

Preservation of Ancient Manuscripts “*Sanghyang Siksa Kandang Karesian*” at the National Library of Indonesia

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Abstract

One legacy that still exists and is considered a tangible result of writing is manuscripts. Manuscripts are documents that contain thoughts, feelings and knowledge produced by a nation of manuscript writers themselves. Like the *Sanghyang Siksa Kandang Karesian* (SSKK) manuscript as a cultural product that can provide information on the perspective, attitudes and behaviour of the people at that time in seeking happiness in everyday life. This research aims to examine the preservation activities of the SSKK manuscript. The location of this research was at the National Library of Indonesia. The objects of this research are 3 SSKK manuscripts collected by the National Library of Indonesia. The method used in this research is a qualitative method with data collection techniques in the form of interviews, observation and through literature studies! The results of the research can be stated that the preservation activities of the SSKK manuscript collection of the National Library of RI are carried out preventively and curatively. Preventive preservation activities are carried out by surveying the condition of library materials, training professional conservators. conditioning the environment around the storage room, and planning disaster preparedness. Meanwhile. curative preservation is done by manual mending fumigation and transliteration. With this, the National Library of Indonesia has made various efforts to preserve the SSKK manuscript so that it is maintained and can-be accessed by the library users.

Keywords: *Preservation, Old Sundanese manuscript, Sanghyang Siksa Kandang Karesian Manuscript (SSKK).*

Introduction

Indonesia has a variety of ancestral knowledge that stretches from Sabang to Merauke. The knowledge that is more than thousands of years old was passed down by the ancestors and written down in the form of ancient manuscripts. Through the information contained in ancient manuscripts, people can find out about the civilisation of knowledge, traditions and culture of their ancestors. The civilisations of the ancestors in the form of ancient manuscripts are scattered in various regions. Both in the country and abroad. Ancient manuscripts that are scattered in various regions require special attention. Special attention to ancient manuscripts is needed because ancient manuscripts have a long age and tend to be vulnerable to damage.

Ancient manuscripts are historical objects that contain information from the past with a socio-cultural background that is different from the socio-cultural background of today's society (Khadijah et al., 2022). Ancient manuscripts contain a lot of information about religion. history, law, customs, etc. Therefore, ancient manuscripts are often used as historical objects. Therefore, ancient manuscripts are often used by historians and literary

experts and from various other fields often use ancient documents to study the information and data they contain.

Speaking of ancient manuscripts, referring to Indonesian Law number 5 of 2017, ancient manuscripts are one of ten objects of cultural promotion that contain all important information for cultural values, history, knowledge, education, religion, technology, and tourism. As one of the high-value tourism objects, the existence of ancient manuscripts needs to be protected, developed, and utilised as assigned in Law number 11 of 2010. This explanation makes it clear why old manuscripts are of great historical significance: they are important repositories of knowledge about literature, religion, law, customs, history, culture, and previous civilizations that should be preserved.

The existence of ancient manuscripts needs to be preserved considering that information about the history of past civilisations will still be needed to support science both education, research, and other knowledge in the present and future. In this case, ancient manuscripts are a bridge of knowledge from the past, present, and future (Darmawan, 2019). In other words, ancient manuscripts can be a valuable learning resource for the community that is priceless because it can provide insight from the results of knowledge in the past so that it can be known to the present generation and utilised for future generations.

The library is one of the institutions tasked with saving and preserving all its collections, including ancient manuscripts. As mandated in Law number 43 of 2007 which states that libraries have a function to preserve all collections of library materials, including ancient manuscripts. Ancient manuscripts are considered to have important values for culture, history and science. The age of ancient manuscripts of more than 50 years is a reminder that ancient manuscripts are very vulnerable to physical and chemical damage that can cause structural degradation and loss of valuable information content in the manuscript. Therefore, there needs to be an effort to maintain and preserve its existence so that future generations of the nation can know the historical value information contained therein (Khadjah et al., 2021).

The number of ancient manuscripts will continue to grow every year. In 2023, the National Library stated that the total number of Indonesian ancient manuscripts was 121,545 copies, of which 24% had been preserved, but there were still 76% of ancient manuscripts that had not been preserved. Of the total collection, 80% of the manuscripts are made of European paper or *daluwang* and 20% are made of non-paper, such as *nipah* (*gebang*), palm, bamboo, animal bones, gourds, animal horns, and rattan (Made Ayu Wirayati, 2023). The *Sanghyang Siksa Kandang Karesian* (SSKK) manuscript is one of the manuscript collections of the National Library of Indonesia made from non-paper media. The National Library has a total of 3 SSKK manuscripts including *kropak* 16 number 630, *kropak* 69 number 624, and *kropak* 1 number 85.

