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The ideal match

Views on marriage in Panji Paniba (1816)

WILLEM VAN DER MOLEN

ABSTRACT

Panji Paniba of 1816 is a Panji story. It is built on a plot which is characteristic of Panji stories: four Javanese kingdoms in a Hindu setting, a princess who disappears and a prince, her fiancé, who finds her again. Another characteristic of Panji tales is the happy ending of marriages and successions to thrones. Interestingly in Panji Paniba a foreign king has a role to play. Crucial to our understanding of this particular version of Panji stories is the special attention it pays to types of marriages. Three types can be distinguished: proper, improper but repairable, and objectionable. How these are defined and how they influence the development of the narrative is the topic discussed in the present article.

KEYWORDS

Makassar; marriage; conditions for marrying; Rama and Sita.

INTRODUCTION¹

Panji tales are a group of tales written between 1600 and the present. They consist of individual elaborations of a shared plot involving four Hindu Javanese kingdoms, a princess who disappears and a prince who finds her again. The name of the princess is Sekartaji or some other name, while the prince – her fiancé – is referred to by his title, Panji (which is also the collective name of these tales).

¹ This article was prepared during a stay in the year 2018-2019 at the Israel Institute of Advanced Studies in Jerusalem, for the research group “New directions in the study of Javanese literature”. It was presented as a paper at the Conference “Java in Jerusalem. New directions in the study of Javanese literature and culture”, held 17-19 June 2019 at the same institute. I wish to thank the members of the research group and the participants of the conference for their valuable remarks. I also wish to thank Professor Peter Worsley for his commentary, and Professor Stuart Robson and Rosemary Robson for the correcting the English of the article.

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Another characteristic shared by the Panji tales is the weddings at the end, first and foremost that of Panji and his beloved Sekartaji, but also of other characters. Coincidentally at the same time as the weddings take place a new generation succeeds to the throne in the four kingdoms. These celebrations of weddings and the rise to power of a new generation confirm as it were the return of peace and tranquility to Javanese society after a period of disruption.

Panji Paniba is a poetical elaboration, one of many, of the common plot of Panji tales. It was written in 1816 (see Illustration 1) on the basis of a *wayang gĕdog* play (*wayang gĕdog* is a type of wayang theatre with two-dimensional puppets and with Panji tales as its repertoire). The transformation from wayang play to poem is mentioned in Stanzas 1 and 2 of the first Canto. Carey informs us about a royal wedding and its concomitant festivities which took place in Yogyakarta in May 1816. One part of the celebration included the performance of a *wayang gĕdog* play (Carey 1974: 9). The choice of a Panji tale for the occasion – not necessarily Panji Paniba – could have been suggested by the special attention devoted to happy reunions and good matches in Panji stories.



Illustration 1. Panji Paniba Ms Leiden University Libraries Or. 2029. (Courtesy of Leiden University Libraries).

However, in Panji Paniba the attention paid to happy reunions and good matches takes a strange twist. One of the marriages is a second marriage. The prince's first wife, of low status, is not only retained but is given the power

to decide whether the second marriage of her husband, with a princess, will take place or not. To me, this seems a reversal of the normal order of things, in which wives listen to their husbands (on the face of it) and lower-class people take orders from their social superiors. Since when did lower-class women wield power over husbands of aristocratic stock? Further research is called for. The Panji Paniba tale can be read as a review of diverse marital options. My paper focuses on this aspect.

Panji Paniba is unpublished. The source of my paper is manuscript Or 2029 in the library of the University in Leiden (Illustrations 2 and 3). For this manuscript see Pigeaud (1968: 60). It belonged to the estate of A.D. Cornets de Groot (1804-1829), a Dutch scholar of Javanese language and literature, who lived in Solo. Much in the text is still unclear to me, therefore the present paper should be regarded as an initial attempt to come to grips with this long and complex text.

