

THE SULUK GATOLOCO

Translated and with an Introduction
by Benedict Anderson

Part One

Introduction

It puzzled the Dutch colonial cognoscenti from the start. When, in 1873, the eminent missionary-Javanologue Poensen brought a (heavily truncated) version of it to the light of printed day, he commented:

From a literary point of view the text has very little value. . . . But if we look more carefully at its spirit, then the writer strikes us--with his conceptions of honor and virtue, and his sensible views on such matters as what foods are permissible for human beings to eat--as very much a man of the world, wholly lacking in the deep religious strain that characterizes the authors of such works as the *Wulang Rêh*, the *Sêh Tékawardî*, etc., and thereby also lacking their cultivation and breeding. In fact, he often arouses our disgust, since he does not refrain from committing the most trivial things to paper, and in the grossest way goes into detail about matters which it is not decent to mention.¹

This picture of a sort of third-rate Javanese *Pantagruel* cut no ice, however, with the grandest of the colonial academic panjandrums. "The heretical daydreams of an undoubtedly opium-besotted Javanese mystic!" thundered Snouck Hurgronje a decade later.² Not at all, opined the liberal scholar-bureaucrat Rinkes in 1909, the poem was a "serious satire against all that mystagogic rigmarole."³ There matters rested for four decades. Then, in 1951, Philippus van Akkeren, forced to abandon his missionary labors in East Java by the Japanese Occupation and the Revolution, and filling in time with philology, published the first full text of the *Suluk*, along with a meticulous critical apparatus and a thoughtful, semi-anthropological thematic analysis.⁴

1. C. Poensen, "Een Javaansch geschrift," in *Mededeelingen vanwege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap*, 17 (1873), p. 227, as cited in Philippus van Akkeren, *Een gedrocht en toch de volmaakte mens, De Javaanse Suluk Gatoloco, uitgegeven, vertaald en toegelicht* (The Hague: "Excelsior," 1951), p. 1.

2. C. Snouck Hurgronje, "De betekenis van den Islâm voor zijne belijders in Oost-Indië," in his *Verspreide Geschriften*, 4 (Bonn and Leipzig: Schröder, 1924), p. 15. The essay originally appeared in 1883.

3. D. A. Rinkes, *Abdoerraoef van Singkel* (Heerenveen: "Hepkema," 1909), p. 130.

4. See above at note 1.

It angered, and later embarrassed, different segments of Javanese colonial (and, I think, postcolonial) society. What seems to have been its initial publication for Javanese--in Surabaya in 1889--went off without incident.⁵ However, in 1918, a storm was aroused by the publication in *Djawi Hiswara*, organ of the Surakarta branch of the Sarekat Islam, of an article citing passages from the *Suluk*, notably one in which the eponymous hero of the poem insists that he frequents opium-dens in faithful imitation of the Prophet Muhammad. Amidst a rancorous debate in the "native" press, an Army of the Most Reverend Prophet Muhammad was formed under the aegis of H. O. S. Tjokroaminoto, which organized a huge protest demonstration in Surabaya, and sent an anguished demand to the colonial authorities in Batavia (ignored) that *Djawi Hiswara's* editor be subjected to criminal prosecution.⁶ Since a major part of the *Suluk* consists of an extremely abrasive polemic against what the anonymous author clearly viewed as narrow-minded, superficial, formalistic, "Arab" Islamic orthodoxy, it may be a matter of some surprise that demonstrations did not take place in 1889. But it must be remembered that in those days the "native" readership for any printed material, let alone long Javanese poems, was very small, organizations capable of organizing urban demonstrations did not exist, and what we think of today as "orthodox" Islam was only beginning to assert itself politically. By 1918, a lively Indonesian and Javanese language press had a wide audience--we note that the controversy was fired by a newspaper quotation from the book, not the book itself--the Sarekat Islam was at the height of its power, with hundreds of thousands of adherents, and the orthodox "moral minority," its self-consciousness strongly enhanced by the spread of Muhammadiyah, was beginning a Kulturkampf which has persisted, even with added vigor, to the present.⁷

At the same time, it is obvious that the *Suluk's* explicit scatological and sexual language (Poensen's "in the grossest way") was becoming an embarrassment to a Victorianized *abangan* urban (*priyayi* and middle-class) public determined to make "Javanism" genteel and respectable in their own *maju* eyes and those of the Poensens. And indeed nothing less *maju*, decent, "ethical," or *bon bourgeois* than the *Suluk* can easily be imagined.

In the face of this formidable united front of orthodox Islam and respectable Javanism, the *Suluk Gaṭoloco* went underground. To my knowledge it has not been republished in Indonesia now for more than half a century: evidently no publisher has been prepared to take the risk of being branded pornographer or religious renegade. Yet it retains a clandestine reputation, known by name at least to many who have never read it. And indeed it is a literary work of far too much merit and interest to deserve perpetual entombment. It therefore seems worth while to offer readers of *Indonesia* a translation, no matter how rough and ready, in order to give

5. Thus G. W. J. Drewes, in his "The Struggle between Javanese and Islam as Illustrated by the *Sĕrat Dĕrmaganḍul*," *Bijdrage tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde [BKl]*, 122, 3 (1966), pp. 309-65 at p. 314. Van Akkeren speaks of the one printed text he used as being a "second printing" of an edition put out by the well-known Javanophile *peranakan* publisher, Tan Khoen Swie of Kediri, but gives no dates for this printing or its predecessor. *Een Gedrocht*, p. 62.

6. Presumably for insulting Islam. The above account is drawn from Drewes, "The Struggle," pp. 313-15. Characteristically, Drewes suggests that Tjokroaminoto cynically exploited the affair to discredit the Surakarta SI leaders with whom he had long been at odds.

7. A similar agitation was launched by Muhammadiyah in 1925 over the republication of the *Serat Dĕrmaganḍul*, a text with marked "political" affinities to the *Suluk*. See *ibid.*, pp. 310-12.

them a glimpse into the catacombs of Javanese culture, and, if they choose, allow them to be puzzled, angered, or delighted.

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It is not my intent, nor am I in any way qualified, to offer an elaborate philological, philosophical, or cultural-anthropological discussion of the *Suluk*; for this, readers may consult van Akkeren's admirable 66-page introduction. But it is still probably useful to make a few brief comments about the dating of the text, its "plot," its themes, and its style, as well as an explanation of the form of the translation.

Dating. All that can be said with certainty about the *Suluk*'s composition is that it must have occurred prior to Poensen's article in 1873, and--since it mentions *landraden* (colonial courts of first instance)--after the establishment of these institutions at the end of the eighteenth century.⁸ Van Akkeren was inclined to a date of c. 1830, arguing that the poem's hostility to orthodox Islam and its aggressive "Javanism" probably reflected a widespread reaction among the Javanese literate class to the total failure of Diponegoro's Islamic-tinged political leadership.⁹ Drewes, on the other hand, seems to favor a much later date, on the grounds of marked similarities in tone, content, imagery, and ideology with the *Serat Dermaganḍul* and the *Babad Keḍiri*, the latter of which, he argues convincingly on internal evidence, was inspired by the impending 400th anniversary of the putative fall in 1478 of "Hindu-Buddhist" Majapahit to the Islamic coalition led by Demak.¹⁰ Readers will notice that Gatoloco himself refers to the fall of Majapahit in "catastrophic" terms.¹¹ On these grounds, and because its description of the opium-dens of rural Java seems to fit the opium-farm system in its pan-Java heyday, I am inclined to think that the 1860s or even early 1870s are a more likely date for the *Suluk* than the 1830s.

The "Plot." The *Suluk* falls into three distinct parts. Part I, covering the meager 13 stanzas of Cantos I and II, introduces the reader to the hero Gatoloco, described as the only son of King Suksma Wisésa of Jajar, and his inseparable *punakawan* Dermaganḍul. Appalled by the child's monstrous and repulsive appearance, the King bids him spend his first sixteen years in lonely meditation, accompanied only by Dermaganḍul. Returning home sixteen years later, the boy has his head "clipped" by his father. But since this only makes him more hideous, he is sent back for another four years of asceticism. His meditation is rewarded with the gift of a matchless skill with language. The King now gives him his adult name of Gatoloco

8. Van Akkeren, *Een Gedrocht*, p. 10.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

10. See Drewes, "The Struggle," pp. 325-28. The similarities between these three texts can readily be appreciated by comparing the present translation with the detailed summaries of the *Serat Dermaganḍul* and *Babad Keḍiri* that Drewes provides.

11. See Canto V, stanza 38: "Beginning from the ancient times / Up to the Age of Majapahit / The Javanese invoked the Gods / But with Demak this changed; they called / Upon the Messenger / Of Allah. This Arabic name / You have adopted now / Abandoning the old religion. . . ."

It is worth noting in this context that, on the eve of the 500th anniversary of Majapahit's fall (1978), there was another sudden revival of prophecies, usually attributed to Sabda Palon (*punakawan* to the last king of Majapahit), that Islam would hold sway in Java for "only" so many (four, five, perhaps, in 2078, six) centuries.

and sends him off to "see the world," warning him of a dangerous adversary, a woman called Perjiwati, who is meditating in a mountain grotto. Gatoloco and Dermaganḍul take their leave and depart.

The physical descriptions of Gatoloco and Dermaganḍul in Canto II, stanzas 3-5 hint strongly¹² at what the names make explicit: Gatoloco is a compound of *gaṭo* (penis) and *loco* (rub, masturbate); Dermaganḍul combines *derma* (closely attached) and *ganḍul* (hanging down); while the root of Perjiwati is *perji* (female genitalia). In other words, the hero and his attendant are, as it were, a walking, talking penis and scrotum, and, at one level, the poem is an allegory of "sexual development." In this sense, Part I describes the growth of a male organ/person from latency, through the ordeal of circumcision (the "clipping") to mature potency and an impending initiation into the rite of sexual intercourse.

Part II covers the 191 stanzas of Cantos III-VI. It describes Gatoloco's activities on his travels. Between bouts of gambling and visits to opium-dens, he engages in a series of vitriolic debates with "orthodox" Islamic teachers on the true nature of God, man, the cosmos, Islam, and much more besides. In every case he triumphs by his wit and depth of *ngèlmu* (mystical knowledge). One after another, the *guru santri* concede defeat and flee his presence in profound humiliation.

The 193 stanzas of Part III depict Gatoloco's encounter with Perjiwati and her four female attendants. After solving a series of conundrums posed by the five women, he gains entry to Perjiwati's hitherto unpenetrated cave. Dermaganḍul attempts to follow, but cannot get in. The motifs of Part I are revived, in that the violent "battles" between Gatoloco and Perjiwati are thinly veiled descriptions of sexual intercourse. After nine months a male child is born, just as hideous as his father, but adored by both parents. The poem ends with a brief meditation on the meaning of this birth and the nature of Life.

Themes. In his careful and thorough "Introduction" van Akkeren analyzes the text in terms of four threads in pre-twentieth century Javanese culture.

a) An age-old autochthonous cult of fertility connected with forms of ancestor-worship. As in other parts of Southeast Asia (he emphasizes ancient Cambodia and Champa), this cult assumed an elaborate religious and political character under the impact of Hindu-Buddhist civilization. This elaboration reached its apogee in Old Java in the conception of the *devaraja* (God-King), the public manifestation of whose potency (in every sense of the word) was the monumental *lingga*. The gigantic stone erect phallus, understood often as a *yantra* ("projection") of the ruler's Power,¹³ linked him to the aboriginal Power of his dead ancestors, the gods (espe-

12. I.e.,

Warnané tan kaprah janmi
Wandané apan bungik
Kulité basisik iku
Kelawan tanpa nétra
Tanpa irung tanpa kuping
Remenané anéndra sadina-dina.