The three SSKK manuscripts are made of *nipah* (*gebang*) and *lontar*. Both writing materials are very limited in number because the manuscripts are handwritten, the distribution is only found in a few locations, and their utilisation is limited. Therefore, no further additions to the collection will be made unless an institution or individual donates it to the National Library of Indonesia (Wakhid, 2021). This makes the SSKK manuscript categorised as a special collection with high historical value.

The SSKK manuscript is the oldest known Old Sundanese manuscript created in 1440 Saka or 1518 AD and is in the form of didactic prose that discusses the rules or teachings about living wisely in everyday life. This manuscript is thought to have been written during the reign of Sri Baduga Maharaja, who ruled Pakuan Pajajaran. It contains teachings or rules of daily life of the community and most of them are not intended for certain people in the interests of the kingdom (Lestari et al., 2023). The SSKK manuscript consists of three main parts, namely: opening, hulun action, and completion. The opening section contains information about the ten welfare (dasakreta), ten devotions (dasa prebakti), and ten sense organs (panca indriya). The hulun's actions (karma ning hulun) towards the king in the country (panca tatagata) contains five writings (panca aksara), five protectors (panca byapara), five sons of Sang Kandiawan (panca putra), five Shiva's disciples (panca kusika), and the division of the five cardinal directions along with the colours and gods that occupy them (sanghyang wuku lima). The supplementary section contains additional rules for good and bad human actions, such as the traits of wisdom, ethical virtues, expressions of trigeuing, tritangtu and triwarga, and many other rules of human life (how to measure land, games, weapons, food, mantras, fabric motifs) (Nurhamsyah, 2020).

The SSKK manuscript is a popular text in Sundanese literary studies. This condition makes the SSKK manuscript undergo maintenance and repair in the laboratory workshop of the Preservation Centre. Although it has been stored by the National Library of Indonesia, currently, the physical condition of the SSKK manuscript is damaged, broken, missing, and has many holes. This condition makes the SSKK manuscript a manuscript that is threatened with extinction. Given that the number is very limited, it is certain that the existence of ancient manuscripts is on the verge of extinction. While the content of valuable information contained in the SSKK manuscript is very important to be used as learning that needs to be preserved by the Sundanese community. Manuscripts include knowledge materials that can be preserved through preservation methods that maintain the manuscript's physical shape and information content. This preservation activity is carried out by maintaining, preventing, preserving, and repairing the collection.

This research was conducted at the National Library of Indonesia which is located at Jalan Salemba Raya No. 28 A DKI Jakarta. The research aims to find out the preservation activities carried out by the National Library of Indonesia for SSKK manuscripts which include policies underlying preservation activities, preparation stages, preventive activities and curative activities in preserving SSKK manuscripts.

Method

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. This research method is used to examine the preservation activities of the manuscript "Sanghyang Siksa Kanda Karesian" (SSKK) at the National Library of Indonesia. A case study is an empirical research study that examines a phenomenon in the context of real life, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear and multiple sources of information exist. Therefore, the appropriate strategy in asking questions using case studies is based on asking how and why questions (Yin, 2011). The research subjects are informants, which means individuals in the research setting who are used to provide information about the situation

and conditions related to the research topic (Moleong, 2022a). Determining the number of informants in this study using purposive techniques. The subjects of this research are Mrs Ellis Sekar Ayu, S.Pd, Mrs Shella Ranti, S.Hum, Mr Cecep Nurjanjati, S.Sos., Mr Yosua Victor Purba, S.S. as librarians at the National Library of Indonesia. The object of research is something that becomes the focal point of research using relevant theories (Moleong, 2022b). The object of this research is the ancient manuscript "Sanghyang Siksa Kanda Karesian" kept by the National Library of Indonesia.

Data was collected in four stages, including (1) Observation. Observation is a planned and directed activity to observe and record a series of activities for a specific purpose. In this activity, the researcher directly observes the situation in the field as an observer (Adams, 2015); (2) Semi-structured interviews by collecting information from informants that allow researchers to ask prepared questions as well as personal opinions or thoughts of each informant interviewed (Sidiq & Choiri, 2019); (3) Documentation; documentation is done by taking photos, recording sound, and recording necessary information; (4) Literature study. Literature study as secondary data to broaden understanding, evaluate theories and enrich scientific sources relevant to the research topic. The data that has been collected is then analysed in 3 stages, namely (1) Reduction with a focus on selecting and simplifying abstractions from high-level data transformations generated from notes written in the field; (2) Data modelling. Displaying previously reduced data in various types of matrices, graphs, networks, and diagrams. Aims to summarise structured information in a consistent and understandable format; (3) Verification. Linear conclusions are drawn from the data that has been presented previously (Miles et al., 2014).

