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ARJUNA, PRINCE OF CHARMS.

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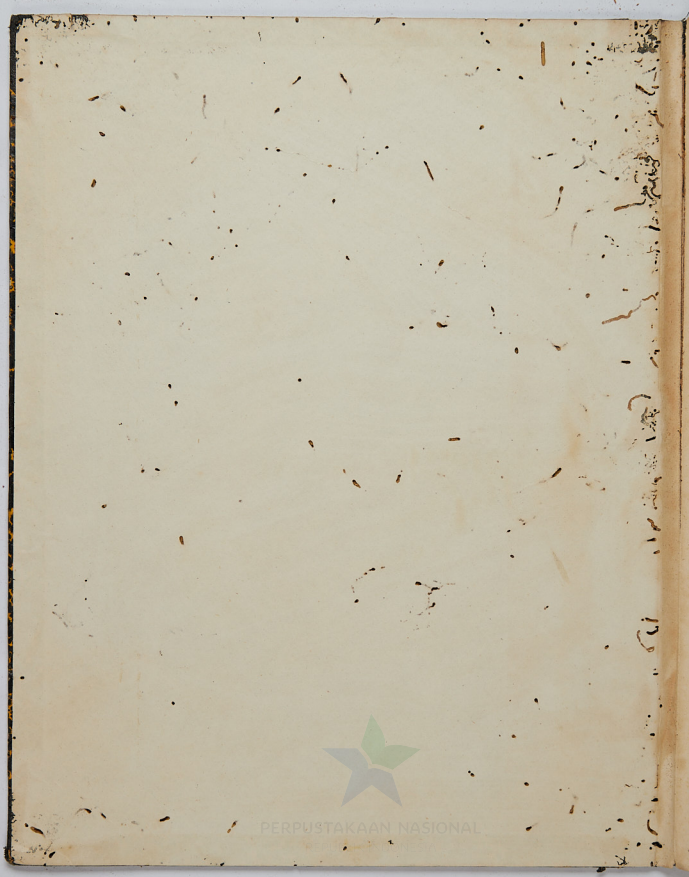
PERPUSTAKAAN NASIONAL



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ARJUNA, PRINCE OF CHARMS.

By M. V. MOENS-ZORAB.

In this essay Mrs. Moens-Zorab gives an outline of another famous character connected with Javanese Wayang, of Arjuna, whom she very aptly calls a Prince of Charms. Those who have read Mrs Moens' former essay, about Rama, another figure of the Javanese Wayang Play, will be struck by the contrast between these two mythical heroes, which is also very evident in the way they have been represented by the native artist and due to these peculiarities of each wayang puppet that Mrs. Moens draws the reader's attention. — Editor.

IT is stated of Arjuna that he rarely puts in an appearance before the hour of midnight. There is a psychological reason for this, if there is one at all. Arjuna of all others possesses the magic power to lift the heavy lid of melancholy off the heart, to put to flight its haunting ghosts: regret, apathy, fatalism and to thrill it with joy and exitement.



BATARA INDRA.

Beauty and Youth, Life's great assets are incorporated in this Prince of Charms. A true artist of life he is who cleverly plays the instrument of his soul, in harmony to himself and his surroundings. He has no compunctions of the mind and serenely enjoys the moment. No wonder he casts his spell over men; the gods themselves favour him, confer on him everything that is in their power, from a magic hat or jacket to supernatural weapons or qualities — often acquirements of the same order — to hold sway over all: then, now, always.

He is the hero "sans peur et sans reproche" of Javanese ideal, gentle and impulsive as a woman, brave as his brother Bima, yet more dreaded, being far more clever, less hasty or rash, more wary. Arjuna is surpassed by none in handling the bow. Besides his famous bow Gandawa he possesses quite an arsenal of divine weapons, among which the Pasupati obtained from Batara Guru and the Bramasastra from Batara Brama. Moreover, the fiery arrows Arya Senkali and Roda Dedali are presented to him by his divine guru Drona who keeps on loving his former pupil Arjuna long after he has sided with the Korawas. Pious Arjuna in his turn greatly bemoans Drona's premature death.



BALADEWA.

Arjuna is a most devoted friend; a loving brother, kindly to all about him, ready to redress a wrong or forget one. He has a contemplative mind and being a true lover of nature, he seeks the solitary wood where he lives the life of an ascetic, praying the gods for help and weapons, to be of use to him and his brother in the war they wage.

But soaring above his good or bad qualities, permeating the whole of Arjuna's fairy excistence, is the one crowning passion of him and of a whole people, the love of sex, the generative source of Creation. Only a beautiful youth at the height of his creative strength, sought out for his virile power, divine and human, could serve as its representative.

The accusation of "mauvais sujet" cannot be justly laid at Arjuna's door; he is the product of a land where sins of the flesh are tolerated at all times, where a numerous offspring is thought a blessing and throngs along the sunlit broadway of extravagant, careless Nature, in no fear of being squeezed unto the cool path of sensible Registration.

Morally undisciplined, though not depraved, Arjuna is eagerly assisted by the reckless womanhood of a region where glaring light and demoralising heat reign supreme. Still this very human prince shows glimpses of a divine wisdom and temperance, as he is stated to resist even the nymphs from heaven when in a virtuous mood.

The cleansing of his soul by doing tapa at various times offer him the excellent opportunity to arrange himself and to tactfully allow breathing-time to all those whom he has shocked by his debaucheries, last but not least his own womenfolk, who are ready enough though, to forgive the handsome sinner and receive him back in their good graces.

Endless love-intrigues are connected with Arjuna or *Janaka;* the number of spurious sons and daughters announcing themselves at all times is so perplexing, that Shrikandi, Arjuna's saucy spouse, not unappropriately remarks that Arjuna cannot leave a house without a child being born to it.

Arjuna is the acme of perfection and good taste. His profile is the ideal of Aryan beauty, forehead and nose meeting in a straight line; the cast-down eyes show the man of good breeding, bashful when still young, it gives a languid, wistful expression to

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ARJUNA, PRINCE OF CHARMS. (Reproduced in the colours of the original)

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the face, at a more advanced age as does the half-blasé droop of his mouth. No one but this arbiter elegantiarum wears his supit urang (more often than not lacking the ear-ornament) in such perfect harmony to the cut of his face. His court-garb, not worn skirted but en queue, of delicate design and colouring, of studied simplicity, is faultless and marks him the tiptop aristocrat. His kris — in the choice of which a Javanese is even more fastidious than in that of his apparel — is covered by a bungkus, a cloth artistically draped about it.

His face is black as that of all his brothers, the golden body showing the graceful, slender build of eastern corporeal beauty. He wears no ornaments save a ring on either hand. All his brothers are sparingly adorned with jewelry: on account of their being poor, we are assured. Still in Arjuna's case it shows the exquisite taste that beauty and youth are ornaments in themselves and can dispense with these even in eastern eyes, deeming sumptuous jewels essentiel requisites to enhance physical charm in either sex.

Arjuna has two wives, with whom he is actually stated to have gone through marriage-ceremonies. One of these is *Subadra* or *Sembadra*, sister to Arjuna's revered friend and cousin Krishna, king of Dwarawati. Subadra is sweet and sixteen, the coveted age for any eastern wife and the age she sticks to, as long as she expects her husband to remain faithful to her — in some way.



SUBADRA.

At the time Arjuna or *Parta* — as is his petname — proposes for Subadra's hand by mouth of Samba, Krishna's son, there are many rivals; among them some Buta-kings and Burishrawas, the Korawa-partisan who is backed by his brother-in-law Baladewa, the king of Madura and twin-brother to Krishna. Though Krishna prefers Arjuna for Subadra he has to reckon with this Baladewa, who with overbearing character often has his way with his younger brother. Krishna has to give equal chances to all by holding a swayambara. Arjuna, aided by Bima wins the bride, who accompanies him to his residence at Madukara.

Subadra is a delicate little female, stooping under the weight of her thick loose-hanging hair. Her black face, virtuously bowed down, shows her modest, timid nature as does the passive droop of her lips. Her tiny frame is clad in a flowing garment amply folded; a laced bodice narrowly encloses the slender waist, ostentatiously displaying what may be called the blessed wealth of prolific wifehood.

Altogether another style of woman is *Shrikandi*, princess of Chempala; she is the younger sister of Drupadi, wife of Yudistira, Arjuna's eldest brother and head of the family.

Shrikandi happened to be among the guests at Arjuna's wedding. She no sooner spotted the beautiful bridegroom than she instantly fell in love with him. When shortly after she herself is asked in marriage, the enterprising lassie resolves to take her lot in her own hand and starts on a visit to Madukara, Arjuna's abode. On finding out that Subadra was lately confined of her son Abimanyu, she deems it the right time — the East wearies quickly — to beg admittance to Arjuna on the pretence of he teaching her the art of shooting the bow. Wisely Arjuna would not hear of this and sent his old valet Semar to Shrikandi to excuse his master, who is supposed to be doing tapa. But the quick-witted damsel being quite prepared for this, forced her way to Arjuna.

Subadra, amply informed of their love-making, being of a phlegmatic disposition, finds solace in the nursing of her tender child.

This state of affairs was by no means to the liking of Drupadi, the eldest Pandawa's wife, who no sooner took wind of it, than she left her residence at Ngamarta postehaste and made for the guilty couple. She gave her sister a thorough piece of her mind, but the ingénue Shrikandi showed her the excellent progress she had made in handling the bow. Drupadi however would not be convinced; they fell out and would have come to blows, had not Shrikandi fled precipitately. Drupadi still besides herself, turned her reproaches on Subadra, whom she severely censured for her stolidness and lack of decorum. But on finding Subadra only shrugging her wee little shoulders, she returned to Ngamarta to explain her point of view in the matter to her noble consort Yudistira.

Arjuna, uneasy about Shrikandi, sent old Semar to hunt her up. In the dark the old faithful mistook Subadra for Shrikandi, assured her of his master's love and of Arjuna's willingness to give up his lawful wife for her. This was too much, even for complacent Subadra. She restrained her anger, pretending to be Shrikandi and ordered Semar to send up her lover. This brought Arjuna to the spot at a moment's notice; in the dark he did not recognise Larasati, his wife's maid-servant, who feigned to open the door, and took her in his arms. Having too late discovered his mistake and exasperated by the scene Subadra

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made him, he administered a sound beating to Semar. This concession to his state of mind put him to a great deal of trouble; it was no easy task to soothe the angry servant who insisted on his innocence. Arjuna then followed Shrikandi on her flight. In the wood she had to traverse on her way home, she was attacked by Butas, who were duly killed by Arjuna. But cross and pettish about the turn affairs had taken, she would not have anything more to do with him and returned to her father's house.

Left in the cold by both his wife and his mistress, Arjuna is now called before Yudistira, who reprimands him for his disgraceful conduct and orders him to fight the enraged suitor of Shrikandi, who has attacked Chempala. Arjuna beats the foe and Shrikandi's sensible father deems it best to marry his adventurous daughter to Arjuna. She graciously consents on the condition Arjuna will show her a woman who is superior to her in handling the bow. Sensible Subadra wants the business to be put an end to. On her summons her handmaid and foster-sister Larasati comes to the fore and beats the worldwise Shrikandi, who now gives in and is wedded to Arjuna.



