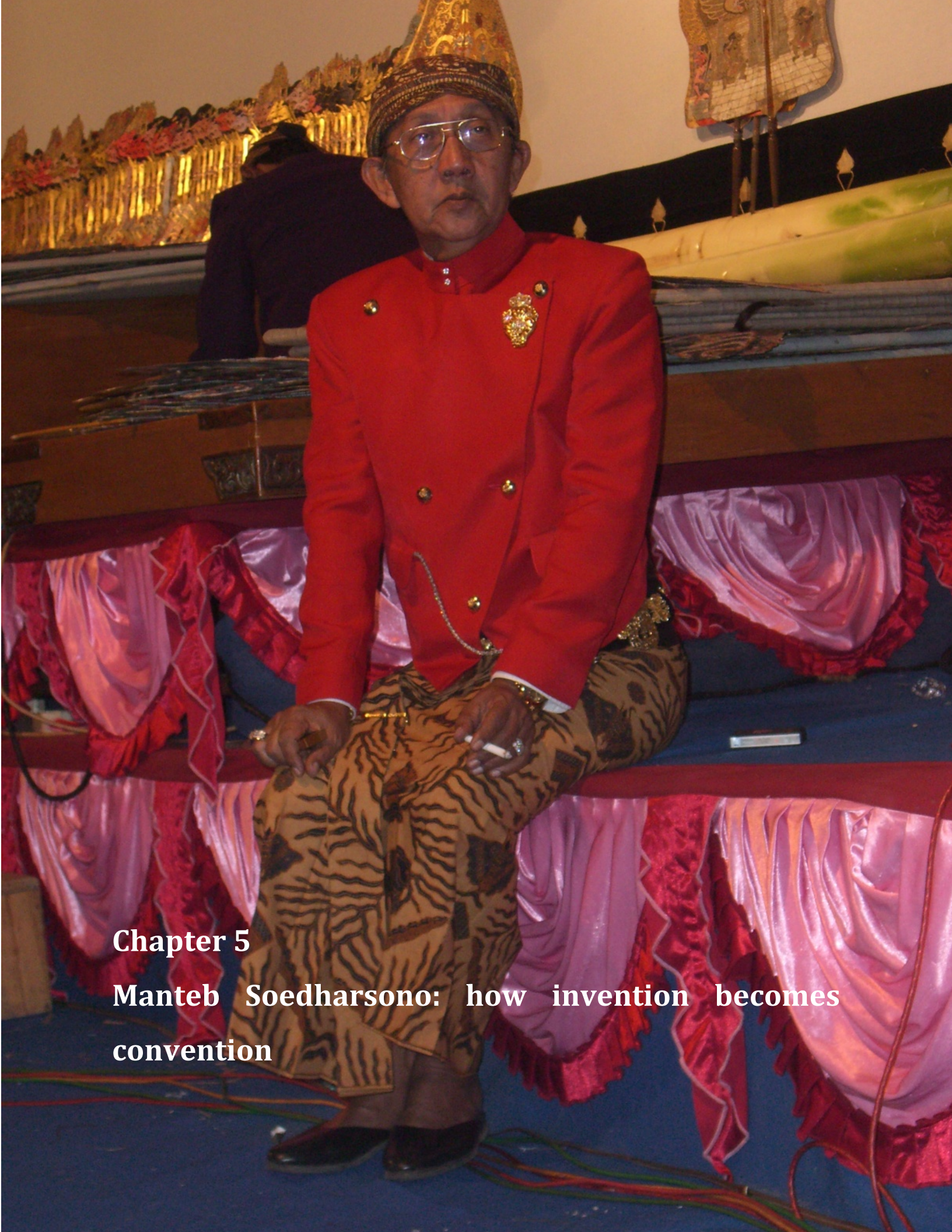
Purbo favors language and text in his *wayang* performance practice and symbolic underlying meanings, such as moral messages. His performance practice thus reflects the discourse established in colonial times, which was re-authorized in postcolonial *wayang* discourse. Colonial discourse of *wayang* continued to exist in international academic discourse after independence in American and Indonesian scholarly discourses and through the institutionalization of this discourse in governmental policy and practices, such as at ISI Surakarta. Because of Purbo's position at ISI and his understanding of *wayang*, his performance practice specifically appeals to those who feel attracted to this discourse. His performance practice and understanding of *wayang* thus shows the entanglement of colonial, postcolonial authorized discourse at ISI, contemporary heritage formation and present-day performance practice.

Sears already made the observation that there is heavy interaction between ISI Solo, the Wayang Museum, Sena Wangi and Pepadi. Pepadi organizes meetings at ISI, *wayang* competitions are organized at ISI, and the Wayang Museum in Jakarta organizes festivals in which Purbo Asmoro performed in 2010. With Purbo's gradual rise to stardom over the past twenty years or so authorized discourses of *wayang* now truly enter the popular domain of *wayang*, not only within Indonesia, but increasingly also outside. Through the simultaneous translations of his shows into English, his performances become readily accessible to a global audience. Consequently, the influence of ISI and its underlying *wayang* discourse, as channeled and popularized through Purbo, reaches this ever increasing global audience. It is the appreciation of global elites for Purbo as a

representative of the *wayang* tradition that rubs off on *wayang* sponsors' appreciation at home. Purbo is especially popular with hosts who share a similar academic background. His academic background provides him with a fan base of intellectual lovers of *wayang*. Appreciation for Purbo Asmoro should thus be linked to the increasing value attached to formal education, which was indicated by Wulan's wish to learn at ISI what is right and wrong in *wayang*.

Although sponsor appreciation might be based on elite conceptions of *wayang*, Purbo is able to relate to large audiences both at home and abroad, mainly through his skill in creating new and compelling *wayang* stories that relate to the interest and concerns of his audiences. Purbo's case also shows the complex interaction between colonial discourse re-authorized after independence in an attempt to standardize and control *dalang* and their performance practice. Discourses of *wayang* established in colonial times and re-authorized in postcolonial discourses are perpetuated and reaffirmed by Purbo, because of the environment and context in which he works at ISI. At the same time though, he is able to find ways to innovate and produce new meanings for *wayang*, particularly through the creation of new *wayang* stories. Purbo's audience in general is not concerned with authorized discourses, but merely interested in the pleasure his shows have to offer. Spectators do not regard Purbo's academic background as an asset, but judge his performing abilities, and greatly appreciate his new *wayang* stories.

Sponsors of *wayang* performances are usually aware of discourses of preservation and safeguarding *wayang* that presumably find their roots in colonial and New Order concerns of the deterioration of *wayang*. However, they are predominantly unaware of the international heritage discourse. In essence, Purbo does what the UNESCO convention aims to achieve: he ultimately shapes his own individual performance practice, which stands by itself. He points out that he does not directly relate to UNESCO's discourse, but through the frame of heritage he is able to reach out and relate to a global audience that can understand and appreciate his art. In this case UNESCO's heritage policy does not actually affect performance practice but is merely utilized by the *dalang*. How new frames and discourses continue to emerge in other ways than discourses authorized by institutions such as ISI and UNESCO will be discussed in the next chapter.



Chapter 5

Manteb Soedharsono: how invention becomes convention

Ki Manteb Soedharsono waiting to start his show, Ngawi, 24th July 2010. By S.N. Boonstra.

It is 7AM and I am on my way back home by bus from a *wayang* performance. Karaoke versions of popular *dangdut* and *campur sari* (Indonesian musical genres) squawk loudly from the television in front of the bus and are regularly interrupted by commercials for all sorts of products, like energy drinks, yoghurts and pain killers. One commercial catches my attention. It flashes on the screen for no longer than forty-five seconds. It shows a red flag with a dragon on it waving in the wind. Chinese characters appear on the right side of the screen to tunes that create a Chinese atmosphere. The camera turns to a group of people sitting in a rocky area in front of a Chinese gate surrounded by flags. They are all dressed in white t-shirts, light blue trousers and black belts. The camera zooms in on a boy who performs martial arts exercises together with a girl in a bright yellow jumpsuit. Suddenly they both grab their heads. They are hit by a headache, but continue fighting. Their aims go awry and the boy ends up beating his teacher instead, crying out 'My apologies teacher, I have a terrible headache!' (*Maaf guru, kepalaku pusing sekali!*). Meanwhile, the girl falls onto her classmates. The camera zooms in on the girl, who is back on her feet again. Half of her face is artificially colored red. She grabs her head complaining, 'Me too, I have migraine!' (*Begitu pun aku, saya sakit kepala sebelah*). The music swells dramatically and the whole class turns ready to fight when the girl asks 'Hey! Who's that?' (*Hey huh! Siapa itu?*). From afar a figure dressed in a long blue coat somersaults towards the camera. He disappears from sight for a split second before he pops up right in front of the camera. He wears gold colored glasses and a *blangkon* (a traditional Javanese cap), and stands upright with his left arm on his hip radiating authority and control. He shows a packaging and says 'Headache, dizzy, drink Oskadon. Oskadon Migra for migraine!' (*Pusing, pening, minum Oskadon. Oskadon Migra untuk sakit kepala sebelah*).

The following scenes show the boy and the girl respectively, drinking a glass presumably containing Oskadon and Oskadon Migra, while they display the packaging in their hands. The camera goes back to the training setting where the class – boy and girl in front - is shown bursting with energy executing a fighting routine. The man in the long blue coat walks towards the camera, repeats which medicine will heal which kind of headache, waves his right arm in a spinning movement and says '*Oskadon, pancen Oye!*', which is Javanese for 'Oskadon, really good!'. The commercial ends with a shot of the two different packages tossed into a rock with the wave of the hand by the man in the blue coat

(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_FKnJOqf4Q). The mysterious man in the long blue coat wearing gold colored glasses who takes control of the situation, the hero of the commercial is the *dalang* I had just watched perform a *wayang* all-nighter. Ki Manteb Soedharsono was the shining star of the commercial.

I laughed because the commercial was funny, but at the same time I was confused. Manteb as a person was clearly recognizable in the commercial, but there was nothing that referred to him as a *dalang*. His costume invoked a slight hint of the *rokkie Jawi* or traditional Javanese dress, which consists of a short jacket worn with *batik*, because of the resemblance with the upper part of the long mantle Manteb wore in the commercial. However there was no sign of *wayang* in the commercial. On the contrary, the context was Chinese martial arts. The *dalang* Manteb Soedharsono was taken out of his *wayang* context and put into a martial arts context to sell pain killers, and apparently it worked: the commercial had made me laugh. At the same time I was puzzled by Manteb's appearance in the commercial without the support of the context of *wayang*. In this chapter I will investigate the kind of dynamics in *wayang* that have made it possible for one of the most famous *dalang* to star in a commercial for pain killers. I intend to look at how commerce influences *wayang* performance practice, and how Manteb's performance practice relates to heritage discourse.

Manteb Soedharsono – *Dalang Setan*

Manteb's fame as a *dalang* is omnipresent both in academic discourse and audience appreciation on the street. As pointed out earlier, most people, when asked who their favorite *dalang* is, would answer Manteb and/or Anom. Manteb is widely regarded as a versatile and funny *dalang*, who is famous because of his extraordinary puppetry skills. As mentioned before, UGM professor Soedarsono places Manteb somewhere between the *dalang* who still use the *pakem* and the ones no longer using it. Manteb indeed is a *dalang* with a complex performance practice in which he combines *Agama Jawa* with technological innovations and commercialism. Manteb is a so-called '*dalang turunan*', which means that he was born in a *dalang* family in Surakarta. Both his father, Ki Hardjo Brahim, and grandfather were famous *dalang*, and his mother was an experienced *gamelan* musician. His five younger brothers are all *dalang* as well. When Manteb was a small child his father

took him to his *wayang* performances where the young Manteb would fall asleep on the stage (Komar Abbas and Subro 1995, 22-23).

Manteb's father encouraged him to continue the family tradition and taught him to make *wayang* puppets, to manipulate them, and to play each instrument of the *gamelan*. At the age of five Manteb was already able to manipulate the puppets and play some *gamelan* instruments, and by the time he was thirteen could perform all-night shows (*semalam suntuk*) and play all the *gamelan* instruments (Interview Manteb, 7th April 2010). As a *gamelan* musician he accompanied *wayang* performances by a senior *dalang*, Ki Warsino from Baturetno, Wonogiri in Central Java (Komar Abbas and Subro 1995, 35).⁶⁹ He was apprenticed for three years with Ki Nartosabdho, and Ki Sudarman Gondodarsono, who specialized in *sabetan*, and started to perform as a professional *dalang* with all-night *wayang* shows at the age of eighteen (Interview Manteb, 21st July 2010).

In the 1970s and 1980s the famous Nartosabdho and Anom Suroto dominated the field of *wayang*. Their fame and pre-eminence in the field of *wayang* performance practice made Manteb realize he had to find a niche in order to distinguish himself: 'Ki Narto was skillful in dramatization, whereas Ki Anom was the vocal expert. I had to be different from them. In the end, I chose to concentrate on the movements of the puppets' (Manteb quoted in Nugroho Adi 2010). Manteb's father was already known for his puppetry skills, but Manteb admits that he drew inspiration for his *sabetan* from *kung fu* films starring Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan (Nugroho Adi 2010). Superstar *dalang* of *wayang golek*, Asep Sunandar, makes a similar claim that in addition to using Disney cartoon characters he also used Hong Kong martial arts as source of inspiration for his puppetry skills (Weintraub 2004, 197). Manteb's rise to fame took off when he won a contest in *pakeliran padat* in 1982, which established his reputation as a *dalang* (Press Release, 13th May 2010).

Manteb's real breakthrough came in 1987 with the staging of the *Banjaran Bima* (a story about Bima, one of the main characters in the Mahabharata) by performing one episode of the story in Jakarta each month over the course of a year (Koman Abbas 1995, 136-145).⁷⁰ In the same year Manteb got his nickname *Dalang Setan* or 'Devilish Dalang'

⁶⁹ <http://www.kimanteb-oye.com/en/profile.html>, accessed 13th November 2012.

⁷⁰ The twelve episodes of the Banjaran Bima were, *Yakni Bima Bungkus, Bale Singala-gala, Dewa Ruci, Bima Suci, Pandawa Dadu, Wiratha Parwa, Dursasana Jambak, Duryudana Gugur, Pandawa Moksa.*

from former minister of information Boedihardjo, who coined this nickname after watching the *dalang* perform in Surakarta. *Dalang Setan* does not refer to any devilish trait in Manteb, but to Boedihardjo's admiration for Manteb's unrivaled puppetry skills. Since then, Manteb is known as *Dalang Setan* (Nugroho Adi, 2010). After twenty years his nickname is still used to refer to Manteb's extraordinary *sabetan*. About these skills Manteb explains that '*Sabetan* is not simply a matter of skill, but rather a way to give the puppets spirit. People can learn how to manipulate puppets in just one month. But without the right skill, the puppets might still appear dead, or without spirit' (Nugroho Adi, 2010). In general, audience appreciation for Manteb also indicates that Manteb has the ability to make the puppets very much alive. Besides being known as *Dalang Setan*, he is also widely known as *Dalang Oye*, Good Dalang, which is strongly linked to his commercial appearances in Oskadon advertisements. To this topic we will return below.

Manteb's skills and fame led to many honors, such as *Satya Lencana Kebudayaan* (Medal of Cultural Honor) given by President Suharto in 1995, and the decoration bestowed upon him by Pakubuwono XII who knighted Manteb as *Kanjeng Raden Tumenggung* (KRT) *Lebdodipuro*. Sears has already observed that Manteb was a politically acceptable *dalang* (1996, 271), something which was confirmed by various informants. Politically safe means that potential hosts know that Manteb will never get them in trouble by embarrassing them. As pointed out above, during the Suharto era *dalang* from Surakartan descent were favored by the government. Manteb's performances did not expand too greatly on social problems, so the Suharto government could encourage and support him and other *dalang* for their own political programs (Sears 1996, 271).

The prizes, awards, titles and representative functions bestowed upon Manteb indicate that his performances are of such a nature that official authorities are willing to, and ultimately do, recognize his value as a *dalang*. Manteb was sent as a representative of the *dalang* community to the UNESCO Masterpiece Proclamation ceremony held in Paris in 2004, and during my field research Manteb received the Asia Nikkei Prize in 2010. Although Manteb criticizes corruption in his performances, he makes sure this criticism is harsh enough for his audience to appreciate and support it, but at the same time he is careful to not alienate potential hosts. In this way he negotiates his position somewhere between the expectations of the audience and his hosts. However, he has his own beliefs in

Pancasila. In every Manteb show a *Pancasila* song is performed by his singers. His performance practice appeals to officials who have served in the Suharto government, as his close relation to Sena Wangi officials illustrates.

Besides official appreciation of Manteb as a celebrity *dalang*, he is also valued for the performance of Javanese values as a *dalang ruwatan* at exorcism or purification rituals. *Ruwatan* have been part of the *wayang* repertoire at least since the seventeenth century (Brandon 1993, 5). In Central Java there is usually one story used, *Murwakala* or *The Birth of Kala*. It tells the story of the gods descending to earth to perform in a *wayang* play in an effort to stop the murderous assault of the ogre-god Kala, who symbolically pursues the child or adult who is being exorcised. The *dalang* reads a powerful mantra or spell to appease both the represented victim in the *ruwatan* performance and the god Kala. The victim is freed, the evil spirit is exorcised, and for a time order returns to the world. Only male *dalang* over the age of fifty from puppeteer families stretching back many generations, and whose fathers have already passed away, are supposed to have enough mystical knowledge to perform this (Interview Manteb, 7th April 2010). Only they are considered to be strong and brave enough to handle the magical forces that surface in *ruwatan* performances (Sears 1996, 235 – 236).

I once attended a *Ruwatan Suro* (a *ruwatan* in the first month of the Javanese year) by Manteb which took place at the house of the famous comedian, Kirun in Madiun on 14th December 2010. The house was prepared and decorated lavishly. Some fifty youngsters, both girls - with their hair down - and boys, who all changed into white clothes, were to be purified. As is usual, this *ruwatan* took place during daytime, starting around 10 a.m. and lasting until 4 p.m. The *ruwatan* started with Manteb's performance. For the occasion he put a scripture in the form of a small book onto the banana log in which the *wayang* puppets are stuck. From this book he read a particular text containing the sacred mantra believed to activate its power. Sears informed us that the recording of these sacred mantras in print form may be due to the influence of the Solonese literatus R. Tanaya. He published a version of the *Murwakala* text in the 1930s, perhaps from fear of losing the sacred text if it was not written down (Sears 1996, 239). After the performance Manteb climbed off stage to cut a lock of hair of each youngster to rid them of bad luck (*untuk buang sial*). They lined up to step forward to the *dalang* in turn. The scene then moved to a large container filled

with flower petals and ritualized water from special sources. Again, Manteb lined up the youngsters to sprinkle this ritualized water over their heads. The fact that Manteb performs *ruwatan* proves that he practices Javanese mysticism. He also takes advice from older *dalang* and is married to one wife at a time because he is a *dalang ruwatan*. When Enthus Susmono was released from a short imprisonment in 2009, which will be discussed in the next chapter, he immediately went to Manteb for a *ruwatan* (Interview Manteb, 7th April 2010). In addition to his performances as a *dalang*, Manteb also regularly performs as an actor in *kethoprak* and *Wayang Wong*.

Manteb thus employs a large variety of seemingly paradoxical activities as a *dalang*, which raises the question what is his discourse of *wayang*. Manteb refuses to define *wayang* because in his opinion *wayang* can be anything: 'Wayang is broad. Anything is possible.' (*Wayang itu luas. Apa pun bisa, bisa*). According to him, it can be religion, politics, spirituality, culture, social, philosophy, for spreading the faith, all depending on the thoughts of the *dalang*, the one who makes culture (*agama, politik, spiritual, budaya, sosial, filsafat, untuk dakwa bisa, tergantung pemikiran dalang, pelaku budaya*). There are *dalang*, he states, that are *dalang ustad* (puppeteer-cum-Islamic teacher) or *dalang* who want to be an MC (Master of Ceremony). Manteb, however, is of opinion that the screen is meant only for culture (*kelir hanya untuk budaya*) that has to be in tune with the time (*wayang harus berjalan dengan zaman*), because if you only use the *pakem*, *wayang* will die. In order to master *wayang*, one has to learn its form and character (*bentuk dan karakter*). Manteb warns that it is not an easy task, and that it takes a long time to become a *dalang* (Interview with Manteb, 21st July 2010).

When I ask what his students should learn or rather what Manteb teaches his apprentices he explains that he teaches them the *wayang* basics. First, they should have knowledge of *wayang*, the characteristics of *wayang* (*mengetahui ilmu pewayangan dulu, karakter wayang*). Second, they study the melodies of *wayang*, the songs (*gending pewayangan, suluh*). Then they are taught puppetry skills (*sabetan*), and after this Manteb educates his apprentices in speaking the *wayang* language (*bahasa wayang, omongan*). Lastly, he instructs them about the structure of *wayang* stories (*struktur lakon*). In essence, says Manteb, the *wayang* tradition concerns the *wayang* puppets and the *dalang* (*wayang dengan dalangnya*). Manteb explains that he increasingly returns to the tradition, which he

regards as a wave-like motion in his career, characterized by versatility (*serba bisa*). Nowadays he claims to change puppets that already feature in a story, but are not embodied in a puppet, such as changing the *wanda* of a puppet, i.e. the appearance of a puppet varies according to the status or situation, creating a particular version. Manteb for example, created a version of young Abumanyi, who is represented only as a mature Abumanyi. The face remains unchanged as it contains the spirit (*roh*) of the *wayang* character, but it is permitted to change its body (Interview Manteb, 21st July 2010). The shift Manteb has made in his approach towards innovation and his performance practice from progressive to reserved reflects the complexity of the dynamics that have worked and still are at work in the world in which Manteb became the superstar *dalang* featuring in the Oskadon commercial.

