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The making of bark paper in West Java

In: Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde 121 (1965), no: 4, Leiden, 472-473

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van Karangasem heeft plaats gehad. Waarin deze woorden: „A. A. Bagus ties red silk.... This one is for Brahma.... As this deity is Lord of fire, He is also Lord of the warrior caste, which A. A. represents as a Prince”.⁵

F. D. K. BOSCH

THE MAKING OF BARK PAPER IN WEST JAVA

In his interesting study on *Ornamented Bark-cloth in Indonesia* (Leiden 1963), Dr. S. Kooijman has included a summary description of the manufacture of bark paper (*deluwang*) in Java (p. 58-62). According to his information, this industry was restricted to a few particular areas, of which Ponorogo in East Java and Purworedjo in Central Java are mentioned in his sources.

It may be useful to point out the existence of an additional piece of information concerning the making of *deluwang* in West Java.

The pre-war Sundanese weekly *Parahiangan* (Bale Pustaka), in its issue of 17 April 1941 (Vol. XIII, No. 16, p. 251-252), contains a short communication by Haks. Wirasoetisna, Garoet, in which it is told that in the village of Tunggilis (*desa Tëgalsari, ondërdistrik Wanaradja*), ca. 7 km from Garut, West Java, there was still a Sundanese farmer, Bisri by name, who made *deluwang* from the bark of the *saeh* tree, the *Broussonetia papyrifera*. This business was practiced by his forefathers from time immemorial and was exclusive to his family.

There were only a few *saeh* trees in his own village. Most of the bark needed he received from other places, such as Leles, Lëbakdjëro, Ngamplang, Madjalaja and Tjitjalengka.

The bark best suited for the process was from three months to one and a half year old; bark older than this was too tough and crisp for the purpose. The description of his technique of *deluwang* making differs in minor details from that given by Kooijman. First, the outer bark was stripped from the inner bast. The latter then was soaked in water for one night to make it soft. During the beating that followed, the pieces of bast were folded repeatedly so that their length diminished to about 1/3. Three such pieces were then combined and beaten again

⁵ Met toestemming van de schrijfters aangehaald. In verband met *Näg.* 91: 6-9 is nog een interessant punt in deze beschrijving dat A. A. Bagus er zelf als danser in de *gambuh* optreedt.

on both sides so as to form sheets of the required size and thickness. After the beating, the sheets were again soaked in water for one night (*diseuseuh* = 'washed') and dried in the sun on the following day. They were each wrapped around a banana trunk and polished with leaves of the *kikandël* (probably a kind of liana, *Hoya spec.*).

The sheets were made in three different sizes: 50 x 30 cm, 80 x 50 cm, and 90 x 35 cm, which sold for f. 0,30, f. 0,60 and f. 1,20, respectively. They were traded mainly to governmental offices in West Java, e.g. in Garut, Bandung, Tjiandjur and Djakarta.

The instrument used for beating the bark, *pangëmplang* (from *këmplang*, beat), was made of copper (an alloy of *kuningan* and *perunggu*) and had a handle and a more or less square head that was grooved on the underside. According to tradition it originally came from Kediri (East Java).

J. NOORDUYN