chapter twelve

Text-Building, Epistemology, and Aesthetics in Javanese Shadow Theatre

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> If aesthetics is ever to be more than a speculative play, of the genus philosophical, it will have to get down to the very arduous business of studying the concrete process of artistic production and appreciation.
>
> —Edward Sapir

INTRODUCTION: SPEAKING THE PAST AND SPEAKING THE PRESENT

In this essay I would like to describe some of the constraints on text-building in a language quite different from our own. The language is Javanese, the kind of text the Javanese shadow play, *wayang kulit,* as I learned to perform it from an East Javanese puppeteer, or *dalang*, Ki Soedjathi Djathikoesoemo, in daily lessons and in watching performances and discussing them together over a period of two years, 1969–71. My goal there was not to become a dalang myself—though that was necessary in order to discover what *not* to do—but to discover how to build a text in Javanese, to explore what text-building revealed about Javanese epistemology, and to learn how to respond aesthetically to a very different artistic medium. I have studied these things and shall describe them within a particular, evolving set of assumptions about what a text is and how it can be said to be meaningful. These assumptions have their roots in traditional philology, modified and expanded by the insights of modern linguistics, ethnography, psychology, and Javanese aesthetic theory itself into what might be called a *modern philology*. These assumptions form a partial epistemography[1]—a specification of

[1]I owe this term, and much of my understanding of it, to Vern Carroll.

what it is important to write about concerning Javanese shadow theater, and how one achieves coherence and completeness in writing about it.

As an intellectual discipline, *philology* can be defined as the text-centered study of language. Philologists have traditionally set themselves the task of making ancient and foreign texts readable. Only part of this task is simple translation, since any careful philologist knows that few foreign words have translations. Words and phrases must be described, often in great detail, not merely mapped onto a foreign term. This description traditionally takes the form of masses of footnotes which explain the contextual relations of words, phrases, sentences, and larger units of the text. These relations ideally include the following:

1. The relations of textual units to each other within the text, which establishes hierarchy and coherence in the text.
2. The relations of textual units to other texts, since part of the context of any text is, more or less, all previous texts in a particular culture, especially texts considered to be in the same genre; readable literature is structurally coherent with its own ancestors.
3. The relations of the units in the text to the intention of the creators of the text, with *intention* defined as the relations of the creator to the content of the text, the medium, and to the hearers or readers.
4. The relation of textual units to nonliterary events with which units in the text establish relations of the sort usually called *reference*.

The *meaning* of a text, then, is a set of relations, by no means all of which are listed above. The information necessary to describe the kinds of relations just listed must be known, discovered, or reconstructed before one can know the essential meaning of a text, any text. For contemporary English works—except for the most esoteric or specialized literature—contextual relations have been presumed not to require philological explication for English-speaking readers. However, texts whose contexts (or epistemologies) are distant from the best-trained readers require philological notes as an essential foundation for interpretation. In a multi-cultured world, a world of multiple epistemologies, there is need for a new philologist—a specialist in contextual relations—in all areas of knowledge in which text-building (written or oral) is a central activity: literature, history, law, music, politics, psychology, trade, even war and peace.

The specific activity of the philologist is contextualizing conceptually distant texts. For many philologists in the past that was the only goal, an annotated edition of a written or oral text. Some philologists, however, in the course of this activity and based upon it, have sought generalizations about the major constraints on text-building itself, the laws of grammar, poetics, narration, etc. Nowadays philology has been partitioned and distributed among various specialists. In the study of literature, there has developed a gulf between those who study particular texts (especially written texts) and those who study con-

straints[2] on the activity of creating texts: the former is usually part of the humanities (literary scholarship), the latter a science (linguistics).

In the study of texts, however, these two activities correct each other, since any meaningful activity is a conjunction of preexisting constraints (or rules, or structures, or laws, or myths) with the present, the unpredictable, particular *now*. In this way a text always—but to varying degrees—contextualizes the present in the past.[3]

One can roughly specify for any language activity the degree to which the speaker/writer is speaking the past or the present. Repeating is almost entirely speaking the past, whether it be repeating something said a moment ago, or written a millenium ago—a repeated remark, a prayer, a song. Yet in these activities there is always something of the present, some variable of the communicative act which is free to express the *now*, be it only the voice quality of the speaker, the variations of tempo and pitch and resonance that express the repeater's attitude about what he is repeating. Furthermore, each repetition of a text (or bit of a text) is in a new context and takes new meaning from its context. One can

[2]I am using the term *constraint* here in a special way which may puzzle some readers. The basic notion is from information theory. It is given wider relevance in Gregory Bateson's essay, Cybernetic explanation (1972:399–410). There Bateson uses the term *restraints*. I use the term *constraints* since it is current in linguistics and appears perfectly compatible with Bateson's term. The linguistic term first appeared to me in the work of John R. Ross and George Lakoff, where linguistic variables were not subject to rules but constraints with differing scope and force. Bateson writes (p. 399): "In cybernetic language, the course of events is said to be subject to *restraints*, and it is assumed that, apart from such restraints, the pathways of change would be governed only by equality of probability. In fact, the 'restraints' upon which cybernetic explanation depends can in all cases be regarded as factors which determine inequality of probability." Later, "Restraints of many different kinds may combine to generate this unique determination. For example, the selection of a piece for a given position in a jigsaw puzzle is 'restrained' by many factors. Its shape must conform to that of its several neighbors and possibly that of the boundary of the puzzle; its color must conform to the color pattern of its region; the orientation of its edges must obey the topological regularities set by the cutting machine in which the puzzle was made; and so on. From the point of view of the man who is trying to solve the puzzle, these are all clues, i.e., sources of information which will guide him in his selection. From the point of view of the cybernetic observer, they are *restraints*" (p. 400). In a text, or any unit of artistic expression, "constraints" are different in different languages and in different cultures. That is, the area of significant variation is not the same in all languages, in all cultures, but it can be discovered by finding what the constraints on the text are, which is what this essay endeavors to do for *wayang*.

[3]The notion of speaking the present and speaking the past came to me from Maurice Bloch. Speaking the past is a particular kind of speech act or mode of communication, which Bloch defines for the Merina of Madagascar, who themselves describe certain ritual speech making as "speaking the words of the ancestors" (Bloch, 1974). Bloch is wrong, I think, in contrasting formalized speech acts and everyday speech acts, on a scale of most to least formalized language. Everyday speech acts are also highly formalized. I feel that the poles of this scale range from repetition (most formal, speaking the past) to imagination or internal discourse (least formal, speaking the present), and I argue that neither pole is ultimately attainable. For an early view of wayang as "speaking the words of the ancestors," see W. H. Rassers (1959).

never wholly speak the past.[4] Even in those ritual repetitions when we speak the past as intently as possible in a kind of temporary trance, there is always something of the present communicated.

Likewise, one can never wholly speak the present. Even everyday language is highly conventional, far more constrained than we normally recognize. Consider how small talk varies from language to language in both content and form. Most conversations begin with repeated conventional content which is not meant to be discussed truthfully (i.e., in the present): How are you? (English); Where are you going? (Javanese); Have you eaten yet? (Burmese), etc. At this point in a conversation relationships are being established, between speaker and hearer first, then between speaker and other—the people or things referred to. Some conversations never get beyond this stage, and the pace at which one moves conversationally from the conventional, predictable past to the present varies widely from language to language.

Notice that language, in these instances and always, communicates on at least two levels, the actual surface content of the message (the proposition being asserted, requested, questioned, etc.) and the relational statements that are conveyed simultaneously, more often by intonation, posture, facial expression, and the like, than by direct statement. This relational communication has been called *metacommunication* by Gregory Bateson and others—communication about relationships, about the context of the message.[5] Hence in speaking the past, in prayer or small talk, too, we are communicating our relations to the hearer and the people or things referred to in the lexically expressed message. Ritual language speaks the past on the surface, but conveys the present at the metalinguistic level.[6]

How, then, does one most fully express the present? Only by decreasing the redundancy (the predictability) at either the lexical level of the message (L) or at the metalinguistic level (Lm), or at both. In short, by spontaneity. *Completely* spontaneous linguistic activity is impossible. Rather, other people could not understand it—or even recognize it as language: the uncompromising position of the schizophrenic, the lonely alienated poet, and the foreign language learner. As Wittgenstein put the paradox: "if lions could talk, we couldn't understand them."[7] One can increase, however, the spontaneous, the *here and now* in communication. One way is to speak directly what is in your mind right at the time you are speaking, speak right from what Ernest Becker calls the "inner

[4]The implications of this notion are explored in Jorge Luis Borges' short story, "Pierre Menard, author of Don Quixote" (1962). Menard, by coping Cervantes' novel word for word in the twentieth century (i.e., by changing the context of the text act), produces a very different work. (Brought to my attention by Susan Walton.)

[5]A similar, multi-channeled view of language has been developed by Kenneth L. Pike, see especially (1963).

[6]This is most apparent in trance communication and hypnosis. The latter is described in these terms in Jay Haley, How hypnotist and subject maneuver each other (1963:20–40).

[7]The quotation—and the idea behind it—were presents from Shelly Errington.

newsreel," the impressions, observations, musing, and rehearsing of embarrassing moments in the past or yet to come which constantly occupy the idling, otherwise not preoccupied mind, the background noise of living—an area of linguistic activity studied at present mostly by Freudians and Buddhists (E. Becker, 1962:77–79; Lacan, 1973; Waldo, 1975). We might revive an old term and call this the *imagination*. Many (e.g., Croce, Sapir, Freud, Lacan, Ernest Becker, Emile Benveniste) have argued that the imagination is an aspect of language, or at least "structured like a language" (Croce, 1970; Lacan, 1973; Benveniste, 1971; Wilden, 1972:29). It is obvious to us all that we *imagine* constantly, waking or sleeping, yet it is very difficult to get at our imagining and examine it, and it takes considerable skill and confidence or wildness or naivete to brush aside enough of the conventional to speak from the imagination. Literary conventions create situations in which it is possible.

