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Provenance report regarding Zwaard zonder schede [Sword without sheath] (*Gliwang pucok meukawet*)

Mirjam Shatanawi

 <p><i>Photo: Collection Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen. Coll.no. TM-1704-11</i></p>	Custodian	NMVW Tropenmuseum
	Current possessor	Dutch State
	Inventory number	TM-1704-11
	Material/technique	Iron, horn, silver
	Measurements	69.8 x 6.9 cm Length of blade: 53.9 cm

Summary of findings

The *gliwang* is from the weapon collection of Willem Hoogers (1876-1946), an officer with the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee, and was bequeathed to the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam after his death. Hoogers was posted in Aceh from 1901 to 1910. His reports on military operations during this period show that as a patrol commander he supervised the capture of weapons and, in later years, the disarmament of the population. However, the research did not reveal how this rare *gliwang* came into his possession.

Reconstruction provenance

Nineteenth century

Manufacture of *gliwang*

After 1896-May 1946

Willem Hoogers

NL-HaNA, KIT-Royal Tropical Institute, 2.20.69, inv.no. 7492, letter from M.H. Hoogers-Höfel to the board of the Indisch Instituut, 5 June 1946.

May 1946-July 1946

Margaretha Hedwig Hoogers-Höfel

NL-HaNA, KIT-Royal Tropical Institute, 2.20.69, inv.no. 7492, letter from M.H. Hoogers-Höfel to the board of the Indisch Instituut, 5 June 1946.

July 1946 - present

Indisch Instituut (today NMVW Tropenmuseum)

NL-HaNA, KIT-Royal Tropical Institute, 2.20.69, inv.no. 7492, letter from M.H. Hoogers-Höfel to the board of the Indisch Instituut, 5 June 1946.

Introduction and context

This Acehese sword (gliwang) is from the collection of the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam. It was bequeathed to the museum by Willem Hoogers (born Hattem 1876 – died Hattem 1946), a former officer of the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army (KNIL) who was stationed in Aceh for many years. Hoogers was a collector of weapons, and the sword is part of a bequest of 25 weapons and four other objects from his collection. The sword is one of the objects selected by the National Museum of World Cultures (NMvW) for research under the Pilot Project Provenance Research on Objects of the Colonial Era (PPROCE).

It would seem logical that Hoogers collected the gliwang while he was stationed in Aceh, i.e. in the period 1901-1910. However, some officers only amassed their collections after returning to the Netherlands, buying weapons from other former soldiers or from dealers. Several KNIL officers who had been stationed in Aceh collected weapons. Among those known to have had weapon collections were Frits van Daalen, Henri Swart, Hans Christoffel, Frederik van Laaren, and George Nijpels.¹ Acehese weapons typically constituted a large part of these collections. Weapons also made up a significant share of those collections of KNIL officers with a broader focus on Acehese objects (for example, the collections of Beijens, Stammeshaus, and Veltman). Weapons account for around 20% of the Aceh collections of the NMvW. The influx of weapons from Aceh into Dutch collections is related to the (protracted) Aceh War.

There were several ways in which KNIL officers could get their hands on weapons:²

- Under unofficial rules, weapons found after battles or other operations by the KNIL had to be handed over to the government. KNIL personnel could then purchase these weapons from the government. The same applied to weapons that Aceh residents had handed in (or been ordered to hand in).
- Not all KNIL personnel handed in weapons that they had 'found,' with some keeping weapons they had captured or seized for themselves.
- Lower-ranking personnel, such as soldiers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs), captured objects (including weapons) or took them from abandoned villages and then sold them to officers.
- Weapons were also bought or commissioned from Aceh residents.

¹ Not all these collections have survived intact.

² Until 1928 the KNIL had no official guidelines, and consequently none for the transfer and sale of weapons. Some officers did issue their own rules and instructions for their troops, see Teitler, "*Voorlopers van het VPTL, 1928-1829. Een terugblik.*" My conclusions are therefore based on information from a range of sources, including diaries and letters from KNIL personnel. To the best of my knowledge there are no known records of the sale of weapons captured in Aceh by the government.