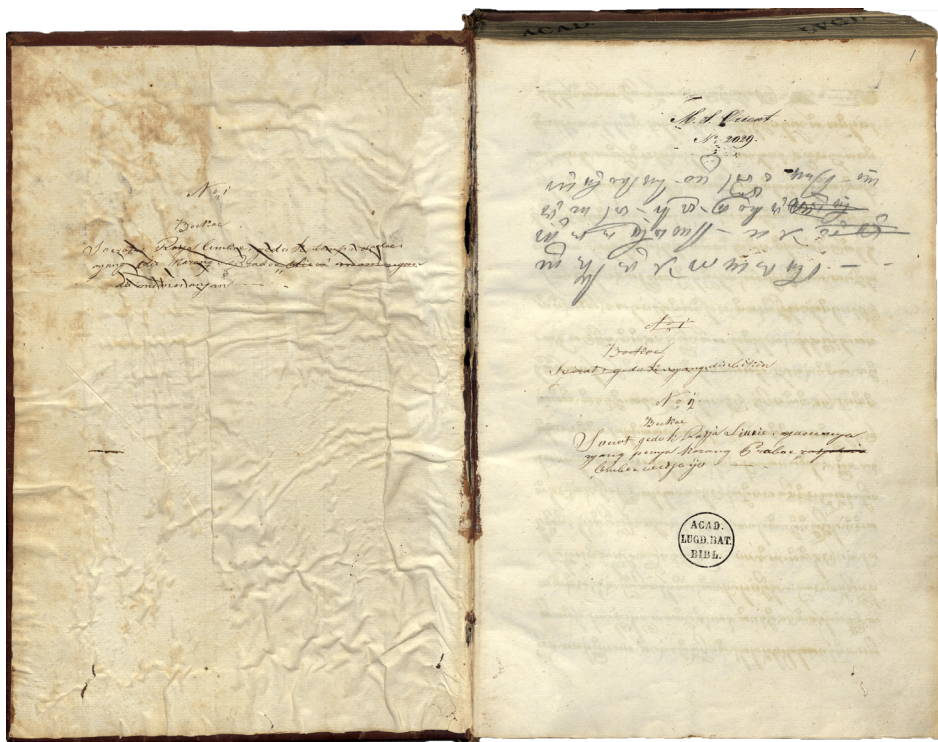


Illustration 2. "Title page" (flyleaf and f001r) of Panji Paniba Ms Leiden University Libraries Or. 2029. Double page preceding the opening pages of the text. Left, crossed out: N^o 1 | Boekoe | [Soerat Radja Lemboe gedok tempo doeloe | njang die karang Praboe Siewie mamangoen | die mamenangan] | |; Right (in Latin script): M.S. Orient. | N^o 2029. |, (in Javanese script): *Ini buku gēdok. kang | digawe purwa prabu di [Mamēnang] | ing Mamēnangan, raja [Siwi] | Lēmbumijaya namanya | |*, (in Latin script): [N^o 1 | Boekoe | Soerat gedok njang dibikin] | N^o 2. | Boekoe | Soerat gedok Radja Siwie namanja | njang poenja karang Praboe [radja siwie] | Lemboe widjaija | (stamp of the library of Leiden University) | |. (Courtesy of Leiden University Libraries).

