The figure of pañji in Old Javanese sources
What is in a name?

JIŘÍ JÁKL

ABSTRACT
Literary and epigraphic references to the figure of pañji in Old Javanese texts are analysed, and contextualized with much better-known references to the figure of Pañji in Middle Javanese texts. A hypothesis is offered that Old Javanese term pañji is best rendered as “court-name”. It is argued that young boys from elite families obtained their familiar court-name (pañji) at the very onset of their career at the court, where they served as pages and attendants of the royal family. They were also trained in arms, religious lore, and arts. Being since their childhood close to the king, they were trusted persons, and some of them made careers as high-ranking court officials, such as Dāmuñ or Kanuruhan. Others, denoted ācārya, were trained as “masters of divine weapons”, Tantric ritual specialists, who were in charge of the so-called “divine weaponry” (diwyāstra), mantra-infused ordinary weapons, an arsenal well-known in Old and Middle Javanese texts. Vestiges of this ritual lore have survived in Java until modern times.

KEYWORDS
Pañji; Old Javanese texts; literary representations.

INTRODUCTION
The figure of Pañji and his narrative is rightly perceived to be one of the outstanding symbols of the rich Javanese culture, like wayang kulit or batik.¹ The

¹ I would like to thank Arlo Griffiths (EFEO, Lyon) for sharing with me his provisional edition and translation of the Sukhāmrta inscription. I am also grateful to two of my reviewers for their helpful comments that helped to improve the argument advanced in this study. I would also
Panji stories, written in the literary register known as Middle Javanese, were widely known in both Java and the Malay world as early as the fourteenth and fifteenth century CE (Braginsky 2004: 157; Vickers 2015). Ever since Rassers published his Panji-roman in 1922, scholars have maintained that Panji stories represent the original creative production of Javanese poets; some of the kidung poems about Pañji stand out as being among the highest achievements in Javanese literature (Poerbatjaraka 1940; Zoetmulder 1974). A number of scholars have linked the character of Pañji to different historical figures documented from pre-Islamic Java, but their efforts have never been conclusive. To give several examples, Poerbatjaraka (1931), based on his reading of the Smaradahana, has identified the Javanese King Kameśwara I (r. 1113-1130 CE) as the historical figure on whom the literary character of Pañji is based. Van Stein Callenfels (1921: 300-302) regarded the famous King Airlangga (r. 1019-1049 CE) as the prototype of the literary figure of Pañji, and Berg (1954) saw Hayam Wuruk (r. 1350-1389 CE) as the prototype of Pañji. In a series of her interesting studies, Kieven (2013, 2016, 2017) has suggested that, in Java of the Majapahit period in the fourteenth and fifteenth century CE, Pañji was a spiritual guide to the esoteric realm for pilgrims (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Depiction of a scene from the Panji story, at the Pendopo Terrace (1375 CE), south part, Panataran Temple: Panji and Candra Kirana have been united, and their union is witnessed by an ascetic (resi) and two nuns (bhikṣuṇī). (Photograph by Lydia Kieven, 2007).

I like to express my special thanks to Lydia Kieven (Köln), who kindly provided a photograph of Pañji (Figure 1).
Looking at the meaning of the name, Kieven (2017: 4) claims that “Panji” is actually only a title to denote a prince. Although I find the views about the ritual function of Panji important, I cannot fully subscribe to the idea that Panji is just a title to refer to a prince. In my rather meagre contribution to the debate about the genesis and function of the Panji-figure, my purpose is to abstract, analyse, and contextualize what appear to be disconnected gleanings from kakhawin poetry and Old Javanese epigraphy. Despite of being typically associated with the Middle Javanese literary tradition, the term pañji also makes a limited appearance in Old Javanese texts. Consisting of only a few scattered literary vignettes and a handful of attestations in inscriptions, this body of evidence has been considered irrelevant to the figure of Pañji, the “Crown Prince of Koripan”, and has therefore largely escaped the attention of scholars working on the topic. It is hoped that the Old Javanese evidence offered here can inspire other scholars to look at possible parallels between Old and Middle Javanese evidence for the figure of pañji/Pañji.

