

Javanese women and their noble values

From *Pāncā Wastā* to *Kāncā Wingking* in Mangkunegaran Principality, Surakarta, Indonesia

Dhian Lestari Hastuti, Imam Santosa and Achmad Syarief

This article explores the profound meaning of *kāncā wingking* in the context of the *Babad Tutur* of K.G.P.A.A. Mangkoenagoro I, the *Serat Piwulang* scripts by K.G.P.A.A. Mangkoenagoro IV, and the real-life practices of the princesses and consorts in Praja Mangkunegaran, Surakarta, Indonesia. Previous research on *kāncā wingking* has predominantly focused on women's domestic responsibilities and the notion that they lack agency over their lives. However, the research of Kumar and Carey reveals the significant involvement of Praja Mangkunegaran women in the realms of arts, defense, and governance. Employing an ethnographic approach from a qualitative perspective, this study reveals the pivotal role of Javanese women in leading and harmonizing the spiritual main system between their husbands, family, and Praja Mangkunegaran. It explores the role of Javanese women in Praja Mangkunegaran, emphasizing their leadership and ability to balance the spiritual framework. The *Serat Piwulang* scripts are implemented through their authority and status, aligning with Islamic principles of impartiality. Wara Srikandhi, a puppet character, represents the attainment of spirituality and true *nirvana* in Javanese ethical and aesthetic values. Princesses and consorts are regarded as *mustikaning wanudya*, embodying spiritual strength, gentleness, and grace. Meanwhile, *Kāncā wingking* represents the culmination of the implementation and interpretation of *Pāncā Wastā* and the flaming womb in the roles of *angamatjani* and *ardhanawari*. The findings suggest that the meaning of *kāncā wingking* is rooted in rightful authority, celebrating the glory of Javanese women as sources of spiritual power.

Keywords: *Babad* and *Serat Piwulang* scripts, gender equality, Javanese aesthetics, Javanese ethics, Javanese noblewomen.

1. Introduction

Southeast Asia has historically regarded women as symbols of culture, a concept known as the 'motherland.' However, women have often been perceived as incapable of actively participating in society, while men lead by using cultural and familial systems to position themselves as 'fathers' to their citizens (Lopez 2019: 607). Nonetheless, women have played an important role in shaping the nation's future, giving birth to citizens while continuing to actively participate in the nation's

development. The majority of educated individuals view women and their bodies as objects of control by the patriarchal state, which seeks to protect the wealth of the motherland (Tope 2018; Lopez 2019). Thus, the state plays an essential role in shaping appropriate gender roles for women and men in line with its political and social interests. Understanding the roles of women and men in Southeast Asia's cultural narratives is crucial for comprehending the past, present, and future of the nations, including Javanese culture in Indonesia.

One of the social and cultural heritages of Javanese, a sub-ethnicity in Southeast Asia, is the term *kāncā wingking*, which refers to women. The traditional term *kāncā wingking* is included in mental folklore or mentifact expressed through proverbs, expressions and satire. This folklore originated from the oral tradition and community practices that assign women the responsibility of managing the domestic sphere. Furthermore, during the era of the Mataram Kingdom, the Javanese developed a spiritual heritage and moral teachings through the *Serat Piwulang* scripts. *Serat* is a Javanese script, and *Piwulang* refers to didactic moral instruction (Bogaerts 2021, 632). The *Serat Piwulang* script is a Javanese literary work containing life lessons, morals, and wisdom, including a special script for Javanese women. In relation to women, the word *estri* is derived from the Kawi word *estren*, meaning encouragement. The meaning *estri* is related to the titles, roles, and responsibilities of Javanese women as wives and to their relationships with their husbands.

The *Serat piwulang estri* scripts authored by male poets during the Mataram dynasty focus on male-dominated themes. These scripts portray men as the heads of households while instructing women to be submissive and courteous. Women are perceived as second-class citizens or invisible confidantes who have no control over their own lives. The title "*kāncā wingking*" reinforces patriarchal ideology by associating women with domestic roles such as putting on make-up (*macak*), childbirth (*manak*), and cooking (*masak*) (Sosan 2010, 103). Cooking, in particular, is framed as a means of reinforcing the patriarchal mindset (Harjito et al., 2022), perpetuating the notion that women are excluded from public spaces and confined to domestic rules.