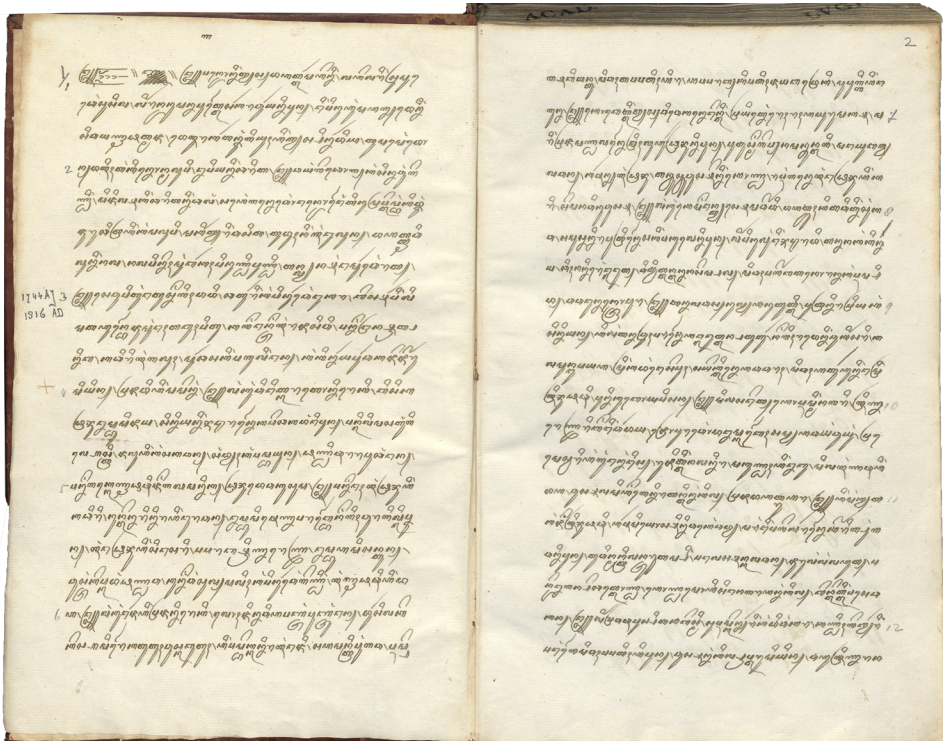


Illustration 3. Example of pages (f001v-002r) of Panji Paniba Leiden University Libraries Or. 2029.² (Courtesy of Leiden University Libraries).

Vreede (1892: 166-169) contains a summary of Panji Paniba. The basic structure of the text is as follows. Three story lines can be distinguished, a main line and two sub-lines. The main line develops from the plot shared by all Panji tales. It includes set ingredients such as the disappearance of Sekartaji and her subsequent reunion with Panji. The two sub-lines each tell about two other quests carried out at the same time, one for Panji himself by a younger brother and sister of his, and a second one for Sekartaji by a younger brother of hers. There is even a third sub-line: that of the king of Makassar, who enters the scene as another of Sekartaji’s suitors.

All four lines are interwoven, developing simultaneously. The range of marital possibilities as presented by Panji Paniba is apparent in all story lines. I see three types: proper, improper but repairable, and objectionable.

² The opening shows two pages, which in Javanese manuscripts count as one page, according to the old tradition of palmleaf manuscripts, which was maintained after the transition to paper manuscripts. The pagenummer is written in Javanese character at the left top of the opening. The European numbers in pencil at the right top, starting with "2" and continuing with "3", "4", "5", etcetera, mirror the Javanese system. They are later additions, as are the European numbers of the cantos and stanzas, visible in the margins. The Javanese date and its equivalent in A.D. in the outer left margin are in the handwriting of Dr Pigeaud, once keeper of the Oriental manuscripts at Leiden University Libraries.

PROPER MARRIAGE

I begin with the proper type of marriage, represented by the main heroes, Panji and Sekartaji. First some background information about what happens to them.

Sekartaji disappears without a trace from the palace in Kediri. There are no signs of violence or of her having left voluntarily, on her own initiative. Should we think of an intervention by the gods? She reappears in the story – away from the people who know her – as the adopted daughter of a merchant couple in a village somewhere in the countryside, not far from the town of Tuban. Her parents give her the name Paniba (hence the name of this Panji story). Sekartaji, as I shall continue to call her, has an elder sister, likewise adopted. During their parents' absence the girls have a fight about the division of household chores. The blows fall thick and fast. Sekartaji, exclaiming, not without exaggeration, that she would prefer death to such a miserable life flees to the forest.

The gods intervene to stop her from dying. In the forest she runs into two men, belonging to the company of Panji, her fiancé, who has gone looking for her after she disappeared and now happens to be close by. After their happy reunion, they embark on the return trip. However, in a scene reminiscent of the one in the Ramayana in which Rama was lured away and Sita was abducted by Rawana, Panji is lured away from Sekartaji; when he returns to where he left her, she is no longer there (there are more correspondences with the story of Rama and Sita). He finds out that she has been taken to the abode of a foreign king who appears to be waging war on Javanese soil (the reader recognizes the king of Makassar, the frustrated suitor of Sekartaji). Panji joins the retinue of this king, with the secret aim of fighting him from within and of course of liberating Sekartaji. After he has successfully achieved his aim, Sekartaji and he are united in wedlock and he succeeds his father to the throne.