Old Javanese Literary Evidence: The Figure of Pañji and Its Martial and Erotic Associations

Scholars of Old Javanese literature have long been aware of the occurrence of the term pañji in Old Javanese literature, where it is found as early as in the ninth or tenth century CE. Let me begin by quoting a gloss on the term pañji provided by Zoetmulder (1982: 1270) in his influential Old Javanese-English dictionary:

name, title; used before a proper name, often in the form (m)apañji. Frequent in kidungs, with or without following proper name (sira Pañji, sira pañjy Amalatrasmi) to denote the crown prince of Koripan. Apañji app. also denotes an official in the kraton of a rank below that of the pamêgêt. (Bhomântaka 81.29).

Zoetmulder’s interpretation, which covers both Old and Middle Javanese meanings of the term, has remained unchallenged: scholars of Old Javanese usually leave the term pañji untranslanted, taking it either as a personal name or title. Teeuw and Robson (2005: 29) understand mapañji madaharsa, the name of a ruler who sponsored the anonymous author of the Bhomântaka, a kakhawin composed in the late-twelfth century CE, to be a personal name, rendering it “Mapañji Madaharsa”. Robson (2015: 751) has recently claimed that the Old Javanese form mapañji refers to “a title for high nobility, found in literature and also in inscriptions as early as the 10th century”.

In a charming vignette in the Bhomântaka, noted by Zoetmulder (1982: 1270) in his gloss quoted above, pañji denotes one of the ranks of the men serving Kršña, who is depicted in the text as an aging king. Although the scene is set in mytho-poetical time-space, the text is thoroughly informed by

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2 In this article I have not discussed the term pañji attested in a number of Balinese inscriptions, in which it seems to refer to the repayment of a debt or another form of financial/monetary transaction (Zoetmulder 1982: 1271).
the socio-political lore of ancient Java and Old Javanese military terminology, in particular, making the Bhomāntaka a valuable source for our knowledge of pre-Islamic Java. The men designated pañji seem to have been part of the military establishment of Kṛṣṇa’s court, and the author depicts them at the moment of military review held before the men depart for the war against Bhoma, the king of the asuras. Reviewed by the king, under the command of their military leaders, pañjis display their martial skill at the palace square, in the hope of receiving promotion in the court hierarchy. Let me quote from the Old Javanese text and excellent translation of this passage in the edition prepared by Teeuw and Robson (2005):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{wāhu mapañji-pañji karikāmalar apamagāta} \\
\text{saiñjata karua tuṅgul alasah minar adulur āden} \\
\text{bhāwa nīkā n umundur i talasnya mapulih abanāt} \\
\text{yar mapulih wuwusnya ri patuṅgul ika cina-cinah}^3
\end{align*}
\]

Recently of pañji rank, were they hoping to become a pamagot?
With their weapons as well as flags hanging limply, they stepped aside and joined in having a rest;
Their manner of acting was to withdraw and after that to make a quick comeback;
When they were particular in their words to the flag-bearers, they were in high spirit.\(^4\)

We have seen above that Zoetmulder (1982: 1270) has noted the importance of this passage, reading it as evidence that (ma)pañji denoted “an official in the kraton of a rank below that of the pamēgēt”. What was the function and social standing of the pamagot in ancient Java? How can we possibly learn more from this interesting vignette? In the preceding Stanza 81.28, it is made clear that the pañjis were part of ‘a throng of taṇḍas, exercising there with close attention’ (taṇḍa mākrap irikāṇulah anīṇat-iṇat). I have argued elsewhere that the men denoted taṇḍa were court-based, active combatants, who led troops of their own followers and were the backbone of the military expansion of Javanese states (Jákl 2019). Interestingly it is also an attribute of a war-flag, the emblem of different bands of pañjis in the passage in the Bhomāntaka quoted above: a war-flag or colour is also typically associated with taṇḍas (Jákl 2019); personal flags could have marked pañjis as combatants. It is clear that pañjis in twelfth-century Java were part of a court (military) establishment consisting of the men generally known as taṇḍas. The court-rank pamagot was the designation of high-ranking officials, whose tasks entailed judicial duties. However, it also seems that some of them were recruited from the court military establishment, and could have begun their career as soldiers.\(^5\) Zoetmulder (1982: 1132) glosses pamagot as “a person invested with a high office or rank at court”. Barrett

