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ON VARIATION IN BABADS

Earlier approaches to Babad: The oral and the written register

In comparatively recent issues this journal has seen the appearance of two articles (Day 1978, Ricklefs 1979) devoted to the question of the transmission of the central Javanese "major Babads". In the second of these articles, Ricklefs pointed out a number of errors in the methodology by which Day arrived at his conclusion concerning the comparative antiquity of different sections of the Babad Tanah Jawi, and suggested that, given the loss of the "ancestral" members of this Babad family, it may be doubted whether there are any acceptable means of establishing the antiquity of variants found in extant *Babad Tanah Jawi* texts (Ricklefs 1979:450-3). It is not the purpose of this article to re-open this particular question. It seeks rather to explore in, it is hoped, a more systematic way a number of general issues raised — sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly — in these earlier articles, with a view to throwing some light upon the difficult theoretical problems which must be faced by those who set out to study Babad in the future.

Day attempts to elucidate the nature of Babad by using a number of analogies. Among these the most important is the work of Lord, first cited at the head of the article (Day 1978:433). In the accompanying footnote, Day remarks that this and other references to Lord's work "are not meant to imply that I think *tembang macapat* is 'oral' in the strict sense of Lord's definition of the term. It is my contention, however, that *macapat* displays traits which are 'oral' and as such central to its meaning" (Day 1978: note 1). In none of these references to Lord's work does Day make it clear how and why Babad is not "oral" in the "strict sense of Lord's definition", so it is perhaps helpful to say something here about Lord's material and his conclusions. Lord, like his teacher and collaborator, the famous Milman

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Parry, was prompted by the study of Homer to turn his attention to a living oral tradition, the South Slavic (Serbo-Croatian and Bulgarian). He describes in his study a situation in which, as he put it, "Singer, performer, composer and poet are one under different aspects *but at the same time*. Singing, performing, composing are facets of the same act" (Lord 1960:13). Lord concluded that the techniques and skills required for oral poetry (that is, poetry composed in performance) are different from and indeed antagonistic to those required in written literature ("the two techniques are... contradictory and mutually exclusive": Lord 1960:129). In his discussion of whether there are any "transitional" texts (transitional, that is, between oral and written), Lord concluded that while there may be a transitional *period*, in which an oral literature is gradually replaced by a written one, there are no transitional literary *products* (texts). After this transitional period, written literature inevitably kills the oral tradition: their requirements are mutually exclusive, there can be no symbiosis.

Unfortunately, the other analogies adduced by Day are by no means easy to reconcile with these references to Lord's work. Fox's work on Roti (Day 1978: note 9) is congruent with Lord's work in that it deals with variation exhibited in oral compositions in a language *without any written tradition*. Yet the work of other scholars referred to by Day deals with quite different literary traditions: Voorhoeve, for instance, deals with the variations introduced by Malay *copyists* (Day 1978: note 1). Even more incongruous is Day's statement that "Gonda (1958) clearly, if unintentionally, demonstrates the oral character of *written* middle Javanese *kidung*" (Day 1978: note 1) - a statement inconceivable from Lord himself, given his stress on the unbridgeable gulf which separates the oral and written techniques. This confusion seems to be due to Day's failure to make at least a minimal distinction between oral *composition*, in a non-literate society or section of society, and oral *presentation* based on written texts (for which some such term as "performative" or "aural" may have much to recommend it). It is the latter which Gonda discusses, in an article not characterised by a high level of "unintentional" revelations. There is a place for argument by analogy in the elucidation of Babad, but the use of analogies which are incompatible with one another without any attempt at systematic distinction and without demonstrating which analogy is most apt for Babad, cannot be helpful. This is particularly so in view of the now well-developed awareness, among scholars who have come after Lord, of the need for greater precision of terminology, beyond the minimal distinction between oral and performative literature suggested above.

This awareness springs from the realisation — due, for a large part, to the extension of field-work to many different societies with their own literary traditions — that in practice we do not find an

absolute gulf between the oral and the written, but rather an almost infinite spectrum of gradations between these two conceptual poles. Lord's emphasis that oral poetry was a process of improvisation in performance antithetical to the practice of memorisation has not stood the test of fieldwork in other societies — in, for instance, the Gilbert and Ellice islands, where the poet first retires to compose his poem in his head, then recites it among his friends for suggested improvements, and only after spending much time on perfecting it recites it in public performance. "Oral" poets creatively responding to radio or written versions of their tradition have also been described, as has the use of written aide-mémoires (Finnegan 1976:137f). It seems likely that Lord's emphasis on the fatal effect of the introduction of writing on an oral tradition stemmed from the particular social situation in Slavic society at that time, which saw the introduction not only of writing but also of a whole school system and its associated texts, with their emphasis on fixed, "correct" versions and disapproval of what they saw not as the creativity of oral composers but simply as a failure to maintain a "standard".

Just as it is now recognized that the written register can influence oral composers, so too can the influence of the oral register readily be diagnosed in poets and playwrights belonging to highly developed written traditions (one has only to think, for instance, of English and French poetry and drama). This breaking-down of formerly rigid distinctions makes it even more essential that the interaction of the oral and written registers in each particular literary genre be precisely defined, if we are not to remain at the level of vague generalisation. Unfortunately, however, when we have nothing but written versions to work with, the nature and extent of the influence of the oral register is no easy matter to diagnose, as scholars who have attempted to diagnose "orality" by its "symptoms" have discovered.

Some of the literary features which appear to be characteristic of oral literature are: the use of formulae or stereotyped motifs; strophes (as opposed to stanzas); blocks, parataxis and linear narration; addresses to an audience; recapitulation, echoing and stalling; fillers and mnemonic devices. Of these, the formula has been most intensively studied and is of most interest to us here. Initially defined by Parry as a fixed noun-epithet combination ("wine-dark sea", "much-suffering Odysseus", etc.) in a particular metrical position, the formula has resisted subsequent attempts to arrive at a broader, and thus more generally useful, definition. No clear consensus has been achieved on such questions as: does *one* repeat make a formula? Can a slight variation on the theme still be considered "formulaic"? Is the sample to be used the poet's own opus, or the whole tradition to which he belonged? Day is silent on the relevance of formula analysis to the Babad, though the use of formula has been considered *the* classical

characteristic of oral literature. This paper deals primarily with variation in Babad, but will make a few very tentative remarks on the subject of formulae, which would be more properly dealt with by the techniques of statistical linguistics. The use of formulae, self-evidently, results in a tendency towards repetition and stereotype *as opposed* to variation, so that when we say something about variation we are often *ipso facto* also implying something about its opposite.