All language activity, including literature, involves, then, variation between spontaneity (present) and repetition (past) and communicates on at least two levels, the lexically expressed message (L) and the relational message (Lm). Of course the lexically expressed message may be about the relationship, in which case a new relational communication is conveyed, leading, if repeated, to the sorts of linguistic involutions exposed by R. D. Laing (1970).

Various forms of indirect speech complicate the act of communication further by at least doubling every variable. Take a statement like the following:

> "'You sound nervous,' she said, ironically."

This statement involves at least two speakers ("she" and the writer), two hearers ("you" and the reader), *two lexical communications* ("You sound nervous" and " 'You sound nervous' she said, ironically") and at least *four metacommunications* ("she" relating to "you"; "she" relating to the statement "you sound nervous"; the writer relating to the reader, pointing out the irony; and the writer relating to his statement: does the irony refer to "she" or to the whole statement, or, was she ironic or is the writer being ironic?). The writer here is speaking the past or only pretending to speak the past (it may be either fiction or reporting—or fiction disguised as reporting—present disguised as past—or vice versa). The ambiguous term *ironically* may be a comment from the present in which the writer is writing, or a reported fact about "she." If "she" is being intentionally ironic, then "her" statement is probably not a spontaneous remark to "you" but perhaps a repeating of something said to her by "you" ("You" may have told "she" she sounded nervous a few days before, and "she" is now ironically repeating the remark back to "you"). Fuller context is necessary to resolve *some* of the ambiguities; others are resolvable only in the imagination of the reader. As complex as this seems, all these relations and many more are necessarily part of the understanding of the statement.

To summarize, then, the analysis of a text requires, minimally, that the modern philologist describe several kinds of relations in order to recreate a conceptually distant context. A minimal set of these relations includes:

1. The relation of words, phrases, sentences, and larger units of the text to each other (i.e., the coherence of the text),
2. The relation of this text to other texts; the extent that it is repetition or new (speaking the present or the past),
3. The relation of the author to both the text and the hearers/readers of the text—seen from the point of view of the author or from the points of view of the hearers/readers (i.e., the intent of the text-builder),
4. The relation of units in the text to nonliterary events (i.e., reference).

Context, then, includes coherence, degree of repetition/spontaneity, intent, and reference. Sorting out the *sources* of constraints on all these relations is a further task for the modern philologist: to what extent are the constraints on these relations human (i.e., universal to all texts)? Or are they operative only within a single language family or cultural tradition, or within a single language, or only in a specific genre, or only in the works of one author? Any work is constrained at all these levels.

The methodology of this essay will be to describe, in the order just stated, the various sorts of relations a particular kind of text, the Javanese shadow play, has with its context. I have been able to isolate some of the generic constraints on contextual relations, and some of these above the generic, particularly at the level of the Javanese language itself. By implication, too, I reveal something of that area of variation constrained only by the individual performer (the dalang) in a particular place and time (A. Becker, 1974; Young, Becker, and Pike, 1971).

TEXTUAL COHERENCE IN A WAYANG: PLOT AS SYMBOLIC ACTION

Textual coherence can be examined at any level of structure in the hierarchy of structures that make up the text. One might examine the structure and categories of words in a wayang, isolating the special vocabulary and distinctive phonology of the language of the puppeteer (basa padalangan). At the level of sentences, and across sentences, there are kinds of coherence unexploited in most Western languages, coherence based not on tense (which is the basis of Western narrative coherence) but upon a system of person (in its grammatical sense) elaborated far beyond similar systems in other languages. I have described this system elsewhere in relation to Old Javanese (Kawi) literature (A. Becker and Oka, 1976; Zurbuchen, 1976). These are constraints which are used in building many other kinds of Javanese texts as well. Here I would like to focus on a higher-level system of constraints, a level intermediate between the usual sentential (i.e., sentence-based) concerns of the linguist and the global concerns of the literary scholar, the level of plot.

The plot of a story or a play is a set of constraints on the selection and

sequencing of dramatic episodes or motifs.[8] These constraints are like the rules of a game, say tennis, which constrain the selection of possible acts in the game (i.e., defining illegal acts) and the arrangement of acts in the game (i.e., defining what may not be done at certain times within the context of the game). Plots, like tennis rules, do not allow one to predict—except in very general terms—what will happen in a play. Rather, plots tell us what cannot be done appropriately. They also, like scientific theories, tell us one other important thing; what the relevant variables are in the things one can do in the play. There is no rule in tennis against scratching my head as much as I want to in the course of a game. There is a rule, however, against serving with my feet across the base line. Head-scratching is, by implication, an irrelevant variable, but foot-faulting is a constraint on position: it tells me where I may not stand, not where I must stand. Likewise, a set of constraints on a plot specifies what areas of variation are particularly relevant and what are insignificant. If I may borrow from a closely related medium, music, we may note that melodic variation is highly relevant to some kinds of Western music, but rather insignificant in some kinds of Javanese music.[9] An American who is looking for melodic variation in gamelan music will be bored; a Javanese looking for dense musical texture in a symphony will also be bored. Likewise in drama, an American who seeks character development in wayang is going to be disappointed in all but a very few wayang stories, and a Javanese who seeks complex coincidences in all but a few American movies (those few being comedies, like the Marx Brothers' *Animal Crackers*) is also going to be disappointed. Plot (i.e., constraints on the selection and arrangement of dramatic episodes) includes constraints on the *kinds* of variation that are relevant.

For the most part, in most cultures, knowledge of plot constraints is unstated background knowledge, like the knowledge of grammar and syntax. It is learned indirectly, first through fairy tales and nursery rhymes (and their equivalents in other cultures), and then from the various media that have access to children. Some Greeks, however, were self-conscious about plots. Aristotle's *Poetics* includes a description of plot which still holds for most Western drama and narrative.[10]

Aristotle calls plot *fable*: "The imitation of the action is the fable," he writes. "By fable I now mean the contexture of incidents, or the plot." He lists the six major variables in a drama:

1. fable or plot,
2. manners or character,

[8]The notion of a text as a selection and ordering of motifs (or motives) is derived ultimately, from V. Propp (1958) and Kenneth Burke (1969).

[9]This point is supported and illustrated in Judith Becker, Time and tune in Java, in this volume.

[10]The text used here is Aristotle's *Politics and poetics*, translated by Jowett and Twining (1969), especially book 2, ch. I–IX and book 4, ch. VI.

3. diction or metrical composition,
4. sentiments or speeches,
5. decoration,
6. music.

Aristotle continues, "Of all these parts the most important is the combination of incidents or the fable." Fable or plot is most important because it imitates what Aristotle held was the most important referential content of the drama, action (or imitation of action).

Among the constraints on plot which Aristotle lists are the following. Note that they are all phrased negatively—i.e., as constraints.

1. A proper fable must not be incomplete: "The poet who would construct his fable properly is not at liberty to begin and end where he pleases. . . ." A fable should, he explains, suppose nothing to precede it, and require nothing to follow it (book 2, chapter IV). Completeness here is completeness of linear (i.e., temporal) causality, a powerful constraint on selection *and* arrangement.
2. Coincidences are to be avoided. Sequences should follow as probable and necessary consequences. Nothing improbable should be admitted, or, if necessary, it should arise out of the fable. Perhaps Aristotle's most famous comment on plot makes just this point: "Impossibilities, rendered probable, are preferable to improbable, though possible" (book 2, chapter VI; book 4, chapter VI).
3. No part of a proper fable may be transposed or omitted without destroying the whole. Anything that can be left out, should be (book 2, chapter V). Again there is emphasis on linear (temporal-causal) sequence.
4. The time in the text should not be more than a single day (book 1, chapter IX).

These basic constraints all have to do with unity and causality, above all with temporal unity and linear causality—two aspects of the same thing. All of them are rooted in the simple fact that intersentence coherence in Indo-European languages is achieved primarily by *tense*. Clarity and coherence *means* to speakers of these languages linear temporal/causal sequencing. Tense is seen as iconic: that is, past, present, and future are taken as facts about the world, rather than facts about language. Tense is not iconic in all language-cultures and hence temporal-causal linearity is not the major constraint on textual coherence in all languages.[11]

[11]The notion of iconicity is derived from Kenneth Boulding (1961), a basic text in the study of comparative epistemography. The centrality of tense in establishing textual coherence in English narrative is demonstrated in William Labov, Transformation of experience in narrative syntax (1972).

What I call the *narrative presupposition* is the presupposition in English (and other, but not all, languages) that in two succeeding clauses with past tense verbs, unless otherwise marked, the events referred to happened in the same order as the clauses. That is, the sentences, "The man looked at the clock. He sat down." mean, in part, that the man looked at the clock before he sat down, although this order is presupposed, not *marked* in the structure of these sentences. In many languages (e.g., Old Javanese, Burmese) this presupposition does not hold and narrative order is a *marked* strategy. This is an example of a basic linguistic difference in languages which affects text-building strategy. These basic differences usually concern iconic linguistic facts, facts assumed by native speakers to be about the nature of the world, not about the nature of language. For a discussion of non-Western iconic facts, see A. L. Becker (1975).

The linearity of Aristotle's constraints can be stated in another way. If meaning comes from temporal-causal sequences, then epistemologies do not, and cannot, change from episode to episode; or, as stated in a recent study of plot,

> Semantically standard universes always have consistency in the interpretation of several connected ambiguous episodes. (Hahn, 1973:8)

That is, Jay Gatsby, Godzilla, Agamemnon, John Wayne, and Charlie Chaplin do not and may not appear in the same plot.

What emerges in the episodes of Western serious drama are the disambiguating causes of actions. These causes are at base represented as character defects, often minor ones. The episodes lead to a catastrophe and a climax, a reversal of expectations, all of which leads on to the end of the causal chain.