Bigger *wayang* stars, smaller universe

Emphasis on the *dalang* as an individual became linked to the popularity of *wayang* and the increasing infusion of capital by the government under Suharto. In combination with the emergence of mass media this led to the rise of the *dalang* superstar. A limited field of privileged practitioners reached the status of superstar that dominated *wayang* performances (Weintraub 2004, 12). In the 1950s and 1960s, the attention of the state for the role the *dalang* in propagating governmental messages increased, but not all *dalang* benefitted accordingly. Certain *dalang* enjoyed greater exposure and publicity than others. It was during this time that the image of the *dalang* as an individual practitioner became central in political discourse on *wayang* (Clara van Groenendael 1985, 140-152).

Until the 1970s superstar *dalang* did not exist but every village had its own *dalang*. Starting in the 1960s hundreds, if not thousands of *wayang* recordings - consisting of eight or nine cassette tapes - flooded the markets in Indonesia on both a regional and national level. Most of these were studio recordings, and just a few registrations of public live performances. The cassette sets were bought and listened to by *wayang* aficionados and played over the speaker system at celebrations, and they are a major resource for *wayang* broadcasts over the radio. According to audience research carried out in Java in the early 1970s, traditional performance genres, including *wayang*, were the major rationale for listening to the radio all over the island, except in the capital, Jakarta. The main stations of

the national radio network RRI on Java, regularly broadcast all night performances from their auditoriums. Although budget cuts at RRI after 1998 resulted in the station signing off around midnight to start broadcasting again in the early morning around 5 a.m., the main RRI stations stay on air especially for their *wayang* broadcasts on specific nights. Some of the private radio stations, and the private television station Indosiar do the same. The monetary crisis of 1997 also affected the cassette industry: few new cassettes were released, but many older sets remained on the market (Arps 2002, 315-316).

The cassette industry started with selling recordings by Nartosabdho and Anom, who were both known for their beautiful voices, their humor, and musical pieces. Arps already noted the effects of the cassette industry on audience expectations concerning *wayang* performances. Because Nartosabdo and Anom dominated the cassette industry, other *dalang*, who were perhaps more classically oriented, got fewer invitations to perform. In order to be invited, they were forced to adapt to the performance styles recorded on cassettes (Arps 1985, 48-49). The success of cassette recordings can be sought in the aural nature of *wayang* that suited audio *wayang* recordings. Although *wayang* is a medium that appeals to all senses, technological innovations, such as radio broadcasts and amplification, made live *wayang* audible for a large distance, and reached mass audiences. The result was that audiences became accustomed to hearing *wayang* performances rather than actually watching them (Weintraub 2004, 168).

The emergence of the cassette culture coincided with other forms of mass culture, such as television, advertising, and the flood of consumer products. Financial capital was used to organize recording companies, to set up studios, to create distribution infrastructures, and to develop new and expanding markets of potential consumers. A growing middle class audience for *wayang* provided a consumer base for cassettes that had previously never existed. The cassette culture helped consolidate the power and influence of superstar performers, and also played a significant role in the emergence of highly innovative styles that embraced popular cultural forms. Although in the 1990s *dalang* were hesitant to admit stylistic links and influences from cassette culture to Weintraub, he argues that cassettes became the medium through which a dialogical process of cross-regional artistic influence emerged and expanded. *Dalang* had now become each other's

audience as well, which led to superstar *dalang* exerting influence over fellow performers (Weintraub 2004, 173-174).

Effects of new technology thus led to a struggle over *wayang* performance practice, the variety of regional styles, language and stories. Cassette producers were interested in only a limited number of performers who they knew would sell and generate predictable economic returns. Consequently, this handful of *dalang* dominated the cassette industry. The cassette culture did not only limit the variety in *wayang* performance practices, but also generated new forms in which humor, musical and theatrical hybridism, and the use of everyday language was emphasized. The cassette industry thus enhanced the opportunities for superstar *dalang* to reach a mass audience. It narrowed down representation, but opened up new audiences (Weintraub 2004, 165-171). Nartosabdho and Anom were kings of the cassette industry in the 1970s and 1980s when Arps wrote in 1985, Nartosabdho was the most popular, followed by Anom. Sears showed that Manteb started to be recorded only in the late 1980s. She argues that Manteb's rise to popularity had nothing to do with the cassette industry, but the cassette industry was rather a consequence of his popularity, which in turn reinforced his status as a performer (Sears 1996, 264).

Television was a medium better-suited to bring Manteb's particular puppetry skills into the spotlight. Live performances remained a more frequent venue for *wayang*, but *wayang* on television created a new space of interaction among *dalang*, audience and producers, says Weintraub. From 1962 until 1989 the national television network TVRI (*Televisi Republik Indonesia*) had a monopoly on television programming in Indonesia. TVRI broadcast *wayang* on a fairly regular basis. The broadcasting of *wayang* on television gave rise to a debate about the formal qualities of performance, audience formation and its cultural functions (Weintraub 2004, 191). Like the cassette-industry, only well-known *dalang* were broadcast on television, as they could afford the high costs involved in a television production, such travel expenses, food and a small honorarium for the musicians. Directors of television channels decided which *dalang* would perform, but selection criteria were also informed by competition with popular programming at private commercial channels. Consequently, the representation of *wayang* became increasingly limited, as certain cultural texts of certain *dalang* were privileged while others were excluded from broadcasting. The result was similar to the effects of the cassette-industry, superstar

dalang enjoyed greater status and wealth and less popular *dalang* started to slowly disappear (Weintraub 2004, 200).

There was no audience present at the recordings of *wayang* in the television studios of TVRI. Because the perspective and direction of the camera was controlled, the audience at home became passive spectators. The audience was no longer a participant in a performance and was turned into critics without any personal contact with the *dalang*. The exclusion of audiences also meant that the state television station now was the only authoritative force of the performance. Audiences would have expressed their desires and expectations to which *dalang* could have and would have responded. As a consequence, audience responses to the message the *dalang* was hired to transmit were now also excluded (Weintraub 2004, 198-199).

Television changed with the establishment of several private commercial stations, such as RCTI (*Rajawali Citra Televisi Indonesia*) in 1989, SCTV (*Surabaya Centra Televisi*) in 1990, TPI (*Televisi Pendidikan Indonesia*) in 1991 and Indosiar in 1995. These commercial stations introduced novel ways of broadcasting *wayang* (Weintraub 2004, 191). Indosiar had national coverage and started to broadcast *wayang golek* performances in 1995. The television station succeeded in creating interesting and innovative ways to attract audiences by introducing *wayang golek* with painted backdrops, special effects, and multiple camera angles to view the productions. The private station even began broadcasting all-night performances and shooting on location which made it possible to show the interaction between the *dalang* and his audience. The private station also developed new kinds of *wayang* for television, including a popular program called *The Asep Show* (Weintraub 2004, 201).

The paradox of recordings is that it decreased representation, but resulted in a demand for innovation. The level of diversity in personal and regional styles has decreased as opportunities to perform have become dominated by just a few *dalang* who were valorized by the cassette industry. In this sense, cassettes and television can be regarded as new technologies fit to document and register *wayang*. The cassette recordings and the broadcasting of *wayang* thus works in the same way as the documentation of *wayang* in texts was practiced in colonial times. They establish standards for the performance practice

creating guidelines for performances in the process. It therefore fixes the performance practices that are broadcasted and renders other styles increasingly invisible.

The difference lies in the scale of the impact of these forms of documentation. Mass media was able to disseminate privileged *dalang* and their *wayang* performance practices on a massive scale. This process decreased the representation of *dalang* and styles. Paradoxically, as *dalang* superstar sold more and more of their stories they were forced to develop their capacity for innovation and experimentation in order to keep their fans interested and avoid boredom in their audiences. This concern was observed by Weintraub (2004, 172), but was also expressed by Enthus Susmono. Superstar *dalang* are only able to sustain their high status and visibility for the mass audience as long as they succeed in fulfilling the public's taste for novelty (Interview Enthus, 19th July 2009). As such, the superstar system and the demand for innovation is a dialogical, self-reinforcing relation.

Wayang innovations

That superstar *dalang* rely on their innovative capabilities became very clear when one day Manteb's earnest demand that I 'Write down that Manteb is an innovator of wayang performances' (*Kamu menulis Manteb pembaru pakeliran*). This reveals that it is important to him to be portrayed as a *wayang* innovator. He claimed that there are hardly any *dalang* who are not influenced by him because his innovations have become mainstream. He alleged that to this day the majority of *dalang* is following along his path (*sebagian besar [dalang - SB] yang mengikuti saya*). Manteb's innovations caused him to be criticized severely in the 1980s and 1990s when he was regarded as *perusak* or 'demolisher' of *wayang* (Interview Manteb, 21st July 2010).

Koman Abbas, biographer of Manteb, also noted that he was regarded as a demolisher of the *pakem* (*dalang perusak pakem*). Both Manteb and Anom were said to head a movement of *pakemisation* in a stealthy way '*secara diam-diam melakukan gerakan pakemisasi*'. Manteb defended himself against these allegations by stating that the option of using the *pakem* is a personal choice of the *dalang* (Komar Abbas and Subro 1995, 149-150).⁷¹ Manteb regards the loosening relation of the *dalang* with the *pakem* as a

⁷¹ Ki Anom and Ki Manteb who represented the organizers state that the foretold activity had no other purpose than to strengthen the ties between the various *dalang*. Between the older and younger *dalang* as well as individuals who have a relation with the

consequence of the lessening influence of the court on culture and society at large (Komar Abbas and Subro 1995, 153).⁷² This is in line with the reluctance Manteb earlier displayed to define *wayang*. It also implies that he does not particularly value authorized discourses of *wayang*. To Manteb the *pakem* is merely a guideline to learn *wayang* (*aturan hanya untuk belajar wayang*) (Interview Manteb, 21st July 2010) and as such should be approached flexibly.

Sears related Manteb's innovations of the 1980s and 1990s to the penetration of *wayang* innovations developed at ISI into the popular domain. She relates this process to the *Rebo Legi* events at Anom's residence, and the dialogical, self-reinforcing relation between *wayang* innovations and the superstar system. In the early 1980s Manteb was already popular in Surakarta and the surrounding areas because of his skillful and unconventional *sabetan*. This blended well with the group of *Rebo Legen* puppeteers that emphasized flashy puppetry skills and coarse humor. She observed also that Manteb's innovations were particularly concerned with technology (Sears 1996, 260). This is endorsed by the statement Manteb made to me in 2010 that he started to renew *wayang* with the use of blue lights, smoke effects, a keyboard for sound effects, trumpets, drums, cymbals, guest stars and *campur sari*, (*lampu biru, smoke, organ untuk sound effect, trompet, drum, cymbal, bintang tamu, campur sari*) in 1987 (Interview Manteb, 21st July 2010).

Manteb applied ISI innovations to his performance practice and then took them to the next level. Colored lamps were already used in *Sandosia padat* performances (using Indonesian) that were developed at ISI. Manteb took this one step further and made use of a lighting specialist who controlled the lighting under Manteb's direction during a performance. In this process he popularized the innovations developed at ISI in the way Purbo popularizes authorized ISI discourses of *wayang*, making them accessible to a mass audience. The practice of a large number of *gunungan* was another technique Manteb borrowed from ISI *padat* performances. Again, Manteb developed this practice further with

world of puppetry. And besides that as an expression of gratefulness towards The Lord who is the ultimate Dalang. (*Menurut Ki Anom dan Ki Manteb yang mewakili penyelenggara menuturkan bahwa kegiatan tersebut tak lebih untuk menjamin lebih eratny kekerabatan antar pribadi para dalang. Baik dalang tua, dalang muda maupun pribadi-pribadi yang ada hubungannya dengan dunia pedalangan. Selain itu sebagai ungkapan rasa syukur kepada Tuhan Sang Maha Dalang.*)

⁷² Ki Manteb observes that it is clear that the group of dalang that applies pakem is decreasing. This is in accordance to the decrease of the influence of the kraton in society. (*Ki Manteb memandang wajar bila ikatan dalang dengan pakem makin menipis. Hal itu sejalan dengan menipisnya pengaruh kraton di tengah masyarakat.*)

his exceptional puppetry skills. In order to bring his puppetry skills into the limelight Manteb changed the course of his *wayang* performances. He opened his shows with flashbacks and expanded the scenes in which he was able to display his extraordinary puppetry skills at the expense of the *Limbukan* (female clown scene). Manteb made use of a dramaturgical technique developed by Nartosabho, opening his performances with the clown scenes that traditionally starts around one o'clock in the morning, and he made use of guest stars. Besides innovations in technology, Manteb was one of few *dalang* who experimented with *padat* performances and cooperated with musicians and *dalang* from ISI as advisers for musical arrangements and innovative *sabetan* (Sears 1996, 260-264).

By the 1990s Manteb's popularity appeared to have surpassed Anom's, and spread through all layers of society. He performed continually all over Java and was said to request several million rupiah per performance. To illustrate his fame, success and status, Manteb established a monthly Javanese birthday event (*wetonan*) called *Selasa Legi* (Tuesday Legi) like Anom's *Rebo Legi* (Wednesday Legi). Following Anom, Manteb invites *dalang* from all over Java to perform at his house, but the atmosphere of *Selasa Legen* is more serious than the *Rebo Legen* event. All performers are recorded on video – as they were at *Rebo Legen* – and Manteb spoke to Sears of his duty to preserve the older *wayang* styles by also inviting older *dalang*. Here I must mention that I have also seen child *dalang* and *gamelan* musicians perform at *Selasa Legen* events. Despite all the adoptions of new technology and techniques, Manteb claimed that he was not changing the tradition. He assured Sears at the time that the trumpets and drums were to keep young people interested and that the tradition remained intact (Sears 1996, 260-264).

During the course of my fieldwork the topic of innovation came to the fore continuously. As I pointed out earlier, Manteb explicitly wanted to be portrayed as an innovator. However, all *dalang* I encountered emphasized their ability to write and perform new stories. Interviews with Purbo's audience showed that innovation in this field is greatly appreciated and also expected by *wayang* spectators. Whenever Manteb was performing a new story he or his wife would proudly point out that the story in question was Manteb's own creation, and that this story had never been performed before. Not only Manteb and his wife wanted to illustrate this point. Other *dalang*, his crew, fans and supporters, would also inform me if the story or other elements were new to *wayang*. The

creation of new stories is thus both a peculiarity and a novelty, but at the same time it is expected. The creation of a new story is a scoop for the *dalang* and used to distinguish oneself from other *dalang*, augmenting the prestige and status of the *dalang* in question. Winning a *wayang* competition has the same effect. Winning a contest is proof and recognition of a *dalang*'s skill and ability within a clear framework, i.e. the rules of the competition, and adds greatly to a *dalang*'s fame and status. This is illustrated by the fact that Manteb's star started to rise after he won a *pakeliran padat* competition in 1982. Being the first to tell a story, to create a new story, musical piece or puppet, to introduce a new *wayang* character, or winning a *wayang* contest distinguishes one *dalang* from the other. It sets a *dalang* apart from the others and gives prestige and standing to the *dalang* who can claim that he was the first.

In this sense, all *dalang* are innovators, which Manteb admits. Besides himself, he mentioned Ki Enthus Susmono, who will be the central figure in the next chapter, as great innovator. Manteb and Enthus Susmono know each other very well and perform *wayang* duels between two *dalang* (*duel dua dalang*) on request, as I witnessed on 30th October 2010. They respect, appreciate and admire each other as colleagues and friends. Manteb was aware of the fact that I was also working with Enthus Susmono for my research because Enthus Susmono's manager, who had become Manteb's manager as well, had introduced me to Manteb. Manteb told me that although Enthus Susmono claims to be the first to make *wayang* puppets with a human face, Manteb made *wayang* puppets with human faces long before Enthus Susmono became famous for this innovation. Manteb stopped making puppets with a human face because he was convinced that this was not the right direction for *wayang* to develop. In his view the face of the *wayang* puppets should remain unaltered because it contains the spirit (*roh*) of the puppet. 'Of course', he says 'anything is allowed, a human face, a lion, but a *dalang* should ask himself the question: what is its use?' (*manfaat apa?*) Manteb wonders (Interview Manteb, 21st July 2010).

The financial boost from governmental sponsorships for *wayang* performances under Suharto allowed superstar *dalang* to bring innovations in *gamelan* music. The '*multilaras*' *gamelan* was tuned in such a way that multiple tuning systems could be used, and it offered a greater variety of pieces and musical associations, something that was positively received by audiences. These *gamelan* however, were very expensive so that

only a small group of successful performers could afford it. By owning these *gamelan*, *dalang* were able to increase their own popularity within the already highly competitive field. As a result, the limited group of superstar *dalang* became even smaller, and came to enjoy such positions of power in their field that they were able to exert a great degree of influence and control over *wayang* performance practice. The *multilaras gamelan* was more than just another creative endeavor of highly talented performers. It was also symbolic of wealth and resources among top *dalang*. The development of the *multilaras gamelan* was thus crucial in the division between marginalized performers and valorized superstar *dalang*. In this way, the *multilaras gamelan* further worked to crystallize the field of performers, practices, and discourses (Weintraub 2004, 128-129, 161).

The above illustrates that it is necessary for a *dalang* to make innovations in order to distinguish himself from other *dalang*, and it is necessary to be acknowledged and recognized for those innovations for the same reason. Recognition of an innovation reinforces the distinguished position of the *dalang*, which adds to his prestige and status. This shows that the relationship between the superstar system and the need for innovations is dialogical. A *dalang* needs innovations to distinguish himself from others in order to become a superstar, and superstars need innovations to maintain their status and maintain or enlarge audience appreciation. The fact that both Manteb and Enthus Susmono claim to be the creator of *wayang* puppets with human faces, and Manteb's earnest request to write down that he is an innovator of *wayang* is an example of this struggle for recognition. Innovation in *wayang* is thus a self-reinforcing and circular process.

The international face of *wayang*

Innovation is a condition for achieving success, fame and status. Manteb could prosper thanks to his ability to develop his skills, make interesting innovations, and claim a position among the superstar *dalang* of the time, Anom Suroto and Nartosabdho. Manteb was able to achieve his success by making himself into a *dalang* entrepreneur, just like his predecessors Anom and Nartosabdho (Sears 1996, 264). The term *dalang* entrepreneur was also applied by Curtis (2003). Entrepreneurship has become pivotal in Manteb's triumph. His fame and success were confirmed and exploited with an exclusive commercial deal that he made with Oskadon in 1992. Oskadon is a product of the Tempo Group that

was founded in 1953 as a producer of pharmaceutical products. It is based in Jakarta, listed on the Indonesian Stock Exchange (BEI) since 1994, and booked a turnover of 7695 trillion Rp. in 2010. The Tempo Group offers a wide range of pharmaceutical products divided into Consumer Health Products, Prescription/Ethical Products and Consumer Products and Cosmetics. The brand Oskadon is just one of Tempo Group's brands that is sold under the label of General Painkillers in the Consumer Health Products division (thetempogroup.net, accessed 11th July 2012).

The television commercial described at the beginning of this chapter was part of an Oskadon commercial campaign called 'Tradisional in you'. This was a national advertising campaign running throughout the archipelago, with an emphasis on its distribution in Java. Oskadon started this campaign in 1992 to reach potential customers in Indonesian villages. The campaign thus aimed to relate to Indonesian traditions; the Oskadon Group Product Manager, Ma Djon, explained that all Indonesians are fairly traditional (*agar tradisional*), and follow traditions such as '*pulkam*' or '*pulang kampung*', a tradition that everyone returns home to their families to celebrate *Idul Fitri*, which marks the end of the Ramadan. With the campaign *Tradisional in you* Oskadon seeks to appeal to traditional elements and feelings in society to be able to sell their products in the villages (Interview Ma Djon, 25th January 2011).

The question is why was a *dalang* chosen as a commercial star for Oskadon (*bintang iklan untuk Oskadon*). Ma Djon argued that 'The connection with *wayang* [was established] as *wayang* is Indonesian traditional culture' (*Hubungan dengan wayang karena wayang itu kebudayaan tradisional Indonesia*). In his view, *wayang* is Indonesia's oldest culture, (*yang paling tua*), and it was very popular when Oskadon started the *Tradisional in You*-campaign especially in the villages (*terutama di desa*). The most popular *dalang* at the time according to Oskadon was Manteb, which was the reason that he was offered an exclusive contract by Oskadon. Since then, Oskadon and Manteb have not ceased their cooperation, and Manteb has accordingly appeared in advertisements for Oskadon since 1992, Oskadon SP since 2000, and Oskadon Migra since 2009 (Interview Ma Djon, 25th January 2011).

When Manteb signed this lucrative deal with Oskadon he already used the nickname *Oye*, Javanese for 'okay' or 'good', upon which Oskadon came up with the tagline '*Oskadon pancen Oye!*' that is used up to this day in their campaign, and has become very famous as

every two years a new commercial campaign is developed with Manteb as its '*bintang iklan*'. The campaign entails that Manteb appears twice a year in print-ads, five to ten times a day in the TV-commercial on all eleven national channels (ten private channels and one public channel) during eight months of the year. Oskadon commercials are broadcast ten times a day on two hundred radio stations across the archipelago during six months of the year (Interview Ma Djon, 25th January 2011). In practice, this means that if one watches a soap opera and some news items on television during an evening, it is very likely that Manteb appears on the screen in an Oskadon commercial. During my one year of fieldwork I regularly saw the commercial on television, print-ads on long-distance busses, and Oskadon sale stands at Manteb's performances.

It is claimed by Manteb's management that his cooperation with Oskadon has had a tremendous effect and increased Oskadon's turnover for the products recommended by Manteb with 400%. Oskadon however, did not confirm this figure, although it admitted to have benefitted from the cooperation. The deal was not only lucrative to Oskadon; Manteb profits greatly as well. He generates a monthly income plus bonuses in both financial terms and material compensation, such as the car he drives. Over the past twenty years Manteb has become inextricably intertwined with the brand Oskadon. Manteb's name and personality has become so recognizable that he has become a brand in himself, strong enough to feature on its own in Oskadon commercials. This has not always been the case. As mentioned above, Sears argued that Manteb's rise to fame developed independently of the cassette culture. He was only recorded in the late 1980s, but television broadcasts of *wayang* only started in the mid-1990s. When Manteb was contracted by Oskadon his face was thus not yet very well-known, and consequently had to be put in a context.

