

Manuscripts of the Old Javanese *Baratayuda* in the Merapi-Merbabu Collection

WILLEM VAN DER MOLEN

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini membicarakan tiga naskah Baratayuda berbahasa Jawa Kuno dalam koleksi di Perpustakaan Nasional, Jakarta. Satu daripadanya ternyata merupakan bagian daripada salah satu naskah antara kedua-dua naskah yang lain. Kedua-dua naskah yang lain itu berasal dari Jawa, maka timbul pertanyaan bagaimana hubungannya dengan tradisi Jawa teks Baratayuda. Tradisi Jawa umumnya kalah dengan tradisi Bali daripada segi perkataan dan matra. Satu dari naskah yang sedang dibicarakan ternyata setara dengan tradisi Bali, sedangkan yang lain mengikut amalan Jawa dalam hal matra, walaupun berdiri sendiri dalam hal perkataan. Selain itu, naskah yang terakhir ini adalah reproduksi ukuran buku saku yang isinya bersifat petikan dari teks. Kesimpulannya ialah kesemua manuskrip yang berasal daripada Koleksi Merapi-Merbabu itu telah memberi dimensi baru kepada penyelidikan tradisi sastra Jawa Kuno.

Kata kunci: Baratayuda, Koleksi Merapi-Merbabu, sastra Jawa Kuna, filologi

ABSTRACT

This article studies three manuscripts of the old Javanese Baratayuda now kept in the Perpustakaan Nasional in Jakarta. One of them turns out to be a fragment that had separated from one of the others. These originated in Java, which raises the question about how they relate to the Javanese tradition of the Baratayuda. This tradition differed from the Balinese tradition, both in wording and metre. One of the manuscripts appears to be on a par with the Balinese tradition, while the second one reflects common Javanese practice in its metrical aspect but seems to be unique where the wording is concerned. In addition, the latter is a small-size reproduction of a selected passage of the text. The conclusion is that the so-called Merapi-Merbabu Collection to which both manuscripts belong adds a new dimension to the study of the tradition of Old Javanese literature.

Key words: Baratayuda, Merapi-Merbabu Collection, Old Javanese literature, philology

THE OLD JAVANESE *BARATAYUDA*

If the number of extant manuscripts in which an old text is preserved is used to measure its importance, then the Old Javanese *Baratayuda* is by far the most important text of ancient Java. There is no other text written in Old Javanese that has as many. Supomo in a survey of extant manuscripts done in 1993 of the *Baratayuda* lists 97 manuscripts. The next is the *Ramayana* with about 70 followed by the *Arjunawiwaha* with about 50. Most other texts are represented by less than 10 manuscripts (Supomo 1993:41).

The term Old Javanese refers to the variety of Javanese in use in Java prior to about A.D. 1500. The Old Javanese poem of *Baratayuda* was created in 1157 in a period when the creative arts were blossoming in the East Javanese kingdom of Kediri (1050-1222). It is a poetical version of the story of the great war between the Korawas and the Pandawas with which the Indian epic of the *Mahabarata* ends (Zoetmulder 1974).

The exceptionally large number of manuscripts of the *Baratayuda* is helpful in exploring the history of the text. Scholars of the *Baratayuda* distinguish two major branches of scribal transmission, a Javanese and a Balinese one. The products of the Balinese tradition, embedded in a literary climate that continued to favour the study of Old Javanese literature after the political bonds of the days of Majapahit had been severed, are superior to those of Java where ideological and linguistic changes after 1500 alienated literati from their literary past. While the Balinese tradition is by no means immaculate, deviation has often progressed beyond repair in the Javanese manuscripts. Javanese manuscripts of the *Baratayuda* are, nevertheless, consulted in preparing textual editions. Gunning, for example, considers them the only source for correct reading in a couple of places in spite of their poor quality. Supomo's judgement concerns the contribution of the Javanese tradition to our understanding of the Old Javanese text. He explicitly wishes not to extend his judgment on it to its role in the later development of the text (Supomo 1993:45). Supomo, on the other hand, does not even grant them that status, but merely discusses their decay ([1993]:45).¹ According to Supomo, three sub-traditions can be distinguished within the Javanese tradition of the *Baratayuda* – one that is East-Javanese, another that is Central Javanese and Surakarta-based, and the third that is not associated with a specific geographical background (Supomo 1993:44-45).

