

The *Wayang Kulit* as the Narrative Framework of Pramudya Ananta Tur's *Perburuan* (*The Fugitive*)

Adelaida A. Figueras-Lucero

Pramudya Ananta Tur's *Balai Pustaka* award-winning novel, *Perburuan* (*The Fugitive*)¹, deemed a work of such literary, historical, and cultural significance that it "well deserves to be widely known outside of Indonesia" (Aveling, "Introduction," *The Fugitive* viii), is both an assertion of humanness and human dignity amidst encompassing inhumanity, as well as a revolutionary protest against foreign domination and local abuse. It is also an affirmation of traditional native culture, it being steeped in Javanese culture and art that add depth and richness to the story.

Such *Tendenzkunst* (art with a purpose) from Pramudya's pen is not surprising considering that he is "a committed idealist-humanist longing to play a significant part in social reconstruction" (Johns, "Writer" 359), who would actively participate in the revolution for independence notwithstanding repeated incarceration and *disiksa* (torture), who "wished to see the world in meaningful ethical even utopian-human terms" (Aveling, "Indonesian" 50), who would exchange the dream of a poet for the career of a social fighter (Teeuw 167), and who kept a strong attachment to Javanese traditions despite the deep European influence in his works.

When he was summarily imprisoned by the Dutch in 1947 to 1948 for his active involvement in the war, he had time to mull over his experiences and observations during the Japanese occupation and during the struggle for independence and to transmute these into literary art, one of which is *Perburuan*.

The main storyline, enacted in only 24 hours (which nevertheless gives an experience of a whole lifetime), deals with the relentless *perburuan* (pursuit) of an elusive underground resistance leader, former *Shodancho* Raden Hardo, who

spiritually strengthened himself for battle the Javanese way, *i.e.*, through asceticism. Together with former Shodancho Dipo, Hardo had taken part in an abortive revolt against the Japanese but their units had been betrayed by Shodancho Karmin. On the eve of the Japanese surrender, Hardo is reported by his betrothed's father and is arrested with Dipo and Kartiman. The timely surrender of the Japanese saves them from execution but Hardo's beloved dies from a Japanese officer's desperate shooting rampage.

Aptly set in the neighborhood of Blora on August 16 to 17, 1945 or toward the end of the Japanese occupation and the beginning of the revolution for independence, Pramudya's narrative documents the Indonesians' suffering under a colonial government, as well as the general uprooting and destruction resulting from the war. Alluding to the Blitar rebellion ("the most serious single attack on the Japanese authority during the Occupation" [Anderson, *Aspects* 50]), it deals with human loyalty and opportunism. Emphasizing the human side of the revolution, not the military aspect, it focuses on the problems of humaneness and human dignity buried under the rubble of war, and the corollary upsurge of inhumanity.

The general inhuman situation Pramudya exposes and indirectly denounces, derives mainly from the harsh living conditions under a militarized Japanese rule as well as the worsened poverty and dislocation from the war. First to be deplored is what A.H. Johns calls "the bland inhumanity of all established authority" ("Writer" 359). Worst of the lot are the Japanese military authorities criticized for their government without scruples and their cantankerous treatment of the natives. They are pictured as property grabbers who are denounced through the Kaliwangan village head (or *lurah*) as "monkies who have taken everything even though they're stationed miles away" (8). They swagger haughtily about with their superiority complex denigrating Indonesians, the way the Keibodan does to Ningsih:

"Shut up," he repeated. "Indonesian must not talk unless spoken to. Indonesian must

shut up." (129)

and thereby successfully instill, not respect, but fear:

"... But I'm scared when I hear a car now.
Very scared. I can't help it..." (44)

and when really cornered or faced with defeat, they can speak only the language they know – violence – the way the Sidokan makes a last ditch attempt to spray as many people, no matter how innocent, with the bullets of a Tommy gun. For they equate efficiency with ruthlessness, blackmail, and threats of indefinite detention, if not execution, in the process blatantly violating human rights and privacy, and establishing continual fear of them.

