As far as in essays on the kris the problem of the real signification of this mysterious object is also considered and in this connection the question is mooted in what spiritual sphere the kris originally belongs, we nearly always find the following method applied that at once stress is laid on everything that, in connection with this curious dagger, might suggest importation or at least influences from outside the Archipelago. Attention is at once fully given to the tracing of the unknown land of its origin; it is quite evident that certainty on this point is not only considered of importance for the external history of the weapon, but is also thought to carry conclusive weight for the solving of the kris problem in its entirety. On the other hand I have argued in an article "Inleiding tot een bestudeering van de Javaansche kris" 1), the desirability of accepting the actual state of affairs and therefore of treating, while studying the above mentioned problem, the kris as an Indonesian object. In doing so, it was not my intention, of course, to deny that there are obvious reasons for thinking of derivation in one form or another in connection with the kris; I only wanted to emphasize the undeniable fact that the kris is an organic part of Indonesian culture and, as far as we can tell from our knowledge of facts, of this culture alone. As a living cultural element we can observe the kris in the Archipelago only; for a detached study of the kris the data collected there form the only basis. No one has ever succeeded, notwithstanding all the trouble that has been taken, in locating as indigenous property anywhere outside the Archipelago a weapon that could be given the name of

1) Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandsche Akademie van Wetenschappen, afdeeling Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks, deel I, No. 8 (1938).
in the Archipelago on the other hand and especially in Java, it is one of the most characteristic elements of culture. Java without the kris would be Java no longer. It plays in the life of the individual as well as in the life of the community there such an important and at the same time peculiar rôle that various students could not but begin to wonder whether the kris is not in reality something different from what it appears to be at a first and cursory glance.

For the rest I tried to make the idea acceptable that it might be useful, especially at the beginning of the investigation, not to regard the kris exclusively in itself, but to allow ourselves to be led by a number of facts pointing to a certain connection between the kris and the Javanese shadow play. I did not reject possibility that by using this supposition as a lead and by keeping an eye on every feature that would seem to make the nature of this connection more clear, we might at the same time arrive at a better realization of what it is that forms the true character of the kris. For the details of my statements I refer the reader to the above mentioned essay; may it suffice here to give a short survey of what is indispensable for the correct understanding of what I hope to advance further on.

Of the early history of both the shadow play and the kris we know next to nothing. From the few data at our disposal we must conclude that both existed in the Middle Javanese period, but that their function in this culture was probably not very important. In any case they do not belong to the things that characterise this particular shade of Hindu-Javanese culture. In the important remains that have come down to us from this period there is nothing that reminds us of their existence. When, however, the centre of culture moves to East Java, things soon begin to change; and from the very moment that kris and wayang appear within our ken, we have a strong impression that they are not unconnected. They make their appearance so to say simultaneously, in the same place, and in exactly the same way. As soon as the fusing of Indian and Indonesian elements has become so complete that it becomes possible to speak of an independent national-Javanese culture, the position of shadow play and kris in it is such as to make it hard to question their internal relationship. It is not only that they always appear together; it is of much greater importance that they are both typical of this culture. In the Hindu-Javanese culture of East-Java wayang and kris are of dominant interest; to both are attached collective ideas — social as well as religious — of uncommon power; so there is little doubt of