

The *Sri Tanjung* Text by Prijono and the Interpretive Communities

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In 1938, Indonesian scholar Prijono published a study of the classic literature *Sri Tanjung: Een Oud Javaansch Verhaal*. From the perspective of *Interpretive Communities* of cultural description/practice, this paper discusses the institutional context of the “publishing community” in the colonial academia that shaped Prijono’s text making of the *Sri Tanjung* manuscripts, comparing it with the “ritual communities”: local groups that have transmitted the story through performing arts in Java and Bali.

It first examines Prijono’s attribute as a contact zone, which supported his involvement in both interpretive communities. Born into the family of a courtier in Yogyakarta, he built an identity as *priyayi* (elite local) through Dutch/Western education via the Ethical Policy and practice of Javanese dance with locals. The duality brought about Prijono’s diverse activities encompassing internationalism and nationalism, or literacy education and the promotion of traditional performing arts.

Scrutiny of the *Sri Tanjung* text—the embodiment of Prijono’s literacy training at Leiden—reveals two important points. The first is that the encounter between Prijono and the *Sri Tanjung* was predetermined by the historic accumulation of Leiden, where all the manuscripts had been archived in the library collection. Second, Prijono was put in the position of inheriting the work of Dutch linguist H. N. van der Tuuk, who left handwritten notes in most of the manuscripts. Following the “collective decision” of the academic milieu, Prijono textualized the *Sri Tanjung* manuscripts from Bali, which originally formed a “text for reciting poetry,” into “a book to read,” applying van der Tuuk’s thought and colonial discourses to his analysis. The academic output consequently incorporated Prijono’s view of East Java as the origin of the *Sri Tanjung* story into the construction of Javanology. Meanwhile, Prijono’s text making accompanied his devotion to Javanese performing arts as part of his nationalistic activism, which became more radical after becoming a minister of Indonesia.

The text investigation clarifies the mission of Prijono’s publication as part of the series of “letterpress *lontar*” of Leiden’s publishing community. Still, the author’s dilemma between text making and cultural practices suggests the significance of “new interpretive communities” in bridging academic texts and indigenous knowledge. From the perspective of musical anthropology, the *Sri Tanjung* text still has potential for rediscovery, such as the “*Wukir/Adri* meter” presented by Prijono: an archaic style of recitation that might be surviving in Balinese physical memory.

Keywords

Javanese/Balinese Lontar Manuscript, Performing arts, Colonial Academia, Text Making, Interpretive Communities

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I Introduction

The *Sri Tanjung* is a human-nymph marriage tale that has been transmitted through performing arts such as ritual songs and dramas in Java and Bali, Indonesia. The poem is also inscribed in traditional manuscripts called *lontar* that were discovered in Banyuwangi (East Java) and Bali¹. In 1938, the study of the Balinese manuscripts was published in Dutch by Indonesian scholar of literature Prijono (1907–1969), who later became Minister of Education and Culture of Indonesia. This article discusses Prijono’s textual practice, focusing on the colonial academic context that shaped the theoretical framework of the text, adopting Stanley Fish’s theory of “Interpretive Communities” (Fish 1980).

This case study draws from my concern associated with musical anthropology, which was inspired by my interdisciplinary project on temple ruins (*candi*) in Java². As part of the project, the local team produced a film that introduces the *Sri Tanjung*, combining the traditional drama and some narrative reliefs of *candi*, which include the image of the story. In the film, what surprised me most was the song of *Sri Tanjung* as sung by a young woman at the beginning; it was as beautiful as *Amazing Grace* echoing from heaven. The excellent singer, Ms. Sesarina Prima Yudhaningtyas, has practiced traditional Javanese song (*kidung*) from an early age in Kediri, East Java. According to the staff, the song in the film is not an existing one but her own improvisation from an academic text that she received before the recording. It is the transliteration of the manuscript from Banyuwangi that was published for linguistic or philological studies (Aminoedin et al. 1986). Thus, the successor of *kidung*, who had engaged in “words as a song” for a long time, naturally found the beautiful melody from the prosodic law in the original text that had been the object of academic discourse. This experience

caused me to realize the difference in how “writers” and “performers” of culture interact with a text; in this case, the former “reads” the *lontar* text as a semantic construction while the latter “recites” it as a living poem. Ironically, my field of musical anthropology is in the ambiguous position of describing the oral/aural elements of musical practice through written language mediated by academic discipline.

Prijono’s practice, which is reminiscent of the dilemma of musical anthropology, is a typical case to turn to when reconsidering the matter of “writing culture” in the post-modern humanities. As a promising Indonesian intellectual in the colonial era, Prijono textualized the *Sri Tanjung* tale in Dutch, conforming his thought to the Western scholarly paradigm while exerting his Javanese identity in promoting the performing arts both in the Netherlands and Indonesia. While acknowledging that Prijono’s text of the *Sri Tanjung* has been an issue of philological study, this article applies anthropological insight to reexamine the institutional context and historical dynamism behind the canonical text. It seeks to explore interdisciplinary perspectives that would rediscover the potential of the humanities for cultural transmission; in particular, musical anthropology as an intersection between writers and performers.