Yèn ngelilir lajeng montah
Tan kena dèn arih. . . .

. . . .

Yet shaped unlike a normal man:
His body shriveled, shrunk,
And scaly, dry his wrinkled skin,
Without a nose at all,
Or eyes, or ears; his pleasure but
To sleep and sleep, day in, day
out, continuously;

Yet once aroused from his deep sleep
Unruly, not to be appeased. . . .

13. For further discussion, see my "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture," in *Culture and Politics in Indonesia*, ed. Claire Holt et al. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), pp. 1-69, especially pp. 8-19.

cially Siva), and the center of the cosmos. The strongly phallic motifs on Candi Sukuh and Candi Ceta show that this tradition was still "above ground" as late as the fifteenth century; with the coming of Islam it persisted in subterranean fashion.¹⁴

b) A heterodox conception of the way (van Akkeren calls it the "left-hand path") to achieve Power: not by the mainstream method of yogic asceticism and meditation, but the Tantric means of deliberate, systematic "exhaustion" of the sensual, above all sexual, appetites.

c) The tradition of Sufi mysticism, with its emphasis on the esoteric interpretation of the vocabulary and practice of Islam. Van Akkeren speaks of the Sufi conception of human life as a manifestation or "descent" of divinity into the world (this emanation often being designated the Nur Muhammad [Light of Muhammad]); and of the adept's search for a mystical "reascend" towards the aboriginal Oneness. In the Sufi-tinged tradition, this movement from Oneness to Duality and the yearning for Re-Union is "figured" on occasion in the movement from the birth of a male, his yearning for union with a mate, and the production through sexual intercourse of a new solitary male. Intercourse between man and wife can be seen both as a sign of, and a means to, achieving the *unio mystica*.

d) What van Akkeren refers to as "Javanese nationalism," by which at bottom he means a tenacious attachment to the idea of the cosmic centrality of Java, going back to the very origins of the world. The ancestors of the Javanese are the mythical heroes of the Mahabharata and the wayang, and ultimately the Gods themselves; Java is the very pivot of the universe. From this there arises a deep rejection of foreign claims to supremacy, and hostility to foreign (most notably "Arab") cultural penetration.

Van Akkeren performs a valuable service in his careful separation of these threads. Yet, in the end, his achievement is like the careful unraveling of a superb tapestry. The different-colored yarns are assorted in tidy piles, but one has no idea of what the pattern was that turned yarns into tapestry, or what the weaver intended by his labors. And thematic classification runs the risk of extruding the *Suluk* from history. We are forcibly reminded of this by one conspicuous fact that van Akkeren overlooks: that in the recorded heritage of these four traditions nowhere (so far as I know) does a "hero" like Gaṭoloco appear, nor, I think, could one easily be imagined. For Gaṭoloco is precisely *not* an imposing devaraja, nor an elegant wayang *satria*, nor a venerable ascetic sage, nor a *wali* (Muslim saint), nor a Sufi adept, nor even a nineteenth century Javanese king or a Diponegoro-style (Javanese nationalist?) rebel leader. He is something quite new: as Canto I, stanzas 3 and 11, and Canto III, stanzas 1-5 make clear, he is a hideous, misshapen, stinking, foul-mouthed, opium-smoking, argumentative, philosophical....ambulatory penis.¹⁵ Nor can we easily shrug off this "hero" Hurgronje-style as the

14. But visitors to the *kraton* of Surakarta will find on the inner walls of the main entrance blue-and-white circular faience plates featuring a *lingga* on one side and a *yon*i on the other.

15. New, but perhaps not outside the trajectory of a certain literary-cultural evolution. Both van Akkeren (*Een Gedrocht*, p. 30) and Soemarsaid Moertono, in his *State and Statecraft in Old Java*, rev. ed. (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Monograph Series, 1981), p. 58, cite the strange episode in the *Babad Tanah Djawi* in which, after the death of Amangkurat II (r. 1677-1703), his "manhood stood erect and on the top of it was a radiant light, only the size of a grain of pepper. But nobody observed it. Only Pangeran Puger saw it. Pangeran Puger quickly sipped up the light. As soon as the light had been sipped, the manhood ceased to stand erect. It was God's will that Pangeran Puger should succeed to the

"heretical daydream" of an "opium-besotted Javanese mystic," for this style of "daydreaming" crops up elsewhere. The testicular Dermaganḍul, for example, appears again, in the *Serat Dermaganḍul*, as the pupil of the great sage Kalamwadi [*kalam* = penis, *wadi* = secret, inner], whose wife is called Perjiwati.¹⁶ The "heroic" character of the triumphant Gaṭoloco is thrown into especially vivid relief if we compare him to the helpless "hero" of the virtually contemporary (1873) *Serat Kala Tiḍa* of Java's last great court poet, R. Ng. Ronggawarsita:¹⁷

Ratuné ratu utama	The King kingly perfection
Patihé patih linuwih	The Chief Minister chiefly in truth
Pra nayaka tyas raharja	The <i>bupati</i> constant of heart
Panekaré becik-becik	The lower officials excellent
Parandéné tan dadi	Yet none can serve to stay
Paliyasing kalabendu	The time of doom . . .

It begins to look as if Gaṭoloco appears on the scene only when all the traditional heroes have either been castrated or entombed; and that the *Suluk* may represent a last stand, back to the wall with fangs bared, of a classical culture in its death-throes. In other words, it may have to be understood as one of the last major Javanese literary works before: the newspaper, the highschool primer, the novel, and the political tract.

Back to the wall--but facing in what direction? Van Akkeren in his discussion of the "Javanese nationalism" of the *Suluk* stresses that its adversary is "Arabian" Islam. The same could be said of many other nineteenth century texts, such as

throne." (Translation adapted from Moertono's version.) It is inconceivable that royal succession should be determined in this manner in *wayang*--no matter how proverbially potent, say, Arjuna is. But it is not hard to detect a lineage running from Arjuna through Puger to Gaṭoloco.

16. And within the *Serat Dermaganḍul*, the celebrated Muslim wali Sunan Kalijaga is described as attempting to convert Majapahit's last king to Islam by, *inter alia*, "decoding" the technical Arabic-derived terms for successively higher stages of the Sufi path to illumination as follows: *saréngat* = *yèn saré wadiné nyéngat* [when sleeping/in bed, the penis is erect]; *tarékat* = *tarèn kang éstri* [seek her assent]; *kakékat* as "man and woman must agree to intercourse"; and *makrifat* as "one must know the rules and practices of the conjugal life." See Drewes, "The Struggle," pp. 352-53. To this there are interesting parallels in the conceptions and ideals of the Saminists, who called their wives *sikep* and themselves *wong sikep*, meaning "those who embrace"; who decoded Nabi (Prophet) as "woman" and Adam as "man"; and who expressed their "ideology" with these pregnant lines:

Jenengé lanang, damelé rabi,
Tata-tata weḍak janji demen.
Tetepé Nabi Adam kandegé wekasan.
Sing kulo nitèni tatané sikep rabi.
Wong sikep weruh teké déwé.

See Harry J. Benda and Lance Castles, "The Samin Movement," *BKI*, 125, 2 (1969), pp. 206-39, at p. 226.

17. Text and translation taken from my "A Time of Darkness and a Time of Light, Transposition in Early Indonesian Nationalist Thought," in *Perceptions of the Past in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid and David Marr (Singapore: Heinemann, 1979), pp. 219-48, at p. 219.

the *Serat Dermaganḍul*, the *Babad Keḍiri*, the *Serat Wéḍatama*, and so forth.¹⁸ It seems never to occur to the gentle missionary to find it odd that this "nationalism" is not directed against the Dutch, who had by then dominated Javanese politics for more than two centuries, who after 1830 had turned most candidate "heroes" into pliable *pangrèhpraja*, and who had just inflicted the Cultuurstelsel on the descendants of Arjuna. The virtually complete silence of the *Suluk* on the subject of the Dutch¹⁹ is not an eccentricity; the same silence pervades the *Serat Dermaganḍul*, the *Serat Wéḍatama*, and Ronggowarsita's oeuvre, not to speak of the "autobiography" of the great Diponegoro himself.²⁰

What accounts for this thunderous Dutch absence is a question far too complex to broach here. But it is only by reminding oneself of it that one will be aware that the landscape of Gaṭoloco's travels, from *pondok* to *pondok*, from palace to opium-den to mountain cave, is not "ancestral-mythological," as it might be in an episode of the *Ramayana*, but "imaginary"--one might almost say utopian. It is landscape from which the Postweg, plantations, Poensens, tax-farmers, bupatis, toll-gates, possibly even railways have been erased. This in turn suggests that perhaps for the first time in Java's long history, its culture is being exactly that: imagined.

Style. It would be hard to call the *Suluk* "poetic" in any obvious Western or even traditional Javanese sense. There is almost none of the ravishing sensuousness of the great late eighteenth century *Serat Centini*, let alone the calm, sweet elegance of the Old Javanese literature to which Father Zoetmulder's *Kalangwan* is such an admirable tribute.²¹ Nonetheless, the style is arresting and, once tasted, hard to forget. The text is full of "classical tropes," but they are used in an eerie, disconnected way, to the point almost of being quotations-in-inverted-commas. For example, the very first stanza is perfectly "classical":

The tale to be related here
Concerns a kingdom celebrated
Both far and wide, called Jajar, and

18. See Suranto Atmosaputro and Martin Hatch, "Serat Wéḍatama: A Translation," *Indonesia*, 14 (October 1972), pp. 157-81, esp. at pp. 169-73.

19. The text mentions *Landa* only once or twice in passing, and in each case simply as another type of foreigner on a par with Chinese, Bengalis, and so on, i.e., with no special power and of no special interest. See, e.g., Canto V, stanzas 35-36.

20. See Ann Kumar, "Prince Dipanegara (1787?-1855)," *Indonesia*, 13 (April 1972), pp. 69-118. What we "know" to be powerful Dutchmen are named in Diponegoro's text, but they are identified simply by *rank* (Edelheer, etc.), never as "nationals" nor as representatives or agents of "the Dutch." In this regard, two visions that the Prince records are instructive: in one, a supernatural voice told him: "Further, I say, / In three years will come a time / Of great disturbances in Jogjakarta [not Batavia, which indeed is never mentioned]"; in another, the Ratu Adil declared: "The reason I have summoned you / Is that you must lead all my soldiers / In the conquest [not liberation] of Java." See pp. 77 and 103.

21. Compare the utterly unromantic, not to say brutal, account of sexual intercourse in Canto X, with its unrelieved stress on "stink," "vomit," and "foulness," with any of the parallel descriptions in the *Tjēntini*. For Old Javanese literature, see P. J. Zoetmulder, S.J., *Kalangwan: A Survey of Old Javanese Literature* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1974).

Its mighty sovereign, in war
Valiant, invincible.
His royal appellation was
Mahraja Suksma Wisésa.

