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Lamak : ritual objects in Bali

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Title: Lamak : ritual objects in Bali

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***Lamak* in the National Museum of World Cultures**

***Lamak* as part of the collection of the museum**

The *lamak* collection in the National Museum of World Cultures¹ reflects the diverse and various ways that the objects from Bali entered the museum collections.² They have been collected during fieldwork, given as presents to colonial officers, taken as war booty after colonial wars, bought in art shops and at auctions, and sold or donated to the museums by the colonial government, artists, civil servants, travellers, and students. The collecting histories of the *lamak* collection, as part of the Bali collections, are not different in this regard.

Although the collection is diverse (though not complete) as regards the variety of materials and techniques used for making the *lamak* concerned, it is necessary to keep in mind that no museum collection can ever give a complete picture of *lamak*, since the majority of *lamak*, the ephemeral ones made of fresh sugar or coconut palm leaves, can never be kept for more than a few days and therefore have never been collected.

In this appendix I have divided this collection into a number of separate groups, related to different themes.

***Lontar lamak* (combined with cloth and/or paper) used at cremation rituals**

As discussed in Chapter 5, the whitish leaves of the *lontar* palm are much more durable than the leaves of coconut and sugar palms. For that reason they are used in Bali for parts of offerings and for ritual decorations, like *lamak*, if preparations for a (usually large) ritual (for instance a cremation ceremony) have to start a long time before the actual ceremony takes place.

Related to this, for economic reasons in the *jejaitan* workshops making palm leaf objects, *lontar* leaves are preferred so that the *lamak* and *ceniga* can be kept in stock. The following examples of *lamak* collected in the past show

1 The National Museum of World Cultures (Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen, NMW), is the new museum formed in 2015 by the merger of three former independent ethnographic museums, the Tropenmuseum (TM) in Amsterdam, the National Museum of Ethnology (Museum Volkenkunde, formerly Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, RV) in Leiden, and the Afrika Museum in Berg en Dal. The first two mentioned museums have major Indonesia collections.

2 This appendix does not include photographs of *lamak*, which are also present in the collection.

both principles.³ Moreover, the addition of less perishable materials as cloth and paper gives them an even more durable character.

1. RV-1586-99

This *lamak*, made from *lontar* leaves, red cotton cloth, blue, white, black and gold-coloured paper, is the first to be registered in the museum in Leiden.

The *lamak* was collected by W.O.J. Nieuwenkamp in Mataram, Lombok, during his travels in Bali and Lombok in 1906-1907, to collect objects for the then 's-Rijks Ethnografisch Museum. According to him he saw this *lamak* as a “*naar beneden afhangende versiering*”, a decoration hanging down from a temporary shrine next to the bed where a deceased lay in state, prior to the cremation ceremony.⁴ After the ritual was over, the *lamak* must have been given to him, since in principle *lamak* are not kept for a later occasion and especially so in the case of a cremation ceremony when the main ritual objects and paraphernalia are burned with the body. Nieuwenkamp did not use the word *lamak*, but soon afterwards the word was used in the museum catalogue (Nieuwenkamp 1906-10:119, 222; 1910:213, 216; Juynboll & Fischer 1907:23; Juynboll 1912:151, plate XV fig. 4).

From top to bottom the motifs can be identified as *Ibu* (Mother Earth), *cili* (“*gestyleerde vrouwenfiguurtjes* or *menschenfiguren*”, stylized female or human figures), *ringgitan*, geometric pattern

3 Besides the six *lontar lamak* described in the following section, there is in the Leiden collection what is best called a *ceniga* (RV-3600-1934), consisting only of a geometric pattern. It is part of a large collection passed on to the museum by the Royal Military Academy; its collection history is unknown.

4 “Between the beds of state at the head ends stood two altars on posts, clad with long colourful decorations hanging downwards, fashioned from cut-out paper, multi-coloured cotton and *lontar* leaf. Depicted on two of these were stylized female figures cut from *lontar* leaf, which I have illustrated on page 119” (*Tusschen de praalbedden stonden bij het hoofdeinde twee altaartjes op palen, met lange, kleurige, van uitgeknipt papier, bont katoen en lontarblad vervaardigde en naar beneden afhangende versieringen bekleed. Op twee daarvan kwamen gestyleerde, van lontarblad gesneden vrouwenfiguurtjes voor, die ik op blz. 119 heb afgebeeld*) (Nieuwenkamp 1906-10:222). See also Nieuwenkamp 1910:213, 216. Actually, the material of the *cili* motif is blue paper.

(which looks like *enjekan cicing*, footprint of a dog⁵), and a kind of *cracap* (something with a sharp point) at the bottom.

2-3. TM-1468-111a and TM-1468-111b

Presumably inspired by Nieuwenkamp's publications (with reference to Juynboll's catalogue), the inventory card pertaining to these two *lamak* (made from *lontar* leaves and red cotton cloth) mentions that the *lamak* were to be suspended in the room where a deceased person lay in state. It is not known where these *lamak* were collected.⁶ They were donated to the Tropenmuseum in 1941 by Cornelis Schermers, as part of a much larger collection of almost 200 objects from Bali, Lombok, Papua and elsewhere. Schermers was an architect who worked in the Netherlands Indies in the first decades of the 20th century.