Since the publication of Clifford and Marcus’s *Writing Culture* (1986), textual/ethnographic practices have been a “traditional” issue of cultural anthropology. Still, it is prudent to recognize that “anthropologists of the early to mid-twentieth century hardly acknowledged the (mostly) colonial links which enabled them to be present in these societies and in fact sometimes to contribute to bringing new practices, including writing, to these societies” (Barton & Papen 2010: 5). Significantly, Prijono was active during the transitional period when native scholars were absorbing such outsider meta-narratives for their cultural interpretations. However,

¹ Regarding the two versions, the Balinese manuscripts are made of palm leaf following the traditional style of *lontar*, but the manuscripts from Banyuwangi are written on paper in Perso-Arabic script. Nevertheless, all of these texts are called “*lontar Sri Tanjung*” (the *Sri Tanjung*’s *lontar*) among local scholars.

² This was an interdisciplinary project for the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (No: 15KK0048, 2016–2017) that I carried out with Indonesian archeologist Yohanes Hanan Pamungkas and Indonesian musicologist Bambang Sugito. The film titled “The Song of *Sritanjung*: Story of Spirit Journey in Hindu-Javanese Cosmology” is available at the library of the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan.

instead of confining the topic of writing to anthropological self-inspection, this article contextualizes it within Fish's concept of "interpretive communities" in textual studies. The idea is due to the fact that the transmission of the *Sri Tanjung* has been largely supported by two groups: researchers and local performers. The two actors were known to Prijono and were surely the source of social communication whereby he developed various activities in the fields of literacy and cultural practice. In this sense, connecting them with the common concept of "interpretive communities" can serve to avoid neglecting the counterpart and to relativize social diversity in cultural perception/representation, which even inhabits one personality. By doing so, the article highlights Prijono's literacy milieu, which I define as "publishing communities," while mentioning the "ritual communities" who have transmitted the local performing arts within ritual contexts.

This framework also corresponds to the joint research theme "Grand Theories and Local Theories in Anthropology/Archeology (in Japanese: *Junruigaku, Koukogaku no Ookina Riron to Genba no Riron*)" by the Anthropological Institute at Nanzan University (project period: April 2019 to March 2022). There are myriad potential discussions regarding the two theories, such as universalism versus cultural relativism, or structuralism versus post-structuralism. Within the purview of this case study, I apply the sub-concept of "Western knowledge and non-Western knowledge," used by M. R. Dove et al. in the study of resource-use systems (2009), to the issue of cultural resources, including ancient local texts. Given the colonial context of Prijono's practices, one can relate his text making as Western literacy-training to the former/*grand theories*, and his devotion to Javanese performing arts to the latter/*local theories*, which could be called "indigenous grammar" (Makeham 2012). In this context, I set out the premise that the contrasting knowledge also implies the intellectual manners of the two interpretive communities; it thus offers the *Sri Tanjung* text, allegedly the product of modernity, as a springboard for global concerns regarding the sustainable development of cultural heritage in collaboration with indigenous knowledge.

From this perspective, the first section situates the

transmission of the *Sri Tanjung* and Prijono in the theoretical framework of interpretive communities. The second section demonstrates the structure of Prijono's 1938 publication *Sri Tanjung: Een Oud Javaansch Verhaal* (*Sri Tanjung: An Old Javanese Story*). The third section examines Prijono's institutional contexts, centering on the scholarly/publishing community and his extensional activities in conjunction with the raising power of nationalism.

II The *Sri Tanjung* Story and Prijono in a Theoretical Context

1 Transmission by Publishing/Ritual Communities

As follows, Fish discusses the notion of "interpretive community" that underlies text making:

Thus the act of recognizing literature is not constrained by something in the text, nor does it issue from an independent and arbitrary will; rather, it proceeds from a collective decision as to what will count as literature, a decision that will be in force only so long as a community of readers or believers continues to abide by it. (Fish 1980: 11)

In terms of the relational nature of text, which even blurs the border between "author" and "reader," one can see two streams that have transmitted the *Sri Tanjung* story: the "publishing communities" and the "ritual communities." The former emerged at the beginning of the Dutch colonialization in Indonesia in the seventeenth century, with the increase of ethnographies by travelers, officers, and missionaries. Then, after the launch of *Koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappe* (The Royal Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences) in 1778, "writing culture" became the main activity of colonial scholars. It was particularly accelerated by the publication of the journal *Tijdschrift voor Indische taal-land en volkenkunde* (1853–1952) and the *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië* (1838–1894), in accordance with the continuous innovations of printing technology in the era. In addition to the Royal Batavian Society, the KITLV (*Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-*,

Land- en Volkenkunde/the Royal Institute for Linguistics, Land and Ethnology) had actively published academic monographs while collecting local manuscripts from across the Dutch East Indies since 1852; in 1908, these were integrated into the archive of *Koloniale Bibliotheek* (the Colonial Library) in Leiden. These movements naturally formed a huge network of publishing communities centering on Leiden, and Prijono's 1938 philological study of the *Sri Tanjung* was published in this cradle.

Given the aforementioned "a collective decision" by Fish, it is fitting to consider the workings behind Prijono's text making. The most notable would be the historical interpretation; indeed, the empirical study of the archipelago's history was a common task among the colonial scholars. As for Prijono, as I argue later, he refers to previous discourses and assumes East Java as the origin of the text written in the manuscript from Bali (Prijono 1938a/b: 16–7). His text thus became the trigger for the *Sri Tanjung* story to be internalized into Javanese collective memory by adding subsequent researchers (Aminoedin et al. 1986; Indiarti 2020) who studied another manuscript from Banyuwangi, East Java. The collaborative projects of the Hindu/Buddhist temple ruins by philologists and archaeologists (represented by J. L. A. Brandes and N. J. Krom) also boosted new narratives of medieval Javanese culture. Following the study of the *Sudamala* relief of the *Candi Tegowangi* by P. V. van Stein Callenfels (Callenfels 1925; Nozawa 2021), the *Sri Tanjung* story was interpreted as the relief motif of some temple ruins built by the *Majapahit* Kingdom³: *Candi Surawana*, *Candi Penataran*, and *Candi Jabung* (Suleiman 1976; Worsley 1986; Kieven 2013, et al.). Prijono's text came to be incorporated into the image of the Hindu-Java or the *Majapahit* era in this way, as part of the construction of "Javanology" that was initiated by colonial scholars.

