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Metaphor in *Sĕrat cariyos ringgit purwa lampahan Dora Wĕca mawi sĕkar macapat* by Raden Mas Panji Arja Suparta

SITI MUSLIFAH

ABSTRACT

The *Sĕrat cariyos ringgit purwa lampahan Dora Wĕca mawi sĕkar macapat* is an example of a translation of a wayang play into poetry, a popular phenomenon in the late nineteenth century. To create aesthetic effects Raden Mas Panji Arja Suparta, the author of the text, makes ample use of metaphors. Some of these metaphors are well-known literary clichés. Others, which are woven into riddles (*wangsalan*), bring the real world of everyday life in Java vividly into view.

KEYWORDS

Metaphor; wayang; aesthetic effect; *lakon malih-malihan*; *wangsalan*.

INTRODUCTION

In this article I will examine a passage from a poetic version of a leather-puppet (wayang) play, *gagrag Surakarta* (in Surakarta style), that was composed in the late nineteenth century, when rewriting wayang plays as *macapat* poems was very popular. The *Lampahan Dora Wĕca* seems to have been well-known in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹ The excerpt below is taken from a printed version of the play published in Surakarta in 1925.² The *Lampahan*

¹ For manuscripts of *pakĕm* (concise prose summary) and *macapat* versions of the play kept in libraries in Surakarta, Yogyakarta, and Leiden, see Florida (2012), Behrend (1990), and Pigeaud (1968). Carey (2008: 405) says that Dipanagara's eldest son, Muhamad Ngarip, mentions the wayang play *Dora Wĕca* in his allegorical poem about his father, *Babad Dipanagaran Surya Ngalam*, written sometime in the mid- or late nineteenth century (see Pigeaud 1970: 383).

² For a detailed summary, including the metre and first line of each canto, of the 1906 edition of Arja Suparta's poem, see Poerwasoewignja and Wirawangsa (1921: 311-315), where the

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Dora Wěca (or *Durawěca*) is a *lakon carangan*, that is, a newly created wayang play that forms a “branch” (*carang*) to the sequence of stories in the main repertoire drawn from the Indian epics. There are several types of *carangan* play, including *wahyon* (featuring a character who receives a revelation), *wějangan* (with a character who receives instruction), *raben* or *alap-alapan* (about a wedding), *lair-lairan* (about a birth), *murcan* (about a character who disappears), *ruwatan* (an exorcism), *lucon* (humorous incidents), and *malih-malihan* (about a character who changes form). *Sěrat cariyos ringgit purwa lampahan Dora Wěca mawi sěkar macapat* is a *malih-malihan* play.

A short synopsis of the play is as follows.³ Janaka (Arjuna) has disappeared, leaving his wife Sěmbadra (spelled Sumbadra in our text) at home in the kingdom of Dwarawati mourning his sudden and unexplained departure. In his absence, a holy man named Dora Wěca (who is in fact Bathara Guru, the supreme deity in the Hindu pantheon, in disguise) arrives and seeks Sěmbadra’s hand in marriage, waiting patiently in a garden outside the palace until she agrees to receive him. Meanwhile, outraged when they hear the news that Dora Wěca is intent on marrying their sister, Krěsna, king of Dwarawati, and his brother Baladewa conceal themselves inside a covered platter of food and have it brought to Dora Wěca by Krěsna’s son Samba accompanied by a close ally, Sětyaki. When he opens what he thinks is a gift of food from the king, Dora Wěca is startled to find Krěsna and Baladewa. They chastise him for his designs on Sěmbadra, but Dora Wěca magically transforms them into a pandanus and a white banyan tree respectively. Samba and Sětyaki run off. Meanwhile, Srikandhi, accompanied by Sěmbradra’s son Abimanyu, sets off in search of the vanished Arjuna. After many adventures they find him. Together they return to Dwarawati where Janaka breaks the spell that turned Krěsna and Baladewa into trees. Janaka confronts Dora Wěca, who reveals himself as Bathara Guru, chastises Arjuna for running off for so long from home, and returns to heaven.

In his *macapat* version of this popular wayang play, which was published in Surakarta three times between 1906 and 1925 (see Arja Suparta 1925 and Illustration 1 for the cover of this edition), the author Arja Suparta uses figurative language that provides various aesthetic effects. In my discussion I want to focus on his use of metaphor, a form of figurative language according to Gorys Keraf (2007:15). According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa 1989: 580), metaphor is defined as the use of words or groups of words that are not the true but figurative in meaning based on similarities or comparisons. For instance, Soekarno is referred to as a roaring lion from a podium, feared by the Dutch. The “roaring lion from a podium” is a metaphor which conveys the sense that Soekarno was a great orator with a fluent, powerful speaking style that ignited the people’s

author is given as “R.M. Pandji Ardjasoeparta”. I haven’t been able to check the 1906 edition to see if it is the same as the edition of 1925, but both versions have the same metre, *Gambuh*, for Canto Four, the same first line, and the same number of verses (54).

