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THE LOGIC OF RASA IN JAVA

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We may have the adage that knowledge is power', but beneath it lies an epistemology implying that knowledge' is primarily a matter of intellect, of qualities of thought and quantities of information. Closely linked to this is a sense of person', profoundly conditioned by Enlightenment notions of equality, which results in sharp resistance to suggestion that there may be qualitatively different orders of consciousness. Yet as Louis Dumont points out, ...it is only in our egalitarian ideology that reality appears on a single plane and as composed of equivalent atoms'.¹ Through work such as his, which explores the pervasive implications of hierarchy and inequality in the Indian context, we become fully conscious of the degree to which our thought is shaped by a one-dimensional ontology. If we are aiming to understand the sense, to decode the logic or system, which underlies the nexus of mystical consciousness and social power, as those are conceived and expressed within cultures which attend to it, then we do need to consider the implications of differing epistemologies.

Insofar as the social sciences are disciplines of intellect it is natural that the dimensions of life and forms of logic most accessible to it are most easily subjected to analysis. So in attempting to unveil the logic of social and cultural systems we may also be seduced by the tendency to treat symbolism as an autonomous realm, then attempting to discern the pattern of relationships between symbols in cerebral terms. But Malinowski's injunctions, which underlie contemporary ethnography, include emphasis on the fact that:

...the foundations of magical belief and practice are not taken from the air, but are due to a number of experiences actually lived through, in which man receives the revelation of his power to attain the desired end.²

This axiom points us toward the new emphasis, I am inclined to say revival, of concern with praxis in contemporary social theory.³ In any event an emphasis on contextualising beliefs not only in their social but also in their personal and experiential contexts is especially pertinent if we are attempting to interpret the logic of the relationship between consciousness and power.

In the Javanese traditional context, and among those now still experiencing a continuity with it, 'knowledge' in its significant form is *'ngelmu'*. Though in Indonesia

¹ Dumont (1970).

² Malinowski, (1954, p 82).

³ For a discussion of the new practice' orientation within anthropology see Ortner, (1984, pp 144-157). The sense of praxis' which underlies my approach here is at a tangent from those discussed by Ortner, but remains related - in both contexts emphasis is shifted to what people do'.

'*ilmu*' now closely approximates Western senses of 'knowledge', the Javanese clearly refers to gnosis, to a mystical or spiritual form of knowledge which is not just intellectual but also intuitive. Another way of clarifying what is meant by '*nglemu*' is that it is in the end the whole body, and all organs within it, rather than just the mind that 'knows'. This sense of knowledge, rather than our own, underlies Javanese mystical theory not only of consciousness, but also of its relationship, which is essentially reflexive, to social and political power. '*Rasa*', my focus in this paper, is among other things the cognitive organ which, as Javanese mystics understand it, we use to 'know' the intuitive aspects of reality. It is in Javanese terms through intuitive experience and knowledge that people may sense the '*wahyu*', the charismatic glow, of a person of power.

The Javanese mystical idea of power may be unique in some of its particulars, but it is clearly also part of a wider pattern of belief. Wolters has recently suggested that one of the underlying patterns within Southeast Asian cultures may be the notion of 'men of prowess', of the existence of 'unequal souls' in Kirsch's terms.⁴ Errington's essay on 'embodied *sumange*' in Luwu' shows that in the Malay world the central concept of *semangat* is linked to mystical senses of power.⁵ Though there is little mention of it in these works, there is clearly a resonance between these 'ideas of power' and the concept of '*mana*', which entered the vocabulary of English after Codrington identified it in the Melanesian context. Anderson's treatment of 'The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture' is the definitive exposition of the theory, both explicitly and implicitly, which in Javanese terms links political expressions of power to magical and mystical cosmology.⁶ But in its stress on beliefs, and the way those contribute to conditioning of social actions, it remains possible within his terms to consider Javanese notions as simply another ideological formulation, different from ours but another gloss of 'the same reality'.

Anderson's essay extends on Weber's work in that he has clarified both the systematic coherence of the political theory implicit within Javanese tradition and the substantive differences between the underlying conceptions of power in traditional Java and the contemporary West. Weber himself had already highlighted the essential logic of charismatic modes of authority:

The holder of charisma seizes the task that is adequate for him and demands obedience and a following by virtue of his mission. His success determines whether he finds them. His charismatic claim breaks down if... his mission is not recognised by those to whom he feels he has been sent. If they

⁴ Wolters, (1982, pp 6-7).

⁵ Errington, (1983); on the centrality of the notion of *semangat*' within Malay thought Endicott, (1970). Also closely aligned to this school' of thought is Rosaldo, (1980). In her discussion of Ilongot society she speak of the sense her informants had that liget energy experienced in the heart, fluctuates through experience and constitutes a major focus of attention within the culture.

⁶ In Holt et. al. eds., Culture and Politics in Indonesia (1972).

recognise him, he is their master - so long as he knows how to maintain recognition through 'proving' himself.⁷

Weber's formulation, based in part on Chinese theories of the 'mandate of heaven', draws attention not only to the circularity of logic underlying this sense of 'supernaturally' bestowed power, but also to the fact that it reflects a linkage between leader and following which, in the ideal, is 'felt' on both sides.

The term 'charisma' has since entered popular vocabulary and Weber's explanation has been used as a way of outlining, in phenomenological terms, the manifestations of charisma. His concept has been criticised, in some quarters discounted, for lacking an explanation of the mechanism which links leader to follower within a charismatic system. In this essay I am suggesting that within the terms of *kejawen*, of traditional Javanist culture, the logic which underpins ideas of power is that of *rasa*. In Javanist terms '*rasa*' is not only a term applied to sensory experiences, leading to aesthetics, but also a cognitive organ or tool, used actively within mystical practices.

From the perspective of practicing mystics within the culture the 'ideas' of power within it are secondary reflections or statements which are logical and sensible in that they are reports of what may be experienced when *rasa* is activated as a tool within *ngelmu kabatosan*, 'the science of the spirit'. As mysticism underlies much of Javanese cultural theory, the perspective of those expert in it does offer grounds for uncovering the logic which may elude us at the ideological level. Though I am arguing that the 'logic of *rasa*' underlies central patterns of ideology and experience, this is not to say that *rasa* explains the whole orientation of the culture.

Important as it may be within the complex of the culture, it remains only an element. Given the resonance of the word intuition with popular cliches of a 'spiritual East', with romanticism about the qualities of traditional cultures, a number of caveats are essential. In the first place my argument does not require a particular ontological position. It is simply an attempt to explicate the significance of *rasa* in Javanese terms, as can be observed in social practice and through Javanese statements about it. Secondly it is crucial to distinguish between discussion of orientation and emphasis and conclusions about everyday realities. In arguing that Javanese culture encourages cultivation of intuition I am simply pointing to an orientation, not making conclusions about the degree to which intuitive sensitivity may be present in social practice. Finally, though I am dealing with the role of intuition in Java that is not meant to imply that the Javanese are either unique or typical.