On the other hand, the "ritual communities" have transmitted the *Sri Tanjung* through performing arts like the singer previously mentioned. In Java and Bali, the memories of this story have been performed in forms of ritual song/poetry (*kidung*) and drama (*kethoprak* and *arja*). In fact, it is hard to find a standard of religious-

ness for the term "ritual" that characterizes these communities: while most of the cases in Bali are associated with Hindu rituals, the Javanese *kethoprak*, which derived from *wayang wong*, is a form of entertainment drama in today's Islamized society. However, following the theory of S. F. Moore and B. G. Myerhoff, I set the function of the ritual as a collective event to share cultural memory through specific physical expressions. Moore and Myerhoff define the category of collective ritual as a "traditionalizing instrument" to "traditionalize new materials as well as perpetuate old traditions." They also point to six factors that make a ritual "an ideal vehicle for [the] conveying of messages in an authenticating and arresting manner." These are "*Repetition*," "*Acting*," "*Special behavior or stylization*," "*Order*," "*Evocative presentational style; staging*," and "*The collective dimension*" (Moore & Myerhoff 1977: 7–8).

The *Sri Tanjung* story in today's Bali exemplifies how the style of performance has changed over time. Regarding the manuscript from Bali, Prijono presents three features of the text: "language: Middle Javanese," "style: *kidung*," and "meter: *Wukir*" (Prijono 1938a/b: 1–5). As far as I have observed, however, these are not applied today. The story has been performed as a drama (*arja*) in some villages, but the most common style today is the form of *geguritan*: it is sung in Balinese (everyday language: *basa kepara*) and belongs to the rudimentary poetry genre (*sekar alit*). *Geguritan* usually applies one of the three meters (*pupuh padalingsa*, *pupuh pada*, and *pupuh carik*), and there are many versions of lyrics, including contemporary works that recount the *Sri Tanjung* story. Traditionally, a palm-leaf manuscript called *lontar* has been used by singers at the performance. However, it is becoming more common to use notebooks in which individual works are written. Regarding the performing context, it appears more often in rites of passage (*manusa yadnya*) than in temple ceremonies (*dewa yadnya*). This situation would be the result of the long-term minor modifications by which local communities have selected the better "vehicle" to convey the aesthetic of the narrative.

³ This is the Hindu kingdom that flourished in East Java from 1293 to circa 1500 C.E.

2 Priyono as the Contact Zone

As detailed above, the two communities have woven the narratives of the *Sri Tanjung* story using different manners and interpretations. Fish consequently states that “the identification of what was normative for the members of one community would be seen as strange (if it could be seen at all) by the members of another” (Fish 1980: 15–6). However, it is significant to note that the two communities overlap in some regards. It is of course the case that local performers are also text producers, whether using *lontar* or paper, and that their old works were incorporated into Priyono’s academic text as the “authentic manuscripts.” On the other hand, the publishing communities also include some ritual aspects. One example is the sharing of publications related to personal social life (company newsletters, class papers, etc.), which is a topic that H. Hasegawa takes up. He observes the features of those publications as the media “intertwined with information transfer and ritual,” thus reinforcing the sense of community membership (Hasegawa 2003: 31–5). This could be applied to academic journals too. Furthermore, one should note that the activities of the two communities are realized upon a certain common language as the premise of cultural/social communication. In the colonial period, in particular, Dutch language ability had the absolute power to divide the hierarchy/community of Indonesian society.

In this context, Priyono spent his whole life in the contact zone. He was born in 1907 in Yogyakarta, the ancient capital in Central Java. In the environment where his father worked as a courtier (*abdi dalem*), he learned the court (*keraton*) culture from childhood while joining the Javanese dance school, *Krido Bekso Wiromo*. Meanwhile, he studied at the Dutch-based primary school (HIS: *Hollandsch-Inlandsche School*) in Yogyakarta and graduated from the secondary school (AMS: *Algemeene Middelbare School*) in Surakarta in 1929. Afterwards, he moved to Paris and completed the French course (*Cours Mayon*) in 1932 at the age of 25. His strong interest in literature brought him to the Netherlands, and he studied at the Department of Oriental Literature at Leiden University until 1936 (Sumardi 1984: 11–5).

This biography relays Priyono’s hybridity as a

quadrilingual man with proficiency in Javanese, Indonesian, Dutch, and French. This background enabled his multi-aspect activities in relation to Western thought and the Indonesian mind, or publishing and ritual communities. As a son of *priyayi* (local elite) working for the court, he was privileged to be educated in Dutch at HIS and AMS as part of the Ethical Policy (*Ethische Politiek*). At the same time, he cultivated his Javanese identity by engaging in local performing arts, which evolved into his later nationalistic activities for the promotion of traditional culture. He finally settled in Leiden and became a member of the philological community represented by J. L. A. Brandes (1857–1905), R. M. L. Poerbatjaraka (1884–1964), and P. J. Zoetmulder (1906–1995). He was also involved in the student association (*Perhimpunan Indonesia*), wherein young *priyayi* encouraged one another as the future of Indonesia while working hard to reinterpret and represent their own culture in Dutch. In this academic milieu, as one of the Indonesian bureaucratic candidates, Priyono fulfilled his doctoral course with the *Sri Tanjung* study in 1938.