While it is generally agreed that oral literature or its close descendant (that is, oral compositions and their early written renditions) is *necessarily* formulaic, formulae in themselves are not sufficient proof of orality. Lord himself had already remarked that we should not be surprised to find formulae in literate authors such as Chaucer or William Morris, or to learn that at some periods the literary style is more prone to formulaic expression than at others, since "Some ages think less about breaking tradition than others; some prefer a traditional flavour, others seek a 'new' pattern of expression" (Lord 1960:131). Since the presence of formulae (or indeed of the other traits generally considered characteristic of oral literature) cannot be regarded as conclusive proof of the preservation of an oral tradition in written form, the presence of internal or external references to the way in which a particular type of literature was composed or presented is especially helpful. Internal references to performers are frequent, for instance, in medieval Romance epics like the Song of Roland, whose various versions contain passages where the *jongleur* interrupts the narrative to say that night is coming and would his listeners please return after dinner tomorrow — with a financial contribution. These *jongleurs* also provide some clues on the way in which their compositions were constructed, some claiming that their songs were "from chronicles" and others apparently providing evidence (through uncomplimentary references to rival *jongleurs*) that the song was actually "picked up" by hearing it in performance (Duggan, forthcoming). In the concluding section of this paper, a very preliminary attempt will be made to contextualize Babad in this way.

While the use of formulae results in repetitiveness and convergence at one level, at another level scholars of oral literature are faced with the phenomenon of major variation, especially when collating different versions of the "same" work. Finnegan lists variation in words, variation in the order of episodes, the introduction of new elements, and general *narrative* variation as characteristic of oral literature (Finnegan 1976:128-30). Duggan's experience led him to conclude that, while the variant versions of an orally performed work exhibited the same beginning, they generally exhibited considerable variation at the end, due to factors such as loss of concentration by the performer or the need to tailor the ending/moral to the tastes of

a particular audience (Duggan, forthcoming). Some researchers have pointed out another way in which significant variation of a rather different type can be introduced by different narrators, i.e. by the *sense* which they give to a particular, well-known, story from the traditional repertoire. Told with a moral, as a joke, or with aetiological explanation, its message to the audience differs significantly (Finnegan 1976:130).

Yet the degree of variation displayed between different versions of an orally transmitted work is by no means the same for all cases. Kiparsky points out that some oral compositions appear to have been reproduced verbatim over long periods of time due to the special value attached to them. He suggests that mythological, historical, and religious texts are likely to exhibit stability, and stories and romances fluidity (Kiparsky 1976:98 ff). The importance of the religious significance of a text in maintaining a relatively stable form is demonstrated not only by the oral transmission, through an elaborate system of mnemonics, of a virtually unchanging "text" of the Vedas, but also by the importance given by the Balinese to establishing a set, "correct" text for *kakawin* (Robson 1972). It seems clear that the conventions governing a particular genre of oral literature are of prime importance in determining the amount of variation introduced in transmission. In the concluding section of this paper I hope to show how this is equally true for written literature, and what conventions seem to have governed the production of Babad.

When we study Babads, we are using, of course, written material. Some Babad manuscripts are unique, displaying no literary or narrative affinity to any other manuscripts. Our problems begin when we are faced with a number of manuscripts which are clearly related, which have too much material in common for them to have been independently composed: they contain poetical passages which are identical, or very close to one another; or, though differing in literary form, the information they contain, or the story they tell, corresponds so closely as to be explicable only by assuming that one has borrowed from another or that they share a common source. The degree of variation exhibited however is generally far greater than that for which the *apparatus criticus* developed by scholars working with European manuscripts is adequate.

This extensive variation Day, as we have seen, relates to the "orality" of Babad, which he compares to literature of the type studied by Lord. Ricklefs, on the other hand, has chosen to eschew analogies and focus directly on the role of the "copyist", that is the person immediately responsible for writing a particular manuscript version. In a tentative general conclusion, he writes: "So far, the evidence suggests that copyists did no more than make a choice between two versions when they were available to them rather than

exercising significant individual creativity" (Ricklefs 1979:451). On the basis of the evidence supplied by manuscripts studied by him and by other scholars, Ricklefs suggests that the manuscripts of any Babad text can be classified into two "textual traditions", between which subsequent copyists chose. A "textual tradition" is defined as follows: "Two [or more] MSS may be said to share the same textual tradition if both (or all) could have been based on the same original MS" (Ricklefs 1979:445-6). Interestingly enough, none of the Babad Tanah Jawi manuscripts studied by Ricklefs actually represents a "pure" textual tradition: all are *mixtures* of the two textual traditions he detects, identified as A and B. Among the extant manuscripts there is no exemplar of an "A" tradition manuscript or of a "B" tradition manuscript, though such manuscripts, according to Ricklefs, must have been combined to produce the mixed manuscripts now extant. The question remains, of course, as to how these two "textual traditions" first came into existence: were they originally two separate texts written quite independently, or did they arise out of the same archetype, which was extensively revised at some stage? If the latter, then at one juncture a "copyist" has taken rather more liberties with inherited material than is consistent with Ricklefs' definition of his role. On this point of terminology, the present writer has decided not to use the term "textual tradition" as defined by Ricklefs, firstly because the vagueness of its boundaries ("While two [or more] texts which are virtually identical can easily be seen to share the same textual tradition, subjective judgements may be required about how different two versions must be before they are said to represent different textual traditions", Ricklefs 1979:446) would make discussion difficult, and secondly because "textual tradition" is already established as a term with a very different meaning (the whole literary tradition of which a particular poet or composer is but a part) in the European field.

For the purposes of this paper, I have also chosen to refer to the "writer" of any given manuscript rather than to the "copyist", since this allows me to retain an open mind and to consider a number of possibilities as regards his attitude to his task. "Manuscript" needs no explanation; "text" is used without prejudice against the oral register, i.e. as a relatively fixed literary composition recognizable just by this fixity even though it appears in a number of different renditions: the Rgveda might be cited as an example of an oral "text". "Family of manuscripts" refers to the related but different versions found in the extant manuscripts of a text which has at some stage entered the written register.

Substantively, this paper rests on the argument that one cannot assess either the relative importance of the oral and written registers in the production of Babad, or the degree of freedom allowed to and

exercised by those whom one may describe as either copyists or writers, without a more systematic understanding of the extent and type of variation which we actually find in Babads. The following pages attempt to provide at least a preliminary classification of variation. This is followed by a complementary section on contextualizing Babad, both by looking for the sort of references to presentation or performance described above, and by exploring the relationship of Babad to other Javanese literary genres, in the hope that the conditions and conventions which give Babad their distinctive form will emerge with greater clarity and definition.

Variation: Some empirical evidence

The material used for the establishment of types of variation is formed firstly by the different manuscript versions of the East Javanese Surapati Babad — which is the *only* one of the three Surapati Babads extant in more than one manuscript, and thus the *only* one that can tell us anything about the introduction of variations.¹ As these types are established, illustrative reference to different examples in other Babad texts will be made.