I call the marriage of Panji and Sekartaji proper by definition: by marrying each other they are following a divine plan; their bond has been decreed from on high – the most authoritative assent we human beings could wish for. The people around them know them as the crown prince of Jenggala and the eldest daughter of the king of Kediri. This is correct, yet they are also incarnations of the God Wisnu and Goddess Sri, come down to earth to set the world free from evil (represented by the king of Makassar). Their mission can only be fulfilled if they are united. Panji and Sekartaji themselves, like the people around them, are unaware of their divine nature and calling, until the gods inform them. It is a truth which is revealed only to them (and overheard by the reader of the story); the rest of the world remains ignorant. It is quite possible that they themselves would not have been informed either, if the difficulties to which they are exposed had not become a serious threat to their resilience.

Divine assent in Panji Paniba is limited to the marriage of Panji and Sekartaji; all the other marriages have to do without. However, there are two other criteria by which to judge the appropriateness of marriages and they are of general validity. These are more visible to human beings than any divine disposition. They are parental consent and mutual love. Whether there is a

hierarchical relationship between the two I do not know, but their absence or presence is decisive: no marriage without love and parental consent.

Love in the case of Panji and Sekartaji is clearly and abundantly present, both in words and in deeds. When the story begins, they are already betrothed; the decision of their parents to marry them, at the end of the story, marks the fulfilment of a long-held expectation. As for deeds, Panji's quest is exemplary. He sets off as soon as he hears the news of Sekartaji's disappearance, he keeps seeking until he finds her and he refuses to give up. At one point it becomes clear that he has been searching for more than a year! His clothes are worn and filthy, but he does not care. The perseverance of his company begins to waver, but he remains steadfastly determined. He even risks his life. Sufficient proof, one would think, of his love for Sekartaji. Still, she longs to hear him say it. Only when he has said it, after they are reunited in the forest, is she willing to admit that she is the one for whom he was looking – she does not say she loves him.

Sekartaji is also tested by Panji. This happens in an absurd scene in which Panji appears to her in the guise of a god. We are told that Sekartaji is being held captive by the foreign king, but so far has been successful in keeping the king at a distance. During the night she is praying to the gods. She has just been told by the king, Kelana, that Panji is dead; she is desperate, wondering whether the gods are telling her lies when they say he would be king of Java.

Panji, who has arrived in the enemy camp at this stage, has managed to find her room. He is overwhelmed by pity when he peeps through the window and sees her emaciated body, her dimmed radiance, her plain clothes. No lover worth his salt would waste any time but would set the girl free straightaway. Panji, however, uses the opportunity to check her feelings for him. In a flash of inspiration, he presents himself as the god to whom she is praying.

Sekartaji is taken aback by the theophany; gods never show themselves. Moreover, this god is saying strange things to her; he urges her to quit her meditation, asks insinuating questions, stammers something about gods looking different in *gědog* settings – what on earth is he talking about? She can hardly believe her ears (Stanza 42.16):

kaya dudu dewane wong kuna

as if he is not a god of the good old days.

lir dewa anyaran bae

He looks more like a new arrival!

Panji carries on his suggestive interrogation, concocting excuses on the spot each time he falls short in his role. When he answers Sekartaji's question about whether Panji is dead in the affirmative, she draws her dagger. He has a hard time making her drop it. Finally convinced of her feelings, he exclaims that she does not recognize him. Then they embrace one another and spend a blissful time together in Sekartaji's room, until the enemy awakes and other obligations force themselves on Panji.

However, love alone is not sufficient to establish a marriage. Parental consent is also needed. There are no marriages in Panji Paniba without parental

consent; lovers indulging in pre-marital relations sooner or later seek it (Panji and Sekartaji, for example). Why is parental consent so important? Although nowhere stated, I suppose it serves to make the bond official, with an eye to matrimonial rights and duties, possessions and children. Parental consent stands for a contract (albeit not written). No less important, it also serves as a safeguard to prevent unsuitable matches. Finally, in this context, celebrating a wedding, as well as an occasion for expressing joy, also has the purpose of making the contract public.

Going by the example of the marriage of Panji and Sekartaji and several of the other marriages mentioned at the end of *Panji Paniba*, it is possible to extrapolate certain conditions and preferences which the parents of the aspirant spouses should look into before giving their consent. These conditions and preferences cover domains inside and outside the family. What counts within the domain of the family are matters such as similarity in the age line of children, not skipping over unmarried elder brothers or sisters and being cousins. Sekartaji is the eldest daughter of her parents. Panji is not the eldest son of his father but he is the first son of the father's consort (the *prameswari*). Both are the first children of their parents to marry. They are cousins because their fathers are brothers. The text does not explain why these conditions and preferences should apply. In the case of cousins, considerations of strategic alliances between kingdoms might play a role.