III Looking into Priyono’s *Sri Tanjung* Text

1 The Structure

Priyono’s thesis *Sri Tanjung: Een Oud Javaansch Verhaal* was issued in the same year by two publishers: the Nederlandsche Boek-en Steendrukkerij (1897–1998) in Den Haag and the Burgersdijk & Niermans-Templum Salomonis (1894–) in Leiden. There are some differences between the two versions. The former (Priyono 1938a) includes a dedication page and a book acknowledgements page, while the latter (Priyono 1938b) does not. However, the latter includes a two-page “Additions and Corrections (*Toevoegsels en Verbeteringen*)” section for the fifty-two local terms before the table of contents (*Inhoud*). The title page of the former features a note containing information about the doctoral thesis (e.g., the chairman of the board trustee and the date of degree conferment), but the latter’s title page only includes the publisher’s emblem. These differences would mean that the former is composed of the whole doctoral thesis made into a book as a collection of uni-

versity libraries; the latter was revised later for public availability (even for limited intellectuals) by adding the two pages of notes on local terms.

The two books have the same structure after the table of contents: “*Inleiding/Introduction*” (pp. 1⁺–33⁺), “*Tekst/Text*” (pp. 1–62), “*Vertaling/Translation*” (pp. 63–155), “*Aanteekeningen/Notes*” (pp. 156–256), “*Lijst der Voornaamste Afkortingen/ List of Main Abbreviations*” (pp. 257–8), “*Lijst van Eigennamen en Termen/ List of Proper Names and Terms*” (pp. 259–60), and “*Woordenlijst/Glossary*” (pp. 261–73).

All of Prijono’s discussions on the text are included in the introduction. The section “Text” contains the Romanized transcription of the *Sri Tanjung* manuscripts from Bali that were written in Javanese character; I will describe the multiple manuscripts used for this transcription in the next chapter. The transcribed text is composed of seven cantos: Canto I (66 stanzas), Canto II (39 stanzas), Canto III (55 stanzas), Canto IV (12 stanzas), Canto V (188 stanzas), Canto VI (47 stanzas), and Canto VII (86 stanzas); one stanza is a group of 9 lines. These are translated into Dutch in the next section, “Translation.”

The following sections, “Notes” and “List of Main Abbreviations,” relate to each other. In “Notes,” Prijono further explains the passages in the “Text” and “Translation” chapters. These mainly support the contextual meanings of original words by quoting reference materials. For example, stanza 1 of Canto I is written as follows:

[Javanese text] *Teja bayu kaki wangsitipun/ tan sipi lawase/ Sudamala duk kinawi/ pupuṭut kang angapus/ Citragotra parabipun/ Kartika-masa tanggale/ purnama Gurw ing Prangbakat/ Sudamala duk rinipta/ baṭari sampurnājiwa.* (Prijono 1938a/b: 1)

[English translation] Magical power and vitality, Lord, are my secret words. It is not long ago that the *Sudamala* was written by a hermit named Citragotra, in the month of *Kartika*, on the 15th of the month, on the day *Guru*, in the *wuku Prangbakat*. That is when it was written, the story of *Sudamala* and the Goddess who were restored to life. (Translated by the author from the Dutch

transcription)

Regarding this stanza, Prijono explains the underlined three terms referring to previous studies: The *Taja bayu* (magical power and vitality) from Kleen & Angelino’s 1922 *Mudra’s op Bali: Handhoudingen der Priesters*, the *Kartika* (the first month of the *wuku* year) from H. A. van Hien’s 1912/1913 *De Javaansche Geestenwereld, 5 deelen*, and the *Gurw/Guru* (the third day of the eight-day week or *Astawara*) from van Hien’s abovementioned book and H. N. van der Tuuk’s 1987–1912 *Kawi-Balinesch-Nederlandsch Woordenboek*.

As a resource for these interpretations, the subsequent “List of Main Abbreviations” specifies the bibliographic information pertaining to the reference materials, the names of which are abbreviated in the previous section; for example, “K. B. W.” of van der Tuuk’s 1897 *Kawi-Balinesch-Nederlandsch Woordenboek*. Thus, this section presents a bibliography of twenty-eight items over two pages that corresponds to a list of references in today’s academic writings.

2 The Points at Issue

Prijono’s argument in the introduction can be summarized into three points. The first concerns the author and the origin of the story. Following the text in stanza 1 of Canto I (see above), which was also mentioned by van der Tuuk (1881: 54–6), Prijono assumes that the *Sri Tanjung* manuscripts from Bali would be a derivative work of the *Sri Tanjung* by Chitragotra, who wrote the *Sudamala* story beforehand (Prijono 1938a/b: 11–3). Furthermore, given that the *Sudamala* story is depicted at the *Candi Tegowangi* built in the mid-fourteenth century, his thought develops into speculation that the story was created by that time and that its prosperity supposedly occurred from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century (Prijono 1938a/b: 17–9). Regarding origin, he first presents his view that the manuscripts from Bali written in Middle Javanese are not necessarily older than the Banyuwangi’s manuscript written in New Javanese (Prijono 1938a/b: 3). He concludes that the *Sri Tanjung* story was likely created around Banyuwangi based on several reasons (Prijono 1938a/b: 16–7) that I mention in the next chapter.