In my earlier analysis (Kumar 1976:14-16) I divided the manuscripts of this Babad into two "lines" (of descent)², A and B, thought to derive ultimately from a common original text. For the purposes of this paper it is necessary to set out the evidence for this common original in more detail. Firstly, the story told in the Line B manuscript (Br. 585) is substantially the same as that told in the various Line A manuscripts (Kumar 1976:140-6). There are differences of detail — nearly always in names and numbers, with minor variations in plot occurring only rarely — but these are only marginally, if at all, greater than those occurring among the manuscripts of Line A, which are extremely closely related in metric and literary form. In metric form, the Line B manuscript is almost completely different from the Line A manuscripts, with the exception of its first two cantos. It should be explained that the only extant Line B manuscript has deteriorated very badly and is incomplete, lacking the opening section which would have dealt with Surapati's childhood and youth. The first two cantos of the manuscript in its present form cover the material presented in Cantos VIII-IX of LM 824 or Cantos IX-X of B.G. 432, the Line A manuscripts. In these two cantos, Br. 585 employs the same metres (Pangkur and Asmaradana) as do the Line A manuscripts, though in actual wording it is not as close to the Line A manuscripts as these are to one another.³ Nevertheless it is certainly close enough to these manuscripts to rule out the possibility of independent composition. Occasionally a stanza is almost word-for-word the same in Line B and Line A manuscripts, as in the following example:

<i>Line B</i>		<i>Line A</i>
Br. 585 Canto II	LM 824 Canto VIII	B.G. 432 Canto IX
Stanza 19:	Stanza 20:	Stanza 20:
syang nata ngëndika	jěng sultan ngëndika	jěng sultan ngandika
aris	aris	aris
ingsun totur maring	iya kulup sun-tarima	iya kulup sun-tarima
sira		
sira ngungsia	sira ngungsi	sira ngungsi aneng
maringong	maringong	kene
nagri celik datan	něgari pan nora	něgara celik nora
kuwat	kuwat	kuwat
tan kělar angokuhana	lamun ngukuhi sira	lamon ngukuhana sira
nanging kulup ingsun	anging kulup ingsun	měngko kulup ingsun
totur	tutur	tutur
iku wong atuwanira	iku ta wong tuwanira	iku ta wong tuwanira

More often, however, the wording, while still close enough to indicate beyond doubt a common original, displays a greater degree of variation, as in the case of the following stanza:

<i>Line B</i>		<i>Line A</i>
Br. 585 Canto I	LM 824 Canto VIII	B.G. 432 Canto IX
Stanza 5:	Stanza 5:	Stanza 5:
kagyat sira tumingal	pan kaget sira	Surapatya kaget
	tumingal	tumingal
aningali gěgaman	aningali yen ana wong	aningali yen ana wong
aneng wonadri	lumaris	lumaris
ting kalecir palahepun	aglis aneng ing wana	ting kělencer neng
	gung	wona agung
wong dagang pan dudu	wong dagang dudu	wong dagang dudu
dagang	dagang	dagang
nyalawedi palahepun	nyalawedi sun-tingali	nyalawedi sun-tingali
	lampahipun	lakunepun
bachah gandeck sira	lah bocah sira priksaa	lah bocah sira priksaa
u[n]danga		
kang kinen sigra	kang kinen sigra	kang kino[ng] kon
lumaris	wotsari	sigra wotsari ⁴

Nor is the variation in wording confined within the limits of a single stanza: in some places two stanzas have been contracted into one, while elsewhere one stanza has been expanded into two; and sometimes three stanzas of Br. 585 convey the same information, and echo the wording found in the corresponding stanzas of the Line A manuscripts, even though the individual stanzas do not closely resemble each other.

These are the only two cantos in Br. 585 which have this type of literary correspondence, in metre and in wording, with the Line A manuscripts, although the absence of material on Surapati's youth in Br. 585 leaves open the possibility that, had this manuscript been complete, the whole first section (childhood, youth, Cirėbon episodes, etc.) might have shown the same degree of correspondence with the Line A manuscripts, with the divergence between the two Lines beginning only *after* the two cantos analysed above. Nevertheless, the evidence of these cantos, put together with the close correspondence in content noted above, is sufficient to establish beyond doubt that the two lines do share a common original: an original which has, at some stage, undergone a major re-cast in poetic form, employing a completely different combination of metres in addition to exhibiting the range of factual and literary variations described below. It is the feeling of the present writer³ that this re-cast is probably to be attributed to the writer of Br. 585 or its original⁵, on the grounds that this is the only Line B manuscript, whereas Line A is represented by a number of manuscripts, including the oldest extant of all the East Javanese Babad manuscripts.⁶ Even if, however, the apparently less likely alternative — that this re-cast is the work of a Line A writer — should in fact be the case, this would not affect the point which needs to be made here, that is, the very great freedom taken by the writer responsible, whoever he may have been.

Let us now turn to the work of those writers who have *not* undertaken a poetic re-cast of their predecessor's work: the manuscripts of Line A. Just how close is the poetic correspondence between these manuscripts can be seen from the table in Kumar 1976:15.⁷ Yet even here the degree of variation is by no means insignificant. Three main types can be identified: minor literary variation; factual divergence within an essentially identical narrative; and narrative divergence, usually hinging upon the inclusion/absence of a particular episode.

A. Minor literary variation

The following two stanzas are typical of the amount of literary variation of the Line A manuscripts:

LM 824, Canto II Stanzas 3-4:

sampunira wau tata linggih
mulat puđat kaot
jragan Cina kasmaran driyane
ki bandar puđake pėkik
pira rėganeki
i[ng]sun ingkang nuku

B.G. 432 Canto V Stanzas 3-4:

sampunira tata linggih
ningali puđak kaot
ki juragan kasėmaran driyane
kyai bandar puđakira pėkik
sun tukune puniki
pira rėginėpun

walung dasa reġganipun ċimin	wolung puluh kula tumbas rumiyin
arta dirham kaot	sarta dirham kimawon
tan antara pinicisan age	tan antara pinicisan age
apan arsa wus buḍal tumuli	enjing arsa buḍal malih
layare rinakit	kang layar rinakit
jangkar bēḍol sampun	bungkar jangkarepun

Here the following variations occur: Firstly, the use of synonyms such as *ningali* and *mulat*, to see; *dasa* and *puluh*, ten; and of synonymous phrases such as *jangkar bēḍol sampun* / *bungkar jangkarepun*, “the anchor was weighed”. Secondly, the use of different forms of the same word, such as *kyai* or the short form *ki*, *rēga* or *rēgi*, *ċimin* or *rumiyin*. Thirdly, an adjective or adverb with a *different* meaning may be substituted, as in the second line of the second verse, where LM 824 has *dirham kaot*, ‘excellent *dirhams*’, and B.G. 432 *dirham kimawon*, “only *dirhams*”, or in line four, where LM 824 has *tumuli*, “then”, and B.G. 432 *malih*, “again”. Fourthly, one manuscript may use a word which conveys some specific additional information, where the other uses a “filler” (words such as *apan*, “indeed”, or *wau*, “above-mentioned”, are very frequently used): thus in line three of the first verse LM 824 tells us that it was a *Chinese* captain, and in line 4 of the second verse B.G. 432 that they prepared to return *on the morrow*, information not given in the other manuscript. Fifthly, the whole line may be rephrased so as to give a somewhat different meaning, as in the first line of the second verse where LM 824 can be translated as “the price was eighty . . .” and B.G. 432 as “I will purchase for eighty . . .”. Lastly, a pair of lines may occur in reverse order in one manuscript, as is the case with the last two lines of the first verse here.