Nearly all these constraints are violated by wayang plot structure. It is not that wayang plots may not have temporal unity, causal linear sequences, catastrophes, reversals and all the rest. These do appear in wayang plots, particularly in those plots most admired by Western viewers, such as the plot of *Dewa Ruci,* a linear search for the water of immortality, or the plot of the simplified and shortened versions of the Ramayana, a search for a stolen wife. These Aristotelian constraints, however, are not *necessary* to a good wayang plot, and to focus on, for instance, causal sequences and character development is to miss the area of relevant variation in wayang theater and to miss the subtlety and depth of good wayang.

Wayang plots are built primarily around coincidence, a word which we in the West use to explain away things of no meaning. "A mere coincidence" cannot, in the West, sustain prolonged scrutiny and analysis. In wayang theater coincidence motivates actions. There is no causal reason that Arjuna, the frail wayang hero, meets Cakil, a small demon, in the forest, as he (or a counterpart) does in each wayang. It is a coincidence; it happens (jadi), and because they are who they are, they fight and Cakil dies, but not forever; he will be killed over and over again in each wayang. When Arjuna and Cakil meet, two worlds, two epistemologies coincide for a moment, Cakil is purely physical. He attacks Arjuna because Arjuna makes him uncomfortable. Arjuna's meditation has raised the heat of the forest higher than the creatures who live there can bear. Cakil responds instinctively to this thermal pollution. On the other hand, Arjuna attacks Cakil because he recognizes him as evil (i.e., other), not because of anything he has done, but because he knows—by thought, not instinct—that it is his duty (dharma) to combat evil. He kills coolly, dispassionately, the passionate Cakil, who is defending his forest home against the intruder. Arjuna controls nature by killing it, but it renews itself again and again. There are other interpretations of this motif. Not every observer of wayang will agree with this interpretation of it. It does seem evident, however, that Arjuna and Cakil live in different conceptual worlds and that their meeting is not caused but is rather an accident, a

coincidence of these worlds. Nothing in the prior events of the text nor in the succeeding events made it a necessary part of the plot in Aristotle's terms. Yet this motif is necessary (obligatory) within the constraints of wayang plot.

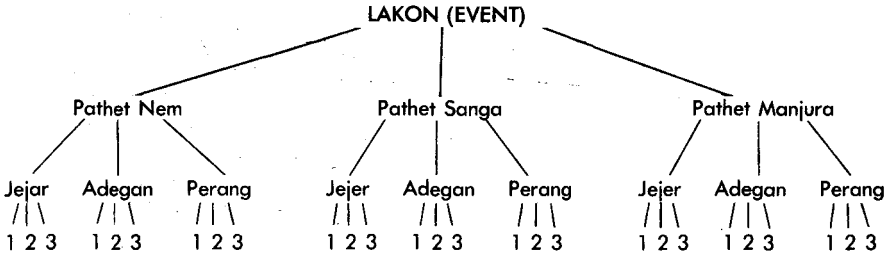
This is but one coincidence, one intersection in the interwoven, cyclic actions that inform a wayang plot—unmotivated, unresolved, meaningless within a chain of causes and effects, but symbolically very rich.

The name for a wayang plot derives from the root *laku* "step or act" plus the suffix *-an,* which normalizes the root, giving us, by vowel sandhi, *lakon* "an action, a way, an event, a plot." A lakon includes three major divisions, within each of which a certain range of voice pitches and a valuing of particular pitches is maintained, and within each of which there is a prescribed internal structure. These divisions, called *pathet,* include combinations of scenes called *jejer* (audience scenes, before a ruler or holy man), *adegan* (scenes outside the audience hall, e.g., *adegan wana* "forest adegan," *adegan gapuran* "gate adegan," *adegan gara-gara* "turmoil adegan," etc.), and *perang* (battle). The meanings of these names for the parts of a wayang are richly metaphoric. Understanding them as words helps to contextualize them within the Javanese semantic world. *Jejer* also means "what exists," "the subject of a sentence," and "the handle of a kris," as well as "an audience before the King." *Adegan,* the scenes outside the audience hall, means also, "propped up," "standing," "door-frame" and "the punctuation of a sentence" (two vertical, parallel lines). The linguistic metaphors suggest a paradigmatic, associational link between sentences and plays, within whose structures experience is shaped and expressed.[12]

A wayang plot, then, is built hierarchically in structures made up of three basic units. A lakon (event) is divided into three *pathetan* or acts, each with the same internal structure. Each *pathet* is made of three basic scenes: (1) the *jejer* (static audience in a court or a hermitage where a problem arises and a plan is formed); followed by (2) two or more *adegan* derived from that audience, and always involving a journey away from the audience place; (3) a *perang* (battle) at the end of the journey.

Each scene, in turn, has three basic components: (1) description of a situation (either *janturan* "description of a place" or *carios* "description of prior action"); (2) dialogue (ginem); (3) action (sabetan). The *minimal* structure of a play—or an event is:

[12]These Javanese terms are partially described in Probohardjono (1966) currently being translated from the Javanese by Susan Walton (J. Becker, ed., forthcoming). The conceptualization of a sentence as a drama, with actors, agents, scenes, actions, etc., suggests that traditional Javanese philologists shared a metaphor, at least, with modern linguists (e.g., Pike's Tagmemics, Fillmore's Case Grammar) and literary critics (e.g., Kenneth Burke's dramatism).



(Key: 1 = description, 2 = dialogue, 3 = action or motion)

Any given wayang allows for three basic operations on this minimal structure: permutation (reordering units below the level of *pathet*), conjunction (repeating units below *pathet*), and embedding (putting units within units below the level of *pathet*). Pathet structure was fixed in the tradition I studied.[13]

The only permutation regularly evident is in Pathet Sanga, within which the *adegan gara-gara* "turmoil scene" (a clown scene during the world turmoil created by the power of the meditation of the hero) *may* precede the *jejer* (the *jejer pertapan* "meditation audience" or *jejer pandita* "audience with a holy man, usually Abiasa"). This inversion is perhaps constrained by dramatic rhythm, particularly impatience among the viewers for the clown scene.

Conjunction may be the repeating of a scene or a whole sequence. That is, there may be more than one *adegan,* or *perang,* or the whole sequence *jejer* + *adegan* + *perang* may be repeated. *Jejer* are not repeated unless the whole sequence is repeated. In the first *pathet* (act), called *Pathet Nem,* there are frequently, not always, two or three complete sequences, though each succeeding sequence is shorter in time and complexity than the one preceding it. Seldom does this occur in the other two *pathet*. There are often up to three *adegan* in a sequence, however, and two *perang*. This may occur anywhere in the play. This derived structure might look like the following:

Jejer + *adegan* + *adegan* + *adegan* + *perang* + *perang*. These different *adegan* and *perang* are given special names, as are the various *jejer,* and the contents of each is constrained by its place in the entire *lakon*. In the repertoire of a puppeteer are at least the following scenes:

[13]*Pathet* in music means something slightly different, closer to our notion of mode. See Probohardjono (1966), translated by S. Walton, in J. Becker (forthcoming). In a wayang performance, music from the final *pathet (manjura)* is played before the play begins, creating a cyclic musical structure, since it is the first and last mode one hears. This musical redundancy is not reflected in the foregoing representation of *lakon* structure.

A Basic Repertoire of Scenes

1. Kinds of Jejer (Audience Scene):

jejer kraton	"palace jejer"
jejer sabrangan	"foreign jejer"
jejer sabrangan rangkep	"second foreign jejer"
jejer pertapan	"jejer before a meditating person"
jejer pandita	"jejer before a holy man"
jejer tancep kayon	"closing scene in which the Tree of Life (kayon) is stabbed (tanceb) into the banana log with the other puppets arranged around it."

2. Kinds of Adegan (Outside Scene):

Adegan gapuran	"gate adegan"
adegan kedatonan	"inner-palace adegan"
adegan paseban jawi	"outer court adegan"
adegan kareta	"chariot adegan, i.e., assembling the army"
adegan gara-gara	"turmoil adegan"
adegan wana	"forest adegan"
etc.	

3. Kinds of Perang (Battle):

perang ampyak	"gang rumble"
perang gagal	"unsuccessful battle"
perang simpangan	"crossroads battle"
perang kembang	"flower battle, i.e., forest battle between small, refined hero and small demon"
perang gridan	"slow-motion, very refined battle"
perang tanggung	"middle battle"
perang tandang	"everyone-rallies-together battle"
perang amuk	"wild, frenzied battle"

Each of these scenes involves certain kinds of characters and characteristic choreography. One could not present a shadow play without knowing how to do these basic scenes, though the list is not by any means exhaustive. Individual dalangs may invent additional scenes (usually scenes involving newly invented demons, one of the most common areas of innovation over the past three hundred years) and are frequently known for the kinds of scenes they do best. For instance, a dalang may be famous for his monkey battles, for his adegan gara-gara (clown scenes) or for the depth and pathos of his meditation scenes (adegan pertapan).

Within any given scene (jejer, adegan, or perang) the structure is, as stated: (1) description, (2) dialogue, (3) action. There are two kinds of dialogue, *janturan,* the description of a place and the people there, and *carios,* the description of a prior action. Only the *janturan* is accompanied by music. After the description, one or more suluk (described later) are sung and the dialogue begins. When the mood changes or a new character enters, other *suluk* are sung. Finally the dialogue ends and an action occurs, a movement of the puppets—e.g., a journey

or a battle (there is different music for each, *srepegan* for journeys, *srepegan* or *sampak* for battles). All of this follows specific rules for the speech and movement of each different puppet, and for each puppet in relation to each other puppet.[14]

The suluks—sung poetic passages in Old Javanese—are of three kinds: *pathetan* (descriptive verses, accompanied by several instruments, including the rebab, gender, gambang, and suling); *sendon* (lyric emotional verses, accompanied only by a few instruments, usually gender, suling, and gambang); and *ada-ada*—verses which build excitement, accompanied by gender, and the knocking of a small mallet against the puppet box or a set of metal plates—(Probohardjono, 1966, in J. Becker, forthcoming). There are, in turn, three possible versions of pathetan and ada-ada: a short version (jugag), a long version (agung), and a normal version (wantah). The pitch center or mode of the suluks changes (i.e., gets higher in pitch) in each succeeding pathet (nem, sanga, manyura).

