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TRANSFORMING WAYANG
FOR CONTEMPORARY AUDIENCES
Dramatic Expression in Purbo Asmoro’s Style
1989–2015

PROEFSCHRIFT

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de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
on gezag van Rector Magnificus prof. mr. C.J.J.M. Stolker,
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties
te verdedigen op dinsdag 28 juni 2016
klokke 13:45 uur

door
Kathryn Anne Emerson
geboren te Kalamazoo, Michigan, USA
in 1961
promotor: Prof. dr. B. Arps
promotiecommissie: Dr. B. Barendregt
                     Prof. dr. J. Bor
                     Dr. H.I.R. Hinzler
                     Prof. dr. M.J. Klokke
                     Prof. dr. Sumarsam (Wesleyan University)
Dedicated to:

my parents
Theodore Poindexter Emerson and Helen Jo Buckley Emerson
who brought me up with both the freedom to explore and the work ethic to make something of it

William W. Austin (1920–2000)
Professor Emeritus, Cornell University
for the hours of provocative discussion in class and out; his door always open, his belief in me unconditional

Purbo Asmoro
a dynamic, innovative performer and deep thinker
a dear friend and generous teacher
a greater inspiration with each year that passes

Wakidi Dwidjomartono
a source of never-ending musical inspiration, patience, and love

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My love for wayang began with three seminal moments: watching a ruwatan\(^1\) outside of Solo in June 1986, hearing a dhalang sing elaborate kombangan\(^2\) in the opening moments of a rehearsal in New York City in 1989, and, in 1991, being taught a gender and voice version of Pathet Jingking in the wee hours of the morning in a Washington, DC hotel suite. Ironically, my current experience of wayang almost never includes ruwatan, elaborate kombangan, or Pathet Jingking—all rare for today’s purposes—yet, with those three enchanting moments, a future obsession was somehow sealed. My gratitude and appreciation go here to the many teachers, friends, mentors, family members, and performers who guided me along the way. These acknowledgements read like a chronology of my growth, resulting in the most crucial and relevant to the actual writing process itself falling toward the end. Since the path is a long and complex one, I felt this type of narrative, with acknowledgements interwoven, would be the most meaningful.

My first exposure to gamelan was through Marty H. Hatch, Professor of Ethnomusicology at Cornell University. Although I was entirely focused on Western music at the time, simply walking by the frequent gamelan performances in the Arts Quad made an indelible mark on my aesthetic psyche, and ultimately led me, five years later, to pursue Javanese gamelan studies. Thirty years later, in 2012, when I expressed dismay at the self-absorbed students just walking by Purbo Asmoro’s troupe playing in a graduate hall on the same campus, Professor Hatch wisely pointed out the irony and we had quite a laugh.

Malcolm Bilson, my piano-performance professor and adviser at Cornell, taught me so much more than how to play the piano in the hundreds of hours he dedicated to me over four years. Under his expert tutelage, I learned how to practice, how to get the most out of the tone and unique characteristics of individual instruments, how to adjust technique to hand size and shape, and how to use historical context to inform interpretation. He also encouraged me to take risks as a musician, and taught me how to revel in a performance while also systematically and critically evaluating it. These are all skills I use extensively in both my gamelan performance-practice and my work in spontaneous translation for wayang.

William W. Austin, music theory professor at Cornell University, opened my eyes to a wide range of topics and viewpoints through his innovative courses and the one-on-one, provocative sessions in his Lincoln Hall studio. In our final session in May 1983, he said the following to me: “What you need is to go sit under a tree. Sit under a tree and think. There’s a whole world of music, theater, expression, and creativity out there. Who knows? Who knows where you will end up? But wherever it is and whatever you do, it will always be fascinating to me. I promise you that. And it will be important.” For his unparalleled expression of support over the years, I am forever grateful.