Outside the domain of the family, similarity of social environment, education and interests are important. Social environment refers to manners, language and dress. Education and interests involve the ability to read and write, to express oneself clearly, to enjoy music, dance, and literature (my source concentrates on the higher level of society). Any imbalance in such conditions and preferences might endanger matrimonial permanency, as is shown by the case of Panepi (see below). As royal children Panji and Sekartaji must have had all these subjects thoroughly inculcated in them.

OBJECTIONABLE MARRIAGE

The second type of marriage, called objectionable, is represented by the king of Makassar. His story can be summarized as follows.

Kelana, king of Makassar, asks the king of Kediri for the hand of his daughter in a letter brought by envoys who also come bearing gifts. Sekartaji's father has to tell the envoys the sad news that his daughter has disappeared from the palace, without leaving a trace. A *sayembara*, a competition whose reward is whoever finds the princess is entitled to marry her, is being announced at the very moment the envoys arrive. Kelana is invited to take part in the competition.

Back home in Makassar, Kelana considers this answer a rejection and an insult. He decides to take Sekartaji by force. A fleet is prepared to transport him to Java with his army and allies, also his harem, and his brother and sister. Landing at Sidayu, on the north coast, he first pitches his tent in the village of

Wanagerit, then moves to Wringinbang, a village closer to Kediri. Raids and skirmishes claim the first victims.

However, Kelana's efforts to get hold of Sekartaji remain unsuccessful. In the end he turns for help to his father, a holy man (*wiku*) who combines the functions of priest and magician. In his second capacity the father is able to fly, make himself invisible and command spirits. He spots Sekartaji in the forest, has her enter his magic box, his *cupu manik*, and takes her to Kelana. Now Panji comes in: he joins the foreign army with the dual purpose of fighting the enemy from within and liberating Sekartaji. When he meets Sekartaji in the nocturnal scene referred to above, he is discovered by the father and son. Both men are killed by Panji.

Why is Kelana unsuccessful? One might think that his status as a foreigner, not a Javanese, would be an obstacle. Because this is what he is, a *wong sabrang* (overseas person). But this is – I am speaking for myself – prejudice. As a son-in-law Kelana would be most welcome, no less than anyone else: he is explicitly invited to join the *sayembara*, with the promise that he will have her if he succeeds in finding her. Or are we dealing with special circumstances? The call for the *sayembara* includes everyone, also people who would otherwise certainly not have qualified (Stanza 1.19):

<i>nora ngitung punggawa mantri</i>	no matter whether he be an officer or a minister
<i>nadyan wong sudra papa</i>	or a miserable wretch,
<i>kere lawan jagul</i>	a beggar or a porter,
<i>ṭoṭok baṭok papariman</i>	begging with a bowl or a shell:
<i>sapa ingkang manggihaken nini putri</i>	whoever finds the princess
<i>sayēkti anjodoa</i>	he will surely marry her.

I think Kelana fails to marry Sekartaji for different reasons. Let us take up the two criteria which were applied to judge the quality of the marriage of Panji and Sekartaji, love and parental consent.

Love in the case of Sekartaji and Kelana is completely absent. To Kelana, love is not a prerequisite for a marriage. He knows what love is because there are people whom he loves. These are his sister, his brother and his father. Three people; that is all. In the domain of marriage love does not play a role. He has been married, no less than forty times, the text tells us. All these forty marriages have been based on fear. What Kelana expects from his wives is that they stand ready whenever he feels the urge to see them (27.36: *lah papagēn wong ayu pun kakang prapta*), no one can compare to him in bed (27.38: *jumēglug tanpa timbang*). But let none of the ladies dare refuse! When Kelana is making his way to two Javanese princesses held captive – two more victims of his father, abducted like Sekartaji –, a female attendant announces his coming (28.13-14):

