Nipah or Gebang?
A Philological and Codicological Study Based on Sources from West Java

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Abstract
This article takes up the question of writing supports, the physical media on which texts were recorded on the island of Java before paper and printing were introduced, with special focus on the western region and the Old Sundanese tradition. In the past, two types of indigenous writing materials prepared from the leaves of palm trees were identified, one known among scholars in the Dutch tradition as ‘nipah’, the other as ‘lontar’. While lontar is a common, widely used designation for the type of palm-leaf writing material used in the vast majority of surviving manuscripts, the nipah is rare and not commonly thought of as a writing material outside of scholarly circles. In an effort to understand the place of nipah in the tradition, the author turns to descriptions of writing materials in old written as well as oral sources and concludes that the terminology used there is at odds with the accepted idea that the second, rare type of leaf used in the palm leaf manuscript tradition came from the nipah palm. Instead, it was prepared from another palm species called gebang. At the same time, the author provides new insight into indigenous conceptualizations that differentiate the types of texts recorded on lontar and gebang materials.

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Keywords

palm leaf manuscripts – West Java – nipah – gebang – Old Sundanese

It is widely accepted and regularly repeated among scholars that there are two types of palm leaves that were historically used as writing supports in manuscripts from the Indonesian archipelago: leaves of the sugar, or toddy, palm (*Borassus flabellifer*) and those of the nipa palm (*Nypa fruticans*). These palms and their leaves are known as *lontar* and *nipah* respectively. These two types of leaves can easily be distinguished by the naked eye: the latter are thinner and stiffer, and they are of a lighter colour than the former. The manner of inscribing text on these two sorts of leaves is also different: *lontar* are inscribed through a process of scratching or incising, while *nipah* are written upon directly using black ink.

In contrast to *lontar*-leaf manuscripts, which make up the vast majority of all known palm leaf manuscripts from Lombok to Sumatra, use of the *nipah* leaf as writing support has been the subject of only limited codicological research, receiving almost no attention in the literature (Van der Molen 1983:88). The only testimony to the use of *nipah* leaves for writing material is De Clercq (1927, as quoted in Van der Molen 1983:89), who states that he heard that formerly, in the hinterlands of South Sumatra, and perhaps up to the time of his report, *nipah* were used for writing ephemeral love letters. Beyond this, the literature is silent on the characteristics of this rare writing material. There are, to be sure, a small number of articles or catalogue notes that discuss *nipah*, but they are limited to the investigation of available *nipah* manuscripts; the writing support is in such sources categorized as *nipah* without further question. The processing and preparation of *nipah* leaves for writing also remains an uninvestigated question, as does their use.

The first notice mentioning the existence of manuscripts written on palm leaves from the Priangan area was published by Netscher (1853:474), although he still designated the writing material of the *Arjunawiwāha* codex (later acquired by the Bataviaasch Genootschap [hereafter BG] with accession number L 641) as *lontarblad* (*lontar* leaf). Holle was the first to use the term *nipah* in 1862 (*NBG* 1, 1862–1863:14; Van Lennep 1969:16).

Five years later Holle (1867) described three *nipah* leaf manuscripts donated by Raden Saleh.¹ Holle identified these three manuscripts as MSS A, B, and C.

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¹ Raden Saleh’s gift in 1866 totaled 38 manuscripts (*NBG* 5, 1867:155), but Cohen Stuart (1872)
and it can be determined that MS A is now catalogued as PNRI number L 632
(Kabuyutan Galuṅguṅ); MS B is L 630 (Saṅ Hyaṅ Siksa Kandaṅ Karəsian), while
MS C is number L 631 (Chandakaraṇa)2 (Holle 1867:452–64).3

But the discussion which touches most directly upon the use of nipah leaf
as a writing medium is the general sketch given by Holle in the introduction
to his Tabel van Oud- en Nieuw-Indische alphabetten (1882), a work on palaeog-
raphy that makes use of epigraphic sources as well as later records on organic
materials. There are three important things to note from Holle’s study: (1) the
sites where nipah manuscripts were collected; (2) the writing implements used
to inscribe them; and (3) the style of script and other aspects of palaeogra-
phy. Holle states that most nipah manuscripts originated in West Java, with a
small number also acquired from the hermit-scholar collections in the Merapi-
Merbabu mountain region of Central Java. With regards to writing implements,
he says that nipah manuscripts were inscribed using a type of ink fabricated
from the nagasari plant (cobra's saffron, Mesua ferrea) and damar sela resin
(Sundanese, harupat). In relation to the writing itself, Holle states that the let-
ters inscribed on the nipah were in a quadratic Kawi script. He also provides a
table of characters drawn from several nipah manuscripts found in West Java,
that is, in Talaga, Cirebon, and Ciburuy (1882:7–8, 17, 25–6).

A few other investigations of nipah manuscripts by scholars of subsequent
generations also need to be mentioned here. Among them is the promising
investigation by Van Lennep in her 1969 undergraduate thesis done at Sydney
University. Her research is important because it notes details of the original
acquisition of nipah manuscripts by the BG, and takes a different look at aspects

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2 A complete edition of this manuscript is available in Lokesh Chandra 1995. See also Appendix
1 of this article.

3 A quick word on the fraught matter of spelling in this article. In order to avoid confusion
due to variation in orthography in quotes from various printed and hand-written sources in
three languages (Sundanese, Old Sundanese, and Old Javanese), all quotes from older literary
sources have been standardized according to the system used in Zoetmulder’s Old Javanese–
English dictionary (OJED) (1982), with slight changes as follows: the e-pepet is rendered as ə,
not ē, while ň becomes ṅ. Furthermore, because the orthographic system used in Old Sun-
danese manuscripts does not distinguish between the vowels ə and eu, it is not necessary nor
even, in my opinion, desirable to distinguish between the two in transcription. I have there-
fore used only the character ə where modern orthography distinguishes e and eu. All quotes
from pantun have been standardized according to Modern Sundanese spelling as used in the
Kamus umum basa Sunda (Panitia Kamus Sunda 1976).

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of *nipah*. Van Lennep also hypothesizes that the BG’s trove of *nipah* manuscripts was part of a royal manuscript collection of the Pajajaran Kingdom in West Java which, when under threat due to the rise of Islam in the sixteenth century, was removed to (or hidden in) the surrounding mountains, such as Mt Cikuray near Garut (Van Lennep 1969:29–33).

Another important codicological contribution is Van der Molen’s careful physical examination (1983:90–3) of one particular *nipah* manuscript containing a *Kuñjarakarṇa* text (LOr 2266), edited in his Leiden doctoral thesis. Through meticulous attention to small details he was able to observe traces of a press or pressure device in the form of marginal lines—one on the right, one on the left, and two in the centre of the leaves—sometimes quite clear, other times faint. Observations on the distance between these lines, measured to the millimetre, indicated that the processing of leaves for use as writing supports was a precision craft. Following Grader (1941:25), who established a relationship between the variability of dimensions of manuscripts and the use of different tools by different artisans, Van der Molen (1983:91) arrived at the hypothesis that there are two possibilities related to such variability. If tools or equipment are the source of variation, then indications regarding the identity of workshops can be derived from manuscript features such as length, breadth, distance between holes, and distance from holes to leaf-edge. If the type of leaf is the most significant variable, then measurements can be the same over a wide area.