But, in fact, this is the first and last reference to Jajar, and the "mighty sovereign" disappears for good after the eleventh stanza! Canto V's first 14 stanzas are devoted to a debate over the esoteric meaning of wayang (puppeteer, puppets, lamp and screen), which is a minor variation on a virtual cliché of later Javanese literature.²² But there is a new arbitrariness to it; one has the distinct feeling that Gatoloco's "winning" interpretation is variable according to whatever his opponents propose. The evocative alliterations and punning assonances of the *haute style* are deployed with easy mastery, but often in a highly unclassical manner. For example, in Canto V, stanza 35, when his adversaries abuse him as a "tail-less dog," Gatoloco turns the tables on them by interpreting the insult as a deeper truth. He does this by exploiting the assonance between *asu* (dog) and *asal* (origin, source) to claim that he is the "true man" (van Akkeren's *volmaakte mens*). In Canto IV, stanzas 32-33, Gatoloco's witty "theological retort" depends for its point on the double meaning of *klèlèt* as both "opium-ball" and "turd." It is hard to convey in English the peculiar, jarring poetry that emerges from the violent juxtaposition of "turds" and "dogs" with the easy flow of traditional literary artifice: a polytonality quite new to Javanese literature, I think. Yet the reader is quickly aware that this polytonality is quite serious--neither a self-conscious playing with styles/tones nor a "sending up" of an ancient literary tradition. Dogs, wayang, Allah, conundrums, Majapahit, turds, opium, Muhammad . . . all are "on the same plane" from a literary point of view; none stands in a privileged, or ironical, relationship to the others.

But the polytonality does not end here. We should remember that the *Suluk*, like all Javanese poetry before this century, was composed to be sung aloud and socially, not read in the silence of the private heart. From a Javanese perspective the significant divisions in the poem are not so much shifts of topic as shifts in melody: the eleven cantos are demarcated from one another by the *macapat* musico-metrical forms in which they are composed: Part I's two cantos in Asmarandana and Sinom; Part II's four cantos in Mijil, Dandanggula, Sinom, and Asmarandana; Part III's five cantos in Gambuh, Sinom, Kinanti, Pangkur, and again Kinanti.

Now these musico-metric forms have, in "New Javanese" literature, well-accepted conventional uses; they are felt to arouse and to reflect distinct "moods," and to be appropriate for distinct "themes" or "topics."²³ Thus, for example, Asmarandana, the "meter" in which Jajar and Mahraja Suksma Wisésa's glory are briefly described, is said variously to be "absorbed, sad, mournful, but sad or mournful in the sense of being lovelorn. Suitable for a tale concerned with the pain of love," and "[arousing] sadness."²⁴ Dandanggula, used here for the dis-

22. Compare the version in the *Serat Centini*, as elegantly elucidated by P. J. Zoetmulder S.J., in "The Wayang as a Philosophical Theme," *Indonesia*, 12 (October 1971), pp. 85-96.

23. For a splendidly sophisticated and sensitive treatment of the relationship between Javanese song and poetry, *inter many alia*, see Martin F. Hatch, "Lagu, Laras, Layang: Rethinking Melody in Javanese Music" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1980), *passim*.

24. Quotations taken from S. Padmosoekotjo, *Ngèngrèngan Kasusastran Djawa*, 1 (Yogyakarta: Hien Hoo Sing, 1960) [fourth printing], pp. 22-23; and R. Hardjo-

cussion of opium-balls and turds, is said to be "flexible . . . if used for didactic purposes, very clear; if used for the fever of love, attractive," and "supple, pleasurable . . . good for ending a poem." Mijil, understood to be "suitable for moral education, but also for a tale of love," and "love-sick or sad," is deployed for the first abusive altercation between Gaṭoloco and the guru santri. More striking still is the fact that the exchange in Canto V, stanzas 58-59, where the guru santri say that Gaṭoloco and his mother are *silité babi* [anus of pigs; pigs' assholes], and Gaṭoloco replies in kind,²⁵ is composed in Sinom, whose character, we are told, is "friendly, clear . . ." and "suitable for lectures."²⁶

Are we then to think in terms of a sort of Ivesian polytonality, such that what is conveyed by the sound of the singing voice runs at 30, 85, 110, or 170 degrees to what the uttering lips speak? I think we must; for it is from this polytonality that the reader/listener gets the sharpest sensation of the almost perverse, hysterical, and original energy of the text; and the feeling that it is a kind of virtuoso dancing on the rim of a precipice.

The translation. It goes without saying that this translation, like most, is treason. I have tried my best to be faithful to the strange shifts of tonality of the Javanese, its elevation, brutality, and wit. Two qualifications, however, should be added. I decided to try to put the translation into some metrical form. There is no way to reproduce Javanese "meters" directly because they are meant to be sung (and thus are as hard to "say" as *Home on the Range* or *Wachet Auf*); moreover, they are sung in an elaborate melismatic style that virtually obliterates any "spoken" rhythm. Even attempting to model a meter on the written text is very difficult, given the enormous differences between the typical cadences of Javanese and English. So I have ploddingly approximated, as best I could, no more than the contours of the written rhythm. For example, a Dandanggula stanza consists of 10 lines of 10, 10, 8, 7, 9, 7, 6, 8, 12, and 7 syllables, whose final vowels must be i, a, e, u, i, a, u, a, i, and a. I have converted the line-lengths to 10, 10, 8, 6, 8, 6, 4, 10, 12, and 6 (all even numbers, as the Anglo-American ear prefers), and made no attempt to copy the final-vowel system. Inevitably, my version will mostly sound like doggerel; but even doggerel is a kind of homage to poetry.

Secondly, puns and alliterative playing with the sounds of neighboring words are absolutely central to the style, tone, and meaning of the *Suluk Gaṭoloco*. I have therefore made a special effort to imitate these puns and alliterations, and,

wirogo, *Paṭokaning Njekaraken*, 2nd printing (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1952), pp. 66-67. I am grateful to Robert Klotz for these references.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 25. I.e., Santri tiga duk miyarsa | On hearing this the <i>santri</i> three |
| Sareng misuh silitbabi | Abused him, screaming: "Pig's asshole!" |
| Ki Gaṭoloco angucap | Said Gaṭoloco in response: |
| Apa ta silité babi | "Why speak you of a pig's asshole?" |
| Digawa kang darbèni | Its owner bears it. Thus |
| Nora gepok raganingsun | On me it has no bearing." Cried |
| Santri tiga angucap | The <i>santri</i> three in turn: |
| Biyangamu silitbabi | "Your mother is a pig's asshole!" |
| Gaṭoloco mojar iku ora kaprah | Said Gaṭoloco: "This is very odd indeed!" |
| Iku ora lumrah jalma | "You must be men of talents rare |
| Sira bisa angarani | If you can specify her so. |
| Menawa sira pribadya | Perhaps you call her 'pig's asshole' |
| Wus ngarani nyilitbabi . . . | Because that's what you are yourselves?" |

26. All these quotations are drawn from Padmosoekotjo, *Ngèngrèngan*, and Hardjowirogo, *Paṭokaning*.

where necessary to achieve this effect, I have translated with some freedom. In every case, however, I have included the relevant lines of the Javanese in a footnote, so that the interested reader can assess the degree of semantic distortion and perhaps enjoy the roll and play of the original.

The full text of the translation, almost 400 stanzas, is too long to be included in a single issue of *Indonesia*, so I have arbitrarily divided it into two more or less equal parts, though the division (Cantos I-V, VI-XI) corresponds to no significant caesura in the poem as a whole. I should perhaps add that I have tried to keep footnotes to the minimum necessary for a reader to be able to follow the text.

A personal postscript: I prepared a rough translation of the *Suluk* many years ago for a seminar on literature in Indonesia. My copy was then lost, and for a long time I thought it was gone for good. But then, early this year, Dr. James Rush of Yale University told me that he had a copy in his possession and sent it to me, urging me to polish it for publication. For this act of friendly conservation I am very grateful.

SULUK GAṬOLOCO

I.

Asmarandana.

1. The tale to be related here
Concerns a kingdom celebrated
Both far and wide, called Jajar, and
Its mighty sovereign, in war
Valiant, invincible.
His royal appellation was
Mahraja Suksma Wisésa.

II.

Sinom.

1. Great was the King's authority,
Submissive were the outer lands.
The royal *patih*¹ numbered two,
To look at like the King himself,
In inner form but one:
The elder was Nur Muhammad,²
The *patih* next below
Was titled Jayarasa, while
The name of the *pengulu*³--Secapaningal;
2. The *jeksa*⁴ was Jayamiyarsa;
The *kliwon*⁵ of the King was called
Kiai Secadimenggala;
The *ganḍèk*⁶ was Secaangling,
The *mantri*⁷ myriad,
The soldiery uncountable.
Well-populated, rich,
Fertile and fortunate the realm,
Extending far and wide beneath Mount Sinai.⁸

1. *Patih*--Chief Minister or Grand Vizier.

2. The name means "Light of [the Prophet] Mohammad."

3. *Pengulu*, or *pangulu*--chief Islamic official of the court.

4. *Jeksa*--top judicial officer of the court.

5. *Kliwon*--title just below *bupati* in the old-style official hierarchy.

6. *Ganḍèk*--court official with the function of communicating royal orders.

7. *Mantri*--lower-ranking court official.

8. The text has Mount Tursina. Van Akkeren, however, identifies this (p. 4) as Mount Sinai.

3. Now let us speak of the Great King
Whose heart was greatly troubled, for
Of royal sons he had but one,
Yet shaped unlike a normal man:
His body shrivelled, shrunk,
And scaly, dry his wrinkled skin.
Without a nose at all,
Or eyes, or ears; his pleasure but
To sleep and sleep, day in, day out, continuously;
4. Yet once aroused from his deep sleep
Unruly, not to be appeased.
Deeply ashamed was the Great King.
Swiftly he sent his son away
To sit and meditate
Beneath the Sungsang banyan-tree.⁹
One servant did he grant,
Ki Dermaganḍul was his name,
Bidden to share the meditation of the prince.
5. Ugly his body, like a sack,
His slumber deep beyond compare,
When sleeping he was like a corpse.
He too had neither eyes nor ears--
Merely a pair of lips--
Nor thews, nor bones. From childhood on
Ki Dermaganḍul shared
The royal prince's meditation,
Suspended bat-like in the Sungsang banyan-tree.
6. When sixteen years had come and gone,
The father in his heart recalled
His one son, whom he had commanded
To meditate while still a child.
The prince's head he now
Clipped short and ornamented, but
His looks were not enhanced;¹⁰
He was more loathsome than before.
The sight made men put shuddering hands before their eyes.
7. Sent to resume his vigil in
The former place, he bat-like hung
Within the Sungsang banyan-tree
And meditated day and night.
Ki Dermaganḍul was
Not left behind apart from him.
How long is not described,
But when the twentieth year had come
His meditation won the favor of The One;¹¹

9. Van Akkeren (p. 107) identifies this tree as the ancient Tree of Heaven, or Tree of Life.

10. The reference is clearly to circumcision.

11. Hyang Suksma. The author uses a variety of terms, including Hyang Widi, Hyang Agung, Pangéran, etc., for the Supreme Being, more for metrical reasons

8. He gained the *wahyu*¹² and the skill
To best his fellow-man in words.
Unschool'd in rhetoric, he knew
The varied arts of argument.
Not studying to write
He knew all literary arts.
Not studying to count,
He calculated without fault.
To end his meditation then he asked for leave,
9. Desiring to roam far and free
And follow all his heart's desires.
Slowly his royal father said:
"Herewith I grant you leave, my son.
But now take every care,
For you will meet a foe whose power
Is great beyond compare.
Know *Ēndang Perjiwati* is
Her name. She meditates within the *Terusan Cave*.
10. "I here bestow on you a title
New--put off your former name--
Si Gatoloco seems to fit.
And now, my son, forthwith depart!"
The prince requested leave
To go. He kissed his father's foot,
Departing for the place
Of meditation; close behind
Came *Dermaganḍul*, following his master's steps.
11. And now he set forth on his way,
Obeying the longings of his heart,
Pleasures of every kind his joy,
His actions wild and riotous,
Absorbed in opium, drink,
And gambling, quick to anger if
Disturbed. *Ki Dermaganḍul* was
Afflicted sorely by it all.
So day by day the prince continued wandering on.
12. His one wish was to hurry on,
To come more quickly there, just as
His father had commanded him,
To where the goddess meditated,
Called *Perjiwati*. Racked
With ceaseless love-pain day and night,
His thoughts on nothing else,

than because the names refer to different attributes of the divinity. I have felt free to adopt an equivalent variety of English terms for the same reasons. The reader should not assume that any particular English term invariably corresponds to a particular Javanese expression.