The interpretation of *kāncā wingking* by the general public has persisted to the present day due to their passive acceptance. Opportunities to directly engage with the *serat piwulang estri* scripts from the original source remain limited, as access is restricted exclusively to those within the palace circle. Wistey (2016) argues that the actual practice of the term has been preserved through oral literature passed down from generation, containing ideas, cultural traditions, and values that form part of the cultural system (Wistey 2016, 1-6). The researcher assumes that *kāncā wingking* exemplifies an oral tradition regarding the positive values of Javanese culture, particularly in the practice of life relations between women and men. Javanese men are considered "*njawani*" when they obey Javanese customs

and rituals (Zoetmulder 1983). Such men are considered cultured or civilized people, exemplifying the teachings of *Pāncā Wastā* as standard for family and community life. These teachings encompass five key symbols: 1) *wisma* (house) as a symbol of honor; 2) *wanita* (woman) as a symbol of the continuation of lineage; 3) *turangga* (vehicle) as a symbol of insight into knowledge and experience; 4) *kukila* (bird) as a symbol of skill and the charisma in communication; and 5) *curigo* (*keris* or traditional weapon) as a symbol of ultimate perfection. Women play a critical role in the realization of *Pāncā Wastā* teachings, which aim to perfect men's lives, a concept rooted in the historical context of the Mataram dynasty.

The Islamic Mataram Kingdom played a significant role in perpetuating the patrilineal system, which influenced Javanese culture through the succession of the royal throne from the father's lineage (Soedarmono et al., 2011). Women, as consorts, are expected to be *angamatjani*, meaning be able to produce superior children, particularly sons who will succeed to power. The chosen woman is considered an *ardhananariswari*, and the man who secures her will ascend to the throne (Andaya 2006). *Angamatjani* and *Ardhananariswari* represent the concept of the flaming wombs. The patrilineal system in Javanese culture significantly influences Indonesia's culture and social system, reinforcing the dichotomy of roles between men and women and the domination of male power over women (Adinugraha, Maulana, and Sartika 2018, 51). The role of men in exercising their power within this system is undeniable, as it assigns a more prominent role to men in both social and political fields (Knorr 2022, 213-37). Researchers believe that *kāncā wingking* is the culmination of the process by which the teachings of *Pāncā Wastā* are embodied in the flaming womb, ultimately evolving into *kāncā wingking*. Therefore, *kāncā wingking* signifies the role, responsibility, and glory of Javanese women's values. Moreover, researchers agree that every culture and folklore is closely related to local wisdom, which contains the right values and life guidelines for women (Saptatingsih & Rahmawati 2021, 2270). Thus, what is the meaning of *kāncā wingking* in Praja Mangkunegaran Principality?

The Praja Mangkunegaran, established as the third Praja following the Treaty of Salatiga in 1757, was designated as a duchy and successor to the Islamic Mataram kingdom. Its first king, Raden Mas (R.M.) Said, actively participated in the "Three Wars of Javanese Succession" (Lombard 2000, 45). The application of Islamic principles significantly influenced the political and socio-cultural activities of the Praja Mangkunegaran, including the clear differentiation of roles assigned to men and women.

From another perspective, previous research has examined the existence of Mangkunegaran's female soldiers (Kumar 2008; Carey 2019), administrative governance (Soedarmono et al., 2011), cultural modernization (Wasino 2014; 2015; 200), and cultural canonization carried out by Adipati Mangkoenagoro IV and VII (Susanto 2023). The academic study of *kāncā wingking*, a social phenomenon in Javanese culture, has faced criticism particularly from lower socioeconomic groups. While the term

signifies the highest level of *krama inggil* used by the nobility, it is also employed by lower socioeconomic classes to express politeness, often with negative manner. These two social groups assign disparate roles and interpretations to *kāncā wingking*. This usage explicitly positions women as companions which contributes to a sense of pessimism due to their association with second-class society status (Sudartini 2010). This positioning reflects the dual role of Javanese women as both domestic and public subjects in a patriarchal culture marked by discrimination (Luthfi 2010; Sosan 2010; Kusumawati 2012; Kismini 2018; Faiz Maulana 2021) and gender bias in folklore (Sugiarti, Andalas and Bhakti 2022). Over time, this phenomenon has transformed into a means of self-actualization through the critical and thoughtful engagement with cultural values (Budiati 2010). The existing research on the life practices of Javanese women in the Praja Mangkunegaran, the successor state to the Islamic Mataram Kingdom, remain limited. This study aims to investigate the impact of Islamic teachings as articulated in *Serat Piwulang* on the practice of *Pāncā Wasthā* and the belief in a flaming womb within the context of *kāncā wingking*.