Manteb's image in Oskadon television commercials has changed over the years. One of them shows a much younger Manteb, perhaps in his forties.⁷³ The commercial setting is a *wayang* stage that is set up in a studio. It shows a *gamelan* orchestra and singers, who play a role in the storyline of the commercial. There is no audience present. The camera zooms in on one of the musicians who complains of a headache. As in the commercial described at the beginning of the chapter, Manteb is presented as the savior. He takes

⁷³ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rQkVqsybSI>, accessed 15th November 2012.

control of the situation and suggests taking Oskadon to get rid of the headache. In this commercial it is explained visually how the painkiller works: take Oskadon and it will vanquish your headache. Thereafter the camera takes the spectator back to the stage where all of the gamelan crew has recovered from their headaches and are now shown smiling, dancing, and full of energy. The commercial ends with Manteb in front of his screen saying: '*Khasiatnya, pancen Oye!*' (It is healing and ok!) after which he places a *gunungan* (a puppet representing a tree of life) in the banana log, an action which marks the end of a *wayang* performance.

Another older Oskadon commercial stars a still young Manteb, but slightly older than in the commercial described previously.⁷⁴ This Oskadon commercial is also set in an obvious *wayang* context. It is shot in a studio and lasts only fifteen seconds. The advertisement opens with a shot from a distance to the side of the *dalang* of a *wayang* stage where the *dalang* is shown in front of his screen, which is ready for a performance. Manteb holds two *gunungan* in the same manner as commencing a performance; with this movement Manteb indicates that the commercial starts. The camera switches to Manteb, who removes the *gunungan*, and appears from behind the puppets. With the performance screen, ready for a performance, clearly visible in the background Manteb recommends Oskadon as a medicine against headache. Camera shots of Manteb are alternated with camera shots of a man who has a headache, which is visualized by coloring part of his face red. Manteb utters the tagline that is still in use today: '*Oskadon pancen Oye!*' after which the commercial ends with a camera shot of the shadow side of the screen where Bagong and Semar, two of the clowns, are visible.

Both these early commercials show Manteb as a *dalang*, in front of a screen set up for a performance, and using puppets. This reveals that earlier in his career Manteb had to be put in the context of *wayang* in the commercials to make clear to the audience that he was a *dalang*. In the oldest commercial, the setting resembles a *wayang* performance context featuring not only Manteb, but a *gamelan* orchestra and singers as well. The second commercial shows a somewhat looser *wayang* context, showing only Manteb without an orchestra. In this commercial only a small reference is made to a *wayang* performance. In

⁷⁴ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_5ad3i3mJg, accessed 15th November 2012.

the newest Oskadon commercial, shot in 2009, Manteb appears totally outside the *wayang* context and put in a Chinese martial arts context. This shows that at earlier stages of his career it was felt necessary to position Manteb as a *dalang* for people to be able to recognize him. In 2010 Manteb's decontextualized commercial performance indicates that his name has developed into a brand strong enough to be recognizable on its own by a mass audience. The commercial appeals to both television-viewers who like, know or perhaps even watch *wayang*, as well as to those who are not familiar with *wayang*. The advertisement is broadcast in the whole Indonesian archipelago, also in regions where *wayang* is not performed, the viewer is assumed to be familiar with Manteb as a personality.

The exposure Manteb has gained and continues to gain through the Oskadon campaign has resulted in the fusion of the image of the *dalang* Ki Manteb Soeharsono with Manteb as a brand and as a commercial symbol of Oskadon. There is a dialectical relation between Manteb as a brand and Oskadon as a brand for pain killers, which is reaffirmed with Manteb's use of the nickname *Oye*. He uses the name on the number plates of his cars and his many motorbikes (Manteb is an avid collector of motorbikes); his website is named kimanteb-oye.com, and he wears a shiny golden bracelet with '*Oye!*' in diamond inlay.

The interchangeability between the brand Manteb, the *dalang* Manteb and Oskadon became clear once more at a performance rehearsal, which took place at his house in Surakarta. Various people had brought their children, who played a game. There was one parent who would say to his child: '*Oskadon pancen ... ?*' The child then enthusiastically pointed to Manteb finishing the sentence by crying out '*Oye!*' Because Manteb features in a commercial campaign with regular exposure in the whole Indonesian archipelago he has gained unrivalled publicity and fame. This resulted in the domination of Manteb in the representation of *wayang*. Hosts of *wayang* performances and the mass audience who are not necessarily familiar with 'live' *wayang* performances are likely to know Manteb from the commercial context and link him to *wayang* through the commercial angle. The commercial frame results in a privileged position for Manteb within the field of *dalang*, and reinforces the already limited representation of *wayang* in a self-sustaining process. The consequence is that Manteb has become the face of *wayang* through Oskadon's commercials.

The face of *wayang* has also become the international face of *wayang* with worldwide acclaim. Manteb has a long history of performing abroad in, among other countries, USA, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, Suriname, Japan, France, Belgium, Hungary and Austria. A great honor was bestowed upon him when Sena Wangi chose him to represent the Indonesian *dalang* community at the ceremony for the Proclamation of *wayang* as a Masterpiece, which took place in 2004. On the day I first met Manteb two delegates of Nikkei Inc.'s office in Jakarta were expected to visit him at his home in Surakarta to discuss the 2010 Nikkei Asia Prize he would be awarded.

Nikkei Inc. sponsors the Nikkei Asia Prizes. It publishes Japan's leading business newspaper, *The Nikkei*. The company's other operations include online information services, book publishing and compilation of Japan's most widely watched stock index. Nikkei established these awards in 1996 in commemoration of the company's 120th anniversary. The Nikkei Asia Prizes honor 'people in Asia who have made significant contributions in three areas - regional growth, science, technology and innovation, and culture. The prizes target individuals and groups in northeastern, southeastern, southern and central Asia, excluding Japan.' (<http://e.nikkei.com/e/fr/forum/nap/2010/index.aspx>, 12th July 2012).

The guidelines for the three prize categories outlined on the nomination form accessible on the website stated that the Nikkei Asia Prize for Culture 'is designed to recognize achievements that improve the quality of life through cultural, artistic, or educational activities. Nominees may include artists, writers, craftsmen, festival organizers, leaders of projects to preserve and study historical heritage and coordinators of cultural activities in the region. Excellent achievements in a country or even in a locality can be awarded as well as achievements by region-wide activities.' As winner of the Nikkei Asia Prize for Culture in 2010, Manteb is described as 'a 'legendary' performer of the traditional Indonesian shadow puppet art of *Wayang* [who] won the culture prize in honor of his activities delighting audiences around the world with performances full of originality for example, ones that blend the time-honored tools of his trade with modern music or that last for 24 consecutive hours' (<http://e.nikkei.com/e/fr/forum/nap/2010/index.aspx>, 12th July 2012).

The two delegates from Nikkei came from Jakarta to Manteb's residence in Surakarta to discuss the award ceremony in Japan. One of Manteb's regular singers of Japanese descent also attended and acted as translator. Two other guests arrived to take part in the discussion too, a former member of parliament, who had served in the early 1980s, attended the meeting as head of Sena Wangi and had brought his assistant. The discussion touched mainly on practical matters, such as the procedure of the ceremony, what he should wear, and the visa he needed. Manteb and the Sena Wangi official explored the possibilities for a performance during the ceremony, but it became clear that there would be no time or space at the venue. The ceremony would concern the formal handing over of the Prize only, although Manteb was allowed to give a speech. Although the meeting appeared to be quite informal (everyone was seated in a very relaxed manner in the *pendopo*, a pavilion-like structure built on columns) the presence of a former politician, who was sure to put his mark on the discussion and decisions, indicates that the Nikkei Prize for Manteb's work was not only a personal or private business. On the contrary, international recognition for Manteb was meaningful and important on a national level too.

Prior to the award ceremony, on 13th May 2010 a press conference was organized in a hotel in Surakarta to generate publicity for Manteb's prize. Honggo Utomo, Manteb's manager, had written a press release and had invited some twenty-five reporters working for newspapers, television and the radio. The official from Sena Wangi was the first to arrive, dressed in *batik*. An hour later Manteb and his wife arrived in his car, carefully and smartly dressed in clothes of western labels. Manteb, his wife, the Sena Wangi official, and his Japanese *pesinden* sat down at a table set up on a stage in front of all the journalists. The Sena Wangi official was master of ceremonies, and acted as a point of reference for Manteb too. Manteb told the story about how he heard that the Nikkei prize was awarded to him, regularly turning to the official for a sign of approval. Thereafter, the Japanese singer explained why specifically Manteb was being awarded the prize. Finally the official asked Manteb's wife to share her thoughts about the award with the journalists. She started to cry and claimed to be proud of her husband receiving the award. The conference lasted one hour after which everyone joined in eating a meal. Manteb travelled to Japan from 17th to 24th May 2010 to receive the Nikkei Award, accompanied by his wife. A small delegation, among whom the Sena Wangi official, went with Manteb on his trip to Japan. The ceremony

consisted of a ten minute speech and time for five minutes of *wayang* demonstration, after which a reception and a press conference was held. Manteb's wife gave me this information when she proudly showed me pictures of the event, pointing out Manteb with the president of the company, other important and high ranking persons, and the Sena Wangi official (Personal conversation with Erni Susanti, 21st July 2010).

Years before Manteb received the Nikkei prize he was linked to a matter of national and international importance when he was sent to Paris in 2004 to perform at the ceremony for the UNESCO Proclamation of *wayang* as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. As has been discussed in the Introduction and chapter 3, the *wayang* puppet theatre was proclaimed a UNESCO Masterpiece. The heritage frame worked in a way similar to the commercial frame in the sense that both dynamics of heritage and commerce standardize and limit the variety of representation of *wayang*. The Candidature File for Indonesian *wayang* described only five *wayang* variants, despite that fact that perhaps hundreds of variants exist throughout the country. The most dominant form *Wayang Kulit Surakarta* was described as the classical form of *wayang*. That this form has become the most dominant can be traced back to colonial times, when Surakarta was already regarded as the center of Javanese culture with Mangkunagaran VII in the 1930s as a vocal advocate for Javanese cultural nationalism. The subsequent continuation of colonial *wayang* discourse and the persistence of Javanese cultural nationalism under both Sukarno and Suharto cause the town to continue to be regarded as center of Javanese culture. As we have seen in chapter 2, New Order officials, including Suharto himself tended to favor *dalang* from the region of Surakarta. This preference was reinforced by the commercial developments as described above, which led to the Surakarta style becoming dominant.

A delegation consisting of forty-five people was sent from Indonesia to Paris to attend the award ceremony in Paris in 2004. Part of the ceremony was a very short *wayang kulit* performance, or rather demonstration, and a *wayang golek* demonstration. Sena Wangi had chosen Manteb to perform the *wayang kulit* demonstration. Sulebar, head of the research team that prepared the Candidature File, told me that Sena Wangi based this choice on a shortlist of *dalang* potentially worthy of being sent to represent the Indonesian *dalang* community. Sulebar prepared profiles of each shortlisted *dalang* and finally, the decision fell on Manteb. Criteria for Manteb's selection were his seniority as a *dalang*, his

outstanding technique and his performance practice of the traditional style (Interview Sulebar, 11th May 2010).

During my fieldwork, I heard that Sena Wangi's decision to send Manteb was received with mixed feelings within the *dalang* community in Central Java. There confusion arose over the nature of the Proclamation. Many *dalang* and *wayang* aficionados were under the impression that the proclamation was an individual prize, an award that was given to Manteb personally through intervention of Sena Wangi. Even though it became clear that this was not the case, many *dalang* still questioned the choice for Manteb to perform in Paris. *Dalang* wondered why Manteb was chosen to represent the classical style, while the majority of *dalang* play in the so-called classical Surakarta style because it is the most dominant form. The question, which still buzzed around in the *dalang* community in 2010, in essence reflects the question of how dynamics of heritage work. The answer to this question might be sought in the development of *wayang* discourse, which, as we have seen in chapter 3, culminated in the Candidature File. As said, the Candidature File was written along UNESCO guidelines, which resulted in a description of *wayang* in a way that the authors thought would be expected and appreciated. The Candidature File declared a certain style as 'classical', which was the *wayang* form that has become the most dominant, the Surakarta style. Within this prevalent *wayang* performance style, Manteb is literally the most visible *dalang*. Through his commercial exposure, Manteb has become a symbol of *wayang* in general and of the Surakartan style in particular. As such, Manteb was the perfect *dalang* to represent *wayang* on the international heritage stage and thus became the international face of *wayang* at the award ceremony of its proclamation as a Masterpiece.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how Manteb and his work have become a standard for *wayang* and how he turned inventions into conventions. Manteb combined his abilities as a *dalang* and entrepreneur in popularizing innovations made at ISI. He was so successful in doing this that he obtained an exclusive commercial deal with Oskadon to become the face in their advertisement campaigns. Maneuvering between authorized discourses of *wayang* and popular performance practice Manteb created a massive fan base with the help of his

success as a commercial star. As a result, Manteb became the standard for *wayang*. This was acknowledged when he, as the face of *wayang*, was sent to Paris to represent the *dalang* community at the ceremony for the proclamation of *wayang* as a UNESCO Masterpiece.

Manteb is a superstar *dalang* who performs *ruwatan* and has an exclusive commercial contract with Oskadon. The emergence of the superstar system led to the crystallization of a limited representation of *wayang*. *Dalang*, sponsors, the audience, and institutions organizing *wayang* performances all contributed to the narrowing down of the representation of *wayang*. Manteb was able to achieve superstar status because he managed to develop extraordinary *sabetan* skills and knew how to exploit them. With his *sabetan* he found himself a niche in the *dalang* field, next to Nartosabdho and Anom Suroto. Manteb's performance style developed under the influence of the emergence of mass media and mass audience appreciation. Consequently, his style has become to a large extent the standard for *wayang* performance practice. Mass media made the mass audience familiar with a certain representation of *wayang*, which they in turn expected from other *dalang* as well. In addition, *dalang* became each other's audience which rendered the variety of performance styles ever more homogenous. The cassette industry started this process, and was reinforced by the expansion of the registration of *wayang* on VCD's and DVD's. This made it possible for *dalang* to listen to and watch each other's performances. Due to this process, and in addition to Manteb's exposure on television, his style was authorized by the mass media and became rather dominant in *wayang* performance practice as *dalang* increasingly started to imitate him since audiences expectations required them to do so.

Manteb's case shows that innovation is crucial in becoming either a superstar or remaining an average *dalang*. Inspired by innovations made and authorized at ISI Manteb mainly innovated in technology. Manteb popularized these ISI innovations and cooperated with musicians and *dalang* from ISI for new musical arrangements and innovation in puppet movements. Today, Manteb claims to make more subtle innovations in the creation of new *wayang* puppets. This might be an even stronger indication that the rise to fame requires innovation. Once superstardom has been achieved, a *dalang* does not need such extreme innovations as he did before reaching celebrity status. Besides his gift for innovation, Manteb owes his success to his ability to be a *dalang* entrepreneur. He found a

niche for his performance style and subsequently made a lucrative deal with Oskadon in 1992. Manteb did well with commercial contract with Oskadon, which from the start of the cooperation has presented Manteb as the face of *wayang* in its campaigns. The result is an enormous increase in his exposure all over Indonesia, even in regions where there is no *wayang*. Manteb gained so much exposure that he and his performance style became dominant in *wayang* representation to a mass audience. As a result of this process, he was chosen to represent the *dalang* community at the award ceremony for the proclamation of *wayang* in Paris in 2004. Manteb's performance practice disseminated and popularized by mass media is now re-authorized in heritage discourse. This shows that the process of making heritage is an exchange between performance practice and *wayang* discourse that both refer to, rely on, and authorize each other. It is a self-referential process which makes stars bigger, but the universe smaller. To what extent there are ways to escape this dynamic will be investigated in the last chapter.

Chapter 6

Enthus Susmono: in search of new audiences



Ki Enthus Susmono, Amsterdam 2009. Courtesy of P. Westerkamp/Tropenmuseum.

Wayang Superstar – the theatre world of Ki Enthus Susmono, an exhibition on Enthus Susmono was opened to the public in the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam from 29th January until 2nd August 2009. The exhibition presented Enthus Susmono as a radical innovator in contrast to ‘the traditional *wayang* theatre’ through the display of a large selection of his puppet creations and audiovisual material to give an impression of his performance practice. A few months later, Enthus performed in the Tropentheater that, like the Tropenmuseum, was a department of the Royal Tropical Institute. Various Dutch newspapers picked up the museum’s press release and wrote: ‘Ki Enthus Susmono breathed new life into the authentic Indonesian *wayang* puppet,’⁷⁵ ‘The controversial Javanese puppeteer and puppet-maker Ki Enthus Susmono in his own country enjoys the status of ‘superstar’. He is the trendiest, the cheekiest, and the most creative.’⁷⁶ ‘His performances are innovative and keep the *wayang* theatre alive’.⁷⁷ ‘Rough language, sexual allusions, a puppet that drinks beer. Until recently such brutalities were unthinkable in Indonesian puppet play, the *wayang*. The work and performances of Ki Enthus Susmono changed that. [...] In his home country Ki Enthus Susmono had to endure a lot of abuse. He was called *dalang Edan*: Crazy *Dalang*, the Cowboy *Dalang*, and the *Kasar Dalang*, or the Rude *Dalang*.’⁷⁸

These quotes suggest that key elements in the work of Enthus Susmono concerned innovation and enlivenment of a tradition that had almost died out. In these characterizations Enthus’s *wayang* is implicitly contrasted with another, opposing sort of *wayang* that is ‘traditional’, ‘classical’, not modern, not creative, not crude or vulgar, but static, polished, refined, and therefore dying. Additionally, Enthus is contrasted to older *dalang* colleagues. The traditional or classical or - whatever other categorization is used - of *wayang* is neither explained nor elaborated upon. Although not explicated, this idea is omnipresent as a contrasting picture; it is assumed to be known by the readers of the (newspaper) articles. In Indonesia, Enthus Susmono is widely regarded by both friend and

⁷⁵ “Ki Enthus Susmono blies de authentieke Indonesische wajangpop nieuw leven in”, *Nieuwe Oost* februari 2009.

⁷⁶ “De controversiële Javaanse poppenspeler en poppenmaker Ki Enthus Susmono heeft in eigen land de status van ‘superstar’. Hij is de hipste, de brutaalste en meest creatieve”, *De Echo*, 10 juni 2009.

⁷⁷ “Zijn voorstellingen zijn vernieuwend en houden het wajangtheater springlevend”, *Friesch Dagblad* 10 januari 2009.

⁷⁸ “Ruige taal, seksuele toespelingen, een pop die bier drinkt. Tot voor kort waren zulke brutaliteiten ondenkbaar in het Indonesische poppenspel, de wajang. Met het werk en het optreden van Ki Enthus Susmono is dat veranderd. [...] In zijn thuisland heeft Ki Enthus Susmono heel wat scheldwoorden te verduren gehad. Hij werd de Crazy Dalang genoemd, de Cowboy dalang, de Kasar Dalang, de ‘grove’ dalang”, *NRC-Handelsblad*, 19 juni 2009.

foe as a radical innovator, which cause his fans to fondly refer to him as *Crazy Dalang*, but prompts critics to call him a Demolisher or *Perusak* of *wayang*.

It may seem like Enthus breaks *wayang* conventions, which suggests the existence of boundaries for the *wayang* performance practice. The first part of this thesis investigated that such understandings of *wayang* can be traced back to colonial times during which discourse shaped guidelines and standards for *wayang* performance practice. These standards are implied in the exhibition and cause some to call Enthus Demolisher of *wayang* although his performance practice is still recognizable as *wayang*. In this chapter I aim to examine to what extent Enthus Susmono's *wayang* practice is influenced by authorized *wayang* discourse. I intend to investigate to what extent and how *wayang* discourse influences Enthus's performance practice and to what extent he draws on alternative discourses or practices in shaping his work.

Ki Enthus Susmono – *Dalang Edan*

Enthus Susmono was born and raised into the ninth generation of an extended *dalang* family in Tegal on the north coast of Central Java. He is a master of both *wayang kulit* and *wayang golek*. From the age of five he accompanied his father Ki Sumaryono to *wayang* performances to watch and learn about both *wayang kulit* and *wayang golek*, which is the way in which most *dalang* are introduced to the art. Enthus's father initially was not a *dalang*, but established a *kethoprak* troupe. Besides managing this troupe, Sumaryono was also a theatre director, responsible for organizing the choreography, music and stage setting. The influence of theatrical genres other than *wayang* on Enthus's performance practice thus began with his father's *kethoprak* plays, in which Enthus, accompanied by his dancer mother, performed minor parts at the tender age of one (Curtis 1997, 285).

Ironically, the success of Sumaryono's troupe also led to financial difficulties, as he was not a businessman and waived admission charges for audience members he recognized and let troupe members remain even though they did not contribute to the performances. Sumaryono decided to change to *wayang golek* in which he continued to integrate *kethoprak* esthetics. Initially, Sumaryono forbid Enthus to play *gamelan* or hold *wayang* puppets as he reasoned that by concentrating on a formal education, Enthus's fate would turn out better than that of his father. Then in junior high school Enthus was able to

take formal lessons in the school's *gamelan* ensemble and began a *dalang* apprenticeship with a teacher called Marwati (Curtis 1997, 288).

One of his teachers recognized Enthus's talent and pleaded with Sumaryono to let Enthus play *wayang*. Finally Enthus's father gave him his blessing when he performed for the first time at his school in 1983. Enthus used his father's puppets for this performance, while his friends played the *gamelan*. Soon he became popular as a small *dalang* (*dalang kecil*). Besides learning most of his skills from his father, Enthus often went to see other *dalang*, such as Bambang Suwarno and Manteb Sudarsono, perform. He also often listened to the commercial cassettes of Nartosabdho. Even now, when Enthus is on the road, travelling either to a performance or on his way back from a show, he sits in the seat next to his driver, sleeping or listening to the sounds of mp3 recordings of Nartosabdho. The year after Enthus's first performance Sumaryono passed away, and Enthus was forced to replace his father in *wayang* performances that were already booked in order to take care of his family. The death of his father also forced Enthus to develop his performances to win popularity among *wayang* audiences so that he would be assured regular work (Curtis 1997, 289).