³ My synopsis is based on that of Poerwasoewignja and Wirawangsa 1921.

enthusiasm, and the way he spoke on the podium resembled a roaring lion, the king of the jungle. Variation in the use of language, especially figurative language in literature, falls under the rubric of stylistics, which examines a writer's technique in using elements and rules of language as well as the effects of that use. In other word, stylistics examines the poetic function of language. The aspects of language examined in stylistics include figures of speech, sound and rhyme (Sudjiman 1993: 3; Suwondo 2003: 152).

In my essay I examine both general and specific instances of how metaphor is used. In general, Arja Suparta uses metaphors to symbolize human behaviour as manifested in the characters Dora Wĕca, Sĕmbadra, and Krĕsna. The behaviour of the main characters (Dora Wĕca, Sĕmbadra, Krĕsna) resembles human behaviour in real life. All the characters, stories, conflicts, even the settings in the play are in fact representations of real life. In the story, Dora Wĕca, as his name itself suggests ("tell a lie"), is considered a troublemaker because he had the audacity to propose to Sĕmbadra, who was abandoned by Arjuna, then fought with Krĕsna and defeated him. Yet Dora Wĕca considered Arjuna to have been wrong to leave his wife. And he stood up to Krĕsna's majesty and power. Notwithstanding the negative sides to his character, Dora Wĕca (who is in fact the all-powerful Bathara Guru) is depicted as a powerful and unwavering figure as he pursues his goal to make Sĕmbadra his own.

I am interested in discussing a passage in the *Gambuh* metre (7u, 10u, 12i, 8u, 8o) from Canto Four (see Illustration 2 and Poerwasoewignja and Wirawangsa 1921: 312), in which Dora Wĕca pours his heart out to Sĕmbadra's lady-in-waiting Rarasati, to be interrupted by the arrival of Samba and Sĕtyaki with their little "surprise package" from King Krĕsna.