The war, aggravated here by the Blitar rebellion, has wrought the greatest violation of humaneness. The numerous lives it has claimed, many of which are innocent; the violations of human rights especially in raids, arrests, and tortures; the confiscation of property, disruption of day to day existence and livelihood are also highly condemned. More than these physical and material losses and destruction, however, are the social and psychological damage: the ruin of the parental home (as Hardo laments, "The rebellion led to my mother's death. I hope it doesn't kill my father as well" (81); the destruction of humane qualities and relationships, resulting in infidelity (like that of Karmin's fiancée); betrayal (as that by the Kaliwangan *lurah*); vengefulness (like that of the Indonesians crying for the collaborators' lives); desensitization (like Dipo's) and apathy if not callousness. Ironically, it is the self-centered Kaliwangan *lurah's* observation that clinches it all:

"When I go to town I see small children dead along the edge of the road. Corpses in front of the market and shops, under the bridges, in rubbish tins, in the gutter – People! adults, children, old people. And before they died, they tried to cover themselves in teak leaves from old parcels or banana leaves. As if they knew

that they would be dead in two hours and no one in the whole world would want to wash or bring them. It's a mad age.... Corpses, uncared-for corpses everywhere ..." (19-20).

Despite the madness of war, the gross violation of humaneness and brutalizing poverty, a few have struggled to assert and uphold humaneness and human dignity, Exemplifying the unfazed struggle against the material and psychological vicissitudes of war and the violations of humaneness is Hardo, the rebel with a heart. His stout heart bleeds for the destitute beggars and raves against the nobles and the rich fleecing the masses. His immense capacity for understanding makes him realize Karmin's predicament and not only forgives the latter for his betrayal but also saves him from the furious mob. In addition, he has sacrificed a normal love life, and comfortable home life for the rigors and unpleasantness of rebel struggle for freedom and dignity. His self-mortification strengthens him more for a more vigorous and victorious battle against the oppressors. And most especially, he is so human that he risks discovery and arrest in seeking inspiration and strength from a glimpse of his beloved Ningsih. In this aspect, he is a foil to Dipo the complete warrior who frowns upon "sentiment" and family ties, as well as to the heartless Japanese obsessed with violent modes, and to the paramilitary Frankensteins that "emphasized the development of a martial manner and bearing...ostentatious aggressiveness, brusque commands, rigid postures (and) boastful swaggering" (B. Anderson qtd. in Aveling, "Introduction," xiii).

A very important facet of the fight for human dignity (*perikemanusiaan*) is the struggle for freedom, both individual and national (Teeuw 167), with which all the Indonesian characters are concerned. It is seen running through the gamut of the pursuit as the unshakable determination of Hardo, Dio, Karmin and their kind to fight against the Japanese, notwithstanding their betrayal by Karmin, the consequent sacrificial lambs, the temporary disbandment of their platoons, and the beggarly lives they were forced to lead. This revolution and local officials'

abuse has deprived the revolutionaries of their peace and normal life inasmuch as collaborators and para-military forces keep them ever on the run with their raids' and unexpected arrests:

"... Six months, no shirt, no shoes. The Japanese after you all the time..." (20).

For as Hardo articulates, they believe that "Men and nations do not exist to be dominated..." (50). The other half of this revolutionary commitment is the fight against oppression and corruption by the local officials, the Japanese's partners in local abuse. As Hardo explains, "Those who work for an oppressive regime are also oppressors, whatever the circumstance" (25).

This two-fold struggle that the rebels wage means a more significant and spiritual revolution: from a *djiwa diadjahan* or *djiwa hamba* to a *djiwa merdeka* (from a slave soul to a free soul, or from ruin and degradation to social renewal). And those directly involved in the guerrilla warfare are fired by a singular resolve to end Japanese domination and betrayal by fellow Indonesians in order to return to a more peaceful and humane life. Yet in this struggle Pramudya sees the contrast between the generations, particularly evident in the conversation between Hardo and the *lurah*, and between the hero incognito and his unrecognizing father. For the older generation would not fully understand or accept the need for the armed struggle, the ruin of parental homes, and the endangered lives. It is mainly the young who are willing to sacrifice all for their people and their freedom.