The most recent study of interest for our investigation is Acri’s (2011a) investigation of the *Dharma Pātañjala*, an Old Javanese Shaivite text. This wide-ranging study includes identification of nearly every known *nipah* manuscript. The specific *Dharma Pātañjala* text Acri focused on was found in a manuscript from the Merapi-Merbabu area, not West Java, where most *nipah* manuscripts originated. With respect to the place where the manuscript was found, Acri suggested that there may once have been a relationship between scriptoria in West Java and the manuscript repositories of the Central Javanese massif. It is possible that several *nipah* manuscripts from West Java could have made their way to Merapi-Merbabu some time before the middle of the eighteenth century, and from there ended up in the great Windu Sono collection of Merapi-Merbabu manuscripts that was later transferred into the possession of the BG. Cultural ties between these two centres of literary production might have led to the exchange of manuscripts in the past (Acri 2011a:44–7). This completes the sur-
vey of principal sources on manuscripts hitherto identified as being inscribed on so-called *nipah* leaves.

Among the studies mentioned above, only those of Holle will continue to retain our attention in this article, for Holle was the first to identify the writing medium that is the focus of our attention here as *nipah* and to furnish codicological explanations about both the material and the utensils used to write on it.

It is unclear on what basis Holle arrived at this identification, as he mentions no source. There seem to be two possibilities: either Holle himself established this botanical identification (with or without the help of an anonymous botanist), or he obtained this information from his local contacts in West Java, where he lived. There is something to be said for the first possibility, because we find that Kern wrote, just a few years later: ‘according to the opinion of the botanists it is palm leaf, I take it to be very thin bark’ (*NBG* 25, 1887: 179; Van Lennep 1969:16). The second possibility also makes sense, as the word *nipah* had already been recorded in the Sundanese dictionaries that date from the same period (*NBB* 1862:s.v.; *Geerdink* 1875:s.v.), and was almost certainly known to Holle’s informants as some kind of palm tree.5

But we must remember that Holle’s explanations date to a time when, as reported by Netscher (1853), the practice of writing on *nipah* leaves was no longer a living tradition. For this reason, we may ask ourselves whether the identification received from an informant was merely based on the physical appearance of the leaves, or whether the informant was actually familiar with the use of the same leaves as reported from Sumatra by De Clerq a few decades later (1927). We may indeed ask ourselves whether Holle’s identification can be accepted at all. In this article I will propose a new identification of this type of palm leaf used as writing material, using sources that were not used by Holle in determining his identification.

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5 One of Holle’s most important informants was his friend Muhammad Musa, a religious leader (*penghulu besar*) from Garut and an important figure for Sundanese literature in his time (see Moriyama 2005:100–42). One example of the important role that Musa played as an informant for Holle is the fact that in his study of the Batu Tulis inscription at Bogor, Holle refers to the authority of his friend when he translates the word *nusuk* found in this inscription with the verb ‘to establish’: ‘Volgens den Panghoeloe van Garoet wordt het Soendasche njoesook nu nog wel eens in de beteekenis van een dorp of stad stichten gebruikt’ (Holle 1869:485).

Sundanese pilgrim who visited Damalung (an old name for Mt Merbabu) to study there (Noorduyn 1982). Damalung is also mentioned in the *Sri Ajñana* (ll. 45–53, Noorduyn and Teeuw 2006) as the name of a place where a heavenly protagonist was exiled to earth in punishment for his sins.
Nipah Manuscripts

The total number of nipah manuscripts is a tiny fraction of those written on lontar. When all nipah manuscripts in Indonesian and European collections are added up, they number only 29 out of the many thousands of Indonesian palm leaf manuscripts in existence. At least 20 of these 29 manuscripts are in the collection of the Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia (National Library of Indonesia; hereafter PNRI) in Jakarta; six are in the Kabuyutan (hermitage) of Ciburuy, Garut; and a single manuscript is in the Sri Baduga Museum at Bandung. In Europe there are at least five such manuscripts: two in the library of Leiden University, one at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (French National Library) in Paris, one at the Staatsbibliothek (State Library) in Berlin, and one at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Others may exist, but they have not yet been detected or described.

Although there are a few exceptions, nearly all nipah manuscripts have been found in West Java, as indicated in the institutional records on their acquisition history. The origins of the nipah manuscripts at the PNRI are indicative. Manuscripts L 374 and L 630–632 were obtained from the Galuh area of East Priangan by the well-known Javanese artist and cultural figure Raden Saleh.

6 Consult Holil and Gunawan’s study (2010) on pre-Islamic, West Javanese manuscripts (including so-called nipah manuscripts in Old Javanese) in the collection of the PNRI.
7 Acri and Darsa 2009 initially identified four nipah manuscripts from Kabuyutan Ciburuy in Garut, in addition to 23 lontar manuscripts kept in the same location. But based on more recent data, it appears that there are only three nipah and 24 lontar manuscripts in the Kabuyutan Ciburuy. I would like to thank Andrea Acri for this information (private email communication, 19 March 2013), and for his permission to include the list of manuscripts in appendix 2 to this article.
8 A manuscript titled Saṅ Hyaṅ Raga Dewata, MS 07.106 (Darsa and Ekadjati 2004).
9 The manuscript mentioned earlier (LOr 2266, containing a text of the Kuñjarakarṇa) and LOr 2267, containing the Tīga Jñāna (Pigeaud 1968:94).
10 Manuscript no. Mal. Pol. 161 (Cabaton 1912:254). In Cabaton’s catalogue this manuscript is not given a title, but Acri (2011a:645) has identified it as containing a text of the Saṅ Hyaṅ Hayu. Several other manuscripts with the same title are found in the collection of the PNRI (L 634, L 637, L 638); an edition of Saṅ Hyaṅ Hayu based only on PNRI L 634 and L 637 has been provided by Darsa 1998.
11 The manuscript is titled Dharma Pātañjala, Cod. Schoemann i-21 (Pigeaud 1975:11–2). An edition of this manuscript has been offered by Acri 2011a.
12 Manuscript titled Rasa Carita, MS Jav.b.1; a portion of this manuscript was photocopied, transliterated, and annotated by Voorhoeve and Soegiarto, and is available as item LOr 8515 in the Leiden collection (Ricklefs and Voorhoeve 1977:477; see also Pigeaud 1968:479).
NIPAH OR GEBANG

Figure 1 ‘Nipah’ Manuscripts. a. Arjunawiwāha (Old Javanese, 1334 CE, cod. PNRI L 641); b. Saṅ Hyaṅ Hayu (Old Javanese, 1523 CE, cod. PNRI L 654); c. Saṅ Hyaṅ Siksa Kandaṅ Karəsian (Old Sundanese, 1518 CE, cod. PNRI L 650). NATIONAL LIBRARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA.