Enthus is very open about his entrepreneurial approach to his work as a *dalang*. He claims initially he did not feel a particular urge to become a *dalang*. Developing his performances and his skills as a *dalang* was necessary to fulfill his responsibilities to provide a living for a large extended family after his father passed away. Business and life however, are very much intertwined, he amended, and *wayang* is his life and vice versa (Interview with Enthus Susmono, 20th July 2009). Indeed, when I spent some weeks at Enthus's home in Tegal, I always saw him working. Enthus worked continuously on designing new puppets, and selected, repaired and prepared puppets for future performances as well. If Enthus was not performing, he would continue working – often in the presence of the continuous flow of visitors and guests - until well past midnight.

As said, when Enthus started as a *dalang* his earnings did not suffice to provide a living. Therefore he also worked as a dj at the local radio station Anita and in theatre (Nugroho 2002, 28). When he won a *wayang* competition in 1988 his name as a *dalang* became widely known in Central Java, especially on the north coast. In 1990 Enthus Susmono became the runner-up senior *dalang* in Central Java and the year thereafter he

received an arts award from the Central Javanese branch of the Indonesian Journalists Association (*Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia*) and the Arts Council of Semarang (*Dewan Kesenian Semarang*). In the 1990s his fame increased even more as he regularly gave performances with two screens that were broadcast live by *TVRI Stasiun Semarang* (Taman Marzuki Exhibition Guide 2006). In addition, he performed at Taman Ismail Marzuki, an art and cultural center in Jakarta, which only invites the nationally most acclaimed *dalang*, such as Anom Suroto and Manteb Soedharsono (Curtis 1997, 289).

Enthus's *wayang* differs from Central Javanese court ideals that underlie colonial *wayang* discourse. This is partly due to Tegal's location on the periphery of Javanese court culture in the *pasisir* (coastal) region of northern Java. Curtis has argued that the geographical distance from the centers of Javanese culture, Surakarta and Yogyakarta, resulted in a more 'independent, egalitarian, grassroots regional identity'. Enthus's performance practice is influenced by the proximity to Sundanese and Cirebonese cultural practices, which is the case with Tegalese arts in general. This for example is the reason why Susmono mastered both *wayang golek* and *wayang kulit* (Curtis 1997, 289). Enthus however, was influenced by the Surakartan school as he learned from Anom Suroto and Manteb Soedharsono, and regularly went to ISI Surakarta to develop his performance skills. From Bambang Suwarno, teacher at ISI Surakarta, Enthus learned to draw and create puppets. As a child he had already loved to drawing, cutting, and coloring *wayang* puppets. He was taught to perform *wayang golek* by superstar Asep Sunandar Sunarya. From 1993, Enthus found spiritual guidance from Sukiman Tamid in a *pondok pesantren* (Islamic schools) in Tegal, who taught him to avoid politics in his performances (Nugroho 2003, 33-35).

Enthus sees it as his task to be the voice of the people when there is no other way for them to express their opinions and ideas. However, he also claims that he does not want to convey a particular message in his performances; he just wants to share his ideas and opinions about life with the audience. To him *wayang* is about how to live a good life. This concept is his philosophy for his *wayang* shows (*mengajar untuk menjadi orang baik*). To Enthus *wayang* offers reflection, solutions and life lessons, even though he noted that the role of the *dalang* has changed into a medium (Interview Enthus, 20th July 2009 and 17th November 2010).

His performance practice is inspired by literature and his experience in modern theatre; his work as a radio dj brought him knowledge of experimental techniques and mass media. As a result, Enthus Susmono employs language influenced by modern theatre and media rehearsals. He talks about his performances as *konser* (concerts), tells his musicians to *cut* (cut) when he wants them to stop, and refers to stage clothes (including his own puppeteer outfit) as *kostum* (costumes). He is on intimate terms with puppeteers around Indonesia. Curtis observed that Enthus's *wayang* shows tend to be populist in character, which is augmented by Enthus's place in the urban intelligentsia. The dialogue in its modernity not only 'updates' his performance aesthetically, but also sharpens its content. Curtis placed Enthus in a generation of *dalang* that radically carried on aesthetic changes initiated by popular *dalang* like Anom Suroto and Manteb Soeharsono. Enthus, he observed, was fondly referred to as *Dalang Edan* (Crazy *Dalang*) and his performances as *Wayang Mbeling* or *Mischievous Wayang* (Curtis 1997, 290).

After Enthus gained spiritual support from Sukiman his popularity as a *dalang* in circles of *wayang* lovers increased significantly, but got a particular boost in 1994 when he performed on two screens in Semarang (Nugroho 2003, 37). Like other superstar *dalang*, Enthus became a real *dalang* entrepreneur. He still lives in Tegal, but moved to another, larger home where he runs the *wayang* studio Satria Laras and expanded his home in 2010, an indication that he is doing well. Enthus employs a large support staff and owns the means to produce his *wayang* shows himself. He has his own *gamelan* instruments, possesses a large collection of some fourteen hundred puppets, sound and lighting equipment, and transportation vehicles for both his crew and equipment. In addition he hires managers, scriptwriters, puppet makers, and musicians and vocalists from all over Java to develop his performances. He has become one of Indonesia's handful superstar *dalang* that have acquired celebrity characteristics. The car he drives carries his brand name, *Wayang Superstar*. His performances draw large audiences of hundreds if not thousands of spectators both inside and outside Indonesia. He performs around eight times a month with regular all-night *wayang* performances, but his newest creation *Wayang Santri*, lasts two hours, and fills up his schedule daily. In accord with his status he has won many competitions and international decorations, such as an honorary doctorate from the Institute of Business Management & Arts of the University of Missouri in the USA in 2005. He

requests between 40 and 100 million Rp per performance, depending on the event and distance to travel.

Marketing *wayang*

Innovations are Enthus's strongest trademark. As said previously, he is widely regarded as a radical modernizer, but whereas Manteb is generally perceived as a pioneer, Enthus takes innovations to another level. As has been argued in previous chapters, innovations are an important element in the performance practice of *dalang* to distinguish themselves from their colleagues. Cohen noted as innovative traits in Enthus's performance practice the minimal use of formal interchanges and the maximization of humor. Other elements are frame breaking, order of scenes, and autobiographical discourse, when Enthus speaks unreservedly about his own experiences and pleasures (Cohen 2007, 361). Cohen's observations are confirmed by Enthus in one of the audiovisuals at the exhibition in the Tropenmuseum. When he is asked how his performance practice differs from that of other *dalang* Enthus answers: 'Yes, first, there are the *wayang* puppets, then the language, then the musical accompaniment, then the dramaturgy, or storyline, then there is the appearance of a funky *dalang*. Say hello to the audience... [he makes his mirror-image puppet wave to the spectator]. Yes, funky, that is what Westerners call it!'⁷⁹ Enthus's manifestations of innovation reflect his overall approach to *wayang*. He says that he is always searching for ways to open up new markets (*buka pasar*), as he calls it, and to reach new audiences. His concern is that people and especially the youth no longer feel that they can relate to *wayang*. He tries to attract people to *wayang* by making it an interesting spectacle so that philosophical values (*nilai filsafat*) in religious and moral lessons can be easily understood.

⁷⁹ In one of the interviews in the exhibition *Wayang Superstar. The theatre world of Ki Enthus Susmono* in Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam, to the question: 'Pertunjukan Ki Enthus juga sudah dianggap lain daripada konvensional. Dalam arti yang mana pertunjukan Ki Enthus lain?' Enthus Susmono answers: 'Ya, pertama dalam boneka wayang, kemudian bahasa, kemudian iringan musik, kemudian dramaturgi, atau alur ceritera, dramaturgi dan penampilan seorang dalang yang funky say halo dengan penontonnya cah cah cah lebih canggi, funky kata orang Barat' The Tropenmuseum translated this as: 'De voorstellingen van Ki Enthus worden ook niet als conventionele beschouwd. In welk opzicht zijn uw voorstellingen anders?' Enthus Susmono answers: 'Inderdaad. Eerstens betreft het de wajangpoppen, vervolgens de taal, de begeleiding van de muziek. Dan de dramaturgie of de loop van het verhaal verder is daar het optreden van dalang die funky is, "zeg halo tegen de mondaine toeschouwers, ja, funky noemen de westerlingen dat."

His puppet creations immediately attract attention. Enthus is both celebrated and notorious for new designs for both existing *wayang* characters and characters from outside the *wayang* repertoire. Although he draws his new creations himself he employs a small team of puppet makers who cut, carve and paint the puppets according to his instructions. His first major creation in 1999 was a set of futuristic looking shadow puppets that he called *Wayang Planet*. For this set Enthus created aliens and the *wayang* characters, dressed in futuristic outfits resembling space suits, travel in UFO's. Another creation is called *Wayang Rai Wong* (*wayang* with human faces) for which he gave the *wayang* characters human faces.

As the reason for this adaptation Enthus claims that he was bored with classical *wayang* esthetics, but the incentive was an experience he had when teaching at a primary school. He was at the school to teach the children about *wayang* and showed the puppet Arjuna (one of the main characters in the Mahabharata story-cycle), upon which one of the children asked what kind of bird that was. Enthus's initial response was amazement: how could the child not know that it was Arjuna? At the same time, it made him realize that the stylistic representation of humans in *wayang* was the result of *wayang* aesthetics. The facial features of *wayang* puppets do not resemble natural features; the mouth and eye of a puppet are completely different from a human mouth and eye. Enthus explained to the children that the puppet was not a bird, but actually a representation of a human body. He subsequently went home and created a more realistic puppet with a face resembling a human face while leaving the puppet's body almost unchanged. Enthus made a whole set in this manner and called it *Wayang Rai Wong, Wayang with Human Faces*. He regards *Wayang Rai Wong* as a bridge between the classical form of *wayang* puppets and reality (Kastolani 2007, 43).

His experience at this primary school and his subsequent creation of *Wayang Rai Wong* in 2003 caused Enthus to be concerned about the continuation of *wayang*. He wondered who in twenty years would have the talent to become a *dalang*. Enthus noticed that the interest of younger generations for traditional arts deteriorated and asked himself who would continue *wayang* if they were not interested in watching *wayang* at a young age. 'What would become of this art?' (*Seperti apa jadinya seni ini?*) he asked at the opening of an exhibition of *Wayang Rai Wong* in the prestigious Taman Ismail Marzuki Gallery in Jakarta (Kastolani 2007, 44). Enthus is not merely concerned with the penetration of western culture in the arts, but he hopes that the innovative *Wayang Rai Wong* makes it easier for the

younger generation to understand and love *wayang* more (*Dengan harapan, inovasi bentuk wayang seperti ini bisa lebih muda dikenali dan generasi muda bisa menjadi lebih suka kepada wayang*) (Enthus quoted in Kastolani 2007, 45).

The classical *wayang* shape of the puppets was the basis for *Wayang Rai Wong*, but Enthus changed the mouth, nose, side-burns, and eyes in order to give a more realistic resemblance to human features. The body of the puppet was slightly straightened up to achieve the same goal. Character-wise he simplified his puppets. He no longer applies the conventional idea of *wanda*, i.e. that the appearance of a puppet varies according to the status or situation, for instance different puppets for the same character in his youth and as an aged person. He also does not use the variety of names for one character, but chose to only use one name for one character to avoid confusion among the audience (Kastolani 2002, 49). Despite the goal to appeal to and interest younger audiences for *wayang* with these creations, Enthus performs with *Wayang Planet* and *Wayang Rai Wong* only on special occasions (Interview Enthus, 20th July 2009).

Enthus is thus concerned with safeguarding the *wayang* performance practice for the future, as can be discerned in heritage discourse, but rather than taking a conservationist stance and urging control with the establishment of rules and guidelines for the performance practice, Enthus chooses to devote his creativity to change and adapt to the spirit of the time.

Besides molding classical *wayang* characters into a more recognizable and comprehensible form, Enthus also creates characters that do not exist in *wayang* stories. For example he created the Wali Songo, the legendary nine saints who brought Islam to Java. They are popularly believed to have adapted the *wayang* form to Islam and used it to propagate the new faith in the fifteenth century. Enthus has also designed shadow puppets of Superman (1996), Batman (1996), the Teletubbies, Bush (2001), Saddam Hussein (2001), Osama bin Laden (2001), and Hogwarts (Harry Potter's school of wizardry). He uses these internationally known characters to compare and contrast them to *wayang* superheroes such as Gatot Kaca, who has super natural powers and can fly. He made the Hogwarts *gunungan* when his children talked endlessly about Harry Potter. He states that nowadays children know Batman better than Gatot Kaca, so Enthus made both superheroes and confronts them in his shows to be able to relate to his audience. The same applied to Saddam

Hussein and George W. Bush. When they were in power in the early 2000s in Iraq and the USA respectively, they were unable to make peace with each other in real life. Enthus arranged an encounter between the two in his performances and had them make peace on his *wayang* screen. In this way he seeks elements to relate the *wayang* world with reality and vice versa. Other creations include a *wayang golek* caricature of himself and a life-size Batara Kala demon puppet that he single-handedly knocks down in his performances. His most recent creation is *Wayang Santri* (2010) that will be discussed below.

To keep his shows up to date, Enthus regularly has new and innovative *gamelan* arrangements composed by Dedek Wahyudi, stage name of Antonius Wahyudi Sutrisno. Dedek is one of Indonesia's leading creative composers of modern *gamelan* music and teacher at ISI Surakarta. Wahyudi's compositions are rooted in traditional music, but cross disciplines and cultures, and include Islamic musical elements. He has added drums to Enthus's *gamelan* orchestra, as well as guitars, and synthesizers. Enthus integrates other Islamic elements in his work as well. *Qasidah*, religious chants in Arabic sung to the rhythm of a plucked stringed instrument of Arabic origin are regularly heard, and Islamic singers perform regularly as guest stars in his shows. This also implies that, in contrast to most *dalang*, Enthus Susmono does not restrict himself to the archaic poetic *wayang* language that *dalang* traditionally use but is not understood by many people. On the contrary, Enthus is of opinion that the language of the *dalang* (*bahasa pedalangan*) is simply an instrument for communication. He regards *Bahasa* Tegal, Banyumas, Cirebon, Sunda and East Javanese all as Javanese language, and is not restricted to the dialects of Surakarta and Yogyakarta. As his biographer, Nugroho puts it, He stubbornly puts up a fight against the politics of the past (Nugroho 2003, 50).

Enthus therefore makes use of colloquial Javanese, Tegalese and Semarang dialect, Indonesian, or slang that some people consider coarse, and occasionally Arabic. His rude language is often criticized, which resulted in a warning from Pepadi East Java to watch his language. Enthus is often sharply criticized for using terms of abuse, such as *asu* (dog), *monyet* (monkey), *bajingan* (crook) and *bangsat* (asshole). Inspired by Sukiman, Enthus claims that morality does not depend on one's speech, but their actions. His crude speech is especially criticized when it alternates with the chanting of Islamic verses, but Enthus Susmono believes that rude words are permissible in order to defend the truth in the

struggle against sleaziness and immoral behavior (Nugroho 2003, 35). Enthus makes sure that he fits rude language to the *wayang* characters on stage; rude language and bad words are uttered only by coarse characters such as Dasamuka, Duryudana and Sangkuni. Islamic verses on the other hand, are only spoken by Brahmans, like Bisma, Puntadewa, Bimasuci and Semar (a clown from divine descent) (Nugroho 2003, 51).

Enthus does not follow conventional structures of the storyline, but arranges *wayang* scenes as he sees fit. He claims to have been influenced in this practice by the *pakeliran padat* model developed at ISI. There is freedom in the *pakeliran padat* in determining the order of the scenes based on relevance to the story line (Nugroho 2003, 156). In combination with narration techniques Enthus learned as a member of a modern theatre company in Tegal, this results in an effect similar to watching a movie. Instead of a linear or chronological account of events in which the story unfolds, Enthus's shows can start with a flashback that builds up tension about what has happened. Thereafter he can relate the story in whichever way he sees fit, either chronologically or alternated with flashbacks.

Enthus is also known for spectacular elements in his performances to fully engage the audience. To this end he communicates directly with the audience by turning around to see how they react. This is in contrast to, for example Purbo Asmoro, who, as we have seen, is of the opinion that the screen should have the *dalang*'s exclusive attention: 'Once a *wayang* begins, the *dalang*'s face belongs to the characters in the *wayang* and to no one else, not even to himself'.⁸⁰ Enthus however, regularly turns around to see how the audience responds. Professor of Javanese, Arps once told me that he had seen Enthus perform in a *wayang* show broadcast on television in the late 1990s. The story related the violent death of Sangkuni (a scheming character in the Mahabharata story-cycle). At the precise moment of Sangkuni's death Enthus held the puppet in his hand, which is usual, and then asked the audience what he should do with the puppet, which was not usual. The audience shouted: 'Kill him!' Upon the audience's demand Enthus killed the puppet, but again in an unconventional manner. He got to his feet to grab a big knife with which he slashed the puppet to pieces. The puppet was thus not only cut into pieces symbolically, but also in reality. Arps admitted that he was shocked by the aggression visualized by Enthus and the

⁸⁰ http://purboasmoro.com/Professional_Life.php, accessed 16th November 2012.

audience. He almost started to pity Sangkuni, but at the same time Arps realized that this was a masterstroke. This incident is an illustration of Enthus's capability to emotionally engage the audience in the performance. He also sometimes stands up and fights a life-size Batara Kala demon puppet, something I witnessed myself.⁸¹ Enthus is also known to have sliced screens open and to have burned puppets in performances. He justifies these spectacular attractions (*atraksi*) as ways to reach new audiences, but his critics speak of a 'virus Enthus' (Enthus virus) that degrades Java's noble *wayang* heritage (Kicuk 2003).

Enthus Susmono is not the first or only radical innovator of *wayang* performance practice. In the 1950s and 1960s the *dalang* Abyor got the same type of critique as Enthus due to his outspoken social criticism, the incorporation of Islamic themes, theatrical attractions, and the cutting open of screens (Weintraub 2004, 197). The same applies to Nartosabdho, who was both the most famous and the most controversial *dalang* in Java in the 1970s. He introduced more humor, musical experimentation, and a new approach to narrative. He too was known as the *Perusak* or *Demolisher* of *wayang* and received censure from conservative *dalang* for his audacity in reworking stories. Although Nartosabdho's innovations were radical at the time, nowadays they are regarded as commonplace and can even be found among conservative *dalang* (Petersen 2001, 106-107). As we have seen in the previous chapter, Manteb was also accused of demolishing *wayang* with his innovations in the 1980s. By now Nartosabdho is commonly regarded as the biggest star *wayang* has ever known and Manteb is almost as big as a star. The innovations of both have become mainstream in current *wayang* performance practice, which shows that even extreme innovations become accepted over time, depending on audience appreciation.

Innovations sell and Enthus knows it. He accordingly developed a complex marketing strategy of multiple *wayang* approaches to appeal to and to attract different markets. These include the incorporation of puppets from outside the *wayang* repertoire, such as cartoon characters, *Wayang Planet* and *Wayang Rai Wong* for youngsters, *Wali Songo* to be performed in Islamic circles, *wayang golek* for the *wong cilik* (little people) on the north coast of Java, and for the general *wayang* audience he performs *wayang kulit*. His

⁸¹ For a demonstration of this phenomenon: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAqWnt2U5-Y>, 17th April 2009.

newest creation *Wayang Santri* that also aims at an Islamic audience will be discussed below.

The performance of politics

Enthus claims to have refused to be used as a government mouthpiece in the early 1990s, and at the time neither did he regard himself as subversive in raising popular political consciousness, despite being very serious about protecting his freedom to be mischievous (*nakal*) and refusing invitations to perform by government bodies, which he felt would compromise his independence and integrity (Curtis 1997, 292). Curtis noted a shift in Enthus's stance during the 1990s. This change ran parallel to the growing size of Enthus's *wayang* enterprise as a result of his increasing popularity. Enthus's success in the second half of the 1990s led to Enthus becoming a mouthpiece for the government, which dialogically contributed to the growth of his *wayang* enterprise. Enthus became the regional head of Golkar's traditional arts section, and started to invite his audience to vote Golkar. Enthus justified this shift by stating that it was more effective to advocate the concerns of his audience and criticize the system from within than from without. Curtis regards this as rhetoric to disguise the fact that Enthus's *wayang* had become an instrument in attracting large audiences to *wayang* performances that had become a reinforcement of dominant ideologies and government interests (Curtis 1997, 300). Thereafter, members of the ruling bloc became major patrons (Curtis 2002, 147).

Curtis's observation endorses the dynamic behind the emergence of the superstar system as discussed in chapter 2 and chapter 5. Attention for the *dalang* as individual by the New Order government was reinforced by the emergence of the mass media, resulting in the superstar system. Nugroho however, observed that despite attracting the ruling bloc as patron for his performances, Enthus continued to voice sharp and businesslike social criticism in his shows and refused to support explicitly governmental campaigns. As a result some of his scheduled performances were cancelled without clear reasons (Nugroho 2003, 38).

When Suharto's regime started to collapse in the spring of 1998, Enthus seized every performance as an opportunity to criticize the government, party leaders and members of parliament who did not consider the interest of the people. Enthus also voiced this criticism

outside his performances, which is illustrated by a demonstration he led against the mayor of Tegal. The mayor was accused of corruption, conspiracy and nepotism during his term in 1999. Although the post-*Reformasi* era proves to be a much more open space for critical *dalang* such as Enthus, excessive criticism backfired. In 2001 he got a stern warning from some *wayang* enthusiasts and Pepadi East Java that his soul would be threatened if he were to continue to blasphemously criticize particular parties (Nugroho 2003, 39). Despite warnings like this, Enthus was punished for his harsh political criticism when he was imprisoned in his hometown on 8th November 2008. He was arrested after seven hours of interrogation, and accused of inciting an attack on the local radio station Radio Citra Pertiwi FM, property of the local government (*Pemerintah kabupaten*) (*Kedaulatan Rakyat*, 11th November 2008). A crowd of which the number is unknown was said to have destroyed the fence around the property, but no other harm was done. The event took place shortly before the elections of the regent (*bupati*) of Tegal for which the current regent sought reelection. Newspaper articles on the matter provide no clear information and Enthus was reluctant to give any details to me about the event. Whatever exactly happened, it resulted in a sentence on Enthus to two (Javanese) months and fifteen days of imprisonment, i.e. seventy-five days, while five (Javanese) months were demanded. The court decided that the accusation of incitement of the crowd was not proven, but found Enthus guilty of forcing employees at the radio station to stop broadcasting (*Suara Merdeka*, 15th January 2009).