According to the inventory card, the motifs are Dewi Sri and butterflies. However, the main motifs look more like trees whose upper parts resemble a human face. The 'butterflies' are part of the geometrical *ringgitan* pattern of no. 111a, which seems to be a variation of *enjekan cicing*, footprint of a dog, like on the previous *lamak*.

4-6. TM-1103-20, 21, 22

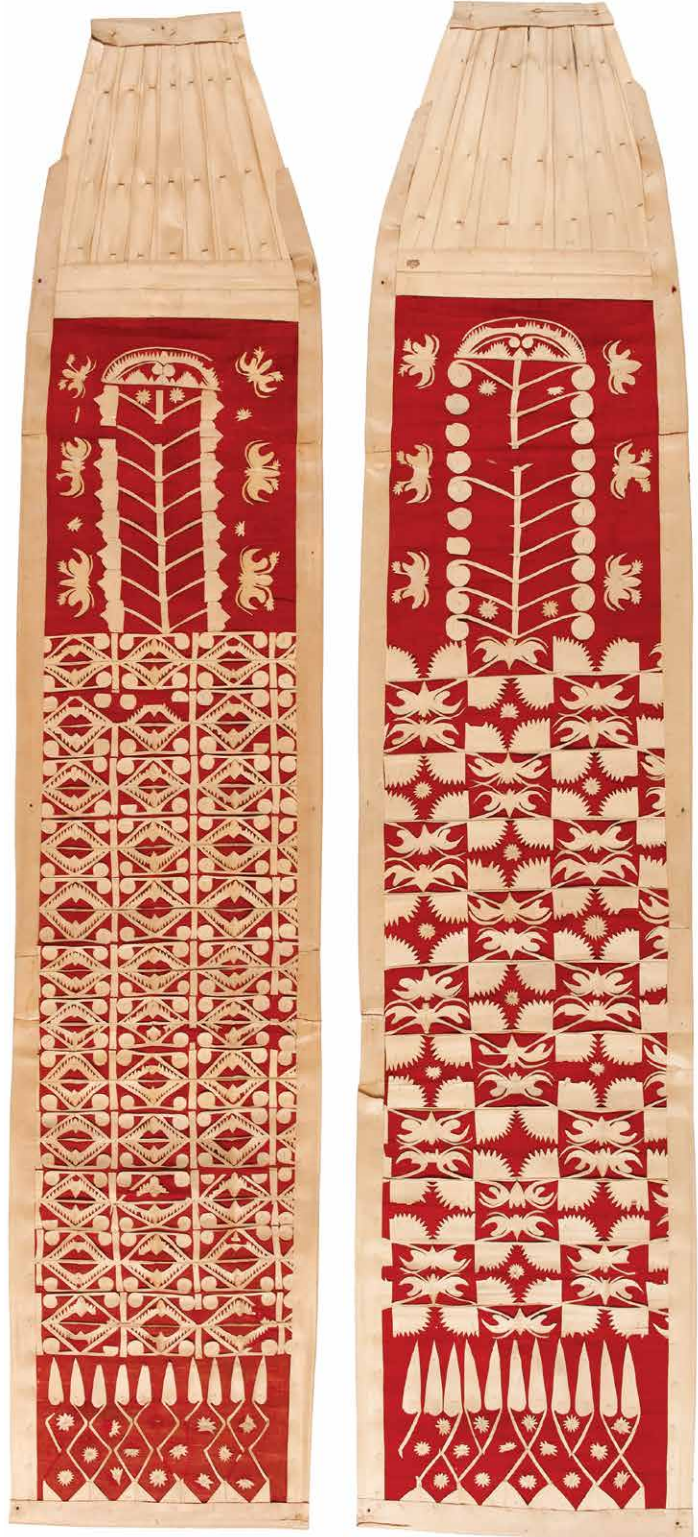
These three almost identical *lamak* (better called *ceniga*) with just geometric star patterns, made from *lontar* leaves against a background of red paper (which has lost its colour), were bought in Museum Bali in Denpasar in 1937. Between 1932 and 1937 a shop associated with the Bali Museum was set up with the purpose to stimulate the traditional and modern arts and crafts of Bali. When Rudolf Bonnet, who played a major role in the organizing, left Bali in 1937, the shop closed (Roever-Bonnet 1993:27-28). The *lamak* are part of a collection

5 See Chapter 3, fig. 3.65.

6 At least one of the two *lamak* was shown in the exhibition “Bali, Kringloop van het leven”, held in 1964-1965 in the Tropenmuseum (see photograph TM-60057909). An exhibition of this name, organized by the staff of and with collections borrowed from the Tropenmuseum, was held in 1966 in Museum Nusantara in Delft (Bali 1965:no. 65).



Figure 1: RV-1586-99
(151 x 37.5 cm).



Figures 2-3: TM-1468-111a (162 x 33.5 cm) and
111b (156 x 34 cm).