In this course of Pramudya's re-creation of the Indonesian world rent by war, his indictment of the sins against humaneness and loyalty and his celebration of the noble sacrifices of the revolution as well as a few characters' capacity for love, understanding, and forgiveness, for loyalty and suffering, the reader encounters a number of allusions to the *wayang kulit*, the Javanese shadow play.² The narrative, for instance, opens with references to the stage paraphernalia for an evening shadow play performance at the Kaliwangan village head's house on the occasion of the son Ramli's circumcision. Later, action away from this house is interspersed with revealing sounds from the

gamelan.³ Even Dipo adopts a *wayang* clown, and Gareng's pose to foil recognition by his former Sidokan and former comrade Shodancho Karmin. And if one studies the narrative more closely, one would observe that the narrative is entrenched in the heart of Javanese creative art, the *wayang*. As critic A.H. Johns writes, "Pramudya is through and through Javanese in his cultural traditions" (355).

To examine even only superficially how *wayang* influences enriches *Perburuan's* revolutionary protest and the struggle for assertion of humaneness is simultaneously to look into Pramudya's commitment to Javanese traditions.

The hundreds of *lakon* (*wayang* play) performed by shadow-making exquisitely carved leather puppets enact the lives of different mythological characters (Brandon 2), notably the Pandawa brothers,⁴ and thereby explore the moral problems of the world. Drawing mythic parallels mainly from the Pandawa *wayang purwa* (i.e., original mythological stories of the *wayang* plays), particularly the *Death of Karna*, *wayang pokok* (trunk *lakon*) lends stature to the twentieth century war heroes of *Perburuan*, and adds breadth and depth to Pramudya's study of men and war.

First of all, an important purpose of the *wayang kulit* and later cycles of shadow plays is the "dramatization of the legitimate descent of Javanese kinship from the earliest gods" or the divine rights of Javanese kinship (Brandon 16). Pramudya satisfies this objective by endowing noble if not divine lineage to his main character den Hardo and naming the other warrior leader after a nineteenth century prince hero of Java, Diponegro, thereby imbuing them with greater than human stature, and the war they figure in takes on a critically significant status if not a divine mission. For den Hardo is allegedly a descendant of Abimanju (son of god Arjuna), and according to Mohamad Kasim (Hardo's father), also of Gotatchka (son of Bima) a great warrior ancestor. Then the time setting, Pramudya's choice of the final year of the Japanese military rule, calls to mind the great war in *Death of Karna*, especially when historian Anderson describes this year of the anti-Japanese war as "a time of intense

almost messianic nationalist consciousness, of social and economic disorder, [with] a widespread feeling of impending catastrophe: the golden age had given way to an age of madness... one expected prior to the return of the righteous King (Ratu Adil) foretold by the very popular prophecies of the medieval monarch Djajabaja" (B. Anderson qtd. in Aveling, "Introduction" viii). Anderson also notes that Suprijadi, the leader of the Blitar revolt (the single but critical blow to the Japanese) was said to espouse mystical beliefs (qtd. in Aveling, "Introduction" viii). Thus, *Perburuan's* war story not only takes on a parallel colossal magnitude and significance as the Bharata War in *Death of Karna* but also like later wayang cycles, becomes a conjunction of the mundane and the mystical, the twentieth century reality and prehistoric myth.

Again, like the *wayang kulit*, *Perburuan* may also be interpreted on the mystical level. The author may be seen as a *dalang*,⁵ a god who "through his knowledge and spiritual power brings the characters to life" (Brandon 18). Like the *wayang lakon*, *Perburuan* can be interpreted as a three-part parable of the life cycle (Brandon 19). Chapter I may be seen as the equivalent of the *patetnem* (first part of a *wayang*), interpreted as man's youth characterized by immature and irresponsible action, illustrated in *Perburuan* by Hardo's seeking out Ningsih at her father's house, risking discovery and arrest thereby, Chapter II, as the counterpart of *patet sanga* (second part of *wayang*), seen as middle age trying to find the right path of action when he encounters and escapes from forces of evil, shows Hardo at a farm hut arguing with a gambler (who turns out to be his father), for his course of action in eluding by Japanese and native forces. The last chapter, representing the *wayang's patet manjura* or old age defeating his enemy and achieving inner spiritual harmony, reveals the defeat of the Japanese and Hardo's magnanimity (hence, forgiving Karmin) and equanimity (hence, pacifying the crowd) in victory.