SHRIKANDI.

Shrikandi by no means impresses one as a timorous, submissive being. Her uppish air, the pertness of her handsome face, the energetic curve of the mouth, the loads of jewels to set off her smartness, mark the woman who full well knows the witchcraft of her charms, who holds her own at all cost, against all odds. It is Shrikandi who, mounted on her car, killed Bisma, the highly reverenced guru and forefather of the Korawas and Pandawas, by her able shot, thus doing her bit in the Brotherwar.

Arjuna's spiritual father is *Batara Indra*. This god is represented with a long flowing coat, named rasukan; he has shoes on and a shawl or slendang is slung across his shoulder, indicating his divinity. He wears his kris visibly as all the gods do. Sometimes he is decorated with the kingly praba and decked with a high crown. More often he wears the amassed haircoils, gelung ukel, symbol of the clouds. His face is black or red; the last colour does not indicate sympathetic qualities. His face though nobly outlined, looks somewhat bold, a characteristic he has in common with all the gods, except Batara Guru; neither do Indra's rounded eye, the full beard at chin and throat bespeak an exalted goodness "that is all his own". In the East the gods may oblige by their goodness if they are so disposed, but they are not bound to. Being omnipotent they can do as pleases them and be welcome.

Of Arjuna's numerous children, the best known is *Abimanju* or *Angkawijaya*, Subadra's child. Abimanju is always represented as a youth, because he is prematurely killed. His modest black face, lithe and graceful golden body bear a faint resemblance to his father's, but he has his hair hanging loose with the reversed head of the sunbird (Garuda mungkur) fastened to it. Not being of the unparalleled elegance of his father, he wears the traditional gold ornaments, among which the gold breastplate worn by youthful personages and women. His loincloth to which a pair of pantaloons is sometimes added, is fourskirted as is the fashion with warriors, whereas his father wears the actual court-costume, the dodot bokongan.

Angkawijaya has two wives — two as a rule being the least number for men of standing — *Siti-sondari* and *Dewi Utari*. The latter is a princess of Wirata. Dewi Utari's son Pariksit born after the death of his father is destined to succeed to Yudistira's throne, when the latter and all his brothers are called away to Endralaya, the abode of the gods.

Siti-sondari is a daughter of Krishna's. In Jakon Pregiwa in which the adventures of her wedding are related, throws a peculiar light on Arjuna's relation to Krishna. It is again Baladewa who opposes Krishna's wish to wed Arjuna's son to Siti-sondari; he asks her hand for Lesmana, son and heir to his friend Duryudana, king of Ngastina. On Krishna's remonstrance, Baladewa rejoins in a haughty and gruff tone: "Meseems I am never in time with my proposals". Unscrupulous Krishna who does not choose to risk his brother's anger, consents on the condition that Baladewa shall present him with a hundred fair maidens, Krishna being a connoisseur in this respect. It is Siti-sondari's brother Samba who delivers the delicate message to Arjuna. Bima and also Yudistira fear that Arjuna will be furious with their mighty ally Krishna for so inconsiderately breaking his word, but Arjuna whose love for his elder friend wellnigh verges on worship, swallows his pique and only remarks: "what ever Krishna decides is right, as my life and my death are in his hand". Still in his heart of hearts Arjuna feels sorely grieved, the more so as he fully well knows that he will be the laughingstock of the Kerawas and Baladewa for his forbearance. He vents

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his petulance by ordering poor Angkawijaya the rejected lover, out of his eyes. Angkawijaya feels offended and leaves for the woods, accompanied by old Semar and his sons Pětrůk and Nalagareng, the two great buffoons of Wayang.

In the end Angkawijaya, who had been preferred by Lesmana's bride from the very outset, wins her on account of the scandalous behaviour of the bridegroom, who is trapped by him in the pursuit of another fair in the house of the bride. A bridegroom acting the part of a "dèngdèng-thief", cannot very well be backed by Baladewa. Arjuna now persuades Krishna to give Sitisondari to his son Angkawijaya. Krishna no longer objects, if only Arjuna will answer for the consequences viz. the revenge of the Korawas.

When later on Angkawijaya is killed by Jayadrata, the Korawa-warrior born out of Bima's caul, and his corpse is duly cremated, it is Sitisondari who sacrifices herself to be burned with it on the funeral pyre, which privilege is denied to Dewi Utari, who is with child.



KRISHNA.

Krishna, the Black one, is a younger son of King Wasudewa and ruler of Dwarawati. He is an incarnation of blackfaced Batara Wishnu and an adherent of the Pandawas, led by his great attachment for Arjuna. This friendship may be partly explained from the fact that Arjuna is the spiritual son of Indra who in Hindu mythology has gradually got assimilated with the god Wishnu.

Krishna is commander-in-chief of the Pandawa-army. He has pledged his word however, not to take an active part in the war, his chakra being so powerful a weapon as to bring ruin on all breathing. Twice Krishna's indignation with the Korawas is so great that he would have interfered, had not Arjuna checked him, prompted by the fine instinct of reverence and fact, that is the keynote of Arjuna's friendship for Krishna.

Krishna is no longer a man at the prime of his life. In spite of his great affection for his young friend Arjuna, his bearing strikes as selfish, when his personal interests are at stake. He is no friend of violence, although he is a famous warrior. He is an aristocrat of the true order, of refined, suave manner, of proud demeanour; and a sceptic of great diplomatic talents, fain to obtain by foul means what cannot be had by fair. Krishna is sensuous to a degree, though not such a favourite with the fair sex as Arjuna. In Hindu mythology he is Arjuna's prototype and is reported to have as many as 13.000 wives, a proof of the unstinted liberality of the East in this matter.

From a moral point of view Krishna's advice to the Pandawas is as often as not unsatisfactory; but it is efficacious and answers the purpose.

Krishna's profile is of the noble type, though by no means so modest as Arjuna's. As to the Javanese mind the main-spring of all Evil is the inordinate of self, it cannot surprise that Modesty is the one virtue to cherish and to cultivate, to put on a line with all that is good, that is correct. Plastically human temper is expressed in Wayang-art chiefly by the poise of the head as well as by the line of the nose: the more the head is inclined, the more modest, the better the character of the man represented. Arjuna is quite the modest type of man; his son Angkawijaya is less modest though the difference is a slight one, his face being a trifle more raised. For a woman Subadra's character is the most modest by far, verging on submissiveness; her head is dropped so low, that it almost affects the shoulderline. Shrikandi's face on the other hand is boldly raised, her nose being even a little tilted at the tip. The half-closed eyes, in Subadra's case accentuating her modesty, add artfulness to Shrikandi's physiognomy.

That Krishna does not come up to the moral standard of Arjuna is clear from the more raised face. He looks the opportune autocrat he is; the half-closed eyes together with the high, narrow forehead give him the air of cunningness, of indolent watchfulness.

He is magnificently dressed in a dodot bokongan — net of the floral design as worn by young swells, but of a leafy pattern. He is decked with a high crown named tropong, an exquisite specimen of intricate goldsmithwork; he wears the praba in the shape of folded wings — a badge of ruling monarchs — the sacred thread of caste and a chain, costly armand footrings.

Baladewa, elder twin-brother of Krishna succeeds his father to the throne of Madura. Krishna has joined the Pandawas, Baladewa throws in his lot with the Korawas and like Krishna he never takes an active part in the war. He is married to Erawati, daughter of Salya, king of Mandraka, likewise a partisan of the Korawa-chief. Baladewa is a pedant, vain of his learning and his great strength, ambitious, quarrelsome, prejudiced and inclined to contradict and counteract

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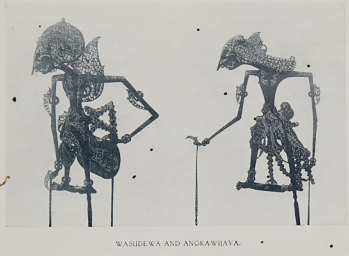

WASUDEWA AND ANGKAWIJAYA.

his brother in everything. Of the latter weakness the king of Ngastina, chief of the Korawas, avails himself wonderfully well and with the better success, as easy-going, urbane Krishna prefers to humour his ill-tempered, petulant brother who is ever and anon riding the high horse.

At one-time Krishna played a practical joke on Baladewa. Sighing after the fair Jambawati Baladewa sends his smooth brother, expert in lovematters, to be his advocate. But on seeing the maiden, Krishna is so struck with her himself, that he tells her that although his brother has commissioned him to ask her hand in marriage, he, Krishna, advises her to take himself instead of Baladewa, who has crooked legs, a squinting eye and a stammer in his speech.

This eulogy on his looks is overheard by Baladewa who ever after owes Krishna a grudge for playing this trick on him.

Baladewa is the spiritual son of the Naga-god Basuki, protector of the treasures under the earth by the wife of king Wasudewa. He has a golden body; a red-coloured, defiantly raised face and the bulging eye of one, who when passion has the upper-hand, is beyond reserve or self-control. The beard at chin and throat also point to vigorous sentiment and vehemence. The slightly turned-up nose gives him an air of arrogance.

He greatly dislikes the Pandawas, especially with Arjuna and Bima he is on bad terms. Arjuna, the petted darling of the fair sex is a thorn in his eye, as Baladewa with his rakshasa-mane, his stalking gait, his acrid speech and his vanity is not very popular with them.

He is treated with some distinction by the Pandawas on account of his strength. Whenever they have incurred his anger, it is Bima who is sent to his encounter to catch the first blow and as often as not makes a narrow escape. It is even stated that at one time Baladewa conquered the kingdom of Krishna and made Duryudana, the king of Ngastina, a present of it. Though Bima and Baladewa are both men of extraordinary physic strength, there is a distinct difference in their characters. Whereas Bima in his want of learning is original and impulsive, learned Baladewa is affected and dull; his sarcasm stings more than Bima's rudeness; where Bima guffaws, Baladewa snarls. That he cannot see a joke is illustrated by the following anecdote. For once, having persuaded himself to talk to Arjuna in an amicable way, it is Bima who entirely spoils his pleasure by asking with mock-interest: "Do you happen to have a sister, Baladewa"?

Like Krishna Baladewa is adorned with a tropong, a praba, a sacred thread and princely jewelry. Instead of the dodot bokongan, he wears a four-skirted loincloth, to which a pair of long pantaloons are added. Upon the whole his appearance strikes as ungainly, lacking charm and suggestiveness.

Baladewa and Krishna are in their youth respectively called Kakrasana and Narayana. They are then represented in the same colours and apparel as in later years, but their hair is hanging loose and adorned with a low crown instead of the tropong. The typical breastplate of youths finishes up their costly array.

King Wasudewa of Madura is father to Baladewa and Krishna and son of Kuntiboja. He is the brother of Dewi Kunti, Arjuna's mother. Of his principal wife Rohini, Wasudewa had the twin-brothers, of Bodra, Subadra. Black-faced Wasudewa is decked with a makuta and wears the kingly praba. His autocratic profile is of the noble type. The rounded eye, the knitted brow, the beard at the chin, awe-if not dread-inspiring, are significant of his omnipotence.

Whenever the Pandawas have a favour to beg from Krishna, it is *Samba* who smoothes the ground for them; whenever Krishna has a delicate message to be delivered, his glib-tongued son is singled out to be his delegate. Samba is the cock-sure brat of a mighty sire. He is the son of Krisna by his wife Jambawati and belongs to the Jeunesse dorée of Wayang.