The three manuscripts discussed here were not included in Supomo's 1993 survey, either because they were unavailable or unknown to him at the time. All three are kept in the Perpustakaan Nasional in Jakarta. The major means of access to that collection was Poerbatjaraka's preliminary list of 1933. It mentions one palm-leaf manuscript, number 268. This was known but not available to Supomo in 1993. The two other manuscripts are not listed or are listed under a different name. The accessibility situation changed about ten years after



Supomo's edition appeared, when several new catalogues of the holdings at the Perpustakaan Nasional were published. One was dedicated to the description of the so-called Merapi-Merbabu Collection. No. 268 was identified as a manuscript of this collection, along with two more *Baratayuda* manuscripts that came to light as well.

The Merapi and Merbabu are two active volcanoes in Central Java. Less well known is that in former times, retreats of hermits and scholars were scattered along the slopes of these and neighbouring mountains. The texts of these hermits and scholars are what is nowadays referred to as "the manuscripts of the Merapi and the Merbabu". These were probably united into one collection already as early as the eighteenth century by Windusono, a Hindu priest living in the area. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Windusono's library was transferred to the Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen in Batavia, the predecessor to the Perpustakaan Nasional, where it remained until now. The rich contents of this extraordinary collection have been documented by Wiryamartana and Van der Molen (2001), while a special catalogue was published by Setyawati [et al.] in 2002.

52 II

The first of the three manuscripts we shall discuss is 52. Actually, this signature combines two manuscripts, 52 I and 52 II, which have nothing to do with each other, except that they are kept in the same box. Manuscript 52 I is a copy of the Old Javanese text *Arjunawiwaha*. The height of the leaves, their colour and the shape of the writing all differ from the corresponding features of 52 II, which shows that we are dealing not with two texts in one manuscript, which is quite common, but with two different manuscripts. Such combinations of completely unrelated manuscripts are often found in the boxes of the Merapi-Merbabu Collection.

52 II is the shortest of the three *Baratayuda* manuscripts under discussion. It consists of one fragmentary leaf without pagination. It is described in the most recent catalogue as a fragment of the poem, containing only the first stanza of canto 9 (Setyawati et al. 2002:41). A leaf with the same passage happens to be missing for the greater part in manuscript 268 I, which I shall discuss in the next section. What is left of that leaf is a small fragment of the centre and the first few words next to it. See Figure 1.

A closer look reveals that the fragmentary leaf of 52 II matches the fragment of 268: their edges fit well together. Taking into account that the height of the leaves as well as their colour and the shape of the characters are the same in both cases and that the texts, or what remains of them, link up, the conclusion must be that these fragments belong together. Putting the two pieces together does not make the leaf whole again, however; the left half of the leaf is still



FIGURE 1. The remains of leaf 11 of manuscript 268 I.
Actual size: 6.3 × 4 cm

missing. The leaf must have carried the number 11, but this can no longer be seen as the left margin where the number was written has disappeared.

268 I

Box 268 also consists of more than one manuscript as in the case of 52. Manuscript 268 II contains a text of the *pawukon* (divination) type without any relation to 268 I (Setyawati et al. 2002:194-195). The latter contains a copy of the *Baratayuda* and, therefore, should be of interest to us. There is no mention in the manuscript about when or where it was written. Still, it must have been written before the second half of the eighteenth century, when Windusono, the earliest owner we know about, died. Future study of the script may bring more light to these matters.