From still another angle, that of the ethical world view usually presented by a *wayang kulit*, *Perburuan* also dramatizes a clash between good and evil. Just as Arjuna and the Pandawa

puppets are portrayed as "more righteous" and "more spiritual" of the right forces, den Hardo, Dipo and their men are presented as champions of the good causes of freedom, justice, and human dignity. Just as the Kurawa puppets, representing the *wayang* of the left, are portrayed as motivated by greed, lust, and chicanery, the Javanese enemies (the para-military forces and the Japanese's stooges) are reprehensible pawns of the Japanese. Also, just as the ethical cleavage between the fraternal Pandawas and Kurawas is not absolute, with the important figures of the two groups having good and bad streaks, the opposing Javanese camps in *Perburuan* are not painted black and white. Karmin may be called a traitor for betraying his comrades but as arresting arm of the Japanese, he protects den Hardo and his companions as best as he can. Even the village ruler may be corrupt, deceitful, and profit-oriented but his self-serving report of den Hardo is really for the future of his daughter. On the other hand, Dipo may be a heroic fighter for a lofty cause but he is too narrowminded, too severe, too vengeful. Even den Hardo seems too hard on his father. And just as in the *wayang*, if there is any purely evil entity, "it is the ogres, non-Javanese who reside 'overseas' in foreign lands and who embody every trait detestable in Javanese eyes;" in *Perburuan*, their counterparts are the Japanese militia who are portrayed without any redeeming trait.

Considering the characters, they two leaders of the revolutionary struggle, den Hardo and Dipo, may be modern warrior archetypes, representing Arjuna and Bima, respectively (Aveling, "Introduction" xv). As idealized warrior of the local underground movement and an awesome ascetic, the *Perburuan* hero, Hardo, reminds one of Arjuna, the "beau ideal" and unsurpassed warrior of numerous *wayang lakon*. As critic Johns points out, "Den Hardo is larger than life and reminiscent of Arjuna," his six months stay in Sampur cave and rigorous fasting recall Arjuna's asceticism in the grotto on Mt. Indrakila, and "his broad humanitarianism and capacity for miraculous escape from the Japanese strengthen the impression" (Johns, "Genesis" 432). Further establishing parallels between the mythic hero and the modern day warrior is the focus on a distinct identifying mark on the right hand. In the case of Arjuna, his second index finger's

mark resulting from a magical exchange of rings gives his away (Aveling, "Introduction" xv), in Hardo's case a long bayonet scar always risks being his "judge and executioner."

Another similarity lies in their physical appearance. Just as Hardo the ascetic fugitive warrior is tramp-looking, scabrous, and covered only in the genitals, and lives worlds away from the bourgeois lifestyle to which he was born, Arjuna the ascetic (called Mintarga) is coarse in looks, unkept in hair, and clad in loincloth — a far cry from the "refined and modest warrior of such physical beauty that he has served as a model of "*alus*" (refined) behavior. In fact, as earlier noted, Pramudya does not simply draw similarities between the two but establishes Hardo's blue blood and extraordinary lineage by tracing the roots of the twentieth century ascetic and revolutionary hero to the epical noble warrior ascetic:

"My son!" the gambler exclaimed loudly,
"I never thought you'd be an ascetic.
You've renounced the world and proven
your descent from holy men.... His
grandfather was. Arjuna's descendants
must be warriors and ascetics at the same
time..." (59).

In sharp contrast to Hardo, the rebel with a heart, Dipo, the severe militarist, calls to mind Bima, the largest and 'fightingest' of the Pandawas. He is characterized by Brandon as "crudely powerful" and blunt as Arjuna is "delicate and controlled" (13). And Karmin, the PETA Shodancho who fails to join his comrades in their rebellion against the Japanese and remains instead with the enemy camp, may be seen as a counterpart of Karna, the half-brother of the Pandawas who fights with the Kurawas.