I will build out of description of the way intuition is perceived, understood, and placed within one Javanese mystical movement. Through the Sumarah case my aim is to draw attention to 'the rules of *rasa*' or 'logic of intuition' as they apply within meditation practice and group interaction. Then I will turn to suggestion of some of the ways in which those same rules can be seen to underlie, and hence elucidate the logic of, general patterns of Javanese belief and action. The link between the case and its context does not rest on

⁷ In Gerth and Mills, (1946, p 246).

assumption that Sumarah is a perfect microcosm of the whole, nor even on suggestion that the sense of *rasa* within it is perfectly representative. It rests rather on the degree to which the logic and rules which we can observe within the case can be used as a key to unlocking the underlying logic of general patterns.

***Rasa* in Sumarah practice**

Within Indonesia there are literally hundreds of movements, ranging from informal local groups to formally organised national associations, which see themselves primarily as extensions of an indigenous tradition of spiritual wisdom, rather than as derivative of imported religious models. These mystical movements, generically termed *kepercayaan*' or *kebatinan*', are national in orientation to varying degrees, but most are primarily Javanese in both origin and composition. Sumarah is among the more prominent national organisations, one of the dozen or so most active at the national level. The Javanese word *sumarah*' simply means the 'state of total surrender' and it is a name not only for the organisation, but also for the practice which provides its focus.⁸

Sumarah was founded in the mid thirties in the court city of Yogyakarta by Sukinohartono. Together with his friends Suhardo and Sutadi he attracted a following of about five hundred by the end of the Japanese occupation. In the midst of the revolutionary fighting of the late forties the membership expanded to several thousand; at the end of that period it became formally organised under the leadership of Dr. Surono, with its centre still in Yogya. Under his leadership, until 1966, it grew to include roughly six thousand members throughout Java, with regional organisations centered in all of the major towns of the island. Since 1966 the organisation has been centered in Jakarta under the leadership of Drs. Arymurthy and Zahid Hussein and it currently has a membership of perhaps ten thousand.

The practice of *sujud* sumarah, as the meditation is called, is carried out both individually and in group meetings by a guide, or *pamong*. Individually members spend periods of time in special meditation' (*sujud khusus*) but they are also supposed to be integrating meditative awareness into their everyday lives. Members are socially invisible', as is the case with most Javanese movements, in the sense that they lead ordinary social lives, have no distinctive dress, and use no special symbols. Individual members are not bound by any outward rules and their participation is conditioned only by the degree to which they internalise, within their consciousness, the commitment to total surrender which, in principle at least, brings them together in the group.

Group meetings are held regularly, usually in the homes of people who act as guides or in those of organisational leaders. There are no special places associated with the practice, no particular buildings are especially appropriate for it, nor is there concern with

⁸ There has been very little published, which provides insight into practices within Javanese mysticism. General introductions to *Kebatinan*' can be found in Geertz, (1976); in Mulder, (1978); and to teachings in Hadiwijono,(1967). Full treatment of Sumarah history is in my thesis, (1980); Sumarah practice formed the focus for a separate thesis - see Howe, (1980).

sacred sites. The atmosphere of meetings is relaxed and informal, including extended discussion of practice mixed with periods of collective meditation led by the guide, or *pamong*. The guides have differing styles and approaches, but despite considerable variation the principles of Sumarah guidance are consistent. Although the individuals who serve as guides are called *pamong*, in principle the guidance is not from them, but through them, and only when the true function of guidance is activated by the right spiritual circumstance.

There is consistent emphasis within Sumarah on the fact that *pamong*' are not *gurus*'. The teaching' is a function only activated when the circumstances are right and not one that can be attached to the personality of the guide. As Arymurthy has said:

Duty as a guide, as a *pamong*, only happens in the instant that the task is given by *Hak* (truth). A person is a *pamong* only in that instant of duty, otherwise we only call him a *pamong* for administrative convenience. Whether he then actually performs as one or not depends on the functions that arise within him. Outside of that he has no special rights or authority over others.⁹

Even if expression of the Sumarah system of guidance has varied over time, differs from guide to guide, and can also be related to regional styles, in all cases a mechanism of 'contacting' or 'attunement' is part of the interaction.

In Sumarah it is axiomatic that the inner life flowers through introspection (*mawas diri*) and self correction, that no 'faith' in the authority of an external teaching or teacher is necessary, that the only significant verification of an external statement is the individual's direct recognition of its truth within their own conscious awareness. To quote Arymurthy again:

Within Sumarah a *pamong* does not announce himself as such. He becomes *pamong* through signs from the guide in which the reality of it is simultaneously obvious. A person could say a thousand times that he is a *pamong* and yet not be one. It cannot be faked. In spiritual things this is evident even if the person says nothing.¹⁰

Nevertheless, the understanding within the practice is that the guides, whether in leading group meditation or in responding to individual questions, are 'tuned' to the inner psychic condition of those they are leading. This is directly related to the notion that there

⁹ This statement of Arymurthy's was made in the context of a formal meeting in September 1973 in Surakarta. In Arymurthy's terms this statement, and the others by him which follow, came through reception of Hakiki, that is it has authority beyond that of personal knowledge. At the time of the meeting, with Western followers of the practice in Solo, I was interpreting. Subsequently I was asked to produce an English translation based on the tape recording of the session. My translation is reproduced in my Selected Sumarah Teachings (1977). This quote is from p.22

¹⁰ Stange, (1977, p.21).

are distinct levels of consciousness, that not all individuals are equally aware, and that some may be aware of the inner state of another person. The transmission of 'sumarah' is based on this sense of experiential contact rather than on a specific technique or ritual practice. The guides are emphatic in reminding people to take nothing on faith, but rather to 'test' within themselves whether a statement or suggestion is appropriate.

This mechanism was implicit within the very first exchange which led to the movement. After Sukino's individual experience, the revelation of Sumarah' (*wahyu Sumarah*) in 1935, he explored it with his longtime friend Suhardo. In Suhardo's subsequent description of the encounter he related that first he had spoken with Sukino, then experimented on his own. During his own meditation he felt the validity of Sukino's experience and so went back to him to check. According to the official Sumarah history, based on Suhardo's own recollection, their conversation went as follows:

Suhardo: Is this the correct way to surrender to God? (And then Suhardo practiced meditation.)

Sukino: Aha, you really can meditate correctly. Who taught you how?

Suhardo: I heard a voice from within saying, 'Sukino's way of worshipping God is correct. If you want to do the same then calm your senses and desires, center your mind and feeling in the heart, and repeat the name of God.' I did follow the advice from within and it genuinely did lead to calm and peaceful feelings.¹¹

Suhardo's narration clearly implied, though it drew no special attention to, the understanding that a spiritually advanced person may have the capacity to 'know' the inner state of another.

The general pattern of guidance within the first phase of Sumarah, up to 1949, followed the same pattern. Everyone who received instruction in the practice had explicit one-to-one corrective guidance, called *nyemak*, from a *pamong*. Practice has changed and nowadays guides make their comments more often in general terms, leaving it to the individuals present to assess whether a statement is specifically relevant to them or not. Within some groups the practice of one-to-one correction is still common, in others it is implicit, and in most of the branches of the organisation it is explicit at times. But from the Sumarah perspective it is important to emphasise that the capacity for contacting is something anyone can develop; it is not seen as the preserve of unique, special or gifted people. Instead it is understood as an extension or normal by-product of the meditation all members practice.