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3 Bhomāntaka 81.29. Old Javanese text taken from Teeuw and Robson (2005: 440).
4 Teeuw and Robson (2005: 441).
5 The military training of pamagots is mentioned in Bhomāntaka 82.39.
Jones (1984: 102), based on the study of Van Naerssen (1933), states that “in the earliest inscriptions the word had the meaning of ‘notable’ and later came to mean ‘expert’ or ‘arbiter’”.

One active military function of the men known as (ma)pañji can actually be traced to the ninth or tenth century CE; a figure denoted pañji is mentioned in an interesting passage in the Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa, a kakawin composed between the second half of the ninth century and the beginning of the tenth century CE. Before I quote Stanza 25.85 in which a pañji is mentioned as a metaphor, let me provide a brief textual context of this passage. One of the young maidens sporting on the bank of the river Sarayū is gathering the red blossoms of the palāśa trees. The bright colour of the blossoms reminds the anonymous author of the kakawin of ‘the hearts of those overcome by passion, stabbed by Manmatha’6 (hati saṅ sarāga tinawak niraṅ manmatha).” Apart from the blossoms of the palāśa trees, young girls are using the pollen of the pandan plants ‘to serve as their powder’ (pinakapupur).” They also collect petals ‘and wind them around their index-fingers to serve as a flower-offering’ (wilatakãna rikan dūwa n pakasokar).” There is one girl, who fashions śrīgadiṅ blossoms into a garland and uses campaka flowers to make her bracelet.” Like the other girls, she seems to be preparing herself for the worship of Kāma, the god of love. At the same time, this girl tries to tempt young ascetics who are spying on the group of young girls, hiding themselves behind the trees growing along the bank of the river. Most interestingly, the girl in question suddenly begins to sway her head agitatedly, acting like a pañji:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{pakatajug wuṇa jaṅgit agoṅjutan} \\
\text{nururakōn sari niṅ saruṇī hulu} \\
\text{puji mapañji mapiñjaṅ meṅjuha} \\
\text{jaga ta saṅ tapa denya maṅel kumōl}^{12}
\end{align*}
\]

6 Manmatha is one of the names of Kāma, the god of love.
7 Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa 25.82.
8 Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa 25.83.
9 Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa 25.83.
10 Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa 25.84.
11 Admittedly, mapiñjaṅ is a difficult term. Zoetmulder (1982: 1364) marks the word with a question mark, adding that Balinese interlinear commentaries on this word insert matenaten (‘with locks of hair in front of the ears’). Robson (2015: 733) renders the form mapiñjaṅa ‘she would toss her head’.
12 Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa 25.85. Old Javanese text taken from Van der Molen (2015: 591).
The enchanted *jaṅgit* flowers\(^{13}\) serve as a *tajug*-crown,\(^{14}\) swaying up and down, Making the pollen of the *saruni* fall on her head; Proud, acting as a *pañji*, she tosses the long locks of her hair agitatedly, To be sure that the ascetics will find it hard to restrain themselves.