The *Perburuan* figures may be also likened to the flat characters of the wayang, represented by flat leather puppets, in that they are "mostly too flat and static" (Teeuw 13), and that they are "little more than personifications of attitudes" (Johns, "Pramudya" 225). Yet, as Prof. Teeuw, scholar of Indonesian literature, admits, "the positive side of this flat characterization is

that human problems can be posed with unambiguous clarity" (180); hence, for a *Tendekunst* writer's purposes, their meaning is equivocal, their impact, more immediate. Moreover, as the wayang puppets, like the Javanese art, are described in terms of their *alus* (refined, hence admired) and *kasar* (unrefined, hence despised) qualities, so are the *Perburuan* characters portrayed. On the lowest rung of the ladder are the Japanese, represented by the Sikokan who, like an ogre puppet, was ill-mannered:

... His face was red. He cursed in Japanese all the time.... He looked in all the cupboards. He read every shred of paper... (17)

ill-tempered:

... The Japanese officer growled like a cat and then gave way to his anger: "Answer properly! Properly!" (70)

and simply cruel:

"You're lying!" the Japanese officer shouted.... "Be careful!" He hit the old man on the cheek with both hands and then hit him across the nose with his right hand.... He hit his head on a rail and he fell. "Don't lie! all right?" He watched the village headmen crawl to a standing position... (102).

He would be the counterpart of the *raseksa* puppet type. Also, one cannot disregard the "*kasar*" physical description of the *lurah* on the road:

... The light showed his thick nose and protruding eyes. Each inhalation revealed his coarse features. (6)

and at the death of Ningsih:

The old man screamed like a monkey in a

trap... (142)

so congruous to his mainly detestable character and so close to the *wayang's gusen* puppet.⁶

The Sidokan reminds one of the *raseksa* puppet, and the *lurah*, the *gusen*; Dipo, with his muscular build and straightforward manner, seems like Bima, a *gagah* character. But den Hardo, despite his ascetic-coarse looks, gives the impression of a slight build and refined and controlled manners, a *lijepan* in flesh and blood, like Arjuna is in the *wayang*. Ningsih, as a traditionally garbed Javanese lady may be proper and dignified but like a *lanjapan*, who is refined and aggressive, she is bravely defiant of the Japanese and assertive of her right just as Karmin too may be another *lanjapan*, active and aggressive but refined.

"The structure of the book also parallels the set form of the shadow play...," Harry Aveling points out in his introduction to his translation of *Perburuan* (xvi). Pramudya himself also intimates this. Through various references to the *wayang kulit* in progress at the *lurah's* house and to the accompanying *gamelan* orchestra (Aveling, "Introduction" xvi), the dialog and action of *Perburuan* are tidily linked to the *wayang kulit* performance. Just as *wayang kulit* is conceived and performed in three parts, namely *patet nem*, *patet sanga*, and *patet manjura*, *Perburuan* is divided into three chapters which roughly correspond to the *lakon* presentation. The use of standard scenes in the *patets*, a characteristic feature of *wayang* drama, is also found in *Perburuan*. In Chapter I, there is the novel version of the *djedjer* (main audience scene) when the presentation verandah surrounded by watching, waiting beggars suggests the problem — the search for Hardo — and, as the next scene shows, the headman has been dispatched (like the *wayang's* generals sent on mission orders) for this purpose. The following scenes along the road parallel the *wayang's adegan*. These scenes show the forlorn beggar (Hardo) emoting aloud then the *lurah* complaining about his errand to bring home Hardo; and the two arguing about Hardo's return. The last scene becomes the equivalent of a *perang gagal* or opening battle scene, an inconclusive verbal tussle but in which

Hardo has a definite edge.