(Cohen Stuart 1872; Holle 1867); manuscripts L 633–642 were acquired by the bupati of Bandung from near Cilegon, Garut (Netscher 1853; Krom 1914:71); L 643 originated from Talaga, Cirebon (NBG 4, 1866:118; Krom 1914:92); manuscripts L 1095, L 1097, and L 1099 all came from Kabuyutan Koleang at Jasinga, Bogor (Krom 1914:32). There is some uncertainty about the provenance of three PNRI manuscripts, that is, L 455, L 627, and L 628. However, in copies of these manuscripts in the K.F. Holle Collection (PNRI Peti 89) the reader finds notes indicating that the last three came from Merbabu (cf. Acri 2011a:46 n. 9).

The situation regarding provenance is similar for nipah manuscripts in European collections. The two manuscripts kept in Leiden, Kuñjarakarṇa (LOr 2266) and Tīga Jñāna (LOr 2267), are thought to come from West Java (Pigeaud 1968:94; 1970:21, 56). The Rasa Carita at Oxford (MS Jav.b.1) is one of a pair of manuscripts donated by Andrew James during the seventeenth century and very likely to have originated in West Java, the other manuscript being in Old Sundanese (Noorduyn 1985). The provenance of the manuscript in Paris is unclear, but noting that its text contains the Saṅ Hyaṅ Hayu, which is also found at Ciburuy and in three PNRI manuscripts known to originate near Garut, it must be closely associated with the textual tradition of West Java. One exception is the Berlin collection, whose Dharma Pātaṇjala came from Mt Merbabu in Central Java (Pigeaud 1975:11–2; cf. Acri 2011a:44).

Local Sources

As mentioned above, De Clercq stated in 1927 that in South Sumatra nipah was used as a writing material for a specific function—love letters. The function of so-called nipah manuscripts in Java, that is to say, the type of texts found copied
on *nipah* leaf manuscripts, was quite different. Judging by the surviving corpus of such manuscripts, they never contain love letters. This difference in use or function is what prompted Van der Molen (1983:89) to ask, ‘Can De Clerq’s information be applied to literature and to Java?’ In other words, are there sources from Java that designate *nipah* as a writing material? We can say from the outset that the answer to this question is resoundingly negative. Although in an article on Old Javanese writing materials Hinzler (2001) states that *nipah* was a type of writing support mentioned in older Javanese texts, she does not indicate the textual source upon which this claim is based. The word she is referring to is found in the *Tuhañaru, Wariñin Pitu*, and *Balawi* inscriptions, as quoted in Zoetmulder’s *OJED* under the entry *nipah* (1982:1183). But the form of the word quoted there, *anipah*,13 and the fact that it appears in a context containing references to *payuṅ wolu* (round parasol?), *mopih* (wrapping or covering), and *ruṅki* (a type of woven basket?), does not indicate any relationship to writing. In any case these inscriptions all originate in East Java. Outside of the realm of epigraphy, I have not found a single textual passage involving *nipah* that could be quoted here.

The identification of the rarer of the two types of palm leaf manuscript as *nipah* until now has hinged on a single scholarly assertion. It has become part of ‘common knowledge’ about palm leaf manuscripts in Java, though it is not based on thorough philological or codicological research. This article will show that this is a case of mistaken identification which has escaped the attention of researchers working on so-called *nipah* manuscripts. What we have come to know as *nipah* manuscripts are probably not actually made from *nipah* leaves. In any case, there are no known references to *Nypa fruticans* as a writing support in the textual traditions of Java and Sunda. Because so-called *nipah* manuscripts generally originated from West Java, sources from this region should interest us before all others in an effort to clarify the identity of these writing materials and the terminology associated with them. Relevant passages have been identified in several texts and in passages from the oral tradition of Sundanese *pantun*, as outlined in the following paragraphs.

### Saṅ Hyaṅ Śāsana Mahāguru

The first source that mentions palm leaves and their use as writing materials is the *Saṅ Hyaṅ Śāsana Mahāguru* (hereafter *Śāsana Mahāguru*), a prose work. As

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13 In his study of the *Tuhañaru* inscription from Sidoteko, Mojokerto, Sarkar (1935) cautiously suggested that *anipah* is based on *sipah* (from *səpah*?) with prefixed *a*-, and that its meaning relates to ‘*sirih*-plums’.
far as is known there are two manuscripts containing this text, both written in Old Sundanese script and language on lontar leaves; they are PNRI manuscript L 621 and another manuscript, identified as kropak 26, in the collection at Kabuyutan Ciburuy. The text is a tutur presenting the teachings of a guru (saṅ pandita) to his student, a religious devotee (saṅ sewaka dharma), presented in typical form as a question and answer narrative. The parts of the text that are of specific relevance are the maṅgala, or introduction, as well as a section containing an enumeration of the ‘ten improvements’ (dasawṛddhi), or ten types of material used as writing media. An edition of this text based on manuscript L 621 is provided in Gunawan (2009).

Bhīmaswarga
The second source is a prose text in Old Javanese, the Bhīmaswarga, which recounts the adventures of Bhīma, second of the five Pāṇḍava brothers, as he journeys to heaven. There are a number of versions of the Old Javanese Bhīmaswarga text. Hinzler (1981:194–203) notes one prose and two poetic renditions in the Balinese tradition. Among the Merapi-Merbabu manuscripts, Setyawati, Wiryamartana, and Van der Molen (2002) have recorded six copies of a prose Bhīmaswarga that differs from the Balinese version. There is also a prose Bhīmaswarga that originates in West Java that is different again from either of the aforementioned. This is the version employed in this study.

The West Javanese Bhīmaswarga, an edition of which is currently being prepared by this writer, is known from three manuscripts, two of which are currently held at the PNRI in Jakarta and one in Ciburuy. The first manuscript, L 455, is inscribed on nipah leaves in a script that resembles that found in the Kuñjarakarṇa manuscript, LOr 2266, at Leiden. The second is manuscript L 623, inscribed in Old Sundanese script on lontar leaves. The third manuscript from the Kabuyutan at Ciburuy is incomplete and has been separated into two separate fragments catalogued as lontar Ciburuy vii and kropak Ciburuy xii. It, too, is written in Old Sundanese script.

Although the core text is entirely in Old Javanese, certain sections display affinities to the pre-Islamic manuscript tradition that is specific to West Java. First, both L 623 and the Ciburuy manuscript are written in local script. Second, the colophon found in L 623 is written in Old Sundanese and states that the text, here given the title Bhimaləpas, was composed (or copied) at Mt Cikuray, situated in the Garut district of West Java. Finally, although it is recorded

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14 The colophon reads: itih kahuwusaniṅ pu[s]taka bimaləpas haranika, samapta sampun sin-urat [riṅ] wulan kasa, saṅ anurat panadaan saka pat pun, ə[ñ]cu nu ṅaheraṅ bukit cikuray
that l 455 was acquired from Mt Merbabu, the writing material indicates the possibility alluded to earlier, namely that the manuscript was originally produced in West Java before ending up in the Merbabu manuscript trove.