Within scenes, as well as between them, there are variations in structure; however, no permutation is possible in scenes, and conjoining is rare. Embedding is the common practice. For instance, during the dialogue of a scene, a new character may enter, in which case there will be an embedded description + dialogue + action, after which we return to the previously interrupted dialogue. This produces structures of the following type:

Scene/Adegan

Description (with suluk) + Dialogue [description (suluk) + dialogue + action] + Dialogue (continued) + Action

Here the bracketed sequence is an embedded scene.

As night goes on, different parts of the scenes are foregrounded, that is, some parts are shortened, others prolonged. In the first act (pathet nem) description usually takes more time than dialogue and action combined. In the second act, dialogue—mostly jokes, but also very heavy spiritual instruction from a holy man—is foregrounded. In the third and final act (pathet manyura), action—usually battle—predominates. When one part of a scene is dominant, however, the other two always appear, albeit often briefly.

One may notice that in describing the structure of a dramatic event, the words used are all Javanese not Sanskrit. Though stories are often imported into wayang, chiefly from Sanskrit epics, plots appear to be uniquely Javanese.

Having seen something of the sequencing of events or motifs in a wayang play, let us turn now to the paradigm of events themselves and the kinds of coherence that appear within the structure that has been described. It is often very difficult for the viewer, foreign or Javanese, to know just where he is in the story

[14]These rules are described in numerous handbooks for dalangs. Among the more complete ones are Nojowirongko (1960) and Sajid (1958). There are also numerous *pakem* (scenarios) for individual plays. See James Brandon (1970) for an English translation of one of the best of these, which combines a handbook and *pakem*, the *Serat Tuntunan Padalangan*.

being presented, i.e., in knowing that polarities between protagonists and antagonists are being established. One always knows, however, where one is in the plot—the structure defined earlier. The story may be very obscure, much of the action may take place off the screen or be assumed by the dalang to be well known, and there may be all sorts of loose ends left after the plot cycle has finished. It is primarly the clowns who try to tell the audience what is happening. Certainly little of the *motivation* for action appears in the plot. The clowns, using modern language, modern ideas, and modern behavior, step among the heroes and demons and gods like wideawake men in a dream world. They bring the present into the story (i.e., they always speak the present), and with the paradox of forethought, contextualize the present within the tradition, changing both, as usually seems to happen when epistemologies are allowed to coincide.

In the coincidence of epistemologies, as just noted, the real subtlety of wayang appears. The major epistemologies are (1) that of the demons, the direct sensual epistemology of raw nature, (2) that of the ancestor heroes, the stratified, feudal epistemology of traditional Java, (3) that of the ancient gods, a distant cosmological epistemology of pure power, (4) that of the clowns, a modern, pragmatic epistemology of personal survival. All these epistemologies coexist in a single wayang, and others may be added (most usually the epistemology of the Islamic saints, that of the modern military, or that of some strange foreign land where one of the clowns goes to be king, like Gulliver among the Lilliputians). Between each of these epistemologies there may be—and usually is—a confrontation and a *perang,* a battle. No one ever wins conclusively, but rather a proper balance is restored. Each epistemology, each category of being, exists within a different concept of time, and all the times occur simultaneously. That is, nature time, ancestor time, god time, and the present are all equally relevant in an event, though for each the scope of an event is different. Throughout the wayang, each is kept distinct, even in language (which will be discussed later). The constraints on wayang plot sustain the notion of multiple time and multiple epistemology.

The differences with the Aristotelian notion of plot should now be apparent. What in the wayang plot are significant coincidences, in the Aristotelian plot are crudities, violations of the basic notions of unity and causality. In wayang, we might say that Gatsby, Godzilla, Agamemnon, John Wayne, and Charlie Chaplin—or their counterparts—do appear in the same plot, and that is what causes the excitement; that clash of conceptual universes is what impels the action.

As far as I know, the wayang tradition has no Aristotle, no one who has attempted to articulate the set of constraints which underlie the tradition. I cannot, as an outsider, do this with any depth or hope of adequacy. I am not even sure that in Javanese eyes it is worth doing, but the symmetry of this essay, the plot we are caught within at this moment, seems to demand it. A wayang plot, then, seems to be constrained in the following ways, all stated *by contrast* to Aristotelian constraints.

1. A wayang plot can begin at any point in a story. It has no temporal beginning, middle, or end. Indeed, a wayang plot is very similar to a piece of traditional Javanese music, in which a musical pattern is expanded from within, producing layer upon layer of pattern moving at different times.

A wayang plot, however, must begin and end in certain *places;* it cannot begin and end anywhere, though it can begin and end anytime. It must also pass through a certain place in the middle. Thus wayang plot has a spatial, rather than temporal, beginning, middle, and end. It must begin and end in a court, the first the court of the antagonists, the last the court of the protagonists (to use the Greek *agon* terminology, which seems appropriate here). The middle section must be in nature, usually in the forest on a mountain, but sometimes, too, in or beside the sea. It is movement out and back, a trip. This structure may well reflect the origin of wayang as an instrument of communication with the dead via trance (Rassers, 1959).

Like an Aristotelian plot, a wayang must not be incomplete, but incompleteness is not temporal or causal, but rather spatial.

2. Coincidences, far from being avoided, impel action, for they induce cognitive puzzles or paradoxes. Coincidences are the way things happen, and the way communication between unlikes occurs. In Javanese and Indonesian, the word used to describe what we call a coincidence (a causeless interaction) is *kebetulan* (or *kebenaran*), literally a "truth" (an abstract noun derived from the adjective *betul/benar* meaning "true"). There are many related terms (e.g., *dadi* "happen, become," *cocok* "come together, fit") which make up a semantic set used to describe events none of which imply linear causality. Likewise, a piece of music is structured by the coincidence of gongs occurring together, and a holy day by the coincidence of simultaneous calendrical cycles.[15]
3. Any scene in a wayang plot may be transposed or omitted, except for the constraint that the plot begin in a court, have its center in nature, and return to the court. Transpositions and omissions of story material do not destroy or even change the whole. Almost anything can be left out or brought in.

When something is brought in, however, it must follow the paradigmatic and syntagmatic constraints of the *lakon* structure described above. This structure defines an event (lakon) as made of three acts (pathetan), which we can now on the basis of the spatial constraint just discussed call the *pathet* of the antagonists (because the first scene is located in the antagonists' court, the antagonists dominate the action and win the battles), the *pathet* in nature, the *pathet* of the protagonists (because the final scene is located in the protagonists' court and the protagonists dominate the action and win the battles). Each act, in turn, is made up of three scenes (jejer, adegan, perang), which may be permuted and conjoined in limited ways. Each scene, in its turn, is made up of three parts (description, dialogue, and action) and scenes are frequently embedded one within another. There are further constraints on the sets of characters (demons,

[15]For a description of time reckoning in Bali (and traditional Java) see Clifford Geertz, Person, time, and conduct in Bali (1973). See also Soebardi (1965). These structural principles are applied to the description of music in Judith Becker, Time and tune in Java, in this volume.

heroes, gods, clowns) in relation to one another (e.g., how they speak and how they move) which will be described later. All of this makes up what might be called the *grammar* of a wayang plot.

4. Aristotle suggests that the time of a serious drama should not be more than a single day. He meant the time enacted within the plot on stage, not the whole story. Here is his most stringent constraint on temporal unity, one not always followed by Western playwrights but rather held as an ideal, even by such modern American dramatists as O'Neill, Miller, or Albee. Indeed, it may be one of the reasons for identifying these as good, serious playwrights in the Western tradition.

   The *time* enacted within wayang is unconstrained, except that it must be multiple. Coincidences are timeless. But, the *performance* time of a wayang is *symbolically* a single day. It is necessary to explain this rather strange phenomenon. The division of scenes is marked by a large image of a tree (or a mountain) called a *kayon* (or *gunungan*). During the play, which is usually performed at night, the *kayon* marks the imaginary progression of the sun from east to west by the angle at which it is set against the screen (which is properly set up on an east-west axis, or if necessary, north-south, in which case north substitutes for east).[16] The kayon is a dramatic clock which marks only the progression of the *plot,* not the times in the story or the time on the wrist watches of the viewers.

These are but a few of the features which define the coherence of a wayang plot, particularly those few which contrast most sharply with Aristotle, whose writings about plot well define the unconscious constraints on plot that most of us in the West have absorbed since childhood. I now turn from discussion of the structure or coherence of a wayang to consideration of the relations of the text with its context, from inner to outer relations, with a full awareness that there is much more to be said, particularly at more technically linguistic levels of focus, about Javanese textual coherence in general, and wayang coherence in particular.