Subordinate changes of metre comprise the last form of “minor” literary variations to be noted. While none of the Line A manuscripts has been comprehensively re-cast into a quite different set of metres, as was the case with the Line B manuscript, there is one place at which part of the text has been re-written in a different metre: the long Durma canto of B.G. 432 (42 stanzas, the second longest of all the cantos) has been broken up into two shorter Durma cantos in LM 824, Noosten 9 and C.B. 143, by the creation of a small Kinanṭi canto in the middle (Kumar 1976:15). Naturally, all the other minor literary variations described above have to be worked within the constraints provided by the various *tēmbang* metres, which prescribe the number of lines in a stanza, the number of syllables in each line of the stanza (stipulating lines of greatly varying length within one stanza for some metres) and the final vowel of each line. This well-developed metric complexity is a far cry from the songs of Lord’s oral bards, based as they are on simple decasyllabic lines, usually with a break after every four.

B. 'Factual' divergence

There is no absolute line between "literary" and "semantic" or "factual" variations, since the first may very well, as pointed out above, bring about the second. It seemed desirable, however, to list separately factual discrepancies which are both major and readily computable. These typically involve numbers, names (geographical and personal) or technically "specialized" times. Some examples are:

i *Numbers*

The discrepancies in the Line A manuscripts include: price paid for the young Surapati, 80 *dirham* in LM 824, B.G. 432 (and Noosten 9), 100 *dirham* in C.B. 143; casualties in an encounter between Surapati's men and a Dutch force, 60 for Surapati and 800 for the Dutch in LM 824 and B.G. 432, 120 for Surapati and 800 for the Dutch in C.B. 143; number of Company soldiers in Tack's expedition to Kartasura, 3,000 in LM 824 and B.G. 432, 500 in C.B. 143 (Kumar 1976:91, 126, 134, 96, 127 and 135).

ii *Names*

These exhibit a remarkable fluidity. Apart from minor spelling differences (Saradēnta and Saradēnti in LM 824, Suradēnta and Suradēnti in C.B. 143 and B.G. 432), a geographical or personal name may be given in one manuscript but not in others (e.g. the Dutch captains "Ēnis", "Pilman" and "Muris" mentioned in LM 824 are not found in the other Line A manuscripts). In all manuscripts Surapati is generally depicted as having four *wēdanas*, a classificatorily "correct" number, but their names vary: Wiradarma, Wirasantika, Wiramantri, Wiralēksana, Wirayuda, Wirarēja and Wirajaya all occur, in different combinations. Geographical names also differ considerably, e.g. C.B. 143 Canto XX stanza 18 has "Sēmawis" (Sēmarang), whereas the corresponding stanza in Br. 585 (Canto XII/17) has "Bētawi" (Batavia), and similarly C.B. 143 Canto XXI stanza 16 has "Prēlindungan" where Br. 585 XIII/15 has "Bandawasa".

iii *"Specialized" items*

Where a number of rather specialized items are listed there tends to be considerable variation between manuscripts of the same Line. In Canto XVI, stanza 2, Br. 585 lists the following weapons: *sēnjata* (rifles), *tiktak*, *kalantaka*, *mariyēm* (different types of cannon) and *gutuk api* (grenades), while the equivalent stanza in C.B. 143 (XXVII/2) has *sinapan* (match- or flint-locks, Dutch *snaphaan*), *mariyēm* and *gutuk api*. Other similar examples occur frequently but need not be listed here.

Here a short expedition may be made into the territory covered by the many versions of the central Javanese “major Babads”, including the Babad Tanah Jawi. The coverage of the Surapati story has again been used, this time as a means of arbitrarily delimiting a manageable section of these works for examination and comparison. Published versions are used, for the writer’s and reader’s convenience. These are: the Balai Pustaka version of the *Babad Tanah Jawi* (31 vols., Batavia 1939-41) and the published version of the Babad Mataram (*Babad Mataram*, 5 vols., Soerakarta 1872-4) and its continuation, the Babad Kartasura (*Babad Kartasoera*, 3 vols., Soerakarta 1872(?)–6). In the coverage of the Surapati story in these texts there are only two common cantos, both in the metre of *Durma*. In the second of these cantos (i.e. *Babad Tanah Jawi* vol. XVIII p. 6ff and *Babad Kartasoera* vol. I p. 88ff) the correspondence is very close: there are 126 stanzas in both versions, which exhibit only minor differences in wording and occasional discrepancies involving names. There is however a more extensive range of variation between the two versions of the first *Durma* canto (*Babad Tanah Jawi* vol. XIV p. 61ff and *Babad Mataram* vol. V p. 62ff). Here the two texts set out to list the Sunan of Mataram’s corps of soldiery (*prajurit*), beginning with the same words in each case (*tan winarna ing dalu wuwusèn enjang*) but increasingly diverging thereafter: in stanza 2 the Babad Tanah Jawi lists the Anirbaya and carbineers’ corps while the Babad Mataram has the Drēmaita and pikemen’s corps; in stanza 3 the Babad Tanah Jawi has the Wartanala and Drēpaita corps while the Babad Mataram has the Drēpanala and Anirbaya. By stanzas 4-5 the listings of the two versions diverge completely:

BTJ	BM
wirabaja kalawan wong brajanala	kartayasa kalawan wong wisa- marta
wong kanoman asisih	wong sanucitra sisih
lan wong patrayuda	lawan jayataka
miwah yudamanggala	tan lali sikēpira
asisih lawan wong miji	wong martalulud asisih
pinilih ngarsa	singanagara
sisih sami pinilih	pan munggend kang ker
kartayasa kalawan wong wisamarta	wong katanggung gander lawan mantri muda
martalulut anangkil	munggend ngarsa Narpati
myang singanagara	lan wong jagasura
munggend ing ngarsa nata	miwah wisapraconḍa
tan supe anganan ngeri	sasikēpira tan kari
ing prēnahira	kabayan ngarsa
angubēng sri bupati	gēḍong kang munggend puri

After these first five stanzas, in which one writer has obviously re-cast the previous version into a markedly different form, the wording of the two texts once again converges, though we find discrepancies in the "information content" throughout this canto, as follows:

- stanza 6 of the BTJ version is not found in the BM version
- BTJ stanza 18 has *sunapan*, BM stanza 17 *sanjata*
- BTJ stanza 19 mentions that Tak arrived at Ngasēm, while BM does not
- BTJ stanza 25 gives the Company troops as 500, while BM has 1,000
- BTJ stanza 26 numbers the Buginese and Makassarese auxiliaries at 200, while BM puts the figure at 2,000
- BTJ stanzas 36, 37, 38 and 39 (dealing with the exploits of a certain "Lieutenant Reles" on the battlefield) are not found in BM
- stanzas 66, 67 and 82 of the BM text have no equivalent in BTJ.

