

= Loetoeng Kasaroeng =

Loetoeng Kasaroeng is a 1926 fantasy film from the Dutch East Indies (modern @-@ day Indonesia) which was directed and produced by L. Heuveldorp . An adaptation of the Sundanese folktale Lutung Kasarung (The Lost Lutung) , the film tells of a young girl who falls in love with a magical lutung and stars the children of noblemen . Details on its performance are unavailable , although it is known to have been of poor technical quality and thought to have performed poorly . It was the first film produced in the country and the first to feature a native @-@ Indonesian cast . It is likely a lost film .

= = Plot = =

Purbasari and Purbararang are sisters and in competition . Purbararang , the elder sister , teases Purbasari about the latter 's lover , a lutung named Guru Minang ; Purbarang 's boyfriend , Indrajaya , is a handsome human . However , the girls discover that Guru Minang is actually a god who is more handsome than Indrajaya .

= = Production = =

The first showing of films in the Dutch East Indies was in 1900 , and over the next twenty years foreign productions ? generally from the United States ? were imported and shown throughout the country . Domestic production of documentaries had begun in 1911 but were unable to compete with imported works . By 1923 a local feature film production spearheaded by the Middle East Film Co. was announced , but the work was not completed .

Under pressure from imported works , in 1926 N.V. Java Film , a production house based in Batavia (modern @-@ day Jakarta) which had previously produced a single documentary , Inlanders op de Krokodillenjacht (Native Crocodile Hunters) , chose to make a feature film based on the Sundanese folktale Lutung Kasarung . The company 's owner , L. Heuveldorp served as director and producer , while its laboratory head G. Krugers handled cinematography and processing . Little biographical information is available regarding the background of both men , although it was reported that Heuveldorp had previous experience from working in the United States .

The cast was drawn entirely from the priyayi (noble) class , under the coordination of school headmaster Kartabrata . Among the cast were children of Wiranatakusumah V , the regent of Bandung ; he had agreed to help fund the film to promote Sundanese culture , and had previously brought the story to the stage . Further subsidies had come from the Ministry of Defence , which donated trucks to ease filming .

Filming had begun by August 1926 , when several scenes were shot in a cave that had been excavated for the production on Karang Hill . Heuveldorp , unable to force the actors to play their roles seriously , shot several scenes with them acting as they wished before showing them the results ; upon realising that their acting had been disappointing , the cast began to listen to stage directions . Afterwards they began rehearsing each scene at least twice , with Kartabrata standing behind the cameraman and giving directions .

= = Release and reception = =

The film was screened on 31 December 1926 at the Oriental and Elita Theatres in Bandung , making it the first domestically @-@ produced feature film and the first with a native cast . The advertisements were in both Dutch- and Malay @-@ language publications . The film was screened for only a week , with live Sundanese gamelan performances providing music , after which Loetoeng Kasaroeng was replaced with Hollywood films . Although its box office performance is not recorded , it is thought to have been poor .

A review by " Bandoenger " in Panorama magazine considered the film of poor technical quality compared to imported films , suggesting that the production was underfunded ; the review states

that some actors were not paid for their work . The Indonesian film historian Misbach Yusa Biran wrote that Loetoeng Kasaroeng would have been poorly received outside of East Java , owing to Sundanese culture and dance not being considered interesting to other ethnic groups , particularly the Javanese . William van der Heide , a lecturer on film studies at the University of Newcastle in Australia , notes that the tendency of European filmmakers to depict natives as primitives may also have influenced the poor ticket sales .

= = Legacy = =

Although Heuveldorp is not recorded as being involved in any more fiction film productions , Krugers went on to direct several films , including the area 's first talkie , Karnadi Anemer Bangkong (1931) , before leaving the country in 1936 . At least one of the cast members , Oemar , is recorded as continuing to act . Lutung Kasarung was adapted to film twice further , in 1952 and 1983 .

After Loetoeng Kasaroeng was released , numerous domestic films were made . The second domestic production , Eulis Atjih (1927) , was directed by Krugers and received a wider release . With the release of Lily van Java (Lily of Java) in 1928 , ethnic Chinese became involved in the industry ; by 1940 native directors had become common . However , the first truly Indonesian film is considered to be Usmar Ismail 's Darah dan Doa (The Long March) in 1950 , released after the Dutch recognised Indonesia 's independence in 1949 .

Loetoeng Kasaroeng is likely a lost film . The American visual anthropologist Karl G. Heider wrote that all Indonesian films from before 1950 are lost . However , JB Kristanto 's Katalog Film Indonesia (Indonesian Film Catalogue) records several as having survived at Sinematek Indonesia 's archives , and Biran writes that several Japanese propaganda films have survived at the Netherlands Government Information Service .