Enthus was released on 22nd January 2009, just in time to travel to the Netherlands to attend the opening of the exhibition *Wayang Superstar. The theatre world of Ki Enthus Susmono in the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam*. Enthus told me that in his eyes his imprisonment was a political conspiracy against him because in his performances he had often criticized the regent for alleged corruption. In Enthus's view, the regent seized the destruction of the fence of the radio station as an opportunity to hold him. Enthus's manager is convinced that the local authorities wanted to destroy the *dalang* Enthus Susmono as a public personality. In prison, Enthus insisted on being treated in the same way as all other inmates. This meant that his long hair was cut, something that many people close to him regarded as the ultimate humiliation for the *dalang*. He was allowed to receive visitors, which resulted in such a stream of guests that a schedule had to be set up. In prison Enthus was able to continue practicing *wayang*. He created four *punakawan* with

a sad '*sedih*' face, signed with '*Wanda Bui*' (Sad Wanda) *kmr 2 Straffcel, Slawi tgl. 1-12-'08*, and a *gunungan* depicting chess pieces, which symbolized the local authorities and as such referred to the political game of which Enthus was convinced he had fallen victim.

In addition Enthus used his creativity to create two *wayang* performances that were staged in cooperation with fellow inmates. *Reminiscence of the meaning of a fault* (*Perenungan Arti Sebuah Kesalahan*) was performed on 1st November 2008 and for which Enthus had composed new songs, such as *Morning Apel* (*Apel Pagi*), *Food Tablet* (*Sega Ompreng*), and *Greetings of a Prisoner* (*Salam Napi*). He had rehearsed for some two weeks with fellow inmates, thirteen *gamelan* musicians, six playing the tambourine and four vocalists. On 11th January 2009 the prison celebrated its first anniversary for which Enthus composed the *lakon Sura Dira Jayaningrat Lebur Dening Pangastuti* with his fellow inmates for an audience of invited officials. He performed this story on 11th, 17th and 18th December 2008 (Kedaulatan Rakyat, 18th January 2009). In prison, Enthus Susmono turned what he calls the political conspiracy against him, into a 'cat and mouse game' with the local authorities. He continued his work and used his time in prison as a source of inspiration for making new puppets and new shows performed in prison.

After Enthus's debut on the international heritage stage in Amsterdam, he performed in France and Korea. When I asked him in the summer of 2009 what the most important episode of the past year was, Enthus answered without hesitation that the most significant events were his exhibition and performances in Amsterdam. I had more or less expected that Enthus would answer his stay in prison, but his foreign trip had been far more meaningful to him. He explained that he was proud of his adventure abroad because he had managed to do it by himself. He explained that most *dalang* who go abroad are able to do so with the help of Sena Wangi and Pepadi, but Enthus had managed to be invited abroad for both an exhibition and performances, due to his own creative abilities (Interview Enthus, 20th July 2009).

When I returned to Indonesia the next year it seemed as if Enthus's imprisonment had happened in a different lifetime; so much had changed in such a short time. The most notable change was the fact that Enthus had started to perform as a *dalang dakwa*. In his capacity as teacher (*pengajian*) he tells *wayang* stories without *wayang* that are related to religion (*cerita wayang tanpa wayang yang berkaitan dengan agama*). He explains his

popularity as *dalang dakwa* as a consequence of his experience as a storyteller and performer. Enthus told me that due to his skills as a *dalang*, who is used to telling stories, people tend to understand him better than other teachers (*ulama*) (Interview Enthus Susmono, 16th November 2010).

In order to convey the teachings as *ulama*, Enthus created a new genre of *Wayang Santri*, which I watched for the first time on 14th November 2010. After a sweaty nine-hour bus drive from Yogyakarta to Tegal I arrived at an Islamic secondary school around midnight. A big event was taking place to celebrate the school's thirty-second anniversary. Music swelled as I made my way through a large gate and passed mobile food stalls. A stage rose high above a large crowd sitting in a large field watching a *wayang golek* performance. As I had seen countless performances by Enthus, I expected to see him, a number of *pesinden* and the regular large *gamelan* orchestra of some thirty musicians all dressed in traditional Javanese costume. I did see Enthus, but for this occasion he was dressed in a non-traditional white outfit. Although he was wearing a *blangkon* (Javanese cap), it was entirely white, instead of *batik*; it also slightly resembled a turban, which gave it a religious twist. There were only two *pesinden* on the stage; they too were dressed in white instead of the traditional tight and colorful *kain* (wrapped skirt) and *kebaya* (open-fronted long sleeved tunic). In addition they were wearing *jilbab* (headscarves). Instead of the large *gamelan* orchestra, there were only ten musicians in the *gamelan*, who were dressed in black and wearing *kopiah* (fez) instead of *blangkon*. Enthus was telling a local story about Muslim daily life, which was not derived from the *wayang golek* repertoire. The musicians used two synthesizers, played an electric guitar and other non-*gamelan* instruments. The songs that were being sung were religious chants in Arabic or *Qasidah*.

The *goro-goro* or clown scene was in full swing. Despite the different dresses of the performers, the performance appeared like a regular *wayang golek* performance in first instance. Enthus pulled out his full repertoire of funny characters, crude language and jokes with sexual allusions. On the stage was Limbuk, a black female puppet that constantly showed her enormous bare behind to the audience. There was also a puppet whose head was not fastened to its body and therefore could kiss its genitals. Then there was Enthus's famous drunken puppet called Mabuk or Drunkard, but who can actually take on any name that Enthus wants to give it. Mabuk peed in his bottle of grog, then promptly forgot that he

had done so and took another sip. The crowd screamed with laughter, took pictures and recorded the action on their phones. The next moment Enthus closed the lively show with a prayer. Watching this scene I felt unsettled. I caught myself being astonished to see Enthus Susmono perform his usual crude – to some perhaps vulgar – jokes in a most obviously Islamic *wayang* show. I realized that I too watched *wayang* with certain expectations, like those people who accuse Enthus of demolishing *wayang*. The crowd however, did not show any sign of such reservations: on the contrary, they could not get enough of the spectacle and nobody seemed to be bothered.

What I was witnessing that night was the newest *wayang* creation of Enthus Susmono, in the genre he calls *Wayang Santri*. This was yet another manifestation of his creativity and extreme innovation. Enthus performed *Wayang Santri* for the first time in August 2010, and it became wildly popular straight away. In just four months, since its premiere until November 2010 when I first saw it, Enthus Susmono performed this new show 173 times; some seventeen times more often than the ten performances per month of his conventional *wayang* performances. He explained that the stories in his new repertoire are locally situated and deal with Muslim daily life, and are not derived from the *wayang* repertoire. He performed the new genre mainly in and around his hometown Tegal (Interview Enthus, 15th November 2010).

In his performances, Enthus reveals, he strives to reflect on current social life, of which Islam is a prominent part. For him, religion in any form, whether Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism or Christianity, is about 'human philosophy' of how to live a good life. He tells people how to live a good life by incorporating Islamic messages in his shows. When he is not performing, Enthus also teaches Islamic lessons in Tegal and the surrounding area. He claims that people invite him to do this because the audience understands him better than the regular Islamic scholars as he is skilled in conveying stories and messages in ways that are interesting and comprehensible to a wide audience (Interview with Enthus, 15th November 2010).

Reasons for *Wayang Santri*'s popularity can be sought partly in its affordability. A *Wayang Santri* performance involves a relatively small number of singers and musicians, and has a considerably shorter duration of two to four hours, compared to six to eight hours for a regular *wayang* show. The costs are therefore much lower, around ten to fifteen

million Rp., whereas a conventional *wayang kulit* show costs forty to hundred million Rp., depending on the location of the performance. The group passes on these savings to the audience, which means that many more people can afford this form of *wayang*. It is not only its accessibility and affordability that has made *Wayang Santri* an instant hit; its form and content apparently speak to the audience's imagination. Indeed, Enthus's *Wayang Santri* might be extremely popular not despite, but because of this apparent contradiction (Interview Enthus, 15th November 2010).

Of course, not everyone approves of this new form of *wayang*. Some people think that Islam should not be incorporated into *wayang* at all because in their view, religion and *wayang* belong to separate and incompatible spheres. Some in this more conservative camp are actively involved in the preservation of *wayang*, including policy makers in the field of heritage management like Sena Wangi and Pepadi. Others regard *wayang* and Islam as incompatible for other reasons. In October 2010, without any clear motive, Muslim hardliners attacked several small *wayang* performances in Central Java. Shows by famous *dalang* have not been targeted, but Enthus Susmono and other *dalang* have strongly condemned the attacks (*Jakarta Globe*, 14 October 2010). Two weeks later I watched a *wayang* duel between Enthus and Manteb called *Duel Dua Dalang* in Surabaya, where they condemned the attacks and told the audience that Manteb was scheduled for a performance in a church, Enthus in a *pondok pesantren*. Manteb added to that that this religious diversity is what *Pancasila* means (*Duel Dua Dalang*, Surabaya 30th October 2010).

As far as the general audience is concerned, *wayang* and Islam are inextricably linked. As mentioned before, it is popularly thought that the Wali Songo adapted the *wayang* form to Islam in the fifteenth century and used it to propagate the new faith. Although Islamic elements in so-called classical *wayang* are scarce, pseudo-historical Islamic story cycles such as *Wayang Menak* portray the propagation and victory of Islam. The recent emergence of *dalang dakwa* (puppeteers-cum-Islamic teachers) like Enthus Susmono is nevertheless an entirely new trend. As mentioned in chapter 5, Manteb also pointed out that there are *dalang* who act as *dakwa* (Interview with Manteb Sudarsono, 21st July 2010). This movement is in line with Elson's observation that one of the most prominent developments in Indonesia in the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century is the increasing sense of Islamic identity.

Conservative modernist expressions of Islam took a greater hold in the popular imagination in Indonesia, partly as a result of the international context, such as Middle Eastern politics and the escalated US-sponsored war on terror. Most Indonesian Muslims, however, adhere to mainstream Islam, do not want a formally Islamic state and dislike activities of jihadist terrorists (Elson 2008, 306-308).

Sensitive to the spirit of the time, Enthus, with almost unrestrained creativity, tries to interest a wide audience in *wayang* by relating to their daily lives and realities in his performance practice. The creation of *Wayang Santri* is just one manifestation of his efforts. In search of new audiences, Enthus Susmono is not afraid to stretch his innovations to the limit and searches for the boundaries of what is accepted or goes too far in *wayang*. In this negotiation, he is as creatively adventurous as economically minded. Critics claim he crosses the line, but the instant success of Enthus Susmono's *Wayang Santri* demonstrates that *wayang*'s boundaries are fluid. Enthus Susmono's audience appreciates his shows for their comprehensibility, and for his openness, creativity and humor. This mix is appealing especially to young people and makes crude jokes and Islam wholly compatible. Innovations, both in content and form, appear to be indispensable to maintain *wayang* and its meaning in today's world.

Wayang Superstar

A new approach to the representation of *wayang* tradition in the Tropenmuseum was explored with an exhibition on puppetry in Africa in Asia in 1995 entitled *The distant friends of Punch and Judy. Puppets in Africa and Asia* (*Verre vrienden van Jan Klaassen. Poppenspel in Afrika en Azië*), with ethnomusicologist E. den Otter as curator. The Tropenmuseum had just started a large refurbishment in 1994, the second in its history, and wanted to revisit its colonial history by rethinking its collection formation, which implied a reappraisal of its colonial collections. From the 1990s onwards, the museum took up issues of globalization and the rise of cultural diversity within Dutch society. International cultural policies developed from a focus on top-down development cooperation to a discourse on shared Millennium Development Goals, sustainable development and climate control, as well as common heritage and cultural exchange (Van Dijk and Lêgene 2010, 14). One of the main issues discussed was the question about

authority in museum displays. Who was authorized to speak for whom, and with what means, in the context of the museum's ambition to create new connections between the institute, the building, its collections, Dutch society and people of the communities whence the collections came and still come. It was a question of the extent to which the museum is authorized to represent people and communities with objects that have been acquired in colonial times (Van Dijk and Lêgene 2010, 16).

The publication that accompanied the exhibition 'The distant friends of Punch and Judy' reveals the goal of the presentation - to explore the multicultural influences in Dutch society and show that traditional puppet theatre is not merely a continuation of a tradition, but truly alive. It emphatically hoped to contribute to a greater sensitivity and knowledge about the richness of puppet theatre (Den Otter 1995, 5). The publication shows an attempt to balance the the discourse of *wayang* developed in colonial times as an 'elevated' and 'high' art with its current popular forms that emphasize the roles of the clowns, and non-classical forms, such as the Islamic story-cycle of Amir Hamza. To show the liveliness of the *wayang* tradition the *wayang golek* superstar Asep Sunandar Sunarya, the *dalang* central to Weintraub's book, was invited to perform at the Tropentheater. This announced a new, more dynamic approach to the display of *wayang* in the Tropenmuseum, which combined a presentation of both tangible and intangible aspects of the *wayang* performance tradition.

This approach to convey the liveliness and multi-sensoriness of the *wayang* performance practice, which is also discernible in current scholarly discourses of *wayang*, was continued in the twenty-first century. The exhibition *Wayang Superstar. The theatre world of Ki Enthus Susmono* was opened on 29th January 2009 in the Tropenmuseum. The exhibition was developed by P. Westerkamp, curator of the department for Southeast Asia. Fifty-eight of Enthus's puppets were put on display in the Parkzaal, along with additional information in audiovisual interviews with the *dalang*, and audiovisuals of (fragments of) his *wayang* performances. Of the fifty-eight puppets on display, the museum purchased forty-three to complement the collection⁸², two *wayang golek* puppets were a gift from Enthus⁸³. In the exhibition Enthus was shown as a Javanese artist who enjoyed the status of superstar in Indonesia. The focus of the exhibition lay specifically on the individual *dalang*,

⁸² Inv.nr. 6630-1/6630-43.

⁸³ inv.nr. 6331-1 and 6365-1.

Enthus Susmono, and highlighted his innovative puppet creations: his puppets of film, television, and cartoon characters, such as Batman, the Teletubbies, and Harry Potter, and his puppets of politicians, George W. Bush, Saddam Hussein, and Osama bin Laden. Modernizing elements in Enthus's *wayang* were emphasized by contrasting innovative and modern aspects in his work with information on what was called 'traditional' or 'classical' *wayang*. The 'classical' and 'traditional' *wayang* was represented in the exhibition through the display of puppets from the museum's collection the majority of which was acquired during colonial times.

The exhibition had four layers: one text banner introduced the exhibition to the visitors with a text on the theme of the exhibition (O-text) on Enthus Susmono and his modernizing elements, with a special focus on his puppet creations. The exhibition theme was presented through six sub-themes (A-texts) in the second layer which consisted of the person of Ki Enthus Susmono; the performance; new creations; *wayang* genres, stories, and characters; Enthus and Islam; and the world and Ki Enthus Susmono. The third layer provided deeper insight (B-texts) in which Enthus's *wayang* practice was put in perspective by confronting his innovations and adaptations with 'conventional' and 'traditional' forms and ideas of *wayang*. The theme Ki Enthus Susmono presented the *dalang* and the making of puppets. The structure of *wayang* performances was explained in texts on the traditional performance structure and the story *The dying Jatayu*, part of the *Mahabharata* story-cycle. Enthus's new creations were presented through a scene from the *Ramayana*: Hanuman with the monkey army. Information on *wayang* genres, stories and characters was given in a general text on *wayang* stories, information on the Mahabharata, six *wayang* genres, and some introductory information on different wayang characters. Islam was discussed in a text on the Wali Songo and the last judgment. Finally, Enthus and the world informed the visitor of the role of the clowns in a performance in their appearance as Teletubbies. In addition, each theme displayed audiovisual interviews with Enthus on the matter discussed. For example, the museum presented information about Ki Enthus Susmono (A-text) as a *dalang* and his puppets (B-texts), and Enthus's view on the theme in question in audiovisuals.

The concept of the exhibition, aimed at demonstrating innovation in *wayang*, showed that it is difficult to discuss innovation alone; to explain change a point of reference is

needed. The B-texts explained in which elements Enthus's work was innovative, and thus had to say something about 'conventional' or 'traditional' *wayang* to which his work could be contrasted. Examples from the museum's collection were displayed as representation of 'conventional' or 'traditional' *wayang*, and as we have seen in previous chapters, puppets in museum collections and their display in museum exhibitions have added to the standardization of *wayang* discourse. What exactly the 'conventional' or 'traditional' *wayang* entailed remained insufficiently explained. The exhibition did not problematize or criticize the existence of the idea of a 'conventional' or 'traditional' *wayang* directly. By presenting puppets from the museum's collections acquired in colonial times, the exhibition suggested that innovation cannot be understood without a point of reference, in this case the 'conventional' *wayang*. As a consequence, the acknowledgement of a 'conventional' *wayang* form, perhaps unintentionally, affirmed these conventions and traditional ideas of *wayang* that go back to colonial discourse. The exhibition thus conveyed the idea of *wayang* as static, but set in motion by Enthus through the addition of contemporary elements.

The audiovisual interviews with Enthus however, made the exhibition by providing a real glimpse of his ideas and *wayang* performance practice. Through giving Enthus a voice, the 'conventional' or 'traditional' *wayang* was indeed challenged. Interestingly, Enthus himself also uses the 'conventional' or 'traditional' *wayang* standard as a point of reference. He explicates the classical style as the style from Surakarta,⁸⁴ and also admits the authority of the classical Surakarta style. In this interview Enthus speaks about his cooperation with Dedek Wahyudi for the creation of innovative musical accompaniment for Enthus's performance. He says: 'Someone from Solo said that our meeting was like a hat-pin with a hat, a bottle with its cap. Well, if someone from Solo says so, they are the *wayang* experts!' (*Ini kata orang Solo mengatakan Dedek Wahyudi ketemu dengan Enthus Susmono itu seperti sumbu ketemu kutub, seperti botol dengan tutupnya. Koh orang Solo mengatakan pada pakar-pakar wayang!*).⁸⁵

In cooperation with other organizations the museum had organized spin-off activities, such as a *wayang* workshop in collaboration with KITLV (Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies) on 30th January 2009 and two

⁸⁴ Audiovisual scene 1, take 4.

⁸⁵ Audiovisual scene 2, take 2.

performances in the Light Hall of the Tropenmuseum in cooperation with Tropentheater. Enthus performed the story *Dewa Ruci*, which relates the quest for perfect knowledge using the Indonesian language on 19th and 20th June 2009. There were no simultaneous translations, but a short synopsis of the story was handed out to every spectator. The show was adapted for foreign audiences. The most obvious intervention was a substantial shortening of the performances from the usual seven to eight hours it was compressed into just one and a half hours. The show started at 8.30 p.m. and was scheduled to end at 10 p.m. Another major intervention adaptation was the downsizing for economic reasons of Enthus's *gamelan* troupe from over twenty musicians to eight, among them the composer Dedek Wahyudi, who had also composed new arrangements especially for the occasion.

Before the show started the curator of the exhibition, Westerkamp, gave a short introduction to the *dalang* Enthus, his *wayang* innovations, as well as a synopsis of the story. The audience responded with laughter when Westerkamp showed them the Teletubby clowns. Both performances were a mix of *wayang kulit* and *wayang golek*. The main story was played with *wayang kulit*, and for the fighting scenes in the forest between the good knight and the helpers of the bad characters, *wayang golek* was used. After this scene the play was finished with *wayang kulit*. The performances were both well attended,⁸⁶ and can be considered a great success when taking the satisfaction of the audience as the criterion. I carried out research among the audience to examine existing ideas of *wayang* by handing out questionnaires consisting of four questions. It asked spectators about their expectations: whether they knew what *wayang* was. How familiar the audience was with *wayang*: whether they owned something that related to *wayang*. Whether they had visited the exhibition, and finally, whether the show and the *dalang* had met their expectations.⁸⁷ Forty-nine out of fifty-eight respondents on the first night indicated that they were satisfied with Enthus's show. On June 20th, sixty-four out of seventy-two respondents were pleased; eight others confessed that they were positively surprised since they had come without expectations.

⁸⁶ The capacity of the Tropentheater was 512 seats of which 321 tickets were sold on June 19th, and 354 on June 20th (information obtained from Tropentheater).

⁸⁷ On both evenings 100 questionnaires were distributed among the audience. The response rate on June 19 was 58% and on June 20 it was 72%.

The answers to the questionnaire also revealed that most spectators regarded *wayang* mainly as traditional, art and cultural heritage, while respondents hesitated to classify *wayang* as modern, popular, contemporary, or entertainment. Most respondents however classified *wayang* as folklore (fifteen), closely followed by art (fourteen), and tradition (eleven). Respondents were divided about the question of *wayang*'s modernity. On a scale of one to five, only nine respondents rated *wayang* as a four on modernity, whereas another seven respondents gave it a rating of five. This shows that the prevailing idea of *wayang* performance practice among the audience was that *wayang* was folklore, art and tradition at the same time. It left little room for modernity and contemporaneity. As we have seen, this discourse can be traced back to the discourse established in colonial times, which in the Netherlands came to a halt with the loss of the colony.