**Saṅ Hyaṅ Swawarcinta**

The third source is a poetic text in Old Sundanese, the *Saṅ Hyaṅ Swawarcinta*, available in PNRI manuscript l 626. This is a *codex unicus*. It is inscribed on lontar leaves in a form of Old Sundanese script. It contains a long narrative by an author who considers himself quite young (*boñcah*), and who asks his readers for permission to present them with *ilmu*, knowledge. Its contents

*Samapun* Ṣ“This is the end of the book called Bhīmaləpas, its writing was completed in the first month, written by pa na da an (?) Śaka year four (?), grandson of the one practising meditation (at) Mt Cikuray. Finished.”
include numerous depictions of the everyday lives of the Sundanese people at the time the text was written, such as the stories they recited, types of food, manners, and the like. An edition based on this manuscript was published in Wartini et al. (2011).

**Pantun**
The last source is pantun literature. Pantun form part of the Sundanese oral tradition, consisting of tales about the initiation and exploits of cultural heroes. They are recited without reference to a written text by a juru pantun, usually accompanied by a kecapi lyre, in a performance that lasts most of the night. According to Noorduyn and Teeuw (2006:279) there is a historical relationship between Old Sundanese poetic literature and pantun, which is apparent not only in the shared feature of composition in octosyllabic lines, but also in the formulaic expressions found in both. My sources for these come predominantly from transcriptions of pantun tales made by Ajip Rosidi: *Carita Kembang Panyarikan* (1973), *Tjarita Demung Kalagan* (1970), *Carita Gantangan Wangi* (1973), and *Tjarita Parenggong Jaya* (1971).

**Nipah or Gebang?**
In this section, passages containing information about writing materials from the sources listed above will be presented. In this way the tradition can itself testify about writing materials and their historical use.

In the maṅgala of Śāsana Mahāguru the writer dedicates his work to Bhaṭāra Gaṇa (Gaṇeśa), the creator of writing implements. Below is the relevant quotation:

*aṅrəguṅ ta jantra sri batara
gana, sinamburatkən riṅ manusa madyapada, matəmahan ta ya ərəban ləwan lwantar, tipuk diwasa pəpəs ərəban ləwan lwantar, tinut pinada-pada, lwane ləwan dawane, tinitisan asta gaṅa wira tanu.*

Śrī Bhaṭāra Gaṇa’s trunk trumpeted, so that it sprayed towards humankind in the middle realm. He created gebang and lontar. [When] the time came for the gebang and lontar to form young leaves, they followed precisely the same pattern.

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What is it that is called hasta gaṅgā wīra tanu? Hasta means hand, gaṅgā means water, wīra means pen and brush, tanu means ink. They are used for writing by a holy man, for reading by one without knowledge [in order that] knowledge might increase, as determined by the poet.

We see that in this maṅgala the writer dedicates the work he is composing to Bhaṭāra Gaṇa, whose trunk trumpeted and sprayed a gift to the realm of humankind. Through this gift he created (matəmahan) both gebang and lontar. After the first green shoots of gebang and lontar appeared (pupus), they were formed in precisely the same way (tinut pinada-pada) in their length and breadth, making them ideal to be used as writing materials that could subsequently ‘be sprinkled’ (tinitisan) by the four instruments of writing, that is, the hand (hasta), water (gaṅgā), pen or brush (wīra), and ink (tanu). These are all instruments used by a pandita to write a work that can then be read by someone lacking understanding so that their knowledge can grow; they are instruments by which the passing on of knowledge is determined or limited (winaləran) by the poet (saṅ kawi).

The quartet hasta–gaṅgā–wīra–tanu as writing instruments or elements can also be found in the text of the Bhīmaswarga below, with the difference that in this text we find a set of three elements, gaṅgā–wīra–tanu, while hasta is not mentioned:

_Bhīma, I will instruct you, the beginnings of a book (pustaka) are black. Gebang leaves, they followed precisely the same pattern with respect to their width and length, [so that they could have] gaṅgā wīra tanu applied. Gaṅgā is water, tanu ink, wīra pen._

The words ‘black’ and ‘ink’ in this context are key. These terms are relevant only for manuscripts written on the palm leaf type identified by scholars as nipah.
With lontar, as is well known, the writing itself is created by colourless incisions which are only subsequently made visible by the application of oily lampblack or a similar soot-based blackener.

Elsewhere in the Bhīmaswarga we find mention of gebang again in relation to books (pustaka), as can be seen in the following allegorical enumeration of Bhima’s divine allies:

sadasiwah pustakaṅku, papanku
brahmasiwah, gəbaṅku bhaṭāra
bayu, taline pustakaṅku, sañ hyaṅ suntagi manik.

Sadāśiwa is my book, Brahmaśiwa is my cover board, Bhaṭāra Bāyu my gebang, Sañ Hyaṅ Suntagi Manik my book’s binding string.

In the Bhīmaswarga text, in addition to gods, the Pāṇḍawa are also represented in ways symbolically linked to a book or pustaka:

manih bima, yudistira pinakagəbaṅ,
arjuna pinakatali, sakula sadewa
pinakapapan, tulis in pustaka, sañ
hyān darmarakā, kañ asəḍahan
pustaka, hyaṅ bagawan citragotra

And further, Bhīma, Yudhiṣṭhira serves as the gebang leaf, Arjuna as the cord, Sakula [that is, Nakula] and Sahadewa as the cover boards, the writing in the book [is] Sañ Hyaṅ Dharmarāja [Yama], the one responsible for writing the book is Bhagawān Citragotra.16

This quote paints a picture in which pustaka is the term for book (manuscript) as a whole, which consists of several parts: gəbaṅ refers to the leaves; tali to the string passed through the perforation in the middle of the stacked leaves; papan refers to the box (kropak) or wooden cover boards of the manuscript.17

16 In the Korawāśrama (Swellengrebel 1936:112) Citragotra is also said to have the responsibility for writing pustaka (bhagawān citragotra pwa masəḍahan pustaka). The character referred to here is none other than Citra-gupta, the assistant or clerk of Dharmarāja (Yama), who keeps the book of humanity’s karma.

17 In an Old Javanese text from Bali, the Tutur Aji Saraswati (Cod. Gedong Kirtya 2289), there is also a symbolic identification of the Pāṇḍawa with the components of a pustaka. In place of gebang, this text has lontar. The twins, Nakula and Sahadewa, between them symbolize the two cover boards (cakəpan kalih), Arjuna the lontar leaf (antal), Bhīma the string, and Dharmatanaya the textual contents (śāstra) (Rubinstein 2000:56–7).
Based on these excerpts from West Javanese sources, we have at this point been introduced to two types of writing support: lontar and gebang. Furthermore, in the Šāsana Mahāguru it is stated that these two writing materials represent two of ten types of writing media:

\[\ldots\] na naha nu dimantraan eta? ah kena karah ain nähwa dek mįįlįkən aksara: sastra muŋgu di na omas, sastra muŋgu riň salaka, sastra muŋgu riň tambaga, sastra muŋgu riň cundiga, sastra muŋgu riň bəsi, sastra muŋgu riň batu, sastra muŋgu riň paduň, sastra muŋgu riň pəjwa, sastra muŋgu riň taal, sastra muŋgu riň gəbaŋ.