The second point at issue is the style of poetry. Given the *Wukir* meter described in stanza 2 of Canto I (see below), Prijono clarifies the pattern of vowel sounds in the end syllable, which underlies the stanzas as follows:

a. 10u (i); b. 6e (a, o); c. 8i (u); d. 7u; e. 8u; f. 8e (o, a); g. 8u (a); h. 8a; i. 8a

Each stanza is composed of 9 lines (*a-i*). For example, “10u” of “line *a*” means that the line consists of 10 syllables and ends with the vowel “u.” The following (i), the vowel in parentheses, is the exceptional change of the end syllable. Below are the lyrics in stanza 2 of Canto I (Prijono 1938a/b: 1), which abides by the same rule as stanza 1, written above. The underlined vowels are the ending syllables.

[Javanese text]

a. *Ana carita ginurit kidung* b. *ring rajya sangkane*
c. *apupuh kang tambang Wukir*
d. *ki Sidapaksa jalu* e. *istrine dewi Sri Tanjung* f. *atatur micara mangke*
g. *batari Sri kang winuwus* h. *tumurun aminda*
janmaa, i. *anggawe pangewan-ewan*.

[English translation] There is a story that was composed as *kidung* in the palace and sung in the *Wukir* meter. The man’s name is Sidapaksa and his wife is Sri Tanjung. This is the miracle of a goddess who descended from heaven in the shape of a human. (Translated by the author from the Dutch transcription)

However, the meter called *Wukir*, which is quoted from the original text, is not known in Java and Bali today. Prijono mentions that “The meter is known as *Adri* in today’s Bali” in the footnote (Prijono 1938a/b: 5). The original text uses the local term “*apupuh*,” which is equal to the Western concept of meter. The “*apupuh*” is generally called “*pupuh*” today, and there are various types of *pupuh* in traditional Javanese and Balinese *kidung*. According to G. E. Marrison, the *pupuh Adri* has the same pattern as *Wukir* among approximately fifty *pupuh* existing in Bali (Marrison 1987: 494–7).

The third point at issue is the story line. There are many differences between the manuscripts from Banyuwangi and from Bali (Aminoedin et al. 1986: 16–8). The former, which is believed to have been created after the Islamization of Java, is characterized by handwritten Arabic script and therefore includes terms derived from the Middle East. However, the two largely share the same storyline. Prijono describes the story of *Sri Tanjung* in prose format after presenting the outline of the *Sudamala* story, the alleged Chitragotra’s previous work (Prijono 1938a/b: 6–10). The following is the summary of the Balinese text:

- (1) Sidapaka, a nobleman who serves King Sulakrama of the Sinduraja kingdom, visits the hermit Tambapetra, who lives in Prangalas (the place for mountain asceticism), in search of a special medicine at the king’s command. In Prangalas, he falls in love with Tambapetra’s granddaughter Sri Tanjung and takes her home as his wife.
- (2) Hearing that a woman of great beauty has married Sidapaksa, the king feels very jealous and lays a conspiracy; he gives Sidapaksa the challenge of receiving the three treasures from the gods in heaven. Afterwards, to help prevent Sidapaksa from being at a loss, Sri Tanjung gives him the “magic feather mantle” that she inherited from her father.
- (3) After Sidapaksa flies to heaven wearing the feather mantle, the king tries to seduce Sri Tanjung but is rejected. On the other hand, Sidapaksa succeeds in acquiring the treasures with the help of the gods who are allied with the hermit Tambapetra; he then returns to the capital.
- (4) When Sidapaksa is offering the treasures to the king in the court, the king tells a lie that Sri Tanjung committed unfaithfulness in the absence of her husband. Sidapaksa, with uncontrollable rage, returns home immediately. Then, he takes his wife out of the house to the graveyard and stabs her with a sword. When she is going to die, she says, “If I were innocent, my blood would smell good.” Just after that, a pure fragrance spreads from the blood. Sidapaksa despairs with deep regret.

- (5) When Sri Tanjung arrives at the world of death, she is shocked by the sight of the souls suffering in hell. She meets Dorakala, the god of death. But Dorakala sends her back to the ground, saying, “It’s not time to die yet.”
- (6) Sri Tanjung’s soul returns to her corpse in the graveyard. The witch Ranini revives Sri Tanjung’s life and brings her to the hometown Prangalas.
- (7) In unhealed despair, Sidapaksa decides to kill himself in the graveyard. On arriving, Ranini tells him of Sri Tanjung’s revival and suggests he meet her again in Prangalas.
- (8) In Prangalas, Sri Tanjung refuses to meet Sidapaksa, who visits her home, saying, “You can meet me only if you get the head of King Sulakrama.” Sidapaksa then organizes a troop with the saints and the gods to attack the king and finally wins.

Today, the *Sri Tanjung* story is handed down not only through the performing arts but also in the form of picture books for children; however, many of these emphasize conjugal love and risking one’s life for each other, and the end of the request for the king’s head has been deleted or modified.

IV Institutional Contexts: Reading, Writing, and Living the *Sri Tanjung*

1 As a successor of van der Tuuk’s work

The manuscripts of the *Sri Tanjung* story, which was originally intended for “reciting as poetry,” were textualized by Prijono into a narrative form of a “book to read” according to this structure. Examining the details, one can find its mission as the successive work of H. N. van der Tuuk (1824–1894) in the interpretative community of philology in Leiden.