Despite this rather static image the audience had of *wayang*, spectators were very satisfied with Enthus's shows. Even though the majority of the audience did not understand the Indonesian language Enthus was capable to make his shows appealing and understandable enough to gain the audience's full attention and maintain it throughout his performances. Many respondents gave positive reactions, and two of them even spontaneously called the performance 'spectacular' (*spectaculair*). Enthus's trademarks such as the incorporation of impressive elements in his performances, like the light show, the maximization of humor and minimalization of formal interchanges were applied in his performances. Enthus stretched the limits of humoristic elements on the first night; he pulled out everything in his repertoire and at his disposal. He tried to speak some English and Dutch words and sentences. He had written a Dutch greeting 'Good afternoon!' (*Goedemiddag!*) on one of his puppets in order not to forget. This effort to actively establish a relationship with his Dutch speaking audience worked well, and he succeeded in immersing the audience in his performance. The audience laughed at his obscene jokes, the puppet kissing his own genitals, and his drunkard Mabuk. Enthus had composed a song, especially addressed to his hosts at the museum and theatre. In the second performance, Enthus got up from his seat to fight a demon himself, when two *wayang golek* puppets that were his mirror images had not succeeded in conquering the demon.

It all worked out very well, the audience went wild, and Enthus got carried away and overran the schedule by almost an hour on the first night. He did what he knows best: he

catered to his audience by applying innovation and improvisation. He shaped his performance in reaction to his audience, improvising to entertain his spectators, and causing his hosts and the organizers a lot of stress by finishing almost an hour late. What happened at these performances was special. In the former colonial institute, where *wayang* discourse had been shaped and authorized in colonial times, this discourse had been confronted first in the exhibition, and then smashed into pieces by Enthus in his shows. He managed to enthrall an audience of foreigners who had only a slight idea of what *wayang* was, and a conventional one at that, who could not understand his language, and only had a synopsis of the story at their disposal. Enthus's performances in the Tropenmuseum showed that *wayang*'s strongest power lies in the innovative and improvisational opportunities it provides, its ability to adapt to ever changing circumstances, and that it does not need, but rather ignores, rules, guidelines and conventions.

Conclusion

The case of Enthus Susmono shows the limitations of authorized discourses. That discourses, authorized in national and international institutions, are not necessarily dominant or even influential in *wayang* practice is illustrated by Enthus's performance practice. It shows that there are and always will be alternative approaches to *wayang*. The reason for this can partly be sought in the fact that Enthus is geographically located in Tegal, far away from Surakarta, the perceived center of Javanese culture in authorized discourses of *wayang* in colonial and postcolonial times. This allows more freedom for Enthus's *wayang* performance practice, which he eagerly seizes.

Enthus is not concerned with the preservation of a pristine and elite art, although he expresses some distress for *wayang*'s future. Enthus is mainly concerned with audience appreciation. In his view, the popular discourse of the audience will lead *wayang* to the future. To open up new markets, as he calls it, and reach new audiences Enthus stretches his creative innovations to the limits drawing on his interdisciplinary background in theatre, and using multiple forms of *wayang*. Enthus is a smart *dalang* entrepreneur, who combines economic shrewdness with unrestrained creativity and a high sensitivity for the spirit of the time. For his success as a *dalang* in terms of both fame and economic advantage, Enthus perhaps softened the sharp edges of his political criticism as Curtis

pointed out, but today Enthus uses his fame and status as a *dalang* to exercise political influence to such an extent that he has been elected *bupati* Tegal for the period 2014-2019. Through his work as a *dalang* entrepreneur and his complex marketing strategy, catering for different audiences, Enthus was able to create a broad popular fan base on which he draws for his political activities in Tegal and surrounding areas.

Enthus's creative innovations, mainly in *wayang* form and esthetics, are a means to produce new meanings for *wayang* and reach new audiences. The instant success of *Wayang Santri* is evidence of his sense of the *Zeitgeist*. *Wayang Santri*'s popularity demonstrates that what is acceptable in *wayang* is interpreted differently by various groups of audiences, and that discourses and understandings of *wayang* are fluid and ever-changing. Enthus Susmono's spectators appreciate his shows for their comprehensibility, for his openness, creativity and vulgar humor, a mix that appeals to youth and renders crude jokes and religion wholly compatible.

The case of Enthus also demonstrates that heritage is about the tension between standards and guidelines established in authorized discourses of *wayang*, and innovations in *wayang* performance practice. Enthus's novelties are mainly in form and esthetics, but his audiences still recognize his puppets and performance practice as *wayang*. He challenges authorized discourse by showing his mastery over the rules and conventions established therein, but does not allow the discourse to take over control of his performance practice. He does not disregard the *wayang* conventions entirely, as he realizes that this would result in a failure of his performance practice. In the process of producing new meanings through his innovations, in the creation of new puppets and genres, Enthus balances cultural conventions, politics and popular appreciation. This negotiation takes place with existing discourses and changes them, because it opens up new markets and audiences of which the success of *Wayang Santri* is a lively example.

Enthus also managed to change understandings of *wayang* with his exhibition and performances in the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam. The museum confronted authorized discourses of *wayang* rooted in colonial discourse with Enthus Susmono's innovations and modernizations, but left this authorized discourse implicit, which actually reinforced this authorized discourse. Authorized discourses of *wayang* urge critics to condemn *dalang* who do not meet the demands of this discourse. The discourse established during colonial

times was subconsciously instilled in the minds of the museum audience that attended Enthus's performances, which was indicated by the spectator's categorization of *wayang* as traditional, folklore and high art, and their reluctance to view it as a modern cultural expression. Their appreciation of Enthus's performance practice however, reveals the possibility of change through a re-balancing of historically constructed authorized discourses of *wayang* and present-day performance practices.

Conclusion



Enthus Susmono fighting a life-size Batara Kala. Kebumen, 3rd July 2009. By S.N. Boonstra.

This thesis demonstrates how the process of heritage making developed in the case of the *wayang* performance practice. The process of heritage formation is approached as a historical process reflected in discourses of *wayang*. It has laid bare the relationship between colonial and postcolonial power structures, legacies of the colonial past and contemporary heritage formation. I have looked critically at the underlying dynamics that have shaped *wayang* discourse historically, and how this process of heritage formation and the accompanying discourse affects the *wayang* performance practice. In this way, this thesis emphatically adds a historical dimension to the theorization of the concept of heritage and its tangible and intangible dimensions and the problematic implications of UNESCO's heritage lists (Askew 2010, Smith 2006, Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 2004, Nas 2002 et al.). In addition, it provides case-studies of three *dalang* whose performance practice has been declared heritage by UNESCO.

UNESCO as a supranational organization has become a dominant and standard-setting voice within the international field of both heritage policy and practice. The heritage concept advocated by UNESCO is continuously shaped in a dialogue with heritage experts and practitioners about the understanding of heritage. This dialectic relation ensures a dynamic of change in UNESCO's conceptualization of heritage. The concept of intangible heritage is the most recent addition to the heritage vocabulary expressed by the adoption of the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO's General Assembly in 2003. The concept of intangible cultural heritage emphatically aimed at giving voice to cultural expression from outside the Western hemisphere. The concept was designed to counter the dominant focus of heritage discourse on material remains from the past in a Western context. It was an attempt to make the concept of heritage less Eurocentric and more representative of its member states, and as such strove to correct categorizations that were based on colonial constructs.

The idea of intangible cultural heritage aims to sustain living, but endangered, traditions around the world by supporting conditions necessary for cultural reproduction. To ensure the dynamics of intangible cultural heritage it acknowledges, recognizes and values practitioners of tradition, who carry and transmit the cultural expressions and traditions within them, as well as to their life space and social worlds. Critics of the concept

have fiercely argued that the establishment of the concept of intangible cultural heritage paradoxically would fossilize the cultural expressions it sought to safeguard. They also claimed that it reproduced the colonial paradigms it sought to counter by admitting elite forms of culture, associated with court culture (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 2004). This thesis showed that both these points of criticism are valid. *Wayang* was recognized as an elite form of culture by its proclamation as heritage. It became even more fixed in the text of the Candidature File as yet another form of authorization and documentation. However, I also argued that *wayang* practitioners apply their creative abilities to utilize standards and norms for intangible cultural heritage to their own ends. *Dalang* continuously negotiate and re-negotiate their position in the world in which they practice their art, which ensures great cultural dynamics in the field of *wayang* performance practice.

Debates by experts about intangible cultural heritage intend to give space to the practitioners of cultural expressions, but practitioners and their audiences take part in these debates only to a limited extent. The danger of limited participation of practitioners and audiences in academic and policy discussions is that too much focus on *wayang discourse* will lead to an overly simplistic understanding of the *wayang* performance practice. This means that too much talking about *wayang* by experts brings with it the danger of overlooking its practice and practitioners, as well as the impact of policy on practice. *Wayang* studies increasingly show an eye for the dynamics of the performance practice and the influence of power and institutions on the performance practice. This thesis has sought to bridge that which is being said about *wayang* in discourse, such as the discourse of intangible cultural heritage, and *wayang* performance practice.

This thesis is not intended as a political study per se, but the state and state-affiliated institutions and organizations play an important role throughout the chapters. This shows that the making of cultural heritage is a highly politicized process, which resulted in the authorization of *wayang*, and simultaneously in the exclusion of forms and styles of *wayang* that were not authorized through existing power structures. Although *wayang's* existence has been traced back to the tenth century, it only came to be described in detail in Javanese, Dutch, and English descriptions since the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Sears 1996, 5). Scholarly discourse of *wayang* started to take off only since then in continuous dialogue with normative and controlling forces both inside

Indonesia and elsewhere under influence of the political situation. As such, *wayang* discourses have always been tied to political power and control, both in the colonial period and after independence, which has led to a deep penetration of the state's voice in *wayang* discourse on a national and international level.

Yet this thesis intended to demonstrate that although political, cultural or commercial powers function as authorizing forces at both national and international levels, they influence *wayang* performance practice only to a limited extent. Even stronger, authorized discourses are in turn influenced by popular *wayang* performance practices. Heritage formation is thus a process in which relationships with past discourses are negotiated and renegotiated and authorized and re-authorized. Despite attempts to control *wayang* performance practice through authorized discourse and extensive regulation *wayang's* boundaries remain rather fluid and uncontrollable through continuous negotiation and re-negotiation. In this context it is of utmost importance to understand that it is the *dalang's* personal choice in which way he relates to discourses, standards and guidelines that are set for *wayang*.

Scholarly discourse started with the creation of documentation of *wayang* stories in the late eighteenth century. In chapter 1 I have illustrated how the first documented discourse shaped ideas of *wayang* and established guidelines for the performance practice. Three different tendencies can be discerned in colonial times during which various elements of *wayang* were emphasized and added. By the end of the colonial period at the end of the 1930s, a certain discourse of *wayang* had been firmly established in the context of colonial power structures, which took on some kind of reality. This understanding of *wayang* emphasized philosophical, mystical elements in *wayang*, and on the deeper meaning of *wayang* as a mirror of life. It presupposed an 'original' core for *wayang*, in which the essence of the Javanese was thought to be found. In this discourse people who were involved in *wayang's* practice, the *dalang*, but also the audience were of lesser importance or ignored. The establishment of this discourse also meant that less theoretical elements of *wayang*, such as the entertaining aspect were rendered silent. The documentation of this meaning of *wayang* and the exclusion of elements considered less suitable for *wayang* were secured in tangible texts. Focus on the tangible side of *wayang*, such as the puppets, the screen and instruments, further fixed the image of *wayang* as static

and never- changing in museum displays as became clear from the example of the *wayang* display in the Colonial Museum/Tropenmuseum in the Netherlands. The *wayang* exhibition was on display for more than forty years in the Colonial Museum/Tropenmuseum which contributed to the static idea of *wayang* as a never-changing performance tradition.

Discourse of *wayang* developed within the context of colonial power structures. The historical colonial relation between the colony and the mother country as institutionalized in documentation, categorization, collection, and display has proved to be foundational in making meaning of *wayang*. However, it was not the end point for understanding the significance and relevance of this discourse as I have discussed in chapter 2. The discourse about the understanding and meaning was further constructed and developed in the postcolonial period and shows both continuities and change of the discourse that was established during the colonial period. The players in the *wayang* arena changed; Dutch scholars handed the field of *wayang* scholarship to American and Indonesian scholars. The discourse constructed in colonial times continued to form the basis for *wayang* discourse after Indonesia's independence and remained dominant until the late 1970s.

Both Sukarno and Suharto re-authorized the discourse of *wayang* developed in colonial times. However, although the sources of their discourses originate in colonial times and relations, they are not a representation of colonialism. They are rather an image and understanding of *wayang* created within certain colonial relations that became a model for reality and continued to acquire meaning after independence. In the discourses of the postcolonial period also other elements of *wayang* were emphasized and explored. In the political context the governmental elite experimented with utilizing *wayang* for communication and education, using the *dalang* as an educator, guru or teacher. In this understanding *wayang* was approached as a vehicle for sending political messages, and the audience was seen as a passive receiver unable to exercise control over the performance practice. Attempts to control the *dalang* and his performance practice resulted in the institutionalization of the education of the *dalang* on a national level at the Indonesian Institute for the Arts, ISI. These institutes developed new *wayang* forms, brought about innovations, and acted as authorizing forces for innovations in *wayang*.

Although the re-authorization of discourse of *wayang* established in colonial times make colonialism seem inescapable, the role of commerce and mass media demonstrate

that other authorizing forces besides state institutions exist. In this popular form of documentation the audience was the leading factor as Weintraub (2004) has shown. The production of cassettes, VCDs, and DVDs turned the mass media and commerce into a powerful authoritative force for *wayang*. These technological innovative mediations created new ways of recording and as such new forms of tangibility, as well as a new discourse. In this new form of making meaning of *wayang* audience response and active participation was being registered in live recordings. In a way this added to the multiplicity of voices in *wayang*, but on the other hand crystallized the available meanings for *wayang*. In this sense, the registration of *wayang* in these technologically advanced mediums worked in the same way as the written documentation of *wayang* in colonial times. Recordings of *wayang* had a standardizing and fixing effect on its discourse. In the wake of the development of mass media as an authoritative force, the superstar system for *dalang* emerged, which enforced the process of standardization, crystallization and fixation even further.

All these elements and different discourses of *wayang* co-exist, but in the authorized discourse of heritage colonialism and its legacies cannot be escaped. The entanglement of the colonial past, its power structures and the kinds of discourse that were produced form the basis for heritage discourse of *wayang*. This becomes clear from the Candidature File submitted to UNESCO as discussed in chapter 3. The discourse of *wayang* in the Candidature File can be regarded as a re-authorization of previous discourses with roots in colonial times, and reframed in nationalist discourse after independence. Safeguarding and conservation of the supposedly endangered *wayang* tradition is UNESCO's focus of attention. Heritage discourse of *wayang* thus reproduces the preservationist stance of the Javanese courts in the 1920s and 1930s and the rigid national cultural approach of Suharto's New Order. It seems to be driven by an anxiety that old *wayang* forms are disappearing and nothing new that is of value is replacing those forms. However, this in my view is a continual deficit way of thinking which represents a profound pessimism about culture and about the ability of people to continually create culture. The fieldwork chapters on *wayang* performance practices clearly illustrate my point.

The Wayang Museum in Jakarta shows that local *wayang* practices are very much intertwined with the historically constructed international heritage discourse. However,

the museum continues to display a largely national understanding of *wayang* in exhibiting tangible elements of *wayang* as a national culture that is made up of all local varieties of *wayang*. UNESCO's heritage discourse too anchors *wayang* in national discourse. I argued in chapter 3 that despite the safeguarding rhetoric, the proclamation of *wayang* as a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2003 is utilized by Sena Wangi and Pepadi for identity building on different levels. Javanese culture is affirmed as national culture and vice versa national culture is argued to be Javanese culture. This notion of Indonesian culture directly relates to the postcolonial discourses of Sukarno and Suharto who were of opinion that the Javanese culture was the best interpretation of being Indonesian, and to the discourse of Javanese cultural nationalism that existed during colonial times. The nationalist discourse seeks backing through international acclaim of Javanese culture. In effect, *wayang* as heritage does not make it part of global heritage, but rather secures it in national political discourse. This shows that Javanese culture is empowered through the concept of heritage to which end heritage is created with references to knowledge of *wayang*, as well as to classifications and categorizations for *wayang* that root in colonial times. Heritage is thus yet another authorization for the image of cultural expressions that have become dominant over time. It confirms the dominant categories and valuation of culture that either with or without a deconstruction of colonial legacies continue to define essentialist notions of culture.

The second part of this thesis moves away from discourse to practice, and shows how what is being said about *wayang* in discourse interacts and influences the present-day *wayang* performance practice that is designated as heritage. This part of my thesis was based primarily on material collected during my period of. I chose to focus on the *dalang* as one of the players in the *wayang* arena and investigate his performance practice, and the discourse of *wayang* he applies in relation to discourses authorized as previously discussed. The three *dalang* I followed during over one year of fieldwork mainly in Java each applied a different strategy to deal with authorized discourse. I have showed how *dalang* deal with norms and discourses established for them and their performance practice by state institutions or top-down national organizations. Vice-versa the *dalang* reciprocally influence these institutions and organizations. The resulting performance practices can neither be shaped entirely by authorized discourse nor be restricted by a set

of guidelines or rules. Instead I have showed that the *wayang* performance practice is a complex interaction between the *dalang*, audience, politics, and commerce. Powerful actors, such as individuals, institutions, or the state set guidelines and rules for *wayang* performance practice, but *dalang* strive rather for acclaim through innovation. As a result of their creativity, *dalang* always seem to find a way to deal with rules and guidelines, and whenever possible bend them around in their own favor. The main tool for *dalang* is innovation, which they use to attract and appeal to their audiences. This choice is partly contingent, depending on the social and cultural context in which the *dalang* grew up and was educated, but more often it is a deliberate choice to strive to be a successful *dalang* for which the acclamation of the audience is required.

Purbo Asmoro skillfully relates his understanding of *wayang* and performance practice to the heritage discourse which enables him to reach new sponsors and audiences who appreciate an understanding of *wayang* as high art. His approach to *wayang* appeals to many who assign importance to language, literature and the philosophical and mystical elements in *wayang*, which root in colonial discourse and were re-authorized in postcolonial discourse. Purbo claims he did not develop his performance practice with an audience in mind, but says to have always been sure that there would be an audience for him. The heritage discourse provides him with a frame to reach international audiences, which uplifts his status and consequently a growing popularity at home. His continually rising fame shows that academic heritage discourse wins ground in popular performance practice. Before Purbo, *dalang* from the art academies were usually not successful in the popular domain. Purbo, who graduated from both UGM and ISI, developed into a practicing *dalang* only later when he studied *pedalangan* at ISI. He is the first *dalang* with an academic background who is really successful as a practicing *dalang*. As a *Dalang Priyayi* who has enjoyed formal education, he preserves and performs *wayang* values as related to ISI Surakarta. Even though Purbo bends these institutional guidelines, using what is useful to him and ignoring what he cannot use, he transfers at least part of them; all the more as at least one of his students is enrolled at ISI to learn from him the 'right' *wayang*. His rise to stardom is influenced by his academic network, for example at UGM, and the connection he is able to make with international audiences through his acting manager. His international

success and academic education reflects on his status as a popular performer at home, and consequently, authorized understandings enter the popular domain.

Manteb Soedharsono and his performance practice illustrate that commerce is an authoritative force for heritage discourse. At the basis for Manteb's commercial success lies audience appreciation. His case shows that since long, academic standards have influenced popular performance practice. Manteb used teachers from ISI as script writers, and applied innovative techniques from ISI in his popular shows as early as the 1980s. By balancing these academically accepted innovations and popular audience expectations and appreciations, under influence of mass media Manteb became a superstar *dalang* during the New Order regime. He became the personification of the *wayang* standard not so much by applying the institutionalized *wayang*, but rather because of his commercial success and the resulting amount of exposure to a mass audience. He stars in Oskadon's commercials to sell its pain killers that are broadcasted on dozens of radio and television stations across the whole archipelago. As the result of this dialectical interaction between politics and commerce, Manteb has become the standard for both popular and authorized *wayang* discourse and practice. This became clear when he was chosen by Sena Wangi to represent the Indonesian *dalang* community at UNESCO's headquarters in Paris at the ceremony of the Masterpiece proclamation in 2004.

Authorized and institutionalized standards for *wayang* are recognized in international heritage politics, but are not necessarily dominant and might not even influence *wayang* practice at all. The performance practice of Enthus Susmono shows that alternative meanings always exist to those reflected in authorized discourses. The possibility to escape authorized discourse and to be successful in terms of audience appreciation at the same time continues to exist. Both friend and foe regard Enthus as a radical innovator, which has caused him to be described either as *Dalang Edan* or Demolisher (*Perusak*) of *wayang*. Enthus claims that his main concern is the audience. He says that he is always in search for new audiences, to which end he applies a multi-layered marketing strategy to reach different generations and social classes. Enthus advances his innovations to engage new audiences and stretches them to the limit, changing the esthetics of his puppets, musical arrangements, and creating entire new genres, such as *Wayang Rai Wong*.

Critics who endorse authorized understandings of *wayang* claim Enthus crosses the boundaries of *wayang* performance practice, but the instant success of Enthus's *Wayang Santri* demonstrates that these boundaries are imagined and therefore interpreted differently by various audiences. Understandings and meanings of *wayang* are fluid and ever changing. Enthus's spectators appreciate his shows for their comprehensibility, his openness, creativity, and vulgar humor. As in the case of Manteb, Enthus's innovations, both in content and form, and the audience's appreciation of them show that the complex dialectic relation between *wayang* heritage discourse and performance practice is decided by audience appreciation. Enthus seeks international acclaim through his exhibition and performances in the Netherlands, France and South Korea, to enhance his status at home. He does not however, relate directly to the international heritage frame. Where Manteb and Purbo relate to UNESCO's heritage discourse, Enthus largely ignores this discourse.