Zoetmulder (1982: 1271) was perplexed by the meaning of *mapañji* in this stanza, and marked the passage as “unclear”. Robson (2015: 751) has noted in the commentary to his translation of the *Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa* that the word *mapañji* in stanza 25.85 “has nothing to do with the Pañji story (SS)”. In my view, we should not dismiss the possibility that there is a certain relationship between the *pañji*-figure enacted by the girl in this stanza and the Pañji hero known from Middle Javanese literature. Firstly, the passage is framed in the context of the worship of Kāma, who was an object of devotion in ancient Java, as we gather from a number of scattered references in Old Javanese *kakawins*, especially the *Smaradahana* (Poerbatjaraka 1931). Secondly, the figure of *pañji* enacted by the girl must have been pretty familiar to the court audience for whom the *Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa* was composed. In Stanza 25.80 the girls ‘come to test and inflame those who have only recently become naked ascetics’ (*mamarīkṣa gumala-galak saṅ wahu-wahu lagna*).\(^{15}\) The naked mendicants are still very young because they are designated by the Sanskrit loanword *taruṇa* (‘young unmarried man’), as we gather from Stanza 25.81. The term *taruṇa* is also commonly used in Old Javanese to denote young, unmarried warriors, men who still have to prove their martial skills.\(^{16}\) A *pañji* in question must therefore be a young man, who is either performing a war-dance or engaging in a mock-attack. The frantic swaying of the head and wildly tossing the long hair enacted by the girl in the stanza quoted above was typical of the martial behaviour of Javanese warriors, and similar displays of prowess accompanied attacks by Javanese soldiers as late as in the seventeenth century, when it was observed and recorded as remarkable by the Dutch officers (Charney 2004).

\(^{13}\) The flower denoted *wuṇa jaṅgit*, which is otherwise unknown in Old Javanese texts, does not seem to refer to a specific biological species; rather, it was a kind of “magically enchanted” bouquet, composed of a number of flower species, including *saruni* (*Pyrethrum* and *Wollastonia*), as we gather from the second line of Stanza 25.85. The *śrīgaḍiṇa* and *campaka* blooms, mentioned in the previous Stanza 25.84, also seem to be part of this enchanted bouquet. Zoetmulder (1982: 727) has noted that a related Old Javanese term, *jaṅgitan*, “seems to be some kind of harm (defect? disease?) caused by the practice of magic (*majajanggit*) to another person”. We are probably not far wrong if we regard *wuṇa jaṅgit* as a kind of enchanted crown made of a garland of flowers, which had some function in the war rituals discussed in the second part of this article. Compare also the Modern Javanese word *anggit/janggitan* which denotes ‘devil, imp’ (Robson and Wibisono 2002: 295).

\(^{14}\) For a not entirely innocent *tajug* garland, compare *Ghaṭotkacāśraya* 5.7 magic (Robson 2016: 52-53), in which the poet, referring to the dress of Princess Kṣiti Sundāri, poses a rhetorical question ‘But who of course would dare to look at her, unless insisting on bringing a curse upon himself?’ (*ndah syapa wānja rakwa mulata sīrīn waśa panambhawānja tulaha*).

\(^{15}\) Their erotic display seems to have been a complete success, as we gather from Stanza 25.81, in which we learn that the young ascetics ‘are defeated, their knees quaking and weak and they are filled with passion’ (*alah tūrnya kumār akwa kwa ya rināgan*).

\(^{16}\) See, for example, *Arjunavivāha* 23.9; *Bhāratayuddha* 13.29; *Sutasoma* 86.6.
Another interesting detail indicating the martial display typical of the category of pañji warriors and its ritual/magical associations is the use of “enchanted flowers”, a kind of amulet-like headdress or garland. We know that in ancient Java young warriors especially wore flowers stuck in their long hair or a flower-crown on their head when they departed for the battle. Elsewhere (Jákl 2016), I have demonstrated that the men denoted waragaṅ (‘young champions’, ‘young front-liners’), known in Old Javanese texts for their combat strategy of launching amuck-like attacks, were associated in particular with a highly ritualized display of dress and weapons. To give one example, in the Bhomāntaka some of the young waragaṅ warriors are ‘determined to do their duty on the battle-field, the flowers stuck in their kura-kura crowns’ (amriha riṅ tōgal saha sākar haneṅ kura-kura).\(^{17}\)