The text of 268 I is now no longer a complete copy. That it is no longer complete is due not to wilful omissions, but to the bad state of the manuscript – in fact, as far as the material aspect is intact, the text of 268 I is complete; I found no omissions or additions after comparing it with the text of Supomo's edition. The *Baratayuda* in its entirety consists of 52 cantos. The text of 268 I runs from the last four stanzas of canto 8 to the end; the leaves containing the preceding text are all missing. Of canto 8, no more than a few characters and one line remain; and of canto 9.1-6, a couple of lines still exist. It is only from 9.7 onwards that there is more text than empty space (on the proviso that 52 II is incorporated), but pages with full text continue to alternate with lacunal pages, missing bits and pieces of the text up to whole lines due to holes in the leaves. Between canto 49.3 and 50.6, eight stanzas are missing, including several lines of the surrounding stanzas, because one whole leaf (number 65) is missing. Towards the end, the quality of the material deteriorates again, causing an increasing number of lacunae in the text. The text breaks off abruptly nine stanzas before the end, in the middle of canto 52.4, because a piece of that leaf, along with the final leaf, is missing.



While awaiting more detailed research on 268 I, I would like to explore on a preliminary basis how this manuscript compares with the various scribal traditions through which the *Baratayuda* has come down to us. The intriguing question is, of course: Is 268 I part of that Javanese tradition dismissed by Gunning and Supomo or does it represent an independent tradition, hitherto unknown, and, if so, of what quality?

One important difference between the Balinese and Javanese traditions of the *Baratayuda* and of Old Javanese poems in general, concerns metre. Old Javanese poetry, in addition to counting the number of syllables in a line and the number of lines in a stanza, distinguishes between long and short vowels. The latter is shown in writing by special signs for long vowels (the equivalent in Javanese and Balinese script of the horizontal line in a letter like *ā*, for example) or by position (a short vowel counts as long if followed by more than one consonant or by one consonant at the end of a line). The distinction is not inherent in the language, but has to be inserted because of the foreign Sanskrit metres used. This was maintained in the Balinese *Baratayuda* tradition, but the Javanese tradition did not. In the latter, one finds no signs for long vowels, and only the rules for fixed numbers of syllables per line have survived. In 268 I, the distinction between long and short vowels is maintained and applied throughout the text in the same way as it is done in Balinese manuscripts.

The rules for the number of syllables in a line continued to be applied in the Javanese tradition, but this does not mean that they survived unchallenged. Gunning in the preface to his edition mentions cantos 14 and 41 as two strong examples where the prosodic rules of the remote past proved irreconcilable with later views. The metres used in these cantos prescribe lines of dissimilar length: lines 1 and 3 have one syllable less than lines 2 and 4. Whereas tradition did retain the rule of equal length, it apparently discarded deviating metres. Therefore, lines 1 and 3 were given additional syllables in an effort to make the number of syllables in each line equal. The process of repairing was begun, but not finished, which helps us to see the process involved (Gunning 1903:II). 268 I shows no signs of such repairs. A line-by-line comparison of the sixteen stanzas of canto 14 in Supomo's edition and 268 I reveals a nearly complete identity in this respect. I found only one uneven line with one syllable too much.

Turning to the textual aspect, it should be pointed out that the differences of readings which distinguish the Javanese tradition of the *Baratayuda* from the Balinese one fall into two categories according to Supomo: synonyms which say the same thing in a different way, and different words which imply a difference of meaning and therefore of interpretation of the text (Supomo 1993:50). The two tables below contain Supomo's examples of both categories as opposed to the readings of the Balinese manuscripts (represented by 'Supomo'); the column to the utmost right shows the characteristic of 268 I.

These tables do not have any statistical value of course, being much too short. They only serve to illustrate that 268 I sometimes sides with the Javanese,

TABLE 1. Synonyms

Line	Javanese	Supomo	268 I
5.9d	<i>kukuruyu</i>	<i>pakukuyu</i>	no text
10.7a	<i>samangkana</i>	<i>ri mangkana</i>	<i>ri mangkana</i>
13.11a	<i>caritan</i>	<i>huningan</i>	<i>huningan</i>
13.19d	<i>mawuwus</i>	<i>mangucap</i>	<i>mangucap</i>
16.17d	<i>gajah</i>	<i>liman</i>	<i>liman</i>

TABLE 2. Words with different meanings

Line	Javanese	Supomo	268 I
12.9c	<i>mamanasi</i>	<i>mamanahi</i>	<i>mamanasi</i>
12.13b	<i>mapulihan</i>	<i>mapupuhan</i>	<i>mapupāhan</i>
13.25a	<i>mamuk</i>	<i>masuk</i>	<i>mamuk</i>
18.18a	<i>muringa</i>	<i>mulinga</i>	<i>mulinga</i>
36.3a	<i>paḍahi</i>	<i>makādi</i>	<i>paḍahi</i>

sometimes with the Balinese manuscripts. The same is probably true for individual members of the ‘Javanese’ group.