¹¹ The Indonesian version of Suhardo's explanation is: Saya mendengar suara batinku demikian: Sukino berbakti kepada Tuhan memakai cara (laku) yang benar. Kalau kau mau, tenangkanlah panca-indra dan nafasmu, kumpulkan cipta (angen-angen) dan rasamu, dudukkan di indraloka dengan dikir Nama (Asma) Tuhan.' Anjuran dari suara batinku itu saya jalankan dan ternyata membuat hatiku benar-benar menjadi tenang dan tenteram.' The above is recorded in Sejarah Paguyuban Sumarah 1935-1970 (1980, pp. 59-60).

The fact that contacting is related to normal practice is linked to one feature of Sumarah meditation that does distinguish it from many other practices: it emphasises openness to and reception of awareness of the environment, even in the initial stages of practice, rather than withdrawal from or exclusion of stimuli from 'outside' the individual. Although some members feel that Sumarah use of contacting is unique, most see it as simply a systematic cultivation of a faculty which is present within many traditions of spiritual practice.

Rasa is at once the key to individual entry into Sumarah meditation and the initial agent for the contacting through which guides lead people into meditation. In Indonesian the word '*rasa*' means 'feeling', referring to the physical sense of it and to emotions; in the more spiritually resonant Javanese it also means 'intuitive feeling'. *Rasa* is at once the substance, vibration, or quality of what is apprehended and the tool or organ which receives it. I will return to the spectrum of meanings associated with this Sanskrit term in Java later on, but for the moment will concentrate on the specific sense of it most relevant to Sumarah practice.

In this context the sense of *rasa* I am concerned with is that of the organ' or agent of perception, or if you like the 'function', of 'intuition'. Within Sumarah *rasa* is considered an organ or constituent of our psychology in precisely the same sense that thought is. In fact it is commonly said that 'mind' is the tool through which we register and process information received through the five senses from the 'outer world', *alam lahiriyah*, while *rasa* is the tool through which we apprehend inner realities, that is *alam batiniyah*.

Sumarah practice begins with relaxation of the physical body and with the stilling of the senses and thoughts. In itself the shifting of attention from outer events and thoughts to releasing the tensions within the physical body implies a shift from thought to feeling. Stillness of the senses and thoughts means, in Sumarah terms, not 'turning off', 'freezing', or 'repression' but rather an open and receptive state within which attention is not focused on sensory perceptions or thoughts. Instead attention', the point at which we are aware, is supposed to enter into *rasa* so that there is not simply increasing awareness of feeling but rather awareness through feeling. 'Feeling' in its turn may in the first instance mean awareness of physical sensation within the body, but that gross level *rasa* becomes progressively more subtle - it shades through inner physical sensation into awareness of the emotions and ultimately into *rasa sejati*, the absolute or true feeling which is itself mystical awareness of the fundamental vibration or energy within all life.¹²

¹²12 Dumont, (1979, p xxx).

More extended treatment of the concept is provided later in this paper. Howe (1980, pp. 71-72) also emphasises the significance of *rasa* within Sumarah. He says that The fundamental element in Javanese psychology is *rasa*, and it is probably the most difficult concept in the Javanese language ... (and) ... *Rasa* is the experiential context of human life ... (and) ... *Rasa Murni* is the feeling of feeling and as such does not constitute any particular affective response'.

The necessity of making the transition from 'thought centered' to 'feeling centered' awareness is repeatedly emphasised during meditation sessions. Sudarno Ong, one of the most active Sumarah *pamong* in Surakarta during the seventies, stressed that:

As we speak of all these things we need to be aware that none of them can be grasped concretely with the mind or senses. The closest we can get to picking up on them is with our intuitive feeling. As we are asking questions there is no use doing so simply to satisfy some mental curiosity. Our questions should be based on whatever concrete experience we are having in our meditation. Then as we ask it we need to be genuinely grappling with it inside ourself. In receiving answers we have to be following with our feeling so that we can experience rather than simply understand what is meant. Not only do we need to be understanding and experiencing, but we also need to be aware what we are experiencing so that it does not just pass right through us. The most important thing is to learn directly in your own consciousness so that we are not just noting down theoretical points but actually making the realisation ourselves.¹³

In somewhat different terms Arymurthy, then the national leader of the movement, explained:

Frequently we become tools of our own tools. Take the mind for example. We might have hopes which are useless so that then the whole self becomes oppressed by the mind. It is not enough just to know the mind, but we need to know how it functions within the whole. If you want to learn Sumarah then you have to do it with the whole self, to receive the impact of experience on the total framework of being. Unless you do that then the human being is becoming a tool of his own tool... Within the *sanubari* we have been referring to there is opportunity to calmly and clearly know your own identity. The point is that then aspects which are not good can be purified. We cannot cleanse ourself, but we can become purified through the guidance of *Hak*. This develops through the natural course of events. Purification only becomes possible as an experience when we are located in the *sanubari*... You have probably frequently heard *pamong*s speak of the *sanubari*!. It is just a term but there is no way to relate to where it really is unless we begin with entering the realm of meditation... here we use the word *dirasakan* meaning to feel the state rather than to understand it. To begin with the meditation has to be felt in much the same sense that we feel when we are physically enjoying something, listening with pleasure or eating tasty food.¹⁴

¹³ This conversation with Sudarno, in the context of a meditation session took place in Surakarta on December 11, 1973. This is a reconstruction recorded in my field journal on the following day.

¹⁴ Stange, (1977, pp.18-19).

The '*sanubari*' is also related to the chest area, within which the function of *rasa* is located. Within that lies the *kalbu*, the inner or esoteric heart which is the center of yet more highly refined spiritual awareness. Though *rasa* is the 'tool' or vehicle through which individuals enter into awareness beyond the mind and senses it is in the end seen only as a pathway toward a final awareness in which no distinctions between inner and outer or between one tool and another exist. It is a pathway through the fact that individuals direct their attention into *rasa*, becoming aware then of the blockages and resistance within their own make-up so that these can be released. According to Sumarah theory, as blockages are released there is increasing surrender or openness to the Absolute which is at once everything and nothing that can be 'known' in the ordinary sense. Most people within Sumarah use the term 'God', some avoid terms and speak only of 'union' and 'oneness'. In any event, and this is all that matters here, *rasa* is not the endpoint or object, even though awareness which subsumes it is fundamental as a step on the Sumarah path.

The 'processing' of individual awareness through Sumarah practice leads toward the condition in which it is possible to function as guide. The general understanding is that normal consciousness is dominated by an attention which is focused in thoughts, filled with attachment to the data received through the senses, and directed, for the most part subconsciously, by desires and emotions. With increasing stillness and receptivity of the thoughts and senses, through surrender, attention becomes more and more firmly rooted in *rasa*. If the practice reflects commitment, then this will mean not only a change within 'special meditations', but also an increasing awareness of *rasa*, and an increasing openness within everyday life.