It is also possible that Stanza 25.85, in which the girl pretends to act as a pañji, is meant as an allusion to a practice of ritual cross-dressing. Hooykaas (1959: 689-691) has drawn attention to the scene of the ritual wedding dance (pulir) in which Raden Inu performs the bride’s part, while Candra Kirana performs the part of the bridegroom. Recently, Kieven (2017: 6) has suggested “the final union, which is depicted in romantic and erotic ways, as a means of esoteric path of achieving union with the Divine. This is known as a crucial aspect in Old Javanese kakawin poetry”. Having discussed these literary vignettes, let me now turn to the epigraphic evidence and offer a suggestion about how to interpret Old Javanese term pañji.

**Old Javanese Epigraphical Evidence: The Figure of Pañji and Its Ritual Associations**

The names of at least four categories of persons documented in Old Javanese inscriptions and literature are preceded by the term (ma)pañji: high-ranking court officials, Javanese kings, spiritual teachers or priests, and surprisingly, some epic figures. All of these men were in the initial stages of their careers as members of the court, in which they served as “pages”. It seems to me that their pañji appellation is actually a kind of “court-name”, initially used for young boys who entered the court (military) establishment at the moment at which they received their court-name; some of them must have continued to use it throughout their careers. Among the highest ranking court officials, Dāmuṅ and Kanuruhan are those who most commonly bear the pañji court-name.\(^{18}\) Several Javanese kings are also known by their pañji court-name: the king (Śrī Mahārāja) who issued the Banjar Arum inscription in 1052 CE, bears the court-name (mapañji) Garasakan.\(^{19}\) In Ghaṭotkacāśraya 1.4, mapañji Madaharṣa refers to King Jayākṛta mentioned in Stanza 1.3, who is, according to Robson

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\(^{17}\) Bhomāntaka 82.2.

\(^{18}\) For Dāmuṅ mapañji Wipakṣa, see Oud-Javaansche Oorkonden / OJO 79 (2a), issued in 1269 CE in Brandes (1913: 183). For Kanuruhan mapañji Maṇḍala, see OJO 70, issued in 1136 CE in Brandes (2013: 143); for Kanuruhan mapañji Anurida, see Penampihan inscription (2a.1-2), issued in 1269 CE in Brandes (2013: 127).

\(^{19}\) Boechari (2012).
Kṛtajaya, the last king of the Kaḍiri period who died in 1222 CE. The famous Javanese King Jayabhaya (r. 1135-57) is known to historians under his pañji-name (hence Jayabhaya), which is mentioned, for example, in the Ngantang inscription, issued by him in 1135 CE (Brandes 1913: 155).

The most interesting category of the figures bearing the pañji court-name, however, are the men denoted ācārya (‘spiritual guide, spiritual teacher’). This function immediately reminds us of Pañji as a Majapahit spiritual guide to pilgrims, the interpretation proposed by Kieven (2013). A man called ṭaṅg ācārya (‘the honourable spiritual guide’) Śiwanātha, bearing the court-name (mapaṇji) Tanutama, is mentioned in the Penampihan inscription, issued in 1269 CE.

An important source which casts more light on our knowledge of the function and social status of the figure known as pañji in ancient Java is the Sukhāmṛta inscription, issued in 1296 CE by King Kṛtarjasa (r. 1293-1309), the first king of Majapahit, for the benefit of a person called Pu Kapat, who was given the privilege of holding the freehold (sīma) of his village of Sukhāmṛta. This long inscription actually mentions a couple of figures who bear the court-name (pañji) but here I shall focus on the recipient of the charter, Pu Kapat.