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As enumerated here, the ten writing supports are (1) gold (omas), (2) silver (salaka), (3) copper (tambaga), (4) steel (cundiga), (5) iron (bəsi), (6) stone (batu), (7) wooden boards (paduň), (8) bamboo? (pəjwa), (9) lontar (taal), and (10) gebang. For the purposes of this article, only the last two are of direct interest.

Further along the Šāsana Mahāguru gives a more detailed explanation of terms and functions related to writing on lontar and gebang:

\[\ldots\] sastra muŋgu riň taal, diňaranan ta ya carik, aya eta mənaṅ utama, kena na lain pikabuyutanən. diturunkən dəi, sastra muŋgu riň

For what purpose am I uttering this mantra? Well, it is because I know [what must be done] when one wishes to produce letters: writing on gold, writing on silver, writing on copper, writing on steel, writing on iron, writing on stone, writing on wooden strips, writing on pəjwa (bamboo?), writing on lontar, writing on gebang.

Let’s

18 I choose to translate kabuyutan as ‘sacred text’, not as ‘place of worship’. The latter meaning does not suit the context because kabuyutan (in the sense of a place) actually denotes a place for storage of manuscripts of various types. Besides the meaning ‘place of worship’, ojed (s.v. buyut) also records other senses of this word, namely ‘object of worship, status of elder’. Furthermore, in the actual contexts where we find the word kabuyutan in Old Sundanese sources, it clearly does not always denote a place, but also denotes things that are ‘holy, sacred’ in a more general way, for example, ‘words’, as in Sewaka Darma (lines 513–4): saur dipikabuyutan, sabda dipirahasea ‘words are held sacred, sounds are kept secret’ (Darsa 2012:383); or ‘cloth’ in The sons of Rama and Rawana (lines 179–81): dialis ku sabuk wayañ, dibaur dəň kabuyutan, saň hyaň gula gumatuň ‘He carried the boy in his
gəbaṅ, diñaráran ta ya cəməṅ, ini ma ina pikabuyutanən, ńaran sañ hyaṅ ripta, ya sunya, ya ləpihan, ya mastra, ya lepwakaraṇa, iya pustaka katunγalanana.

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go down again: writing on gebang is called black (cəməṅ), and this is for the sacred texts, in other words, for such texts referred to as manuscripts (sañ hyaṅ ripta), the means for attaining emptiness (śūnya), leaves (ləpihan), mastra (?), the smearing (of ink, lepakaraṇa?), and pustaka are synonyms.

Thus, a technical demarcation is established between the two media in terms of use and function: writing on lontar is called carik, while writing on gebang is called cəməṅ. The word carik means 'scratch, line'; lontar manuscripts are written by incising, cutting, and scratching shapes onto the leaf surface using a type of knife (Balinese: pengutik; Sundanese: pésö pangot). As for cəməṅ, its meaning is simply 'black' (cf. Javanese cemeng). Perhaps 'black' is used to signify black ink, such as we find used on nipah, as stated by earlier scholars? Compare also the term hiriṅ as written in the opening of the Bhīmaswarga’s first passage on the pustaka. The material distinction between lontar and gebang as writing supports is paralleled by a distinction in the type of text that each is meant to bear: lontar are not meant to hold writings of an inherently sacred character (lain pikabuyutanən), while gebang leaf is specifically intended to be the medium for conveying sacred texts (pikabuyutanən).

Another useful source is the Old Sundanese text Sañ Hyaṅ Swawarcinta, ll. 447–52, which provides the following overview:

447 kaguritkən kaguratkən, dina gəbaṅ lawan lo(n)tar, lampihan kukuluntuṅan, dicarik (ku) tanah hirəṅ, ampar gəlar susuratan, əsi sañ hyaṅ pustaka.

Written incised, on gebang and lontar, leaves or rolls, incised with black tanah, the writing spread out, containing a sacred book.

The meaning of tanah (l. 450) raises several questions. Zoetmulder (1974:129–35) has identified this writing implement in the Old Javanese tradition as a sort decorated sash, with his sacred cloth, the sacred Gula Gumantung’ (Noorduyn and Teeuw 2006:183).

of slate pencil made from a soft stone; it could be sharpened with the fingernail and was simply thrown away when it was broken or worn down to a nub. Interestingly, the quote links tanah directly to lontar and gebang, while in kakawin sources it is regularly paired with karas (a writing slate) and never with palm leaves. In the excerpt above it is stated that the tanah is black. Can the tanah intended here be linked to the spines (lidi) of Enau sugar palm fronds (Arenga pinnata), called harupat in Sundanese, as stated by Holle (1882:17)? Can the characteristics of tanah as identified by Zoetmulder be linked to those of the lidi of the Enau palm, which in fact is black, easily bent, and capable of being sharpened with the fingernail?

Let us turn our attention now to the final set of sources: the pantun of the oral-tradition. The relevant portions for the purposes of this article are the rajah in the pantun stories. Rajah, which are usually performed by the juru pantun at the beginning of a performance, are sung prayers asking the gods to prevent the occurrence of any disturbances during the performance of the tale:

\[
\text{Mopoya(n)keun kandana anu baheula,} \\
\text{urang diguratkeun cenah ku urang téh diguritkeun,} \\
\text{kana pus gebang,} \\
\text{na pus gebang gé pondok lontang,} \\
\text{cecekan guguluntungan,} \\
\text{sabeulit tamba pamali.} \\
\text{Demung Kalagan, p. 4}
\]

This is a tale from the days of yore, incised and composed by us on gebang shoots, on gebang shoots and young lontar leaves, dotted on a rolled [leaf?] and twisted once to ward off taboos.

The word pus is a short form of pupus, meaning ‘the young (just unfolding) leaf of the banana and the lirang-palm’ (OJED, s.v. pupus). In the next line we find as synonym of pupus the word pondok, which appears to be a mispronunciation by the juru pantun of, or a mistranscription/misprint for, the more archaic word pondoh, which is still noted in dictionaries with the meaning ‘young palm leaf’ (Danadibrata 2006:s.v. pondoh). This may be compared with the case of the synonyms pucuk, which also means ‘young leaf’, and pondok (again mispronounced/mistranscribed for pondoh) in the pantun Kembang Panyarikan cited below.

Lontang is also a mispronunciation/mistranscription for lontar. Sabeulit, ‘one twist or turn’, indicates a length of string wrapped once through the perforation at the middle of the manuscript leaves (Balinese: song) and then wound once around the cover boards. In the context of the quoted sentence, the word sabeulit indicates that the juru pantun intends to finish the entire...
narrative in a ‘single wrap’ of the manuscript (though in fact the performance
does not involve actually reading from a physical manuscript). The entire story
must be finished as a tamba pamali, or protection from forbidden things.