At the end of this canto, stanzas 94-6 of the *Babad Tanah Jawi* (the last stanzas) have no equivalent in the *Babad Mataram*, which has now switched to the metre of *Pangkur*. Because of the fact that some stanzas occur in one text but not in the other, the canto has a total of 96 stanzas in the *Babad Tanah Jawi* version and only 85 in the *Babad Mataram*. The two versions are also characterized by minor literary variations, of the type described above, within equivalent stanzas.

Errors

It should be stressed that the type of variations described above are purposive, originating in a deliberate desire to change or improve the received text: they do not arise out of the substitution of one word for another which is close to it either in its spoken or its written form, or out of simple carelessness. Errors *tout simple* do occur, however. These typically involve omission (of letters [aksara], subordinate symbols such as the vowel markers and the *cĕcak* denoting *ng*, words, lines, and even whole verses), reduplication (dittography) and *saut du même au même*. All such errors arise from *misreading* or careless reproduction of written material and not from *mishearing* of oral material.

Some errors have a more complex genesis. An example may be taken from LM 824, Canto XVI stanza 6, where the Prince of Pugĕr is quoted as saying to his brother, the Sunan: *Tuwan emut duk rumiyin, bibit tuwan madĕg aji, inggih saking kopyah amba, awone dereng kaeksi*: "Remember, sir, the origins of your reign in former times; indeed, from my hat, the evil here is yet to be seen". This strange

phrase "from my hat" (*saking kopyah amba*) has been arrived at in the following way: in the orthography of these Babads, the nasal tends to be dropped, *timbul* becoming *tibul*, *rendra* becoming *redra*, etc. From the other manuscripts, it seems certain that the antecedent manuscripts of LM 824 must have read *inggi saking tapi amba*, i.e. *inggi saking tampi amba*, "as I understand it". But *tapi* can also be an east Javanese orthography for *topi*, hat, since the *taling tarung* indicating the vowel *o* is often omitted in first syllables, leaving the word with the inherent vowelization *a*. The writer of LM 824 has read it in this sense, and (not entirely foregoing his personal contribution) has substituted the synonym *kopyah*, making nonsense of the meaning of the sentence.

Again, such an error clearly arises from operating within the *written* register: had he been transcribing an oral performance, it would have been quite clear to the writer which word was meant. The sort of error which arises from mishearing and thus "misrecording" an oral performance is quite different in type. It commonly involves such features as a shift in word boundaries resulting in a sometimes rather drastic alteration of the sense (a classic example of this type is from Gladly the cross I'd bear → Gladly the cross-eyed bear) or a mishearing of the sound pattern of a reconstruction, which may also involve a large alteration to the sense (e.g. "Lead us not into temptation" → "Lead us not into Penn Station": see Treitler, forthcoming). In my experience, shifts of this type do not occur in Babad.

The treatment of proper names in Babads seems to be something of a grey area between the scribal and the oral, or at least to involve in some cases a process of oral recall. As we have seen above, if a writer does not recognize a technically specialized word he often simply substitutes a different item from the same "inventory" (e.g. weaponry). This is not possible with proper names. In some cases variants amount only to minor scribal variation, e.g. in the East Javanese Babads both Alduwelbeh and Anduwelbeh occur as forms of the Dutch name Herman de Wilde. In other cases a writer seems to have looked at a name, wondered what it was, said it to himself, and come up with a version which "sounded right" and was also not too far from what appeared to be written: in the *Durma canto* referred to above (pp. 22-5), for instance, the Babad Tanah Jawi has a Lieutenant Pandērbel (van der Poel?) and Capt. Britman who appear in the Babad Mataram as Lieutenant Betērwel and Capt. Tēрман (*Babad Tanah Jawi* stanzas 70 and 73, *Babad Mataram* stanzas 59 and 62). Variant forms of Javanese names are also common, for instance the names of Surapati's wife and sons in the East Javanese manuscripts (see Kumar 1976: 145-6). The tendency for proper names to become distorted directs our attention to two important and related characteristics of Babad writers: that they appear to have little recourse to independent records.

or archives (the basic resource which a historian requires of his environment) where there is something which is unclear in the text(s); and that they do not find it necessary, as copyists in other manuscript traditions do, to reproduce the antecedent version exactly even when it is unclear.

The last type of error which should be mentioned for the sake of completeness is the metrical. Metrical errors involve failure to observe the required number of syllables per line (the *guru wilangan*) or the final vowel required (the *guru lagu*). The surprising frequency of such errors suggests that though the metres of the *tembang macapat* in which Babads are written are as much melodies as metres, many writers did *not*, in fact, "hear" what they wrote, either in actuality or through the "inner ear".

C. Narrative divergence

This is most amply displayed in the opening sections of the Line A manuscripts, dealing with Surapati's birth, childhood, and youth. LM 824 does not include any information on his birth and childhood, but begins at the point in his career where, as a youth, he is purchased by a Balinese harbour-master. He is subsequently sold to a Chinaman from Batavia, who sets sail for home but is overtaken by a huge storm. This manuscript goes on to discuss the passage to Batavia, Surapati's different masters there, his affair with a Dutch girl, his imprisonment, escape, and subsequent battles with the Dutch.

The other three line A versions have more extensive accounts of Surapati's early childhood. In C.B. 143, he is said to be the son of a Sunan of Mataram, whose wife, from the Malang region, was given to the Dipati of Balambangan while she was still pregnant with the boy. After he was born he was called Suraja; he had a radiant beauty and various omens suggested that he would be more powerful than the Dipati's own children. The Patih, Suwanda, suggested that he be put to sea in a boat; this was tried, but the seven-year-old Suraja was so heavy that the boat developed a strong list and could not be launched. He was therefore abandoned in the jungle. A poor tobacco planter, Ki Basir, rescued him, and thanks to Suraja's presence he and his wife were blessed by fortune and became rich. After some time, however, Suraja left them. He met a great snake, as big as a mountain, overgrown by jungle growth, and managed to cut it free. As a reward, the snake gave him its jewel. He wandered on, and was seen by a Dutch ship whose captain seized the jewel; but his ship was wrecked, and Suraja was washed up on the shores of Bali. He was taken home by a certain Ki Karis, who like Suraja's other patrons became rich; then he had a Chinese master, who sold him to the harbour-master, who also became rich. Suraja was later sold to another Chinaman, who sailed away with him. From this point, C.B. 143 converges with LM

824, though there are still some differences in *personalia* and geographical location of e.g. battle scenes.