Beyond the senses and thoughts there lies a 'cleaning' of internalised subconscious blockages, so that gradually perception is less filtered through subjective structures. As a person becomes open, as even inner blocks are released, he or she becomes increasingly conscious of precisely what information enters the sphere of awareness- it becomes possible to distinguish 'inner noise' from messages received. A *pamong*, or guide, is a person who is, at least when the function of guidance is activated, fully aware within *rasa* and clear enough in consciousness of what happens within his or her individual meditation to relate it to others. This is not an adequate definition of *pamong*, nor does it clarify the range of qualities of guidance, but it is sufficient in this context.

There are a number of analogies used within Sumarah to suggest how progress in individual meditative consciousness relates to the practice of guidance. Arymurthy has used the imagery of 'mirroring'. He suggested that it is as though in our normal awareness, our 'internal mirror' is clouded. As a result we benefit when facing a clear mirror because we can see ourself better, hence realising our inner limits so that we can release them. In explaining the process of guidance to Western followers of Sumarah in Solo Arymurthy clarified that:

Once this has happened, once you are relatively blank, you become like a mirror. You can see your own identity more clearly: that you are grey, or very black, or red, or that you are becoming rose. You can see it all yourself. When I say that you become like a mirror I mean that then you

become aware of your total identity. This means that functioning as a *pamong* is also directed within the self, that a *pamong* is headed in healthy directions internally. A mirror takes shape within which we can see our own reflection... What we can do is to give witness. Once the mirror within us has begun to clear enough so that we can see ourself, then when it is turned toward others they can see themselves reflected to whatever extent their own mirror has not cleared. If we do not have the use of our own mirror then it is as though we can borrow that of another. At the same time that other mirror does nothing except reflect. A *pamong* is only truly one when we see ourselves more clearly in his purity of consciousness. Ultimately those who make use of a *pamong's* guidance can cleanse themselves to the point that they can see with their own mirror. But while our own mirror remains scratched we can benefit from willingness to temporarily borrow the mirror of another. In any case it is the spirit rather than body of the *pamong* which provides the mirror.¹⁵

Sudarno suggested an analogy with the *gamelan* orchestra. He points out that if two identical *gamelan* are side-by-side and only one is played precisely the same notes will resonate on the other *gamelan*. The guide, in these terms, is the 'silent *gamelan*'; ordinary awareness a state of 'being played' which eliminates awareness of resonance. In the same vein, Joyosampoerno compares guides to finely tuned radio receivers. The radio waves are there to be received by anyone, but most tuners are either turned off (eg. people unaware of *rasa*) or confused by static (eg. too much inward noise or not enough sensitivity).

The analogies draw attention to several characteristics of *rasa* and guidance as they are understood within Sumarah. The mirroring image highlights the fact that even when experiencing guidance it is what the meditator sees for and of himself that increases awareness. The *gamelan* image clarifies what the guide must do to function as one. The radio analogy emphasises that the information is available to anyone and that the differences between people are simply questions of reception. In all three images it is clear that *rasa* is conceived as an organ present within all people even if only consciously developed in some. While the process of 'reading' another person's inner state in Sumarah guidance is at first glance a leap into the paranormal, the emphasis in these images and indeed in general Sumarah understanding is on the fact that it simply involves refinement, through conscious discipline, of an intuitive facility everyone has.

Attunement and authority in Sumarah

So far I have been focusing on individual awareness of *rasa* and the way that relates to meditation guidance. If we turn now to the principles which are related to the role of leadership and process of collective decision making, we see the same logic applied to a larger stage. On the surface the Sumarah organisation has been structured in the same way most modern organisations are. Ever since it was formally organised in 1950 it has had a constitution, clearly defined leadership and branch structures, conferences and congresses,

¹⁵ Stange, (1977, pp.21-22).

minutes, membership lists and most of the other trappings of formal' associations. At the same time leaders are supposed to function for the collective in very much the same way that guides function for the groups they lead in meditation. Collective decision making is based, insofar as practice approximates the ideal, on consensus achieved through group meditation - that is on what is confirmed through *rasa*, though once again this does not mean that *rasa*' is the source' of the decision.

From the inception of the organisation it has been emphasised that the basis for all important decisions must lie in *Hakiki*, that is in Truth. The Javanese word *hakiki*' derives from the Arabic *khak'*, meaning 'right' in the sense of privilege, and *haqiqa'*, which in Islamic terms refers to basic or absolute Truth, to what is incontrovertibly correct. Suhardo, the second of Sumarah's founders, confirmed that the Sumarah sense of *Hakiki* is identical to the *guru sejati*, the 'true teacher', and to the figure Dewaruci in Javanese mythology.¹⁶ It refers in other words to direct inner reception of Truth of the highest order. Constitutionally the highest authority in Sumarah lies in decisions of congress based on *Hak*.

In practice there are naturally difficulties recognising *Hak*. On the one hand it is accepted by everyone in the movement that individuals are of varying degrees of consciousness and that by implication some are more capable of receiving and recognising *Hak* than others. Conversely it is understood that *Hak* is only confirmed when it 'meshes' with collective experience during the attunement achieved through group meditation. Convergence of these two principles does help to explain some of the problems and tensions which have surfaced in organisational history. In any case, the confirmation that *Hak*' exists is meant to work in the same way that a *pamong*'s guidance of meditation does.

During discussion of the group decision making process with in the first congress of Sumarah in 1950 Dr. Surono, who became the first leader of the reformed movement, explained that:

Even if it is *Hakiki* it also has to be proven. It is up to us to experience the Truth in all these matters, not just to adopt suggestions on faith. We differ from religions, within which people accept God on faith and without knowledge. Even Sukino asks us for our agreement.¹⁷

Thus, though individuals, usually those of high spiritual standing, may be the receptors of *Hak*, only the collective could certify it as such.

Hakiki does not, in Sumarah terms, come from *rasa*, nor is *rasa* finally even the tool of awareness through which it is apprehended. Nevertheless the recognition of a fully harmonised feeling within *rasa* is one of the key indicators that a consensus based on *Hak* has been achieved. As a consequence it is understood that correct functioning of the organisation depends on a meditative atmosphere achieved both through group guided meditation and continuous awareness of *rasa* on the part of all present. This explains why

¹⁶ Interview with Suhardo in Yogya, (July, 1972).

¹⁷ In Soebagyo, (1951, p.38).

the frame for group meetings, including business sessions, is collective guided meditation. At points of doubt, deliberation, crisis, or division the group returns to deep meditation and apart from that everyone aims to remain centered in *rasa* and thereby 'tuned' to the 'collective sphere'.

Underlying this meditative approach is the conviction that the 'correct' decision, insofar as there is one, is implicit in the situation. If the context is one of division, then that is thought to reflect attachment to surface forces rather than surrender to divine will- which is itself of course understood to be unitary rather than divided. Ultimately there is conviction that God's will is actually being expressed through natural law within all events - men need only open themselves to align their awareness and actions fully with it. These convictions frame and in one sense explain Sumarah actions. But focus here lies on practices rather than on the beliefs they may be related to. The point is that exercising awareness of and receptivity within *rasa* is not only a key to Sumarah meditation but also a basis for organisational processes and finally an approach to everyday life.