The rajah (introduction, introit) reproduced above is parallel with the rajah
at the opening of the pantun called Kembang Panyarikan, as below:

Caturkeun,
urang cuang caritakeun,
cuang diajar mupulihkeun nu bihari,
mopoya[n]keun nu baheula,
diguratkan diguritkeun,
kana pucuk gebang pondok lontar,
ecekan guguluntungan,
sabeulit tamba pamali.
   Kembang Panyarikan, p. 7

Gebray geuning pucuk kawung
beukah,
lain gebray pucuk kawung beukah,
apus gebar mana lawé lontar,
ngaranna lulumbang siang,
mun surat kukuluntungan.
   Perenggong Jaya, p. 5

Let the story be told. We relate and
we learn while speaking of old tales,
which were incised and composed on
young gebang leaves and young
lontar leaves, [the letters] sprinkled
onto rolled leaves wound around
once and serving as a tamba pamali.

Split, it seems to be the aren shoot
that has split. No! It is not the aren
shoot that has split, but the gebang
string and the lontar cord. This is
called lulumbang siang, a letter that
is rolled up.

In this passage, gebar is a mispronunciation/mistranscription of gebang, the
same phenomenon of /r/ and /ng/ being switched (as in lontar < lontang) seen
in the Demung Kalagan excerpt. The quote above also shows the word lawe
being used as a synonym for apus, meaning string or cord. The word lulumbang
is assumed to have the meaning of luluman in modern Sundanese (ng < n),
meaning ‘to be joyful’ (Satjadibrata 2005:235). Lulumbang siang may perhaps
have a meaning similar to baranang siang, ‘a clear day’, which, in the above
context, indicates a bright and joyful mood. It appears the writer intended
to offer good tidings through the gebang and lontar, whose leaves have been
opened:

abis gobang lawé lontar,
cecekekan guguluntungan,
dituruban ku bandepung.
   Gantangan Wangi, p. 8

cord of gebang, string of lontar, drops
[of ink] in a rolled-up [writing],
wrapped in a protective cloth.
Abis gobang is a mispronunciation by the juru pantun (or mistranscription) of apus gəbang (gebang cord), as becomes clear from the next phrase, lawe lontar (lontar string), a near synonym. Bandepung may be taken as a variant of mandepun, a piece of cloth used to cover up objects set on a tray. A mandepun is also used to wrap up ‘manuscripts’ and other sacred heirlooms (Panitia Kamus Sunda 1976:301). Once again we see the equivalence of /ng/ in pantun usage to /n/ in modern Sundanese.

The excerpts from the rajah of pantun stories offered above strengthen Noorduyn and Teeuw’s assertion (2006) that pantun are closely related to the Old Sundanese written tradition. In practice, juru pantun performed pantun tales without relying on a written text, but when the reciter began his performance by uttering the opening rajah, it is clear that the story about to be related had originated in a text recorded in a manuscript (kandana baheula) consistently described as gebang and lontar.

Gebang

As has been shown above, the analysis of West Javanese sources, both in the form of ancient manuscripts preserved in West Java and in oral tradition, provides reasonably strong evidence that the term gebang is used to refer to a type of writing material in the manuscript tradition of West Java. By contrast, the word nipah never figures anywhere in ancient sources in the contexts that concern us here. Although there are physical similarities between nipah and gebang, and both belong to the same botanical family (namely, the Areccaceae palm family), they are distinct species belonging to different genera. There appears to be no indication in Sundanese, Javanese, or Balinese sources that nipah has ever been commonly used as a writing support.20

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20 As for sources in Old Javanese not transmitted in West Java, I first note that Zoetmulder (1982:505, s.v. gębay) cites just one text, namely the Pārthayajña, which mentions this word among other trees. A so far unrecognized occurrence of the word gəbañ is to be found in a passage in the Agastya parwa (Gonda 1933:381 lines 27–30, 1936:266): kunaṅ anak bhagawān pulastya i saṅ wirudhinyaṅ odwad, salwirin odwad, sakwehin rumambat mwaṅ dukut, pətuṅ, nyuh, hano, tal, gəbañ (em., goňañ ed.), salwirin twaksāra. nahan tānak bhagawān pulastya i saṅ wirudhi ‘And the children of Bhagawān Pulastya with Wirudhi, they are the hanging plants, all types of hanging plants; all creepers and grasses, bamboos, coconut-palms, aren-palms, lontar-palms, gebang-palms, all types of trees. Those are the children of Bhagawān Pulastya with Wirudhi.’ The emendation to gəbañ is unproblematic in palaeographic terms (ṅ and b are very similar in Balinese script), and evident in the
It is worth noting in this connection how palm leaves were historically used as a writing material in other, related cultural settings in South and Southeast Asia. Throughout this extensive zone, *Borassus flabellifer* L. and *Corypha umbraculifera* L. (both members of the subfamily Coryphoideae) are the two types of palm most widely used (Jahn 2006:923). A survey of studies of palm leaves as writing support from Tibet to the Philippines confirms that the genera *Corypha* and *Borassus* are the raw materials of first resort in societies that manufacture writing materials from palm leaves. Writing about India, Hoernle (1900:93) explains that two types of palm leaves were traditionally used as writing supports there—just as we have seen in Java. Those two species of palm were the *tāḍatāla* (*Borassus flabellifer*) and *tāḍitāli* (*Corypha umbraculifera*). *Tāḍatāla* is the same species as *lontar*. *Tāḍitāli* is the leaf of a different type of palm, called talipot; its leaves are thinner, wider, and have have a smoother surface than the *Borassus*. Thus we see that in India, too, two types of palm leaves are used as writing materials, one identical to *lontar*, the other a close relative of *gebang* (*Corypha utan* or *Corypha gebanga*).21 Indeed in a very recent article, Perumal (2012:159) notes that *Corypha utan* is a third type of palm leaf used as a writing support in Tamilnadu, South India, in addition to *Corypha umbraculifera* and *Borassus flabellifer*, while *Nypa* is notably absent.22

When we regard these plants in their natural environments in Indonesia, *gebang* is a common and well distributed variety of palm tree (Rigg 1862s.v.). It is naturally known by a variety of terms in the languages of the archipelago. The Dayak people know it as *gabang*, the people of Timor call it *gawang*, in Madura it is *pocok*, to the Betawi it is *pucuk*, among the Batak and Sasak it is *ibus*, while in Minahasa it is *silar*. Physically, a mature specimen ranges between 15 to 20 metres in height. *Gebang* leaves form a fan shape, like the fingers of an open hand, with a diameter of 2–3.5 metres, joined at the tip of a stalk. This tree is most commonly found in coastal areas near rivers and

21 For more details on local names for *Borassus flabellifer* and *Corypha umbraculifera* in India and Indonesia, see the table provided by Jahn (2006:927–8). Interestingly, in this table, *Corypha umbraculifera* and *Corypha utan* are considered to be the same.