Figures 4-6: TM-1103-20-TM 1103-22 (42.5 x 24 cm).

of 37 objects, including 16 paintings and wood-carvings, but also 18 objects directly related to and only used at cremation ceremonies.⁷

According to the inventory cards, these three *lamak* were to be used at cremation ceremonies, with reference to the *lamak* collected for the museum in Leiden by Nieuwenkamp, and to a catalogue of the Bali galleries in the Museum of the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences in Batavia, in which Schwartz noted that he had seen a *lamak* (from the leaves of the sugar and coconut palm), hanging from the same kind of shrine as noted by Nieuwenkamp,

7 There are for example a *damar kurung*, *kajang*, *ukur*, *adegan*, and *angenan*.

and which he had seen at a cremation ceremony in Karangasem in 1916 (Schwartz 1920:21).⁸

***Kepeng lamak* or ‘male temple hanging’**

The NMW has a large number of ritual objects made of Chinese coins, *kepeng*. They are often used as ‘hanging’ temple decorations, and are in general called *salang pipis* or *salang jinah* in Bali, meaning ‘hanging coin objects’. They are often combined

8 “[...] *sanggah prajapati* was placed next to the bed of state at the head end and decorated with a long hanging ‘runner’, over which was a smaller one (*lamak*) of dark green aren (*jaka*) and young coconut leaves (*busung*), partly with finely cut-out figures, artfully and tastefully joined together” ([...] *sanggah pradjapati*

with little mirrors (set in metal or wooden frames), carved wooden top ornaments and beads, and they sometimes have a cloth background.

Curiously, although the kind of *salang* with rectangular panels nowadays in Bali are called *lamak* and are suspended in front of shrines, like palm leaf *lamak* (although they cannot be used as basis for offerings at the same time), in the descriptions of the objects the term *lamak* is almost never used. They are called ‘temple hanging’ (*tempel hanger*) or ‘temple decoration’ (*tempel sieraad*). Moreover, all ‘flat’ shaped temple hangings are denoted as ‘male’, in contrast to ‘female’ circular, more three dimensional objects (Juynboll 1912:118-119). Although the complementary opposition male-female plays an important role in Balinese culture, I have never heard this distinction as regards *kepeng lamak* or *gantungan* in present-day Bali.

7. TM-H-956

Most of the oldest objects consisting mainly of Chinese coins (*kepeng*) entered the museums in Leiden and Amsterdam (which formerly was the Colonial Museum in Haarlem) as part of the war booty or loot following the conquest (or *Puputan*, ‘fight to the finish’) of the states of Badung in 1906 and Klungkung in 1908. They were passed on to the museums by the ‘Ministerie van Koloniën’, the Ministry of Colonies, after the Museum of the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences in Batavia had made the first choice.

This object, which might now be called a *lamak*,⁹ was given to the Tropenmuseum in 1909 by the Ministry of Colonies, very likely after *Puputan Klungkung* in 1908, because also the museum in Leiden received similar objects in 1909 from this Ministry, specifically said to come from Klungkung.¹⁰ Among the objects the museum in

was geplaatst naast het praalbed bij het hoofdeinde en versierd met een lang ahangende looper, waarover een smalleren (lamak) van donker groene aren (djaka)- en jonge klapperbladeren (boesoeng), gedeeltelijk tot fraaie figuren uitgeknipt, kunstig en smaakvol aan elkaar gehecht (Schwartz 1920:21).