So while the format of Sumarah meetings is defined on the surface by standard modern patterns of representation, regulation, and leadership, the process of decision making is meant to follow a logic which is only perceptible through *rasa*: the focus of attention is not exclusively intellectual. This does not mean that mental and critical facilities play no part in the proceedings. On the contrary, they are meant to 'speak for themselves' and this is implicit in the Sumarah understanding of consensus. Statements which offend reason are seen as automatically leading to 'division in feeling' as well. It is understood that people react spontaneously if they are being open. This is to speak of principles and in practice there is a tendency to repress criticism due to 'belief' that there ought to be unanimity. But if we leave aside deviations from principle, achievement of consensus, a verification of *Hak*, is seen as occurring when a statement or directive emerges from group meditation leaving the collective 'feeling' right.

It may be impossible to fully explain the dynamics of attunement within Sumarah, but it is possible to suggest the 'direction of attention' involved. What Sumarah people 'do' when centering in *rasa* is aptly suggested by thinking in terms of experiences we can relate to through our everyday life. Perhaps, while attentive to a tearful friend, we have noticed empathetic tears, stemming from sympathy rather than from any grief of our own. We may notice the difference between the atmosphere of an argumentative committee session and a spring celebration in a sun-flooded park. Surface events do not always correlate to inward qualities of feeling, but in case we can recall times we have been aware of registering feelings originating beyond ourselves. For the most part we notice them only in extreme situation, where it is as though they 'intrude' into our awareness rather than constituting a focus for it. Albeit imperfectly, we can grasp something of what it means to approach life through *rasa* if we imagine continuous awareness of this inner feeling and of the changes within it in response to the fields of our interaction. Sumarah practice implies, as one step on the spiritual path, exercising continuity of awareness within and refinement of sensitivity to this sphere of *rasa* .

If by this point it is clear what the role of *rasa* is within Sumarah meditation, and how it extends from individual practice into social situations, then we already have the basic point I want to build on. Before shifting to discussion of the ways in which this intuitive approach relates to general Javanese practices and ideas, there are several additional points to be drawn from Sumarah experience. These points are particularly useful in making the transition to the general level because practice of surrender which begins through *rasa* is explicit within Sumarah. As a result it also relates more explicitly than it does in other contexts to social patterns and historical evolution within the group.

From the micro level of individual practice we can extend first to the functioning of leadership within the movement and then to the relationship between the movement and its context - only then considering *rasa* in the general context of Javanese culture. Organisational leadership within Sumarah is not directly correlated to degrees of spiritual awareness. Nevertheless there is a close correspondence between the relationship of a *pamong* to those he is guiding in meditation and that of a leader, at any level, to those he is responsible to. The function of *pamong* is only genuinely activated when, among other things, there is a 'sphere' indicating contact in *rasa*. Once that pre-condition is met then it may be possible for the guide to speak on the basis of a direct link to the actual inner condition of others present. If that happens then it will be as though the guide is a receptor, highlighting forces which had been only subconscious in others. At the same time confirmation that the 'contact' is genuine depends on the practical relevance of what is said to those receiving guidance.

Similarly, the appropriateness of a leader can be, and within Sumarah is, tested by the degree to which he is tuned both to the inner condition of the collective and to the outer circumstances it relates to. When leaders are appropriate then they will be doing and articulating what feels right to the group. It was a confirmation of Arymurthy's leadership, for instance, when his guidance of the opening meditation at the 1973 conference touched on and clarified all of the major issues which had been preoccupying the branches.¹⁸ On the other hand, when leaders have had increasing concern with matters which do not concern, or are in conflict with, the corporate experience that has led to rejection. In the years leading up to replacement of Dr Suroso in 1966 the break between leadership and collective was clearly reflected in Suroso's unwillingness to even hold the meetings which would have 'tested' the *Hak* he claimed. To function properly a Sumarah leader is meant to be tuned to and speaking for the collective.¹⁹ While this could be said in one sense for any theory of representative leadership the implications here are different. In Sumarah the

¹⁸ This point is based on my participation in the 1973 Sumarah annual conference in Surakarta. I had been involved with the organisation intensively for two years. Immediately prior to the conference I completed visits to all of the regional centers, spending several weeks in each. During the visits I became aware of issues which preoccupied regional groups - issues differed from place to place, although some concerns were common I was therefore especially struck, during this opening meditation, by the degree to which and the way in which Arymurthy touched on all of them.

¹⁹ Further details of the problems which surfaced in the sixties can be found in my thesis.

underpinning is conviction in an immediacy of contact and directness of intuitive awareness that is not normally entertained.

Insofar as leaders have articulated what may have been latent within the collective then the source of action, leaving aside teleological questions, lies in the clarification of what already is' - not in innovation or expediency, though each of those is also given a place in Sumarah interpretation. Leaders are not so much pioneers, pointing the way to new ground, as 'focalisers'.²⁰ As such they are meant to merely crystallise and thereby raise consciousness of developments which have already been taking place.

This stance is especially evident in the way Sumarah leaders have spoken of the emergence of new phases in spiritual practice. There have been six distinct phases so far and in announcing them the leadership has generally aimed to draw attention to changes which have been related at once to the Javanese context and to the maturation of individual practice. The movement from one phase to another is presented as a sequence of evolutionary stages rather than as a shift in direction.

The changes, especially the depth of change within Sumarah, are fascinating. Two points about them are relevant here: the first having to do with the Sumarah interpretation of them, the second with the general relationship between changes within Sumarah and in its context. I cannot even summarise all of the data I am referring to here, but will simply refer to them.²¹ Significant changes in Sumarah organisational structure, after its origins in 1935, occurred in 1950 and 1966; distinct phases of spiritual practice are associated with 1935, 1949, 1956, 1974, and (less clearly to me) in the late seventies. There is no surprise in the fact that major organisational changes coincide with the attainment of national independence, the transition to Sukarno's Guided Democracy and the coup which introduced Suharto's New Order. It is striking, however, how thoroughly changes have ramified through the organisation, paralleling national changes profoundly rather than just at the surface levels of the movement.

Within Sumarah the interpretation of this parallelism is that the movement stands in precisely the same relationship to the nation as leaders within it do to the collective or *pamong* to those they guide: as a focaliser or receptor of unusual clarity which therefore throws into relief the murky or hidden realities around. Here we are simply moving up the scale from the microcosm of the individual through the group as a collective to the nation. Within the group it is thought that the degree to which, at any of these levels, a structure reflects its environment can be related in practical terms to how open it is to whatever is.²²

²⁰ Use of this term is drawn from the way it is used within the Findhorn community in Scotland, where precisely analogous principles are used. See David Spangler, (1977, pp. 173-177).

²¹ Changes constitute the major focus of my thesis, (1980).

²² 'Mysticism' and 'religion' interpenetrate but in this we may have a way of identifying different characteristic emphases. Within mystical styles of spirituality there is usually emphasis on the fact that all forms, including those of the movement or practice itself, are simply vehicles for or pathways to the ultimate; within the religious approach there is a

Since Sumarah defines itself by commitment to increasing openness its sense of union involves not only a remote and abstract absolute, but also a dissolution of the boundaries between people and thereby an increasing interpenetration between individual, collective, and society.