Whether dividing the variant readings into synonyms and words with a different meaning is useful or not remains to be seen as long as no explanation is available as to how or why a given variant reading came into being. See for example the second row of Table 2. There can be no doubt that *mapulihan* “to come back into the battle” and *mapupuhan* “to come to blows” are words with different meanings, as the dictionary tells us. But if, say, *mapulihan* happens to reflect an effort to correct the “nonsensical *mapupāhan* of” the exemplar (which in the type of script used in 268 I is not so utterly different from *mapulihan*), then *mapulihan* would historically speaking be less removed from *mapupuhan* than the dictionary tells us.

Incidentally, the first row of Table 2 gives a good example of Gunning’s point that sometimes the only possible reading is preserved in the Javanese tradition. Old Javanese has an expression *amanah mamasasi*, meaning something like “to shoot furiously” or “to make it hot for the enemy by showering him with arrows” (*mamasasi* contains the word *panas* “heat”). The expression occurs twice in the *Baratayuda*. In line 12.9c Arjuna is giving his adversary Bisma a hard time by *alakṣa mamasasi* according to the Javanese manuscripts, *alakṣa* being a synonym of *amanah*, “to shoot with arrows”. The Balinese manuscripts read *alakṣa mamanahi*, in which *mamanahi* is a powerless addition to *alakṣa* (“covering him with arrows”).

Whatever 268 I’s ultimate position may be, it certainly does not belong to any of the three sub-traditions of the Javanese tradition identified by Supomo –



the East-Javanese, the Central-Javanese, and a geographically unspecified one. This is borne out in part by other textual aspects. Confining myself to the most conspicuous differences, I notice that the geographically unspecified Javanese tradition shows three important lacunae. It misses the first line of canto 15.32,¹ stanza 4 of canto 21, and stanza 24 of canto 31. Manuscript 268 I in all these cases agrees with the Balinese tradition as laid out in Supomo's edition; there are no lines or stanzas missing, the texts are near to identical.

The East Javanese tradition has an addition of two stanzas after canto 40.1. Furthermore, it has many lacunae, missing canto 19.20, 20.7d-8c, 21.6, 30.3d-4c, 34.4, 38.4d-9b and 51.7. Manuscript 268 I does not have the addition nor does it show any of the lacunae. Its text in all these places again is almost identical with the text of Supomo's edition. The Central Javanese tradition, finally, in comparison with the Balinese tradition has twelve lines extra after 13.23b and three lines after 13.27. Manuscript 286 I has none of these additions.

The lacunae separate 268 I from the unspecified and East Javanese sub-tradition. On the other hand, membership in the third, the Central-Javanese tradition, cannot be excluded because lacking an addition does not say as much as sharing a lacuna: a manuscript could have lost the passage concerned (the two other sub-traditions are distinguished from the Central Javanese one not because they do not have the addition – which they do not – but because they have lacunae found exclusively in them). Hence, the textual material is not decisive. However, what excludes membership in not only the Central-Javanese tradition, but in any of the three sub-traditions is the prosodic quality displayed by 268 I. To make no distinction between long and short vowels is the hallmark of the Javanese tradition, which distinguishes it from the Balinese tradition. Therefore, if a manuscript from Javanese soil does make the difference, in a consistent way and according to the rules, then that manuscript is different enough from the sub-traditions known so far to qualify as a sub-tradition of its own, and a quite special one at that. I therefore consider 268 I to represent a fourth sub-tradition, independent of the other three sub-traditions.