This thesis showed that there is continuous interaction between discourse and practice. They influence each other in a dialectical relation, referring to each other, building on each other, and authorizing and re-authorizing each other. As such, it is indisputable that the historically constructed heritage discourse affects present-day performance practice, as we have seen in the cases of Purbo and Manteb, who both popularize authorized discourse. *Dalang* actively engage and negotiate with these authorized discourses, which also became clear in Enthus's case. This has two seemingly paradoxical consequences. Authorized discourses control, limit and decrease the variety of styles of performance practice, and simultaneously call for continuous innovations in *wayang*. Innovations are made non-stop. The three fieldwork chapters bring to the forefront the connection between the personal approach of the individual *dalang*, and authorized norms and standards in local-specific socio-political settings. Immediate personal needs of the *dalang*, such as status, money, but also politics and spirituality, confirm and clash with norms established by political authorities. While authorized discourse of *wayang* functions as a controlling force that establishes guidelines and rules for performance practice, it provides individual *dalang* with a tool to adapt and bend these standards and norms to their own individual interests. They try to find their own way in the *wayang* arena, balancing the forces they have to handle. Seen from this perspective, politics and authorized discourse appear to be only of limited influence on their performance practice. Heritage discourse, to which the concept of

intangible heritage is a recent addition, is yet another element *dalang* have to deal with. They utilize it when needed or when it offers them something useful, otherwise it is ignored.

Authorized discourse in the case of *wayang* is not a suffocating strait-jacket, has never been and never will be. Innovative and daring artists will always find ways to challenge, criticize, and problematize existing discourses and attempt to find and cater to audiences that appreciate their work. *Dalang* can only live and prosper by the grace of the audience, but the audience is not uniform, and neither are the *dalang*. Therefore each *dalang* searches for his niche, and targets and appeals to different audiences. In order to keep their audiences interested and to open up new audiences, *dalang* endlessly negotiate the described tension between authorized discourses, standards, guidelines, and innovations. The innovative creation of new forms of *wayang* that are still recognizable is successful partly because the *dalang* takes risks and is seen as an individual character and artist. In making innovations the *dalang* is able to go beyond standards by showing his mastery of these conventions. Through making innovations, the *dalang* refuses to submit to conventions, but is also careful to betray these standards to the point he will fail to produce a recognizable *wayang* form. In this creative process the *dalang* changes *wayang* precisely because he gets new audiences. He creates new meanings and brings in new people, which changes the *wayang* discourse to which national governments and other authorizing forces have to adjust. As *dalang* produce heritage, they play game with existing categories.

The arguments made about discourse are of relevance beyond the particularities of *wayang*, and tell us something about the concept of heritage in general. The result of UNESCO's concept of intangible cultural heritage in the case of *wayang* is rather disappointing. It created greater visibility of Indonesia on UNESCO's heritage map, contributing to making it appear less Eurocentric. However, generalizing discourses of culture in the concept of heritage, regardless of how much they aim to counter hegemonic discourses that tend to emphasize material or tangible heritage will always reproduce and reaffirm its roots. In practice the concept of intangible heritage did not change *wayang* discourse at its roots, but rather re-authorized pre-existing meanings of *wayang*. In line with Kirschenblatt-Gimblett's (2004) arguments about the concept of intangible cultural heritage in general, the basis of *wayang* discourse in heritage discourse continues to be unchanged, which paradoxically reiterates and re-authorizes colonial definitions and discourse. This

thesis will have the same effect. Even though I have tried to analyze and historically deconstruct the process of heritage formation this thesis is yet another platform on which these discourses feature in the process reiterating them and in a way lending them new authority. Seen from this point, it seems impossible to escape colonialism and its legacies as they are foundational for present-day *wayang* discourse. On the other hand, it is certain that that *dalang* will always be able to escape discourses because of their supreme creativity in producing new meanings and understandings of *wayang*.

It remains to be seen how the discourse of intangible cultural heritage will influence the performance practice in the long run. This aspect will need more investigation in the future. One way to look at it is through an examination of the periodic reports that countries have to submit every five years to UNESCO to evaluate the progress of the safeguarding program. These reports could give us more insight about how and to what extent *dalang* and their performance practices are affected by UNESCO heritage policy in the long term. It will reveal who benefits from this policy and who does not, who is included and who is excluded, and why. Moreover, in 2023, the files of the UNESCO Masterpiece Proclamations will be opened for research, which might shed light on the decision making process behind *wayang*'s proclamation as a Masterpiece in 2003. This could give answers to the question how and why *wayang* was enlisted as heritage.

As an analytical category intangible cultural heritage is of limited use. It is a category that requires valuation and judgment that is based on historically and politically constructed discourses. However, viewing heritage as a construct makes it possible to analyze and deconstruct how the past acquires meaning in the present. This then, in my view, is the most important contribution of this thesis to debates about heritage and the concept of intangible cultural heritage as a signifier for the *wayang* performance practice. I have critically scrutinized the underlying dynamics of how discourses, standards, and guidelines for *wayang* were created, rather than taken them for granted. This thesis impels us to admit the limitations of the power of authorized discourse. In my view, it is important to continue questioning who decides what heritage is, in what conditions it is created and for whom heritage is intended. By telling what has happened in past heritage discourses in contexts of varying degrees of control over the production of culture we may be able to prevent cultural elements or expressions from becoming silenced or rendered invisible.

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Veranderende Wayang Scènes
Erfgoedvorming en de *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk
in (post)koloniaal Indonesië

Samenvatting

Cultureel erfgoed wordt vaak geassocieerd met iets uit het verleden, maar iets uit het verleden bestempelen als erfgoed zegt eerder iets over de manier waarop in het heden wordt omgegaan met het verleden. In navolging van Smith (2006) beschouw ik cultureel erfgoed als een proces waarin de betekenis en waarde van het verleden in het heden worden gecreëerd en erkend. Dergelijke onderhandelingen raken aan vraagstukken van politieke, nationale, religieuze aard en identiteitskwesies in relatie tot verschillende waardesystemen voor cultuur op lokaal, nationaal en internationaal niveau. Dergelijke culturele waarden en betekenissen zijn niet statisch, maar aan verandering onderhevig. De toevoeging van het begrip immaterieel cultureel erfgoed aan het erfgoedvocabulaire is bewijs van een dergelijke verandering.

Het concept immaterieel cultureel erfgoed was bedoeld om een tegenwicht te bieden aan de dominante focus van UNESCO's concept van Werelderfgoed op materiële overblijfselen uit het verleden in het Westen, zoals monumenten en gebouwen. Het nieuwe concept was bedoeld om het begrip erfgoed minder eurocentrisch te maken en een representatievere afspiegeling van haar lidstaten te zijn. Met dit doel startte UNESCO in 2001 een project om iedere twee jaar 'Meesterwerken van het Orale en Immateriële Erfgoed van de Mensheid' uit te roepen. De doelstelling van dit project was om identificatie en behoud te bevorderen van culturele uitingen, zoals taal, literatuur, muziek, dans, mythologie, rituelen, gewoonten, ambachten, architectuur en andere kunsten, evenals traditionele vormen van communicatie en informatie. Het project van Meesterwerken was vergelijkbaar met de Werelderfgoed Lijst en vormde de drijvende kracht achter het opstellen van een nieuw verdrag voor immaterieel cultureel erfgoed. In 2001 werden de eerste negentien Meesterwerken uitgeroepen door UNESCO. Twee jaar later werd het Verdrag inzake de bescherming van het immaterieel cultureel erfgoed door UNESCO's Algemene Vergadering aangenomen.

Als erfgoed beschouwd wordt als een proces, zoals hierboven beschreven, roept dit de vraag op hoe dit proces zich in de loop der tijd ontwikkelt. Dit proefschrift geeft inzicht in de totstandkoming van erfgoed met een focus op de *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk in Indonesië. Het woord *wayang* verwijst naar verschillende soorten traditioneel theater op Java, Bali, Lombok, en enkele andere delen van Indonesië en andere landen in Zuidoost-Azië. In Indonesië zijn de twee meest voorkomende vormen *wayang kulit*, gespeeld met platte uit leer gesneden schaduwpoppen, en *wayang golek*, gespeeld met drie-dimensionale houten stokpoppen.

In dit proefschrift heb ik inzicht gegeven hoe *wayang* is geconstrueerd als immaterieel cultureel erfgoed en hoe UNESCO's begrip van immaterieel cultureel erfgoed de *wayang*-erfgoedpraktijk beïnvloedt. *Wayang* maakte deel uit van de koloniale kennisproductie in het westen en verwees naar een 'authentiek' inheems verleden van de kolonie. *Wayang* groeide uit tot een symbool van Java, Bali, Indonesië en Nederlands-Indië. Echter, het *wayang*-vertoog ofwel dat wat wordt gezegd of geschreven over *wayang*, lijkt vaak los te staan van de *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk. Standaardideeën van *wayang* zijn nog altijd te vinden in populaire literatuur, in schoolboeken die *wayang* bespreken, in (antropologische) musea die *wayang* tentoonstellen en zelfs in een aantal zeer recente publicaties over *wayang*, zowel Indonesische als westerse (Bondan 1984 en Katz-Harris 2010). Standaardideeën of conventionele ideeën zijn ook terug te vinden in de voordracht van *wayang* voor het programma 'Meesterwerken van het Orale en Immateriële Erfgoed van de Mensheid', die Indonesië bij UNESCO indiende in 2002.

De diversiteit die *wayang* biedt lijkt op het eerste gezicht tegenstrijdig en veroorzaakt vaak verwarring en verwondering. Voorstellingen zijn geworteld in het verleden en in lokale tradities en het publiek begrijpt de taal die wordt gebruikt nauwelijks (*Kawi*, de dode oude Javaanse taal). Tegelijkertijd is de gehele voorstelling aangepast aan de moderne wereld en worden delen van de voorstelling in de hedendaagse taal gesproken. *Wayang* spreekt mensen uit alle lagen van de samenleving aan, zoals sponsors, publiek, wetenschappers, museumconservatoren, politici, maar *wayang* trekt ook zakkenrollers en straatverkopers aan. *Wayang* is populair op radio en televisie, in stripboeken en wordt commercieel geproduceerd op cassettes, vcd's en dvd's. Voorts betaamt er een grote

verscheidenheid in voorstellingen; elke *wayang*-show is anders en er zijn even zoveel uitvoeringsstijlen als er *dalang* of poppenspelers zijn.

De talrijke *wayang*-voorstellingen die ik bijwoonde tussen 2009 en 2011 werden opgevoerd door verschillende *dalang* en hadden allemaal hun eigen karakter. Echter, ze waren altijd overweldigend in hun volume, schaal, geluiden, geuren, kleuren, bezienswaardigheden en in het aantal toeschouwers. De voorstellingen waren altijd een oogverblindend spektakel dat zich afspeelde op een groot podium, waarop een enorm scherm was opgesteld en een omvangrijk *gamelan*-orkest speelde. Voor het podium namen welgeklede genodigden plaats op stoelen. Daarachter keek een groter publiek van ongenode, soms honderden of zelfs duizenden, toeschouwers. Allen genoten van de voorstelling, al kijkend en luisterd, maar ook rondwandeland, zittend of liggend op de grond, onderwijl pratend, drinkend, etend, rokend en vaak ook slapend. De shows waren immer levendig en onderhoudend. Mensen zijn gefascineerd door de artiesten, de musici, de prachtig geklede zangeressen (*pesinden*), maar bovenal door de *dalang*. De eerste vraag die mensen stellen over een *wayang*-show is: 'Wie is de *dalang*?' De *dalang* is interessant niet alleen als individu, maar ook als kunstenaar. Mensen bewonderen zijn vaardigheden, zijn uithoudingsvermogen en zijn charisma. Ze zijn nieuwsgierig naar roddels over hem, de zangeressen en de onderzoeker die de *dalang* volgt en onderzoek naar hem doet.

Het kijken naar en het beleven van *wayang* werpt de vraag op hoe het standaard en statische beeld van *wayang* de tand des tijds heeft overleefd en hoe vertoog en praktijk zo ver uit elkaar kunnen liggen. Tevens doet het de vraag rijzen hoe vertoog en praktijk elkaar beïnvloeden. Dit proefschrift richt zich op deze vragen en probeert een brug te slaan tussen dat wat er gezegd wordt over *wayang* in vertogen en de *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk. Het proefschrift is gebaseerd op een vertooganalyse van historische bronnen en uitgebreid veldwerk in Indonesië. In de eerste drie hoofdstukken maak ik een chronologische analyse van de constructie van betekenissen voor *wayang* in historische vertogen. Ik onderzoek de verandering in betekenissen van *wayang* in teksten uit de koloniale tijd zowel in Nederland als in (koloniaal) Indonesië. Deze veranderende betekennissen en waarden culmineerden in het huidige internationale erfgoedvertoog over *wayang*. Het eerste hoofdstuk maakt een analyse van teksten geschreven tussen circa 1800 tot de onafhankelijkheid van Indonesië in 1945. Deze teksten produceerden normen en standaarden voor *wayang*-voorstellingen

en werden vervolgens op verschillende manieren geïnstitutionaliseerd, zoals in het Tropenmuseum, voorheen het Koloniaal Instituut in Amsterdam in Nederland, maar ook aan de Javaanse hoven van Surakarta en Yogyakarta.

Wayang-vertoog begon met de documentatie van *wayang*-verhalen door Nederlandse geleerden in de achttiende eeuw in een dialectische relatie met de Javaanse elite en de *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk. Ik onderscheid drie perioden voor *wayang*-vertoog in de koloniale periode, gebaseerd op M. Bloembergens periodisering in *Koloniale Vertoningen. Nederland en Nederlands - Indië op de wereldtentoonstellingen, 1880-1931*. De vroege jaren 1800 tot 1870 markeren de jaren waarin Nederlandse wetenschappers trachtten de Javaanse cultuur te ontdekken. In de jaren tussen 1870 en 1920 vond er een herwaardering van de Javaanse cultuur plaats onder Nederlandse geleerden ten gevolge van de ontdekking van de Indo-Javaanse wortels van *wayang*. De laatste periode vanaf de jaren 1920 tot 1945 laat een beschermende houding zien ten aanzien van de Javaanse cultuur (Bloembergen 2006, 32).

Iedere periode toont een dynamiek in de houding die wordt aangenomen ten aanzien van *wayang*, wat resulteerde in de productie van verschillende betekenissen in vertogen. Tegen het einde van de jaren 1930 had zich een vertoog van *wayang* ontwikkeld dat de standaard of de traditionele idee van *wayang* geworden is en deel van de realiteit werd. In het traditionele vertoog over *wayang* worden filosofische en mystieke elementen benadrukt alsmede de diepere betekenis van *wayang* als een spiegel van het leven. De documentatie van *wayang*-verhalen in teksten creëerde een bepaalde tastbaarheid, die een zekere verankering van het *wayang*-vertoog tot gevolg had. Het vertoog werd verder verstevigd door tentoonstellingspraktijken in musea die zich richtten op de tastbare en materiële kant van *wayang*, namelijk de poppen, en als zodanig een statisch beeld van *wayang* gaven. Dit statische en onveranderlijke beeld werd in Nederland versterkt door het feit dat de *wayang*-opstelling in het Koloniaal Museum, later Tropenmuseum, in Amsterdam ongewijzigd bleef vanaf de late jaren 1920 tot de jaren 1950.

In het tweede hoofdstuk bespreek ik hoe het *wayang*-vertoog zich na de onafhankelijkheid van Indonesië verder ontwikkelde en zowel continuïteit als verandering vertoont ten opzichte van het vertoog uit de koloniale periode. De Nederlanders verloren hun vooraanstaande positie in *wayang*-studies aan de Amerikanen en de Indonesiërs. Het

standaard *wayang*-vertoog bleef echter de basis vormen voor wat er over *wayang* gezegd werd tot de jaren 1970. Aan dit vertoog werden nieuwe elementen toegevoegd onder zowel president Sukarno (1945-1966) als president Suharto (1966-1998), maar zij authoriseerden tevens opnieuw de vertogen die waren ontwikkeld tijdens de koloniale tijd. Onder Sukarno werd er uitgebreid geëxperimenteerd met *wayang* met het doel het in te kunnen zetten ter ontwikkeling van een nationale cultuur en te gebruiken als een spreekbuis voor politieke boodschappen. Suharto's regime richtte de aandacht vooral op de *dalang* als een *guru* of leraar in de samenleving, die medeverantwoordelijk was voor de ontwikkeling van het Indonesische volk en de samenleving. Er werden pogingen gedaan om controle op de *dalang* en zijn opvoeringspraktijk uit te oefenen door verregaande institutionalisering en centralisering van het onderwijs van de *dalang* op nationaal niveau aan het Indonesisch Instituut voor de Kunsten (Institut Seni Indonesia, ISI). Tevens werd getracht greep te houden op de *dalang* door de oprichting van de nationale *wayang*-organisaties Sena Wangi en Pepadi. Deze instituten en organisaties fungeerden als een autoriserende kracht op *wayang*-vertoog en -praktijk.

Het *wayang*-vertoog ontwikkelde zich niet alleen onder invloed van de politieke context, maar ook als gevolg van technologische innovaties en de opkomst van massamedia (Weintraub 2004). De massamedia ontwikkelde zich tot een autorisende macht vanaf de jaren 1970 tot op heden door de productie en de verkoop van cassette opnames, vcd's en dvd's van *wayang*-voorstellingen. De *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk werd beïnvloed door de manier waarop *wayang* op verschillende manieren werd gedocumenteerd door massamedia. Dergelijke opnames resulteerden in nieuwe vormen van tastbaarheid, die hetzelfde resultaat hadden als de vroege documentaties van *wayang*-verhalen in de negentiende eeuw. Het resultaat van het opnemen en registreren van *wayang* was standaardisering en fixatie van het *wayang*-vertoog. Als gevolg van deze ontwikkeling groeiden de massamedia uit tot een gezaghebbende kracht voor *wayang* en ontstond het supersterrenstelsel voor *dalang*. Met dit systeem wordt bedoeld dat slechts een handjevol *dalang* kon profiteren van de ontwikkelingen in de massamedia. Slechts een kleine groep *dalang* was in staat om een echt massapubliek te bereiken via de massamedia en verwierf daarmee een bekendheid, status en rijkdom op een ongekend niveau. Dit

supersterrenstelsel versterkte de standaardisatie en fixatie van zowel het *wayang*-vertoog als de -opvoeringspraktijk.

Het derde hoofdstuk bood inzicht in het nationale en internationale erfgoedvertoog over *wayang* en liet zien dat het *wayang*-vertoog steeds complexer wordt. Het tentoonstellingsbeleid en de tentoonstellingspraktijk van het Wayang Museum in Jakarta verhoudt zich tot zowel lokale opvoeringspraktijken als tot het internationale erfgoedvertoog. Echter, het Wayang Museum blijft een grotendeels nationaal begrip van *wayang* hanteren in het tentoonstellen door een focus op de tastbare elementen van *wayang*, namelijk de poppen. Het museum presenteert *wayang* als een nationale cultuur die is samengesteld uit lokale *wayang*-varianten. Het internationale erfgoedvertoog bevestigt het nationale *wayang*-vertoog. Het vertoog in het Nominatie Document voor *wayang* door Indonesië kan worden beschouwd als de som van alle voorgaande vertogen waarin de nadruk wordt gelegd op bescherming en behoud van de zogenaamd “bedreigde” *wayang*-traditie. Sena Wangi en Pepadi betogen dat *wayang* uitgeroepen moest worden als een UNESCO Meesterwerk van het Orale en Immateriële Erfgoed van de Mensheid in 2003 omdat het met uitsterven bedreigd was. Echter, deze organisaties wendden het uitroepen van *wayang* als Meesterwerk aan voor doeleinden van identiteitsvorming. In het Nominatie Document wordt *wayang* als Javaanse cultuur bevestigd als een vorm van nationale cultuur en wordt vice versa nationale cultuur opgevat als Javaanse cultuur. Dit begrip van Indonesische cultuur gaat rechtstreeks terug op postkoloniale *wayang*-vertogen van Sukarno en Suharto. Zij waren van mening dat Javaans-zijn de beste manier was om Indonesisch te zijn. Tevens gaat deze opvatting van cultuur terug tot het Javaanse culturele nationalisme van de vroege twintigste eeuw. Het nationalistische vertoog zoekt via *wayang* steun in de internationale erfgoedarena. Het gevolg hiervan is dat *wayang* als immaterieel erfgoed geen onderdeel wordt van wereldwijd erfgoed, maar juist wordt versterkt als nationaal erfgoed.

In het tweede deel van dit proefschrift zet ik het *wayang*-vertoog af tegen de hedendaagse *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk van drie beroemde *dalang*. In de laatste drie hoofdstukken bestudeer ik de dialectische relatie tussen de erkende vertogen en de *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk door een bespreking van de opvoeringspraktijk van Ki [Eerwaarde] Purbo Asmoro, Ki Manteb Soedharsono en Ki Enthus Susmono. In de laatste

hoofdstukken besteed ik aandacht aan hun opvoeringspraktijken, de verschillende sociale werelden waarin zij opereren en de machtsverhoudingen waartussen *dalang* manoeuvreren in het vormgeven van en betekenis creëren voor *wayang*. Ik laat zien dat vertoog en opvoeringspraktijk dynamisch en dialectisch gevormd en ontwikkeld worden. Hiermee bedoel ik dat vertoog en praktijk elkaar wederzijds beïnvloeden, naar elkaar referen, op elkaar steunen en elkaar autoriseren. Iedere *dalang* verhoudt zich tot het erkende *wayang*-vertoog van de staat en het internationale erfgoedvertoog. Echter, daar ieder van deze drie *dalang* gesitueerd is in een andere sociaal-culturele context hebben ze allen andere strategieën ontwikkeld voor de omgang met geautoriseerde of erkende *wayang*-vertogen. De opvoeringspraktijken van de *dalang* bieden een tegenwicht aan erkende vertogen en tonen zowel de reikwijdte als de beperkingen van dergelijke geautoriseerde vertogen.