<i>lěhěng gusti sumarah ing kapti</i>	It is best, my ladies, to surrender to the wishes
<i>rakanta sang katong</i>	of your beloved king.
<i>těka tinuruta ing karsane</i>	Please, do as he wants,
<i>nadyan giněmbonga ing arěsmi</i>	he should enjoy sex to the full.
<i>prayogine kalih</i>	It is proper that you both
<i>kewala anurut</i>	just obey.
<i>lamun botěn sumarah sang dewi</i>	If you do not surrender, my ladies,
<i>mring raka sang katong</i>	to your beloved king,
<i>tan sande aněkani běndune</i>	his wrath will surely assail you.
<i>mindak kasangsara mangke inggih</i>	If that is the case, you will indeed be made to suffer,
<i>sariranta kalih</i>	both of you.
<i>těmahan pinupuh</i>	You will be beaten up.

To Sekartaji, on the other hand, love is a prerequisite of marriage. She does not love Kelana, therefore she refuses to share a bed with him. Interestingly, there is no direct confrontation between her and Kelana. A couple of ladies, most notably Kelana's own sister, take it upon themselves to protect her and the two other princesses. He should allow the traumatic experience of the princesses' abduction to lessen; then his enjoyment will be greater, they tell him. Kelana believes them.

Turning to the criterion of parental consent, we would not expect Kelana to consult his own father or to see him urging his father to contact Sekartaji's father. Kelana is a grown man, who, moreover, is married already. He can speak for himself, and this is what he does. The father of the bride-to-be gives his consent by opening the *sayembara* to Kelana. Why not? Although conditions inside the family do not count, as Kelana is a foreigner, all conditions outside the family are met. As a king he is of the same social status as Sekartaji. Literacy and other forms of cultural expression are an asset in the circle to which he belongs (a silent assumption at the court of Kediri, but testified to in Makassar, where Kelana's patih appears to be a man of wide reading and Kelana is the author of poems). Even while a war is waging, there is music and dance, of the *tayuban* type, in the encampment off Wringinbang.

Hence, one of the conditions for a proper marriage is met, that of parental consent. But this is not enough. The other side of the coin is missing, there is no love. Kelana's prospects are further weakened when the one condition which is met, parental consent, is undermined. This happens when the agreement with Sekartaji's father is made null and void, by Kelana himself. He does so in two steps. First, he declares Sekartaji's father to be a liar, by denying the truth of his explanation that Sekartaji has disappeared. From now on, her father can no longer be taken as a serious party to the contract. Then Kelana actually

violates the contract, by taking Sekartaji away after she had been found by Panji. The contract stated that she would be the wife of the one who found her. Panji – although unaware of the *sayembara* – had found her and should therefore marry her. Kelana by his action nullifies the contract.

IMPROPER BUT REPAIRABLE MARRIAGE

The third type of marriage to be discussed, improper but repairable, involves one gentleman and two ladies.

The context is as follows. A younger brother and sister of Panji, called Lempungkaras and Onengan, are anxious to trace him after his sudden disappearance from the palace. Actually, Onengan had wanted to go in search on her own, but Lempungkaras had shouldered his way in, because women in his opinion are unfit to travel alone. She is annoyed by his constant ploys to have things his way.

They travel incognito, as commoners. It is not always easy to hide their high status, because of the beneficial influence they exude wherever they happen to be and their uncommonly handsome features. The simple landlady with whom they spend some time is quite innocent and does not suspect their true identity, but the host at their next stop is not so easy to deceive.

This is a holy man living on Mt Wilis. As a seer, he knows beforehand what kind of people his guests are. He also knows the purpose of their journey, without being told. He warns them not to expect any quick result, as the gods have certain plans for the one for whom they are looking. What these plans are is as yet hidden to human beings, even to him. All he can say is that the object of their quest is alive. Lempungkaras falls in love with his daughter, Panepi, and is married to her. His father-in-law advises him to ally himself with the foreign king who has attacked Java – none other than Kelana –, in order to fight the enemy from within.

Lempungkaras inspires Kelana's trust; he speedily climbs through the ranks. Then he is contacted by one of the Javanese princesses held captive by the enemy. They have an affair while still in the enemy camp. After the war is over the two are united in wedlock, but only after the position of Lempungkaras' first wife, the daughter of the holy man of Mt Wilis, has been settled.