This usage is exemplified by the materials (table 1). Prijono textualized the story as a compilation of multiple manuscripts, and, as summarized in the table, named these manuscripts A to K (without I) at the end of the preface (Prijono 1938a/b: 19–32). Prijono mainly applies himself to manuscripts A to G in his analysis, dividing them into two groups: “A₁–C₃” and “D–G.” The difference is that the former contains strophe that cannot found in the latter, while the latter contains passages that the former does not include. Furthermore, even within the same group, there are many differences in expressions and unclear points due to physical damage. Therefore, it is mentioned that the remaining manuscripts “H–K” are used as the third form of supplementary material.

Of the fourteen items, one can see five *lontar* manu-

Table 1 The Resources of Prijono’s *Sri Tanjung* Text

Mark	Catalog Information (Number/Code, Supervisor, Volume, Page)	Material
A ₁	3801, Juynboll, I, 259; 1046, Brandes, III, 101	<i>lontar</i>
A ₂	4499, Juynboll, I, 260; 1045, Brandes, III, 100–101	paper
B	4500, Juynboll, I, 260; 1047, Brandes, III, 101	paper
C ₁	3623, Juynboll, I, 260; 1052, Brandes, III, 104	<i>lontar</i>
C ₂	3866, Juynboll, I, 260; 1051, Brandes, III, 104	paper
C ₃	3863, Juynboll, I, 260; 1050, Brandes, III, 103–104	paper
D	(Collection of Roermond City Library)	<i>lontar</i>
E ₁	3749, Juynboll, I, 261; 1054, Brandes, III, 106	<i>lontar</i>
E ₂	4503, Juynboll, I, 260; 1053, Brandes, III, 104–105	paper
F	4504, Juynboll, I, 261; 1055, Brandes, III, 106	paper
G	4505, Juynboll, I, 261; 1056, Brandes, III, 106–107	paper
H	3126, Vreede, 394–395	<i>lontar</i>
J	4502, Juynboll, I, 260; 1049, Brandes, III, 102–103	paper
K	4501, Juynboll, I, 260; 1048, Brandes, III, 101–102	paper

This is based on Prijono’s *Sri Tanjung: Een Oud Javaansch Verhaal*, pp. 19–32, 1938.

scripts⁴ and the nine paper manuscripts at the right end of the table. “*Lontar*” is the traditional palm leaf manuscript made of *borassus flabellifer* in Indonesia; it is a set of tied long strips (length: around 5 cm, width: 30–60 cm) on which horizontal writings and drawings are inscribed. The paper manuscripts include the copies of the *lontar*’s descriptions, such as “A₁→A₂,” “C₁→C₂ and C₃,” and “E₁→E₂.” In addition, the texts of these paper manuscripts (A₂, B, C₁, C₂, E₂, F, G, J, and K) written in Balinese letters are transcribed in *Beschrijving der Javaansche, Balineesche en Sasaksche handschriften aangetroffen in de nalatenschap van Dr. H. N. van der Tuuk, en door hem vermaakt aan de Leidsche Universiteitsbibliotheek* (Description of the Javanese, Balinese and Sasak manuscripts found in the estate of Dr. H. N. van der Tuuk, and bequeathed by him at the Leiden University Library) by J. L. A. Brandes (1915: 100–7)⁵.

The table shows that everything was prepared for Prijono’s text making. As seen in the “Catalog Information,” the brief information on these manuscripts (except for D) is described in *Catalogus van de Javaansche en Madoereesche handschriften der Leidsche Uiversiteits-bibliotheek* (Catalog of the Javanese and Madura’s Manuscripts of the Leiden University Library). Except for item H in the first edition by A. C. Vreede (1892: 394–5), the twelve items are listed in the supplementary edition (vol. I) by H. H. Juynboll (1907: 259–61) and in Brandes’ 1915 catalog. Therefore, it is obvious that it was not Prijono who collected the first materials in Indonesia; rather, the academic space of Leiden connected Prijono with the *Sri Tanjung* story by offering the abundant manuscripts, either *lontar* or paper. In particular, Juynboll’s 1907 catalog, in which most of the information of the related materials is listed within three pages, indicates the smooth acquisition of materials at the library. Interestingly, Prijono also states that the three images in the chapter *Vertaling* (Prijono 1938a/b: 97, 129) are

taken from the library collections listed in Juynboll’s 1911 (vol. II) catalog (Prijono 1938a/b: Table of contents).

In connection with the title of Brandes’ 1915 catalog, of particular significance is the fact that the six manuscripts (A₂, B, E₂, F, J, and K) contain handwritten annotations by H. N. van der Tuuk (Prijono 1938a/b: 19–32): a Dutch linguist who worked in Bali for twenty years with the title of “civil servant for the study of Indonesian languages (*ambtenaar voor de beoefening van Indische talen*)” (Scalliet 2011). According to Prijono, “When this thesis was nearing completion, I suddenly remembered that there were many manuscripts at *Kirtya Lieftrinck* (the *lontar* museum) in Singaraja, which had been established by Dr. van der Tuuk. I urgently asked the museum to send a copy of the manuscript, and later I found that the content of the copy, named L, was almost the same as item B” (Prijono 1938a/b: 33). However, this is just an additional episode. Prijono often refers van der Tuuk’s discourse in the introduction as the first study that mentioned the origin and storyline of the *Sri Tanjung* (van der Tuuk 1881: 54–56). It is also noteworthy that P. V. van Stein Callenfels developed the study of the *Sudamala* story (Callenfels 1925), which had been described by van der Tuuk as “Citragotra’s work before the *Sri Tanjung*” (van der Tuuk 1881: 54–56). It was forty-four years after van der Tuuk’s 1881 article and ten years before Prijono’s arrival at Leiden. These facts exemplify the situation wherein the young Javanese intellectual was welcomed by the vast amount of material (manuscripts on paper, palm leaf, drawings, etc.), which had been left unorganized after being donated to the Leiden University Library by the will of van der Tuuk (dated February 14, 1885). The historic accumulation of Leiden thus implicitly directed Prijono to complete the work left by the famous linguist.