The document gives us rare insight into the court ranking system, detailing the career of Pu Kapat, who obviously began his career as a member of the court-establishment as a “page”:

\[
\text{hana pva saṅ apaṇji pati-pati sākṣāt vuruk de bhaṭāra śrī kṛtanagara satata saṅkan rarai tan sah ri pādapithanira maparināmāṅintiri makāvaśāna dmuṅ ri liṇa bhaṭāra śrī kṛtanagara pva}
\]

As for the one who bore the court-name (pañji) Pati-Pati, he was clearly the beloved page of Lord Śrī Kṛtanagara; from childhood never separated from His [Kṛtanagara’s] footstool, gradually rising in the court ranking-system, finally holding the function of Dāmuṅ at the death of Lord Śrī Kṛtanagara.

Male members of Javanese noble families seem to have entered the court as young boys, and were trained in arms as well as in the arts, such as music and dance. This view is strengthened at another place in the Sukhāmṛta inscription, where we learn that Pu Kapat – still a young man known under his court-name Pati-Pati – actively followed his Lord, King Kṛtanagara, to the war(s) against his enemies. The military campaign is described in graphic detail:

\[\text{OJO 68 (1a.4).}\]
\[\text{Panampihan inscription (2a.7).}\]
\[\text{In citing the Sukhāmṛta inscription, I have made use of a provisional edition and translation kindly shared by Arlo Griffiths, but have modified the latter on points important to the argument presented here.}\]
\[\text{Sukhāmṛta inscription (Va.6-Vb.2).}\]
Tan kantun ta sañ apañji pati-pati tka pva sirerika ntu teki kadevātmakanira kavus ŋas-ňson tekān śatra tan pasara ekalomānipāta tan rumurvakān vulu salambio qātina kevala paravaša hantu vadvany katurya hinir ānak rabinyy inalap rājadryanyā²⁴

The one who bears the court-name Pati-Pati was not left behind. When they reached the place [of the enemy], the divine nature [of the king] manifested itself: completely subdued and shivering with fear, the enemies were seized by terror, unable to make even a single hair [of the king’s men] fall. They found themselves completely overpowered/vanquished: their military troops were crushed, the kings taken captive; their children and wives were led away [as slaves], the royal property was confiscated.

At another place in the inscription we learn more details about Pu Kapat’s career, including the biography of his father:

hana pva sañ apañji pati-pati inanugrahan ta kumalirana pañji nin rāma mapañjyā pati-pati ndān rāma sañ apañji pati-pati sira ta bhujāṅga śaivapakṣa bhairavabrata mapusapapāta dañ ācāryāstrārāja mapañji pati-pati²⁵

As for the one with the court-name Pati-Pati, he was granted the privilege of inheriting the court-name of his father, so that he [too] would bear the court-name Pati-Pati, for the father of the one with the court-name Pati-Pati was a bhujāṅga-priest of the Śaiva persuasion, of the Bhairava vow, who had a consecration name “Honourable Master of Divine Weapons”, [and] a court-name Pati-Pati.

This passage makes it clear that the court-name (pañji) could be inherited in a family line in ancient Java. It also indicates what might have been the principal task of those spiritual guides/priests who bore the pañji court-name: his consecration name ‘Master of Divine Weapons’ (ācāryāstrājā), plus the fact that the man is associated with the cult of Bhairava would indicate that his duty lay in the field of war rituals. Magical empowerment of troops, as well as rituals to achieve the magical subjugation of the enemy, were part and parcel of ancient warfare in pre-modern Southeast Asia (Quaritch Wales 1952; Charney 2004; De Grave 2014). Old Javanese sources are particularly rich in this lore and the so-called ‘divine weapons’ (astra), regular weapons (such as bows and spears) imbued with the supernatural power (śakti), figure prominently in the arsenal of epic heroes and of Javanese mortals until the early-modern times (Jākl 2012).