12. *Wahyu*--the mysterious radiance of Power that descends on those heroes of Javanese lore who are destined for special greatness.

Only of her, the promised one.
Of *guru* and their *santri* let us now relate.¹³

III.

Mijil.

1. In *mijil* meter let us now describe
The *guru* of a *pondok*.¹⁴
Ki Ngabdul Jabar was the name of one,
Ki Ngabdul Manab was another's name,
The third Amat Ngarib,
Their pupils numerous.
2. Each *guru* had a hundred students or
Yet more, young *santri* all.
They taught Quranic recitation and
The *kitab* *Sitin*, *Pekih*, *Mukarar*,
Isbandi and *Usul*,
And *Tahjwit* and *Nahwu*.¹⁵
3. Their fame was celebrated everywhere.
Distinguished in debate,
There was no *guru* who could best them. All
The *santri* stood in deepest awe of them,
In *ngèlmu*¹⁶ argument
Ever-victorious.
4. Now at this time were the *kiyayi*¹⁷ three
Eager to take the field,
Battling with words about the *ngèlmu* lore,
Debating other *guru*, hither and yon.
That afternoon they fixed
To leave the following day.
5. Thus the next morning rose these *santri* three
And, after *Subuh*¹⁸ prayer,

13. *Guru*--teacher, usually in the sense of an adept in Javanese mysticism, but here in the sense of what today would be called an *ulama* or *kyai*, i.e., someone with an advanced knowledge of Islam. *Santri* in this poem usually means a student or follower of an Islamic divine, but can also refer to these divines themselves.

14. *Pondok*--an old-style Islamic school.

15. *Kitab*--a general designation for religious texts and commentaries within the community of Islam. *Pekih* = *Fikh* (Muslim jurisprudence); *Sitin* = *Sittin*, *Mukarar* = *Muharrar*, *Usul* = *Usul*, *Tahjwit* = *Tadjwid*; *Isbandi* and *Nahwu* are the same in Arabic. Many of the texts mentioned are associated with particular *tarékat*, or Sufi brotherhoods, e.g., *Isbandi* with the *Naqshbandi tarékat*.

16. *Ngèlmu*--the general Javanese word for knowledge, but especially esoteric mystical or religious knowledge.

17. *Kyai* is generally used in the text to mean anyone with superior religious knowledge, whether orthodoxly Islamic or not.

18. The first of the five daily prayers required of a pious Muslim, it is usually performed about 5 a.m.

Put on their turbans, skull-caps, flowing robes--
 Turbans of fine white cotton, skull-caps made
 Of rattan, and their robes
 Three layers of *jubah*¹⁹ white.

6. Two pairs of clean white trousers each man wore,
 Both long and wide in cut,
*Polèng*²⁰ their sashes, white their handkerchiefs,
 Breastplates of brass one finger thick, while tucked
 In at their waists were daggers
 Whose hafts were made of horn.
7. The *swasa*²¹ rings were etched with flower-motifs,
 The sheaths were overlaid
 With blossom-patterned silver decoration,
 And from these sheaths there dangled prayer-beads.
 Each guru held a staff
 Tipped with a tin point.
8. Two followers escorted each kiyai,
 Carrying in their arms
 Four kitab each, and thus the library
 Was four-and-twenty volumes all in all.
 And now with all prepared,
 They set off on their way.
9. They left at six o'clock, the sun on high,
 Their passage leisurely.
 Each one was wearing sandals made of wood,
 Which sounded *kateklik* as they trudged along
 The road. By ten o'clock
 They had come far indeed.
10. Because it was so hot, they paused to rest
 Beneath a banyan's shade.
 The three kiyai spread their handkerchiefs
 And laid them o'er the banyan's knotty roots
 To make a place to sit
 With knees drawn tightly up.
11. Their staves they planted in the ground.
 Their followers sat down too
 In front of them, all seated in a row.
 Fanned by a steady, cooling breeze they prayed
 With gentle mutterings,
 Counting their prayer-beads.
12. The six companions joined them in their prayers
 Muttering the *zikir*,²²

19. *Jubah*--an Arab-style long, loose, cassock-like garment.

20. *Polèng*--a sacred pattern, usually of alternating red, black, and white squares, of great antiquity. In *wayang*, loincloths of this pattern distinguish the descendants of the Wind God Bayu, most notably Bima, the second Pandawa brother, and Hanuman, the white ape of the Ramayana.

21. *Swasa*--a gold-colored copper-zinc alloy.

22. I.e., the *dhikr*, an Islamic (typically Sufi) religious exercise consisting of

Shaking their heads in rhythmic unison,
 Holding the kitab volumes in their laps.
 And thereupon they saw
 A man approaching them,

13. Stunted and small, hasting with busy steps
 When seen afar; but when
 He came near by and could be viewed from close,
 Wretched and wasted did the stranger seem,
 Unlike a normal man,
 More like a stalking crow.²³

IV.

Ḍaṇḍanggula.

1. Stunted and squat was he, with crinkly hair;
 His pock-marked face was round; his squinting eyes
 Cast sidelong glances here and there,
 His eyebrows one straight line;
 His nose was flat, his mouth protruded,
 His teeth uneven, white,
 Lips thick and blue;
 His upturned chin peaked to a jutting point,
 His ears misshapen, and his cheek-flesh dangling jowls,
 His neck short and thickset.
2. On shoulders hunched a hump of rice-pot size,
 His arms and hands misshapen and askew,
 One finger pointing sharply up,
 Breasts hanging grossly down,
 His belly bulging, rump protruding,
 Knees knocking as he walked,
 Feet pigeon-toed.
 His skin was scaly-dry and dirty-white,
 And when he breathed, his breath came out in heaving gasps;
 He slavered constantly.
3. He wore a blue-black headcloth tattered-torn,
 His coat and shirt were full of gaping holes.
 Only his pockets were intact.
 His belt, like women's sashes,
 Was off-white cotton all in rags;
 His *lurik*²⁴ pants had more
 Than twenty holes.
 The pockets of his jacket were stuffed tight
 With corn-leaf wrappers, nor was good tobacco wanting,
 Together with a flint.

continuous repetition of a few sacred words or phrases, and rhythmic movements of the head and body. Frequently the dhikr leads to a religio-mystical trance.

23. The simile is meant as nothing more than a semantic clue indicating a change of meter. *Ḍaṇḍang* (crow) is the first half of the name of the meter *Ḍaṇḍanggula*.

24. *Lurik*--a typically Central Javanese type of striped hand-woven cotton cloth.

4. His opium-pipe was polished, flecked bamboo
Gleaming a reddish-yellow here and there;
It had three sections, and the rings
Above, betwixt, below,
Were fashioned all of tin alloy;
The pipe-top black with age,
The neck-ring broken,
All over gleaming greasily,
Since it was blackened every day by smoking lamps;
Also a cleaning-knife.
5. His pouch contained a mere three *klèlèt*-balls.²⁵
He sat down close beside the *santri* three,
Wheezing and puffing as he breathed,
His cheeks puffed hugely out.
He smelled of something stale, repulsive;
It wafted on to where
The *santri* sat.
The stranger rummaged in his pocket,
Drew out his pouch, lit up, and stuck into his mouth
A corn-straw cigarette
6. One finger thick. The coiling smoke spread out
To where the three renowned *santri* sat.
The smell of burning straw was strong.
When the three guru sniffed it
They covered up averted faces,
Spitting and sputtering,
One of them coughing.
The six companions at the front
Retreated hurriedly to where their teachers were
And with bowed heads sat down.
7. Now the three guru scanned attentively
The features of the stranger just arrived--
Ashy and sallow was his face--
And thus did they begin:
"Astagfirullah! Begging God's
Forgiveness! Heaven preserve
Us from the Devil's
Accursèd work! What kind of man
Is this? In all our lifelong lives upon this earth
Never have we set eyes
8. "Upon a human being the like of this!"
They turned to their companions, muttering:
"Young friends! Just take a look at this!
What an ignoble creature!
Utterly ignorant of the Prophets!
In this world clearly doomed

25. *Klèlèt*-balls, also known as *jicing*, are made of the dross left in the bowl of an opium-pipe after a smoke. The balls are chewed and swallowed. In nineteenth century Java this was the cheapest form of opium consumption. See James Rush, "Opium Farms in Nineteenth Century Java, 1860-1910" (Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1977), p. 28 n. 66.

To suffer torment--
 No less so in the world hereafter,
 In fact seven times more dire than in this world!
 So now we say to you

9. "Earnestly learn Quranic recitation
 Aiming to know the *sarak* of God's Prophet.²⁶
 Safety in this world and the next
 Comes only to the faithful
 Obeyers of the Prophet's law.
 This creature's doubly damned
 In this life and
 The next." All the companions then
 Murmured amens, while Amat Ngarib spoke these words:
 "This creature, I suspect,
10. "Is really no true human being at all.
 Most likely it's a *wéwé*, graveyard-born,
Gendruwa, or a *memedi*,
 Or an *ilu-ilu*!"²⁷
 Then Ngabdul Jabar took his turn:
 "A goblin of some sort!
 Some kind of ghost!
 Or possibly a gibbon-ape,
 Or an orangutan, dwelling in jungle depths!"
 Ki Ngabdul Manap said:
11. "All your interpretations are amiss.
 It's of the race of jungle-stalking ogres
 Called *Memedi Tongtongsot*!" As
 He listened to the words
 The guru santri spoke, the stranger's
 Heart grew bitter, but
 He showed no sign.
 Swiftly his bundle he untied,
 Took out a large container-box of opium-dross
 And downed it at one gulp.
12. At once the intoxicating power spread
 Right through his body, through both skin and flesh,
 Flowing through every muscle to
 The marrow of his bones.
 Therewith his strength was all restored.
 His eyes flashed glittering fire,
 His face turned blue.
 The santri scanned with watchful eyes
 The manner of this stranger who had just arrived,
 Noting his altered mien.
13. Ki Ngabdul Jabar turned to Mat Ngarib:
 "Amat Ngarib, pray ask this creature what

26. These are the five obligations laid on pious Muslims by Mohammad: the five daily prayers; the confession of faith; the observance of the fasting month of Ramadan; the pilgrimage to Mecca; and the distribution of alms.