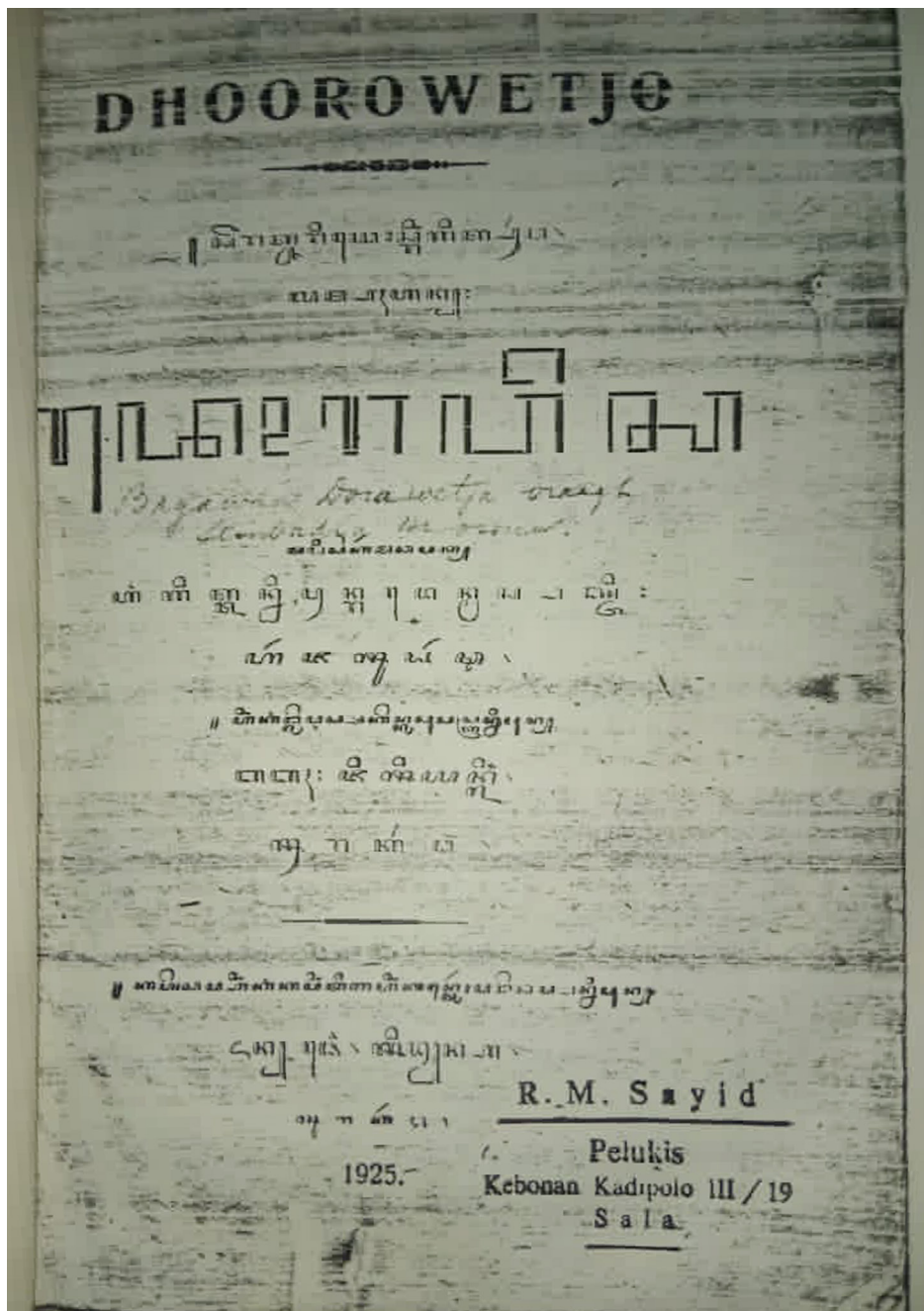


Illustration 1. Front cover for the 1925 edition of *Sĕrat cariyos ringgit purwa lampahan Dora Wĕca*. (Photograph by the author).