The second part of the *wayang* shows the hero prepared for the main struggle through his acknowledged asceticism and successful combat with evil forces. In *Perburuan*, the counterpart of the standard *djerdjer pandita* or hermitage scene depicting the *pandita* or seer (usually the hero's grandfather or father) receiving in audience his own son at his hermitage is the hero's respite in the gambler's remote hut in the fields. Here Hardo's unrecognizing father learns of his son's ascetic sojourn at Sampur cave and later, prays for him. As the gongs and drums follow the play to its "flower battle scene" the pleasant argument between paternal love personified and his incognito son becomes the verbal version of the *perang kembang*. Other major battle scenes featuring various evil forces follow. Giants in the form of the Keibodan and later, the ogre, in the shape of the brutish Sidokan all engage the old man in verbal *perang*.

The third chapter sees more "battle scenes." As the enemy kingdom is subdued (in *Perburuan*), the Japanese surrender, the "great battle scene" or *perang amuk-amukan* ensues. As in the *wayang's* desperate enemy fighting and wanton killing by the winning camp, following the decisive fight, the defeated Sidokan makes a last ditch killing with his Tommy gun. When the Japanese is under control and at the mercy of the rebel fighters, Dipo's version of Bima's standard exultant victory dance (*tojungan*) is his gory hacking of the Japanese. Unlike karna, who is killed by Arjuna, however, his counterpart Karmin is allowed to live, protected from Dipo and the crowd by Hardo. Also in the final audience scene (the *djerdjer tanjeb kahon*), instead of a splendid feast uniting all the winning warriors of the right, the novel closes with a heart-tugging tableau of brave fighters so helpless in the face of a brave lady's death beside her beloved (whom she could no longer recognize).

Taking note of the third level of the *wayang* dramatic structure, one may also observe in *Perburuan* the building blocks of the classic *wayang* scenes, namely the two types of narration, *djanturan* (for major scenes) and *tjarijos* (for describing minor

scenes); spoken dialog or *ginem*; and songs, especially the *dalang's suluk* (establishing mood or expressing a character's state of mind, or a hurried exit).

Inasmuch as an analysis of the use of these structural features in the whole novel would be herculean, an illustration of their use in one chapter would bear out the point. The second chapter, *a la patet senga* opens with a *djanturan* focused on the abode of Mohamad Kasim beyond the rice fields. As the beggar appropriates the hut for a much-needed rest, he reflects aloud, the way a *suluk* would render in song his state of mind as a hunted man, and his views about the *lurah*, Ningsih, and Karmin. His musing is interrupted by a commotion which, the *tjarijos* (narration of action) reveals, is the noisy pursuit of M. Kasim who had figured in a tiff at the gambling table.

A *djerdjer* (major scene) following feature's a *ginem* in the form of a long character-revealing argumentative dialog between the unrecognizing father and his son. A simulation of a small fight (*perang*) is related in another *tjarijos* as the two "wrestle," one entangling the other for a paternal, possessive embrace, the other struggling to free himself. Then as the compassionate gambler allows the beggar a much-needed sleep, he can mull over the intriguing visitor's identity in a brief *suluk*.

Moreover, as the *gamelan* accompaniment in the *lurah's* home pierces the silence of the night and later, the dawn, it impinges on the action in the novel and lends its dramatic function to the novel action. The soft gong and drum beats soothing the air with their regular rhythm transport Kasim and the reader to the mystical world of *wayang* and reinforce the atmosphere of peace and calm felt by the gambler outside his hut. But as the gongs and drums accelerate and intensify in order to follow the *wayang* into the flower battle scene, the *gamelan* music alters the mood and foreshadows the *tjarijos* on the coming of the pursuers and the ensuing clashes. More *tjarijos* on the confrontations between the gambler and the Keibodan, and between him and the Sidokan and his local cohorts are read. Then the dazed gambler in a *suluk*-apostrophe berates the *lurah*

and gives vent to his belated feelings of "anger, vexation, sorrow, and fear." Then the *patet* or chapter closes with a *suluk* on the back-to-normal atmosphere, with an accompanying shadow play orchestra, a rooster's crowing, and district office's bell ringing.