Object information

The sword is a rare type of gliwang, namely a *gliwang pucok meukawet* (colonial spelling: klewang poetjo meukawet). Gliwang or *klewang* is a collective term for various types of swords and machetes from the Indonesian archipelago.³ A characteristic feature is that the blade widens towards the tip, meaning that the centre of gravity is at the tip. The blade is straight or slightly curved. This type of gliwang has a single cutting edge on the inner side, which requires a specific fighting technique. The collections of the ethnographic museums hold three swords of this type: in addition to this one, TM-674-669 and RV-1599-521, from Willem Stammeshaus and Theo Veltman, respectively.

The sword has no sheath. The blade is made of smooth iron. It is slightly curved and ends in a hook-shaped curved tip. The hilt is made of black horn and is shaped like a horse's foot, decorated with carving. The carving features curling motifs on one side with an arrowhead-shaped motif on the back. In between are parallel bands enclosing diagonal motifs and rows of riveted silver pins. The heptagonal stem ring beneath the hilt is made of silver.

The inventory card states that this type of gliwang was "zeer zeldzaam" [very rare], referring to their rarity in Dutch collections.⁴ The information on the card is from Willem Stammeshaus (1881-1957), collector and conservator of the Colonial Institute, and can be found in different versions on the inventory card for TM-674-669 and in Stammeshaus' memoirs. The card gives the following anecdote as proof of the sword's rarity:⁵

"In 1908 verzamelde de Kapitein der Marechaussees H.J. Schmidt⁶ Atjehse wapens om daarmee de collectie van Civ. en Mil. Gouverneur van Atjeh en onderhoorigheden (G.C.E. van Daalen) te kunnen completeren. Aan die verzameling ontbrak o.m. de 'gliwang poetjo' meukawét." In alle gampongs liet Schmidt dit wapen opsporen, doch het werd nergens aangetroffen. Toevallig kwam hij eens even een kijkje nemen bij de Atjeh-verzameling van F.W. Stammeshaus te Koeta Radja, alwaar hij de bedoelde gliwang aantrof (thans aanwezig in de verzameling der Afd. Volkenkunde van het Indisch Instituut,⁷ serie 674-669). Dit exemplaar werd toen geleend teneinde het te laten namaken" ["In 1908 Captain of the Marechaussees H.J. Schmidt was collecting weapons from Aceh to complete the collection of the civil and military governor of Aceh and subordinate territories (G.C.E. van Daalen). One of the items still missing from the collection was the 'gliwang poetjo' meukawét." Schmidt ordered a search for the weapon to be undertaken in every *gampong* (village) but none was found. One day he happened to be taking a look at the Aceh collection of F.W. Stammeshaus in Kuta Raja where he found the gliwang he was looking for (now present in the collection of the Dept. of Ethnography of the Indisch Instituut, series 674-669). This specimen was subsequently given on loan so that a copy could be made].

Stammeshaus' memoirs (these are notes elaborated by him after 1947) mention the same anecdote as background to TM-674-669.⁸ They also state that Stammeshaus acquired gliwang TM-674-669 in

³ Albert G. van Zonneveld, *Traditional Weapons of the Indonesian Archipelago* (Leiden: C. Zwartenkot Art Books, 2002), 70.

⁴ National Museum of World Cultures, inventory card for TM-1704-11, digitalised in TMS. The fact that there are only three of these gliwangs among the 1,600-plus Acehese weapons in the collections of the NMvW and the Wereldmuseum confirms their rarity.

⁵ National Museum of World Cultures, inventory card for TM-1704-11, digitalised in TMS.

⁶ This is Harko Johannes Schmidt (1872-1953).

⁷ In 1945 the Colonial Institute was renamed the Indisch Instituut; in 1950 the name was changed to KIT-Royal Tropical Institute and Tropenmuseum.

⁸ Memoirs of F.W. Stammeshaus, archive of F.W. Stammeshaus, Stammeshaus family collection.

1913, i.e. five years after he was said to have lent out the gliwang in question, which casts doubt on the overall accuracy of the anecdote.