B.G. 432 and Noosten 9 include two additional adventures, the first of which comes after the snake episode. In these versions Suraja enters the belly of a stupendously big fish — the writer explains that it was actually a whale — which had been beached on the shore. At this time, it is said, the young Suraja spent days without food or sleep. Next comes the episode of the Dutch ship (and it is here, in these manuscripts, that the young hero is found to be too heavy to put in a ketch without a counter-balance, a phenomenon described at an earlier stage in C.B. 143), and then the second additional adventure, in which Suraja and a slave from the Dutch ship (called “Sěteber” or “Septemběr”) are shipwrecked on a supernaturally dangerous island, one which is frequented by a huge elephant-eating Garuda. Roping themselves to the Garuda, Suraja and his companion fly through the air, but as they disengage themselves to land in a tree Sěteber is killed. Once again, *personalia* and names differ somewhat.

Clearly there are major divergences in this section of the Line A manuscripts. If we assume that LM 824 is closest to the original version⁸, then a whole series of adventures illustrating the young Surapati’s supernatural powers has been added in C.B. 143, and an even more extensive series in B.G. 432 and Noosten 9. Two further remarks may be made: quite apart from the early episodes (which are obviously in the realm of what Babad scholars despairingly categorize as “the fantastic”), this whole section of the Line A version is completely unhistorical. The only possible exception is the alleged love-affair with the Dutch girl, which may, perhaps, have escaped the records. But a pitched battle with “Admiral Alduwelbeh” (Herman de Wilde) costing 800 Company troops certainly would not have; and if Surapati had any connection with Cirěbon it can only have been a very minor one, in contrast to his major involvement in the wars of Bantěn, which these Babads do not refer to at all. Secondly, this part of the text seems to show considerable influence of stories which were evidently well-known in the world to which it belongs. I have noted earlier (Kumar 1976:337) the striking resemblance, not only of individual episodes but also of the particular combination of episodes, to the Malay Hikayat Si-miskin. Later it seemed to me that the extraordinary staying-power of the story of the young Surapati’s love affair with a Dutch girl and his subsequent imprisonment (which is found not only in the East Javanese but also in the West Javanese and Balambangan Babads) may indicate a patterning of the treatment of Surapati on the model of Yusuf. Yusuf, in the well-known romance, like Surapati rises to greatness from slavery, and in his career an important part is played by the beautiful “foreign” Zulaika, who is portrayed as a seductress, as is the “Dutch girl” in many versions of the

Surapati story. I also noted some similarity to the Sinbad stories (Kumar 1976:338), but the episode involved — the elephant-eating Garuda — is also suggestive of an episode in the Old Javanese *Adi-parwa* (see Juynboll 1906:39F), and one is, of course, never in a position to quantify exactly the contribution of the writer's various sources, as against that of his own imagination.

Tracing the transmission and transformation of material in different manuscripts of a "text" has revealed a good deal about the activities of their writers. While word-for-word copying is so rare as to be virtually non-existent, the range of the variations which *are* introduced is very wide. Sometimes only comparatively minor variations within what is recognizably the "same" stanza are involved; elsewhere, however, a complete re-cast of the original into a totally different metric and literary form has been undertaken. The evidence of the two Durma cantos from the major Babads provides further evidence of the different ways in which a copyist might treat antecedent material, for one of these cantos has been substantially revised and the other much less so. There are two possible explanations for this difference in treatment: either two writers, at two different stages in the evolution of the text, have interpreted their task differently; or one and the same writer has taken a different approach to different parts of his material. Furthermore, the fact that the only common cantos in this rather extensive material from the major Babads, which otherwise exhibited very considerable narrative divergence, are two Durma cantos containing highly dramatic representations of battle scenes, supports a conclusion that writers regarded earlier versions of their text primarily as literary material, different parts of which might be retained or improved upon in a process of literary re-creation, rather than as a record to be preserved.

Finally, it should be noted that just as the common types of errors, listed above, can be seen to arise from misreading or careless writing (that is, they are what we call scribal errors) rather than from *mis-hearing*, so the types of variation found do not accord well with what scholars in other fields have seen as typical indicators of the influence of the oral dimension. Far from producing a form of literature exhibiting a heavy reliance on formulae within a simple strophic form, Babad writers, as we have seen, show a distinct tendency not only to alter received noun-epithet combinations but to go beyond this and rephrase whole lines and even stanzas, all within the constraints of a fairly demanding metre. In the larger, narrative, framework it is the beginnings rather than the endings of Babad manuscripts which diverge most, suggesting a situation not of a reciter who has lost the thread or tailored the ending to his audience, but of a writer who has begun his own literary version of a text but after some time, tiring of

the strain of innovation, has fallen back into reliance on the manuscript before him to provide the basic framework, though he will generally still introduce some literary improvements of his own as he moves from stanza to stanza.

Divergence between unrelated texts

In the above discussion of the variations which are exhibited between related manuscripts — different versions of the same “text” — we have found not only a wide range of literary variation but also a distinctly cavalier treatment of the specific, “factual” information passed down from antecedent manuscripts — a phenomenon common to both the Surapati and the major Babads. Why, one must ask, should this be the case? To answer this question it is useful to turn from variations which have developed through the transmission of *one text* to the way in which *different* Babad texts, bearing no literary relationship to one another, treat what we would regard as “the same subject”. Here the tendency towards factual and narrative variation is even more marked. A particularly striking example is offered by the multiple transformations of the *only* common element in all versions of the Surapati story, found in the East Javanese, West Javanese and Balambangan Babads, which are quite separate and unrelated as literary compositions, and in the major Babads. This element is centred upon Surapati’s relationship with a Dutch girl. Though such a relationship is described in all these texts, there is almost nothing in common in the way the different authors present it. In the West Javanese Babad, the girl is said to be the daughter of the ruler (“Emur”⁹) of Batavia, a ruler whose entourage of wives, concubines, and courtiers is portrayed in the same conventional terms as for a Javanese ruler, and who has no recognizably “Dutch” characteristics at all: his daughter has the Javanese name of Rĕtna Wrĕsiki, and she and the hero actually marry (though they have to elope). In the East Javanese Babad (and in the Babad Tanah Jawi versions) the girl, here the daughter of a Dutchman of high standing, is, if not quintessentially Dutch, at least depicted as culturally alien in dress and speech; the pair form an irregular liaison whose discovery leads to their separation and the hero’s imprisonment. In the Balambangan Babad, the hero is *adopted* by the girl’s father (here a sea captain who rises to become Governor-General) and later rejects her advances on the grounds that Balinese *adat* prohibits sexual relationships between adoptive siblings. Whether Surapati did in fact have any of these relationships with a Dutch girl is not so important as the fact that different authors have made very different things of the “same material”, both in particulars (*name, parentage, etc.*) and in theme and moral. This phenomenon, of what one might call the “floating motif”, is by no means peculiar to the Surapati Babads. Some of their motifs, e.g. the persecution of the

young hero, marked for greatness, and his casting-out to sea or into the wilderness, are very widespread in Babad literature. Another example, not from the Surapati Babads, that may be cited is the story of the famous “synod of *walis*”, which different authors, inspired apparently by local patriotisms, have set in the different regions which their works celebrate.¹⁰ Nor is the account of this synod, which centres on the trial of the “heretic” *wali* Siti Jĕnar, simply transferred from place to place. In some cases the reinterpretation reveals a strong polemic element, and Siti Jĕnar may be portrayed as (to put it rather crudely) either villain or hero, depending upon the author’s attitude to one of the central theological controversies (the admissibility or inadmissibility of the union of man with God) in Javanese Islam.