TEXT WITHIN TEXT: THE JAVANESE ART OF INVENTION

The distinction between story and plot is very important in studying the structure and development of a wayang text. The *plot* has been defined as a set of constraints on the selecting and ordering of episodes or motifs. The story is a prior text, fictitious or factual or both, which is the source of these episodes or motifs; it is a prior text to some degree known by the audience. Literature, in this sense, is mostly about prior literature. For example, in our own tradition any cowboy movie tells the story of the past more in the sense that it repeats episodes and characters of previous cowboy movies and novels than that it recounts "real" events that occurred in the American West. The "truth" of a cowboy movie is much more a matter of its correspondence with a mythology (a body of prior

[16]For a description of the Old Javanese-Balinese semiotics of space, see C. Hooykaas (1974). I am indebted also to unpublished work on the five directions by Patricia Henry.

literature) than with any events recognizable by nonfiction cowboys in their own experiences.[17]

Wayang has reference to a mythology accessible to us in Old Javanese or Sanskrit literature, primarily the two great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Javanese, of course, have access to this mythology in many less literary ways: in names of people and places, in other theatrical performances and oral literature, in comics, in the very language itself (Resink, 1975; Anderson, 1965; Emmerson, forthcoming). A wayang plot, however, *need* not draw on this mythology, though it almost always does. That is, a dalang may well turn to Islamic or Christian or autocthonous Javanese mythology, wholly or in part, as a source of the motifs and characters for his performance, and he can do so without violating any of the plot constraints discussed earlier.

The story, whatever its source, provides *content* and *context* for the plot. To introduce Arjuna, the hero of the Mahabharata, as a character into a particular plot establishes as a context for that particular plot all the prior texts (mythology), oral or written, related to Arjuna. Arjuna has done certain things, relates in certain ways to other characters, and is associated with many details of appearance, dress, behavior, speech, etc., which have been established in prior texts (Anderson, 1965; Hardjowirogo, 1968; Kats, 1923).

What happens to Arjuna in a particular plot may either repeat episodes from prior texts or it may be new, although consistent with prior texts. The new creation fills in more details of the growing text or mythology related to Arjuna, new episodes in his life, only hinted at previously, or a return to the world by Arjuna across time, into, for instance, an ancient Javanese court. The Arjuna mythology (or Rama mythology, or Hanuman mythology, etc.) is a living expanding text in Java. Two examples of this sort of text expansion may help to make this process of invention clearer.

During the Indonesian national elections in 1971, one dalang who supported the incumbent military government created a wayang in which Krishna, when he realizes that he must direct the Pandawa armies (the armies of Arjuna and his brothers Yudistira, Biam, Nakula, Sadewa, and their allies), in the great war of the Bharata, seeks out the old clown-servant Semar. Krishna asks Semar what he should do and how he should behave as a military leader. Then, in the center of the play, in the forest, Semar instructs Krishna in his duty, the common man in an era of democracy instructing the ruler. The text for these instructions was the *Sapta Marga,* the official Code of Behavior for modern Indonesian soldiers. This brilliant new story, *Bagawan Ismojo Sandi,* conceived by Ki Hari Puribadi, very deftly contextualizes past in present and present in past simultaneously; the Sapta Marga is sanctified as a modern Bhagavad Gita, and the ancient mythology is given rich current relevance.

[17]This sense of mythology is explored in Roland Barthes (1972), particularly in the final essay "Myth today," in which Barthes writes, "Mythical speech is made of a material which has *already* been worked on so as to make it suitable for communication" (p. 110).

Another kind of invention involves no overt innovation at all, but rather lets the audience infer the connection with current events. This second example was performed in 1971, too, but this time by a dalang opposed to the military government, a supporter of the PNI, the political party associated with former President Soekarno. This dalang performed the old text nearly without change, except that the clowns did say they were volunteer workers at the PNI party headquarters and made several jokes about campaign activities on a day-to-day level. The story was *Kangsa Adu Jago,* a traditional Sanskrit story of a powerful villain (Kangsa/Kamsa) who usurps Krishna's kingdom and drives Krishna into the forest. Krishna seeks the aid of his cousins, the Pandawas, particularly Bima, in defeating and driving out the powerful Kangsa. No one missed the political statement.

It is interesting to note that in those national elections the most powerful public statements against the government were made by dalangs, using just this technique. Every other medium of communication, including other forms of theater, was noncritical. It is also interesting that two sides, the government and the PNI, recognized the same mythological context; the difference lay in whether Krishna represented the modern Ksatria or the deposed king.

One of the most important differences between traditional artistic expression and modern individualistic artistic expression is that in a traditional medium the artist is consciously expanding a prior text, an open corpus of literature, art, or music, whereas an artist whose intent is self-expression creates and develops his own text, his own mythology, so far as he can and still communicate. When an artist can no longer work within the inherited mythology and plot constraints, he seeks new mythology and constraints, often from his own imagination, and he works in alienation from his own society. This same distinction appears to have been made by Levi-Strauss, this time in distinguishing the shaman and the psychoanalyst:

> . . . the shamanistic cure seems to be the exact counterpart to the psychoanalytic cure, but with an inversion of all the elements. Both cures aim at inducing an experience, and both succeed by recreating a myth which the patient has to live or relive. But in one case, the patient constructs an individual myth with elements drawn from his past; in the other case, the patient receives from the outside a social myth which does not correspond to a former personal state. To prepare for the abreaction, which then becomes an "adreaction," the psychoanalyst listens, whereas the shaman speaks. Better still: When a transference is established, the patient puts words into the mouth of the psychoanalyst by attributing to him alleged feelings and intentions; in the incantation, the shaman speaks for his patient (Lévi-Strauss, 1963).[18]

No dalang is in this sense a modern artist (or psychoanalyst). It is as if he were performing a new act of Hamlet, or relating a new episode from the Gospels, working on an expanding text which extends through space and time far

[18]This passage was brought to my attention by Shelley Errington.

beyond his own imagination. In this kind of traditional creation, the skill of the dalang is revealed in his ability to recreate the past, which he must do at the beginning of each wayang and at certain points throughout the performance, most particularly in singing short descriptive passages from Old Javanese (Kawi) texts. Here he speaks directly *to* the past of his own culture in words almost entirely unintelligible to the dalang or his audience.

These suluk occur at dramatic transitions in the plot, at any point where there is a descriptive passage (one of the three requisite components of a scene, description + dialogue + movement). The content of these Old Javanese quotations is usually unrelated in any easily discernible a priori way to the particular plot, except that the dalang can substitute relevant names, if he wishes. A bit of another story is recited, and it coincides mysteriously with the evolving plot, linking old text with new. Here is part of the first suluk in most performances:

Leng leng ramyanikang, sasangka kumenyar, O. . . .
Mangrengga rumning puri, O. . . .
Mangkin tanpa siring, halep ikang, umah,
Mas lwir murub ring langit, O. . . .
Tekwam sarwa manik, O. . . .
Tawingnya sinawung, O. . . . , O. . . .
Saksat sekarning suji, unggwan Bhanuwati, O. . . .
Ywan amrem alangen, mwang Nata Duryuddana, O. . . .
Mwang Nata Duryuddana, O. . . .

Very few dalangs are aware of the erotic nature of this quotation from section V, verse 1 of the Old Javanese *Bharatayuddha,* composed in Kediri (Daha) by Mpu Seddah in approximately 1157. Krishna has come to the palace of the Kaurawas, enemies of the Pandawas, in order to try to avert war; at least on the surface that is what is happening. After the initial audience with Krishna, King Duryuddana retires to the inner palace. It is early night, and the moon has risen. Then comes the passage quoted:

> Beautiful was the moon that shone over the palace where the women lived. More and more it grew golden, an incomparable golden house against the sky. And so too its curtain of gems, like flowers on an embroidered fabric. And here was the chamber of Queen Bhanuwati where she slept with King Duryuddana. . . .

Here prior text is being quoted directly, the history of the genre is being displayed, and the Javanese art of invention exemplified. One must interpret the actions of the present in the mysterious context of this scantily understood passage.

The art of invention for the dalang, working within the plot constraints of his medium, involves selection of motifs and characters from the body of mythology he believes in. This is not unlike the Aristotelian art of invention, which was primarily the selection of quotations and ideas from the classics—a kind of information retrieval—in order to interpret the present (Young and A. Becker, 1966).

A political change in Indonesia can be reflected in wayang as a change in mythology, as it has been described in the penetrating studies of Donald Emmerson (forthcoming), and Benedict Anderson (1965), and G. J. Resink (1975). One generation of heroes may replace another, or one set of gods may replace another, as was the case in a village wayang I saw in Lombok in which the Hindu gods were the villains who were defeated by Moslem heroes. This is, however, essentially new wine in old bottles, or what we might call *surface change*. Deep change, in terms of this essay, would be change in the plot, change in the constraints on selecting and ordering the characters and motifs. Deep change would be change in the Javanese conception of time and event, change of epistemology.[19]

INTENTIONALITY IN A TEXT: THE USES OF TEXTURE

One of the first things a dalang learns is that not everyone will respond to a wayang in the same way. There is no assumption that everyone will be interested in the same things at the same time; someone will always be dozing. The setting for a wayang is noncompulsive, more like a Western sports event than serious theater. It is not shameful or embarrassing to sleep through what someone else is enjoying. Jokes, philosophy, action, poetic language, each has different appeal to different people, depending on their own mental makeup, which is often described in a way parallel to the Indian theory of rasa and guna (Coomaraswamy, 1957), a theory parallel, in turn, to the archaic theory of humors in the West. One responds according to his makeup. There can be no single, intended correct response to a play, no one complete interpretation. This multiplicity of events and perspectives builds the kind of thick texture that Javanese favor. As an old man responded when asked why he liked wayang,[20] "Asalnya ramai!" ("Above all because it is bustling/complex/busy/beautiful!") *Ramai* < Old Javanese *ramia* < Sanskrit *ramya* "pleasing, beautiful." Notice the semantic change in Java from "beautiful" to "beautiful because bustling and complex." Sanskrit words, like Sanskrit stories, are recontextualized in Java.

Within the variety of responses—too thick to be untangled here—there are always two separate audiences at every wayang, an essential audience, without whom the play is pointless, and a nonessential audience, who may or may not be present and who in some sense overhear much of the drama. It is the nonessential audience that we have described so far, the various people who have various responses to a noncompulsive event, which is noncompulsive precisely because they are the nonessential audience.