I am thankful to many other teachers: Louis Nagel of Interlochen, Phyllis Rappeport of Western Michigan University, Edith Oppens of Aspen Music Festival, and the professors at Queens College in New York, where I was exposed to the mental challenges of Schenkerian analysis and 12-tone composition. During my experience as a pianist with the

\(^1\) A spiritual cleansing ceremony through wayang, in which the dhalang negotiates with the ogre Bethara Kala, offering him all sorts of appeasements and reciting special texts so that the ogre will allow the families, communities, or individuals requesting the ruwatan to live in peace and good health.

\(^2\) Short phrases, or even single pitches, sung by the dhalang to match the melodic line of the gamelan music.
Ghoklyma Trio and a number of intensive summer chamber music festivals between 1980 and 1985, I came to the realization that I preferred ensemble work to solo playing, foreshadowing my fascination with the complex musical interactions in the gamelan ensemble. Thanks to the vision of curriculum directors at Queens College, every graduate-level music student was required to take private lessons on two non-Western instruments. After a semester of the Japanese flute (shakuhachi) and a semester of Ghanaian drumming, my curiosity about gamelan was piqued and memories of listening to the Cornell Arts Quad performances floated back. I joined the New York Consulate Gamelan group, studying under I.M. Harjito\(^3\) and Anne Stebinger. This immediately led to a summer in Java in 1986.

Arriving in Solo off a night train from Jakarta, I was left by a becak driver at the massive doors of Joyokusuman in Gajahan (where the king of Solo used to house his elephants) at sunrise in June 1986.\(^4\) Sitting in the pendhapa in a daze, with tropical gardens, birds, lizards, and frogs surrounding me, speaking very little Indonesian and not knowing a single soul in Solo, I was greeted by ethnomusicologist Marc Perlman later that morning when he awoke. That night he took me on the back of his motorcycle to the first wayang I had ever seen—a ruwatana by an elderly dhalang somewhere through the rice fields southwest of Solo. I would like to express my greatest appreciation to Marc for his guidance, wisdom, and friendship in the years since.

A few years later I had the good fortune to study with Midiyanto S. Putro in the Berkeley area for two years, moving there after being impressed by his abilities (including the kombangan mentioned above) when he performed in New York City in 1989. He not only brought me to a level on gendèr such that I was able to play for all-night wayang immediately upon reaching Java, but also introduced me to a number of distinguished dhalang based in Eromoko, Wonogiri, and, most importantly, to my husband, Wakidi Dwidjomartono. During the summer of 1991, I served as a guide for Sutino Hardokocarito’s wayang troupe in residence at the Smithsonian Institute, under Midiyanto’s direction. My deepest sungkeman go to all the dhalang from Wonogiri who allowed me into their world upon my move to Solo in 1991, and trusted me in the important role of gendèr: Sutino Hardokocarito, Suyati, Warsino Gunasukasno, Gito Brayut, Pujono, Marsono, Eko Sunarso, Lukito, and also Kasno Mudhocarito of Pajang, Solo.

I owe my gamelan playing and interpretation abilities to my original core of karawitan instructors once in Solo. I studied gendèr with Wahyopangrawit, Sukamso, and Sular (Eromoko); kendhang with Waki Diwidjomartono (a meticulous performance critic as well); rebab with my brother-in-law, Waki Djjo Warsopangrawit, a formidable musical inspiration; and sindhênan with Suparni Setya Laras, Mulyani Cendhani Laras, and Darsono “édan.” I am grateful to have had the opportunity to play in klenèngan, wayang, radio broadcasts, and rehearsals with all these masters—Suyadi Tejapangrawit and Suripto as well—for over two decades. The Pujangga Laras community has taught me about aesthetics and rasa, as have many other troupes, including: Dwidjolaras of Jakarta, Mayangkara, and Ngripto Raras. I am also grateful for nightly practice opportunities at Sriwedari Wayang Orang Theater, afternoons at PDMN with master pedagogue Suyatno, and the generous hearts of musicians all over Java, so open to having foreigners give it a try.

\(^3\) While it would be unthinkable to refer to a Javanese teacher without a title when speaking, even research in Indonesia is written up without such titles, to avoid inconsistencies, so I follow that practice here.