For my purposes, that is in drawing from the Sumarah case to make suggestions about Javanese culture, we can leave aside discussion of whether Sumarah in fact mirrors national events, or whether it does so more or less than other movements. We can ignore the question of whether leaders in Sumarah are actually attuned to the collective and there is no reason to be concerned with whether a *pamong* is actually able to know the inner state of another. All we need to note is that there is a consistent structure within those three relationships and that the interpretation within Sumarah links them all through a systematic understanding of the way consciousness relates to social interaction. The key to that structure lies in an approach to meditation through *rasa*, or intuitive feeling. It is to emphasise use of a different psychological facility in approaching both cognition in general and social life in particular. Sumarah people are not just interpreting reality through a different theory, they are cultivating *rasa* within their meditation and approaching interactions through it. While we might devote energy to fine analytical distinctions; they are refining and sharpening awareness of intuitive feeling.

***Rasa* in Javanist Theory**

Sumarah is profoundly rather than incidentally Javanese. It is unique only in the sense individuals are, or in the way particular villages might present variations in the general pattern of rural life. While this means we cannot assume that it is a perfect microcosm of the society, it also implies that we need not. The usefulness of the case lies in that within Sumarah there is an explicit and elaborate understanding of *rasa*. Through that we can draw out patterns which remain implicit within general thought and practice. In making this transition I will begin by considering the meanings attached to the term *rasa* both within other mystical movements and within the culture as a whole. Then I want to show how *rasa* is interlocked with other key ideas within Javanese culture. Finally I will extend to suggestion of how the logic which underlies Sumarah practice corresponds to traditional patterns of social relationship and political power.

The concept of *rasa* is especially potent in part because of the spectrum of meanings attached to it. Because it links the physical sense of 'taste' and 'touch' to emotions, the refined feeling of the heart, and the deepest mystical apprehension of the ultimate, it provides a continuum which links surface meanings anyone can relate to inner levels of experience which normally, at least within our context, appear discontinuous. It is at the same time central not only to Sumarah spiritual psychology, but also to Javanese mystical theory in general and through that it is related to Javanese perceptions of society and politics.

tendency to identify the ultimate with its manifestation through specific forms -whether doctrinal, personal, ritual, or corporate. While the latter may lead to resistance to change the former (insofar as practice reflects ideals) may be more open to it.

Gonda comments that the Javanese have combined the original Sanskrit meanings associated with *rasa*, (taste, flavour, essence, enjoyment, sentiment, disposition, meaning, etc.) and *rahasya*' (secret, mystery') within their use of the term *rasa*'. Javanese interpretation certainly does involve an emphasis different from that within Sanskrit, where *rasa*' is primarily aesthetic rather than psychological. Nevertheless there has been a remarkable continuity of interpretation extending from Sanskrit through Kawi and into contemporary Javanese usage. This continuity combines with the resonance of *rasa*' in Javanese language and thought to provide one measure of the degree to which the Javanese have interiorised Indian patterns of thought. In commenting on the use of the term within old Javanese texts Gonda clarifies both the varieties of usage and depth of meanings associated with it:

...it is not easy exactly to say what connotations were meant by these mystics when resorting to the favourite term *rasa*. It often served to translate the Arabic *sirr* secret, mystery', which refers to the most subtle and most hidden and latent elements in the human heart in which God is said to reside, the 'spot' where God and the soul are in contact ... In Javanese mystic texts this divine principle is also called *rasa*, but not the ordinary *rasa*, it is not the *rasa* (feeling) which we feel in our bodies, but the *rasa* which is felt in the heart. The clear and pure heart receives the supreme *rasa*, which is pure and without any defect ...(and)... On the one hand *suksma* and *rasa* are regarded as related, but not identical principles, on the other hand they may be interchanged or *suksma* is called the true *rasa*, the *rasa* of the body.²³

In the same context Gonda goes on to point out that in Javanese mysticism there has been a special emphasis on the heart, which is associated with *rasa* (from Sanskrit) but also with Sufi stress on the *qalb*, which in Javanese is '*kalbu*'.

If we trace back through the esoteric lore of Java, we can relate emphasis on the heart, and with it *rasa*, to the importance of Vishnu, as represented by the inclination of rulers such as Airlangga to be associated with him. This is not to suggest that 'paths of the heart', either in the form of Vishnu cults or Sufism, have been developed to the exclusion of others in Java. Of course there have been many different forms of mystical practice in Java. Although each cult or spiritual practice tends to emphasise particular occult centers of perception, referring here to those as they are understood within either Tantrism or Sufism, both of which frame Javanese understandings, each also carries awareness that the center it may emphasise is but part of a complex system. While we could identify a variety, even the full range, of possible emphases among Javanese spiritual paths, it is arguable that both historically, as reflected in texts such as the Dharmasunya, and in contemporary spiritual practice, that emphasis on the heart (whether as the esoteric locus of Vishnu, as *kalbu*, or as the locus of true *rasa*) is a characteristic of Javanese spirituality.²⁴

²³ Gonda, (1973, p. 256).

²⁴ On the Dharmasunya I am drawing from Forrester, (1968). This is a basis on which we could construct a useful comparative mysticism. While there is within Sufism

This emphasis, and its association with the same senses of *rasa* I have been detailing above, are represented clearly in the teachings and practices of contemporary Javanese mystics - and scholars dealing with the subject have not neglected to note it. One of the larger Javanese sects is called *Rasa Sejati*, or the absolute, pure, inner feeling'. Hardjanta, a leader of a Hindu sect in Surakarta, confirmed emphasis on the heart as a characteristic approach in Java.²⁵ In the teachings of Sapta Darma the radiance of God in man is called *rasa* or 'spirit' and its understanding of the network of inner psychic centers is called *tali rasa*, literally 'the rope of inner feeling'.²⁶ In Bratakesawa's teachings the *rasa djati* is the organ unique to man through which he can contact his essence.²⁷ Within Pangestu, as Hadiwijono puts it:

Rahsa Djati is not something organical, it is a definite sphere in the psychological life. It is also indicated as the essence of the emotional life. It is the entrance or the threshold to the immaterial possibility of being...²⁸

In his report, based on the understandings of his informant Pak Dwidjo, Weiss says the 'feeling of the heart' is called *rasa khodim*' and places it on the gradient of *rasa* leading to *rasa sejati*'. Pak Dwidjo immediately linked *rasa*' to *elmu rasa*', that is the science of intuition', and for him this was coterminous with *kebatinan*, or Javanese mysticism as a whole. At the same time he presented his theory that many psychic powers are extensions of *rasa sejati* and that if *rasa* is developed then there is no need to rely on tools of divination, such as the primbon.²⁹

Leaving aside questions of relative emphasis it is clear that Sumarah is not alone among Javanese mystical groups in attributing great significance to *rasa*. In their general interpretations of the Javanese world view, Clifford Geertz and Niels Mulder point to the significance of *rasa* within it. As Mulder puts it in a variety of places:

The Javanese high road to insight in reality is the trained and sensitive *rasa* (intuitive inner feeling). In mysticism, the essence of reality is grasped by the *rasa* and revealed in the quiet batin... It is only by training the *rasa* that man can bridge the distance to God' .³⁰

Mulder goes on to relate the Javanese emphasis on *rasa* to the principles of harmony, oneness, and even coincidence, which are expressed in Javanese social life.

an emphasis on the heart; within Zen or Taoism the stress falls on the navel. Different centers, within the body are given different emphasis by variant practices.