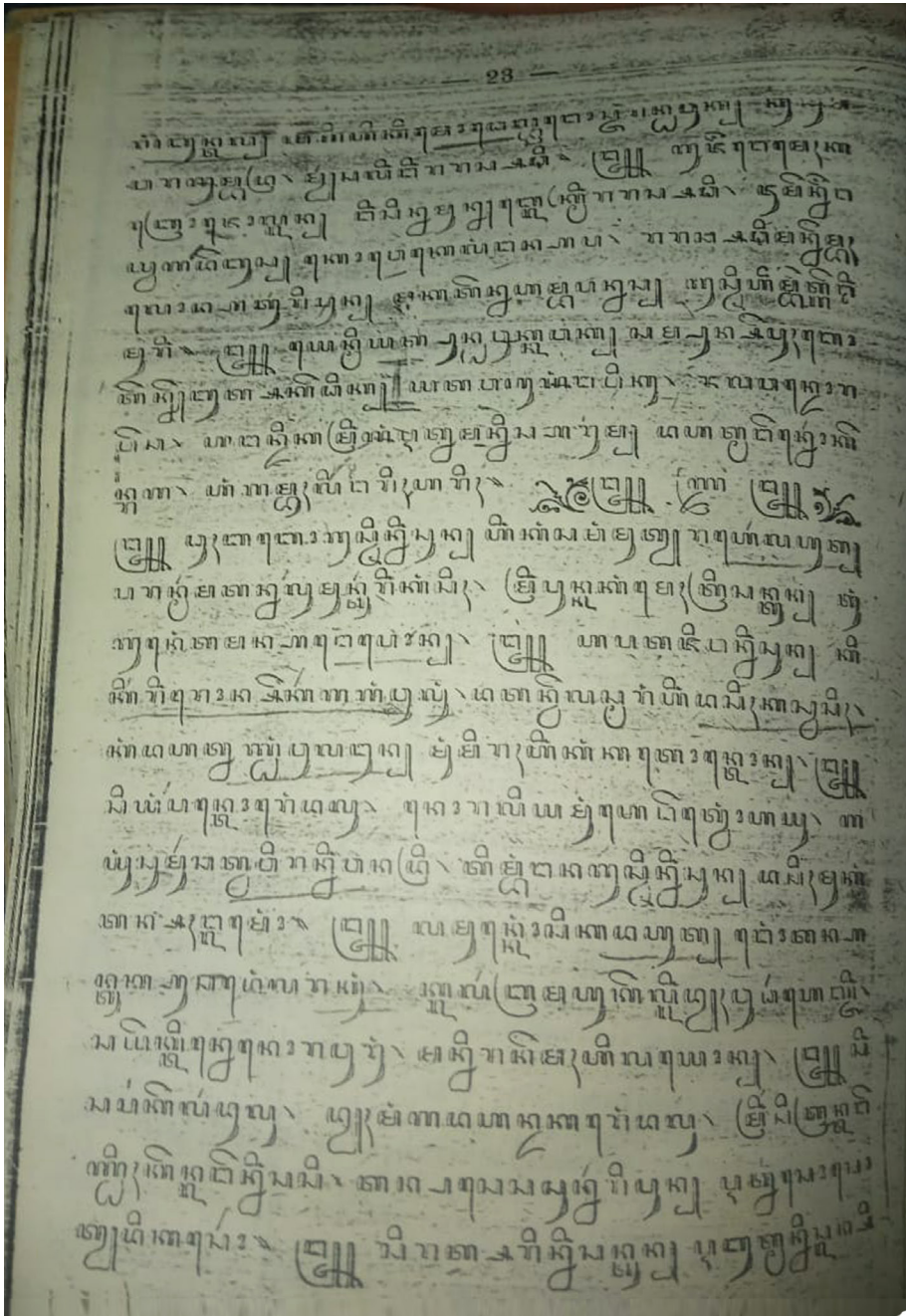


Illustration 2. Page from the 1925 edition showing the beginning of Canto Four (*Gambuh*). (Photograph by the author).

TEXT

TRANSLATION

1. *dhuh babo gustiningsun
ingkang samang mutyara her laut
paran marma tan na lumunturing kang sih
mring pun kakang meh tri santun
tunggu neng taman angewon*
1. Oh, my princess
you are a sea-water pearl!
Is there no way for you to pity
me who for nearly three months
has been waiting in the garden, frustrated?
2. *apa ta jiwaniingsun
kikiring ron sĕkar gagang wulung

datan mĕlas marang ing dasih kaswasih

kang datan nandhang wulangun
mung mirah ingkang katonton*
2. Why is it, darling,
"stingy with leaves, flower with a purple
stem",
that you do not pity the lover who cherishes
you,
who is only suffering and yearning
for you, a ruby just revealed?
3. *siyang pantoreng dalu
nora liya mung engĕt wong ayu
gayung sumur satwa wiraning wanadri

timbangana gustiningsun
dasihmu kang tansah nglamong*
3. Day and night
I do nothing but think of you, lovely one,
"water scoop at the well, an animal brave in
the forest".
Consider me, my princess,
your constantly delirious servant.
4. *lamun kongsi kadaut
ngong tan antuk usadeng lara kung
klalar brama ukĕling dyah wudhar enjing

sayĕktine nora wurung
manira nĕmahi layon*
4. If, swept off my feet
I receive no cure for my lovesickness
"ashes from the fire, a princess's hair knot
undone in the morning",
then truly I won't recover
and I will die.
5. *sing sapa kĕlar dulu
dyah Manggada andakareng dalu
ming citranta ngĕndhihkĕn langĕning sasi

tanpa sesa sunaripun
rĕtna sosotyadi kasor*
5. Whoever is able to look at her,
Dyah Manggada⁴ is the brilliance in the night.
Only, your form surpasses the loveliness of
the moon,
whose radiance is extinguished.
Diamonds and fine jewels can't compare.
6. *sirat sarining santun
rĕbut manis lan sira tan kiwul
sarpa krĕsna sedaning barang kinardi

nadyan apsari swarga gung
mung pantĕs nyethi kemawon*
6. "Golden rays of the essence of essences":
To seize sweetness with you can't be resisted!
"Black serpent, death of things that have
been done."
Even the angels of almighty heaven
are only worthy to be your servants.
7. *dhuh mirah paran kayun
bĕndaraku bok aywa kalalun
darwa cipta wangkal wukeng nora bĕcik
cacak yen sira miturut
apa sabarang reh ingong*
7. Oh, my ruby, the destination of desire!
My princess, don't be led astray.
Having stubborn ideas will lead to no good!
Try simply to follow
all my commands.

⁴ Dyah Manggada is Citrawati.