9 A very similar object, TM-H-957, is unfortunately damaged and thus not illustrated.

10 The three similar Leiden objects, RV-1684-128,129,130, are also damaged.

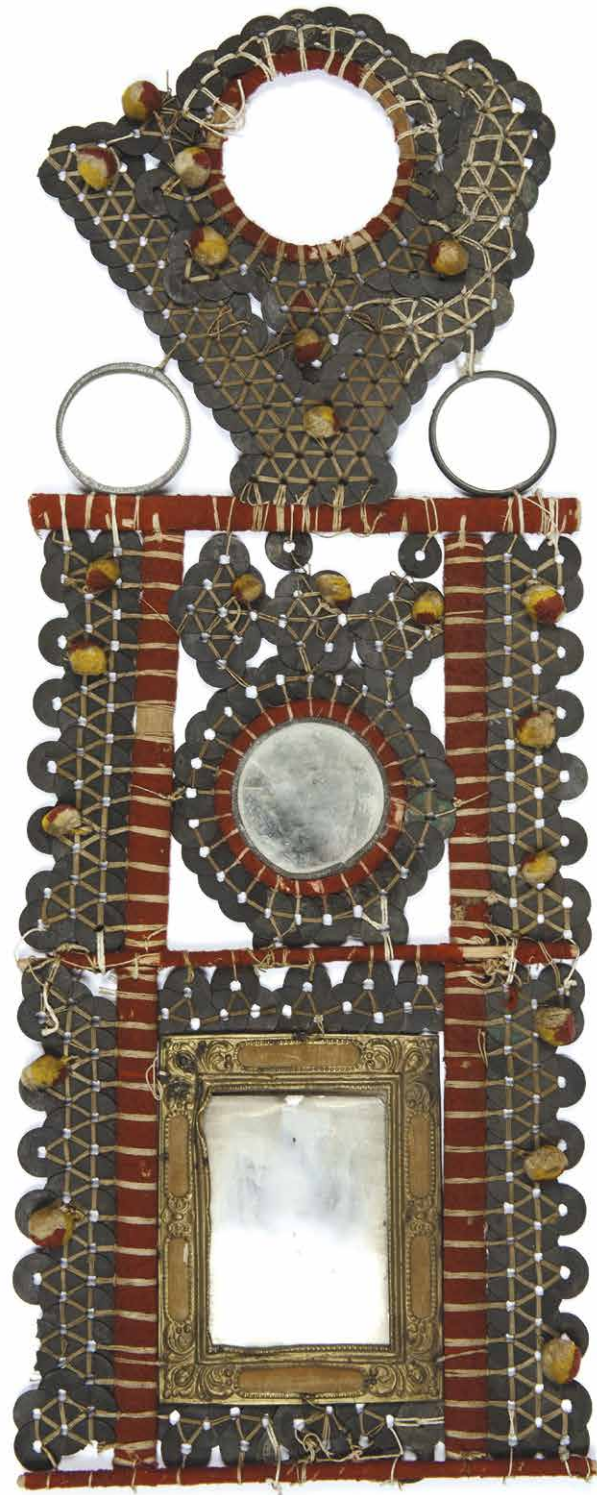


Figure 7: TM-H-956 (63 x 24 cm).



Figures 8-9: TM-1330-215 (146 x 42 cm) and RV-2407-197 (134 x 36 cm).

Leiden received were also many silver and gold objects from the temple of the Klungkung palace.

The upper part of this lamak reminds one of a *cili* (human) figure, with circular mirrors as her large earrings.

8-9. TM-1330-215 and RV-2407-197

In 1939, both museums acquired collections from Prof. dr. J.P. Kleiweg de Zwaan (1875-1971), former head of the department of physical anthropology at the Colonial Institute (later the Royal Tropical Institute) in Amsterdam. From 1908 he travelled and carried out research in the Netherlands Indies, and in 1938 his studies brought him back to Bali and Lombok. There he collected more than 1000 objects of high quality, including other ritual objects made of Chinese coins. It is not known where in Bali he collected these two 'male temple hangings' as they were called.

The Leiden example consists of a set of panels made of bamboo slats strung with red cotton cloth, against which are attached Chinese coins and large and small round mirrors in metal frames. These panels are tied together with thread to form one long hanging object.

Similarly, the Tropenmuseum example consists of three panels made of wooden slats framing red cloth, on which Chinese coins and small mirrors in copper frames are attached, and then tied together with red and yellow thread. The wooden polychrome top ornament is carved in the shape of two crowned, winged serpents (*naga*) with intertwined tails; in the centre is a lotus flower.

10. TM-5572-17

The *kepeng lamak* collected in 1990 in Bali by the staff of TM Junior, in preparation for the exhibition '*Onzichtbare gasten*' ('Invisible guests'), about a Balinese temple festival, was indeed called *lamak*. This *lamak* was bought at a shop for ritual paraphernalia at the market of Sukawati (pers. com. Marion Crinche le Roy, 2016).

The wooden ornament at the top, in the form of two mirrored S-shapes, is often found at the top of, for example, temple gateways, and is called *bantala* (Gelebet 1985:401). The wooden border has a re-



Figure 10: TM-5572-17 (115.5 x 25 cm).

peated pattern of inverted S-shapes. The top motif formed by the *kepeng* is a *cili*, with the mirror as face, and the bottom motif of two triangle and a circle can be identified as *Ibu* (Mother Earth).



Figure 11: RV-4491-89 (143 x 60.5 cm).

Two unusual cloth *lamak*

In principle, permanent *lamak* can be made of any kind of material and when making *lamak* for their own use makers are inspired by their own creativity and imagination. At Galungan I often noticed such 'home-made' *lamak* on the shrines of the *penjor*. The only requirements or prerequisites are that the *lamak* has a vertical structure, in order to hang down from a shrine, and secondly, that an offering can be placed on the upper end of the *lamak*.

In the Leiden collection are two *lamak* which are rather unusual, in the sense that I have neither seen similar *lamak* in other museum collections, nor in use at rituals in Bali.

11. RV-4491-89

Although this *lamak* does have a vertical structure consisting of three panels one on top of the other, these components themselves are unusual. The central panel consists of three concentric rectangular pieces of cloth, a yellow plain piece on the outside, and blue and red pieces on the inside, decorated with gold leaf (*prada*) motifs of tendrils with a lotus flower in the centre. On both sides are strips of cloth painted with flower motifs.

The top and bottom panels depict episodes of the Malat story, painted in Kamasan style. As described in the catalogue of an exhibition in the Gemeentemuseum in Den Haag in 1961 (Kunst 1961:no. [32]), the panels tell the episode of the visit of the King of Malayu to Ratnaningrat, princess of Gegelang, and the consternation this caused, that required Panji, the hero of the Malat, to calm things down.

The *lamak* was collected and denoted as *lamak* by Th.A. Resink as part of a large collection of traditional Balinese paintings, for the most part in the style of the Kamasan tradition. Resink was born in 1902 in Indonesia, and inherited his great interest in Balinese arts and crafts from his mother who collected Hindu-Javanese antiquities. Trained as a civil engineer, at the end of the 1920s he was sent to work in South Bali. He settled down in Ubud, where he became friends with Walter Spies and Rudolf Bonnet. Through them he was temporarily appointed as curator in the Bali Museum in Denpasar (Brinkgreve 2005:141-144).