103 I

The third manuscript of the *Baratayuda* is one of the three manuscripts included in 103. Of manuscripts II and III, nothing can be said since they are written in an as yet inaccessible variety of Javanese script (Setyawati et al. 2002:83). It is 103 I that concerns us here. Like 268 I, it does not inform us about the time or place of writing. Future research into the codicological aspects of the manuscript will have to account for the peculiar fact that 103 I has been written partly in ancient, partly in modern Javanese characters. See Figure 2 and 3.

The catalogue characterizes 103 I as a fragment (Setyawati [et al.] 2002:83). This seems fully justified by the number of leaves, of which there are no more

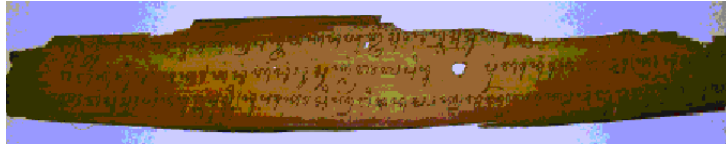


FIGURE 2. First page of manuscript 103 I. Javanese script.
Actual size: 28.7 × 4.1 cm

than 9. Manuscript 268 I, itself incomplete, has 61 leaves. A complete palm-leaf copy may contain 70 to 100 leaves, depending on the handwriting and the dimensions of the leaves. As a consequence, 103 I contains only a small portion of the story, viz. the death of Karna at the hands of Arjuna, an important episode in the *Baratayuda*. This part of the story is found in cantos 30 and 31. However, I wonder whether ‘fragment’ is a correct designation. If, as I think, ‘fragment’ means remains, something which is no longer complete, then it would be wrong to call 103 I a fragment, because its size is the outcome not of the ruining influence of time but of design.

There are several reasons to see it this way. To begin with, it is suggested by the contents and the layout of the manuscript. 103 I contains a full episode, two complete cantos, about the death of Karna. The writing material gives plenty of room for the text: while writing starts on a new page (see Figure 2), after the last line of the text there is still room left which no doubt would have been filled if more cantos had followed. See Figure 3. Moreover, the relatively small dimensions of the manuscript and the limited amount of text to the page (leaves of less than 30 cm instead of the usual 40 or more cm, three lines on a page instead of the usual four) make a complete copy improbable in view of the unwieldy amount of leaves needed in that case.

In this context, the length of the leaves, slightly less than 30 cm, is perhaps not without meaning. According to Hinzler, in the Bali tradition, the dimensions of manuscripts are subject to certain standards, depending on the type of text they contain. In the case of the major works of Old Javanese prose and poetry the usual length lies between 40 and 62 cm (Hinzler 1993:451-455). Whether the Balinese tradition recognizes small-size versions of the type of 103 I is not mentioned by Hinzler. Unfortunately, I do not know of any research on the Javanese situation.



FIGURE 3. Final page of manuscript 103 I. Buda script.
Actual size: 28.7 × 4.1 cm

From these considerations, I conclude that manuscript 103 I does not comprise the sad remains of a once complete copy of the *Baratayuda*, but is the still complete small-size reproduction of a selected passage. I do not know what the purpose of that selection may have been. A few other such manuscripts in the Merapi-Merbabu Collection contain selections from the Old Javanese *Bomantaka* and *Ramayana* (Van der Molen 2003). In Bali, it is quite common to copy small parts from texts as a mnemonic device for the puppeteer; many ‘fragments’ circulate for this purpose. Is it possible that manuscripts in the Merapi-Merbabu Collection had similar aims?

The material condition of 103 I is quite bad, yet it is in better shape than 268 I: there are no leaves missing, no stanzas have got lost in their entirety (though lines have). This allows us to have a closer look at the condition of the text. The picture we get is quite different from the previous manuscript. Below, I shall discuss spelling, metre and wording. In its spelling 103 I shows several modern features. One of the most conspicuous differences with older forms of spelling is the writing of *o* instead of *w*. The text abounds with words like *wong* instead of *mwang*, *ro* instead of *rwa*. Other modern features are the writing of *lir* instead of *lwir*, *mungsuh* instead of *musuh*, while *suh* and *singa* have replaced *syuh* and *singha*. Manuscript 103 I has no signs for long vowels. In other words, the distinction between long and short vowels does not play a role in its metre. The tradition that produced 103 I is in this respect clearly of the type to which Supomo’s sub-traditions belong.