2. Values in Javanese ethics and aesthetics

Javanese ethics have become the basis for understanding proper behavior in Javanese society. In addition, this ethics encompass the general norms and principles by which Javanese people strive to live harmoniously (Suseno 1996). Harmony (*rukun*) is characterized by the absence of conflict, rapport, serenity, peace, and mutual cooperation. The term 'harmony' refers to the self-interpretation that people are meaningless as individuals unless they become part of a group of people (Suseno 1996). The Javanese believe in the expression, *rukun agawe santosa* 'harmony brings peace and prevents conflict' in contrast to *crah agawe bubrah* 'fighting or quarreling causes destruction.' Javanese ethics are deeply rooted in cultural traditions, emotions, and attitudes. Meanwhile, harmony is considered the highest value, it is not an absolute principle. Community members are expected to foster harmony, avoid conflicts, and demonstrate politeness and composure. The key characteristics of Javanese ethics include restoring harmony, conforming to reality, seeking one's place in the family, social environments, nature, and one's inner self, as well as cultivating emotional sensitivity (*rasa*) (Tjahjono 1989). Javanese ethics demand a genuine moral attitude, demonstrating kindness as well as commitment to justice and harmony.

Javanese women, including daughters and sons of kings, are taught to maintain harmony and grace within the palace environment. They are expected to manage physical and spiritual elements to achieve perfection of life, or *kasampurnan jati*. Javanese culture distinguishes between two main categories: smooth and rough (Mangunwijaya 2013; *Serat Jatimurti* 1980). Civilized individuals can

control their bodies and regulate their minds, while violent behavior indicates a lack of self-control and maturity. Refined behavior and purity indicate spiritual harmony and strength (Suseno 1996: 212). Javanese ethics emphasize aesthetic value, requiring harmony and alignment between the soul and the body. Inner purity is manifested through politeness in attitudes, behaviors, gestures, and speech, as well as the wisdom to appropriately position oneself in any situation or interaction.

The *Serat Piwulang*, a manuscript intended for female readers, is a collection of poems dedicated to the reigning king of the Mataram kingdom. These poems promote harmony and alignment, and the manuscript is known by various names depending on the ruling monarch's heirs. It serves educational purposes in inner palace domains, where power and patriarchy dominate (Edy Nugroho 2019). Female poet Nyi Adisara composed *Serat Piwulang Putri* for princesses in Surakarta Kasunanan Palace. These scripts are internalized through Macapat songs, benefiting power, politics, and socio-culture. The *Serat Piwulang* scripts were taught to the princesses at *Dalem Keputren* and princes at *Dalem Kasatriyan*, shaping the morals, attitudes, actions, and behaviors of future heirs and Javanese nobles (Soedarsono 1986, 63). This study employs Javanese ethics and *Serat Piwulang* scripts as moral didactics.

3. Research methods

Our qualitative research investigates the teachings of *serat piwulang* for women authored by Mangkoenagoro I and IV, focusing on Javanese women in Mangkunegaran Palace during the reigns of Mangkoenagoro I-IX. The study employs an ethnographic method, incorporating text analyses, observations, and in-depth interviews with historians, humanists, and women from Mangkunegaran Palace. Data validity was ensured through triangulation, namely (1) triangulation of interview data through cultural actors, historical experts, cultural experts (including Javanese architecture), and eyewitnesses of events, and (2) verification of data from the texts, observation, and interviews to support the analysis and achieve the research objectives. The results of this study indicate a significant correlation between the content of the *Serat Piwulang* script and the practice of *kancå wingking* folklore by princesses and consorts in *Dalem Keputren Pracimosono*, which is based on Islam principles. This study concludes that the value of Javanese women derives from the relevance and significance of the relationship between Islamic teachings in *Serat Piwulang* and their implementation in *kancå wingking* practices.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Mangkunegaran women in the teachings of *Pāncā Wastā*