\(^4\) It is amazing to consider now, that had I wandered across town to the pendhapa at ASKI, I might have caught a rehearsal for Purbo Asmoro’s final exam, which was conducted in August 1986.
When I began a more intense focus on wayang, in 2004, I was overwhelmed by all the talents who so generously let me in on what they knew. I often spent my weekends in Solo interviewing and recording. I used to call these “genius day-tours” as I would get in the car in the morning and by the evening have been exposed to multiple sources of theory, facts, history, ideas, and inspiration without going more than a 20-kilometer radius from Solo proper. Bambang Suwarno specifically stands out in this regard—memories of dozens of visits to his colorful wayang-making studio, listening to him describe the detailed map of ideas that led to his creative innovations in wayang figures, and his role in developing pakeliran padat. Those who also offered invaluable insight through lengthy interviews on multiple occasions were Rahayu Supanggah, Manteb Soedharsono, Bambang Murtiyoso, Sumanto, Suyanto, Sri Dadi, Supadmi, Blacius Subono, Sugeng Nugroho, Jungkung Darmoyo, Sayoko Gondosaputro, Wahyu Prabowo Santosa, Tomo Pandoyo, Suratno, Sunardi, Toto Atmojo, Saguh Hadiraharjo, Gathot Sasmintoro, Gaib Widopandoyo, Hali Jarwosularso, Cahyo Kuntadi, Sigid Ariyanto, and Bayu Aji Pamungkas.

Between 1997 and 2009, I had the great fortune to work with the late Tristuti Rahmadi Suryasaputra, visiting his home on many occasions to discuss scripts and interpretation. To Kanjeng Gusti Harya Benowo (Kraton Solo) and Kondang H. Sutrisno (Head of PEPADI Pusat), two powerful wayang supporters with hearts of gold, I express my deepest thanks for their friendship and unity of purpose. Of course this list would be incomplete without a heartfelt expression of appreciation to ISI-Surakarta, as well as to former rectors Soetarno, Waridi, Slamet Suparno, and current rector Sri Rochana Widyastutieningrum. Special appreciation goes to the Pedalangan Department under the expert leadership of Sudarsono. Not to be forgotten are my talented video, translation, and live streaming documentation team of ten years: Kartiko Nugroho and Danang Susilo.

For my abilities in the Javanese language, credit is due, first and foremost, to my husband, Wakidi Dwidjomartono. He accepted a steep decline in the expressive quality of communication with his wife the day I announced, in 2004, that we would henceforth only speak in Javanese. He has been a staunch and welcome critic of my language use, finding the right time to detail my errors, post any interaction. Purbo Asmoro has been my formal Javanese teacher, of all levels and vocabulary sets from ngoko and krama inggil to Kawi and basa pedhalangan. He has shown immeasurable patience, openness, and generosity on a daily basis for over 12 years. Others who have guided me in Javanese are Endang Tri Winarni of UNS, every dhalang whose performances I have attended, every Javanese I have spoken Javanese with in the streets and on social occasions, and of course Ward Keeler, Bernard Arps, and Elinor C. Horne, all authors of useful grammar books to guide the Western student. I am grateful to Hardjo Susilo of Honolulu, Hawaii, for inspiring me to pursue the world of simultaneous translation. To Jennifer Lindsay and to all of the audiences reading my translations, many thanks for continued dialogue on the subject of simultaneous translation. I am indebted to John McGlynn and The Lontar Foundation for allowing me to realize my dream of publishing annotated translations in book as well as audio-visual format; the seven volumes and 33-hours of live footage in DVD-form entitled The Wayang Educational Package formed the seed idea for this dissertation.