Literature Review

Preservation

Preservation is an effort to preserve the physical form and content of a document. Harvey describes preservation as an activity that includes all management and finances such as storage methods, tools, human resources, rules, techniques, and methods used in preserving library materials and the information contained in them (Harvey & Mahard, 2020). Purwono defines preservation as the entire process of working to guard against things that could harm documents or cause damage (Purwono & Wahyuningsih, 2012). Preserving library materials is evidently a collection of actions meant to store, safeguard, and prevent harm to these materials by employing available resources and methods to prevent the information contained inside from being lost and to ensure that future generations can still access it. This preservation activity includes physical maintenance and the content contained therein to ensure the survival and accessibility of valuable information in library materials remains accessible (Endang, 2018). With preservation activities, the original form of the document and the information content in it can be maintained.

Ancient Manuscripts

Ancient manuscripts come from two words: 'manuscript' and 'ancient'. KBBI defines "manuscript" as a handwritten or unpublished essay and the word "ancient" is defined as a duration that denotes a long time ago. From this definition, it can be concluded that an

ancient manuscript is a text written in the past (Attas & Nuruddin, 2015). Various expressions of thoughts and feelings resulting from the nation's previous culture that is still felt in Indonesia are recorded in ancient manuscripts in handwriting. The content of information contained in ancient manuscripts is usually a mandate or knowledge that is useful in life. The diverse information content of ancient manuscripts is influenced by various things such as regional culture, the purpose of making manuscripts, and the behaviour of the people at the time the ancient manuscripts were made (Bahar & Mathar, 2015).

Such as the geographical location of an area, human origins, religion, culture, social, medicine and so on. Various ancient manuscripts are found in several regions in Indonesia, with a variety of forms, contents, languages, and scripts used. One of the materials for making ancient manuscripts that is also used as material for writing SSKK manuscripts is palm leaf manuscripts.

Palm leaf Manuscript

Nipah and lontar manuscripts come from the same family of *Arecaceae* or palms. Nipah is a tree that grows in warm climates with wide leaves and thin fibres. While lontar is a type of siwalan leaf that is dried and used as a script or craft. Both trees were often used as writing media by ancient people, before the introduction of paper (Agrawal, 1999). These manuscripts were usually stored on wooden crates called kropak. Generally, the kropak is larger than the size of the manuscript and is decorated with carvings and paintings to illustrate the contents of the manuscript it holds. Being made purely from plants, palm leaf manuscripts are more susceptible to damage than paper. A common attack is insect infestation. The most common way that can be done to overcome the biota attack is by fumigation. Fumigation uses water with a mixture of insecticides on shelves, cabinets where manuscripts are stored (Sully, 2015)

Results and Discussion

The manuscript of "Sanghyang Siksa Kandang Karesian" (SSKK) in the National Library's collection is stored in 3 places with two different writing media, namely manuscript L code kropak 16 number 630 which is written using nipah leaves (gebang) in mountain Buddhist script or ancient western Javanese script, and in ancient Sundanese language, and kropak 69 number 624, and kropak 1 number 85 which is written using lontar leaves using ancient Sundanese script, and in ancient Sundanese language. All three manuscripts are written using Old Sundanese script. The SSKK manuscript in kropak 630 is written on palm fibre sticks with the Buddhist script Gunung using organic black ink from nagasari and damarsela. Meanwhile, the manuscripts of kropak 624 and 85 1+ were written in the Old Sundanese script using peso pangot (pengutik/pengrupak).

The manuscript in box 16 number 630 was acquired by the National Library from the National Museum (BGKW) given by Raden Saleh, which has a more complete manuscript consisting of 29 plates. However, the manuscript in kropak 16 number 630 is not properly arranged and its parts are incomplete. The SSKK manuscript in crop 16 number

630 is a manuscript that is often borrowed by the library, so there are many traces of restoration history found on the manuscript because it often enters the laboratory for maintenance and repair. Complementary to the manuscript in box 16 number 630 is the manuscript in box 69 number 624. Overall, the condition of the manuscript is still good and the writing can be read quite clearly. This manuscript is kept in the "Kropak Bandung" group as a gift from the regent of Bandung, Wiranatakusumah IV. Furthermore, the manuscript in Kropak 1 number 85 is mixed with the Merbabu and Bali manuscripts in some parts.