What interests us in this storyline are Lempungkaras' two marriages, how they came about and how they relate to each other. As for the marriage between Lempungkaras and Panepi, it is true that Lempungkaras falls in love with Panepi the moment he sees her. But it is her father who takes the initiative, by offering his daughter to his guest as a wife. Humbly, as a secondary wife – but do not hurry; think it over (19.6):

dadosa sělir pawingking

karyaněn jurune pawon

kalamun sěmbada

Let her be a concubine,

make her your cook.

Or, if it is more convenient

<i>sang abagus</i>	to you,
<i>sarehna rumiyin</i>	let it rest
<i>sih pitung dina ěngkas</i>	for another seven days.

How does Panepi react to these developments? The newly arrived guests are the talk of the ladies' quarters. A lot of gossip and guessing is going on. Panepi speculates on the reason of their visit, suggesting that the nobleman could have heard about the seer's pretty daughter. But she is speaking ironically: no way would someone from the city pay attention to tuber-eating provincials (20.2-3). She strongly opposes being married off summarily: her father has to summon her as many as three times before she finally appears before the guests, in her everyday garb. She bitterly regrets his decision. Fortunately, her unwillingness is purely superficial: once she has seen Lempungkaras she wants him as much as he wants her; once married, the two are inseparable.

However, it does not require expert knowledge to see that social class, education and shared cultural interest are completely out of balance. What does poor Panepi know about court music and dance? How could she possibly participate in the joy of literature? She cannot read or write. She is unfamiliar with the etiquette of the upper classes – a lapse which will make her a welcome victim of ridicule later on at the court. Her only capital is her extraordinary beauty.

Panepi realizes that she and Lempungkaras have an uneven relationship. They have a long talk together on their wedding night – their first opportunity to have a serious talk –, and this is one of the topics brought up by Panepi. She calls herself provincial. But Lempungkaras, who is busy making advances, brushes her objections aside. She insists: she has no manners – with the same effect (21.28-31, 38-41). On another occasion, in the Makassarese camp, she alludes to it once more (38.2):

<i>tĕka norana bosĕne iki</i>	“Do you never get enough of it,
<i>tan nganggo milih gon</i>	no variation?”
<i>sang tumĕnggung arum pamuwuse</i>	Lord Tumenggung answered gently:
<i>besuk bosĕn yen uwis ngĕmasi</i>	“I'll have had enough of it when I fall”.
<i>sang dyah maleroki</i>	She looked away
<i>anulya tumungkul</i>	and lowered her eyes.

(Lempungkaras is a *tumenggung*, a high-ranking officer in the army of Kelana by now.) Before long, she will witness her husband's affair with Kumuda, who is indeed a perfect match, in all respects.

How could this mismatch come about? What happened to the presumptions which should underly it? Of the two men who arranged the marriage only one is a parent, Panepi's father; Lempungkaras represents himself, as it were. The latter was far from clear-headed at the time, for evident reasons, while

Panepi's father must have sensed the opportunity to land a good catch. His offering Panepi as a secondary wife is prophetic: there will indeed be another wife, who will take precedence.

Panepi's competitor in love is one Kumuda, princess of the Javanese kingdom of Ngurawan. This lady is being held captive by the king of Makassar preparatory to being added to his collection of wives. So far, she has been successful in keeping the king at a distance. Then she sees Lempungkaras during a *tayuban* party organized by Kelana. His clothes and demeanour arouse her suspicion that he might be a Javanese. As she has nothing to lose, she decides to contact him, by writing him a letter: a short notification, informing him about her and her situation and asking for help. The wording of her letter is a clever mixture of request and promise. Their first meeting, the upshot of this letter, ends in bed.

As far as Kumuda is concerned, this is a story which should be continued. It is easy to see that she meets the requirements: love, similarity of class, education and culture. Only parental consent is still missing.

Oops, there is Panepi. What should be done with her? This looks strange: Kumuda's plan is jeopardized merely because Panepi happens to be married to Lempungkaras already. Yet, the conclusion must be that it is within Panepi's power to block a marriage between Kumuda and Lempungkaras. Pertinently Kumuda does not proceed without first obtaining Panepi's consent. She invites Panepi to her house (by now the war between Kediri and Makassar is over), with the intention of keeping Panepi with her until the latter has given her the green light. Kumuda could have imposed her will on Panepi, given her high status, but she does not do so. Panepi admits that her inferior position leaves her little choice but to take Kumuda's wish as an order, but this is also dismissed by Kumuda. It is not what she wants.