The essential audience of a wayang is normally unseen: spirits, demons and

[19]Ironically, most attempts to "preserve" traditional drama require deep change. This "irony" is discussed in A. L. Becker (1974).

[20]Reported to me by Patricia Henry, personal communication from Malang, East Java.

creatures, gods, and ancestors. To whom does the dalang speak in Old Javanese and Sanskrit if not to those who understand these languages, which are unintelligible to the nonessential audience? Archaic language is not merely embellishment or mystification, else it would have been lost long ago. Rather it is essential language addressed to the essential audience, the ancients, the dead. All drama, as we have noted, speaks from the past, the unseen sources of power which are the widest context of the play.

The first words of a wayang—prior even to the *lakon* itself—are uttered softly to unseen hearers, "prayers" or mantra to the sources of power. Before the puppeteer arrives at the place of performance he establishes relations with this wider spiritual context, including his own, nonhuman brothers (kanda empat) who guard and extend his senses and provide buffers in an unpredictable, often hostile environment (Hooykaas, 1974).

There are several prayers uttered by the dalang between his home and the place of performance, all seeking safety and support. The words of these prayers are not repeated exactly each time, but they are highly constrained variants of the Javanese-Sanskrit phrase which begins literary works:

> Awighnam Astu "Be there no hindrance."

This initial phrase of a wayang text is called the *manggala* in Old Javanese (Kawi) written literature. A *manggala* is anything—word, god, or person—which has the power to support the poet. The *manggala* is invoked, praised, and then relied upon to sustain the poet/dalang in his effort. Here is a point of choice, then, for the puppeteer, who is likely to turn his mind to several sources of support. For the dalang, unlike the poet in the kakawin (poetic literature of the Old Javanese period), it is a private act, invoking the widest context of the shadow play, the earth, the light, the wind, the mountains.

The language of the manggala-prayers is usually a single expanded sentence which includes a descriptive subject and an imperative predicate. The sentence is preceded by the original syllable, *Om,* which establishes the parameters of all language sounds, in Sanskrit linguistics. In structure, the *manggala* is very similar to a Vedic hymn:

Om. O' (insert name of the *manggala* and phrases describing him/her/it) + Imperative predicate.

For example, as he adjusts the lamp (kerosene or oil), the dalang may softly say:

> Om. Be there no hindrance. God of spirit, center of all, God of light—let the flame of this lamp illumine the world.

The phrases of the prayer linguistically are parallel. All prayers follow the general pattern just given, except that the phase "Be there no hindrance" is not always stated. The language is a blend of Sanskrit and Javanese, the subject in Sanskrit (the language of the gods, the remote past), and the predicate in modern

Javanese (the language of the himself, the immediate present). The words bridge past and present, and must be uttered with full attention.[21]

Perhaps here is the place to note an extraordinary fact about the language of the wayang, a fact of great importance in understanding what is happening at any given moment. A wayang includes within it, in each performance, the entire history of the literary language, from Old Javanese, pre-Hindu incantation and mythology to the era of the Sanskrit gods and their language, blending with Javanese in the works of ancient poets (the suluks), adding Arabic and Colonial elements, changing with the power of Java to new locations and dialects, up to the present Bahasa Indonesia and even a bit of American English (in which one clown often instructs another). I do not just mean here what might be said of English, that it reflects its history in vocabulary, syntax, and phonological variation. That is also true of modern Javanese. The difference is that in the shadow play, the language of each of these different eras is separate in function from the others; certain *voices* speak only one or the other of these languages and dialects, and they are continually kept almost entirely separate from each other. One could even say that the content of the wayang is the languages of the past and the present, a means for contextualizing the past in the present, and the present in the past, hence preserving the expanding text that is the culture. I shall point out these different kinds of language as they appear, though we have already seen that the prayers (mantra) to the gods and other sources of power use Sanskrit and modern Javanese, the *suluk* use Old Javanese (Kawi), and the clowns use all modern languages, Javanese, Indonesian, Dutch, English, Japanese, French, neatly reflecting the context of modern Indonesia. Clowns speak the older languages only to mock them.

Like the manggala-prayers, the *suluk* speak to the ancients (not the gods but the Javanese ancestors) in their own language at the beginning of each scene. In many cases the chanted *suluk* are addressed to the individual characters represented by the puppets in the wayang. Like Vedic hymns they invoke the character in his own language by a kind of word magic, in which to state a thing properly and effectively, even without intent (as in a casual Brahmin's curse, which cannot be revoked), is to effect power in the world, bridging time and space.

It is here that wayang becomes an education in power. Wayang teaches men about their widest, most complete context, and it is itself the most effective way to learn about that context. There has been much written about the mystical communication in wayang, and its details are best left to Javanese themselves to write about. For us in the West it might be called *trance-communication*. The dalang is above all a man who can be "entered," a "medium," though to use our own terminology is to invoke all the wrong associations. *Trance speaking* can be defined as communication in which one of the variables of the speech act

[21]These mantra are being translated by Susan Walton and will appear in J. Becker (Ed.), in press. Some of the mantra also appear in Hooykaas (1973).

(I am speaking to you about *x* at time *y* in place *z* with intent *a*) is denied, most frequently the variable *I* is paradoxically both speaking and not speaking, or speaking involuntarily or nonintentionally. Trance is a kind of incongruence between statement and intent (I/not I am speaking to you/not you. . . .), and covers a wide spectrum of linguistic experiences, from the minor trance of singing the national anthem—or any song you *believe*—to the major trance of hypnosis and schizophrenia (Haley, 1963).

In any case, it is as trance communication as a means of relationship with an unseen, essential audience that wayang can be linked to the Barong drama of Bali, the autochthonous trance ritual of the other islands (e.g., the ma'bugi in Sulawesi),[22] and the use of puppets and dolls as spirit media throughout Southeast Asia.

What is the use of communication with the ancients, besides preserving the text of the culture, which is probably not a primary goal but a constant effect of this communication? Two uses are implied in the instruction books for the dalang: to exorcise danger or potential danger, and to contextualize the present in the past. There are many well-known myths about the origin of wayang as a way of subduing or at least calming down dangerous power, the power of Siva amuck or the power of his demon son Kala (time) who formerly dealt out death indiscriminately.[23]

How does wayang *control* power gone amuck, madness, demons, disease, and stupidity? By nature all these are sources of chain-reacting, linear power,

[22]The ma'bugi trance ritual of Sulawesi has been beautifully filmed by Eric Crystal in *Ma'bugi: Trance of the Toraja.*

[23]Versions of this myth appear in Sastroamidjojo (1964:142–163), Rassers (1959), and Holt (1967). The basic source is the Tantu Panggelaran, written during the latter days of Majapahit. Claire Holt translates the text as follows:

> As for Lord Guru, never before was he seized by wrath, now however, he was overcome with fury; therefore, he cursed himself and became a *raksasa* [giant]. Then the Lord Guru took on the shape of a *raksasa* with three eyes and four arms; since then he has been called Kala-Rudra. All the gods were stunned, as was the whole world, when they perceived the shape of the Lord Kala-Rudra who was bent on devouring everything on earth.
>
> Directly, Icwara, Brahma, and Wisnu tried to prevent Lord Kala-Rudra from devouring the world; they descended to earth and played *wayang;* they told about the true nature of the Lord and the Lady (his consort) on earth. They had a *panggung* [an elevated place] and a *kelir* [screen]; their *wayangs* were carved out of leather and were extolled in beautiful *panjangs.* The Lord Icwara was the *udipan* [*dalang?*], Brahma and Wisnu protected him. They wandered about the earth, making music and playing *wayang,* since then there exists the *bandaginahawayang;* thus was the origin according to the old tale.
>
> Another means of defense by the Lords Icwara, Brahma, and Wisnu against the Lord Kala was they went about the earth and sought out Lord Kala who, pale-faced, agitated, moved around his *bale* [pavilion], ... Icwara became *sori,* Brahma became *pederat,* Wisnu *tekes;* they went around singing songs *(mangidung)* and playing *(hamenamen);* since then there has been the *bandaginamen* men.

which accelerates by repeating more and more of the same. Someone who is amuck kills and kills *without intent* until he in turn is killed. Likewise disease and madness feeds upon itself. The closest answer to the question of how wayang subdues power gone amuck came to me from a Balinese friend, who answered, "You know, it's like the doors in Bali." (NOTE: an entrance in Bali and traditional Java is backed by a flat wall or screen (Javanese *wrana*) a few feet behind the entrance gap in the outer wall, so that one cannot go straight in but must pass right or left. Demons and people possessed or amuck move in straight lines, not in curves like normal human beings.) My friend continued, after I looked mystified, "The demons can't get in. The music and shadow play move round and round and keep the demons out." Then he paused and laughed heartily, and added, "As you might say, demons think in straight lines!"

Clearly, from this point of view, it is not the story or the archaic words or the puppets but the whole thing, the *texture* itself, the maze of relations, that is most important. The structure of the medium itself subdues power gone amuck, inducing paradox and coincidence, anathema to those who think in straight lines.[24]

In summary, then, the dalang speaks as himself and as the past through himself to an unseen, essential audience and to the immediate, nonessential audience, each containing a wide variety of perspectives on the action being performed. And he is playing with fire. If, for the immediate audience, the event is noncompulsive, for him, it is powerfully compulsive. Once begun, he may not for any reason (illness, storm, violence, power failure) stop until the play has finished. Hence, he must be careful not to begin anything he cannot end.[25]

REFERENCE: ON LANGUAGE AND THINGS OF THIS WORLD

The first sentence of Hardjowirogo's *Sedjarah Wajang Purwa (History of Traditional Shadow Theater,* 1968), like the book itself a subtle blend of Javanese and Indonesian, sets the perspective of the book: "Wajang purwa adalah sebagai

[24]The term for this texture is *ruwat,* which is often translated as "liberation," but it is "liberation" in the sense that Br'er Rabbit is "liberated" from Br'er Fox within the safety of his tangled briar patch. Wayang is a kind of conceptual briar patch. The active verbal form for *ruwat* is *ngruwat,* the term used for performing a shadow play in order to exorcize spirits. *Ruwat* is part of a series *ruwit, ruwed, ruwat,* "little, delicate tangle," "medium-sized tangle or complication," and "large physical or conceptual tangle, or liberation."