In Javanese culture, several terms represent individual women: *wadon*, *wanitā*, *estri*, and *putri*. In Sanskrit, "women" are referred to *perempuan* (*per* + *empu* + *an*) in which *per* means 'being' and *empu* means 'proficient,' 'noble,' or 'master'. Thus, *perempuan* denotes 'capable or noble individuals.' In Kawi, the term *wadu* is the origin of the word *wadon* 'women,' while *wanitā* 'women' is derived from *wani* and *tātā* 'to be governed.' The interpretation of *wanitā* as 'to be regulated' aligns with the traditional understanding of women's role in the teachings of *Pāncā Wastā* and the concept of *kāncā wingking*. The term *Kāncā wingking* refers to women's domestic responsibilities in the household. Additionally, *wanitā*, derived from *wani*, and *nātā* means to organize. The word *estri* comes from Kawi term *estren* 'supporter,' reflecting a woman's role as the driving force for her husband and family. In Javanese culture, *putri* symbolizes an individual's social status and serves as an acronym for the principle of *putus tri perkawis*, indicating that a woman must fulfill three roles: as a *perempuan*, *wanitā*, and *estri*. The term *putri*, in the context of Javanese women's roles, is marked by various namings of *wadon*, *wanitā*, *estri*, and *putri*. Mangkoenagoro I (RM. Said) introduced a three-pillar concept to define and implement the meaning of the word *putri* for his daughters and women in his territory.

The three main pillars of the kingdom were devised by RM. Said, Mangkoenagoro I. They are:

1. *Tri Dharma*, or 'Three Good Deeds,' serves as a guide for the government and people of Praja Mangkunegaran. It consists of three components: *Mulat Sarira Hangrasa Wani*, a chronogram from 1757 AD; *Rumangsa Melu Handarbeni*, which instills a sense of belonging and ownership among the people. It represents the unity between the people and God and the king; and *Melu Hangrukebi*, which emphasizes the duty of both men and women to defend their territory with resilience similar to their predecessors.
2. *Hanebu Saayun* refers to the king and his people as a cluster of sugarcane plants, symbolizing equality and unity. The people of Praja Mangkunegaran, seen as an asset to the Mataram Kingdom, are integral to its prosperity. The territory, consisting of 4.000 *cacah* (Metz 1939), reflects its values based on the population of household heads. These households contribute to their welfare through land cultivation and management. The term symbolizes the king's obedience to improve the economy and Praja's prosperity.
3. *Praja Mangkunegaran* was established based on RM. Said's motto for struggle: *tiji tibehe, mukti siji mukti kabeh, mati siji mati kabeh*, which means that everyone shares the same fate ('when one dies, all die') and the same glory ('if one prospers, all prosper'). This underscores the enduring sociopolitical

bond between the Mangkunegaran kings and their people, forged during the struggle to establish the principality.

The three pillars of Mangkoenagoro I's administration emphasized the interconnectedness of humans, nature, and God, promoting common prosperity and shared fate. They also served as a declaration of solidarity, as exemplified by a collective pledge.



Figure 1. *Pendhapi Ageng* (The Great Hall) of Mangkunegaran Palace (visualized by Hastuti, 2023).

Mangkoenagoro I directly trained the soldiers (Santosa 2011: 21) and the troops that had accompanied him for 16 years throughout the struggle, including the female soldiers. Records mention 60 female soldiers listed in *Estri Ladrang Mangunkung* cavalry (HMS 1988: 25). These women in the *Estri* Soldiers Corps became the elite corps within the Praja Mangkunegaran army (Santosa 2011: 18). In *Babad Tutur* (the Chronicle of Mangkoenagoro I), the presence of the female soldiers is recorded in the *Sinom* song, in verse 2, page 107b, which reads:¹

*Dene Pangeran Dipatya/ngagem kampuh kang manggihi/pilenggah aneng mandhapa/Dipati
Mangkunegari/ngagem cara prajurit/ saprajurit estrinipun/busana cara priya/acuriga cara Bali/wingking
tunggak semi kandelan kancana/*

¹ The sEnglish translations are mine.

Prince Adipati is dressed in traditional kampuh clothing, seated in a *pendhapa* (a large open-air hall), whereas Mangkoenagoro I is wearing a soldier's uniform; the female soldiers are also dressed in male soldiers' uniforms, equipped with a gold-plated Balinese kris in upright position.