In hoofdstuk vier staat de opvoeringspraktijk van Purbo Asmoro centraal. Purbo heeft universitair onderwijs genoten en geeft sinds twintig jaar onderwijs aan ISI Surakarta. Zijn benadering van *wayang* spreekt velen aan die belang hechten aan filosofische en mystieke elementen. Deze elementen gaan terug op het koloniale vertoog dat na de onafhankelijkheid opnieuw erkend werd. Purbo zegt zijn opvoeringspraktijk niet te hebben ontwikkeld met een specifiek publiek in gedachten, maar claimt er altijd van overtuigd te zijn geweest dat er interesse voor zijn *wayang* zou zijn. Het internationale erfgoedvertoog voorziet hem van een kader waarmee hij een internationaal publiek kan bereiken wat resulteert in zijn groeiende populariteit in Indonesië. In de tijd voor Purbo waren *dalang* met een opleiding aan één van de kunstacademies meestal niet erg succesvol in het populaire domein. Purbo is de eerste *dalang* met een academische achtergrond die waarlijk populair is. Door het toepassen van de normen die geïnstitutionaliseerd zijn aan ISI bevestigt Purbo deze richtlijnen. Dit wordt des te duidelijk daar een aantal van zijn studenten aan ISI studeert om van hem de 'juiste' *wayang* te leren. Purbo's stijgende sterrendom wordt beïnvloed door zijn academische netwerk, zoals dat van Universitas Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta en zijn internationale betrekkingen met onder meer zijn optredend manager. Zijn internationale en academische succes hebben weer invloed op zijn status als populaire *dalang* binnen Indonesië. Als gevolg hiervan sippelen erkende normen, standaarden en richtlijnen door in het populaire domein van de *wayang*-

opvoeringspraktijk. Uit Purbo's toenemende bekendheid blijkt dat het academische en erfgoedvertoog terrein winnen binnen de populaire opvoeringspraktijk.

In hoofdstuk vijf bespreek ik de opvoeringspraktijk van Manteb Soedharsono, die erkend wordt in zowel erkende als populaire *wayang*-vertogen. Manteb ontwikkelde zijn opvoeringspraktijk tijdens Suharto's Nieuwe Orde onder invloed van de erkende vertogen en de massamedia die hem tot een *dalang* superster maakte. Vice versa werd zijn opvoeringspraktijk beïnvloed door erkende vertogen van *wayang* als erfgoed. Manteb balanceert academisch erkende innovaties en populaire publieksverwachtingen en waardering, op meesterlijke wijze. Hij is de ster in Oskadons advertenties en reclamespotjes voor pijnstillers die worden uitgezonden op tientallen radio- en tv-stations in heel Indonesië. Manteb werd de personificatie van de *wayang*-standaard niet zozeer doordat hij erkende *wayang*-vertogen toepaste, maar eerder doordat hij vanwege zijn commerciële voorspoed als gevolg van zijn succes als *dalang* en zijn verschijningen in de media door zijn contract met Oskadon, een massapubliek wist te bereiken en aan te spreken. Als resultaat van deze wisselwerking tussen politiek en commercie, is Manteb uitgegroeid tot de standaard voor zowel populaire als erkende *wayang*-vertogen en opvoeringspraktijk. Dit werd des te duidelijker toen Manteb door Sena Wangi werd verkozen om de Indonesische *dalang*-gemeenschap in Parijs te vertegenwoordigen tijdens de ceremonie voor het uitroepen van de UNESCO Meesterwerken in 2004.

In het laatste hoofdstuk besprak ik Enthus Susmono's opvoeringspraktijk, die alom wordt beschouwd als een radicale vernieuwer en bekend staat als zowel de Gekke *Dalang* (*Dalang Edan*) als de Vernietiger (*Perusak*) van *wayang*. Zijn shows laat zien hoe de *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk continu het erkende vertoog uitdaagt en betwist. Enthus beweert immer op zoek te zijn naar nieuw publiek. Om verschillende generaties en sociale klassen te bereiken hanteert hij een meerlagige marketingstrategie. Enthus wendt extreme vernieuwingen aan om nieuwe doelgroepen te bereiken en gaat daarin tot het uiterste. Hij brengt verandering aan in de esthetiek van zijn poppen, muzikale arrangementen en creëert geheel nieuwe genres, zoals *Wayang Rai Wong*, *wayang* met een menselijke gezicht. Critici die het standaard en erkende begrip van *wayang* onderschrijven zijn van mening dat Enthus de grenzen van de *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk overschrijdt. Echter, het onmiddellijke en buitengewone succes van zijn nieuwe creatie *Wayang Santri* toont aan dat

verschillende mensen anders denken over wat wel en niet is toegestaan in *wayang*-voorstellingen. *Wayangs* grenzen blijken dus rekbaar en altijd in verandering. Enthuis' publiek waardeert zijn shows, waarin seksuele grappen samengaan met islamitische gezangen, om hun begrijpelijkheid, Enthuis' openheid, zijn creativiteit en vulgaire humor. Enthuis vernieuwt in zowel inhoud als vorm. De waardering van zijn publiek laat zien dat de complexe relatie tussen *wayang*-erfgoedvertoog en de opvoeringspraktijk wordt bepaald door de waardering van het publiek. Hoewel Enthuis streeft naar internationale erkenning en bekendheid en die ook verkrijgt door zijn tentoonstelling en optredens in Nederland, Frankrijk en Zuid-Korea, verhoudt hij zich niet direct tot het internationale erfgoedkader. Waar Manteb en Purbo zich direct verhouden tot het UNESCO erfgoedvertoog, negeert Enthuis dit kader grotendeels.

Erfgoedvertoog beïnvloedt de *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk indirect, zoals we gezien hebben in het geval van Purbo en Manteb, die beiden het erkende vertoog populariseren. *Dalang* verhouden zich op een actieve manier met deze erkende vertogen, wat duidelijk werd uit Enthuis's geval. Deze observaties leiden tot de schijnbaar paradoxale conclusie dat vernieuwingen in *wayang* floreren, terwijl het aantal varianten in opvoeringsstijlen onder invloed van erkende vertogen kleiner is geworden. Sterker nog, vernieuwingen worden continu ontwikkeld en tot het uiterste gedreven. De hoofdstukken die gebaseerd zijn op mijn veldwerk laten zien dat de persoonlijke benadering van de *dalang* tot erkende normen, waarden en betekenissen voor *wayang* afhangen van de specifieke lokale sociaal-politieke omstandigheden. Dringende persoonlijke behoeften van de *dalang*, zoals status, financiën, maar ook politiek en spiritualiteit botsen soms met politiek erkende normen en betekenissen voor *wayang*. Hoewel het erkende *wayang*-vertoog functioneert als een sturende kracht, die richtlijnen en regels voor de opvoeringspraktijk opstelt, gebruiken individuele *dalang* deze standaarden en normen op instrumentele wijze en weten zij ze aan te passen aan hun persoonlijk belangen. *Dalang* vinden hun eigen weg in de *wayang*-arena en balanceren daarin verschillende krachten en machten. Vanuit dit perspectief lijken erkende vertogen slechts beperkte invloed te hebben op de *wayang*-opvoeringspraktijk. Het internationale erfgoedvertoog, waarvan het concept van immaterieel erfgoed deel uitmaakt, is slechts één element waarmee *dalang* van doen hebben.

Changing Wayang Scenes
Heritage formation and wayang performance practice
in colonial and postcolonial Indonesia

Summary

Cultural heritage is often associated with something from the past, but calling something from the past 'heritage' is a way of dealing with the past in the present. Following Smith (2006) I regard cultural heritage as a process in which the meaning and value of the past in the present is created and re-created, authorized and re-authorized. Such negotiations often deal with issues of political, national, religious, and ethnic identity issues, linked to local, national and world value systems for culture. These values and meanings of culture are not static, but change over time. The addition of the concept of intangible cultural heritage to the heritage vocabulary is proof of this change.

Intangible cultural heritage was meant to balance the dominant focus of UNESCO's concept of the World Heritage Convention, designed in 1972, on tangible remains from the West, such as monuments and buildings. It aimed at making the heritage concept less Eurocentric and more representative of its member states. To this end, in 2001 UNESCO started a project to proclaim 'Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity' every other year. The objective of the project was to encourage the identification, preservation, and promotion of cultural expressions, such as language, literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, architecture, and other arts, as well as traditional forms of communication and information. The Masterpiece project was a listing system similar to the World Heritage List, and was to be the driving force behind the drafting of a new convention for intangible cultural heritage. In 2001 the first nineteen Masterpieces were proclaimed by UNESCO. Two years later UNESCO adopted the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*.

If cultural heritage is regarded as a process, this raises the question how this process evolves. This thesis gives insight into the dynamics of heritage formation with a focus on the *wayang* performance practice in Indonesia. The word *wayang* refers to many

kinds of traditional theatre in Java, Bali, Lombok, and some other parts of Indonesia and other countries of Southeast Asia. In Indonesia the two most widespread forms are *wayang kulit*, played with flat shadow puppets carved out of leather, and *wayang golek*, played with three-dimensional wooden rod puppets. I investigate how *wayang* was constructed as intangible cultural heritage, and how UNESCO's concept of intangible cultural heritage influences heritage practice. *Wayang* has been incorporated in a western body of scientific colonial knowledge and has come to refer to an 'authentic' indigenous past. It has become a symbol of Java or Bali or Indonesia or even the East Indies. However, *wayang* discourse, that what is said or written about *wayang*, often seems far removed from its performance practice. Standard ideas of *wayang* are still repeated in popular literature, in textbooks that mention *wayang*, in (anthropological) museums that display *wayang* puppets, and even in some very recent publications on *wayang*, both Indonesian and Western (Bondan 1984 and Katz-Harris 2010). It can also be found in the Candidature File that Indonesia submitted in 2002 to UNESCO to have *wayang* proclaimed a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Wayang's diversity seems contradictory and causes puzzlement and wonder. Performances are rooted in the past and in local traditions, the audience hardly understands the language that is used (*Kawi*, the dead Old Javanese language). At the same time the show is adapted to the modern world. *Wayang* attracts many people from all walks of life, sponsors, audiences, scholars, museum curators, politicians, but also pickpockets and street vendors. It is popular on radio and television, in comic books, and is commercially produced on cassettes, VCDs, and DVDs. Like the great variety of forms of puppet theatre, every *wayang* performance is different to the next, and there are as many different performance styles as there are puppeteers or *dalang*.

The numerous *wayang* performances I watched between 2009 and 2011 by various *dalang* all had their own character and were always overwhelming in their loudness, scale, sounds, smells, sights, tastes, colors, and audience numbers. Often the performance was a dazzling spectacle revolving around a large stage on which an enormous screen was set up with a large *gamelan* orchestra. Invited guests were seated on chairs, and a large audience of uninvited, sometimes hundreds or even thousands, of spectators all enjoyed watching and listening, strolling around, sitting or laying down, while talking, drinking, eating,

smoking, or even napping. The performances are extremely lively and entertaining. People are fascinated with the performers, the musicians, the beautifully dressed female singers (*pesinden*), but above all with the *dalang*. The first question people ask about a *wayang* show is: 'Who is the *dalang*?' The *dalang* is appealing both as an individual and as an artist. People admire his skills, his stamina, and his charisma. They are curious about the gossip that surrounds him and the singers, as well as about the scholar who is following the *dalang*.

Experiencing and watching *wayang* makes one wonder how the static and standard image of *wayang* has survived, and how discourse and practice can seem so far removed from each other. It also raises the question how discourse and practice interact and influence each other. This thesis addresses these questions and tries to bridge that which is being said about *wayang* in discourse with contemporary *wayang* performance practice. The thesis is based on discourse analysis of historical sources and extensive fieldwork in Indonesia. In the first part of this thesis I analyze chronologically the discursive construction of *wayang* discourse. I examine the creation and authorization of meanings of *wayang* from colonial times in the Netherlands and Indonesia that culminate in current international heritage discourse. In the first chapter I analyze colonial writings from about 1800 until Indonesia's independence in 1945. These writings discursively produced standards for *wayang* performances and were consequently institutionalized in various ways, such as in the museum display of the Tropenmuseum, formerly the Colonial Institute in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and in the Javanese courts in Surakarta and Yogyakarta.

Dutch *wayang* scholars started *wayang* discourse with the documentation of *wayang* stories in the eighteenth century in dialectical relation with the Javanese elite and *wayang* performance practice, which is discussed in the first chapter. Loosely following M. Bloembergen's periodization in *Colonial Spectacles. The Netherlands and the Netherlands-Indies at the world exhibitions, 1880-1931* (2006), I distinguish three periods for *wayang* discourse: the years in which Dutch scholars attempted to discover Javanese culture from the early 1800s until 1870, the years between 1870 and 1920 in which Dutch scholars started to revalue Javanese culture as a result of the discovery of Indo-Javanese roots of contemporary culture, and the final period in which a preservationist attitude towards Javanese culture prevailed from the 1920s until 1945 (Bloembergen 2006, 32). Each of

these periods shows shifts in making meaning of *wayang*, which resulted in the production of different discourses by newly emerging agents. By the end of the 1930s a discourse of *wayang* had developed that became the standard or traditional idea of *wayang*. It emphasized philosophical and mystical elements in *wayang* and focused on its deeper meaning as a mirror of life. The writing down of *wayang* stories created tangibility in textual documents, which had a fixing tendency on the development of *wayang* discourse. In other words, the documentation of *wayang* in texts was limited in scope and became the accepted understanding of the performance practice, and gradually took on some kind of reality. This particular discourse was reaffirmed in exhibition practices that focused on the tangible side of *wayang*, the puppets, and as such displayed a rigid image of *wayang*. This static and unchanging image was reinforced by the fact that the display in the Tropenmuseum in the Netherlands for example, remained unchanged from the late 1920s until the 1950s.

In the second chapter I discussed how *wayang* discourse further evolved revealing continuities and change of the colonial discourse that developed after Indonesia's independence. The Dutch lost their colony and their pre-eminent position in *wayang* studies to the Americans and Indonesians. However, the discourse as developed in colonial times proved to be foundational for *wayang* discourse until the 1970s. although it gained new elements under both President Sukarno (1945-1966) and President Suharto (1967-1998) it was also re-authorized and reiterated by them. Under Sukarno much experimentation with *wayang* took place to turn it into national culture and use it as a mouthpiece for political messages. Suharto focused on the *dalang* as a *guru* or teacher in society, who was also responsible for developing the Indonesian people and society. Attempts were made to control the *dalang* and his performance practice through the institutionalization of the *dalang*'s education on a national level at the Indonesian Institutes for the Arts (Institut Seni Indonesia, ISI), and through the foundation of the national *wayang* organizations Sena Wangi and Pepadi. These institutes and organizations acted as authorizing forces for *wayang* discourse and practice.

The development of *wayang* discourse was not merely a politicized process, but notably also changed under influence of innovations in technology and the emergence of mass media (Weintraub 2004). The mass media developed into a powerful authorizing

force from the 1970s onwards to the present through the production and selling of cassettes, VCD's and DVD's of *wayang* performances. These recordings created new forms of tangibility, which had the same result as the documentation of *wayang* stories by the early Dutch scholars: it had a standardizing and fixing effect on *wayang* discourse. As such, the *wayang* performance practice was influenced by the way *wayang* was documented in texts and forms of mass media. As a result of the development of mass media as an authoritative force for *wayang*, the superstar system for *dalang* emerged. This system made it possible for only a handful of *dalang* to capitalize on exposure in the mass media and gain fame and status at an unprecedented level as they were able to become meaningful to a broad audience through mass media. The superstar system reinforced the standardization and fixation of the discourse and performance practice, decreased the variety of performance styles, but stimulated innovation.

The third chapter deals with *wayang* as incorporated in national and international heritage discourse and shows the entanglement of colonial and postcolonial powerstructures, legacies of the colonial past and contemporary heritage formation. The exhibition policy and practice of the Wayang Museum in Jakarta relates to both local practices and international heritage discourse. It continues to display a largely national understanding of *wayang* in exhibiting tangible elements of *wayang* as a national culture that is made up of all local varieties of *wayang*. International heritage discourse too anchors *wayang* in a national context. *Wayang* discourse in Indonesia's Candidature File for *wayang* can be regarded as yet another authorization of colonial and postcolonial discourses with an emphasis on the safeguarding and conservation of the supposedly endangered *wayang* performance practice. In the Candidature File Sena Wangi and Pepadi claim that *wayang* should be preserved because it is on the verge of dying out. However, despite this rhetoric of safeguarding heritage *wayang*'s proclamation as a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2003 is utilized for national identity building purposes. In the Candidature File, Javanese culture is affirmed as national culture and vice versa national culture is argued to be Javanese culture. This notion of Indonesian culture directly relates to the postcolonial discourses of Sukarno and Suharto who were of opinion that being Javanese was the best way of being Indonesian. It is also related to the discourse of Javanese cultural nationalism in the early twentieth century. The nationalist discourse

about *wayang* seeks backing through international acclaim of Javanese culture. As a consequence, *wayang* as heritage does not result in making *wayang* part of global heritage, but rather secures it in national political discourse that roots in colonial power relations.

In the second part of this thesis I confront these authorized *wayang* discourses with the contemporary *wayang* performance practice of three famous *dalang*. The last three chapters study the dialectical relation between the authorized discourse and *wayang* performance practice through an examination of the performance practices of three particular *dalang*: Ki [The Honorable] Purbo Asmoro, Ki Manteb Soedharsono and Ki Enthus Susmono. The last chapters deal with their performance practices, the distinctive social worlds in which they operate and the power relations with which they deal in shaping *wayang* and creating meaning of *wayang*. I show that discourse and practice are dynamically and dialectically shaped and developed. By this I mean that discourse and practice draw equally on and influence each other, refer to each other, authorize and re-authorize each other. Each *dalang* relates to authorized discourses of the state and international heritage discourse, but as each of the *dalang* discussed is situated in different socio-cultural contexts they each develop different strategies to cope with *wayang* discourse. The performance practices of the *dalang* provide a counterweight to authorized discourse, and show the reach and limitations of these accepted discourses.

Chapter four discussed the performance practice of Purbo Asmoro, who has university education and has been teaching at ISI Surakarta for twenty years. His approach to *wayang* appeals to many who assign importance to the philosophical and mystical elements in *wayang*, which go back to colonial and postcolonial discourse. Purbo did not develop his performance practice with an audience in mind, but claims to have always known that there would be an audience for him. International heritage discourse provides him with a frame to reach international audiences, which results in his growing popularity at home. Before Purbo, *dalang* who had graduated from the art academies had difficulties becoming successful in the popular domain. By applying standards institutionalized at ISI Purbo reaffirms them - all the more so as some of his students attend ISI to learn from him the 'right' approach to *wayang*. His rise to stardom is influenced by his academic network, namely at Universitas Gajah Mada, and his international relations like his acting manager. His international and academic success is reflected in his status as a popular performer at

home, and consequently, authorized standards enter the popular domain. His rising fame shows that academic and heritage discourse win ground in popular performance practice.

In chapter five Manteb Soedharsono is the central *dalang*, one who is recognized in both authorized and popular discourse. Manteb's performance practice developed during Suharto's New Order under the influence of authorized discourses and mass media, which turned him into a *dalang* superstar. Reciprocally, his performance practice influenced authorized discourses of *wayang* as heritage. Manteb is a master in balancing academically authorized innovations and popular audience expectations and appreciation. He is the star in Oskadon's commercials for pain killers that are broadcasted on dozens of radio and television stations across Indonesia. Manteb became the personification of the *wayang* standard not so much by applying the institutionalized *wayang*, but rather because of his commercial success and the exposure to a mass audience through both his success as a *dalang* and through Oskadon. Manteb has become the standard for both popular and authorized *wayang* discourse and performance practice. This was illustrated and confirmed when Sena Wangi selected Manteb to represent the Indonesian *dalang* community in Paris at the ceremony of the Masterpiece proclamation in 2004.

The last chapter discusses Enthus Susmono's performance practice, who is widely regarded as a radical innovator and known as both the Crazy *Dalang* (*Dalang Edan*) and Demolisher (*Perusak*) of *wayang*. His performance practice shows that there are always ways for the *wayang* performance to escape authorized discourse. Enthus claims always to be in search for new audiences. He applies a multi-layered marketing strategy to reach different generations and social classes. He advances his innovations to engage new audiences and stretches them to the limit, changing the esthetics of his puppets, composing new musical arrangements, and creating entire new genres, such as *Wayang Rai Wongl* (2002), *wayang* with realistic human faces. Critics who endorse standard understandings of *wayang* claim Enthus crosses the boundaries of *wayang* performance practice. The immediate success of his new creation *Wayang Santri* (2010) demonstrates that different audiences have a different understanding of what is and what is not allowed in *wayang* performances. *Wayang's* boundaries are thus fluid and ever changing. Enthus's spectators appreciate his shows for their comprehensibility, his openness, creativity, and vulgar humor, which make sexual jokes compatible with Islamic chants. Enthus's innovations in both

content and form, and the audience's appreciation of them show that the complex dialectic relation between *wayang* heritage discourse and performance practice is decided by audience appreciation. Although Enthus seeks international acclaim through his exhibition and performances in the Netherlands, France and Korea, he does not relate directly to the international heritage frame. While Manteb and Purbo refer to UNESCO's heritage discourse, Enthus largely ignores this discourse.

Heritage discourse indirectly affects performance practice, as we have seen in the cases of Purbo and Manteb, who both popularize authorized discourse. At the same time, *dalang* actively interact and negotiate with these authorized discourses, which became clear from Enthus's case. This interaction leads to the seemingly paradoxical conclusion that while the variety in performance practice styles has decreased under influence of authorized discourses, innovations in continue to be made. Stronger even, they are the most important element of the performance practice and are therefore stretched to the limit. The fieldwork chapters bring to the fore the connection between the personal approach of the individual *dalang*, and authorized norms and standards in local-specific socio-political settings. Instant personal needs of the *dalang*, such as status, money, but also politics and spirituality, sometimes clash with norms established in discourse authorized by political authorities. While authorized discourse of *wayang* functions as a controlling force that establishes guidelines and rules for performance practice, it provides individual *dalang* with a tool to adapt and bend these rules and guidelines to their own individual interests. They find their own way in the *wayang* arena, balancing the forces they have to handle. Seen from this perspective, politics and authorized discourse appear to be only of limited influence on their performance practice. Heritage discourse, to which the concept of intangible heritage is a recent addition, is just one element with which *dalang* have to deal. They utilize it when needed or when it offers them something, but and otherwise it is ignored.

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