12. RV-2860-1

The second 'unusual' lamak is an *endek* (weft ikat) *lamak*, which was purchased in 1950 from a company called 'Nederland-Indië Centrale'. I do not know of any other example in museum collections.¹¹ Although this purple textile was said (on the inventory card) to be a breast cloth (*saput, kam-puh*), the structure of the motifs is vertical rather than horizontal, and the motifs themselves are very similar to those on *lamak*.

These motifs are not very clear because the piece is not of high quality technically, and anyway this resist-dye technique does not produce precise motifs. Still, most motifs can be identified. The borders consist of rows of small triangles, called *gigin barong*. The two figures at the bottom are *cili*, but it is not known if they were meant to be *cili ngant-en*, wedding couple. Perhaps the oval figure above the two *cili* is supposed to be a sun or moon, with stars in the four corners. Above this motif is a kind of *ringgitan* pattern, topped by what is probably a tree (*kekayonan*). At the very top are two squares, one with a swastika and the other with an *ibu* motif inside the square.

11 Curious is the case of what was originally a single piece of weft *ikat* cloth, in colour and motifs similar to the Leiden *lamak*, fragments of which are in the collections of the Museum für Völkerkunde in Basel (no. IIc 15336), the Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum in Köln (no. 44712, see Khan Majlis 1984:249), and in the Museum für Gestaltung (formerly Kunstgewerbemuseum) in Zürich (no. 13772, see Billeter 1963:133 and Larsen 1976:202). One wonders whether this textile was ever used as a *lamak* (the cloth is broader than is usual for a *lamak*), and why it was cut into fragments. For another fragment of *ikat* cloth with *cili* figures, see Solyom 1984:15.



Figure 12: RV-2860-1 (222 x 72 cm).



Figure 13: TM-1841-4 (153 x 51 cm).

Rare woven *lamak*

The museum in Amsterdam has two of a kind of rare woven *lamak* which have become real collector's items. They have a blue woven cotton foundation and are decorated with motifs fashioned from thick bundles of mainly white and sometimes some red and yellow yarns, applied in a double-faced continuous supplementary warp technique.

As discussed in Chapter 4, according to Pelras (1967) this kind of *lamak* was made in the 1920s in Kesiman (now part of Denpasar) by a lady called Men Nis.

13. TM-1841-4

This *lamak* was bought in 1948 at an auction in Gouda (it is not known who the previous owner was), and is described by Langewis (1956), but in a previous article (Brinkgreve 1993) I gave a different interpretation and the Balinese names of the motifs.

The rather broad vertical border panels consist of double rows of *gigin barong*. The top motif of the central panel (which Langewis did not identify) is *Ibu*, Mother Earth, then follows a circular motif which is either the sun (*matanai*) (with rays) or the moon (*bulan*) (with little stars all around it). The next motif is rather problematic: Langewis interpreted it as a *cili*, but in any case the triangular bottom part of the motif is a mountain (*gunung*) motif. It is possible that the maker tried to combine the mountain with the *cili* motif, the mountain being the skirt of the *cili*, on top of which rests her face with large earrings on either side.

The geometrical pattern underneath the mountain motif consists of rows of diamonds, structured into a diagonal grid. They can in general be compared to the *ringgitan* patterns on a palm leaf *lamak*, and more specifically to the *mas-masan* pattern, the leaves of the croton plant, whose elements are always diamond-shaped. Two large diamonds form the bottom border of the *lamak*, above which is another row of *gigin barong*.

14. TM-5977-40

This *lamak* is smaller than the previous *lamak*. Here again the broad side panels consist of double rows of *gigin barong*. The top motif is *Ibu*, on



Figure 14: TM-5977-40 (140 x 43.5 cm).



Figure 15: RV-6162-1 (130 x 36 cm).

each side bordered by rows of *gigin barong*. If the two diamond shapes on both sides are taken into account, the motif could perhaps also be interpreted as a very stylized *cili*, with large earrings. Underneath this motif is an empty circular space, probably originally filled in with embroidery as on the previous *lamak*, to create a sun or moon motif. Another possibility is that this space was meant for a circular mirror, as some other *lamak* of this kind have; but there are no signs of loose yarns to support this idea. The motif beneath this empty circle is less clear than the corresponding one on the previous *lamak*, but probably again a mountain motif can be identified. Underneath the mountain is the same geometrical pattern as on the previous *lamak*.

This *lamak* was collected by Charles Sayers (1901-1943), a painter and collector of Indonesian artefacts, who lived in Bali from 1927-1928 and again from 1932-1934 (Van Brakel 2004). It is not known when and where he acquired this *lamak*, but it is likely he bought it in Bali during the years he lived there.

15. RV-6162-1

In this *lamak*, purchased in 2012 with help of the Liefkes-Weegenaar Fund of the Leiden Museum, a related technique is used, but in a much less refined way than either of the other woven *lamak*. It is said to come from a family temple in Kerambitan, where it is called *lamak benang* (*benang* means thread in Balinese and Indonesian). What its relationship is (if any) with the Men Nis *lamak* is unknown, but it seems likely that the maker must at least have seen these other *lamak*, since there are certain correspondences. The *lamak* could have been made in the second half of last century.