Special thanks go to Stuart Frankel, who worked for over a year as copy editor of this dissertation, and would not accept a cent in return. His expertise has made me a better writer, while his clever sense of humor that infused every installment of feedback kept me going. I had a large group of friends who supported me in the work in one way or another.
over the three years of dissertation writing. To Robert Cowherd in particular I will be forever grateful, as he was always willing to listen, give feedback, and be there as a friend. He had the rare talent to provide insight that went straight to the issue at hand, although wayang and gamelan are not his field. Special thanks go to Barry Drummond, who hosted me when I first moved to Solo and when I moved back to Cambridge for a year, and who has also been a great friend throughout my journey. Thanks also go to the support, feedback, and friendship I received from Sumarsam, Benjamin Brinner, Susan Walton, Marc Benamou, Alan Feinstein, Chris Miller, Sarah Weiss, Charley Sullivan, Phil Acimovic, Jon Rea, Gabriel Laufer, Carol Walker, Ellen Kampersal, and Rachel Hand. Financially, I could not have completed such an endeavor without the steady employment of Jakarta Intercultural School, as well as the administration’s undying support in my pursuit of artistic activities. This included allowing me time to conduct tours, performances, and workshops related to my work with Purbo Asmoro.

The nature of my upbringing had a profound influence on my path. The type of researcher I became, as well as the lenses through which I view the artistic community in Solo, cannot be separated from the influence of my parents, Theodore P. Emerson and Helen Jo Buckley, and the nature of the small, interconnected, Solo-like community where I grew up, on Gull Lake, Michigan. My four grandparents, as well as my aunts, uncles, cousins, and my brother, Ted Emerson, also shaped who I am today, as I grew up in what was essentially a village. My husband, Wakidi Dwidjomartono, has given me so much in the time that I have been consumed by this dissertation; I can only express my eternal gratitude and love.

I could never have completed a doctorate without a program such as the one offered at the Leiden Institute of Area Studies. I was introduced to the idea by Marc Perlman and connected to the Leiden faculty by Robert Cowherd. The dream became a reality after I received the support of my promotor, Bernard Arps. I am grateful both for his time and for the time my doctoral committee spent on the reading and revision process. I appreciate all of their valuable input. Thanks also go to the PhD Council at The Leiden Institute of Area Studies, an active group that sent weekly invitations of all sorts, both academic and social, making me feel part of a community even though I was working from Jakarta.

Finally, and most profoundly, this work is shaped by the inspiring genius, Purbo Asmoro. For 12 years and counting we have conducted performances, workshops, seminars, and international tours together, as well as producing a major publication and developing plans for more projects. We have laughed, commiserated, enjoyed success, experienced loss, celebrated highlights and supported each other through hardships, shared countless precious moments, and even argued. Our working relationship and our friendship have grown with every month that has passed. Most valuable to the research specifically has been Purbo Asmoro’s passion and integrity about who he is and what he stands for as a dhalang, as well as his uncanny ability to express so much, so poignantly, with such economy of words, be it in interviews, seminars, workshops, classes, or on stage.

This work is a melding of all of the influences mentioned above. However, all mistakes, misinterpretations, or misrepresentations are completely my own.
Figure 0-4: Kresna, in Purbo Asmoro’s modern collection known as Kyai Bantala (photo by Kartiko Nugroho).
BASIC TERMINOLOGY

Wayang, dhalang, lakon, and gamelan will not be italicized as they are used frequently and will be assumed to be understood by readers. These and other Javanese terms may be used as singular or plural. For a complete alphabetical listing of terms and definitions used in the text, see the Glossary of Terms. For short biographical sketches of artists and scholars frequently mentioned, see Artists Cited in Text.

Wayang here refers specifically to Javanese wayang kulit purwa—a performance art from Central and East Java using flat puppets cut from raw water-buffalo hide (wayang kulit), which cast striking shadows due to their intricate carvings, and which are also elaborately painted (see Figure 0-4). “Purwa” refers to the body of stories told in this art form, based on the Mahabharata and Ramayana epics, as well as the Jawa Dèwa, Lokapala, and Arjunasasrabau story cycles. Even more specifically, this publication examines the work of one artist, Purbo Asmoro, who was born in 1961 in Pacitan, East Java, but whose style is entirely based on performance practice from Surakarta (also known as Solo), Central Java and the surrounding areas: Klaten, Sragen, Wonogiri, Karanganyar, Sukoharjo, and Boyolali (see Figure 0-9). This work does not attempt in any way to comment on either the history or development of performance practice in Yogyakarta, Banyumas, Cirebon, East Java, or any other regions where wayang kulit purwa is performed. “Wayang” can refer to either the performance art as a whole, or to the actual puppet figures themselves.