22 This article presents two misconceptions that need to be clarified. First, it states that *Corypha umbraculifera* grows in dry climates. In reality the opposite is true: this species does not thrive in dry zones. Second, *Corypha utan* is referred to as *lontar* and is said to grow in wet zones. *Lontar* is not *Corypha utan* but *Borassus flabellifer*, and only grows in dry zones.
swamps; it is also encountered in hilly countryside, though more sparsely. *Gebang* have a slow rate of growth and are not found above elevations of 300 metres (Heyne 1922:301). The geographical origins of this species are not clear, but its distribution today includes tropical Africa, India, Burma, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

By contrast, the *nipah* palm is more rarely found in Java (Gallop 1998:16). Local toponymy gives a clear reflection of the relative abundance, importance, and familiarity of natural landscape features, flora, and fauna. An examination of gazetteers reveals that *nipah* is almost completely unknown in the toponymy of West Java. *Gebang*, by contrast, is widely used in place names, including Bantar Gebang in Bekasi, Gebang sub-district in Cirebon, and Ciawi Gebang in Kuningan. Several of these place names are located in lowland areas (such as Bantar Gebang and the Cirebon sub-district); others are in areas of low hills (Ciawi Gebang). One can deduce that areas named after this type of palm tree are places where the *gebang* once grew in a way that made it stand out. *Nipah* stands out only by its absence as an element in place names.

Although our focus here has been on Java and in particular its western stretches, it should be noted that there are references outside of West Java to *gebang* as a writing support. Ketut Ginarsa (1975:92) once wrote that ‘in Bali, in addition to *lontar*, *gebang* (*Corypha utan*), sometimes called “forest *lontar*”, is also said to be related to writing implements (for example in the prayer accompanying wayang performances uttered by dalang in North Bali)’. Hinzler (1993:438) quotes Cox (1931) in the opening to her article on palm leaf manuscripts in Bali, adding that the *gebang* palm was, at least in the 1930s, very rare in Bali, whereas *lontar* palms grew abundantly in dry areas. No further information offering insights into their use along the lines found in West Javanese sources is mentioned.

**Conclusion**

Holle's misidentification of *gebang* as *nipah* more than 130 years ago was taken up uncritically by subsequent researchers. It is contradicted by sources from West Java, both manuscripts and the oral *pantun*, which describe use of two types of palm leaves as complementary writing materials: *gebang* and *lontar*. *Nipah* does not enter into these passages, though other types of material that can be used for writing on are enumerated. As long as no other sources are found that contain references to *nipah*, one should rely on the term *gebang* (*Corypha gebanga, Corypha utan* Lam.) to designate the palm-leaf writing support that is written on with ink, not incised with a knife or stylus. Indeed, the
character of manuscripts copied through use of ‘black’ (cəməṅ) rather than ‘incising’ (carik), is differentiated in important ways. Writing on lontar is ‘not intended to be used to preserve a sacred text’ (lain pikabuyutanən), that is, a text imbued with sacral power and dealing with matters of transcendent knowledge. This theoretical notion is substantiated by the fact that, in general, Old Sundanese texts found on lontar tend more to have the characteristics of ‘literature’ as understood by modern readers. Writing on gebang, by contrast, is ‘intended for use in preserving sacred texts’ (pikabuyutanən). This statement, too, is substantiated by the fact that nearly all texts written on gebang are of the tutur or tattwa variety, that is to say, didactic religious works in prose containing teachings of sacred knowledge structured as an exchange between a guru and a student, and often accompanied by several śloka.23 The special, religious character of these texts is reflected in the use of Old Javanese, the cosmopolitan language of Java and Bali in that period, which is relatively dominant in texts written on gebang.24 It is worth noting that in Sanskrit and descendant Indo-Aryan languages Corypha is also called śrītāla (Jahn 2006:929). The addition of the element śrī (sacred) to the word tāla in this compound may indicate the special character of Corypha compared to Borrasus.

Gebang manuscripts available to us at this time provide evidence that, although the gebang leaves are physically less robust than lontar, as a writing support they are very long-lasting and able to survive in the humid tropical climate of Indonesia. The oldest of the gebang manuscripts, giving a text of the Arjunawiwāha (PNRI L 641, dated 1334 CE), is nearly seven hundred years old. Although it has been late in coming, further codicological research on the production process by which leaves become writing supports, such as that carried out by Hoernle for palm leaf manuscripts in India more than a century ago, remains an important task to be pursued today. The conclusions reached here on philological grounds should also be strengthened by botanical research on nipah and gebang through laboratory experiments. Although this could not yet be offered here, such experimental evidence will be important to determine with greater precision which type of leaf was actually used in the past to

23 A detailed account of tutur or tattwa, including chronology, typology, and relationship between these texts and their Sanskrit antecedents, can be found in Acri 2006 and 2011a:8–10.

24 Such as Saṅ Hyaṅ Hayu (PNRI L 634, L 637, L 638, see Darsa 1998), Dharma Pātañjala (cod. Schoemann i-21, see Acri 2011a), Śikṣa Guru (PNRI L 627, L 628, L 643), Kuñjarakarna (LOr 2266, see Van der Molen 1983), Arjunawiwāha (PNRI L 641, see Poerbatjaraka 1926), and others.
produce the type of writing material that I propose from now on to designate as gebang.

Pun. Leuwih luangan kurang wuwuhan.

Finished. Whatever is excessive, please reduce; whatever is deficient, please supply.

References


Lennep, D. van (1969). Some observations on the nipah leaf kropaks from West Java, with an analysis of content and historical relevance of the manggala to the Old-Javanese Amaramala. [BA honours thesis, University of Sydney.]


Wartini, Tien, Ruhaliah, Mamat Ruhimat and Aditia Gunawan (2011). *Sanghyang Swa-
war Cinta: Teks dan terjemahan. Jakarta: Kerjasama Perpustakaan Nasional RI dan Pusat Studi Sunda.


Appendix 1. Gebang Manuscripts in the Collection of the National Library of Indonesia

Abbreviations

*NBG* Notulen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen.

*TBG* Tijdschrift van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen.

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<th>No.</th>
<th>MS no.</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>L 374</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Fragments w/o cover boards, 35 × 3.4 cm (longest leaf), 10 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Sundanese and Old Javanese language, prose. Title on label ‘Old Javanese/Sundanese?’. Contents: not further identified, mentions <em>jati niskala</em>, state of <em>sunya</em> (emptiness) dan <em>acintya</em> (inconceivableness of god).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>L 455</td>
<td>Bhīmaswarga</td>
<td>34.9 × 3.9 cm, 36 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Javanese language, prose. In Holle’s copy (260 peti 89) there is a note saying that L 455 came from Merbabu. This manuscript may not be from West Java. Contents: tale of Bhīma’s journey to heaven to meet Bhaṭāra Guru in order to have the gift of heaven bestowed on Pandu, Bhīma’s father. It consists almost exclusively of question-and-answer exchange between Bhaṭāra Guru and Bhīma. Copy of manuscript: No. 260, peti 89.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>L 627</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>38.7 × 3.7 cm, 26 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Javanese language, prose. Leaves damaged, out of order. Contents: religious text, unidentified, mentions <em>sapta-patala</em>. Copy of manuscript: No. 261, peti 89.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>L 628</td>
<td>Siksa Guru</td>
<td>35 × 3.3 cm, 23 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Javanese language, prose. Some leaves broken, edges damaged, holes due to insects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Place copied: Lurah Kamulan? Title on label ‘Old Javanese/Sundanese?’
Contents: religious teachings of Saṅ Pandita to Saṅ Sewaka Darma about life in this world. Core of teachings centred on mastering bayu, sabda, and hədap and potential of the dasaindria possessed by humans
Copy of manuscript: No. 262, peti 89.