²⁵ Based on discussions with Hardjanta in Surakarta. He is the leader of a Javanese based association called Sadhar Mapan, and was previously a regional leader within the national structure of Hinduism. Details of his career are treated in Howell, (1977).

²⁶ The quote is from Hadiwijono (1967, p.165), but for the rest I am relying on instructions about the practice from Ibu Sri Pawenang in Yogyakarta (1972 and 1973).

²⁷ Hadiwijono (1967, p.194).

²⁸ Hadiwijono (1967, p 213).

²⁹ Weiss, (1977, pp.278 and 285-289).

³⁰ Mulder, (1976, pp.15 and 30).

In a similar vein, Geertz gives us an extremely useful outline of some of the many uses and permutations of *rasa*. He stresses the dual meanings of 'feeling' and 'meaning' and also points to its association with the heart. Although he provides an excellent statement, the emphasis on 'meaning' within it is at the expense of the more appropriate 'essence' and the term 'intuition' is unfortunately absent from his vocabulary. His greatest contribution on this point was to clarify that:

The three major foci of *prijaji* 'religious' life are etiquette, art, and mystical practice ... these factors are so fused as to make their separate consideration nearly meaningless ... The connecting link between all three, the common element in them all which ties them together and makes them but different modes of the same reality, is what the Javanese ... call *rasa* ... By taking *rasa* to mean both 'feeling' and 'meaning', the *prijaji* has been able to develop a phenomenological analysis of subjective experience to which everything else can be tied.³¹

He goes on to point out that the concept is used to link subjective experience and objective religious truth and to explain that through the emphasis on 'feeling' implied there is direct link between *rasa*, ultimate spiritual knowledge (in Javanese terms), and the quality of '*halus*' or extremely refined feelings cultivated through Javanese etiquette. While Geertz accurately, in my opinion, pinpoints the centrality of *rasa* within Javanese cosmology, while he shows great sensitivity to its permutations in mystical theory and the social etiquette it is bound to, the logic evident within Sumarah practice provides a basis for extension from his point.

***Rasa* and social relations**

The logic of *rasa* is the mechanism underlying 'the interpenetration of etiquette, art, and mystical practice'; it is the mechanism underlying the complex of Javanese ideas relating to the nature, manifestations, and ideals of power (*kasekten*) in the political realm. *Rasa* occupies a fundamental place within the Javanese map of spiritual consciousness, and that in turn is fundamentally related to notions of power and authority. In this context there is neither the possibility nor need to catalogue complexes of Javanese thought and action which relate to *rasa*. Instead my aim is to concentrate on just a few examples to identify the logic of *rasa* as a sub-structure underlying Javanese cosmology and actions. If the logic becomes apparent, then it will be possible to conclude that the fundamental rules we are dealing with are not simply those of a thought system, but rather extensions of perception resulting from practical cultivation of sensitivity to *rasa* as is suggested in the Sumarah example.

Within Javanese village society there is a consistent emphasis on harmony, peace, balance, and consensus. This is of course characteristic of peasant cultures in general, it is not unique to the Javanese case.³² Justus van der Kroef speaks of it in terms of a 'stasis-seeking mechanism', virtually an obsession with balance, one that has its natural counter in

³¹ Geertz, (1976, pp.238-239).

³² For instance see Wolf, (1965) or Redfield, (1956).

the prevalence of millenarian movements.³³ Geertz identifies the *selametan*, or communal feast, along with its associated offerings to the spirits as the basic ritual of rural society.³⁴ The word '*selamet*' means 'peace' or 'sometimes safety', and is closely paired with '*rukun*' or 'harmonious', as an ideal of village life.

These concepts are related to an emphasis on 'smoothness' in social relations, on the importance of cooperation (*gotong-royong*) within village enterprise, and on the ideal of consensus (*mufakat*) as a model for decision making. Individual behavior is guided in theory by the imperative to harmonise and collective decisions are meant to reflect achievement of a corporate union of wills which is supposed to be simply articulated, or brought to the surface, by the village head. Despite the degree to which these may be merely ideals, often in stark contrast with behavior, there can be no doubting that they are widely held and invoked as ideals, even by ordinary villagers.

At the national level the same ideas entered most forcefully into synthesis with other ideologies through Sukarno's political philosophy especially so in the period of Guided Democracy. Sukarno's thought is simply the most powerful and accessible example - there are many others with a similar bent and those who follow him in spirit remain numerous to the present. Sukarno referred actively to village values and sought to construct a national ideology which had an indigenous, for him mainly Javanese, basis. As this feature of his enterprise has been repeatedly outlined, even filtering into press coverage of Indonesia, only brief suggestions bear repeating here.³⁵

Consensus through deliberation (*musyawarah-mufakat*) was taken as an ideal to replace the notion of representative democracy through elections. Sukarno presented himself as the mouthpiece of the people' (*penyambung lidah rakyat*) implying that through his attunement to popular consciousness he spoke for the whole. The national motto of 'unity in diversity' (*bhinneka tunggal ika*), is in this context explicitly linked by many to the mystical sense that union lies in the realm beyond forms, just as is the parallel pronouncement that 'all religions lead to the same goal'. Whether in the statements of Sukarno and Suharto or in critiques of them, it is suggested that the fundamental basis of power lies in the '*wahyu*', the cosmic sanction which bestows both legitimacy and a spiritually charged authority.³⁶

The classical notion of the ruler held that the king's heart (*sanubari*) needed to be 'oceanic', embracing the realm so that his consciousness became a pure embodiment or reflection of the collective. Conversely, criticism becomes justified when it begins to seem that *pamrih*, selfish motive or self interest, rather than collective interest, guides government. These notions are still current, even contributing to the framing of dissent

³³ 'Javanese Messianic Expectations', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* V I (1958-59).

³⁴ Geertz, (1976, part one) on the abangan'; and on forms of village co-operation Koentjaraningrat, (1961).

³⁵ Geertz, (1971, ch.3); Anderson, (1972); Dahm, (1969); and many others.

³⁶ Anderson, (1972) and Moertono, (1968).

within Suharto's New Order.³⁷ The leader is supposed to have, and this is a closely related conception, 'keenly attuned inner feelings' -implying capacity to receive and register the qualities of sentiment moving through the public, so that direct consciousness rather than simply an intelligence system contributes to awareness of the kingdom.³⁸ Finally, explicit traditional ideology of kingship attributes higher qualities of spiritual awareness, in the end merging into ideas of incarnated deity to the ruler. The highest ideal of traditional kingship called for a consciousness through which rulers could demonstrate attunement both to the natural world, through the mediation of the ancestral spirit realm, and to the social world of the realm.³⁹

This emphasis on the spiritual consciousness of the ruler is directly related to the socio-political sensitivity of mystical men and movements. The structure of that relationship is clear in Anderson's discussion. Anderson points out, following Schrieke, that the prevalence of politicised mysticism has been viewed in Javanese society as a barometer, increasing incidence indicating growing imbalance and ill-health in the state. Conversely, if those who are thought to have spiritual awareness of a high order, and by direct correlation a high degree of actual attunement to the social realities of the time, are aligned with the ruler, then this is interpreted as an important confirmation that the wayhu indeed rests with those in power.⁴⁰

Insofar as the logic which is evident in Sumarah does underlie general Javanese beliefs, either in the case of the village ethos or in terms of ideologies of power, the implications are obvious. Mystical practice is precisely concerned with dissolution of ego, and in the Javanese case at least, with an increasing sensitivity of intuition which makes people directly aware of currents of energy, sentiment, or vibration beyond the ego.