Therefore, Prijono’s view that the *Sri Tanjung* story originated from the Banyuwangi area, the most signifi-

4 However, Prijono gives the further classification based on the *lontar*’s shape as follows.
“*cakĕpan*” (C₁ and H): a bunch of *lontar* strips sandwiched by two wooden covers called *cakĕpan*.
“*ĕmbat-ĕmbatan*” (D and E₁): *lontar* strips tied through a thread without a cover (*cakĕpan*).
“*lempiran*” (A₁): dozens of *lontar* strips without thread or covers.

5 Only manuscript G is written in Middle Javanese character, but it also includes interlinear commentaries in Balinese character.

cant point among his arguments, is affected more or less by van der Tuuk's description of "Bañuwangi, where it (the *Sri Tanjung*) was probably composed at a time when a great part of East Java still adhered to the Indian faith" (van der Tuuk 1881: 54–55). As Bernard Arp critically argues, Prijono develops this idea on the basis of four reasons: The language of the text is written in Javanese; when Sidapaksa flies to the heaven, he sees the sea in the north, south, and east, but not in the west; the story is not known in Java outside Banyuwangi; many animal names in the text appear to be known only in Banyuwangi. Though Arp points out that neither argument is convincing, he agrees that the archaic features do not necessarily mean that Prijono's text is older than the text from Banyuwangi (Arp 1992: 126). However, van der Tuuk also notes, "According to the tradition, *Bañu* (water) *wani* (well scented) has its name from her, but the poem itself says nothing about this" (van der Tuuk 1881: 56). Nevertheless, Prijono strengthened the relation between the *Sri Tanjung* and Banyuwangi, referring to Franz Epp's reports about Banyuwangi and the local legend there (Epp 1849: 261; 1852: 496). This relation eventually constructed the value of the *Sri Tanjung* as a "cultural memory of medieval East Java," in conjunction with the subsequent studies of the Banyuwangi text and the relief interpretations of temple ruins in East Java.

As a successor of van der Tuuk's work, Prijono published the extensive text following the disciplinary tradition of philology. The text surely includes the originality that comes from seeing through local eyes, particularly in its comparison of New Javanese and Middle Javanese (Prijono 1938a/b: 13–5). However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, it is also true that its interpretation largely depends on discourses accumulated through Western lenses (see the "Notes" in II–:). Given this context, it could be said that Prijono faithfully embodied the "collective decision" of the philological/publishing community, not only as the writer but also as the "reader" of the *Sri Tanjung* that had been rediscovered by van der Tuuk more than four decades before. In other words, like the original manuscripts defined as "re-edited texts of the existing folklore," Prijono also produced a sequel to Callenfels' study of *Sudamala* as part

of the series of "letterpress *lontar*" of Leiden.

2 Prijono's Reality between the Two Worlds

It is also significant to consider Prijono's involvement in the activities of the performing arts; namely, the ritual communities. Prijono spent his academic life in Leiden amid the rising nationalism among Indonesian students, as represented by the launches of the SVIK (*Studentenvereniging ter Bevordering der Indonesische Kunst*/Student Association for the Advancement of Indonesian Art) in 1935 and the political association *Roekoen Peladjar Indonesia* in 1936 (Stutje 2016: 227). Prijono particularly exerted himself in the cultural promotion of Indonesia at SVIK, which gave him the title of "honorary member" in 1938 (Poeze et al. 2008: 264, 284). For Prijono, who had built ethnic identity through Javanese dance, physical expression of traditional culture might have constituted the "retrieval of inner sovereignty." Such awareness corresponded with the increase of performing arts organizations in Java since 1918 (Rahardjo 2013). Prijono's 1940 paper written in Dutch states the significance whereby Indonesian intellectuals "know the end of the era when they thought imitating European culture was 'chic,'" and "take a balance so that they promote the preservation and the development of our culture" (Prijono 1940: 149). In the Japanese occupation period (1942–45), he actively supported the Jakarta branch of the Javanese dance school, *Krido Bekso Wiromo*, where he composed a dance drama titled "*Banjaran Sari*." After national independence, he promoted many overseas performances of Indonesian music and dance as Minister of Education and Culture (Sumardi 1984: 13–5) and published a book, "*Indonesia Menari=Indonesia Dances*" (Prijono 1982). Furthermore, Minister Prijono set out a cultural policy that idealized "aesthetic representation of people's real life" under Soekarno's socialistic administration. As the result, various dance works of labor movements, such as Balinese "*Nulayan*" and "*Tenun*," were produced during the period (Umeda 2009: 47–8).

Prijono also worked hard as a literacy practitioner. After serving higher education in Jakarta from 1938, he was promoted to a national civil servant and one of the founding members of Gadjah Mada University in 1946.

For these achievements, he was inaugurated as Minister of Education and Culture of the Soekarno Cabinet on April 27, 1957 (Sumardi 1984: 12–3). He exercised his ministerial power first in the Indonesian orthography based on IPA characters *Ejaan Prijono-Katoppo* in 1957. The biggest challenge for him was improving the nation's literacy rate, which used to be only 7% (Prijono 1964a: 12). As a man of letters, he also introduced foreign literature such as Romanian folk tales (Prijono 1964b) to connect Indonesia and the world. Furthermore, as part of the revival of narrative culture in national and local languages, he wrote a children's book of Javanese folktales (Prijono 1954) and the Javanese poem *Serat Djakasura-Tresnawati: Mawi Sekar* (Prijono 1966) under the pseudonym of Prijana Winduwinata.