8. *yĕkti kabĕgyan agung
pira-pira kamulyan pinanggih
ngendraloka janaloka den parĕki
kawibawan kang linuhung
reh satuhune wus condhong*
8. Indeed, that is a great good fortune!
Prosperity without limit to be gained!
In heaven and on earth we'll draw near to
the most exalted power and glory,
because truly, that is our destiny!
9. *ngong petang saka kawruh
caraka kawĕdhar caranipun
ran Sumbadra aksara sa pan neng ngarsi
ganĕp astha nĕptunipun
de Dora Wĕca ran ingong*
9. I've made calculations, based on my
knowledge,
revealing the inner meaning of the alphabet
is the method.
The name Sumbadra begins with letter "s".
In the horoscope that is an even number,
"eight".
As for Dora Wĕca, that's my name.
10. *aksara da ing ngayun
katĕmu nĕm ganĕp nĕptunipun
dadi sira lan ingsun padha tan ganjil
saparane runtung-runtung
estu nutut gĕndhon rukon*
10. The letter "d" at the beginning
is an even number "six" in the horoscope.
You and I are both not odd numbers!
Wherever we go, we will always be
inseparable,
truly we make a perfect match,
11. *rukun saindĕngipun
wus mangkono kuwate ing petung
sajĕg bakal nora tau benceng pikir
kinapakna wong wis rukun
ginesehna nora enjoh*
11. harmonious wherever we are!
Thus is the power of the calculation!
Throughout our life we will never disagree.
Whatever happens, always united!
Quarrel, never!
12. *layak ngong nora gumun
si Janaka lan sira tan tutug
si Janaka petunge katĕmu ganjil
Ja tĕlulas nĕptunipun
mĕsthi bae yen tan condhong*
12. Naturally, I'm not surprised
Janaka and you didn't stay together.
For Janaka the numerical value is odd.
"J" is "thirteen" in the horoscope.
For sure there would be disagreement
13. *dhaup lan pujaningsun
gathet ganĕp yĕkti datan mathuk
nyang ĕndiya bae kalah salah siji
katujune jiwaningsun
kabĕnĕr tan bisa keyok*
13. if he married my beloved.
Odd to even doesn't compute!
Wherever you might go everything would
fail.
Luckily, my love,
there is definitely no mistake.
14. *la wong jodhoh ngawur
buwang adat dadak tanpa petung
tuwas bae tiwas nambut silengkrami
beda petung kang wus jumbuh
lir sira iki lan ingong*
14. Yes, a married couple throws caution to
the wind
to ignore custom and act on impulse,
without a horoscope.
There's simply no point to marry!
It's different when the numbers match,
like you and me!

15. *pinĕgatna ping satus*
lĕt samudra yĕkti bali kumpul
wus kacĕtha mring jro rontal iladuni
titenana ajuringsun
yen ing tĕmbe kongsi linyok
15. Though we were to be divorced a hundred times,
 separated by the ocean, we will come back together again.
 It has been revealed in old manuscripts about knowing the future:⁵
 Watch carefully as I am reduced to dust if ever I go so far as to tell a lie!
16. *marma mĕngko mas ingsun*
bĕnang pisang waringin ron pingul
dipun nuli biratĕn tyas ta prihatin
ilanging lakinta antuk
ijol wiku kotos-kotos
16. Therefore my dear love
 "banana thread, white leaves of the banyan tree."
 Hurry and banish sorrow from your heart!
 Accept that your husband has vanished and in his place, there's a brand new one, a holy man!
17. *Ken Rarasati ngrungu*
mencĕp mlengos nabda noleh pungkur
dhuh ewaku nĕmĕn mring si dhawuk iki
ngaku kotos-kotos berut
mĕsthi bae wingka atos
17. Ken Rarasati listened,
 poked out her lower lip in a sneer, looked away and said:
 Oh my, how I despise this drab little man,
 pretending to be someone special. Bullshit!
 He's just a piece of tough old roofing tile.
18. *ngĕndi wingka sing ĕmpuk*
ya mung lagi kojaha si dhawuk
ya ta wau Sang Rĕtna Banon Cinawi
mring Rarasati dhadhawuh
bibisik sabdane alon
18. Where do you find tiles that are tender and tasty?
 Just keep on babbling old man, whatever!
 Just at that moment Sang Rĕtna Banon Cinawi⁶
 gave Rarasati an order,
 in a low whisper:
19. *heh Rarasati gupuh*
wangsulana Dora Wĕca iku
nging arahĕn supaya enak kang ati
priye saakal-akalmu
mrih glis lunga sing ngarsĕng ngong
19. Psst, be quick, Rarasati,
 give an answer to Dora Wĕca,
 make him feel good,
 how you do it is up to you,
 as long as it gets him to depart immediately!