Obviously enough, the remarks made above on narrative variation in Babads do not apply to that small minority which have no significant narrative content — what we might term “listing” Babads. The two principal types here are the *babad sangkala*, where events are listed in chronological order and dated by means of chronograms (*sangkala*: for an edition and translation, see Ricklefs 1978), and genealogical Babads, where the chronological framework is supplied by the listing of subsequent generations of one or more noble families, usually accompanied by a brief record of events, but without many dates. The existence of such “listing” Babads raises some interesting questions, especially when one considers that the story of Surapati in the Balam-bangan Babad, to take one example, has either grown out of, or been inserted into, a genealogical framework of this type. Though comparison of different manuscripts reveals how a Babad text was transformed in its transmission, much less is known of the process of its original composition: what sources did Babad authors “normally” refer to? It is possible that many fully elaborated narrative Babad were developed from genealogies or *sangkala* lists, or, for Babad treating a shorter time-span (the life of a prince, for instance) from court diaries, of which hardly any have survived, though the type of record represented by the apparently unique Mangkunegaran diary (see Kumar 1980) certainly raises very interesting possibilities, especially when one considers that some Babad (the *Babad Bĕdah ing Ngayogyakarta*, for example) are not far removed from the diary form. The fact that Babad writers do not feel impelled to say what sources they use, as traditional chroniclers commonly do, is, of course, in itself a further indication that the yardstick by which their work was judged was *not* the extent to which it remained “true to the record”.

Contextualizing Babad

What do we know of the social and literary context of Babads? The answer, alas, is virtually nothing. The Babads themselves are not

generous with information on who their composers were, and for whom they were composed. A “standard” exordium (*manggala*) will take the form of the composer (*kang angawi*, *kang anulis* — the latter term, “the one who wrote” [this work], being used both for the original composer of a poem and for subsequent writers) lamenting his ignorance of language (*basa*), of literature (*sastra*), of the proper conventions and style (*krama*, *ukara*), and claiming that he only presumed to undertake this work because he was compelled to do so by his lord (*gusti*). Very (perhaps most) often neither composer nor patron are named. In at least one text a distinction is made between an original composer and a later writer: in the West Javanese Surapati Babad the first, named Padangkrĕta, is referred to as *Sang Gurit*, and the second, named Krĕtinala (a “mere boy”), is referred to as *Kang Anurat*. We do not find, however, the internal references to *performers* which are so frequent in the medieval Romance epics: these appear to be absent from Babad.

Other works which would appear to be obvious sources of information on the social context of the Babad are strangely silent on this subject: the Cĕnĕtini, the most comprehensive of all treatments of the performing arts of Java, describes a wide spectrum of both the Islamic and the Hindu-Javanese repertoires — *wayang* in its different forms (*purwa*, *gĕdog*, *kliĕtik*, as well as the specifically exorcist, *ruwat lakons*), *sinĕden* (performance of a certain repertoire of relatively short songs together with dance or musical accompaniment), “singing” (*nĕmbang*) of *kawi* works such as the Bratayuda, and the Arabicized genres of religious song i.e. *tĕrbang* and *emprak*, *slawatan*, *singiran* and *ratib* (Soeradipoera et al. 1912-15). Babad, however, do not appear to belong to the public domain.

The present writer knows of only one work which makes reference to the aural presentation of Babads, that is, the journal of Mas Rahmat, a *kyai* with strong connections to the *kraton* of Yogyakarta. This journal, which is from the 1880s, contains two relevant passages: *ing desa Pamanggungan ing omahe Rawin nginĕp sawĕngi den-hurmati dening mantune diwacakaken babad Cĕrbon, mas Rahmat sawĕngi ora sare sĕnĕng ngrungokake*, i.e.: “in the village of Pamanggungan we stayed a night with Rawin; the son-in-law treated us as honoured guests; the Babad Cĕrbon was read; Mas Rahmat did not sleep the whole night he enjoyed hearing it so much”; and: *sabĕn bĕngi kang maca Babad Mĕntaram, Wangsasujana lagune ngĕĕatoni*, i.e.: “It was Wangsasujana who read the Babad Mataram every night, singing it in the *kraton* style” (Lor 6553, pp. 56 and 72). From these very brief passages we can say that at this time Babads were “read” at sessions which might last the whole night or even several nights in a row; and that different styles of singing the *tĕmbang* in which they were written were recognized. According to information provided by the present

Patih of the *kraton* of Surakarta, R. T. Harjonegoro (personal communication), in the decade before the Second World War Babad manuscripts were read (sung) to members of the royal family by a *kraton* lady noted for her cultivation, Nyai Tumenggung Secatugura. Until more information comes to light, this scarcely adequate collection of testimonies and silences seems to be leading towards a conclusion that Babad were intended to be “read” either within the *kraton* itself or among a fairly select circle with strong ties to the princely families whose heroic past they celebrate and whose fires they rekindle among succeeding generations.

Going on from this point to relate Babad to other literary genres is no easy task. Definition of “genre” in modern Javanese literature is not well advanced, and boundaries are hard to draw. Ricklefs writes that there exist “texts which mix what scholars regard as *babads* with things which are not usually regarded as such” (Ricklefs 1979:452). In fact the problem seems to involve more than the juxtaposition in certain manuscripts of passages from Babad and “non-Babad” works: it seems that the Babad itself is curiously permeable to external literary influences. We have already seen how a particular “story” (e.g. that of Siti Jĕnar) or “motif” (e.g. a marital or sexual connection with a Dutch girl) is found in slightly transformed versions in a number of different Babads; but it also seems beyond doubt that those responsible for the original text of a Babad or for its later versions took their material not just from Babad or “historical” sources but from a much wider range of literary works. The highly permeable nature of the boundary between the ascriptively “historical” Babad and “non-historical” genres can be illustrated by, for example, the way in which certain characters appear on both sides of the wall. Rather a favourite of mine is the “rich merchant” *par excellence*, Dampu Awang, who appears not only in the “historical” *Babad Buleleng* and *Hikayat Banjar*, and in at least one Cirĕbon history (Pigeaud 1967:145), but also in a *wayang lakon*, a Sundanese rice-myth, in Lampungese folk mythology, and as a cult figure among the Chinese of Semarang (Worsley 1972:143 and 222-3). While Dampu Awang may perhaps be seen as “originally” an historical figure who moved *out* of Babad and was adopted *into* other forms of literature, there is no doubt that influence in the other direction — of other literary forms on Babad — was at least equally important. The apparent “patterning” of Surapati’s youth after that of Yusuf has already been mentioned, and the question of the influences of the Panji, Damar Wulan and Menak Amir Hamzah romances on Babad may well repay further investigation. Clearly, more research is also needed on the influence of *wayang*: apart from the fact that some Babad authors *explicitly compare* the characters they are describing with characters from *wayang* (see for example Kumar 1982:265-6), we find a striking

similarity of *structure* between many Babad and *wayang lakon* in that both tend to alternate between the two foci of battlefield and royal audience, the dominant scenes (*adegan*) of *wayang*. Of course, different Babads show different influences, which help shape the particular world-view of the Babad in question: compare, for instance, the heavily "mythologized" world of many central Javanese Babads, with their emphasis on supernatural causation, with the much more prosaic and secular world of some *pasisir* Babads.