27. Various kinds of Javanese spooks, ghosts, and ghouls.

- It is that it is eating there?
 And what it calls itself?
 Where its true dwelling-place is found?
 What is its occupation?
 From day to day
 Whether it ever takes a bath?
 Its skin's so scaly, scrofulous, and dry.
 I think the creature has
14. "No knowledge of the *sarak* or *sirik*,
 What's *najis*, *makruh*, *batal*, or *haram*.²⁸
 It simply serves its appetites!
 No matter whether flesh
 Of dog, or jungle boar, or swine
 It wolfs down everything
 Without disgust,
 Completely unafraid of sin."
 Ki Amat Ngarib then drew near and gently spoke:
 "O Stranger, would you please
15. "Inform us what your true name really is,
 And where your usual place of habitation?"
 Softly the stranger answered him:
 "My name is Gaṭoloco.
 I am the Perfect Man,²⁹ my place
 The center of the universe."
 With peals of laughter
 The santri three received these words,
 Cupping their mouths, and rubbing thighs in ecstasy.
 Then Gaṭoloco said:
16. "Why is it that you're laughing in this way?"
 To him the santri three responded thus:
 "We're laughing at that name of yours
 Because it's very odd.
 It is no common human name."
 So Gaṭoloco said:
 "Come, do not laugh!
 My name's the highest name of all.
 Interpreted, the sense of *gaṭo* is 'prick-head'
 And *loco* 'something rubbed.'
17. "This is the reason all my kith and kin
 To their own liking call me by this name
 And I respond to them as such.
 In truth my names are three:

28. Various types of Islamic taboos. *Sirik* and *makruh* are things to be avoided (rather than strictly forbidden), e.g., shellfish. *Najis* and *haram* refer to things regarded as absolutely polluting, such as pork. *Batal* refers to the cancellation of the beneficial effect of a ritual through accidental pollution.

29. *Lanang Sejati* is to be understood in multiple senses: *Lanang* means "masculine," "a male," while *sejati* has the double meaning of "flawless" and "original" or "model." The meaning of the whole phrase is both "essence of maleness," and "Perfect Man."

- Kyai Gaṭelkinisik's the first,
 The third Gaṭelpanglus.³⁰
 But the best-known
 In all the neighboring villages
 Is Gaṭoloco." When the santri three heard this,
 They roared with mocking laughter,
18. Cupping their mouths, and clutching at their hearts.
 The tears flowed down their visages in streams,
 Their laughter uncontrollable.
 The six companions wet
 Their pants. Ki Ngamat Ngarib said:
 "The name you bear's haram.
 It is laid down
 In all the kitab that I have
 That those who die haram must go to Hell, whereas
 The *halal* soar to heaven."³¹
19. "Your name's one fatal consequence is that
 You're what the kitab call makruh, najis!"
 Then Gaṭoloco softly said:
 "Your sarak are quite wrong.
 He who can stroke and rub his prick
 Is truly honorable.
 And such a one
 Deserves at least to be *demang*,
Kepala, *mantri destrik*, *patih* or *bupati*,³²
 No others capable.
20. "As I myself am no *priyayi*,³³ and
 I merely bear the name "Most Glorious Prick,"
 So later my descendants will
 Become *priyayi* proud."
 Said Ngabdul Jabar angrily:
 "You look just like a civet
 Cat, yet dare
 To claim the title of True Man!"
 Giggling, Ki Gaṭoloco answered him this way:
 "My words are not amiss.
21. "I claim indeed the title of True Man!
 For *ala* is the meaning of *lanang*.³⁴

30. These are synonyms of Gaṭoloco: *gaṭel* is a variant for *gaṭo*; *kinisik* means "rubbed," and *panglus* "one who rubs."

31. *Halal* is the opposite of *haram*, i.e., ritually pure.

32. Various ranks of territorial officialdom in nineteenth century colonial Java. *Kepala* = village headman; *demang* = a special superior kind of headman, with authority over other headmen; *mantri destrik* = an official at the District (*Kewedanaan*) level; *bupati* = Regent; *patih* here = deputy to a *bupati*.

33. *Priyayi*--a member of the Javanese administrative upper class.

34. A play on words repeated many times in the course of the text. *Ala* (bad, ugly) is what the *santri* call Gaṭoloco, because of his appearance and behavior. But he assimilates its sound to that of [a]*lanang* (male) and, later, Allah, indicating a mystical relationship between all three.

And if I call my prick *sejati*
 The reason is the word
 Means *sedyā-mati*, life-for-death." ³⁵
 The santri three replied:
 "Your mug is like" ³⁶
 A spook's, untouched by water all
 Its life." Ki Gatoloco laughed aloud and said:
 "It's hard for me to bathe.

22. "Suppose I were to bathe myself in water?
 My body's filled with water all the time!
 Suppose I bathed in roaring flames?
 My body's filled with fire!
 Suppose I scraped myself with earth?
 The earth's my origin!
 Were I to bathe
 In whirlwinds, it's from me they come!
 Oh tell me then with what my body should be bathed?"
 The santri three replied:
23. "Take the True Water, wash yourself with it.
 Therewith your body will be purified."
 Ki Gatoloco gently said:
 "The three of you are wrong.
 Were you to purify yourselves
 Immersed nine months in water,
 Still you'd fail
 To reach true knowledge. As for me,
 In the pure water of the inner Will I bathe,
 Unmingled in the heart
24. "With anything contaminating, deep
 Within; such only is for me the real,
 True bathing of the self." Replied
 The santri three at once:
 "Your face is like a mangy dog's!
 Who ever would believe
 Your line of thought
 Is straight. We clearly see that you
 Know neither batal, haram, makruh nor najis;
 For you all is halal.
25. "Though it be flesh of dog, wild boar, or pig,
 You eat whatever strikes your fancy, and
 You have no fear of sin at all."
 Ki Gatoloco said:
 "That is quite true, you are not wrong
 In what you have asserted.
 Though it be flesh
 Of dog, I think first of its source;

35. Another esoteric play on words: *sedy[a m]ati* means "prepared for death" in the physical and mystical senses of the latter word.

36. Here, and elsewhere, the antagonists use the coarsest possible Javanese to one another. *Dapurmu* is a vulgarism for "face" or "mien."

- And if the dog in origin is good, and not
One that's been stolen, or
26. "If I have bred him up from puppyhood,
Who then can charge me or complain? His flesh
Is far more halal than a lamb's;
In cases where the lamb
Has been obtained by theft, the meat
Is more haram than dog.
And as for pork,
I look to see its provenance.
And if I've raised that pig from piglethood, its flesh
Is more halal than lamb.
27. "And if it is a goat, but yet obtained
By theft, it is more haram than a pig.
Thus, though I eat a wild boar's flesh,
If but its source be good--
Say that I hunted it myself--
Not stolen, then it is
More than halal.
As for the flesh of carabao,
If stolen, it's more haram than a suckling pig!"
The santri shouted back:
28. "Your reasoning's exceedingly perverse!
No wonder that your life on earth's accursed,
Always in wretched poverty,
No rice, hulled or unhulled,
Your clothes not those of normal men,
Each garment worn-out rags;
And all your days
Denied the pleasures of good food,
Enjoying neither 'salty,' 'oily-rich' or 'hot,'
Homeless and miserable."
29. Ki Gaṭoloco answered them and said:
"You who are so endowed with food and clothes,
How many chests of rags do you
Possess, how many pots
For preservation of your shit?"
At this the santri three
Laughed loud and said:
"Our worn-out clothing mixes with
The dust, and when our shit drops to the ground below
It mingles with the earth."
30. Angrily Gaṭoloco said to them:
"If so, then you're just like the common herd,
Deserving of no special name.
Unlike myself, for all
That lives upon this earth, beneath
The canopy of heaven--
All, all is mine.
Whatever glitters bright and new

- I offer to my loyal friends, reserving for
Myself only the bad.³⁷
31. "I am content with what I here possess.
And as for every sort of tasty food,
No matter what the flavor--salt,
Hot, oily-rich, or sweet--
I give it to my friends to eat.
The Living Being's name
Alone I know;
Day in, day out, I write this name
Using in full the one-and-twenty characters,³⁸
Storing it in my heart.
32. "And as for what I eat from day to day,
I pick out everything that is most hot
And what is bitterest alone.
For thus each turd I drop
Becomes another mountain high.
And that is why their peaks
All belch forth smoke.
The charred remains are what I eat³⁹--
What has become encrusted stone and rock--that is,
The klèlèt I consume.
33. "In truth, until I drop my burning turds,
These mountain peaks have no reality;
They'd disappear immediately
If I should once refrain
From dropping turds. Check for yourselves
My truthfulness from what
My anus spouts!"
When the three santri heard these words
In utter rage they said: "Your face is like a cat's,
Homeless, all skin and bones."
34. Ki Gaṭoloco slowly answered them:
"The reason why I am so thin and worn
Is that I would obey the Will
Of Allah's Messenger."⁴⁰
Each day I follow but His Will alone,
Proceeding to the opium-den
To purchase there
Both klèlèt and pure opium;

37. Again, "the bad" [ala] is to be understood in its esoteric sense.

38. These are the basic characters (*aksara*) of the Javanese script, which for many Javanese have a hidden mystical meaning.

39. Understanding this stanza depends on recalling the double meaning of klèlèt, i.e., "opium-dross left over after a smoke" and "turds." "Dropping turds" has the esoteric meaning of consuming klèlèt-balls and enjoying the consequent opium-trance.

40. I.e., Mohammad. But this "Mohammad," as the text later suggests, is by no means the orthodox Mohammad of Arabian Islam.

- And then I eat or burn it all; this knowledge deep
To me from Allah comes.
35. "If I do not obey His Will in this,
His wrath at my neglect is very great;
My torment terrible, of sleep
Deprived by night, as though
My body's torn out of its frame."
Replied the santri: "This
Is your idea--
The Prophet in an opium-den!
The truth is that the Prophet honored by the world
In Mecca much be sought!"
36. Angrily Gatoloco answered them:
"The Meccan Messenger you glorify
Has no existence, for he died
A thousand years ago.
His home was in the Land of Araby,
Full seven months away
And sea-concealed.
All that remains of him's a grave.
Each day you make your upside-down *sembah*⁴¹--don't say
You hope to reach him thus?
37. "That's why your *sembah* bring no benefit.
To know your own true self, you must *sembah*
To your own Messenger--I mean
Your inward Life. *Sembah*
To Messengers outside your Self,
With all the ritual words,
Are waste of breath.
You call on Allah uselessly,
Shouting against each other so contentiously
That Allah gets no sleep!
38. "The Prophet died one thousand years ago:
So, if you bellow from your windows till
Your necks snap with the strain, he'll still
Hear nothing that you say,
And you'll have killed yourselves in vain."
To which the santri said:
"You're civet-faced,
You wretch! An unbeliever too!
Besides the whole world speaks against what you have said."
39. "The reason why I'm sore afflicted is
That in me there is something dark concealed.
Always, from childhood up till now,
My heart has been concerned

41. Gatoloco contrasts the Javanese *sembah* with the Muslim prostration in prayer. The *sembah* is a gesture of respect performed with the palms placed together before the face, with the face itself in a normal, upright position. The Muslim prostration ("upside-down") involves kneeling and placing the forehead down on the ground.