⁵ These are well-known texts for making prophecies using *ilmu iladuni*. The term *iladuni* is explained in Gericke and Roorda I (1901: 121) with reference to its Arabic etymology (*ilm ladunī*). Ann Kumar (1997: 427 note 107) gives the following definition: "iladuni, presumably a contraction of 'ilm ladunī, knowledge imparted directly by God through mystic intuition, a Sufi concept". The search function (*telusuri*) of the website <https://www.sastra.org/leksikon> yields twenty-six mentions of a *petangan* (calculation), *jangka* (prophecy), *ngelmu falak* (astronomy), and *primbon* (handbook of astrological knowledge) *iladuni* in various Javanese texts, including the *Sĕrat Cĕnthini* and the *Babad Tanah Jawi*. For manuscripts of the *Iladuni* text in the Leiden University Library, including one that belonged to Mangkunagara IV (1853-1881) and was later published, see Pigeaud (1970: 250), "iladuni". There is extensive scholarship on this "bestowed" (*ladunī*) knowledge.

⁶ The name of the garden where Dora Wĕca has been waiting and pining for Sĕmbadra is Bata (or *banon*, Krama for *bata*) Cinawi, 'brick wall decorated with flowers'. Sang Rĕtna Bata Cinawi, 'Her Highness Queen of Rĕtna Cinawi' is a synonym for Sĕmbadra.

20. *sĕlak sĕpĕt tingalku
yen kasuwen dĕlĕng kang kadyeku
Rarasati umatur saha wotsari
sandika nulya lon muwus
mring Dora Wĕca lingnya lon*

21. *dhuh pukulun sang wiku
kula ngĕmban dhawuhnya sang ayu
wiwit mangke arinta jĕng sang sudewi*

*sirna kang wangkal tyasipun
engĕt mring reh karahayon*

22. *dupi wau kapanduk
sabda tuwan kang langkung pikantuk*

*mangke sampun manut piturut sakapti
sumarah reh ta sang wiku
wus mupus pasthening Manon*

23. *paran genipun mingkuh
manusa mung sadarmi tumuwuh
barang lakon kawĕngku dening dewadi*

*satindak darma lumaku
jĕnggĕlĕg mung darmi lunggoh*

24. *ya ta wau sang wiku
Dora Wĕca kalane angrungu
mring ujare wau Niken Rarasati
gĕblag niba bali lungguh*

gumuyu lan manabda lon

25. *lah bok mangkono bagus
dadi tĕrus ayu bangun turut
wruh ing tutur bisa nimbang ala bĕcik*

ngono jĕnĕnge wong ayu

aywa manggung mogot-mogot

26. *basanu banjur katut*

ngong dongani sakĕdhap kapencut

*Rarasati basĕngut manabda maning
nanging tuwan sang awiku
ing galih den radi srantos*

20. My eyes start to hurt
if I look too long at someone like this.
Rarasati lifted her hands in obeisance
then quickly spoke in measured tones
to Dora Wĕca saying slowly:

21. Gracious me, your honour and holiness,
I am conveying the wishes of the princess:
From this moment on, your little sister and
goddess
has no more disobedience in her heart
and is mindful of the rules for health and
prosperity!

22. When just now she encountered them,
your lordship's words were most appealing
to her.
From now on she will obey all you desire,
submitting to your worship's commands,
resigned to the decrees of the All-Seeing.

23. How could she do otherwise?
Mankind must exist
with its actions governed by the splendid
gods.
Every step is a duty carried out.
Suddenly it was obvious: It's all about Duty!

24. At that the holy man
Dora Wĕca, as he listened
to what Miss Larasati was saying,
fell over backwards, hit the ground, then
regained his seat,
laughing and quietly speaking:

25. Well, that's just excellent,
just continuing to be beautiful and obedient,
knowing what's best, able to weigh evil and
good!
That's what's called being a beautiful
woman,
not refusing to do this and that!

26. In the meantime she has been persuaded
to go along.
For a moment there I thought she was
refusing to!
Rarasati gave him a nasty look and replied:
But my lord, your Holiness,
please try to be patient.