The women's roles in Praja Mangkunegaran administration were similar to men's, as recorded in *Babad Tutur*. The leadership of subsequent Mangkoenagoro was more moderate, democratic, firm, and disciplined. R.M. Said requested the royal title of Praja Mangkunegaran kings, using his father's name. Raffles addressed R.M. Said as 'Mas Sayed' and 'Paku Nagara,' referring to his royal title as Prince *Adipati Mangku Nagara* (Raffles 2008). *Mangku Nagara*² means 'He who carries a kingdom or a country on his lap' (Day 2021: 722), while Mangkunagoro means managing the country.



Figure 2. Bedhaya Anglirmendung symbolizes the position of women as estri soldiers (picture: retrieved from puromangkunegaran.com, on May 15th, 2023).

The *Babad Tutur* Script is a biography of Mangkoenagoro I (1757–1795) in the form of a chronicle that records various events and activities, all of which contain his thoughts, perspectives, attitudes, and treatment of women in Praja Mangkunegaran. *Babad Tutur* serves as empirical evidence of how Mangkoenagoro I treated and behaved towards women. Through *Babad Tutur*, Mangkoenagoro I successfully contributed to the cultural construction of women's roles and positions in Praja Mangkunegaran, which became the referential foundation for his successors.

² Interview with philologist Wishnu Prahutomo Sudarmadji, a relative of Mangkoenegaran, 30-07-2022. The official spelling of the royal title is K.G.P.A.A. Mangkoenagoro (pronounce: Mangkunagoro), and the kingdom is Mangkunegaran.

Mangkoenagoro IV, both a king and businessman, left a wealth of advice in *Serat Piwulang* for his daughters and sons. He was a great poet and businessman, establishing Colomadu and Tasikmadu sugar factories. His *Serat Piwulang* advice influenced the development of individual characters, which remains relevant today. Mangkoenagoro IV created numerous literary works, including *Serat Wedatama*, *Tripama*, *Wira Wiyata*, *Paliatmo*, *Warayagya*, and *Darmowasito*, all of which teach morals and life lessons. *Serat Piwulang* is also taught through 11 characters in the *Macapat* song, which describes the human life cycle from womb to tomb.

Mangkoenagoro IV composed *Serat Warayagya* scripts, which specifically provide teachings for women in a 10-verse song known as *Tembang Dhandhanggula*. The 9th and 10th verses of the song contain advice for men on selecting a wife. The 9th verse of the *Tembang Dhandhanggula* is presented below:

*Mula nora gampang wong arabi/kudu milih wanodya kang kena/Ginawe rewang uripe/Sarana ngudi tuwuh/
Myang ngupaya kang sandhang bukti/Wiwilangane ana, catur upayeku, yogyane kawikanana. Dhingin bobot
pindo bebet katri bibit, kaping pat tatariman.*

That's why marriage is not an easy matter; one must choose a reliable woman to be a life partner and to bear offspring. She is also in charge of providing clothing and food. Four matters need to be taken into consideration when finding a wife. The first is *bobot* (social status), the second is *bébét* (wealth), the third is *bibit* (ancestry lineage), and the fourth is *triman* (obedience).

The 9th verse highlights the complexities of marriage, requiring careful selection, weighing, and decision-making in choosing a suitable wife. *Bobot* assesses a woman's background based on her father's expertise, *bébét* evaluates her father's capabilities, and *bibit* considers her physical appearance as a reflection of her nature and character. Meanwhile, physical perfection is not paramount, expertise and skill are prioritized. *Tatariman* or *triman* was the former wife of a king given to another man (Al Marie n.d.: 30). In modern times, it refers to accepting what is given, aligning with Islamic belief in moral strength to overcome life's difficulties (Pontjowolo 1993: 5). This concept aligns with pre-Islamic *sabr* adapted into Islamic teachings (Kuswaya and Ma'mun 2020: 170). The 9th verse of *Serat* scripts was created to prepare the king's daughters for leadership. The 10th verse of *Tembang Dhandhanggula* in *Serat Warayagya* script reads:

*Papat iku iya uga kanthi/dhingin warna kaping dhone brana/kaping tri kawibawane/catur pambekanipun/
Endi ingkang sira senengi/aja nganti angawang/manawa keduwung/ Karana milih wanodya/datan kena den
mupakatken sasami/wuruk neng karsanira/*

Consider these four aspects as well. The first is beauty. The second is wealth. The third is position or rank. The fourth is the character and behavior. Which one do you prefer? Be cautious of your

wishful thinking to avoid regretting your choice. Selecting a wife cannot be determined by others. The decision must be made independently.