In this *lamak*, which is also smaller than the other two, no yellow is used as colour. The borders consist of only one row of *gigin barong*, the geometrical pattern is very similar to that of the other two, and the second motif from the top is a kind of *Ibu* motif. Only the top motif is very different; the five-cornered design reminds one vaguely of the *kekayonan*, the central figure in *wayang* theatre.

Lamak as part of dance costume

The museum has several examples of *lamak* which (could) have been used as part of a dance costume. As usually is the case, their vertical form is the same as that of a *lamak* as ritual object, but their ornamentation does not have the vertical structure which is related to the three-fold structure of the universe. Furthermore, their motifs, mainly tendrils and flowers, differ from those on ritual *lamak*.

16. TM-4607-3g

The first example is a *lamak* for a Jauk dancer and is called *lamak sulaman*, embroidered *lamak*. Together with the other parts of the costume, it was given in 1979 by Cokorda Agung Mas from Ubud, who at that time was in the Netherlands teaching Balinese gamelan to music groups, including one in the Tropenmuseum. He also gave complete costumes for Baris and Kebyar dancers.

The *lamak* consists of three panels, machine-embroidered with flower motifs and tendrils.

17-18. TM-116-2d and 7d

These two *lamak* are elements of Jauk and Telek Luh dance costumes, and were sold to the museum in 1939 by H.J. Janssen, who was Assistant-Resident of South Bali.

Both *lamak* are decorated with gold-leaf (*prada*) motifs. In Bali (and elsewhere in Indonesia where it is practised), *prada* is the glue-work technique of decorating cloth with gold leaf, or gold dust, or more recently with cheaper gold-coloured substitutes.

Together with seven other similar *lamak prada* in different colours, these *lamak* are part of a series of several complete dance costumes.

19. TM-1403-7d

This *lamak* of refined craftsmanship, entered the Tropenmuseum in 1940, donated by the 'Stichting De Nederlandsche Deelneming aan de wereldtentoonstellingen te New York in 1939' which organized the Dutch contribution to the New York World's Fair of that year. The Colonial Institute was involved in this preparation.



Figure 16:
TM-4607-3g
(75 x 21 cm).

The *lamak* formed one element of the costume of a life-size statue of a Legong dancer.¹²

The catalogue entry for the Bali exhibition in San Francisco in 2010 describes this gilt leather *lamak* as being "cut through with delicate geometric and floral designs" and embellished with small pieces of mirrored glass (Reichle 2010:288-291).

20. TM-1991-1e

This *lamak*, which was purchased in 1950 from the 'Nederland-Indië Centrale' (like RV-2860-1), was part of the costume of the servant (*condong*) in the Legong dance.

The leather is embellished with small glass ornaments in the form of star and floral motifs.

12 For a photograph of the statue at the exhibition, see Rosse 1939:75.



Figures 17-18: TM-116-2d and 7d (84 x 72 cm).



Figure 20: TM-1991-1e (64 x 27 cm).



Figure 19:
TM-1403-7d
(60 x 23 cm).

Ceniga from Kerambitan

In 1983, when I was doing fieldwork in Bali for my MA thesis, I made for the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden a collection of ritual objects, decorations and implements, mainly to be used in an exhibition on the art of the offering, in the Bali room of the museum. I collected all varieties of *lamak* which were for sale at that time in the places where I concentrated my fieldwork: Denpasar, Sanur, Padangtegal in Gianyar, and Kerambitan in Tabanan.

In Kerambitan, *lamak* in general are called *ceniga*, and the main motif is usually a *cili* figure. The *cili* in this area can be identified by their very long hair which is depicted in an upright position.

Sagung Putu Alit, one of my main informants, who was very talented in making objects of palm leaf, made from *lontar* leaves a *lamak* with motifs of dyed *lontar*. She used both bamboo slivers (*semat*) and white thread for attaching the motifs. This *lamak* was meant as a kind of model, especially made for the museum, of a *lamak* in typical Tabanan style; she would not use such a *lontar lamak* herself, preferring always a *lamak* of the leaves of the sugar or coconut palms.

21. RV-4255-6

The first *ceniga* from Kerambitan was given to the museum in 1967 by Prof. dr. Ch. Hooykaas who did research in Kerambitan. It is part of a large series of different *jejaitan*, palm leaf objects for ritual use, all made of *lontar* leaves. It is very likely that Sagung Putu Alit, whom he also knew well, made this collection for him as she also did for me, 16 years later.¹³

This *ceniga*, which consists of one layer of *lontar* leaves only, has the head of a typical *cili* of this area as main motif. The geometric pattern forms as it were her body and the *cracap* at the bottom her legs.

13 Four other *lamak* in the Leiden museum (RV-03-937, 938, 939, 949) could possibly also have been made by Sagung Putu Alit, but unfortunately their collection history is unknown.



Figure 21: RV-4255-6 (61 x 12 cm).



Figure 22:
RV-5258-106
(102 x 17 cm).

22. RV-5258-106

Sagung Putu Alit (pers. comm. 26/9/1985) said about this *ceniga* that she made herself, “the motifs at the bottom are just *ringgitan*, just as a hip cloth (*kamben*) for the *cili*, the human figure above it”. If she makes a longer *ceniga*, she extends the *kamben* rather than adding other motifs.