³⁷ Criticisms of the Suharto regime are concentrated on its moral qualities. Incidents such as the Sawito affair of 1976 underline the significance the regime itself attaches to these forms of criticism. See Bouchier, (1984). Bouchier's analysis suggests that the mystical' aspects of the affair were magnified by the Government to discredit the challenge implied by it (p.7-8 and 94). I do not see an opposition but rather a convergence between the framing of dissent in cosmological and moral terms and the reality' or substance' of the political challenge - which is what his analysis implies. In terms of the point I am making in this paper it is in any event incidental whether the challenge was in substance moral' or political'. In either event the framing of the challenge and the Government's response confirm the existence of an idea of power which relates it to the presence or the absence of a cosmological mandate.

³⁸ The quote, to be a leader you must have keenly attuned inner feelings' (dadi pemimpin mono kudu duwe rasa rumangsa kang landep'), is from Horne, (1974, p.495). It is not incidental that this appears as her final illustration in defining rasa'.

³⁹ The classical discussion of kingship is Heine-Geldern, (1956).

⁴⁰ See Anderson (1972), and Schrieke (1957, pp 76-95). In general Schrieke emphasises succession as a basis of legitimacy, as opposed to the cosmological mandate; however in this section he deals with the ideal theory of royal power and the way that relates to protests which have been directed against rulers. He also points to the particular emphasis on Vishnu in Javanese ideals of royalty.

Whether as leaders, advisors, neutral people, or critics, mystics are thought to have direct access to and awareness of the actual conditions of individuals, the collective, and the natural world. Their power, because that is implicit in this quality of consciousness, is presented as a consequence of attunement to objective realities, an openness and clarity which hence allows in and registers events which remain confused or unclear to most. One paradox in this lies in the fact that it is precisely through transcendence of ego, self, and the concern for material gain that access to influence increases -this explains the Javanese preoccupation with *pamrih* in those exercising influence over others.

Finally, just as a village head or national leader is analogous, in the terms outlined above, to Sumarah *pamong* (a term which, not incidentally, is of course also used in the bureaucracy), the significance of individual mystics or their movements as 'barometers' is explained by the fact that they are believed to have not just an unusual consciousness of the ineffable, but also a particular clarity, as receptors, about the environment. Javanese kings were supposed to be *warana* just 'screens' registering neutrally; Sumarah leaders such as Sukino and Arymurthy apply the same concept to themselves.⁴¹ As 'receptors' they do not simply 'register', but also internalise and embody the forces around. So the *pamong* is meant to consciously experience what his follower does; the leader to feel precisely what is implicit in the collective; the collective to mirror the currents within society. Mystical union is once again conceived here as having practical implication - and it is this that underlies Javanese thought.

The Javanese conviction that there is a parallelism, even an identity, extending from microcosm (*jagad cilik*) through to macrocosm (*jagad gede*) becomes in this context a secondary reflection of practices of union cultivated through *rasa*; it does not remain simply a philosophical belief inherited from India and carried by tradition.⁴² The mirroring suggested between *pamong* and student, leader and group, or Sumarah and nation is of course precisely identical to that of ruler and realm. Each is explicitly linked, through the mediation of *rasa*, to meditative consciousness. The ideal ruler is then one who practices awareness attuned to the collective he rules - and as we would expect there are a variety of ways in which rulers are said to have, or according to traditions supposed to have, actively exercised meditation.⁴³ Insofar as the ideals are embodied then the understanding is that leaders have actually been aware of their environment, directly experiencing currents of feeling from the collective of those ruled.

Conviction in, and from the perspective of 'realised' mystics the actual experience of, the fundamentally unitary nature of reality is then reflected into the dimension of cosmologies and beliefs in the form of the idea that microcosm and macrocosm correspond. The underlying logic within Javanese cosmology is an expression of its

⁴¹ Moertono, (1968, p35) on *warana*' and kingship.

⁴² On the centrality of the notion of correspondence between microcosm and macrocosm see Heine-Geldern, (1956, p.3). As an element within the structure of Javanist ideology, this notion deserves more emphasis than it has generally been given.

⁴³ For example see Zoetmulder's discussion of Kertanagara's spiritual practices (1965).

experiential basis. If we suggest that Javanese have been shaped in their actions by their beliefs and leave it at that then our image is incomplete - the dialectic of belief and experience proceeds both ways. At a simpler level, we can observe in this logic a more practical bent than is normally associated with the Javanese world view. Within Sumarah the validity of a *pamong's* guidance or leaders *Hak* is tested by whether it strikes home' in the group. By implication the measure of a ruler's *wahyu* lies not simply in debates about hypothetical imponderables, but quite practically at the level of whether the leader does act on the basis of a recognised consensus, one that is spontaneous and rooted in well-being.

The practical implications of this suggestion are not confined to the dimensions of formal authority and power, but also extend to everyday social relations. While my focus here has been on the special sense of *rasa* which applies within Sumarah practice and mystical perceptions of power, I have also been suggesting that Javanese culture is generally characterised by an emphasis on intuitive modes of knowing and relating. The Javanese language is in itself an indication that this may be so, as fine distinctions in the realm of emotions and feeling contribute so much to its vocabulary, as the word *rasa'* itself has so many permutations.

If we are concerned with interpreting the nature of everyday social transactions in Java, awareness of the significance of *rasa* within them does provide a new angle for insight. Without understanding its significance we might conclude that the endless repetition of formulas within ordinary social discourse is a way of 'avoiding meaning'; once our attention is turned to *rasa* we can see that the transaction finds its substance not in words, but in the establishment of a harmonious 'feeling contact' between the parties. This observation, by shifting our attention from the surface forms to interpersonal transactions, will help us make more sense of bureaucratic attitudes, bargaining in the marketplace, or the content of interaction as guests are received in a home. Instead of concluding that discourse draws consciousness to the 'surface', as though devoid of content, we will see the locus of substance in communicative exchange at the level of contacts in intuitive feeling.

To conclude suggestively, and at the most general level, one of the implications extending from this argument is that we need to pay more attention to the cognitive and psychological differences of emphasis between cultures.⁴⁴ If we read cultural systems as primarily consisting of different ideological glosses on the same 'reality' then we have only noted part of the matter. Cultures clearly involve different glosses, different ideological formations which then condition or shape perception and behavior. At the same time, however, they may also 'direct attention' and awareness to different cognitive functions, to different aspects or dimensions of the exchanges involved in social discourse. Thus, as in this case, we may conclude that while specialised development of intuitive awareness may be an expertise of the few, even in Java, the culture as a whole also gives great emphasis to the intuitive dimensions of knowing and interaction.

⁴⁴ Here I am thinking of suggestions such as that of Ornstein, in (1975) that traditional Asian cultures give more emphasis to the intuitive mode' of awareness - a suggestion clearly convergent with mine.