Based on the results of the research, it can be stated that the National Library has carried out several maintenance and repair activities on the three SSKK manuscripts, including: cleaning from dust, mould, and dirt; wrapping the manuscripts with conqueror paper that contains little acid (wrapping paper) and making protective boxes with acid free millboard cartons (acid free paper boxes) according to the size of the manuscripts; storing manuscripts on iron shelves by adding silica gel so that the manuscripts are kept moist and not easily destroyed or damaged from termites. Preservation activities carried out by the National Library for SSKK manuscripts include:

Preventive

Preventive preservation refers to activities taken to prevent damage or deterioration of library materials. Preventive preservation is essential to ensure long-term preservation by helping to prevent damage from environmental factors, pests, and human error, thus maintaining the integrity and usefulness of the materials for future generations. Preventive preservation activities need to be carried out with technical preparations. This technical preparation determines the activities or treatments that must be taken at the next stage of the preservation of the SSKK manuscript collection of the National Library of Indonesia. The technical preparations made by the National Library of Indonesia include:

1. Survey the condition of library materials: A condition survey of library materials is an important first step to determine the condition of each collection of library materials. From the results of this survey, the preservation method that must be carried out to extend the life, repair, and protect library materials will be determined. The National Library conducts activities to fill out survey forms for manuscript conditions. The survey form contains the bibliographic data of the manuscript, the damage done to the manuscript, the general condition of the manuscript, insect problems, and the method of observation done (using acidity testing, ink fading, or visual observation methods). It is during the completion of the survey form that the appropriate repair method for the manuscript is determined. Through the condition survey form, conservators can map out what damage has occurred to the manuscript and the appropriate method of handling tools and materials (Teygler, 2001).
2. Environmental conditioning around the storage room: The National Library has a special room for storing all types of ancient manuscripts, both book and non-book manuscripts. This room is in the open-access circulation service section. Although the storage room is on the same floor as the reading room, the storage room is in a separate section from the reading room. The storage room is behind the service section and only librarians are allowed to enter, not users who want to borrow collections. Access

guidelines to all of the Library's manuscript holdings are connected to the division between the reading room and the storage area. All accessible manuscript collections require the permission and assistance of a librarian to access. This is a preventive measure in protecting the security and preservation of the collection to reduce the risk of damage or loss of objects that have high historical value. The separation of the rooms is also to create a controlled environment for the effective and sustainable preservation of the specialised collection of ancient manuscripts.

- a. Environmental conditioning around the collection storage room, including routine maintenance activities which include:
- b. Maintaining the cleanliness of the maintenance and repair building and the floor of the storage room which is characterised by regular sweeping, cleaning the storage shelves using rags and duster, and the availability of rubbish bins in the room around the storage.
- c. The temperature and humidity regulation uses a dehumidifier with a temperature setting of 23⁰C. All ancient manuscript collections, including the SSKK manuscripts, are stored in air-conditioned rooms. Therefore, to maintain humidity and avoid extreme temperatures, the National Library uses a dehumidifier to keep the manuscripts preserved.
- d. Differences in light intensity settings for the reading room and storage room. The reading room has a brighter light intensity compared to the storage room. This is done so that readers do not experience eye damage when reading ancient manuscript collections. In relation to lighting, the manuscript storage room is arranged so as not to be exposed to direct sunlight, instead using low-voltage fluorescent lamps. This activity is an effort by the library to avoid potential damage due to UV exposure that can cause colour fading, paper damage, and damage to the integrity of information.
- e. The use of metal shelves containing at least 1 mothball and silica gel to repel insects and other biota that can cause deterioration of manuscripts.
- f. Always lock the storage room door after library operating hours.

Conditioning activities around the storage room are routine activities carried out as part of housekeeping to maintain the cleanliness of the library environment and see the suitability of temperature and humidity is the conservator's effort in preventing manuscript damage due to destructive factors, especially animals through collection maintenance activities (Feather, 1991).

3. Digitation. The digitation activity carried out by Perpustakaan for the SSKK manuscript is to reproduce the manuscript and then upload it on the Khastara (Khazanah Pustaka Nusantara) page as a digital resource for Perpustakaan's special collection. Reproduction is an effort to make copies or duplicate library materials that are important but perishable and have high historical value (Indriyani, 2018). The three SSKK manuscripts in the National Library collection with the call codes 16L630, 16L624, and 85+1 have been transferred to digital format. The reproduction activities of the SSKK manuscript carried out by the National Library with the consideration that the manuscript has a high historical value and is limited in number, so it needs to be saved by being transferred in digital format. The reproduction activities carried out by the National Library for the

SSKK manuscript are to add information and a comparative picture of the text in different versions of the manuscript.