Inspite of the drooping eye, he looks as bold as brass owing to the quite upturned face, the white, gold or sometimes black colour of which indicates a good disposition. His hair is done up in a supit urang, adorned with a trailing neckornament and the garuda mungkur lengthened into a lappet or tongue, called utah utah. He wears a low crown, the breastplate of a youth and a dodot bokongan.

Dewi Kunti is among the selected few who beget her children from a number of difinities. Her sons Yudistira, Bima, and Arjuna are respectively from the

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gods: Yama, Bayu and Indra, their mortal father being Pandu, who was cursed by a holy Pandit into sterileness.

Kunti is a most respectable little dame of noble features, her gracefully balanced, modestly bowed head is adorned with the unassuming South-Indian hair coil, gelung kaling. The high-necked bodice intimates that the day of her womanly triumph is over, that she goes softly for the rest of her days.

Kunti has another son whose divine procreator is a god. Brilliant *Arjuna* is the son of the golden-faced morning-sun Surya; he rivals in beauty with his younger half-brother Arjuna and in handling the bow he cannot be excelled by him. Kunti can be equally proud of either of them.



KARNA AND SAMBA.

But Karna is her son born before her marriage to Pandu, for decency sake born out of her ear; it is the only favour the Pandita Durwasa could confer on her after her transgressing his command to leave alone a charm or mantra he had given her, till after her marriage with a prince who was ordained to remain sterile.

Karna was born with the golden harness and the radiant ear-rings of his father Surya; he was exposed in a wood by order of his mother who dared not risk the anger of her father Kuntiboja — and was brought up by a Korawa chief. When afterwards he found out his birth, he came to Ngastina at the time of a tourney in honour of the Pandawas and Korawas, before their hostilities. Here Karna measures his strength with Arjuna, either ignorant of his relation to the other. As the gods had conferred on Karna all the weapons they had bestowed on Arjuna it remained a drawn battle. The crowds cheered them both, unable to make their choice.

As it now behoves Arjuna to ask Karna after his name, the latter has to admit that he is Surya's son, born to Dewi Kunti, out of wedlock and that no mortal father has been allotted to him.

Arjuna, son of mighty Indra sees his chance and he deliberately takes it. He declines to further compete with Karna; he persists in calling him a bastard and all his brothers follow suit.

The Korawa-chief Duryudana, at all times an acute strategist and diplomat in the "recruiting" of allies, detects his advantage and offers Karna his help by conferring on him the land of Awangga and the title of Prince of Awangga. From hence Karna's name is *Prabu Ngawangga* and he remains an ally of the Korawas ever since. He marries Surtikanti, daughter of King Salya and sister to Duryudana's wife Banowati.

At various times undaunted Karna falls out with Arjuna, but Karna is generally disliked for his "ill-timed" bragging, as he never wearies of vowing that he shall extinguish the Pandawas. That he resents the treatment he experiences at the hands of his half-brothers, is only human.

As a youth wearing the supit urang hairdress Karna so closely resembles Arjuna, that his foster-parents and their daughter who are very fond of him, cannot distinguish him from his brilliant half-brother, although he is adorned with costly arm- and foot-rings and the breast-plate of a youth, which are never worn by Arjuna. As Prince of Awangga, disillusioned by the dubious rôle he has to play in spite of great parts and exalted birth, the red-coloured, scornful face with the tilted nose, marks his altered view on life. His head-gear at this stage of life consists of a makuta.

Karna is destined to die by the hand of Arjuna. Though Karna is given the first chance to aim at his adversary, he misses his deadly shot owing to the driver of his car: his father-in-law Salya. Salya, Prince of Mandraka is uncle to the young Pandawa-twins Nakula and Sahadewa, sons of Madri, second wife to Pandu. As in his heart of hearts Salya frets that he has taken the part of the diplomatic Korawa-chief, he has resented Karna's threats against the Pandawas from the first and it is Salya who at the fatal moment gives a turn to the car, so that Karna misses his aim and is killed by Arjuna, the royal driver of whose car is mighty Krishna. It is Karna's game which is lost, whereas Arjuna's neme is blessed by Posterity.

Arjuna, Prince of Charms casts his spell over men, holds them in thrall: then, now, always.

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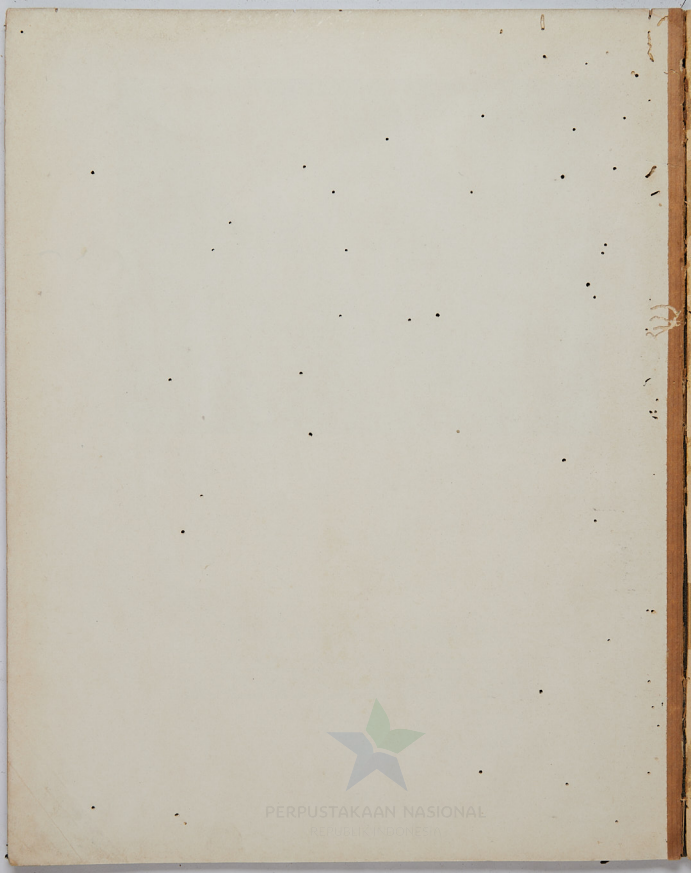

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MINTARAGA.

AN ASCETIC COSMIC LOVER.

By M. V. MOENS-ZORAB.

Mintaraga, the Passionless, originally the Kawi epic "Arjuna Wiwaha" (Arjuna's Nuptials) by Mpu Kanno, was done into the Javanese language for the first time by Sultan Paku Buwana III about 150 years ago. It consists of no fewer than 350 padas or metric stanza. The 3rd book of the Indian epic of Mahabharata has a description of "Arjuna's Travel to Indra's Heaven". The part of the Arjuna Wiwaha however, treating of this subject, differs considerably from the Indian parallel and the Kawi epic may be justly looked upon as an original product of Javanese fiction. The following is an adaptation from J. F. C. Gericke's translation of the Javanese poem into Dutch, published in 1844.

HE who in the grotto of ascetism and self-denial, for the sake of his immortal soul subdues the very demon of passions, the unbridled instinct of sex, is the ordained champion of Heaven and may claim this instinct for the sake of the immortality of the race. It is this philosophy that Arjuna, the descendant of anthropomorphic gods, embodies in his rôle of cosmic hero.

In the secluded cave of Mount Indrakila, away from the world's turmoil, a hermit was performing his devotions. *Bhagawan Mintaraga* — he whose passions have fled from him — was doing yoga-exercise. Unheedful of Time he was absorbed in meditation and persevered in his holy attitude. He never moved, nothing could disturb him. Material life had passed out of the Holy one. His faculties inaccessible to impressions from without had entered the state of eternal passivness. His heart was filled with a heavenly light throughout. A moonshine-radiance sprang from him, yea he seemed the serene moon brightening a clear starless sky.

The stern barren moon replaces the genial life-giving sun; the eunuch is the young hero transformed. Mintaraga, the austere saint was none other but the illustrious Pandawa-prince *Arjuna*, the fairest of the fair, the eternal lover in an ascetic mood. Surely the darksome cave dimly lit by his moonshine-halo was in strange contrast with his usual abode, the sunlit palace full of bright gayness, where four lovely wives anticipated his every wish, where the most captivating, the most bewitching women were lost in love for this fairy-prince. Were not four gallant brothers immensely proud of him and a fond mother eagerly longing and devoutly praying for the return of the emaciated hermit of Indrakila?

What had led the holy Bhagawan to address the Supreme Bhatara Guru thus intently? Were these fervent supplications to steel his will, to stir his energy prompted by a craving for spiritual bliss or by the earnest desire to succeed in the war he and his brothers were waging against their wicked Korawa cousins, personifications of deceit, inequity and egoism? Would Bhatara Guru acknowledge his humble serving, his pains, his fastings and vigils? Who knows — but let us speak no more of Bhagawan Mintaraga.

Bhatara Indra, the exalted Lord of Firmament, who dwells in Indralaya with his celestial hosts, was in great trouble; he was actually at his wits' ends. A potent monarch, *Niwata Kawacha*, had declared war on Him and was on the point of assailing His abode. Niwata Kawacha was in possession of immense riches. His extensive empire was situated south of Mount Sumeru and millions of trained and fearless soldiers were at his disposal. An impenetrable cuirass protected him against attacks from without. This cuirass almost matched in thickness the cap of clouds that prevents the suffocating heats from an ever-glaring sun to get away. Niwata Kawacha was like a demon of heat creating a close, sultry atmosfere. Besides, as a reward for steadfast devotion and zealous worship, Bhatara Guru had granted him the boon that none of the gods or dewatas, none of the Demons or Yakshas could worst him.

But Guru's limitation had been that Niwata Kawacha, who had resisted the colds and severities of Mount Himawan (the mount of eternal snows), could be subdued by a human being that like himself had become powerful by meditation and by doing tapa. At times the Divine one does not take punishment in His own hands but makes a mortal the instrument thereof. However, these mortals who by sheer force of purpose and concentration of will are inclined to think themselves mightier than the gods, should never forget that they remain dependent on the Order of the Universe.

Niwata Kawacha, emboldened by his power on the gods had claimed the loveliest widyadari from Bhatara Indra's heaven; for is there to be conceived eastern potentate with power unlimited who does not claim as his due the most beautiful maiden in Universe? This happened to be the excellent nymph *Supratbha*. Indra had no wish to comply with the request, but sent a reflex of hers, a nymph as beautiful instead. The demon was disappointed. How seldom a realised ideal answers our expectations! He went into such a fury that he threatened to attack Indra's heaven and take his right by force.

Indra was not a little embarrassed. But on remembering Guru's restriction regarding Niwata Kawacha his thoughts dwelled on the hermit of Mount Indrakila, his own earthly reflex. He thought the matter carefully over. ' There is no use asking Parta's help "(Parta is another name for Arjuna like Dananjaya "or Pamadé) unless he is intent on the wellbeing "of the world. Also I want to make sure that he can "resist temptation, otherwise Bhatara Guru will not "make him all-powerful."