5  L 630 Peti 16  Saṅ Hyaṅ Siksa Kandaṅ Karəsian 35 × 3.5 cm, 29 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Sundanese language, prose. Time of writing: third month of 1440 Ś (1518 CE). Manuscript from Galuh (Krom 1914:98).
Copy of manuscript: Plt. 131, peti 119; No. 263, peti 89. 44 × 3.1 cm, 49 leaves, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Javanese language, prose. Note saying this was a ms from Raden Saleh. Holle (tbg 16) calls this ms c. From Galuh.
Contents: teachings on the art of writing kakawin, amaramālā (Sanskrit-Old Javanese lexicon).

6  L 631 Peti 15  Chanda-Karaṇa 34 × 3 cm, 6 leaves (4 leaves separate from case), 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Sundanese language, prose. Leaves adhere to cover boards, middle part missing, leaf edges damaged and breaking.
Contents: begins with genealogy of Rahyaṅ Baṅa, continues with advice of Darmasiksa to care for and protect kabuyutan in Galuṅguṅ.
Copy of manuscript: Plt. 120, Peti 119; No. 265, peti 89. Pleyte himself, in the manuscript Plt. 120, Peti 119, gave the title ‘Darmasiksa’.

7  L 632a Peti 16  Kabuyutan Galuṅguṅ 22.6 × 4 cm, 41 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Sundanese language and Old Javanese. Manuscript from Tarogong, Garut (Krom 1914:71). Time of writing: bulan kasapuluh (tenth mounth). Place copied: Desa Sunya. Title on label ‘Serat Sewaka’.
Copy of manuscript: No. 264, peti 89.
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<td>L 634</td>
<td>Sañ Hyañ Hayu</td>
<td>47 × 3.6 cm, 80 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Javanese language, prose. Manuscript in good condition, well-bound, neat. Time of writing: 1445 Ś (1523/4 CE). Place copied: Desa Mahapawitte (read Mahapawitra?), Tajak Barat, Giri Wañsa. Manuscript from Cilegon, Tarogong, Garut, gift of Rd. Tumenggung Suria Kerta Adi Ningrat (Netscher 1853:469–79; Krom 1914:71). Copy of manuscript: No. 267, peti 89; No. 268, peti 89.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>L 635</td>
<td>Sañ Hyañ Hayu</td>
<td>36.8 × 3.6 cm, 122 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Javanese language, prose. Manuscript from Tarogong, Garut (Krom 1914:71). Title on label ‘Serat Buwana Pitu’. Copy of manuscript: No. 155 (Ciburuy t), peti 89 (Javanese script); No. 274, Peti 89.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>L 636</td>
<td>Sañ Hyañ Hayu</td>
<td>42.5 × 4 cm, 83 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Javanese language, prose. Place copied: Giri Sunya. Copyist: Sañ Bujanga Rosi Laksa. Manuscript from Tarogong, Garut (Krom 1914:71).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>L 637</td>
<td>Sañ Hyañ Hayu</td>
<td>37.6 × 4 cm, 103 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Javanese language, prose. Place copied: Desa Mahapawita (read Mahapawitra?), Tajak Barat. Manuscript from Tarogong, Garut (Krom 1914:71).</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>L 641</td>
<td>Arjunawiwāha</td>
<td>47.5 × 4 cm, 38 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Javanese language. Date of composition: 1256 Ś (1334 CE). Place copied: Sañ Hyañ Mandala Katayan in Gugur. Copyist: Sañ Guguron? Manuscript from Cilegon, Tarogong, Garut, gift of Rd.</td>
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<td>No.</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>l. 642 Peti 88 Siksa Guru</td>
<td>Tumenggung Suria Kerta Adi Ningrat (Netscher 1853:469–79; Krom 1914:71). Title on label ‘Serat Wiwaha Kawi’. Copy of manuscript: No. 272, peti 89; KBG 346 (Javanese script).</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>l. 643 Peti 16 ?</td>
<td>37.5 × 3.6 cm, 23 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Sundanese language and Old Javanese, prose. Manuscript from Tarogong, Garut (Krom 1914:71). Place copied: Desa Mahapawitra in the Śaka year hlaṙ (2) twaya (4) wu (1) (142×, that is, 1498–1509 CE).</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>l. 647 Peti 16 ?</td>
<td>Fragments, manuscript in shambles, 4 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Javanese language, prose. Title on label ‘Fragment Stukken’.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>l. 1095 Peti 69 Laṅgañ Jati</td>
<td>31 × 3.8 cm, 37 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Sundanese language, prose. Place copied: Gunuñ Jati Sunya, upstream from the silent forest of Mandala Puntañ. Manuscript from kabuyutan Kolêang, Jasinga (NBG 4, 1866:118; Krom 1914:92). Title on label ‘Sundaasch’. Contents: religious treatise on mastering the three elements bayu, sabda, dan ḥədap. Text incomplete.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 19  | l. 1097 Peti 69 Carita Jati Mula | 21.4 × 3.7 cm, 57 leaves, 4 lines/leaf, Old (West) Javanese quadratic script, Old Sundanese language, prose. Place copied: Sagara Wisesa. Title on label ‘Sundaasch (met
Appendix 2. Gebang Manuscripts from Kabuyutan Ciburuy

Information on manuscripts below is drawn from the descriptions in Acri and Darsa (2009). These descriptions were appended as an index for the Ciburuy manuscript digitalization project, sponsored by the British Library through its Endangered Archive Program (EAP) in 2009. Digitalized copies are kept at the National Library of Indonesia with an additional copy deposited at the British Library as the sponsoring institution (http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_project.a4d?projID=EAP280).

### Gebang Manuscripts from Kabuyutan Ciburuy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Ms. no.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Kropak Ciburuy i 280_Petizb_krpkCbrI</td>
<td>Former title: n.a.</td>
<td>86 leaves, 51 × 4 cm, 4 lines. Script: Old (West) Javanese quadratic. Language: Old Javanese. Title: Buana Pitu (?); time and place of writing unknown.</td>
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<td>No.</td>
<td>Ms. no</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
280_Peti2b_krpk23  
3 leaves damaged, 36 × 4 cm, 4 lines.  
Title: Tattvajñana (see Acri 2011b); time and place of writing: unknown. |
280_Peti2d_krpk24  
7 leaves + some broken leaves, ca. 35 × 4 cm, 4 lines.  
Title: Sañ Hyañ Hayu (?); time and place of writing: unknown. |