Kumuda tries to achieve two aims: to make Panepi say that Lempungkaras loves her, Kumuda, as much as he loves Panepi (if not more), and to make Panepi give her, Kumuda, permission to become the second wife of Lempungkaras. Why?

The only reason I can think of why Panepi has to give her permission is because there is a marriage contract between her and Lempungkaras. This must be the instrument which gives Panepi decisive power. If so, then for Kumuda it is a matter of self-interest to ask for Panepi's permission, as she is about to enter into a contract herself: contracts should be honoured if one does not want to have oneself ostracized the way Kelana did; overruling Panepi by authority of royal status would be counter-effective. An additional reason Kumuda might have entertained is that, by honouring Panepi's contract, she is honouring the one of the parties involved with whom she is most intimate, Lempungkaras. The permission itself will clear the way for her to proceed with making her own contract.

But why press Panepi to pronounce Lempungkaras' love for Kumuda? Is love not the exclusive business of those in love? Of course, it is. This is the point. If Panepi were to profess that Lempungkaras has the same feelings for Kumuda as he has for her, she would loosen her exclusive bond with him

and grant Kumuda the same position as she has. She would not drop her own claims but testify that Kumuda can make the same claims. In this way love as a factor of permanence is guaranteed Kumuda in the triangular wedlock she is about to establish.

At last, Panepi gives the green light. However, she has one condition (57.34):

<i>sampun kongsi sinikang ing benjing</i>	never send me away;
<i>mung tumut among-mong</i>	I also want to look after him; that's all.

Panepi's love for Lempungkaras is so strong that she is willing to accept a second wife if this is what makes him happy.

What should Lempungkaras have done? By the way, where is he? Officially, he is being continually kept busy by duties, so it is said. He must have been more than happy to leave it to the ladies to negotiate. Even had he wished to intervene, he could not have done much. Overruling Panepi or sending her away would have met with the same obstacles which Kumuda had foreseen. Lempungkaras' love for Kumuda could have been a topic of discussion between Panepi and Lempungkaras. But Panepi's acknowledgement could only become an official testimony if witnessed by Kumuda as the claimant. No need of Lempungkaras here.

I have presented the marriage of Lempungkaras and Panepi as an example of the improper but repairable type. Their marriage was no doubt based on sincere feelings but it was entered into too rashly: insufficient attention was paid to the criteria by which marriages were judged to be proper or not. As it happened, their marriage was not. The second marriage, of Lempungkaras and Kumuda, did meet the conditions: it was a perfect match in all respects. As such, it can be seen as the replacement of the first, defective marriage. However, the first marriage was not dissolved; rather, it was complemented by a better match. The agreement between the three parties involved was based on the same authoritative considerations as applied in agreements between two parties.

CONCLUSION

Panji Paniba as a Panji story covers many adventures revolving around quests, marriages and the succession of rulers. Given the historical context to which this particular text eventually owes its composition, a royal wedding in the palace of Yogyakarta in 1816, it is remarkable that Panji Paniba should go into various types of marriage. Drawing a norm for proper matches from the marriage of the main hero and heroine enables us to add two other types of marriage, the objectionable type and the improper but repairable type, represented by other characters in the story. I have shown that all three types are based on the same considerations. In the case of a second marriage this means that the first wife is maintained not for romantic reasons or on

compassionate grounds but because the same considerations are operative as in the other two types.

Many things have been passed over in my analysis. No attention has been paid to the storyline of the quest for Sekartaji by one of her brothers, or to other narrative aspects. There is a whole range of cultural topics waiting to be addressed, such as: What did people in the early nineteenth century still know about the old Hindu religion? How was that knowledge used to re-create an ancient setting? What do we learn about the opposition between city and countryside? What were the ideas about national (Javanese) sovereignty (a problem ever since the Peace of Giyanti)? And these are but a few conundrums. A far more wide-ranging analysis than the one I have presented here is needed in order to disclose the riches stored in Panji Paniba.

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