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Thus Indra made up his mind to put Arjuna to the test and sent down temptation to him in the form of seven widyadaris — the most perfect in heaven, created out of its purest gems. Among them were — need it be told — Suprabha and also *Wilutama*. They almost equalled in beauty Bhatari Rati, the spouse of Bhatara Kama, god of Love. As to Kama the passionate god himself, he would assuredly deem the maidens as beautiful as Rati, if it is true that what one has is never superior to what one desires!

The seven lovely widyadaris were all alike in beauty; they resembled the sevenfold beauty of the heavenly princess of Dawn. At Bhatara Indra's command they were called to appear before Him and the assembled Dewatas, to have criticism passed on their powers of seduction.

As they slowly loomed into sight, they executed one of their wonderful dances. Daintily, almost hesitatingly they lifted their filmy veils, faintly outlined against a sky variegated in the tints of a glorious sunrise. One by one they dropped these veils, uncovering themselves in all their eternal charms before the enchanted divine critics. The pageant set the amorous hearts of the celestials aflame. They had not eyes enough to take in all the beauty of the show. A mysterious third eye manifested itself in the middle of their foreheads, emanating a light so bright that it equalled the lustre of the eye of Day.

When the widyadaris had finished their dance Bhatara Indra, He of the thousand eyes, addressed them thus: "With thine matchless beauties, lovely widyadaris, ye wilt put Arjuna to a severe test. Ye who art sweeter than the haunting fragrance of the jasmine, lovelier than the shimmering white of the champaka-bud and yet more delicate, ye canst seduce Parta if anyone can. Aye — when the sky's serene face nor the languishing moon can draw forth a sigh from the wistful heart, when the blushing gading-flower wafting its perfume from the glossy haircoil fails to intoxicate the senses, it is then the god of Love must renounce his claims, it is then passion has died in man."

There was no need to enjoin upon the widyadaris to do their utmost to seduce Arjuna; the commission of love suited them down to the toes of their graceful little feet. They humbly saluted the divine audience and asked Indra's leave to set out on their journey.

Swiftly they moved through the air, as invisibly as the soft zephir. All night they travelled; towards the early morning-hours they descended to the earth. They peered down with curious eyes. The scattered houses below were hidden in a thick mist, but the chemara-cones rose proudly above the fog. In the chill morning-breeze they shook their bushy plumes disapprovingly at the approaching bevy of widyadaris. A fine rain drizzled upon the mountain-slope where the hermit dwelled in his sheltered cave. The mountain-peak, enveloped in a grey mist resembled the cap of a venerable rishi. Under this cap on his forehead stood out a wart. The slope of the mountain was grown on one side with bamboo-trees, overhanging a lake below and could be taken for the saint's arms. As the wind played through the bamboo the rishi seemed to scoop water from the lake and to wash his face after the night's sleep.

Being near their goal the nymphs stopped to talk things over. They seated themselves on a huge flat stone in the shade of a blossoming rejasa tree on the side of a little brook; the boughs dropped their crimson flowery tribute slowly and constantly into the water. At a little distance stood the moss-grown time-beaten image of a young god, gravely scanning his reflexion in the brook. But the lighthearted damsels took no notice of their surroundings, their hearts were brimming over with the important task laid on them. No pangs of conscience on the poor hermit's behalf they had. They trimmed themselves as unceremoniously as one might expect of a pack of girls among themselves, eking out their charms when these happen to fall short of their fancies. Their bright eyes clung to the water-surface: they washed themselves, combed and arranged their hair, they powdered their faces and gleefully stretched their toes in the cool running water. One was making eyes in the water as if she were facing the young hermit and attempting his virtue.

They agreed not to start until late in the afternoon, for the extreme heat of the day might spoil their face-powders. If they stayed at their cool resting-place till the sun was low, they would arrive at the hermit's place when the moon was out and moonshine is supposed to be the helpmate of love!

Suprabha the cleverest of the lot, insisted upon their taking the shapes of Arjuna's wives, lest he should see through Batara Indra's ruse. As to herself she would choose the shape of Dewi Subhadra, Arjuna's principal consort, she who was of a perfect beauty, demure and sedate: "Though her beauty has often "carried men off their senses, her pure heart is unsoiled "by unhallowed passion. Therefore I prefer to be like "Subhadra. Thou Wilutama be like Arjuna's second "wife, like ravishing Manuhara. With her broad "shoulders and swelling breasts, upheld by a tiny waist, "she reminds of a naked honey-bee. Thou Gagarmayang "shalt be Arjuna's youngest wife, keenwitted Shrikandi, "she who is second to none but Arjuna in drawing "the bow."

Towards dusk the widyadaris reached their destination in the lonesome vale. A grove of trees led up to the cave. Moved by the wind the trees seemed to beckon them to proceed, but maybe it were their fluttering hearts imagined this. No human voice was to be heard, not a vestige of fire to be seen, grass shot out on the little plot in front of the cave. The hermit had not cooked his meals nor come out of the cave for many a day.

The widyadaris were like a flock of unpretentious grey little evening-clouds, driven on by the wind. They held their breath and stole a timid glance into the inner recess of the cave. They beheld something like a golden image, a shimmering light like that of the stern moon. The holy Bhagawan was there, wholly wrapped up in prayer, serenely unconscious of the fact that tender comfort awaited him from the holders of peerless charms.

Suprabha took her courage in her hands and entered the cave. To Arjuna she was a revelation of his favourite wife Subhadra. He heard her coaxing voice say: "Pamade here is thy poor lovesick wife Subhadra who "is dying to see thee. Subhadra thought thou hadst "gone to heaven and sought thee there in vain. Do

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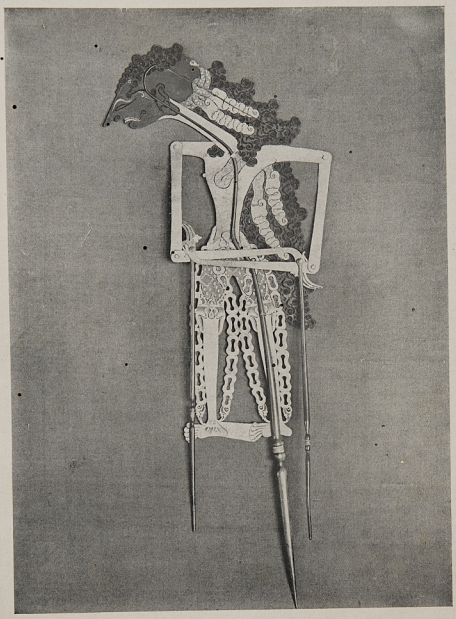

MEDITATING MINTARAGA.

USUALLY REPRESENTED WITHOUT THE VEIL ACROSS THE SHOULDER. FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE SRIWEDARI MUSEUM AT SURAKARTA.

PERPUSTAKAAN NASIONAL

"come home; all thine relatives are killed by wicked "Duryudana." She wept bitterly, her tears fell on her bare breasts and lingered there like raindrops glistening on leaves. Parta took no more heed of her than the moon does of a passing cloudlet.

Dewi Wilutama stepped in, she who looked Manuhara. The lucent charm of Suprabha was outdone by her gorgeous make-up. Her face was done up with cosmetics of the finest hues; strongly scented were her haircoil and breasts. Her wonderful teeth shimmered like the filmy wings of the honey-bee. Then — she was no more successful than Suprabha. Nor was a third nymph who was decked with priceless jewelry and if possible even more enticing than Manuhara's perfumed body or Suprabha's serene beauty. She claimed attention to her massive armrings of gold, to her beringed fingers adorned with sparkling rubies of a rare lustre. Her black-lackered teeth were of great beauty. She resembled a lurid sky with a whisk of black.

For three days and nights the widyadaris practised all their arts and tricks on Arjuna they exposed themselves in gorgeous array or in their naked splendour, painted with powders of a dainty violet, ochre or pink, adorned with many-coloured gems. Their hair was either carefully arranged or clinging in wet strings to their face and shoulders as if they had just left their bath, their teeth were a shimmering white like clouds caught by the light or a contrasting black like an overcast sky. They behaved like coy maidens or like impudent jades, theirs was a modest glance of concealed adoration, a bold leer of passionate command or a wistful look of hidden tears. They shyly cuddled up to him or shamelessly caressed him. They took his hands and laid them to their breasts and waists. It resembled a game of hide and seek of the moon and the frolicking, gamboling clouds.

The widyadaris did their work of seduction as well as could be reasonably expected of them, they had all lost their hearts and were head over ears in love with the handsome saint. But their pains were in vain, he never swerved from the path of self-denial. He resembled the coolness of a tropical moonlit night after the burning heat of the day or rather after the passionate courtship of the widyadaris.

Then the amorous nymphs left for Indralaya whence they returned low-spirited on account of their defeat. The Dewatas felt glad, they never doubted but Arjuna would kill Niwata Kawacha. Indra was not quite so sure: what if Arjuna strove after his own salvation, what if he did not choose to be a saviour to the world, but preferred a state of eternal rest to a life of action and sacrifice? Indra therefore resolved to appear to Arjuna personally in the shape of a naked Pandita, like one who has given up his share in the world's outfit. In a gust of wind and rain — the first little shower that brings refreshing coolness after a period of drought—*Padya*, the Pandita, came to Parta. Shivering and quivering, propped by a stick, he remained standing at the entrance of the cave. Parta was praying aloud and never heard Padya till the latter coughed to draw his attention. A dialogue ensued and the Pandita said among other things: "Though I believe thou art "sincere in thy penance, it hurts me to see weapons "lying about. Meseems thou still covetest earthly things. "One cannot aspire after things spiritual and things material at a time."

Parta replied: "Surely exalted rishi, a virtuous man "should never forget that the goal of life is to get "ready for death. But I cannot occupy myself with "my spiritual bliss yet. The love for those dear to "me is uppermost and I pray the Supreme One for "success in the war my brothers and myself carry on "against our Korawa-cousins, lest evil should triumph. "What would become of the world if I did not strive "to mend the wrong that is done and to teach mankind "that to do right and to be righteous leads to happiness. "That is what I am doing penance for and I shall not "leave this place unless Batara Wisesa — the most "Excellent — has heard my prayer."

Padya greatly rejoiced at these words. He took his former shape and spoke: "Continue thy penance and "Bhatara Rudra, he who is the mighty god of annihila-"tion and destruction, will manifest himself to thee." Parta threw himself at Indra's feet and worshipped Him. — Let us now speak of Niwata Kawacha.

This king of the earth who in due course had grown more and more tremendous, had heard of Parta's penance at Indrakila and that Indra had chosen him for His champion. The first downpour had warned him of coming trouble. As Niwata Kawacha had as yet no high opinion of Indra's champion, he sent his chief of Giants, *Momong Murka* to Parta's hermitage to kill him. Momong Murka looked for Parta at Mount Indrakila but as he did not see the hermit, he took the shape of a wild boar and rooted up the whole mountain with his tusks. This reminds us of god Wishnu who in his boar-awatar takes the shape of a unicorn-boar to rend up with his one tusk — lightning — the mount of clouds (the rainbag) in which the sun (Indra) is hidden. The solar hero is either asleep or a hermit at worship.