Figure 23: RV-5258-52
(85 x 13.5 cm).

23. RV-5258-52

Referring to the plastic *ceniga* I bought from Sagung Putu Alit, she called the geometric motifs “just intersecting lines” (*silang saja*). I bought this *lamak* from her because she no longer used it. Although the use of plastic had been in fashion for some time, religious authorities had “forbidden” this material for use in temples.



Figure 24: RV- 5258-96
(143 x 29 cm).



Figure 25: RV- 5258-97
(140 x 24 cm).

Two model *lamak* made by I Made Sadra

Tukang lamak I Made Sadra from Padangtegal made in 1983, as models or examples especially for the museum, two *lontar lamak* with motifs of dyed *lontar* leaves, based on *lamak* he usually made with fresh sugar palm leaves. He used bamboo slivers (*semat*) to attach the motifs to the base layer of the *lamak*. Both *lamak* are in the style of Padangtegal.¹⁴

24. RV-5258-96

The main motif on this *lamak* is the *cili* (human figure), the geometrical pattern underneath the *cili* is called *kapukapu kambang*, water lettuce (*Pistia*

stratiotes), an aquatic plant whose leaves float on the surface of the water. The motif at the bottom is called *cracap*, with a sharp point. The pattern on sides and ends is called *bungbung jangkrik*, cage for crickets.

25. RV-5258-97

The main motif on this *lamak* is the *kekayonan* (tree), the geometrical pattern underneath the *kekayonan* is called *candigara* or *kanigara*: a kind of tree with yellow flowers, called by many names, including bayur tree (*Pterospermum acerifolium*). The patterns at the bottom and sides are similar to the other example.

14 See Chapters 4 and 5.



Figure 26: RV-5258-51 (35 x 15 cm).

Durable *lamak* in the 1980s

In 1983 I went in Denpasar to the *toko yadnya*, shops with ritual implements, in the two main market buildings in town, Pasar Badung and Pasar Kumbasari. A few very simple and cheap painted *lontar* lamak were for sale, and a very small variety of small cloth *lamak*, with simple patterns of sequins sewn onto a plain background.

26. RV-5258-51

This small cloth *lamak* can be used as a *lamak* on a shrine, or as part of offerings called *rantasan* which consist of a (usually small) pile of textiles. These textiles represent the clothing for the gods when they descend into the world of human beings at temple festivals.

The motifs which are sewn with sequins onto the black velvet background of this *lamak* are the swastika and a flower with four petals, perhaps an abbreviated version of the *padma* or lotus flower which usually has eight petals. These numbers refer to the cardinal directions.



Figure 27:
RV-5258-100
(102 x 23 cm).

27. RV-5258-100

This *lamak* is made from *lontar* leaves, and the motifs are painted green and red after they have been attached to the base layer of the *lamak*. The main motif is the *kekayonan* (tree), with underneath a *ringgitan* pattern in the form of flowers, and *cracap* at the bottom. The pattern on sides and ends is *bungbung jangkrik*, cage for crickets.

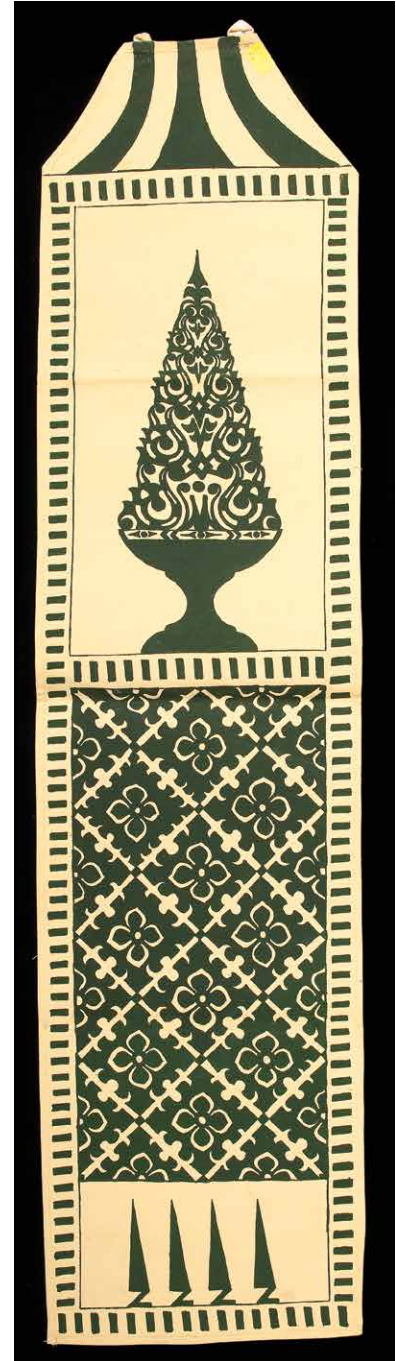


Figure 28:
RV-5258-50
(89.5 x 21.5 cm).

28. RV-5258-50

This *lamak* was made for sale by Pak Tantri from Padangtegal in 1983.¹⁵ He painted the motifs on canvas and also signed his work on the back. The main motif is *banten gebogan* (offering); the geometric pattern is *candigara*.