27. *rehning rinta sang ayu
mangke nuju kapamběng ing parlu
tarakbrata laminipun tigang sasi
nanging sawěg kalih santun
kirang sawulan kemawon*
27. The reason is that your love the princess is currently busy with something else, meditating for three months. She's just finished two months, with just a month to go.
28. *dene yen sampun rampung
sakarsanta andherek sakayun*
28. Once she has finished then anything you want she will obey with all her heart.
- wiku Dora Wěca kalane miyarsi
mring Rarasati lingipun
esmu cuwa jroning batos*
- When the holy man Dora Wěca heard what Rarasati said he appeared to be deeply disappointed,
29. *nanging netya sinamun
sang bagawan alon ing pamuwus
lah ta iya Rarasati sun ěnteni
gustimu ubayanipun
mung ugěr ywa nganti goroh*
29. but he didn't let it show. The holy man slowly spoke: Never mind, Rarasati, I will wait. Be sure your mistress's promise doesn't end up being a lie!
30. *lah wis kariyeng pungkur
tutugěna lalangyan sakayun
mrih sukane gustinira yayi dewi
měngko uga ngong yun měthuk
utusanira sang katong*
30. So then, farewell! Continue with all the amusements that will please your mistress the princess. Right now I want to meet with the messengers from the king.
31. *Somba ingkang ingutus
lan Sětyaki ingkang rowangipun
wusnya nabda sang bagawan maděg mijil*
31. Samba is the one he sent with Sětyaki as his companion. After speaking the holy man stood up and left.
- praptěng jawi wus kapěthuk
satriya dwi duteng katong*
- Arriving outside he was met by the two knights, ambassadors from the king.
32. *ngacaran samya lungguh
sang bagawan Dora Wěca muwus
sung pambagya mring wau kang lagya
prapti
lah karo kang padha rawuh
apa padha karahayon*
32. He invited them to be seated. Dora Wěca the holy man spoke and welcomed those who had just arrived: Are both of you who have just arrived well in body and spirit?
33. *satriya dwi andhěku*
33. The two knights sat down showing respect.
- wusnya sinambrama arjěng laku*
- After they had been welcomed and wished every success,
- Radyan Somba saksana umatur aris
dhuh pukulun sang awiku
prapta kawula sakloron*
- Raden Samba uttered gentle words: With your leave, my lord, your holiness, your two humble servants have come,

34. *ngutus rakanta prabu*
matĕdhakkĕn dhawuh kang pangestu
kaping kalih paduka dipunparingi
dhahar tapak asmanipun
raka tuwan rama katong
34. we were sent by your elder brother the king
to ask that your blessing be bestowed upon us.
Secondly, your lordship has been invited to partake of leftover food that has been touched by your elder brother the king,
35. *munggeng sumbul mas agung*
nanging agnyanta jĕng rama prabu
jĕng paduka paman dereng den lilani
ambuka tutuping sumbul
lamun tuwan dĕrĕng sagoh
35. here in the large golden rice platter.
But the command of the king is that you, reverend uncle, are not permitted
to open the lid of the platter
if you have not yet made a promise
36. *ambatang isinipun*
dhadharan kang neng jroning sumbul
sang bagawan Dora Wĕca duk miyarsi
mring Dyan Somba aturipun
angakak gumuyu moncos
36. to guess its contents,
what kind of food is inside the platter.
When the holy man Dora Wĕca heard the words offered by Dyan Somba he smiled and let out a guffaw: "Hahaha."

COMMENTARY

Dora Wĕca wonders if Sĕmbadra had the slightest of compassion for him. He has been waiting in the garden for three months (which is the proper waiting period in Islam before asking the hand of a widow in marriage), infatuated with Sĕmbadra and dreaming of her face. In verses 1 and 2, the author uses a metaphorical figure by comparing Sĕmbadra with the words *mutyara her laut* 'seawater pearls' and *mirah* 'rubies'. In the next verse, the metaphorical use of images taken from the natural world continues. The phrase *kikiring ron sĕkar gagang wulung* serves as a metaphor for Sĕmbadra's indifference to her suitor. At the same time, it can be read as a riddle or *wangsalan*, in which the word *kikir*, translated here as 'stingy', can also mean a file for making something smooth, a meaning which is picked up in the next line in the word *mĕlas*, 'pity': the syllable *las*, which combined with the word *watu*, means 'polishing stone'. Meanwhile, the *sĕkar gagang wulung*, 'flower with purple stem', puts the reader/listener in mind of the word *tlasih*, 'basil flower', which is suggested by the phrase *dasih kaswasih*. Thus, the whole phrase, *kikiring ron sĕkar gagang wulung*, plays metaphorically with the idea of Dora Wĕca's feeling of rejection as well as with associations between flowers, polished rubies and the beautiful princess Sĕmbadra. Here and in the verses that follow, Dora Wĕca's florid figurative language heightens the reader/listener's sense of him as a comical character, an ugly old man hopelessly infatuated with a beautiful princess who not only will never reciprocate his feelings for her but is already married to the most glamorous lover of them all, Arjuna. Of course, the humorousness of the scene is enhanced by the fact that the knowledgeable wayang audience already knows the true identity of Dora Wĕca!