Curative

The process of conserving an object's physical form and information content through a variety of specialized approaches is known as curative preservation. The preservation action is not only to maintain the physical evidence, but also the content of the information in the manuscript needs to be preserved (Susilawati, 2017). Curative preservation activities carried out by the National Library of Indonesia include:

1. Mending manual: Mending is an activity to glue the broken parts together so that they do not break further. The materials used are filmo-plast and/or Japanese tissue glued together with MC (Methyl Cellulose) glue. Making MC glue is done manually using a blender. While Filmo-plast is an acid-free cello-tape as an adhesive intended to preserve and protect palm leaves. Filmo-plast consists of a thin, translucent plastic sheet coated with a pressure-sensitive adhesive. This adhesive is placed on one side of the film, allowing it to adhere to the palm leaf while maintaining its integrity. The film is then attached to the leaf, ensuring that it remains in place and safe from environmental influences that could cause damage or degradation (Chu et al., 2023).
2. Fumigation: The process of fumigating manuscript collections to get rid of fungi, insects, or rat droppings can help preserve library items (Martootmodjo, 2009). Fumigation activities are routinely carried out at least once a year by the National Library. Fumigation activities carried out on all non-book collections, especially on leaf-type manuscripts, need to be carried out by untying each leaf and placing it on a special fumigation room table in a closed condition, then the collection is closed and spraying/fumigant fumigation activities are carried out (Fumigant is a chemical at a certain dose that can turn into gas and make organisms die) and allowed to stand for 3 days, after which it is opened by conservators who use PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). Through fumigation activities, it is a guarantee in maintaining the integrity and strength of the collection from the remaining termites. The purpose and benefits of fumigation are to protect and prevent library collections from damage due to pest invasion, maintain the integrity of the collection's information value, and ensure the physical preservation of the collection (Hermawan, 2018).
3. Transliterating the manuscript. Media transfer activities for SSKK manuscripts carried out by the National Library of Indonesia were carried out by transliteration and manuscript reproduction. Transliteration is the activity of changing characters from one alphabet to another to facilitate copying and retrieving texts that are close to the original, so that the text is easily understood properly (Koswara & Permana, 2019). The curator of the Old Sundanese manuscripts of the National Library, Aditya Gunawan, has read the photos of the manuscript number 624 and the manuscript number 85. Through the reading of the photos, the National Library has published a book of transliteration results of the SSKK manuscript which is a refinement of the research conducted by Nurwansyah (2012). This was done by the National Library with the consideration that the SSKK manuscript is a popular manuscript among codicologists, especially Old

Sundanese literature. With the transliteration results, it is hoped that the manuscript can be read in a wider circle, not only those who can read Old Sundanese letters (Nurhamsyah, 2020).

Obstacles

There are several obstacles found by conservators in conducting preservation activities of SSKK manuscripts, among others:

1. The National Library of Indonesia does not have a guidebook that can be used for preservation activities, especially for non-book manuscript collections. Although the number of non-book manuscripts in the National Library's collection is only 20% of the total manuscript collection, librarians still need guidelines for preserving non-book manuscripts. The guidebook contains principles that must be followed by conservators in conducting preservation activities of non-book manuscripts. To overcome these problems, the librarians of the National Library experimented with various methods of doing things until they found the most effective method.
2. Limited human resources for conservation. The number of ancient non-book manuscript collections in the National Library of Indonesia is around 24,309 pieces. It is based on data in 2023 and will certainly continue to grow every year. This number is not proportional to the availability of human resources in the Maintenance and Repair of Library Materials section of the National Library of RI, which is only 11 people, of which only 8 people have the status of a conservator librarian. To overcome this problem, National Library of Indonesia took 1 outsourced person.
3. Budget for preservation activities. Of the total government funding for the library department, only 10% of the funding is spent on conservation activities and much of the funding is used to make acid free paper boxes. Given that the material is rare and expensive.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the discussion, several research conclusions can be made regarding the preservation activities of the SSKK manuscript collection of the National Library of Indonesia. Preventive preservation activities are carried out by surveying the condition of library materials, training professional conservators, conditioning the environment around the storage room, disaster preparedness planning, and digitation. As for other curative prevention, it is done by manual mending, fumigation, and transliteration. Some of the obstacles faced by the conservators of the National Library of Indonesia in carrying out physical preservation activities include the absence of guidelines for non-book manuscript preservation activities, limited human resources, and limited budget.

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