Momong Murka's assault made the mountain tremble as with an earthquake; part of it collapsed. Parta's cave was rent up and through the rift the sun appeared. Suddenly a stormwind arose and the black clouds were swept and scattered by it; the sun appeared through the rainy clouds. It was a forerunner of the coming Bhatara Siwah who came from Kailasa (his residence on Mount Sumeru) to see Parta's penance. On nearing Indrakila he noticed the wild boar. He at once took the shape of a prince of one of the wild mountain-tribes, out hunting. At this moment Parta came out of his rent-up cave with his bow and arrows. He aimed at the boar at the moment that Bhatara Siwah did so too. They both hit the brute. By Siwah's might the two arrows were united into one. When Parta was about to draw out his arrow from the dead boar, Bhatara Siwah interfered and said: "Do "not be so hasty, young man. It is Prince Kiratarupa's "arrow, how darest take it. Thine penance seems to "have taught thee nothing, a downright villain thou "art in the shape of a pandita." The sky looked a threatening black, it was covered with black rain-clouds through which the wind fought its way.

Arjuna's blood was up at the insulting words. "Whom "dost take me for, Prince? I am the satrya Dananjaya, "thou shalt have to answer for thy cheek." Kiratarupa naturally was enfuriated at Arjuna's swagger. They fought a fierce struggle by which Arjuna's long hair

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WIDYADARI SUPRABHA. WIDYADARI WILUTAMA.

FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE SRIWEDARI MUSEUM AT SURAKARTA.

dropped down to his very feet. But by Bhatara Siwah's infinite goodness neither was superior to the other, for He did not wish it to be a hard lesson for Arjuna. When finally the latter lifted his adversary from the ground to fling him on the stones, Bhatara Siwah disappeared like smoke out of the hands of the terrified satrya.

A rattle of rain was heard, fragrant odours from the thirsting earth spread, a noise was in the air such as accompanies the first monsoon-rains but which were hymns in Siwah's praise from the dewatas and rishis. The sky brightened, a rainbow appeared. Bhatara Siwah descended on a lotus-seat of purest gems. Arjuna dropped submissively on his knees and worshipped the exalted One, extolling and magnifying Him: "The "worship of Thee only those possess on whom thou "bestoweth this knowledge". We shall not dwell on Arjuna's homage; Bhatara Siwah was pleased with it any-how and He graciously bestowed on him the Pasupati — the arrow that surpasses all other arrows and also a bow, a crown and a beautiful suit of clothes. After the rain Nature seems to have donned a brandnew array.

After Bhatara Siwah was gone, Arjuna felt a great void in spite of the infinite favours bestowed on him, which had given him all he had prayed for. He felt sad that Siwah had not taken him with Him and a great longing surged up in him for those he had left. He felt he must go home at once.

At this moment two messengers from Suralaya appeared and informed Arjuna of Indra's request to come to His heaven and fight Niwata Kawacha with the Pasupati he had just acquired. They also brought Arjuna the jacket Antakusuma (made of the speckled snakeskin, representing the bestarred firmament), the hat Basunanda (representing the jar filled with jewels i.e. the raincloud that procures all treasures) and a pair of slippers Padakatjerma. Arjuna felt sad: now that he himself longed to see his beloved ones at home, he understood what their grief was like. The messengers were touched with his sorrow but they besought him to come with them and help his heavenly Father out of His plight, as he was the only one who could save Suralaya.

The words went straight to Arjuna's heart. He put on the jacket, the hat and the slippers nor did he forget to take his bow and arrows. With the jacket he could fly through the air; he set out to Indralaya at once. However, pious Arjuna did not forget to pay homage to the Mount that had been visited by two gods; more than once he looked back to the place where he had dwelled so long. The chemara-trees moved their boughs as in respectful salute. The peacock shrieked — there lay a gloom over the wood as if it mourned for the departing Arjuna.

To be concluded.

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MINTARAGA.

AN ASCETIC COSMIC LOVER.

By M. V. MOENS-ZORAB.

In the preceding part of this metaphoric epic, in which the Cosmos is a reflex of human nature, Mintaraga (the pious Pandawa-prince Arjuna) resists the temptation of seven widyadaris; the solar prince is indifferent to the courtship of the princesses of Dawn. These are sent by Batara Indra, the benevolent sun of the rainy monsoon, to try the moral virtue and strength of His spiritual son Arjuna, whom He wants to fight Niwata Kawacha, the demoniacal sun of the dry season. After some final trials, showing Arjuna's superiority, he is led to Indra's heaven.

CONCLUSION.

THE solar prince was eastward bound. On his arrival in Indra's heaven Arjuna was awaited by dewatas and widyadaris. The dewatas warmly cheered him, the widyadaris' welcome were their beaming eyes. Not one of the pretty ones but would willingly have laid down her little heart at the young hero's feet. Their hearts had been like withered lotuses with leaves drooping from the drought and the arrival of prince Arjuna had the effect of a refreshing rain reviving them, restoring them to a state of radiant loveliness. For what is the dawn without the sun?

An extremely young and pretty nymph had not run to meet Arjuna at the heavenly gate. It would never do if the men later on said that she had been too eager to see the handsome young hero. Pouting her lips she remained indoors, busily cutting at the superb wings of the sambërlilen, the gorgeous emerald-green little beetle that no fastidious beauty will despise to wear for a breast-pin once it is mounted in gold. She trimmed the perfect wings ever so little with her scissors, yet she cut her finger. It was a shame; it showed that the young conqueror carried everything before him.

Arjuna's eyes were dazzled with the lustrous sheen of Indra's heaven. All the palaces therein were of purest gold; gems and precious stones of a sparkling beauty lay carelessly heaped up in gardens magnificently laid out, whilst perfumes floated in the air and gongs and other musical instruments sounded all the time.

Arjuna was brought before Bhatara Indra who awaited him in great state. Indra urged him to make haste as Niwata Kawacha was about to assail Surahaste as Niwata Kawacha was about to assail Surahaya. Arjuna rejoined in a respectful tone that he was quite willing to do what was desired from him, but he feared that Bhatara Indra would be at a disadvantage when He chose him for his champion. Then what could he do against Niwata Kawacha: it seemed the fight of a fire-beetle against the moon or of a dwarf trying to reach at the sky with his arms! But if Bhatara Indra could get someone to find out Niwata's vulnerable spot, he might have a chance. Indra admitted that the demon had a vulnerable spot and he considered it best to send the widyadari Suprabha — the immediate cause of Niwata's anger — who on the pretext of love might find out what Arjuna wanted to know. Arjuna had better accompany her in disguise to assist her and to take stock of the enemy's quarters. Indra presented him with the charm Bajrasadana which would make him invisible.

Suprabha was told to start with Arjuna for Niwata's domain and together they took a respectful leave of Batara Indra. On their passing out of the gate of heaven together, some good souls, gathering there, whispered to one another that the young prince and the pretty widyadari must be in love with each other, one could see it from their shiny eyes!

The satrya and his lovely companion at once made for the earth. Arjuna went at a small distance behind Suprabha. When they had still been inside the gate of Suralaya the nymph had looked sulky and cross, now she felt shy and ill at ease. She did not think it decent to be sent on a message all alone with a young man, but how could she have dared to oppose Indra's command? She felt sure that her friends at home were discussing her at this very moment and wondering what a little fool she was making of herself. She felt irritated and somewhat haughtily she said to Arjuna: "Prithee Raden Pamadé go thou in front, I shall follow". Arjuna looked critically at her, then answered roguishly:

"It would never do for me, gracious lady, to precede "a Dewi — a goddess like thee. Besides Batara Indra "has ordered me to follow thee. I was just going to "ask thee not to hide thy charms so scrupulously. I "do admire thy perfect figure and I should not mind "to see even more of it. If I went in front, I should "not only miss a charming sight, but I should not be "able to protect thee. I should have to look behind "all the time, which would greatly hamper our journey. "It would be different if I were allowed to take thy "hand, but that being out the question I shall follow "thee, jewel of all dewis. I may warn thee if thy hair-"coil loosens and I can pick up the flowers that drop "from it". Suprabha was silent, what must she say? "Art angry with me, sweet lady? People seeing thine "severe look, might think thine heart cruel. As to mine "own, it looks pitch-dark inside. Dost know how to "make it look bright?"

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Suprabha cut him short. "Dost know how far away "from Indralaya we are? Maybe we have passed Mount "Sumeru alltogether! That reminds me, I never asked "thee where Negastina lies, is it far to thine capital, "Raden Pamadé?" "Why ask me about my capital, "precious lady? It smarts to think of mine own people. "I am dying to see my mother, my beloved brothers "and my wives, thy sisters. Surely it would make all "the difference if thou wouldst condescend to take off "the sting of my smart." Suprabha smiled, she fixed her radiant eyes on Arjuna and pouted. It was impossible to squash him! The prince of Day and the princess of Dawn always start a flirtation, she evades him coquettishly while he chases her, enamoured by her charms.

Now something is related of the beauties of the landscape the young couple passed in flying. They detected a lonely beach between a mountain and the sea. The waves came and went, sighing their constant love for the shore. The low-stooping pandan-trees looked helplessly on. Eggs of sea-birds and tortoises lay invitingly about but there was no one to collect them. The place was sufficiently lonesome for a hermit to do penance and prepare himself for Eternity. On the two young people went, past a lake in which a wild elefant was bathing, lazily stretching its trunk up in the air and squirting up the water. They noticed a kasturi—a little musk-deer—its scent was good to smell. The kasturi lay staring at the sun, its eyes quite swollen and bloodshot with the glare. It looked like a zealot at his vigils. They flew past a tjandi in ruins; on one side it was covered with images, which were mossgrown, tall arrow-grass standing at bay. Sympathetic Nature had hastened to cover up the wounds of Time and of the neglect of Man.

A hermit's dwelling stood close by, it seemed empty: from above it looked like a white cow about to descend into the the valley. A tuhubird, perched on a branch, shrieked; it strained its tall neck and seemed to invite the prince and the pymph to alight.

Now they left the domain of Indralaya and were near their destination. Their journey had lasted seven hours, the sun was about to set and the young couple looked like spun gold projected on a cloud. An incoherent noise struck their ears. It came from the feasting danawas — Niwata Kawacha's warriors — among whom weapons, gold and new clothes were divided. In seven days they were to march on Suralaya.

The widyadari felt sad and weary. She looked quite miserable and suddenly she burst out crying. The reds of evening, preceding the setting sun at times render a melancholy sight, especially when there is rain in the air. "What am I to do?" she sobbed. "I feel "so upset, I had rather die than let the giant touch "me and make love to me. Why has the adored One "ordered me to go to this horrid giant! If I only had "a powerful relative to protect me now! I feel like a "creeper that stretches out its tendrils but finds no "support. Oh I do feel so unhappy, Raden, no one loves "me".

When she had calmed down a little, Arjuna remarked kindly: "Why shouldst be so upset, dearest one, "it was not thy choice to go to Niwata Kawacha. Art "not willing to give thy soul for thy Lord, especially "now that he needs thee? Have no fear, I shall be "with thee. Let us leave it all to Batara Indra, He will "turn things for the best. Put on a smiling face and "look on the bright side of things. Be sure and look "sharp to outwit Niwata Kawacha. Methinks thou wert "not a bad hand at Indrakila".