Dhalang refers to the master performer (see cover and Figures 0-3, 0-8) who single-handedly manipulates the wayang, delivers all the dialogue and narration, and presents the unique personality, voice, gait, and point of view of every character on the screen. A successful dhalang must be a compelling actor, as well as a natural poet, gripping orator, talented vocalist, dynamic choreographer, creative scriptwriter, effective musical conductor, spontaneous comedian, astute political and social commentator, and efficient business manager. Beyond being a virtuosic manipulator of puppets and shadows, he (the vast majority are men, although there are some prominent female dhalang) must also have a deep understanding of stylized Javanese classical dance movements, and be able to make these come alive through the wayang figures. Beyond being a storyteller, he is expected to have a vast repertory of traditional plotlines at his fingertips. Beyond being a poet and script writer, he must be an expert linguist, able to handle the complexities of Javanese speech levels and vocabulary sets, from ancient to modern, while taking on the
personae of many different characters in quick succession. But most of all, he is an artist with something to say: a creative interpreter of stories, offering topical issues, moral messages, and conflict-rich scenarios for the audience to ponder through the colorful allegory of ancient tales.

Lakon are the stories as they are played out in wayang performances. These are not plays or scripts, but rather general plotlines fleshed out by the interpretation and spontaneity of the dhalang. Experienced dhalang never perform the same lakon (episode) in the same way twice. A dhalang will react to and integrate the needs of the sponsor, the situation, the audience, his own frame of mind, and current events at each performance—not just during the joke interludes, but in the way he unfolds the actual storyline itself. He will also inevitably change and grow as a performer, and over time come to present the same lakon in a multitude of ways with different twists and takes on the story.

In one authoritative encyclopedia of lakon synopses compiled in 1995 by dhalang Tristuti Rahmadi Suryasaputra, the Mahabharata is broken into 122 commonly performed lakon, while the Ramayana is broken into 26 commonly performed lakon (for summaries of these epics, see Appendix 1). Aside from these episodes, which are directly based on standard Indian or Javanese-version storylines (pakem), the Javanese have created hundreds of their own (lakon carangan), with more being created by each generation. While generally based on the same characters and overall story outcomes, lakon carangan explore various intrigues not existing in the older Indian or Javanese Mahabharata or Ramayana. Although there are books in which entire lakon are written out like plays—sometimes transcribed from a live performance and sometimes created by request prior to a specific performance—the most experienced, talented, and professional dhalang do not use these as scripts to be read straight through during a performance.

Gamelan here refers specifically to the musical ensemble from Solo, Central Java, which in the context of this work is used to accompany current-day wayang performances, an ensemble consisting of some 20 to 30 musicians (see Figure 0-5). Although predominantly an orchestra of bronze percussion, leadership roles are taken up by the drum (kendhang), and the lone bowed string instrument (rebab), while the vocalists are also prominent: female soloists called pesindhèn, and a chorus of male singers known as gérong. An absolutely central role in wayang is held by the gendèr player (see Figure 0-6), who plays almost non-stop throughout the night. She
Figure 0-5: Mayangkara gamelan troupe, Sukoharjo, 2007 (top and left) and Mayangkara pesindhen section, Sasanamulya, Solo, 2008.
or he not only plays with the gamelan and during every poem the dhalang sings, but also creates a continuous musical and dramatic backdrop during dialogue and narrative sections, weaving together a polyphonic fabric of snippets and short melodies known as grimingan.

The Institute of Indonesian Arts in Solo is where many of the recent developments in wayang started. The performer featured in this study not only received his education there but also has been an instructor in the Pedalangan Department since 1986. Thus there are frequent references to this institution. As it expanded over time it became known by three different names, corresponding to changes in its accreditation status. For historical accuracy, it will be referred to by three different acronyms (ASKI, STSI, or ISI) depending on the era being discussed. Unless otherwise noted, the Surakarta (Solo) branch of the institution is assumed. For more detailed information on each acronym, see the Glossary of Terms.