The word *ruwat* is rich in folk-etymological associations, due to its phonological associations with *ruwah,* "spirit, soul of the dead" and *(w)ruh* "to see or know." See the following section for discussion of the importance of this etymologizing (Cf. evolution of Sanskrit *ramia,* "beautiful" > Javanese *rame* "complicated, tangled lively").

[25]My teacher tells the story of his first wayang performance in which he insisted on performing a story which was too "heavy" *(berat)* for him. All the oil lamps died mid-performance, so his grandfather pushed him aside and continued the performance, and all the lights came on again.

On Mount Kawi, near Malang, a wayang performance goes on every day and every night, nonstop year round, performing for the essential audience and preserving the spiritual texture, the *ruwatan.*

perlambang kehidupan manusia didunia ini'' (Traditional shadow theater is a signification of the life of man in this world). Part of the statement is that it is our present life as men in this world, not our ancestors in the ancient world, nor a spiritual world, nor an imaginary literary world, but this world that *wayang* signifies. To understand how that can be so is to understand the referential meaning of wayang, the relation of the text to the present-day non-wayang world. This aspect of the meaning of wayang is both the easiest and the most difficult to describe. It is easy because interpreting the present relevance of shadow theater is a ubiquitous kind of discourse, oral and written, in Java; hence there are countless examples of wayang hermeneutics. It is difficult because the linguistics of wayang commentary—the constraints on it as a language activity or speech art—are as yet unexamined. And it is difficult, too, because there are major epistemological differences in the way people of different cultures relate language to nonlinguistic phenomena. That is, we all too frequently apply our own current Western assumptions about how linguistic reference works—particularly how reference works in *fictional* literature—to a non-Western text. A study of the way a wayang text relates to ''this world'' ought to begin, then, with a study of *how* words are thought to refer in Javanese. Once again, as with Aristotle and the notion of plot, the strategy will be to begin with some features of the dominant Western notion of reference and then try to show how wayang epistemology differs.

In the dominant Western notion of reference (the one assumed in introductory and popular books about linguistics), there are three categories which can be labeled roughly *words* (language), *thoughts* (or concepts), and *things* (objects in the sensible world). These are assumed to be separable (though slightly overlapping) categories of being, since concepts appear to be stateable in different languages, and there appear to be different, unrelated names for the same things in different languages. The relations of language to concepts and things are therefore felt to be fundamentally arbitrary. If anything, natural language gets in the way of clearly seeing things as they *are* (Bacon's ''idols of the market''), and gets in the way of clear, logical thought (based as it is for us now on measurable identities and differences). Thinkers in the West tend to give priority to concepts or things and treat language as a ''tool'' to be shaped to our ends, or discarded and replaced. Not for many centuries in the West (until recently in the works of Foucault and Lacan and with the development of modern linguistics) has language itself been given priority as a source of highly valued knowledge.

Opposed to this notion of the arbitrary nature of reference is one familiar in American thought in the work of Emerson, particularly in his essay ''Language.'' In this earlier view, the relation of words, thoughts, and things is not arbitrary, though it has been confused by the multiplicity of languages. The laws of Nature govern thoughts, words, and things alike. Emerson could, therefore, make his essay ''Language'' a subsection of his larger work, *Nature*. *Signified* and *signifier* are constrained by the same laws. To know is to interpret either words or things or concepts. All three—signifier (words), signified (things), and

the relations between them (concepts)—offer themselves to men to be deciphered in order to discover the "text" of the world. As Emerson wrote, "The world is emblematic. Parts of speech are metaphors, because the whole of nature is a metaphor of the human mind" (Emerson, 1948:18; A. Becker, 1975).

A favored form of discourse in this epistemology is the commentary or the essay, a decipherment or interpretation of language and nature. In commentary, etymology is an important strategy, not as an attempt to discover the original meaning of words, but rather as an attempt to discover the "intrinsic 'properties' of the letters, syllables, and, finally, whole words." One of the things that strikes us about the text of a Javanese shadow play is the pervasiveness of etymologizing as an explanatory strategy. Javanese call this etymologizing *djarwa dhosok* or "forced" (imposed) interpretation.[26] My own first impulse was to dismiss etymological commentary in wayang as "folk" linguistics, rooted in ignorance about the true history of the words explained, for many of which I knew the Sanskrit etymons. I dismissed etymologizing, in spite of its frequency and obvious importance as a text-building strategy, since it did not give the "true" origin of words. Even more, it appeared to me as an embarrassing and silly aspect of wayang. What I failed to see then was that, since the meanings of words constantly change, etymologies must be reformulated (like genealogies), based upon what one now, in the present, sees as the "intrinsic" meaning of the word under consideration. A brief example: etymology A of the word *history* traces it to French *histoire,* then to Latin *historia* "a narrative of past events" to Greek *istoria* "Learning by inquiry" and back to *istor* "arbiter, judge" and hence back in time to a possible Indo-European root. Etymology B of the same word divides it into "his" and "story," and interprets the elements of the word in the present. "His-story" is also an account of past events, but an account relating primarily to men, with women in a secondary role. Which etymology is correct? It is impossible to answer, for the question is wrong in insisting that we reject one or the other conceptual strategy, etymology A or etymology B. Certainly etymology B tells us more that is relevant and true to current thought than etymology A. In traditional Javanese discourse, including wayang, but also including history and commentary, the strategy we have called *etymology B* is held to be serious and an important part of a text, a basic way of deciphering this world.

Etymologizing of this second sort is known to us, in part, as *explicating,* and the object to be explicated is usually a text clearly recognized as literary or religious or legal, and we have specialists who explicate each of these kinds of text. What they do is relate the words of the text (and the phrases and sentences, etc.) to the current context. Precisely in this sense, though less specialized, the

[26]This term was pointed out to me by Susan Walton, who observed that the pervasiveness of etymologizing in Javanese texts is closely related to the high value placed on coincidence. Both are considered nonarbitrary.

dalang relates the old words to the current context. What differentiates the dalang from the explicators of texts in our society is that he explicates primarily proper nouns, names for things, whereas we tend to feel that names are the most arbitrary words of all, given to people and places before they really "are." Etymologizing about names is not unknown in our culture, of course, but it is not particularly highly valued as a way of understanding people and places. What can we know by explaining the name "Detroit," via etymological strategy A or B?

There are two structural points in a lakon when etymologizing, as a text-building strategy, is appropriate: in description or dialogue. (It never occurs in *suluks,* where it is most needed.) Etymologizing is the descriptive part of a scene (either *janturan,* "description of a place," or *carios,* "description of prior action") is done by the dalang directly and it is serious. Etymologizing in a dialogue is done by one of the characters, and may be serious and "academic," if spoken by Krishna or Abiasa, or only half-serious, if spoken by a clown. A major skill in puppetry is the ability to etymologize in all these ways. Let us examine a few instances.

After the mantra and a set musical interlude, the dalang brings out the puppets for the first scene, and begins the description of the first scene of the first *pathet* of the lakon, using fixed phrases:

> Once there was a land. Many are god's creatures that walk the earth or fly the air or swim in the water. Many are the beauties of the world. Yet none can equal those of this land, Manikmantaka (here the name of the particular place in the particular story is inserted). Among a hundred there are not two, among a thousand not ten like Manikmantaka. . . .

Then the dalang describes the kingdom following the strategy of moving from widest physical context to narrowest, from the place of the kingdom among all kingdoms, the mountains around it, the sea, the town itself, the houses, the people, narrowing to a specific person, the king and those about him. All this is set language, though phrases can be left out or reordered slightly. In these passages, the skill of the dalang in controlling the rhythm and pitch contours of his voice in relation to the gamelan is established (or not).[27] In speaking the past almost entirely his legitimacy as a dalang is being proved in one area. At some point in the description, usually as a transition from the description of the kingdom to the description of the king, the dalang begins his first etymology, either on the name of the country or on the name of the king, or both. Here another skill is brought to the foreground, for the etymologies are not set, although one may borrow them from wayang promptbooks called *pakem* (at the risk of being

[27]See Gregory Bateson, for further examples (chiefly Balinese) of the role of skill as a basic element in aesthetics: "Style, grace, and information in primitive art." Bateson writes, "Only the violinist who can control the quality of his notes can use variations of that quality for musical purposes." (1972:148).

known, condescendingly, as a "book" dalang).[28] The dalang displays his skill at explication; he must be authoritative and informative. He does not, however, explain words by consulting a dictionary of Sanskrit roots, but interprets the elements of the words as Javanese words:

> The king who ruled this land is called Maha Prabu Niwata Kawaca. And his name means "one who wears armor that may never be pierced" which, in our time, means "one who could not be defeated," for he and all his people believed that, and acted as if that were true. His name is made of three words: Ni, Wata, and Kawaca. Ni or nir is from the word *nirwana*. Nirwana means freedom from desires, freedom from the past, freedom from the future, something which cannot be likened to anything. In other words, the Great God. *Wata* means blind, without vision. Kawata comes from *Kaca,* which means mirror. Hence, his name, Niwatakawaca, means a mirror that is broken, a mirror which has lost its ability to reflect the truth, the Great God. When he was young he was called Nirbito, which comes from Nir and bito. Nir is, as was said, from *Nirwana*. Bito means afraid. For although all feared him, he was himself a coward and turned away from the Great God.