At this suggestion Suprabha could not help smiling, her face brightened. Appreciation and sympathy are next to wisdom! They cautiously went on towards the palace-gate and slipped in unnoticed. The gate of heaven through which all the setting suns pass, closed on them; it was dark without but inside it was as bright as day. They entered a wonderful garden, where Suprabha's eye was caught by three widyadaris who showed a striking resemblance to the widyadaris from Indra's court. They seemed to be treated with great distinction, surely they must be messengers from Indralaya.

In the garden stood a superb canopy of purest gold. It was there for the princess of Dawn. Suprabha went up to it and sat down on the sumptuous and immense couch. A wonderful kalpa-tree (tree of paradise of costliest gold, closed in by the transparent curtains of the canopy on all sides, stood within. The tree was in a tub studded with priceless jewels; its fruit were gems, its leaves as lucent as the clouds. Arjuna seated himself in the kalpa-tree, quite close to Suprabha. Indra's charm Bajrasadana made him invisible to all but her. The young hero was anxious to hear every word that was spoken by his rival and the bewitching girl. Suprabha made herself at home on the couch and loosened her beautiful long hair; she knew she looked ravishing.

The three widyadaris resembling those of Indra's heaven came up to her, they did not recognise a sister in her. They asked her the timeworn threadbare questions: who-she-was and where-she-came-from. One of the talkative damsels sat down under the kalpa-tree, right on Arjuna's lap. He playfully slipped his arm under her breasts. She was blissfully unconscious of the fact. Suprabha smiled at his naughtiness. She told the widyadaris that she had come on her own accord, as she was afraid that Niwata Kawacha would conquer Indra's heaven. "I must say", she added archly, "that this is a lovely place, particularly now that "there are four widyadaris to enhance its splendours".

One of the widyadaris went to inform Niwata Kawacha of Suprabha's arrival. The demon literally beamed on the bearer of this welcome news. He went to meet Suprabha at once, accompanied by a large retinue of his wives and slaves. Having saluted Suprabha, he placed her on his lap without further to-do, but she managed to slip off his knees. He put her on his lap once more, again she moved away. She pretended to be ashamed of the presence of the other widyadaris. He ordered them to leave him alone with Suprabha; they straight went to Suralaya.

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NIWATA KAWACHA, THE GIANT KING.

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He made love to Suprabha and tried to embrace her. He was put out when she resisted but the clever minx said suavely: "Is not Suprabha thine, Revered "one, is she not wholly in thine power, to day and "tomorrow and always? Suprabha's body is like a "lump of sugar, that cannot escape thee The sweet "of the sugar I will offer thee soon but not today. "Thou art the mightiest prince on earth, all the other "princes are afraid of thee and I feel flattered by "thine love". Sulking Niwata's spirits rose and he thought her a very sensible woman to whom he could talk about his cares. He told her of his penance and how powerful he had got by it. Though the dewatas had continually tried to close the door of the cave in which he was doing tapa, he had successfully resisted them. The sun during the dry monsoon is not covered by clouds but scourges the earth with its intense heat.

His great power resided in his tongue he then confided to Suprabha, but the seat of his greatest power was also his vulnerable spot. Even as he revealed his secret Niwata regretted he had done so and he strictly forbade Suprabha to speak of it to anyone. But in bringing over Niwata by her sweetness — the greatest evil comes from being outwitted by a woman — Arjuna shared the secret with her. The latter felt sure of Niwata's defeat now. He forthwith left his seat in the kalpa-tree, ran to the nearest golden gate and mounted it. He stamped his feet and the gate broke down with a thundering noise There was a great uproar in Niwata's palace. He put down Suprabha who was in his arms and whom the idea had struck that she might like him after all. His passion for her was a thing of the past.

Suprabha did not wait another moment, but soared up high in the air where she met Arjuna with whom she disappeared in a grey mist. Someone came and told Niwata that Suprabha had left, he paid no heed. He was in a white heat; he felt that his life was at stake and that he must fight for it.

All his troops had heard of the catastrophe and they gathered round their king Niwata Kawacha felt no fear, his rage had the height of Mount Sumeru. The white clouds were gathering for a last fight with their enemies the black ones There was a fearful tumult in the air like peals and rattlings of thunder. The sheen of Niwata's weapons was as dazzling as that of a thousand suns. He had not his equal in the world: he was as bloodthirsty as a tiger, he could carry three elefants on either hand His warriors adored him, for he was very generous, as bountiful indeed as the dews of the atmosphere. Niwata came out of his palace in superb attire. He resembled Bhatara Kala, the awe-inspiring god of Time, when he prepares himself to destroy the earth Niwata Kawacha seated himself on his car of sparkling gems, the edges of which were as keen as swords. A team of elefants with monstrous white heads were put to it. Two widyadaris accompanied him in his car and either held one of his feet on her lap. Niwata smacked his whip, his passion was like another whip His eyes shot fire, he was anxious to see the end of his work.

The banners of his troops were the skins of huge snakes with the heads sewn on to them. to put fear into the enemy. Other standards were fiery balls. The chiefs sat on white elefants, lions or tigers, their tusks were flashes of lightning. All the gadas, dandas and other weapons were adorned with gems. As the troops marched on in close file many millions deep, the waters dried up, the trees went up in flames or were destroyed by the weight of their feet.

When Parta arrived in Indralaya, Indra's army was ready to march they were waiting for him. Indra intended to shut himself up in the fortified Kayangan (abode of the gods) and to leave it all to Arjuna, but the latter persuaded him to take the lead Thus Indra marched at the head of His army on His white four-tusked elephant Erawana richly harnessed and adorned with jewels. He carried His bajra a bundle of flashes of lightning). Two umbrellas made of the hair of the sun-vulture shaded Him. Rishis and dewatas strew golddust on Him that came down in the form of rain mingled with heat Indra was preceded by His archers. These were selected troops clad in jackets of treebark edged with gold. Their banner was a raincloud from which flashes of lightning shot.

There were standards of gold and of a fiery red. One chief sat on a golden car clad in crimson silk. Bhatara Indra's son had a car of white lime drawn by lions and he spread a delicious strong scent of musk. His colours were white with a gold lining His men wore hats with golden rims. Others had lotus-shaped coats of pure gold and held bows and shields.

Arjuna made up the rear. His car was of precious stones all over and was drawn by mehatalis, mystical solar animals. His banner was a white silk one with his own wayang (shadow) on it. For is not a shadow a reflex of light, as Arjuna was the reflex of the sun? Young gandarwas in the age of fourteen — mere boys they looked — marched in front. There were nine thousand of them, all armed with bows. They were followed by widyadaris mounted on elephants Then came millions of horsemen carrying lances The region through which the army marched suffered dreadfully. Mountains disappeared and were levelled by the tread of the elephants and horses. All was changed to dust

When Indra's army reached the southside of Mount Sumeru, it drew up in battle-array. The forepost joined battle with those of the enemy. The former were eaten up by the giants and crunched under their teeth. They were put to flight. The rakshasa-warriors of Niwata Kawacha then came up in great numbers and made a deafening noise; it was a regular pandemonium. The screechings of the danawas were like millions of thunder-peals; the elefants tusks flashed like lightning. There was no water on the battlefield, which was covered with huge boulders. The Suras of Indralaya had to go in search of water.

Seeing Indra's troops yield, Arjuna placed himself at the head of the army; the Suras managed to cut off the greater number of the giants' army from their

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resources. These were destroyed and trodden under foot.

Now prince Niwata Kawacha made a furious assault. He was like a fire darting flames, arrows issued from his body, his eyes, his hands, his hair. Arjuna immediately prepared for the attack. He had his Pasupati with him; he was wholly absorbed in prayer. Niwata seeing that his warriors were destroyed and that danger was imminent, prayed to Bhatara Birawa — the gruesome man-eating god — and his prayer was heard. Millions of giants came out of his mouth, Niwata's body expanded, his car expanded and arrows proceeded from them. It put Arjuna's troops to flight. Arjuna pretended to flee with them. Niwata thought that Arjuna was fleeing and he cried out: "Knowest not that I am Bhatara Kala, the god of Time and master of this world? How darest defy me". At this he shot his tomara (fiery torch) at Arjuna, who caught the arrow in its flight and hid it under his arm, pretending to be hit. "Arjuna is hit, he dies", and forgetting everything in his arrogance, Niwata Kawacha laughed aloud, opening wide his mouth. This was Arjuna's moment. He quickly shot his Pasupati which struck home, filling Niwata's mouth entirely. Backwards he fell dead on his car.

Verily Niwata Kawacha had been a great king. The melancholy quiet of dusk sets in, the clouds stop in their course, a gorgeous display of colours is to be seen in the sky. The sun appears a bloody red. The sunset is the death of the King.

Niwata's corpse, his charriot and his warriors were all burned. His capital was looted: his treasures, his weapons and most of his beautiful wives changed hands and became the property of Indra's triumphant troops. All the killed warriors of the great Bhatara were restored by the Water-of-life, the wounded were cured by it, as well as the crushed animals; even the broken cars and weapons were brought back to their former state. The mighty Bhatara left the battlefield in His charriot with Arjuna at his side; for Arjuna was one with his divine Father.

On their way home Indra's warriors talked about nothing but their conquests and their booty, aye — and of the women from niwata's palace they had with them. Their wives at home had been elated when the news had reached them of the great conquest, but their spirits sank when they heard of the captured wives that were coming with their husbands. A passing wind had breathed these tidings to them. Some of the wives who had slept on the bare ground all the time their husbands had been in the war and who had put themselves to all sorts of privations were beside themselves with rage. But we shall talk no more of all the disappointed wives.

Arjuna was the hero of the day. He was sumptuously entertained and regaled to all sorts of rare viands; there was a continuous rejoicing and the air resounded with music. Indra had decreed that Arjuna should be King of Suralaya for full seven days and nights — which is seven months according to our reckoning.

All the inmates of Indra's palace: the Nayakas, the stately courtiers, as well as the Dewatas, Rishis and Sugatas had assembled in Arjuna's palace. When the latter arrived he seated himself on the singasana — the lion's seat reserved for gods and allmighty kings. He was dressed in full princely array, wearing a handsome crown and a tiara set with precious stones. His apparel was the thrown-off skin of Antabhoga — the cosmic dragon — and sewn all over with gold-thread; thousands of rubies and other sparkling gems enhanced its splendour.

The elders of the Dewatas seated themselves nearest Arjuna; seven gandarwas came to the fore who performed a ritual dance round them. Trumpeting Arjuna's glory they did all sorts of caperings like unto those of the solar (or lunar) goat (or doe) that pierces the clouds.

Seven jars filled with the Water-of-life were set before Dananjaya, also seven pitchers studded with gems containing another costly fluid and again seven bowls with the dews from the moon, sothat there were twenty-one receptacles in all. Some fruit — a present from the god of the Earth — were also put in front of Arjuna, and to crown these gifts, Indra gave him for wives the seven beautiful widyadaris at one time sent to try his virtue.

It cannot surprise that in the East where the heart — the seat of emotional and lyrical sensations — has the whiphand, abstract and mental notions have their full swing of personal sentiment. Metaphors, nay all things moral, symbolical or transcendental, take as often as not the character of a lovematch or union between man and wife, where the western mind prefers a more platonic view of the matter. Whereas the genius of western intellect hovers above pure abstraction, the more primitive, maybe more human genius of the Mintaraga frees from sensual lust. This more direct emancipation is in a way as noble, as pathetic as its western prototype. The recompense of Arjuna for his merit is of a drastic realism that wellnigh paralyses imagination; it certainly is a "document humain" of a primitive innocence that strikes western mentality as a kind of paradise it has lost for good and all.