**ASKI**: Akademi Seni Karawitan Indonesia (Indonesian Academy of Gamelan Music), was founded in 1964 and known under this acronym until 1988.

**STSI**: Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia (College of Indonesian Arts); this acronym was used 1988 to 2006.

**ISI**: Institut Seni Indonesia (Institute of Indonesian Arts); this acronym has been used 2006 to present.

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5 “Dhalang” is the Javanese spelling while "dalang," without the h, is Indonesian. When the prefix pe- and the suffix –an are added, the resulting pedhalangan refers to the field of study. Throughout this work, “Pedalangan Department” (Indonesian spelling, no italics) refers to the title of that department in a government school, whereas pedhalangan (lower case “p,” with an “h,” and in italics) is Javanese for the general field of study, thought, literature, philosophy, and performance practice involved in being a dhalang.
Figure 0-8: A few of Purbo Asmoro’s facial expressions while performing (top photo by Djajusman).
ABBREVIATIONS

In the interest of allowing the titles of musical selections in the text to stand out, references to form, which traditionally accompany titles, will be abbreviated. For example, Gendhing Cucurbawuk kethuk 2 kerep minggah Paréanom kethuk 4 kerep kalajengaken Ladrang Sri Katon katampèn Ketawang Sukma Ilang would be written: Gd Cucurbawuk kt 2 kr mg Parénom kalj Ldr Sri Katon ktm Ktw Sukma Ilang. The abbreviations are listed here (for definitions, see the Glossary of Terms):

Gd – Gendhing
Ldr – Ladrang
Ktw – Ketawang
Ktw Gd – Ketawang Gendhing
Lnc – Lancaran
Jn – Jineman
kalj – kalajengaken
ktm – katampèn
mg – minggah
kt – kethuk
kr – kerep

ILLUSTRATIVE AUDIO-VISUAL EXAMPLES

There are references in the text to illustrative audio-visual examples that can be found in the commercially available Lontar DVDs (Asmoro 2014). For example, [MK-CInt 4, 12:36] means that the illustrative example can be found in the following Lontar recording: Makutharama, contemporary-interpretive style, disc 4, at the timing 12:36. Here is a table explaining the codes:\(^6\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>code</th>
<th>lakon</th>
<th>style</th>
<th>style: English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MK-Class</td>
<td>Makutharama</td>
<td>klasik</td>
<td>classical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Rama’s Crown)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MK-CInt</td>
<td>Makutharama</td>
<td>garapan</td>
<td>contemporary-interpretive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Rama’s Crown)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MK-C</td>
<td>Makutharama</td>
<td>padat</td>
<td>condensed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Rama’s Crown)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRS-Class</td>
<td>Sesaji Raja Suya</td>
<td>klasik</td>
<td>classical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(The Grand Offering of the Kings)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRS-CInt</td>
<td>Sesaji Raja Suya</td>
<td>garapan</td>
<td>contemporary-interpretive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(The Grand Offering of the Kings)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRS-C</td>
<td>Sesaji Raja Suya</td>
<td>padat</td>
<td>condensed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(The Grand Offering of the Kings)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^6\) The timings sited are when using the application DVD Player. Slightly different timings have been noted when using other programs or applications.
VARIANT SPELLINGS

Diverse spellings are encountered whenever Javanese is put to paper, owing to a combination of many factors, such as: the shift from Javanese characters to Roman script, the influence of Dutch, Arabic, and other spelling systems, and the parallel existence in everyday life of Javanese and Indonesian.