Prijono's *Sri Tanjung* text is certainly a colonial vestige. Meanwhile, his manifold practices between nationalism and internationalism suggest the "dual nature" of the text. For example, the academic milieu in Leiden in the 1930s was at the peak of anti-colonialism and communism. One of the influencers was Roestam Effendi: the then-president of Indonesian students' association *Perhimpunan Indonesia* to which Prijono belonged. Considering the later intimacy between Prijono and the Murba Party⁶, he is likely to have been deeply involved in these ideologies. If so, just as Effendi represented his criticism on Dutch colonialism through the Ramayana story in his work *Babasari*, one can infer such a metaphorical aspect embedded in the *Sri Tanjung* text by Prijono; even if it includes ambivalence between obedience and resistance. Another noteworthy individual is "Mrs. E. C. Alings—van Mels," who is mentioned on the acknowledgments page as Prijono's only acquaintance outside of family (Prijono 1938a). Although little information is available about her, there are some records indicating that she was an activist of gender equality and democracy⁷, which suggests a

strong influence on Prijono's thought.

It is worth noting that Prijono was writing the thesis in the vortex of these antiestablishment ideologies and returned to the homeland from the Netherlands where the invasion of Nazi Germany was imminent. Then, in 1939, he married an Indonesian woman from Pandeglang (West Java) whom he met in Leiden (Sumardi 1984: 12–3). In light of the political dynamism of the time, it would not stretch the point to read between the lines of the *Sri Tanjung* text; in other words, how Prijono "lived" within this story during the text making and what "justice" he envisioned by overlapping himself with Sidapaksa: a hero who fought against evil to be true to his love for Sri Tanjung.

In his 1963 speech, Prijono introduces the *Sri Tanjung* as a story about "the loyalty of people to their beloved one that resembles *Tristan and Isolde* or *Romeo and Juliet*" (Prijono 1964a: 16–21). It is prefaced by the view that "if we republish books on regional and traditional literature, we do so not only to point out the positive sides of the heroes and heroines, but also to expose the defects of feudalism which should never be restored" and "here is a fundamental difference between the national and colonial or neo-colonial governments which try to maintain feudalism wherever they can" (Prijono 1964a: 12). These statements leave room to consider how Prijono came to imagine the *Sri Tanjung* story after becoming a government bureaucrat of the new republic. To emphasize the aim of disseminating the narrative culture of the world, he concludes the speech with a hope that the new Indonesian generation will "overcome difficulties that we are facing" and "help create a new world free from imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism for the sake of true world peace" (Prijono 1964a: 26). However, he passed away in 1969 in adverse circumstances after the 30th September Movement (*G30S*).

6 The Murba Party is a communist political party founded by Tan Malaka et al. in 1948, which was merged into the Indonesian Democratic Party in 1973. It was included as one of the ten legal parties under Soekarno's Guided Democracy. Though the Murba Party was an opponent of the PKI (the Communist Party of Indonesia), which became the target of the mass purge after the *G30S*, the party was also pressurized under Suharto's New Order regime due to its pro-communist ideology.

7 The edition of the newspaper *Leidsch Dagblad* dated February 23, 1937, includes the name E. C. Alings—van Mels as one of the members of the Democratic Party of the Leiden district. The publication *Archief Comité voor eene Gemeenschappelijke Actie tot Hervorming onzer Huwelijkswetgeving* by the Action for the Reform of Marriage Law also includes her name as a correspondent (1920: 198).

V Conclusion

This paper examined how the Balinese manuscripts of *Sri Tanjung* were textualized by Prijono within the collective decision of the colonial academia, which had been shaped along with the imperial power of manuscript collection and the contemporary orientalist's strong concern with Indonesian history. The academic output, which virtually succeeded van der Tuuk's work, consequently incorporated the *Sri Tanjung* story into the construction of Javanology. As the result, it has been referred to as an established text in the realms of philology, text studies, and other publishing communities. On the other hand, the author exerted his inner identity through the promotion of the performing arts, leaving the physical transmission of the *Sri Tanjung* to the local ways of Javanese and Balinese ritual communities.

In the political context where "publishing a book in Dutch" was of absolute value, Prijono's text making necessarily entailed an untranslatable dilemma that could be compromised only by cultural representation through the performing arts. In fact, both acquiring Western-based literacy and building ethnic identity through the physical representation of culture were crucial for the development of the new republic. Instead of reproducing colonial discourses or criticizing the past for critique's sake, then, how can today's humanities cultivate the *Sri Tanjung* text, applying Prijono's passion for the performing arts?

In my view, a key aspect would be the meter called *Wukir* that Prijono found in the Balinese manuscripts. This meter, which Prijono wrote "is also known as *Adri* in Bali," is hardly seen in the current practice of the *Sri Tanjung* in Bali. That is why Prijono's description is worth developing to inspire Balinese physical memory to rediscover the rhythm of *Wukir/Adri*; it would enrich the aesthetic value of this medieval literature, like the Javanese singer who amazed me. From the viewpoint of musical anthropology, therefore, it is not sufficient to position Prijono's text only in the colonial context. His work rather suggests to us the hope of the *priyayi*, who lived with the *Sri Tanjung* in the turbulent period, that new interpretive communities would activate the transmission of the literary/performing arts of Indonesia

by interweaving academic texts with indigenous knowledge.

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