Lest I be punished by The Owner.⁴²
 This burden to escape,
 Please teach me now
 To justify all that I've done,
 And thus avoid the penalty the state lays down."
 The santri, hearing this,

40. Then said: "Well now! It's clear you are a thief!
 It's not appropriate for you to talk
 With us. You're just a hypocrite,⁴³
 A sinner in God's eyes.
 Were we to teach the rules of how
 Responsibility
 Must be assumed
 By evil-doers, we would share
 Your sins, e'en though we truly were instructing you
 In Islam's holy rules.
41. "Yet, by informing you of thieving's rules,
 We'd end up sharing in your punishment."⁴⁴
 Ki Gaṭoloco softly spoke:
 "If you don't wish to tell
 How thieves must answer to the Judge,
 This riddle at the least
 Please solve for me!"
 To this the santri three replied:
 "Just tell it us, and straightway we'll unravel it,
 We teachers of young men."⁴⁵

V.

Sinom.

1. "Now then, you famous santri three,
 Resolve my riddle if you can.
 Take Ki Ḍalang and Ki Wayang,⁴⁶
 The bléncong-lamp and the kelir,⁴⁷
 And tell me which, in truth,

42. The Owner (*Ingkang Darbèni*) is another expression for the divinity.

43. They use the term *munapèk*, derived from the Arabic [*munāfiḳ*] and literally meaning "apostate from Islam."

44. The above passage satirizes what the author sees as the formalism of orthodox Islam--such that even theft can be justified by use of the right scriptural casuistry.

45. "Young men" (*nomnoman*) is a linguistic cue indicating that the meter is to shift to *Sinom*.

46. *Ḍalang* = puppeteer; *wayang* are the celebrated puppets used for the Javanese shadowplay.

47. The *bléncong* is the special (often beautifully ornamented) oil-lamp used for traditional *wayang* performances. The *kelir* is the screen against which the puppets are placed.

Is the most ancient of them all?"⁴⁸

Amat Ngarib replied:

"The oldest of them is the screen.

Before the *ḍalang* or the puppets are at hand,

2. "Before the *bléncong*-lamp is lit,
The screen exists already, and
The four directions of the winds,
Beside, below, between, above.
Thus oldest is the screen!"
Then loudly spoke Ngabdul Jabar:
"Mat Ngarib, you are wrong,
Your answer is erroneous.
My guess would be--the oldest is the puppeteer.
3. "The screen and puppets all are his.
The lamp is lit and hung by him.
The puppets are his handiwork.
Therefore the oldest one is he.
There's nothing that precedes
Th'existence of the puppeteer.
He who creates the play,
And good and evil, victory
And loss determines, is the mighty puppeteer.
4. "Whether the lamp burns high or low,
Whether the screen is wide or narrow,
It is the *ḍalang* who decides;
Most ancient then is he, I think."
Then Ngabdul Manap spoke:
"Amat Ngarib! Abdul Jabar!
Both your solutions are
Amiss, for in my view at least,
Nothing more ancient than the puppets can be found.
5. "For when a man 'puts on' a play,
And it is still full three months off,
The *ḍalang*'s name as yet unknown,
The place itself quite unprepared,
He'll still inform his friends
That he is planning to put on
A wayang. Never does
He say he's going to 'put on'
A screen or *bléncong*, let alone a puppeteer.
6. "I'm sure we all agree that what's
'Put on' is wayang; so, although
No trace of it can yet be seen,
Its name's already been pronounced.
Thus wayang is the oldest."
Softly did Gatoloco say:
"Abdul Jabar! Ngabdul
Manap! And you, Amat Ngarib!
All three of your proposed solutions miss the mark.

48. *Tuwa* is used throughout in the double sense of "senior" and "ancient," i.e., close to the origin of things.

7. "According to my view at least,
The oldest is the bléncong-lamp.
For even though the screen's set up,
Wayang and gamelan prepared,
Musicians seated with
The puppeteer, if all's still dark,
The dalang's at a loss,
To pick unable, or reject
Or give the proper speech to any of the puppets.

8. "The audience can not recognize
Each wayang-puppet for itself,
And everything's mysterious,
Obscure and hidden from the eye.
It's when the bléncong comes
To life, and flares up brilliantly,
That from the bottom to
The top the screen is visible
With the Kurawa and Pandawa left and right.⁴⁹

9. "The puppeteer beneath the lamp
Can now select, can now reject
Each wayang puppet in its turn
By weighing them reflectively.
And then he sets one forth
Whose form is called 'the one-who-yearns.'⁵⁰
What makes this possible
Is the bright bléncong's blaze on high;
I think, therefore, the lamp is older than the rest.

10. "Now when the gamelan resounds,
It's for the wayang that it's played.
The dalang speaks, but yet his words
To Ki Wayang⁵¹ belong, not him.
The players great and small
Obey the dalang's will, from slow
To rapid tempo, turn and turn
About. The dalang rules indeed,
Yet he does merely move the puppets, speaks their words,

11. "To serve Him who 'puts on' the show,
Whose honored name is Kyai Sepi.⁵²
Sepi betokens 'what-is-not.'
His Being, when revealed, is true,
Eternal and unmoved,
With nothing over, nothing short,
Beyond direction, place;

49. The cousins who are the main protagonists of the Mahabharata, the best-loved source of stories for wayang performances.

50. Van Akkeren (p. 118) says that typically the first puppet that the puppeteer brings on stage is described by him as someone who "yearns for" a loved one or a treasured object.

51. Another expression for the divinity.

52. Still another esoteric expression for the divine essence.

And He it is who governs all
The movements of the puppets through the puppeteer.

12. "He who decides what tale is played,
He who determines good and bad,
He who puts on the show, and He
Who watches it is Kyai Urip.⁵³
And when the lamp-flame's quenched,
Then everything becomes a void,
Nothing at all exists,
Like blackest night before the dawn,
Utterly empty, indistinguishably dark.
13. "The meaning of the screen is 'body,'
While wayang is the inner soul,
The *dalang* is The Messenger,
The *bléncong* is the Light of Life,
The outer form of Being;
This Light of Life of yours throughout
Your body radiates,
Inside, outside, above, below,
Your outer form is thus the outer form of God.⁵⁴
14. "Now when the wayang-show is over,
The wayang-puppets and the screen
Are stored within the wayang-chest;
The lamp and screen part company,
The *dalang* and his puppets.
The lamp's light and the puppeteer
Have gone, but who knows where?
Go see if you can find the place,
But if you find it not, you're like a monument.⁵⁵
15. "And later when you come to die,
Where think you then will be your life?
And now, while you are still alive,
Where does your death reside? Your life's
Companion to your death,
Which bears your life along with it.
Where is its burial-place?
So restlessly you lug it round!
Seek carefully the place wherein your being lies!"
16. On hearing this, the *santri* three
Glared angrily, and spoke in scorn:
"Come, *Gaṭoloco*! Your discourse
Is not that of a normal man."
Ki *Gaṭoloco* said:
"That is precisely what I seek,
Not to be like the rest,
But to excel my fellow-men.
With knowledge such as yours I am not satisfied.

53. *Urip* = Life. Another expression for the divinity.

54. The Javanese term is *Pangéran* (Prince, Lord).

55. *Arca*, a lifeless stone statue.

17. "Each one of you is like a leech,
For you have neither eyes nor ears;
You like to eat whatever stinks,
Sucking so much you get a rash,
Not knowing it is blood.
What's stinking, rotten, and decayed
To you's a special treat!
And when you're glutted, you curl up
For one whole year incapable of re-emerging!
18. "And when the moment comes at last,
You're unaware that you are sinning;
True to the kitab, tip-tap-hearted,⁵⁶
True to the Prophet, without profit,
For all you make are profits,
Of the True Meaning ignorant.
You read the Book amiss
(Bald-shaven, hair plucked wholly out),
Not knowing how to profit from its deeper *Rasa*.⁵⁷
19. "Obedient to the words and text
But not ecstatic in your hearts.⁵⁸
So the commandments you receive
Awry, to profit turning them;
Aiming to make a profit,
You have no profit of their sense.
The pleasure of the tongue
Is all the sense you can enjoy,
To Inward Learning's deepest sense insensible.⁵⁹
20. "Eye-less you live, your eyes just like
The eye-marks found on bamboo-stems.
You have no profit from them." When
The santri three heard this, enraged,
They answered: "Don't your own
Eyes tell you that these eyes of ours
See very clearly?" Then

56. Here and in the following line I have taken some liberties in attempting to convey something of the author's ironical playing on words. The Javanese runs: Manut kitab tabetaban / Manut dalil tanpa angsil / Amung kinarya angsil / Tan kangsil ing rasanipun. . . .

57. *Rasa* is one of the most notoriously untranslatable words in Javanese, partly because of its multiplicity of meanings ("feeling," "sense," "meaning," etc.), but also because it is central to a very un-Western conception of man's physical and spiritual being, and his relation to the cosmos. Thus it may bear the connotations of "that inner faculty which links man to the divinity in the world," or "mystical consciousness" or "inner meaning"--and so forth. The difficulties are such that I have often left the word untranslated, in its original form--a strategy which also has its metrical advantages on occasion.

58. With "text . . . not ecstatic" I have tried to convey the play of: Mung nurut daliling kitab / Tan kinetap jroning ati . . .

59. Here the play corresponds to: Tan kangsil in rasanipun / Namung rasaning ilat / Puniku dipunkecapi / Rasanira ing kawruh datan rinasa.

Ki Gatoloco said to them:

"How very fortunate indeed you santri are,

21. For all of you have eyes, I see,
Two eyes per santri, if I'm right.
But do you dare to take an oath
Asserting that you own two eyes?"
Replied the santri three:
"Of course we dare to take this oath!
In this world and the Next
These eyes will always be our own."
Ki Gatoloco answered them impatiently:
22. "You take this much too much for granted;
They'll read the *talkim* over you⁶⁰
For claiming what you do not own.
The state police will hear from me!⁶¹
They'll chain you up for sure
For claiming what you do not own!
But if those eyes are yours,
Then bid them function separately,
Let one keep watchful guard, the other soundly sleep!
23. "Then never, all your lifelong lives,
Will you be victimized by thieves!"
To this, they said: "It's only you
Who use your eyes alternately!"
Ki Gatoloco said:
"If those things really are your eyes
And you have full control,
Then have them do what you command!
But if they don't obey, you clearly do not own them."
24. The santri three replied: "We dare
To reaffirm our ownership.
From childhood to old age our eyes
And bodies are inseparable."
Ki Gatoloco said:
"Well, since your eyes and you
Are never separated,
Pray tell me where you got them from?
Did you create them, borrow them, or buy the pair?
25. "Supposing they were given you,
Who was it who presented them?
Who were the witnesses? What day
And where did the donation happen?"
Stunned were the santri three,
And speechless too, at first; but then,
After a pause, they said:
"They were created by our fathers."
Laughing impatiently, Ki Gatoloco said:

60. *Talkim*. In Islamic practice, an oration spoken at the graveside and addressed to the deceased person, accompanied by prayers.

61. *Tak-repotaké pulisi* is the original Javanese.