This is a version of the first etymology from the story, Arjuna Wiwaha, as I learned it. Notice that the name is explicated more than once, and that the meaning as a whole ("one who could not be defeated") is not the same as the meaning of the parts ("a mirror blind to nirwana"). Both are true and both, along with the childhood name of the king, tell us about him. If he had other names they would be interpreted here, too. Clearly, words here are not arbitrarily related to people and things.[29]

I do not intend here to go into the ritual and magical potentialities of this language, chiefly because I only very dimly understand them.[30] It is enough to say that the shadow play is a text nonarbitrarily related to the world outside the play, and that explication of the language is a means to cut through the hidden nature of things. The dalang is a skilled explicator, who demonstrates that complexity and obscurity can be unmasked and, hence, provides a model for understanding the world.

Others (Anderson, Resink, Emmerson) have described how the present world looks within this model. Events in Indonesia really are interpreted by some Javanese as lakon, the lakon plot does have psychological reality as a kind of meditation, names of political leaders are taken as revealing character and role, changes in stories or mythologies from which motifs are drawn to parallel social and religious changes. That is, each way that the text relates to its context (see

[28]A book dalang is insufficient for most Javanese because he fails to perform one of the important functions of a good dalang, contextualizing (the present in the past, and the past in the present).

[29]Thus foreign borrowings are *information* about nature. Almost all Sanskrit borrowings into Javanese (and Kawi) are nouns, the names for things. Javanese (and others) borrow from Sanskrit (or Arabic or Dutch or English) not primarily to appear elegant and learned—though these are secondary motivations sometimes—but to gain information. See J. Gonda (1973).

[30]There are many difficult Javanese books about the mystical meaning of the language of wayang. For a sample, see Holt (1957), which is a translation of Mangkoenegoro (1973).

the first section) is emblematic of the world and defines a way of interpreting the world, once one believes, knows, or pretends that reference is nonarbitrary.[31]

CONCLUSION: TOWARD AN AESTHETIC UNDERSTANDING OF COMMUNICATION

The methodology of this essay has been to describe the various sorts of relations a text (or a part of a text, a word, a sentence, a passage, an episode) has with its context. Parts of a text relate to the whole under the constraints of what we called *plot coherence*. The motifs or episodes of a text relate to their source in a cultural mythology under the constraints of invention. The text and its parts relate to the participants in the linguistic act (direct or indirect speaker, direct or indirect hearer, direct or indirect beneficiary, etc.) under the constraints of intentionality. The text and its parts relate to the nontext world under the constraints of what we have called *reference* (either naming or metaphoric reference). In the previous sections of this commentary, these relations have been examined, not in terms of their specific content, but at the more general level of constraints on specific content.

By no means have all the relations of text to context been explored here. The complex grammatical and phonological constraints on wayang language have so far only been hinted at. The semiotics of voice qualities and typologies of dialect and style, for example, relate a character to particular attributes. The dalang learns to reshape his mouth and alter his entire vocal mechanism systemat-

[31]That the Javanese view wayang emblematically in this way is supported by frequent allusions in literature and by constant references in conversation. Here is a well-known and frequently quoted example from the Serat Tjentini, translated and explained by Zoetmulder (1971). In a discussion about wayang and its relation to Islam, a Javanese host says,

> The illuminated screen is the visible world. The puppets, which are arranged in an orderly fashion at both edges of the screen at the beginning of the play, are the different varieties and categories created by God. The *gedebog*, the banana trunk into which the dalang sticks his puppets whenever they have no role to fulfill in the play, is the surface of the earth. The *blentjong*, the lamp over the head of the dalang behind the screen, which brings to life the shadows on the other side, is the lamp of life. The *gamelon*, the orchestra which accompanies the play with its motives and melodies fixed in accordance with the various persons and events projected on the screen, represents the harmony and mutual relationship of everything that occurs in the world.
>
> The creatures, which appear in the world in uncounted numbers and in an astounding variety of forms, may become an obstacle to true insight, impeding understanding of the deeper meaning of all that is created. He who refuses to be led by one who is wiser than he [that is: the uninitiated who is unwilling to put himself under the guidance of a guru] will never see that God is in and behind everything. He is deceived by form and shape. His sight becomes troubled and confused, and he loses himself in a void, while the true significance of the universe remains hidden to him. He goes astray on a path full of obstacles for, lacking the right knowledge, the true meaning of all that appears before his eyes continues to evade him.

ically to distinguish certain characters and types of characters. Pushing the points of the articulation of sounds forward in the mouth suggests refinement and culture, pushing them back toward the throat suggests roughness and raw nature. Between these two extremes is an unmarked area, where characters most like the "us" defined by the dalang speak. Steady, even pitch and rhythm suggest control; wide pitch and rhythm variation suggest impulsiveness, a dimension of character very important to Javanese. It is interesting that gods speak outside the system of evenness versus irregularity; in wayang they have their own semiotics. Nasality is tied to cleverness, and *latah,* a version of the speech pathology echolalia,[32] is related to a wild and powerful inspiration in both gods and men. Each character speaks in a certain way, in a certain range: taken together, the voices of the set of characters reveal the semiotic polarities of Javanese phonological variation.

Nor have the visual constraints, the constraints on the shape and color of the puppets (called *wanda*) and their movements (called *sabetan*) been explored here (Mellema, 1954; Hardjowirogo, 1968). The voice qualities of the puppets are supplemented (or contradicted for humor) by labeled, recognized variations of eye shape, head angle, ornamentation and clothing, stance, arm and body movement, speed, etc. Furthermore, certain puppets and styles of puppets are attributed to particular people in history,[33] and keen observers of wayang can recognize the different *wanda* of, for instance, Siva as *Bartara Guru wanda Karna,* attributed to Senapaten Mataram I in the Javanese year 1541 (A.D. 1619), or *Batara Guru wanda artja,* attributed to Susuhunan Mangkurat in 1578 (A.D. 1656). The fire-haired demon (Kala Dahana) is attributed to Sultan Agung Hanjakrakusuma of Mataram in 1563, and the eggplant demon (Buta Terong) is attributed to Susuhunan Paku Buwana II at Kartasura in 1655. This lore adds further kinds of meaning to the total text, relating it to particular people, places, and things in the history of Java. And beyond sound and vision are the other perceptions of the wayang night, the smells, tastes, and feelings which add further layers of meaning, more and more particular, to the context of the wayang text.

Commentary here approaches closer and closer to the performance itself and the total responsiveness of the ideal, Javanese audience.

The goal of the philologist is to guide outsiders (here non-Javanese) to what might be called an *aesthetic* understanding of a text. To achieve an aesthetic understanding it seems reasonable to say that in interpreting a text, the outsider must be aware of his own differences—particularly those most "natural" to him—and must learn to use new conventions of coherence, invention, intention-

[32]See Hildred Geertz (1968), one of the very few explorations of the cultural context of speech pathologies.

[33]Some of these attributions are listed in Sastroamidjojo (1964: 265–273). Attribution is itself an interesting linguistic act. Who attributes what to whom under what circumstances? We attribute texts mostly, whereas Nukuoro attribute some words to certain individuals, as Vern Carroll pointed out to me.

ality, and reference. For an aesthetic response to be possible, a text must appear to be more or less coherent; the mythology it draws upon and presupposes must be more or less known; the conventional intent of the creator or speaker of the text in relation to one's own role as hearer/reader/interpreter must be relatively well understood; even the more basic assumptions about how words relate to thoughts and the things of the world need to be more or less shared. If any of these kinds of meaning is not understood, then one's responses to wayang are either incomplete or contradictory. Never fully to understand and constantly to misunderstand are linguistic pathologies that characterize a wide range of phenomena from the strategic understanding of the schizophrenic to the persistent confusion and uneasiness of one who is learning to use a foreign language; all these pathologies subject one to a world in which language and metalanguage are incoherent, where, to take an extreme case, people say "I love you" and at the same time reveal contradictory messages, even "I hate you," in a look or a slap.

The universal source of language pathology is that people appear to say one thing and "mean" another. It drives people mad (the closer it gets to home). An aesthetic response is quite simply the opposite of this pathology. It is opposite in the sense that the same constraints are relevant to both, but there is one difference. That is, opposites are things which are in the same class but differ in one feature (Hale, 1974). Schizophrenia, foreign language learning, and artistic expression in language all operate under the same set of linguistic variables, constraints on coherence, invention, intentionality, and reference. The difference is that in madness (and in the temporary madness of learning a new language or a new text) these constraints are misunderstood and often appear contradictory; whereas in an aesthetic response they are understood as a coherent integrated whole. Shadow theater, like any live art, presents a vision of the world and one's place in it which is whole and hale, where meaning is possible. The integration of communication (art) is, hence, as essential to a sane community as clean air, good food, and, to cure errors, medicine. In all its multiplicity of meaning, a well-performed wayang is a vision of sanity.[34]

[34]This essay, taken together with Judith Becker's *Time and Tune,* suggests the possibility of a single set of constraints running through the whole of the traditional Javanese epistemology, in music, calendars, texts, rituals, and social relations. Of course, this unity may be in part the oversimplification of an outsider, but if true, this unity is probably a rather rare situation in a culture, as it is in a person. In both it has great power. The complex of changes we call *modernization* necessarily fragments this unity. Socal change alters one by one, and in no particular order, it seems, those relations of a text to its context which constitute its meaning. Modern single time (Greenwich Mean Time, manifest in the modern necessity of life, the wrist watch) thus strongly affects plot coherence by devaluing multiple time. If multiple time is devalued, coincidence ceases to be "truth" (kebetulan), and is replaced, usually, by narrative/causal "truth." (In music the strategy of expanding cycles gives way to linear theme and variation.) Likewise the mythology may change and a whole new set of characters and motifs may come into currency. The unseen audience may fade, and trance communication become just entertainment. Words may lose their naturalness and hence etymologizing its purpose. Thus conceptual worlds slowly disappear, just as new ones emerge.

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