When Arjuna was wedded to the seven widyadaris the Dewatas paid homage to the King-elect. Arjuna went to the palace of the widyadaris where he doffed his kingly array and dressed himself like a satrya, an Indian nobleman. Menaka, Indra's menial, led him to the place where a gorgeous bridal bed glittering with precious stones of variegated colours stood. Suprabha sat in the west, Wilutama in the east, Warsiki in the north, Surendra in the south awaiting in state their solar bridegroom. Menaka urged on the widyadaris as Bhatara Indra's special wish, that they should be all of a mind to please Arjuna, to make his presence in heaven a beautiful dream of bliss to him. Suprabha who had been instrumental to Arjuna's success would have precedence over all others.

Ratna Suprabha slowly moved into the inner recess of the lucent canopy, Arjuna followed her and sat

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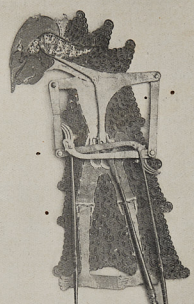
down close to her, as the setting sun is wont to follow the evening-aurora. Suprabha moved on, an impatient ring was in her voice when she remarked: "It does not seem difficult to come up close to me". "Such is the command of our lord Indra on whom depends the order of the Universe", quoth Arjuna. "Yet my heart is wholly devoted to thee, heavenly princess, whose beauty excels the radiance of the declining moon, whose shiny eyes dim the lustre of the stars, whose wondrous hair is laved in the sheen of the constellations". He unbent his amorous heart in a transport of delight.

She moved up and he moved up with her. The beautiful princess is either cruel-hearted and smothers her lover the setting sun in his sleep or she is good-natured and is blissfully united with her solar partner. As the aurora of evening (or morning) is seven old here, Arjuna is united to seven widyadaris.

However when the seven months drew to an end Arjuna's celestial abilities degenerated accordingly and he grew less appreciative of Eternity. Being a mortal and the product of a world of change, he began to long for his return to the earth. With Suprabha he now began to speak about his wife Subhadra, with Wilutama about Palupi, with the other widyadaris about his other wives.

Bhatara Indra had laden Arjuna with His goodness and himself taught the youth to shoot the bow; the dewatas had instructed him in all the arts of waging war, sothat Arjuna had become a hero of great skill. When at last the seven months were up, Indra's favourite was called before Him and permitted to return to the earth. Arjuna took a respectful leave of Him and of the dewatas. Then he mounted his car of gems; he drew his bow and a gale arose which enabled him to descend to the earth.

The widyadaris accompanied him as far as the gate of Heaven. Once more they shone in all the sheen of a glorious evening-sky. This time the prince did not follow but made straight for the earth, hiding himself in a cloud. Arjuna was a mortal again; the widyadaris mourned for him as if they had lost a son. The power of poetic imagination had rendered him the radiance of a victorious celestial lover; prosaic common sense could but afford the modest part of a child loved by its parent.



BHAGAWAN MINTARAGA (AFTER HIS STRUGGLE WITH PRINCE KHATARUPA).

Arjuna safely reached his capital. With deep respect he bowed before his two elder brothers and kissed their feet. His two younger brothers inclined themselves for Arjuna as Etiquette exacted it. His wives, his children, his relatives and his people rejoiced.

The pinks and reds and violets of the evening-sky are followed by the monotonous greys of dusk, the glamour of fantasy is replaced by the humdrum of every-day life.

Continued from page 765.

They cannot produce rice to compete with the growers of Indo-China, nor tobacco with Sumatra, copra with Ceylon, and in a short time even hemp will cease to be a monopoly, and in spite of these conditions lies the delusion that America possess a tropical storehouse in the Philippines. It is only another case of mis-information, which has been reiterated so long as to become an obsession. From time to time agricultural Messiahs visit these shores and passionately advocate this or that crop to accomplish economical salvation, without taking into the slightest consideration the investment, land, transportation, labor, climatic conditions and a dozen other factors necessary that decide against such a proceeding, but the press headlines the new discovery so that all who run may read, and it is from these superficial observations that this "opulent storehouse of the Orient" still stagnates and in all probability will continue to do so.

As regards the rubber investigation, the greater part of the sum appropriated by Congress will without doubt be spent in those countries adapted to its culture surrounding the Caribbean littoral, as transportation is much quicker and cheaper, the taking up of suitable lands and opportunities to invest capital are superior than the Philippines can offer, and perhaps when all has been said there is just as much political stability and goodwill as exists in the Islands. In addition there is not the slightest doubt that when Philippine independence is secured American capital will have no more chance to invest in the future than it has had in the past, in spite of the cheerful propaganda that observers rich in optimism but poor in capital, persist in continually spreading.

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BIMA AND HIS KIN.

By M. V. MOENS-ZORAB.

In the following paragraphs Mrs. M. V. Moens-Zorab explains the meaning of some of the outstanding features of a few wayang figures, referring to the ancient Hindoo legends from which the Javanese wayang performances are derived. As the reader knows such performances take place in the evening hours, the leather wayang figures being passed between a lamp and a screen, so that a shadow falls on the latter. Meanwhile the "dalang" recounts the story to the audience, the latter squatting down on both sides of the screen. In former issues we have already had occasion to refer to the different forms of wayang known in Java, and to the manner in which the puppets are made, so these few remarks may serve as an introduction in the trend of Mrs. Moens' story. Editor.

IN mythical times, the fabulous kingdom of Ngastina, of fantastic fame, had been founded by Palasara, who numbered among his progenitors the supreme gods Brahma, Wishnu and Batara Guru. Palasara's successors Santanu, Bisma, Abiasa were priests and gurus, endowed with superhuman powers, who kept in so close contact with their divine relatives, that the gods either presented them with heavenly nymphs for their wives or lent a helping hand in procuring offspring, by uniting with their mortal favourites' wives.

As it happened that Abiasa's eldest son Destarata was born blind of both eyes and his younger brother Pandu ruled in his stead, it was agreed upon at the close of Pandu's reign, that half of the kingdom of Ngastina was to go to Destarata's heirs, the hundred Korawa princes and the other half to Pandu's sons, the royal Pandawas. Royal they were, these five Pandawa princes, of superb look and carriage, second to none in skill of arms, braver than any mortal on earth. For were not they of godly lineage, being not Pandu's sons in the flesh, but sons of Pandu's wives Kunti and Madri by the gods Yama, Bayu, Indra and the Ashwins (Gemini)?

In spite of Pandu's last wish, that Ngastina might be divided between his sons and his nephews, the Korawa princes led by the eldest: selfish Duryudana, had no mind to go halves, as they hated their cousins bitterly and aimed at their utter ruin.

No sooner these schemes dawned upon the Pandawas, than they rose to a man to defend their lives, to stand upon their rights. But none was more enraged, more bent upon revenge than fierce Bima, the second-born, son of the mighty Windgod Bayu. *Werkodara* or *Bayuaka* — Bayu's son — he is called by preference. His prototype is the indomitable wind overcoming all resistance, carrying before it all that is in its way. Bima's athletic build, his admirably trained gigantic body, his shapely though tremendous limbs indicate this characteristic.

He is by no means a man to be trifled with, to play the fool with, nor do his looks betray a mild disposition. The bulbous eye bespeaks the man of strong passions, who brooks neither contradiction nor insult. The arrogant shape of the nose is that of a man, prone to poke it into another man's business, resorting to violence at first provocation. The scornful, supercilious mouth shows a propensity to bully, to thunder, to swagger, to boast, to send forth vile language; the beard at chin and throat, the tuft of hair at the root of the nose hint at brutal and strong appetites.

Indeed Bima is the man he looks. He is fond of his brothers, most generously risks his life when theirs is at stake; he is a fearless warrior, ever foremost in battle, greatly exposing himself by fighting on foot while other chiefs are mounted on car or elefant. But he is a man of little refinement or learning, indiscrimenately adressing betters and su-

WHY

DOES NEARLY EVERYBODY VISIT GAROET ON THEIR HOLIDAYS AND STAY AT

VILLA HOTEL BELVEDERE??

BECAUSE

ONE LIVES THERE AS RESTFULLY AND FREELY AS IN ONE'S OWN HOME; THE SCENERY IS GRAND, THE ROOMS COZILY FITTED UP, FOOD IS EXCELLENT, THE TERMS ARE MODERATE. AND, IN SHORT, ONE GETS MORE COMFORT FOR LESS MONEY

ROOMS FROM F 6.30 TO F 11.- FOR ONE PERSON AND F 12.- F 17.- FOR TWO PERSONS

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PERPUSTAKAAN NASIONAL
BAT. GENOOTSCHAP VAN K. EN W.



Photo Charis & van Es, Weltevreden.

BIMA.

"HE IS BY NO MEANS A MAN TO BE TRIFLED WITH, TO PLAY THE FOOL WITH, NOR DO HIS LOOKS BETRAY A MILD DISPOSITION".

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bordinates in the vernacular of the low-born. He prides himself on his colossal strength, he mocks at the chivalry of his gentle twin-brothers Nakula and Sahadewa, the noble-mindedness of his stately, eldest brother Yudistira, the conscientious scruples of his tender-hearted second brother Arjuna.

Bima is the dread of his enemies, as he never spares a fallen foe. He goes for the hapless creature with his mighty cudgel like the very devil, tramples upon the defenceless body, revels in calling his victim the most vulgar names, seating himself astride on the dead body, the blood of which he delights to drink or the bowels of which he tears asunder, scattering them to the winds.



ANTAREJA.

For Bima is the personification of brutal force, of the crude instinct of self-preservation, in its most violent, most savage state, stripped of all gentler feelings.

When new-born, Bima was completely enveloped by a caul, for which reason he is called *Si Bungkus* (the Enveloped). No mortal on earth was able to break the caul. Batara Guru, prayed for help, sent down his son Gajah Sena in the form of an elephant (Ganesha ?) who forced it and set free the son of the Wind, Narada, the messenger of the gods then fastened another name on Bima: *Bratasena*. From the caul itself a mighty warrior sprang, *Jayadrata*, who became one of Bima's most powerful opponents in the great war.



WIJASENA.

Batara Guru's spouse, Dewi Uma, bestowed on the naked child Bima — that was instantly full-grown — a checkered loincloth, the checks being in four colours, white, black, red and yellow; which colours refer to the four bayus or mythical winds of the Yoga-philosophy. This two-skirted loincloth is the only garment Bima ever wears, except when, as a *King of Giling Wesi*, he is arrayed in full kingly gear, decked with a high crown (makuta), a diadem and a reversed head of the sun-bird (garuda mungkur) in the hair, wearing the sacred thread (upawita), armrings and bracelets, the halo (praba) of a king in the shape of folded wings and under his loincloth the court-pantaloon.

The loincloth is one of Bima's chief characteristics; another is his terrific fivefold nail Panchanaka. Bima never wears rings on his fingers, but he has a singularly shaped armring, consisting of two fighting nagas, the third of his characteristics.