Provenance report

Willem Hoogers died on 7 May 1946.⁹ In a letter dated 5 June his widow Margaretha Hedwig Hoogers-Höfel informed the Indisch Instituut that her late husband “*de wensch geuit heeft dat zijn wapen-verzameling (o.m. 16 groote sabels, 7 à 8 dolken en 2 schilden enz.) aan het Koloniaal Instituut ten goede zou komen*”¹⁰ [“expressed the wish that his weapon collection (including 16 large sabres, seven or eight daggers and two shields, etc.) should go to the Colonial Institute”]. The collection arrived at the Indisch Instituut on 4 July or thereabouts. The bequest consisted of 25 weapons (the majority from Aceh), two Acehnese shields, a fly swatter from Java and a table from India.¹¹ The weapons that did not originate in Aceh are from Flores and Kalimantan (Dayak), places where Hoogers had also been stationed. On 6 July Mrs. Hoogers-Höfel sent the Indisch Instituut a list of specifications of the weapons. This was duly received, as is clear from a letter from acting deputy director Johanna Felhoen Kraal in which she thanks Mrs. Hoogers-Höfel for the “*opgave van bijzonderheden omtrent de geschonken wapens*”¹² [“specification of details regarding the gifted weapons”]. However, the list was not found during the research in the archives of the Tropenmuseum and KIT-Royal Tropical Institute.¹³ Only one of the 25 inventory cards provides any provenance information, namely that for revolver TM-1704-22, which according to the card was “*gevonden in een Atjehse woning in Pidië, Meurendoe, Noordkust Atjeh*”¹⁴ [“found in an Acehnese home in Pidië, Meurendoe, northern coast of Aceh”] in 1901 or 1902. It is likely that this information was derived from the list provided by Mrs. Hoogers-Höfel, but this is not certain. The acquisitions archive (the so-called long list) of the Tropenmuseum does not contain information on how the weapons were obtained for any of the 25 weapons from the Hoogers bequest.

Willem Hoogers

Willem Hoogers was an officer who served with the KNIL. After training at the Royal Netherlands Military Academy he left for the Dutch East Indies in 1896.¹⁵ In 1902 he was appointed to the Marechaussee Corps. He was stationed in Aceh from 1901 to 1910, subsequently holding various positions in other parts of the Dutch East Indies. He retired in 1923, having progressed to the rank of lieutenant colonel (1920).

The collection of Museum Bronbeek contains patrol reports and fragments of the diary written by Willem Hoogers in the period 1902-1914.¹⁶ The file also contains statements from other KNIL personnel regarding the conduct of operations Hoogers was involved in.¹⁷ The reports make no mention of the appropriation of weapons. They are brief reports of operations in which Hoogers participated as patrol commander. Almost every patrol report concludes with a list of captured

⁹ Algemeen Handelsblad, 9 May 1946. <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000046343:mpeg21:a0046>

¹⁰ Letter from M.H. Hoogers-Höfel to the board of the Indisch Instituut, 5 June 1946. NL-HaNA, KIT-Royal Tropical Institute, 2.20.69, inv.no. 7492.

¹¹ National Museum of World Cultures, inventory numbers TM-1704-1 to TM-1704-29abc (inclusive).

¹² Letter from J. Felhoen Kraal to M.H. Hoogers-Höfel, 9 July 1946. NL-HaNA, KIT-Royal Tropical Institute, 2.20.69, inv.no. 7492.

¹³ I.e. the acquisitions archive of the collection of the Tropenmuseum (the so-called long list) and NL-HaNA, KIT-Royal Tropical Institute, 2.20.69.

¹⁴ National Museum of World Cultures, inventory cards for TM-1704-1 to TM-1704-29abc (inclusive), digitalised in TMS.

¹⁵ NL-HaNA, War / Service records of Royal Dutch Army, 2.13.04, inv.no. 411/638/679.

¹⁶ Museum Bronbeek, Patrol reports and diary of first lieutenant of the Marechaussee W. Hoogerd. Inv.no. 2001/04/20-1-1.