26. "I'm quite convinced your parents both
 Would say that is not true at all.
 Neither would have the feeling that
 They'd given you eyes, nose, and ears.
 For all they did was feel
 The ecstasy of prick-meets-cunt;⁶²
 All they created was
 The means whereby you got your shapes
 And forms, they did not make your noses, eyes, and ears!"
27. To this the santri three retorted:
 "Allah the Great and Holy is
 Creator of our bodies all!"
 Ki Gaṭoloco answered them:
 "What was your standing then
 Before the Almighty? And what made
 You so acceptable
 To Him, that in return He gave
 The two observant eyes you have, both left and right?"
28. Replied the santri three: "To Him
 What is acceptable is worship!"⁶³
 Ki Gaṭoloco roared at them:
 "The worship of the One Most True
 Does not belong to you.
 For every word of worship spoken
 Is His in origin.
 Thus you are simply crafty thieves
 Brazen enough to peddle stolen goods around!"
29. "You can't acquit yourselves of this;
 You've been entrusted with the goods!
 You can't avoid arrest, and there's
 No way you can deny the facts:
 For what are mine I've found
 On you. Where did you get them from?
 If you can't tell the source,
 Then truly all those eyes are mine;
 You can not reaffirm you really own your eyes!"
30. "My orders carry out at once!
 If not, I'll rap you on the skull.
 For you have clearly been defeated.
 Those eyes of yours are mine. The world
 Holds you responsible
 For using them so witlessly.
 I hurl them at your heads.
 Lost since the age of mystery⁶⁴
 I've stored them at the center of the universe.

62. The Javanese could not be more coarsely explicit: *Mung nikmat pucuk perji*.

63. "Worship" has perhaps unavoidable Christian connotations. The Javanese word is *puji*.

64. The Javanese phrase *ilangé duk alam gaib* is itself rather mysterious.

31. "My witnesses are form and sense,
The dayspring and the night. I will
Report you to He-Who-Is-Not;⁶⁵
For now I've found them, and 'twas you
Who'd hidden them away
And witlessly made use of them.
If you don't yield them, the
Police will quickly hear from me!⁶⁶
And willy-nilly you'll be dragged before the Court!
32. "The Judge will sentence you for sure
To spend a night or two in jail."
To this the santri three replied:
"We're talking with an idiot!"
Ki Gaṭoloco said
To them: "Throughout my lifelong life,
Before I take a step,
I always seek the proper means.
I've thought about what's rough, what's smooth, and what's obscure,⁶⁷
33. "So that I do not make mistakes."
In anger Mat Ngarib declared:
"We're talking with a crazy man!"
Ki Gaṭoloco said: "You're right!
From childhood I've been mad,⁶⁸
And reaching adulthood still am
Not wholly right in mind,
In restless motion day by day,
Selecting and rejecting tasty foods to eat
34. "And garments beautiful and dear."⁶⁹
For my conviction takes the path
That leads a man to excellence."
Spitefully Ngabdul Jabar said:
"I'm utterly fed up,
Debating with a tailless dog!"
Ki Gaṭoloco said:
"That name you give me is correct,
For all my ancestors, through every generation,
35. "Each one of them was tailless, so
That truly none possessed a tail.
Now 'dog,' interpreted, means 'source,'⁷⁰

65. Hyang Tanpana (Hyang Tanpa Ana)--another appellation for the divinity.

66. In this and the following line we find the colonial judicial terms "*pulisi*" and "*pangadilan*." But there's no doubt that both terms here have an esoteric mystical meaning as well.

67. Inevitably, "rough," "smooth," and "obscure" do not do justice to such richly connotative Javanese words as *agal* [*kasar*], *halus*, and *samar*.

68. *Édan* (mad) has to be understood esoterically as meaning both "unlike ordinary men" and as "obsessed with the search for the divinity."

69. Again, these pleasures are to be understood (?) esoterically.

70. Here, and elsewhere in the text, "dog" (*asu*) and "origin" (*asal*) are esoterically linked.

- While 'tailless' indicates that I
Am truly human, with
No tail, unlike your ancestors.
You, on the other hand,
Are who? With shaven, outplucked heads,
Are you from Holland, China, Northwest India,⁷¹
36. "Or are you from Bengal?" Forthwith
The santri three responded thus:
"All three of us are Javanese
And our religion is Mohammad's!"
Ki Gaṭoloco said:
"You act like infidels! You must
Be Christians!⁷² If
You really are all Javanese,
Why do you not invoke the *déwa* and *beṭara*?⁷³
37. "Know the religion of Mohammad
Is the religion of the Arabs.
Since you invoke a foreign people,
Again you're proven simply thieves.
Upon a foreigner
You call, because you live in sin,
Your knowledge immature,
Faithless in everything you do;
Therefore your faith is hopelessly degenerate.
38. "Beginning from the ancient times
Up to the Age of Majapahit,
The Javanese invoked the Gods.⁷⁴
But with Demak⁷⁵ this changed; they called
Upon the Messenger
Of Allah. This Arabic name
You have adopted now,
Abandoning the old religion,
Meaning you're jiveass Javanese and infidels.⁷⁶

71. *Apa Landa apa Cina apa Koja*. It is hard to know in this context whether by *Landa* the author means "Dutch" or "white men." There is a similar problem with *Koja*, which Van Akkeren translates as "from N.W. India," but which was in the nineteenth century a common Javanese term for foreign Asian (non-Chinese) merchants in general.

72. *Krèsten agamanira* puzzled Van Akkeren (p. 122), who thought that if the author meant Christians he would have said *Srani*. He therefore suggested that *Krèsten* might mean the Quraish of the Kur'ān. This reasoning seems implausible to me, and I assume that *Krèsten*, like *pulisi*, derives from Dutch-colonial "Malay," and simply means "Christians."

73. I.e., the multiple divinities of the Hindu-Javanese cosmology and the wayang world.

74. I.e., *beṭara*.

75. The leader of the coalition of coastal states that destroyed Majapahit in the fifteenth century, and the first major Islamic state in Java's history.

76. No doubt this anachronistic phrasing jars. It is my only solution to the problem of conveying the play of *Jawa jawal kaping kopar*.

39. "Kapir 'capricious' signifies;⁷⁷
 Kobar, interpreted, means 'burnt,'
 'Half-done,' and thus it follows that
 The three of you are just 'half-baked.'
 You say you're Javanese
 And your religion is Mohammad's;
 But if you claim you are
 Arabians living in the land
 Of Java here, it means you're really Christian Arabs!"⁷⁸
40. Now when the santri three heard this,
 They glared at him and sharply said:
 "O Gaṭoloco, you're quite mad!"
 To them Ki Gaṭoloco answered:
 "I'd surely go insane
 Had I to look at mugs like yours!
 And if I caught your sickness,
 I too would have no eyes or ears.
 Your ngèlmu's merely counting zakāt and fitrah!"⁷⁹
41. Louder their angry mutters grew,
 And thus the santri three responded:
 "You're just the bastard of a whore!"
 To this replied Ki Gaṭoloco:
 "You're absolutely right!
 My parents and my ancestors
 All met their deaths; and when
 They reached the endpoint of their lives
 All disappeared, returning to their whoright!"⁸⁰
42. "But I suspect you santri three
 Were out of cast-iron statues born,
 Mere shapes and forms, no living breath,
 And that is why you're witless!" When
 The santri three heard this,
 They screeched in rage: "Your mother's cunt!"⁸¹
 Ki Gaṭoloco said:
 I'm deeply grateful to you all,
 And feel indebted to you three for being able
43. "To point my mother out to me.
 Of her I had no knowledge, truly,

77. The text has *Tegesé kapir kapiran*, which can be literally translated as "The meaning of kapir is 'abandoned,' 'neglected'" (*kapiran*). *Kapir*, of course, "really" means "kaffir," or "infidel." "Kapir 'capricious' signifies" is a very loose translation designed only to keep the play of sounds.

78. The text has *Teges sira bangsa Kristen bangsa Arab*. Once again, my translation diverges from Van Akkeren's on the question of the meaning of *Kristen* (*Krèsten*).

79. *Zakāt* and *fitrah* are the alms and donations pious Muslims are obliged to make annually to the poor and to mosque officials. See above at n. 26.

80. This phrasing attempts to convey the play between *anak jalang* (whore's son) and *ajal kaélangan* (death and disappearance).

81. The Javanese *trukbyangmu* is no less coarse than my English.

- When from her womb I first emerged.
 I simply took for granted what
 Our neighbors used to say,
 And what my parents told me: that
 I was indeed their child.
 And so I've now accepted it,
 Although I dare not swear within my inner being
44. "That truly I'm my parents' child,
 Because I do not know my birth.
 But since you now allege you can
 Identify my parents both,
 Where was their dwellingplace
 Of old? What were their names?
 How wide or narrow was
 The opening of my mother's cunt?⁸²
 If you don't know, your knowledge lacks all inwardness.
45. "According to my inmost sense,
 This present outer form of mine
 Without assistance formed itself.
 It was not Allah that produced
 Me, for this body is
 In truth the work of The Most High;
 The time the Buddha's age;⁸³
 The place the universe's heart.
 The length of time the making of my body took
46. "A single *windu*⁸⁴ was, one year,
 Twelve months, one week of seven days,
 One five-day week,⁸⁵ one night, one day,
 Twelve hours and sixty minutes, not
 One jot more, not one less,
 The *wuku*⁸⁶ only thirty; then
 At last my body was
 Full-grown. This do I claim and swear.
 I've kept this knowledge clear until the present day
47. "That, if my body suffers harm,
 My Life⁸⁷ has knowledge of it. To

82. I.e., *Amba ciut sepira* / *Perjiné ing biyung mami* . . .

83. The Javanese words *nalika alam Buda* are exceptionally difficult to translate. Although "*Buda*" clearly derives from "Buddha," it is likely that in the nineteenth century, as today, it is commonly understood as meaning simply "pre-Islamic." A folk-etymology derives *Buda* from *wuda* (naked, innocent), and it is possible that *alam Buda* really means something like "age of innocence."

84. In Javanese time-reckoning each cycle of eight years is called a *windu*.

85. In the Javanese calendrical system there are two main types of week, one of five days, one of seven.

86. A *wuku* is one of thirty 7-day periods which go to make up the 210-day Javanese year. The calculations involved in the lines above are not at all clear to me, but it is striking that all the terms are Javanese or Colonial Malay (*jam*, *menit*), none Islamic.

87. *Uripingsun* (My Life) is to be understood in the esoteric sense.

Mohammad a command it gives;
 The Messenger repairs the damage
 Because he loves it well.
 Thus the companion I am made
 Of everything that lives.
 Accordingly, I claim, within
 My Life, Mohammad, I, and Allah are united."