The 10th verse of the *Dhandhanggula* song teaches the king's sons to choose women based on their own decisions. Both verses are guidelines for women to pursue self-improvement. The beauty mentioned refers to inner beauty, thought, and attitude. As stated in *Serat Jatimurti* and *Serat Dewaruci*, outer beauty originates from inner beauty, as the two are interconnected (*Serat Jatimurti* 1980; Sastroamidjojo 1967). The 'wealth' in the song refers to the state of having skills and intelligence for life. Position means being able to carry oneself with dignity. Behavior is the emanation of inner beauty manifested in a unity of facial expressions, body language, and refined, polite attitudes. The 9th and 10th verses of the *Dhandhanggula* song highlight the shared happiness of men and women as life partners.

Mangkoenagoro IV also composed *Serat Darmawasita* scripts, containing the teachings about attitudes and behavior in marital relationships. The script consists of three songs: *Pupuh Dhandhanggula*, *Pupuh Kinanthi*, and *Tembang Mijil*. *Pupuh Dhandhanggula* contains 12 verses of *asthagina* in its 3rd-5th verses.

Serat Darmowasito script, *Pupuh Dhandhanggula* song, 3rd verse.

Yèka mangka srananing dumadi/tumanduking marang saniskara/manungsa apa kajate/sinêmbadan sakayun/yèn dumunung mring wolung warni/ingaran asthagina/iku têngêsipun/wolung pedah tumrapira/marang janma margane mrih sandhang bukti/kang dhangin winicara/

As a guide to living and conducting oneself in all matters, humans must fulfill their necessities to achieve their goals. Understanding the eight principles known as *asthagina* allows individuals to gain benefits in finding their path to their needs.

The *asthagina* teachings are mandatory as a code of conduct for both women and men in married life. They are obliged to behave according to these teachings. Women, in particular, are expected to uphold virtuous behavior and demonstrate the qualities outlined in the *asthagina* teachings.

Serat Darmowasito script, *Pupuh Dhandhanggula* song, 4th verse.

Panggaotan gêlaring pambudi/warna-warna sakacongahira/nuting jaman kalakone/rigên ping kalhipun/dadi pamrih marang pakolih/katri gèmi garapnya/margane mrih cukup/ping pat nastiti pamriksa/iku dadi marganing wêruh pawèsthi/ lima wruh etung ika/

There are various forms of work that reflect good characters depending on one's ability to adapt and evolve with the times. The second is *rigên* ('smart and resourceful'), demonstrating selflessness to achieve results. The third is *gèmi* ('careful'), ensuring sufficiency in all actions. The fourth is

nastiti ('meticulous'), emphasizing thoroughness and precision. The fifth is having the ability to calculate things effectively.

The 4th verse contains the teachings of *asthagina* principles 1 to 5:

1. adapt to changing times and be dynamic;
2. be smart and resourceful in finding solutions;
3. work carefully;
4. be meticulous;
5. have strong calculation skills.

This verse teaches that one must obtain the obligatory ability to place oneself appropriately, which is influenced by self-awareness of emotional intelligence, creativity, careful and meticulous work, and proficiency in calculation.

Serat Darmowasito script, *Pupuh Dhandhangula* song, 5th verse.

Watêk adoh mring butuh saari/kaping nênm tabêri tatanya/ngundakkên marang kawruhe/ping pitu nyêgah kayun/pêpenginan kang tanpa kardi/tan boros marang arta/sugih watêkipun/ping wolu nênm ing sêja/watêkira sarwa glis ingkang kinapti/yèn bisa kang mangkana/

One must possess the character to manage daily needs. The sixth character is *tabêri* (diligent and careful) in performing tasks and increasing knowledge. The seventh is the ability to overcome *kayun* (lust), or unproductive desire, and practicing frugality to become a millionaire (rich). The eighth is *tênm* (perseverance) in achieving one's will. By adhering to these principles, one can achieve desired outcomes.