In conclusion, let us try to characterize more economically the genesis of variation in Babad. Firstly, the type of poetic and narrative variations found, the typical errors, the anti-formulaic tendency exhibited within the constraints of a complex poetic form, all indicate that it is the written rather than the oral register which is most important in the genesis of variation, a conclusion confirmed by what little information is available on its social context. We must avoid simple logical fallacies: variation is characteristic both of Babad and of oral literature, but it does not follow that Babad is therefore oral literature. Secondly: the degree of variation between manuscripts of the same text, the cavalier attitude to "factual" content, the tendency towards pronounced narrative divergence, suggest a genre which, though it is part of a literate tradition, is nevertheless governed by conventions which permit the introduction of a high degree of variation in the transmission of texts, whose "copyists" partake of the privilege of an author, rather than merely following or choosing between antecedent versions. Thirdly: the amount of common ground with "non-Babad" genres, especially when considered in conjunction with the amount of variation which can be introduced in the transmission of a text, is far greater than we would expect of a genre intended as an historical record. It is clear that Babad "live", as it were, in a literary environment rather than in an archival, record-keeping one, even though their original composition probably took form from the existence of diaries and other records. In transmission and with the passage of time, preservation of the "record" takes second place to literary effect.

Finally, can we move towards defining Babad as a genre? Many Babad undoubtedly present special problems: the "listing" Babads (Babad Sangkala and genealogies) have already been mentioned, and it seems likely that the writing of Babad — or at least of *some* Babad — became rather a different exercise in the course of the nineteenth century, when both Dutch records and Dutch conceptions of historiography seem to have brought about some innovations. Perhaps, however, there remains a central core of Babad that we can characterize as "epic" in the broad sense of the term. Traditionally, at least in the work of scholars such as Chadwick, the epic has been seen as typical of a "heroic" society, characterized by a state system dominated by a

warrior class — a situation which corresponds well with the Javanese political system during the “golden age” of Babad and with the dominant martial emphasis of Babad themselves. More recently, it has been suggested that the epic does not necessarily arise out of an “heroic” society, but is rather characteristic of *early literate* societies (Goody, forthcoming). This too is suggestive for the Javanese case, at least if one is prepared to equate “partially literate” (a highly literate minority with a literary heritage of some antiquity, and a largely illiterate majority) with “early literate”. In suggesting this analogy with the epic or saga, I do not mean to imply that Babad are thereby fully characterized. Obviously, our understanding of the range of Babad is deficient in the extreme, and much work remains to be done. But let us not proceed with the construction of Procrustean beds: it is time to lay aside judgements based on alien criteria, to take note of what Babad themselves reveal of their essential nature, and to recognize, if belatedly, the moral and aesthetic integrity of the great Babad masterpieces.

NOTES

- 1 This seems an appropriate juncture to correct any misconceptions which may have arisen out of Ricklefs' erroneous use of these Babads (East Javanese, West Javanese and Balambangan) to support his contention that Babad manuscripts do not provide any evidence of situations where a “copyist” has done more than choose between two antecedent versions (“textual traditions”, in Ricklefs' terminology: see Ricklefs 1979:449-50). Since the West Javanese, East Javanese and Balambangan Babads are not manuscripts of a single text but three completely distinct and unrelated texts — just how different in metric and literary form, in narrative line, and in the emphases and apparent purposes of their authors may readily be apprehended from the synopses and text extracts provided (Kumar 1976: 47-316) — they cannot be amalgamated to support this contention, or any other that has to do with the transmission of texts and the development of variation.
- 2 “Line” (of descent) is used here in the same sense as in analyses of the transmission of classical and later European manuscripts. Cf. Greg 1971:1-2 on manuscripts derived from a common original: “The whole collection formed by the original together with all its descendants, constitutes a family, which, like other families, has a genealogical tree. Such a tree is the sum of all the lines of descent of the various manuscripts; a *line of descent* being a series whose consecutive terms are linked together by the relation of parent and child (exemplar and transcript). Normally the lines of descent are divergent in a downward, convergent in an upward direction.”
- 3 Or as these are to C.B. 143, the manuscript produced by conflation, which has clearly followed a Line A manuscript for the first half of its text. The term “conflation” is used, again as in the terminology of the transmission of classical and later European manuscripts, to describe the importation of readings from one line of descent (see above, note 2) into another. It is also described as “mixture” and “contamination”: see Greg 1971:56. In the case of Javanese manuscripts, however, it is obvious that not only *variae lectiones* but whole passages are frequently introduced by conflation.

- 4 Br. 585 and B.G. 432 both have a strongly provincial orthography: for *totur* read *tutur*, for *celik*, *cilik*, for *ngokuh*, *ngukuh*, for *wona*, *wana*, for *palahipun*, *polahipun*, and for *bachah*, *bocah*.
- 5 Br. 585 is a fair copy of another Musium Pusat manuscript, B.G. 421 (see Kumar 1976:13), which may also, perhaps, be based on an earlier Line B version.
- 6 LM 824. This manuscript also has the most accurate metre of all the East Javanese manuscripts, though it seems questionable whether *lectio facillior* can be advanced as an argument for superior antiquity in the Javanese manuscript tradition as it is elsewhere.
- 7 In fact the degree of correspondence between the Line A manuscripts is even more striking than this table reveals, since only B.G. 432 includes the complete history of Surapati from his birth to his death: thus the fact that its Cantos XVIII-XXX have no equivalent in any other manuscript is because no other Line A manuscript goes up to this period, not to an actual *divergence* between manuscripts.
- 8 See above, p. 231.
- 9 Ēmur is probably a version of Mur as in Kapitan Mur (from the Portuguese Capitano Mor, Admiral, often used for the Dutch Governors-General).
- 10 See Drewes 1978:8-11 for a discussion of the treatment of this story in the Babad Dĕmak, Babad Purwarĕja, in two versions of the Babad Cĕrbon, and in religious writings.

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