Finally, one may note other parallel elements between *Perburuan* and the *wayang-purwa*, particularly the *Death of Karna*. Most obvious is the background motif of struggle for sovereignty in one's own land. There is the epical fraternal war between the Pandawas and Kurawas of the *pokok* plays (including *Death of Karna*) which parallels the dichotomy between the Javanese rebel forces and their pro-Japanese brothers (*i.e.*, the PETA, Keibodan, and Seinendan forces together with the local officials appointed by and loyal to the Japanese). Just as the central conflict in the classic *wayang* lies not between the Pandawas and Kurawas but between the Pandawas or Kurawas on one hand and an ogre kingdom on the other, in *Perburuan* the main conflict pits the Javanese rebels with the Japanese militia (reminiscent of the ogres in their detestable portrayal) and their allies. Pramudya's faith in the youth and their unquestioning sacrifices for the country's freedom and betterment also parallels the Pandawa's reliance on "their [the youths'] sacrifices to assure the Pandawa's future" (Brandon 341). Just as the warrior's code of honor disdains unworthy conduct among Pandawas and Kurawas (Brandon 326), in *Perburuan*, it marks the true warrior. Even the pre-historic practice of taking women hostage in battle is frowned upon both in the Pandawa-Kurawa, and in *Perburuan* (84.)

For both the *pokok* and the novel, the war also becomes an occasion for exploring human loyalties in particular, and morality during the war in general. In *Death of Karna*, the eponymous hero's loyalty to this king overrides other considerations; lesser subjects like Saja and Togog capitulate to the other side in support of what they consider higher morality — virtue and justice — represented by the Pandawas. In *Perburuan*, disloyalty brands the character weak, as it does the sycophant *lurah* and the emotionally sick Karmin.

There is also concern for the rueful damage inflicted by

war, demonstrated in the Pandawa court's silent but listless contemplation of the numerous injuries resulting from the Bharata war, and in the descriptions of and references to the irreparable war losses and general uprooting indirectly deplored in *Perburuan*.

Both *purwa* and fiction exploit a Javanese folk belief in the power gained from self-denial or asceticism as evidenced by the superhuman feats accomplished by the *purwa*'s Arjuna and Hardo's miraculous escape from the Japanese dragnet of 4,000 hunters, and his favorably answered prayer for Karmin's re-joining them.

The motif of father-in-law betraying his son-in-law is also found in both *Perburuan* (*turah* reporting Hardo's presence to the Japanese) and *Death of Karna* (character king Salja treacherously jolting the chariot rein to deflect Karna's arrow for Arjuna). So also is the theme of fidelity to the beloved even in wartime. While Arjuna's and Karna's wives are unwaveringly faithful and inspiring in the *pokok*, in *Perburuan*, the variation lies in Ningsih's true love being revitalizing just as the perfidy of Karmin's beloved is dislocating.

Thus, the mythic parallels, the borrowings from the *wayang kulit* structure and mode of presentation not only lend a richer dimension to the novel. These also give it a dramatic-symbolic perspective as well as a historical-realistic significance, the equivalent of the *wayang* puppet and shadow meanings. Furthermore, these borrowings underscore the significance and continuity of the ancestral struggle against domination, the heroism and moral values involved, as well as the weaknesses and treacheries. They also affirm the beauty and richness of the *wayang* tradition and Javanese culture.

NOTES

¹ All references to the novel are taken from the translation by Harry Aveling.

² In Javanese, the word '*wayang*' means 'shadow' and '*kulit*' means

'leather.' The literal meaning of '*wajang kulit*' is 'shadow-made-by-leather,' that is, shadows made by puppets cut out of leather (Brandon 2).

³ Orchestra accompanying the performance.

⁴ A cycle of *wayang* plays deals with the five Pandawa brothers and their war with the Kaurawas, their cousins.

⁵ Main performer in a *wayang kulit*, who narrates, sings, speaks dialogue, directs musicians, and manipulates puppets (Brandon 385).

⁶ Brandon gives a list of broad categories of puppet configurations in *On Thrones of Gold* (49). A *dusen* type is of large or medium build, with exposed gums and rough manners. The *raseksa* is a gross-featured non-human ogre with extremely rough actions.

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