Ever since Poerbatjaraka (1926) and Berg (1954) analysed Stanza 36.2 in the Arjunawiwaha, a kakawin composed by Mpu Kaṅwa in the first half of the eleventh century, they established the close associations between Old Javanese kawi, a figure usually interpreted rather simplistically as a ‘poet’, and the business of war. In Stanza 36.2, the very last stanza of the text, we find a curious reference to Mpu Kaṅwa, ‘who is excited, as he is now preparing for a military campaign, attending the king’ (bhṛntāpan tāhār anharap samarakārya

²⁴ Sukhāmṛta inscription (VIb.4-6).
²⁵ Sukhāmṛta inscription (VIIIa.1-3).
maṇirinī haji). What was the task of the “poet” in the war waged by his lord? Berg (1938, 1953) has envisaged Old Javanese kawi as a “priest of literary magic” (Dutch: priester van de literaire magic), who, by manipulating historical data, fortified the “magic energy” of the king, his patron (1953: 117). Other scholars, such as Zoetmulder (1974: 179), who speaks about the “literary yoga”, have only partially accepted the views proposed by Berg. Yet, there is a common consensus that the process of writing kakawins in ancient Java entailed a spiritual aspect. Although this is not the place to discuss the function of the Old Javanese kawi in detail, it is clear that he was knowledgeable in the wielding of “divine weapons”, and had access to the mantras used to activate this supernatural arsenal.

It seems obvious that the ritual specialists entrusted with this arsenal and mantras to activate divine weapons had been based since their early childhood at the court as “pages” who could be trusted by the king and were trained in both the weaponry and the scriptures (aji) containing mantras to transform regular weapons into a divine arsenal. Another interesting reference to a kawi who bore a pañji court-name is found in the Deśawarṇaṇa, a kakawin composed by Mpu Prapañca in 1365 CE. In Stanza 25.2 we encounter him among the distinguished persons who welcome King Hayam Wuruk to Patukaṇan, where he spent several days of his “pleasure trip”, accepting tributary payment and gifts from his subjects. The kawi in question is said to be a Śaiwa, bearing the court-name (mapaνji) Mapaνji Sāntara (apaνji mapaνji sāntara), ‘learned in the scriptures and a knowledgeable kawi’ (widagdheṅ āgama wruh kawi).Several scholars have commented on what looks like a reduplicated form apaνji mapaνji; Robson (1995: 112) notes that apaνji mapaνji ‘seems double’ and offers an explanation by the way of question: “Is the former a category and the latter a title, or was the poet a bit confused about the names?” I can only add that Mapaνji Sāntara seems to be a court-name of the poet.

Finally, I would like to discuss the references to pañji in the Sumanasāntaka, a kakawin composed by Mpu Monaguṇa around 1200 CE and the only Old Javanese text in which pañji refers to the crown prince, a social and political role typically associated with the figure of Pañji in Middle Javanese literature. As already noted by Robson (1983: 305), there are only two places in the Sumanasāntaka where Old Javanese pañji clearly refers to the crown prince. The first passage is found in Stanza 7.22, in which the sage Trṇawindu informs the dying divine nymph Harini that in her next rebirth she will marry a mortal, Prince Aja, who in his previous life was her (divine) husband. The passage implies a sexual bond established between the mortal figure of pañji and a heavenly nymph. Let me quote from the Old Javanese text and its translation from the recently published edition prepared by Worsley and his colleagues:

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26 Deśawarṇaṇa 25.2.
Your husband in a former life has become a handsome mortal born of the Sun dynasty.

They say that King Raghu has a child who, in his own image, is renowned and famed in other kingdoms.

Crown Prince Aja, an archer, young and the ornament of the Raghu’s kingdom, has not yet suffered the pains of love.28

The second person bearing the pañji appellation (apañji) which can be rendered “Crown Prince” is Daśaratha, a famous hero in the Mahābhārata epic, who is introduced in Sumanasāntaka 162.3 as ‘the only child’ (mānak tuṅgal) of Aja. His birth, too, was prophesized by the sage Trṇawindu, as we can gather from Stanza 7.26. It might be construed as significant that, in the Sumanasāntaka, both Aja and Daśaratha are categorized as ‘archers’ and both of them were experts in handling divine weapons.