The 5th verse continues the *Asthagina* teachings 6 to 8:

1. diligence in enhancing knowledge;
2. frugality in avoiding waste;
3. perseverance in achieving one's desires/goals.

These teachings urge women to emulate good things, obey goodness, accept reality (*nrimo*), and prioritize beneficial choices in life. The essence of these teachings lies in women's obligation to improve their capacity, gain knowledge, and practice frugality while persevering towards their desires/goals. The *Pupuh Kinanthi* song has 10 verses. *Serat Darmowasito Pupuh Mijil* emphasizes that women are responsible for all aspects of married life, including attentiveness, understanding customs, time management, effective communication, humility, household protection and adherence to trusted principles. Both men and women share equal responsibility in maintaining a harmonious marriage.

The 29th verse of the *Pupuh Sinom* song in *Serat Wedatama* also addresses work ethics, especially regarding positions and efforts to elevate self-esteem, as shown below.

Bonggan kan tan merlokena/mungguh ugering ngaurip/ Uripe lan tripakara/wirya, arta tri winasis/kalamun kongsi sepi/saka wilangan tetelu/telas tilasing jamna/Aji godhong jati aking/Temah papa papariman ngulandara/

It's your fault for neglecting your life's foundation. Life is based on three pillars: nobility, prosperity, and knowledge. Without one of these, a person's life becomes meaningless. Dry teak leaves hold more value than such a life, leading to eventual suffering as beggars and homeless people.

The *Serat Wedatama* script emphasizes the importance of a foundation built on nobility, *arta* or wealth, *tri winasis* or education, and knowledge to achieve the highest social status. It advocates for women's intellectual development, as stated in the 4th and 5th verses of the *Pupuh Dhandhanggula* song in *Serat Darwawasita* and aligning with Surah Al-'Alaq 1-5, which states that Islam emphasizes equal educational opportunities for women and men. In the era of Prophet Muhammad, women were granted extra time for study (Hanapi 2015: 20).

This proves the 29th verse of *Pupuh Sinom* teaches the principle of justice as Islam teaches that recognize women's right to be intellectually intelligent. Islam advocates for fairness requiring the strong to protect the weak. In the past, women faced injustices, but Islam asserts their humanity and promotes equality between men and women as partners who honor one another. It upholds fairness as an obligation aligning it with piety and submission to God. Adipati Mangkoenagoro I exemplified this principle as written in *Babad Tutur* script. The *Serat Wedatama* in the *Pupuh Sinom* song, in its 29th verse, is in accordance with Surah Al-Nisa's 34, stating that leadership requires knowledge, good deeds, and self-development, for both men and women.

This perspective contrasts with *bobot*, *bibit*, *bébét*, and *triman* ('obedience') as considerations in choosing a qualified wife. Instead, the *serat* script provides moral guidance on achieving dignity and self-respect through virtue, prosperity, and knowledge. It teaches women how to embody the best *bobot* ('social status'). In line with this, the *Pupuh Pocung* song in its 33rd verse teaches about the following things:

Ilmu iku, kelakone kanthi laku/ Lekase lawan kas/ Tegese kas nyantosani/ Setya budya pangekesing dur angkara/

Knowledge is acquired through doing *laku*. Begin learning with willpower, as it leads to welfare. Discipline in performing good deeds will eliminate evil desire.

The 33rd verse of *Pupuh Pocung* emphasizes that the soul can be purified through knowledge by studying it carefully to obtain its essence. In order to do this, it is necessary to practice *laku*—the process of learning by balancing the physical and mental levels of self-maturity to improve self-quality. This teaching applies to both men and women and aligns with Qur'anic principles stating that the physical and psychological superiority of women must be supported with certain prerequisite knowledge to lead so that women can replace men as leaders (Muhsin 1994 93-94). It is apparent that Islam justifies an impartial attitude and policy towards both men and women as leaders. In the Qur'an, it is stated (Al-Hujurat 13) that God created and differentiated between men and women, as nations and tribes, to know one another and elevates the righteous to a noble position among them. Furthermore, it assures (Al-Nahl 97) that men and women who perform good deeds in the Islamic faith will receive a good life and be rewarded accordingly. Finally, it affirms (Al-Taubah 71) that God grants His mercy on male and female believers who help each other, do good deeds, establish prayers, pay alms tax (*zakat*), and obey God and His Messenger. These teachings confirm that *Serat Piwulang* is written according to Islamic values and presented in song form for easier understanding and practice.