¹⁵ For a full discussion of the painted *lamak*, see Chapters 4 and 5.



Figure 29:
RV-6223-1
(260 x 37 cm).

Embroidered *lamak*

Since at least the 1990s when people in the district of Jembrana started to use other varieties of *lamak* in their family temples, embroidered *lamak*, a specialty of that district, have appeared on the art market.

29. RV-6223-1

This very long embroidered *lamak* I bought in 2014 at the Tong Tong Fair in The Hague, financed by the Liefkes-Weegenaar Fund.

The top motif is a female figure, depicted in *wayang* style. Next to her are two flowers. On embroidered *lamak* from Jembrana the name of the figure is often embroidered, but on this *lamak* the name is only written at the top in pencil: DEWI-SRI, identifying the figure as the goddess of rice, agriculture and fertility in general. In the centre of this *lamak* an impressive crowned serpent or *naga* with tail rising upwards is represented. On the lowest part a lotus flower with tendrils is embroidered. The borders and ends are 'protected' by rows of *gigin barong* patterns.

30-31. NMW 7047-1 and 2

These two embroidered *lamak* were bought in an art shop in Klungkung in 2011. They are embroidered in the same style as the previous *lamak*, but they are much smaller. They both belong probably to the one set for a family temple, since the name of the shrines for which they are intended is written in ink, together with a number. The identity of the main figure is written in capital letters in pencil above the figure.

On one *lamak* (NMW 7047-2) is written: '7 P. [pelinggih] Majapahit' and the main (male) figure is identified as Darmawangsa. On the other *lamak* (NMW 7047-1) is written '8. Taksu' and the main (female) figure is identified as Subrada. They are 'protected' by rows of *gigin barong* patterns. A *pelinggih* Majapahit is a shrine dedicated to the ancestors who arrived from the Majapahit empire in the 14th century. Taksu is the Divine Inspirator. Darmawangsa and Subrada are both personalities in the Mahabharata epic. Darmawangsa is another name for Yudhistira, the eldest brother of the five Pandawa brothers, and Subadra is the spouse of Arjuna, a younger brother of Darmawangsa.



Figures 30-31: NMW 7047-1 (68 x 21 cm) and NMW 7047-2 (69 x 21 cm).



Figure 32. NMW 7048-1 (55 x 17 cm).

Lamak in the 21st century

The small collection of *lamak* I collected in 1983 (inv. nos. RV-5258-96-100 and RV-5258-50-52) consists of permanent *lamak* which could have been bought and used by the Balinese themselves, as well as some *lamak* of durable *lontar* leaves, especially made for a museum collection.

Since different types of *lamak* have come onto the market since the 1980s, I updated the *lamak* collection of the National Museum of World Cultures with three *lamak* which I had acquired more recently.

32. NMW 7048-1

This *lamak sablon*, made in the silkscreen technique, I bought at the market in Denpasar in 2005, but it was said to have been made in Sukawati, Gianyar.¹⁶

The main motif shows the features of a goddess, Dewi Saraswati. This important Hindu goddess is in Bali worshipped as the consort of the Creator Brahma, and as goddess of learning, knowledge and writing, especially *lontar* manuscripts. On the *lamak sablon* Dewi Saraswati is represented with all her attributes which she holds in her four hands. In one of them she holds a musical instrument which she is playing with her second hand, and in the two other hands she holds a *lontar* manuscript and a rosary. At her feet are two geese, which act as her vehicle, and on her head she wears a kind of crown with an aura around it, a variation of the ornate headdress of the traditional *cili*.

One maker of *lamak sablon*, I Ketut Lantur, called the circular motif above the head of Dewi Saraswati a *padma* (lotus) or *gumi* (world). The uppermost motif is a mountain motif, with two flowers like stars on either side. The pattern below the goddess consists of flowers, surrounded by ornamental leaves and petals. Towards the bottom three long sharp triangles are depicted, like the *cracap* on palm leaf *lamak*, and along the sides and bottom are rows of *gigin barong*.

16 *Lamak sablon* are discussed at length in Chapters 4 and 5.



Figure 33:
NMW 7048-2
(59 x 15.5 cm).

33. NMW 7048-2

This *lontar lamak* was made in 2010 by Ni Wayan Suartini who worked in a workshop in Bebandem, Karangasem,¹⁷ to be sold in connection with the upcoming Galungan. She used dyed *lontar* leaves to cut out the motifs, and staples for attaching them to the base layer.

Deviating from the regional style of Karangasem, in which the mountain motif is always dominant, the main motif on this *lamak* is a lotus flower growing in

17 See Chapters 4 and 5.



Figure 34:
NMW 7048-3
(71 x 16 cm).

a pond, a little butterfly flying around it. At the top a small mountain and a little sun are depicted.

34. NMW 7048-3

One of the varieties of *lamak* which is at present most common in *toko yadnya* at the markets and even for sale online is called *lamak pentol tanggung*. They appear in five different colours: white, yellow, red, black and *poleng*. I bought this *poleng* example at the main market in Klungkung in 2015. The black and white checked *poleng* cloth is embellished with beads and small colourful plastic decorations.