When still young he is often represented with a dragon's head on his thigh. Bima's naga-ornements either relate to the innumerable dragons he vanquished or to his having a naga-wife, named *Nagagini*, the daughter of Antaboga or Basuki, the wealthy king of Nagas. Of Nagagini Bima had a son, *Antasena* or *Antareja*, who as a young man is represented with his hair hanging loose, the usual hair arrangement of a youth. He has Bima's features. At a more advanced age he wears the lobster shear hairdress of his father and sometimes wings are added to his array. Antasena wears a diadem and a garuda mangkur is fastened to his hair. His complete royal court costume includes a four-skirted loincloth. As a youth he is adorned with a magical breast ornament, that is afterwards replaced by the sacred thread and a gold necklace. His body and face are usually of a *golden* colour.

Wijasena, the *young* Bima, when in a benevolent mood is represented with a golden face, his *bindu* face. Grown older, when his character is more pronounced, Bima's face gets black, whereas his body remains golden. In a very angry mood Bima has his *bugis* appearance i. e. an all-black body; however, on account of his better qualities which he even then retains, his face is given the golden colour.

As the story runs, Bima the violent male was not overgentle in handling his ladylove Nagagini; he had a curious habit of throwing her high up in the air and catching her again, by way of caress, just as was his want to do with his terrific cudgel Lohitamuka.



GATUTKACHA.

Bima was "enfant chéri des dames rakshasi", female cannibals and demons of darkness who set their cap at him, "giving him the glad eye", although he ruthlessly slew many of the males of their tribe. He marries one of them, *Dewi Arimbi*, after having killed her brother. Arimbi is by no means a beauty with her impudent rakshasa face; she is very keen on human flesh, after due consummation of which she is used to carrying out various savage dances. Her one good point is that she knows the future and the past.

Of Arimbi a son is born to Bima, the half human

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Gatutkacha, the most popular of wayang heroes. He is considered a real "brick", most beautifully, most perfectly arrayed; like the deus ex machina of classic drama he is acting in emergencies. He can raise himself in the air, thus stealing a march on friend and foe, serving his fellow-combatants as a flying machine does in modern war. Besides he is not afraid to fight in the dark, being a rakshasa owing to his mother. He resembles his father Bima in looks and arrangement of the hair, but in Gatutkacha's lobster shear the ornament of the garuda mungkur is fastened. He wears a diadem and the royal wings at his back. Like his half-brother Antareja he sometimes lacks the wings. He is distinguished from his naga-brother by his *black* face and his more stalwart appearance.



BIMA SUCHI AND PRABU GILING WESI.

In Hindu mythology Gatutkacha is an ugly rakshasa, with pointed ears, long hair standing erect, red eyes, four fangs and a mouth stretching from ear to ear. But in wayang he is of superb though less sturdy build than his father; he has handsome though frowning looks and a golden body. In battle Gatutkacha is accompanied by a host of rakshasas. He can expand or reduce himself, which is also a trick of Bima's.

In one instance Bima diminishes his form and is then called *Bima Suchi*. Drona at a time the Guru of both the Korawas and Pandawas, but having joined the Korawas in the great war, urges Bima to go and search the Water of Life. Drona harboured a secret hope of delivering the Korawas in this way of their formidable adversary, as the undertaking was a dangerous one. Dauntless Bima is not to be checked by either friends or brothers and he is off to the haunted mount of Chandra Muka, where innumerable demons await him, but are killed by him. Having looked in vain for the Water of Life, he returns to Drona in a great fury. Crafty Drona then advises him to go and look for it at the bottom of the sea. Bima is off once more. He fights all kinds of nagas and sea monsters, till he lands at the bottom of the sea, where he comes across a little being, who introduces himself as Dewa Ruchi, a descendant of Batara Guru. He is in possession of mythical wisdom and advises Bima to enter his womb. Bima for this purpose takes his minute form of Bima Suchi. In the womb of Dewa Ruchi he gratifies his hang after mysticism, but Dewa Ruchi cannot allow him to stay, as is Bima's wish. So he returns to his relatives, who are only too pleased to have him back.

As Bima Suchi, he is only about one fourth of his usual size, but has his characteristic face and build, his checkered loincloth, his fivefold nail and his peculiar two fold naga arm ring. His hair is hanging loose as in his youth, but he wears the headcover of the gods, the amassed haircoils (gelung ukel), symbolising the clouds.

A god is not only distinguished by these remarkable haircoils but also by the tailcoat and the shoes he needs in the cold upper spheres, as the "dalang" assures us. Besides a kind of shawl, symbol of the heavens, is slung across the shoulder, alluding to the supernatural powers of the wearer. In the person of *Batara Bayu* all these characteristics are displayed.

Beside Gatutkacha there is another warrior in wayang, resembling Bima in looks: *Jayadrata*, born of Bima's caul, prince of Bana Kling. Jayadrata is almost the image of Gatutkacha with the exception of the hairdress, which is not the lobster shear but the gelung kaling, the so called south-indian haircoil. Though strongly betraying the family traits, Jayadrata's profile is less sloping, showing more "cheek", Jayadrata being the brother in-law of Duryudana, the Korawa-chief and a member of the evil party, his more impudent physiognomy is in excellent keeping with the qualities ascribed to him.



HANUMAN.

It is mentioned above that the fivefold nail and the double arm rings are prominent characteristics of Bima. The most popular Ape of Ramayana, by the name of *Hanuman*, shares these attributes with him. One would certainly not mistake this simian hero for Bima as the ape-face, showing in three quarter profile two bulbous eyes, a sunken nose, a typical muzzle with upturned upper jaw and two file of saw shaped teeth and fangs, does not strike one as particularly Bima's style. Like all divine Apes in wayang he is the owner of a formidable tail, curling up along the body into his lobster shear hairdress. He looks a robust male and has a well-shaped human frame costly arrayed in a fine two skirted loincloth, sacred thread and any amount of gold ornaments, even to his portly tail.



PULASTYA.

His likeness to Bima is clear, as he is his half-brother; he is a son of Bayu and Dewi Anjani,

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the divine Ape-mother. Anjani was a heavenly nymph cursed to be reborn as the daughter of the Ape-king Kesharin. The delicately built Anjani with the ape face but fortunately lacking a tail, continued to keep up her connections with heaven, Bayu becoming her lover. As far as Bima is concerned, he fares well by the match, as Hanuman proves to be a useful helpmate to Bima whenever he is in a plight. Hanuman can fly the air; like Bima he can expand and reduce his form. In some cases he is even stronger than Bima, who can not so much as lift his tail. He is the soul and brain of the Ramayana war. There he is the great general, indefatigable, undaunted and tenacious, surpassing his enemies in strategy and tactics, frustrating their energies, outwitting them at all points.



BATARA BAYU.

Bima in the shape of *Pulastya* or *Pulasya* is a match for Hanuman with regard to good looks. Pulastya is the progenitor of all rakshasas and evil demons, but also of the good genii of mortals. He is the son of the supreme god Batara Guru and the father of Kuwera, the god of riches. Bima beats this potentate and takes his form, to rule Pulastya's kingdom; but even then Bima is to be recognised by his fivefold nail, his double naga ring and his checkered five-coloured loincloth. Only his face is a typical rakshasa-face with an abundant mass of hair hanging loose down to his shoulders and adorned with the garuda mungkur. His face is set with a demoniacal eye, a grin showing the gums and fangs. In this form Bima has a *white* coloured body like Hanuman's.



KARTALA.

The characters and moods in which Bima is here introduced, appear in wayang *purwa* — primary or original wayang — featuring the mythic and traditional tales connected with the history of Pandawas and Korawas. The hindu epic, translated and adapted by Mpu Seda is expounded by order of Jaya Baya to his ignorant and unsuspecting people as a heroic poem of their own country.

In the wayang *geboy* — this means last or final wayang — leading personages of the history of the Javanese middle ages are dramatised. Although the dramatis personae have been actually alive, this kind of wayang is not much in vogue now. It principally features the legend of prince Panji, son of the ruler of Janggala.



JAYADRATA.

Under the name of *Kartala* appears another prince of Janggala, half-brother to Panji and son of an outlandish princess. He is believed to be an incarnation of Kala Bayu, the Windgod, and is identified with Bima whose appearance he assumes. These particulars raise a doubt as to whether this phase of Javanese history is under much better control than the mystic history of Korawas and Pandawas.

Kartala's face and body have the black colour. His profile is more upturned than Bima's, laying the more stress on the triviality and the limitations of his human character.

He wears Bima's characteristic checkered loincloth and has his peculiar fivefold nail. In order to adept Bima's supit urang to the quaint headdress of the five Panji princes, Kartala's coiffure is the lobster shear turned downwards. Kartala nearly equals Bima in physical strengh and bravery. He accompanies prince Panji on his erratic wanderings to far-off countries to hunt up a substitute for his murdered beloved, Dewi Angreni. On these dangerous expeditions Kartala has more than one opportunity to display his great skill and audacity.

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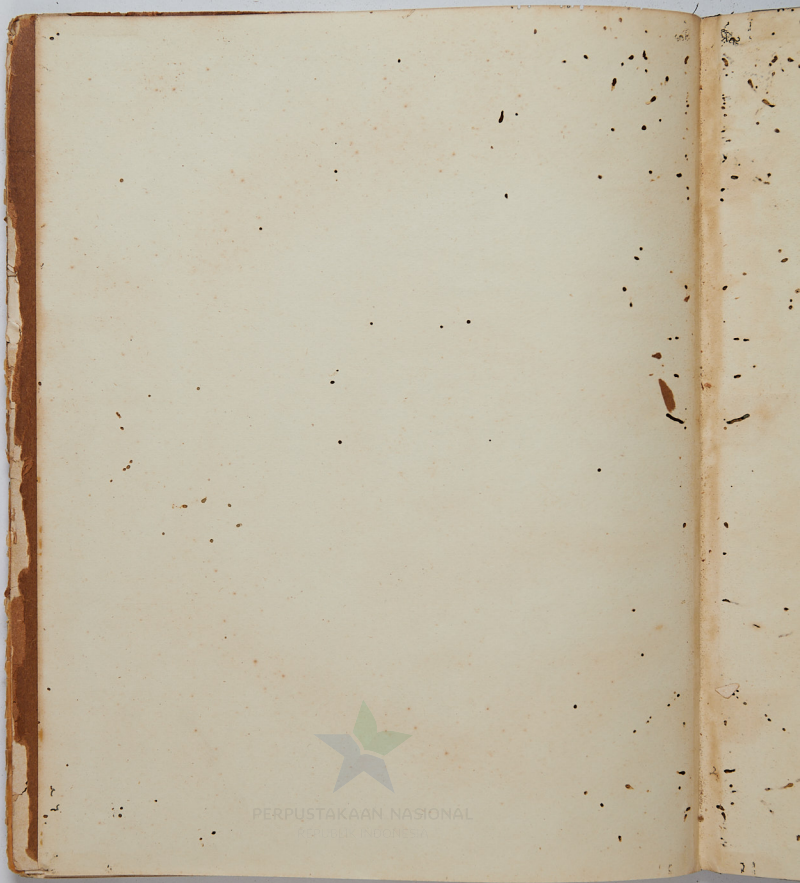
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