¹⁷ These statements served to support an application by Hoogers for a military distinction.

weapons.¹⁸ For example: in July 1902 during the hunt for Teuku Muda Peudada, Hoogers and his men discovered the hideout of the Teuku and his allies. Two Acehnese were struck down during the action but most, including the Teuku's 18-year-old son, managed to escape. In the hideout the brigade discovered various weapons, "*in het geheel vielen in onze handen twee Beaumontgeweren, een achterlaad- en een voorlaadgeweer en blanke wapens, w.o. een gouden rentjong van genoemde zoon*" ["in all we captured two Beaumont rifles, a breech-loader and a muzzle-loader as well as bladed weapons, including a gold 'rentjong' belonging to the aforementioned son"]. An operation in Aceh's west coast from 18 June to 27 June 1905 was aimed at discovering the hideout of Pocut Barin and her father, the kejurun Dullah, uleebalang of the right bank of the Woyla river.¹⁹ Hoogers concludes his report on the operation by reporting the capture of "*twee zilveren tjappen*" ["two silver *tjaps*"] (seal stamps) and "*eenige preciosa*" ["several precious items"]. His fellow officer Gerardus Teunissen later gave a statement in which he related how Pocut had sustained a serious gunshot wound to the leg during her capture, "*reeds vanuit de verte riep Hoogers het mij toe en naderbij komende zag ik de jonge en energieke vrouw op den grond liggen en de Commandant haar persoonlijk verbinden! Onder zijn persoonlijk toezicht werden toen de gevangenen en gesneuvelden gevisiteerd en kwamen de bovengenoemde tjappen en preciosa voor den dag*"²⁰ ["Hoogers was already shouting out to me from afar and as I approached I saw the energetic young woman lying on the ground while the Commander himself bandaged her wounds! Under his personal supervision the prisoners and casualties were subsequently searched and the aforementioned *tjaps* and precious items were found"]. In his statement concerning the same period the Ambonese corporal Asfa affirmed that the brigade under the command of Hoogers conducted a search of the home of Habib Badaj, seizing "*een revolver, waarvan de greep met goud was beslagen, blanke wapens en preciosa*"²¹ ["a revolver, the hilt of which was overlaid with gold, bladed weapons, and precious items"]. Weapons and precious items were not the only things captured; in the report in late May 1906 Hoogers stated that his brigade had seized eight praus during the raid on hideouts near Tjeuratjo Mon on the upper stretches of the Teunom river. In 1909 and 1910 Hoogers was deployed on the registration and disarmament of the Acehnese population. His reports from this period repeatedly state how many guns were handed in by each village; together these numbered in the thousands. It is noteworthy that Hoogers only mentions guns although other weapons (such as *gliwangs*) also had to be handed in.

It is clear from the patrol reports and the statements that as a commander Willem Hoogers had direct access to sizeable numbers of captured and surrendered weapons. Bladed weapons, a category which includes the *gliwang*, are frequently mentioned by Hoogers and his fellow officers among the captured and confiscated weapons. This makes it likely that Hoogers amassed his collection of weapons, including the *gliwang*, during the time he was stationed in the Dutch East Indies, i.e. between 1896 and 1914. The fact that one of the weapons in his collection is stated to have been derived in an operation in 1901/1902 strengthens this presumption. The fact that all the weapons that Hoogers bequeathed to the Tropenmuseum come from areas where he had been stationed points in the same direction. However, in the absence of direct sources concerning how Hoogers came by his collection it is impossible to establish for certain how he came into the possession of the *gliwang*.

¹⁸ This was a customary arrangement for patrol reports, see Schmidt and du Croo, *Marechaussee in Atjeh*, 44.

¹⁹ Pocut Barin (1880-1933) is a famous resistance heroine, see Elsa Clavé, "Silenced Fighters: An Insight into Women Combatants' History in Aceh (17th-20th c.)," *Archipel* 87, no. 1 (2014): 273-306, <https://doi.org/10.3406/arch.2014.4465>.

²⁰ Statement of 28 October 1908, taken by officer W.F.K. Bisschoff van Heemskerck. Museum Bronbeek, Patrol reports and diary of first lieutenant of the Marechaussee W. Hoogerd. Inv.no. 2001/04/20-1-1.

²¹ Statement of 19 April 1909, taken by officer of the Marechaussee George Felix Bernard Watrin (born Padang 1869 – died The Hague 1935). Museum Bronbeek, Patrol reports and diary of first lieutenant of the Marechaussee W. Hoogerd. Inv.no. 2001/04/20-1-1.