48. To this the santri three replied:
 "You really dare to claim your form
 Is one with that of God? On what
 Authority does this claim rest?"
 Ki Gatoloco said:
 "I know Becoming has its source
 In Dissolution, and
 The grace and will of The Most High;
 As for myself, I've no authority at all.
49. "This flesh of mine is Allah's form,
 And all its inward inclinations
 Are the possession of Mohammad.
 In Truth the Messenger controls
 My faculty of speech,
 Of hearing, and my sense of sight,
 My sense of smell, my sense
 Of taste, indeed my sense of self--
 All these are the possessions of the Messenger.
50. "There's nothing that I own myself
 All that I have are my five senses,
 And only by the love of God.⁸⁸
 Thus, if there is no love from God,
 I have but emptiness.
 The sense of 'emptiness' is 'void'
 Or 'utter nothingness,'
 Like morn before the dawning light,
 All-imperceptible."
51. Now Ngabdul Jabar gently spoke:
 "It seems that you are claiming that
 You have the selfsame form as Allah
 And yet your body's subject to
 Mischance, decay,
 Destructible, impermanent."
 Ki Gatoloco said:
 "What is destructible is earth,
 The outward cover of my form and that of God.⁸⁹
52. "For I and The Most Glorious One
 Experience no mischance, decay,
 Eternal in the highest heaven."
 Angrily Ngabdul Manap said
 To him: "If that's the case,

88. Here and in the next line "God" corresponds to "Hyang" and "Widi" in the original text.

89. I.e., "Pangéran."

Then you must know your destiny
 Still to be undergone!"
 Ki Gaṭoloco answered him:
 "In truth, I know my body's destiny full well,

53. "For I have predetermined that
 At this time, on this very day,
 I'm seated in your company.
 I'll foreordain once more anon.
 If I don't do it now
 For what comes later, it's because
 If it's too little or
 Too much, it's hard to add, subtract.
 I'd spoil my notebook scratching words and numbers out.⁹⁰
54. "By altering the calculations
 I might arouse the anger of
 The One who is my Scribe, whose pay
 Is low enough in any case!"⁹¹
 Replied the santri three:
 "As to the fate which you have yet
 To undergo in time
 To come, good fortune and mischance,
 What is the day, what is the hour when finally
55. "Your corpse will lie within its grave?"
 Ki Gaṭoloco said: "My grave
 I carry with me constantly.
 Each day I live and die, for in
 Reality, each day's
 The limit of my life, yet when
 The moment of my death
 Is nigh, within twelve hours of it,
 I'll choose myself the time and day it will occur.
56. "Were I to settle at this point
 My body's final hour, if aught
 Should happen in between, it would
 Be hard to cancel what's ordained.
 Far better fix from day
 To day my body's destiny,
 According to my heart's
 Desiring--nothing less or more--
 Untroubled thus, and not betraying promises."⁹²

90. *Ngrusak buku nyekrap sastra lawan angka*. Van Akkeren (p. 124) thinks that this line is the author's "insider" joke about the art of writing. Possibly, but the general point of the stanza is a cunning discussion of the paradoxes of free will and predestination.

91. The translation does not do justice to the allusive literary elegance of *Kang dadya juru serat*. *Juru serat*, which can mean "clerk," or "scribe," and here clearly refers to the divinity who pre-"scribes" all things, is, I think, also to be taken in the sense of "author"--so that the reference to "low pay" may well allude to the author of the text's own impoverished circumstances. This self-referentiality is something that goes back to the very origins of Javanese literature.

92. I.e., what is preordained.

57. To him Ki Ngabdul Jabar said:
 "To Hyang Widi your destiny
 Belongs--what yet will come to pass!"
 Ki Gaṭoloco then replied:
 "Hyang Widi's Will indeed
 It is, not mine. And yet it is
 My Allah who creates
 The fate I daily undergo,
 According to my will and for my happiness."
58. On hearing this the santri three
 Abused him, screaming: "Pig's asshole!" ⁹³
 Said Gaṭoloco in response:
 "Why speak you of a pig's asshole?
 Its owner bears it. Thus
 On me it has no bearing." Cried
 The santri three in turn:
 "Your mother is a pig's asshole!" ⁹⁴
 Said Gaṭoloco: "This is very odd indeed!"
59. "You must be men of talents rare
 If you can specify her so.
 Perhaps you call her 'pig's asshole'
 Because that's what you are yourselves?"
 Replied the santri three
 Immediately on hearing this:
 "Go, Gaṭoloco! Hold
 No more discourse with us!" To them
 Impatiently Ki Gaṭoloco spoke in turn:
60. "I am the Center of the World,
 Where do you want to send me to?
 The World's but one, and at its core
 I have my place, and balance it
 So that it does not slip
 East, North, or West, or South; but if
 I moved away and stood
 Upon the universe's rim,
 I'd bring calamity to humankind for sure."
61. To this the santri three replied:
 "Mecca's the Center of the Earth!
 You really do not know where lies
 The Center of the Universe?
 It's in the Holy Land,
 Where only once a year it rains.
 There stands the Ka'bah, which
 The sun itself dares not o'ertop." ⁹⁵
 Ki Gaṭoloco asked: "What is this Ka'bah thing?"

93. *Silit babi*, literally, "pig's anus." But the expression is part of a common-place coarse expletive (see below), so I have taken some liberty in finding an English equivalent.

94. This whole phrase is a vulgarism suggesting that the mother is a common whore.

95. The Ka'bah (Ka'ba) is the huge black rock, probably of meteoritic origin, in

62. "The Ka'bah is a giant rock,
The Prophet Abraham its lord.
And why did he erect it there?
To mark the navel of the Earth.
Before it Muslims bow
From every quarter of the world."
Ki Gatoloco said:
"Again you have misunderstood
The truth. The Land of Mecca is by Allah cursed!
63. "Since what the people of the Land
Of Mecca bow themselves before
Is not in truth the Lord, therefore
Each man and woman must endure
The wrath of Hyang Widi.
Insultingly they dare invoke
His precepts, night and day
Bellowing prayers and wagging heads,⁹⁶
Like rain-soaked fowl brought down with chicken-cholera!
64. "Great is the anger of the Lord!
He puts His mark upon the land.
He makes the rain fall only once
A year, and aggravates the heat,
So everything they plant
Will come to nothing, making food
And clothing very scarce.
In consequence, the people of
The Land of Mecca, male and female, every one,
65. "If they should piss or defecate,
They wash themselves infrequently,
For water is extremely scarce.
They simply wipe themselves with dust
Or dirt, and that is why
The other prophets could not bear
To live there and all moved
To places like Medina, or
Mesir,⁹⁷ for Mecca is a place for those accursed.
66. "Yet brazenly you all persist
In styling Mecca by the name
Of Navel of the Universe.
Where have you learned this from? You call
It so by rote alone!
Have you surveyed the site yourselves?"
Replied the santri three:
"In our kitab it's so described."
Ki Gatoloco laughed and answered sneeringly:

the center of the great mosque in Mecca. In the final stages of the hajj the pilgrims walk around the Ka'ba seven times in prayer. It is said that out of awed respect the sun itself never stands directly over the rock.

96. A reference to the practice of dhikr--see above at n. 22.

97. I.e., Egypt.

67. "You're really santri damned to Hell,
Believing anything you're told.
Your folly so misleads you that
You trust in ink and paper, but
The message you ignore
About the Inner, Outer worlds.⁹⁸
The gossip of the market
You swallow, caring naught for truth.
And so you live your lives incapable of death."⁹⁹
68. To this the santri three replied:
"O Gaṭoloco, we are sure
Some *sétan*¹⁰⁰ has you in its grip."
To them Ki Gaṭoloco said:
"That statement is correct!
From when I had no form as yet,
Within the formless world,
Right up until this very day,
My *sétan* and my self have never once been parted.
69. "Sétan *séta*-ness signifies;
Séta, interpreted, means 'white,'
And 'white,' in turn means 'origin,'
Original to mothers all,
A substance white with which
I was combined when I was still
No more than semen from
My father's body dripping out.¹⁰¹
Accordingly, my body's form is also white.
70. But it seems likely that you three
From semen black were generated,
For you are witless, closed in mind."
Now when the santri three heard this,
Ki Ngabdul Manap gave
Ki Amat Ngarib this advice:
"He must be put to death!
For if he lives much longer, he
The progress of religion will for sure obstruct.

98. Here, as elsewhere in the text, the opposition *lahir* (outer)/*batin* (inner) is both central to the thought of Javanese mysticism itself, and serves as an invidious symbol comparing it with Islam. To Gaṭoloco, as to other Javanese mystics, orthodox Islam concerns itself excessively with the outward forms of ritual, not their spiritual essence.

99. "Death" here, as often elsewhere in the text, refers to the mystical death-to-the-self, not physical extinction.

100. I.e., a devil or spook.

101. If I am not mistaken, this passage reflects a common pre-twentieth century Javanese idea of the nature of conception: a man's semen holds, as it were, the entire genetic code, or more properly conveys a common, continuing substance from generation to generation, and especially to his sons. But until mixed with a "characterless" white substance inside a woman's genitals, the semen cannot create new life.

71. "This fellow undermines God's law.
He'll empty all the mosques!" At this
Ki Gatoloco loudly roared:
"Make haste then! Stab me now! The first
Blow that you strike, you stab
A man; the second blow, you pierce
A corpse! But once I'm dead,
What profit will you gain from that?"
Their answer: "Simply that our hearts will feel relieved,
72. "For you the *sarak* will destroy!"
To this Ki Gatoloco said:
"The *sarak* cannot be destroyed!
They've been ordained by Hyang Widi!
The *sarat*¹⁰² set for food
Is that it should go in the mouth.
If you the *sarak* would
Destroy, then shove the food right up
Your ass!¹⁰³ It's always Arabs who the *sarak* break.
73. "It's in the nature of religion
That it accord with each man's choice.
Even the Chinaman's religion,
If genuinely practiced, is
To God acceptable."
Harshly the *santri* questioned him:
"And what is your religion?"
Ki Gatoloco answered thus:
"The name it bears is the religion of the *Rasa*.¹⁰⁴
74. "'Religion of the *Rasa*' means
Yield to the *rasa* of the heart,
The *rasa* of the body and
The mouth. To these I yield--to wit,
Whatever's fiery hot,
Sweet, aromatic, oily-rich,
Sour, bitter, bitter-sour.
Now what is your religion, pray?"
Their answer: "Our religion is the Messenger's!"
75. Loudly Ki Gatoloco said:
"No wonder you're so empty-headed!
Sarak means 'gone to rack and ruin,'
While 'Messenger' means 'missing things.'
You've missed the road, you've gone
To rack and ruin,¹⁰⁵ so you're fools!"

102. Here the *sarak* of Islam are sardonically assimilated to *sarat* (conditions), by which the author means, more or less, "what is natural." He contrasts what he sees as the unnatural Islamic prohibitions on certain foods with the natural conditions of life ("pork wouldn't be there, or so tasty, if it wasn't to be eaten").

103. Literally *mangan lebokna silit*.

104. See above, at n. 57.

105. A rather loose rendering of Basa *sarak rak larasan / Sul nusul tegesé iki / Nusul rerasan sisip* . . . to attempt to accommodate the complex--and here rather

- On hearing this, the three
 Departed without taking leave,
 With their assistants grumbling all along the way
76. And raging at what had occurred.
 Softly Ki Amat Ngarib said:
 "Ngabdul Jabar! Ngabdul Manap!
 I deeply hope our whole lives long
 We never meet with him
 Again, and if our paths should cross,
 I'll step aside at once.
 For even dreaming of him I
 Feel sick. Pray God we don't encounter him henceforth!"¹⁰⁶

[To be continued]

confused--play of the Javanese words. The mild confusion arises because the author begins by suggesting he will make a punning esoteric interpretation of Rasul (Messenger); then is diverted by the association of sounds and meanings between Ra(sul) and (sa)rak to interpreting sarak; and finally reverts to the final syllable of Rasul.

106. *Kawuntat* "after, behind" is a synonym of sorts for *pungkur*, a signal that the meter now will change to *Pangkur*.