The complex relations between the figures known from Old Javanese kakawins and their counterparts attested in Middle Javanese kidungs are not limited to the problem of pañji/Pañji. Teeuw and Robson (2005: 621) have detected another interesting parallel in an enigmatic figure called pisaṅan in the Bhomāntaka and the well-known literary figure Ken Pisangan attested to in a number of Middle Javanese Panji stories. The vignette in the Bhomāntaka is part of a discussion among the servants of Princess Indumati. The ladies learn from the divine nymph Tillotamā that Princess Indumati has had sex with Prince Aja, who ‘has arrived here, and has already slept with the princess’ (prāpti ike tulas aturū lawan suputri), according to Tillotamā’s succinct report in Stanza 28.6. Eager to know more about the identity of Aja, the ladies engage in a lively conversation about the prince and his possible relations to Princess Indumati. One of the maids (paricārikā), whose name is not disclosed in the text, gives an account of her dream in which she saw Indumati entwined with a big snake, apparently a hint of her secret love affair:

The princess, you know, had the moon beside her;
A big snake came and wound itself around her –
This is evidently what will happen to her: the result is quick and plain.29

In Sanzas 28.9-10, the maid explains why she has decided to disclose the dream, hinting at her ambitions to become a pisaṅan, a court figure otherwise completely unknown in Old Javanese literature:

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27 Sumanasāntaka 7.22abc. Old Javanese text taken from Worsley et al. (2013: 82).
28 Worsley et al. (2013: 83).
29 Bhomāntaka 28.8bcd. Translation is that of Teeuw and Robson (2005: 223).
My nature is to say something pleasant about the gentleman – providing, of course, that it is her loved one. And in this way, she will be grateful for how I have served her in the past. And my ambition is to be made a pisañan, as this is very wonderful.  

Teeuw and Robson (2005: 621), the editors of the Bhomāntaka, have noted in their commentary on the text that the maid “may be referring to a particular position in the service, as Ken Pisangan is one of the princess’s maidservants in many Pañji stories, second in rank to Ken Bayan”. In my view, the pun and allusions found in the two stanzas quoted above indicate that the Old Javanese pisañan could have referred to a (female?) interpreter of dreams attached to ancient Javanese courts. The maid seems to offer a kind of “spiritual service” for which she hopes to be rewarded in the future if it were to transpire that Indumati is pregnant. As I see it, the lady who hopes to be promoted as a pisañan tries to save the precarious position of Princess Indumati, who has had sex with a figure whom the ladies regard as a complete stranger. The prophetic dream of a “would-be-pisañan” will provide a supra-natural explanation for the princess’s pregnancy.

**Conclusion**

In this short contribution, I have discussed the Old Javanese term pañji, contextualizing its meaning and use with what we know about the figure of Pañji from Middle Javanese literature. Typically interpreted by scholars as “name” or “title”, in Old Javanese literature and inscriptions this word (ma) pañji precedes the personal names of four types of persons: high-ranking officials, Javanese kings, spiritual teachers and some epic figures. All of them seem to have been closely associated with the royal courts. The Kakawin Rāmāyaṇa (late-ninth to early-tenth century) and the Bhomāntaka (late-twelfth century) suggest that the figures designated (ma)pañji were young warriors or persons associated with warfare. I have offered a hypothesis that Old Javanese term pañji is best rendered as “court-name”; young boys from noble families obtained their particular court-name at the outset of their careers at the royal court, at which they initially served as pages, and were trained in the use of arms and the arts. As persons trusted by the king, some of them were promoted to the position of high-ranking court officials, such as Pamagat, Dāmuñ, and Kanuruhan. Others were trained to be “masters of divine weapons”, Tantric
ritual specialists who had mastered the mantras for turning regular weapons into the so-called “divine weaponry” (diwyāstra), a type of arsenal commonly mentioned in Old and Middle Javanese texts. Although changed by the process of Islamization, the Tantric concept of “divine weapons” has survived in Java until modern times in the form of magically infused, “enchanted” weapons, such as arrows, pikes, and bullets.

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