In the choice of words, 103 I finds itself partly on the side of the Javanese, and partly on the side of the Balinese tradition as rendered in Supomo’s edition. Tables 3 and 4 show examples of synonyms and words with different meanings. In the case of Table 3, I had to distinguish between the various sub-traditions in order to get more than one row (31.10d). Moreover, I have added the readings of 268 I for the sake of comparison.

Leaving aside interchangeable words such as *ndah* and *dan* or *nan* and *nā* there are a couple of expressions which seem to imply an independent position. One of these is 31.9d. See third row of Table 4. This is the final line of a stanza in which Arjuna and Karna are warned to tone down the vehemence of their arrows, lest the world perished. The warning is accompanied by the argument

TABLE 3. Synonyms

Line		Javanese	Supomo	268 I	103 I
30.5d	E	<i>len</i>	<i>mwang</i>	<i>mwang</i>	no text
31.1c	UE	<i>tātan</i>	<i>ndātan</i>	<i>ndātan</i>	<i>datan</i>
31.4b	UC	<i>aněšěb</i>	<i>aněbas</i>	<i>aněbas</i>	<i>aněšěb</i>
31.10d	all	<i>ndah</i>	<i>ndan</i>	<i>ndān</i>	<i>dan</i>
31.19a	UE	<i>nan</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>nan</i>

C = Central Java. E = East Java. U = unspecified area

TABLE 4. Words with different meanings

Line	Javanese	Supomo	268 I	103 I
30.1a	<i>denirang</i>	<i>sīrṇa de</i>	<i>denirang</i>	<i>den...</i>
31.7c	<i>tandwa</i>	<i>ndāndā</i>	<i>ndāndā</i>	<i>tan da</i>
31.9d	<i>āwiyanga</i>	<i>āngiringa</i>	<i>āwihanga</i>	<i>amrihang aji</i>
31.16b	<i>kaṇḍēm</i>	<i>kāṇḍēg</i>	<i>kāṇḍēk</i>	<i>kandēg</i>
31.18d	<i>marike pwa</i>	<i>mangkeki</i>	<i>mangke pwa</i>	<i>makin</i>

that Siwa might become angry with them if – what follows after ‘if’ is interestingly different in the various manuscript groups. The Balinese manuscripts according to Supomo add this at the end: ‘if you just continue to apply dishonest means’. The Javanese manuscripts, including 268 I, have: “if you are contrary and keep to dishonest means”. Manuscript 103 I stands alone with: “if you continue applying magic formulas in the world” (‘magic formulas’ may refer to the sacred codes that go with weapons of extraordinary power). All three sentences are put in correct Old Javanese, and all seem to fit the context.² Whatever the exact course of the historical development, it is clear that 103 I represents a voice by itself.

Finally, the lacuna of the East Javanese manuscripts, from stanza 30.3d to stanza 30.4c is not shared by 103 I, nor is that of stanza 31.24 in the geographically unspecified manuscripts. This confirms the impression that 103 I stands apart from those sub-traditions.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this article I have discussed three manuscripts of the Old Javanese *Baratayuda* from the so-called Merapi-Merbabu Collection not covered in Supomo’s 1993 inventory. On closer inspection of the material and textual aspects, this number was reduced to two, as one manuscript turned out to be a fragment missing from one of the two other manuscripts.

One of these manuscripts, 268 I, appears to represent a textual tradition different from the Javanese tradition as hitherto known. In wording and quality of the metre, it shows a close relationship with the Balinese tradition of the *Baratayuda*. This is quite extraordinary because the Javanese tradition has generally come to be regarded as inferior to the Balinese tradition in both respects. The other manuscript seems to be closer to the Javanese tradition we know. Here it is the uncommon size that strikes the eye, making us wonder what its purpose may have been.

Preliminary as this discussion is, it does suggest that the rich contents of the Merapi-Merbabu Collection, still largely untapped, will challenge established views. Its manuscripts are indispensable for philologists who occupy themselves with the history of Old Javanese literature.