In verse 3, the author conveys the infatuation of Dora Wěca for Sěmbadra with the phrase *siang pantoreng dalu*, 'day and night', *nora liya mung enget wong ayu*, 'I do nothing but think of you, lovely one'. In verse 5 the opposition of day to night will be turned into figurative expressions of Sěmbadra's beauty. Here we find figurative language at work in the *wangsalan* "water scoop at the well, an animal brave in the forest", where the complementarity of 'the water scoop' (*gayung*) and 'the well and the brave animal' (*satwa wira*) and the forest where he lives anticipates the argument that Dora Wěca will make in verses 9-11, that he and the princess are a perfect match made in heaven. In verse 3, line four, the words *timbang*, meaning 'counterbalance' or 'partner', in *timbangana* and *mong*, meaning 'tiger', in *ngramong* answer the riddling hints thrown out by *gayung* and *satwa wira* in the *wangsalan*. In verse 4, another *wangsalan*, "ashes from the fire, a princess's hair knot undone in the morning", translates Dora Wěca's fear of rejection into vivid metaphors of extinguished and unravelled desire. The word *awu* is then barely concealed in the phrase *nora wurung* ('won't recover', like ashes that can never turn into fire) and the answer to the riddle posed by the phrase *ukěling dyah wudhar enjing*, 'a maiden's hair knot undone in the morning', is found in the last line of the verse, *manira němahi layon*, 'and I will die', where one can hear the word for 'spouse', *semah*.

In verse 5, Sěmbadra's beauty is compared to the moon and to diamonds, metaphors that Dora Wěca says are both transcended and rendered inadequate by their subject. The riddle in verse 6, *sirat sarining santun*, is answered and unlocked by the words *manis*, 'sweet' and *apsari*, 'angels' in subsequent lines, while the riddle *sarpa krěsna sedaning barang kinardi* puts the reader/listener in mind of heaven, which is alluded to in lines 4 and 5, where the word *mung* suggests *dumung*, a kind of black snake. In the final *wangsalan* in the excerpt, "*běnanang pisang waringin ron pingul*" (verse 16), two natural images serve as riddles to be unlocked in two words in the following line: *sěrat*, meaning 'fibre', which is suggested by the word *biratěn* and *prih* (also *preh*), a kind of fig tree, clearly visible in the word *prihatin*. In this final example of the use of *wangsalan*, as in the earlier examples we have examined, natural objects are not simply metaphors for human attributes and emotions. They become themselves riddles that must be solved through the discovery of even more figurative allusions to the real world in words that seem at first glance unrelated to the metaphoric meaning of the passage.

CONCLUSION

There is more to say about literary language in this passage from Arja Suparta's poem about the adventures of Dora Wěca, but my intention has been to focus on the use of figurative language, particularly metaphor. Some of the examples of metaphor in this excerpt are straightforward: Sěmbadra is compared to pearls, a ruby, the moon. In verse 17, Rarasati compares Dora Wěca to a piece of roofing tile, an amusing, and decidedly disrespectful, metaphoric designation for a god-in-disguise! *Mingka*, the derived form of *wingka*, means 'stubborn, obstinate', but also 'horny' (said of a woman) (Gericke and Roorda 1901, II: 75).

This perfectly fits the “lustful” character of Dora Wěca. These comparisons (with the exception of the last one) are well-known literary clichés in Javanese literature that do not really bring “everyday life” into view.

Much more vividly evocative of the real world, if no less literary, and much more interesting as instances of Javanese metaphor, are the *wangsalan* (riddles). In the *wangsalan* in this excerpt, metaphoric comparisons are based on referents drawn directly from everyday life: common plants, the village well, a cooking fire, the forest and its animals, a woman’s unkempt hair in the morning. These referents are not only used for the purposes of metaphoric comparison but also hidden within other, seemingly unrelated words where they must be uncovered if the riddle is to be solved.⁷ Like the mystical, numerological significance of letters of the Javanese alphabet that Dora Wěca invokes in order to persuade Šembadra to marry him, many Javanese words contain hidden meanings – either because some of their letters spell out different words, or because they have synonyms, or because they sound like another word altogether – that *wangsalan* invite us to discover. In this way, *wangsalan* greatly enhance the playfulness of figurative language that we find in Javanese metaphors generally, extending the power and range of lexical associations by which language refers to specific sights and sounds of the everyday world. Even highly “literary”, poetic Javanese words, which appear at first sight or hearing to have nothing to do with the sights and sounds of everyday life, may end up resonating with and revealing life’s concrete presence in the world of the poem.

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⁷ *Wangsalan* are generally also well-known clichés in Javanese literature. For example, there are collections of *wangsalan* (in manuscript as well as published form), in which “solutions” for “literary enigmas” can be looked up. Furthermore, *wangsalan* seem to be particularly used in romantic episodes.

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