In this work, the sounds \( \text{a} \), as in the \( \text{a} \) in father, and \( \text{o} \), as in the \( \text{aw} \) in law, are both spelled with the letter \( \text{o} \). The \( \text{o} \) sound is applied to any \( \text{a} \) in a final open syllable (as in \text{sirna}, or the second \( \text{a} \) in \text{karta}) or any penultimate open syllable where the final open syllable is also \( \text{a} \) (such as the \( \text{a-s} \) in \text{papa}, \text{tata}, and \text{krama}). This practice follows not only the \text{EYD Bahasa Jawa},\(^7\) but also publications currently coming out of ISI, as well as Purbo Asmoro’s preference. This reserves the letter \( \text{o} \) for an entirely separate sound, as is the \( \text{o} \) in hope, when found in an open syllable. Hence \text{rosa} (physical strength) is made distinct from \text{rasa} (feeling); \text{loro} (the number two) from \text{lara} (to be ill); and \text{polo} (a crass word for the brain) from \text{pala} (nutmeg). The dental \( \text{d} \) and \( \text{t} \) (tip of tongue behind upper front teeth, the latter unaspirated) are distinguished from the post-alveolar \text{dh} and \text{th} (tip of the tongue curled slightly backwards, latter unaspirated). Diacritics are used to distinguish \( \text{e} \) and \( \text{è} \) from the mute \( \text{e} \) or \text{schwa} (\text{pepet}) sound, which is left unmarked. None of the older spellings for other sounds, such as \text{oe}, \text{dj}, or \text{tj}, are used except if as a preference in a person’s name.

I attempt to spell peoples’ names the way they prefer.\(^8\) In Java, this is not always as easy as it may seem, due to uneven editing standards in some Indonesian publications, and historically a general tolerance for varied spellings when using Roman script. Many Javanese, however, prefer to spell the \( \text{o} \) sound with an \( \text{o} \) when it appears in their own name. This helps guide pronunciation when the name is encountered by non-Javanese, and it reflects an Indonesian spelling of the name. Purbo Asmoro,\(^9\) while quite strict about using \( \text{a} \) not \( \text{o} \) for the \( \text{o} \) sound in Javanese text documents, prefers the three \( \text{o} \) sounds in his own name to be spelled with \( \text{o} \), yet it has appeared in print as both Purba Asmara and Poerbo Asmoro. Nartosabdo’s name has been published by his own family members as Narto Sabdo, Nartosabdho, and Nartosabdo, while by ISI as Nartasabda.\(^{10}\)

Current-day place names use Indonesian rather than Javanese spellings, so Wonagiri and Klaten, instead of Wanagiri and Klatheh. Names of characters and places within lakon though, are spelled according to the guidelines above: Abiyasa not Abiyoso, Kunthi not Kunti, Puntadewa not Puntodewa, and the kingdom of Cèdhi, not Cedi.

\(^7\) \text{Ejaan Bahasa Jawa Yang Disempurnakan} (EYD Bahasa Jawa) is a guide to consistency in Javanese orthography developed by the Indonesian government in the 1980s.

\(^8\) A trend in research at ISI since around 1990, is to spell the names of people still living according to their preference, but to spell the names of people passed away in accordance with \text{EYD Bahasa Jawa}, thus avoiding debates on the preferences of people no longer living. That policy was applied in the 2013 Lontar publications by Purbo Asmoro and Emerson, but not in this dissertation.

\(^9\) The word \text{purba} is Javanese for “authority over,” and \text{asmara} Javanese for “matters of love.”

\(^{10}\) Since \text{sabda} in Javanese is a literary term for “speech” and \text{sabda} has no meaning, I use the “Nartosabdo” alternate. This is also upon the advice of two of his former musicians: Saguh Hadiraharjo and Gatot Sasminto.
This dissertation concerns the cultural region known as "Surakarta Kota Madya" (The Greater Surakarta Area) with the city of Surakarta itself, also known as Solo, at its center. In the pedhalangan community this region is also known as:

**Suba Suka Wana Sraten**
(Surakarta-Boyolali-Sukoharjo-Karanganyar-Wonogiri-Sragen-Klaten). It does not include Yogyakarta, which is its own distinct governmental, and cultural, entity.

Figure 0-9:
Map of Java
Detail Map of Surakarta (Solo) and Surrounding Areas
(Maps drawn by Robert Cowherd.)