Mangkoenagoro IV also wrote the *Serat Wedatama* script in the *Pupuh Pangkur* song. Its 12th verse teaches about *Bangkit Mangungkut Jiwangga* ('mastering knowledge to perfect oneself') as follows:

Sapantuk wahyuning God/gya dumilah mangulah ilmu bangkit/ Bangkit mikat reh mangukut/kukuting jiwangga/ Yen mangkono kena sinebut wong sepuh, lire sepuh sepi hawa/ Awas rorong atunggil.

One who receives divine revelation and is immediately able to master knowledge is capable of attaining the perfect understanding necessary for self-perfection. Such a person is worthy of being called wise. To be wise means being free from lust and carefully analyzing the relations between humanity and God.

This 12th verse of *Pupuh Pangkur* song teaches about how to receive revelation from Almighty God by controlling one's lust to master the knowledge of self-perfection and become a mature and wise individual. This knowledge of self-perfection leads to the creation of a perfect individual capable of achieving *manunggaling kawula Gusti*, in which a human being unites with God, dissolving dualism and leaving only the unity of the two or the one true God. This phenomenon can be attributed to the syncretism between the Islamic tradition in Indonesia and the pre-Islamic Buddhist and Hindu cultures.

Javanese people believe that God's grace for Islamic believers is bestowed through a spiritual role assigned to women (and wives) who are seen as the only ones capable to receive revelations for their husbands or families.³ This belief is based on the interpretation of the word *wanita* ('woman'), which means noble beings. This 12th verse of the *Pupuh Pangkur* song teaches about how to receive revelation from Almighty God by controlling one's lust to master the knowledge of self-perfection and become a mature and wise man or woman.

This spiritual role is also in line with the 72nd *pupuh* song, the 3rd and 4th verses of *Serat Centhini* script volume III and *Serat Candrarini* script, which assert that women must be highly spiritual in maintaining and nurturing their relationship with God to receive grace through their faith and prayers. This spiritual role involves giving direction as well as managing the household, as written in the *Pupuh Mijil* song of the *Serat Darmawasita* script. Women's spirituality is symbolized by Arjuna's five wives as the representation of the five levels of the universe. Therefore, Javanese women are expected to perform *laku*, or 'spiritual practices,' with obedience to God. This knowledge of self-perfection can create a perfect individual who can achieve *manunggaling kawula Gusti*, in which a human being becomes one with God, dissolving dualism, leaving only the union of the two or the one true God.

Mangkoenagoro IV, in the 48th verse of the *Pupuh Gambuh* song in the *Serat Wedatama* script, presents teachings for his sons and daughters on how to worship and obey God:

Samengko ingsun tutur/ Sembah catur supaya lumuntur/ Dhihin raga, cipta, jiwa, rasa, kaki/ Ing kono lamun tinemu, tandha nugrahaning Manon//

Now I advise you on 4 types of worship that you must understand: physical (*raga*) worship, mind (*cipta*) worship, spirit (*jiwa*) worship, and sense (*rasa*) worship. These four must be performed simultaneously. When you perform these four and reach total submission, you shall receive grace from God, the All-Seeing.

This teaching explains the classification of the four levels of worshipping God, including physical (*raga*) worship, with *sholat* or prayer, mind (*cipta*) worship (our minds only obey God), spirit (*jiwa*) worship (our thoughts are only directed towards God), and sense (*rasa*) worship (our heart is focused on purifying ourselves in a peaceful state of mind before God). These four levels of worship are focused on the true sense and must be unified and synergized in the same frequency. Human beings can achieve this by performing *laku*, or spiritual practices, through which they will ultimately achieve the true 'sense' (*rasa*). The correct understanding of the Javanese people is that they are open to the 'senses' or

³ Interview with a historian, Wasino (58 y.o.), Semarang, January 12th, 2022.

to feel certain emotions (Suseno 1996: 156-159). The teaching of the four types of worship serves as a technical guide to achieve self-perfection (*kasampurnan*), which aligns with the teaching of verse 12 of the *Pupuh Pangkur* song. A sharpness of the senses can reflect the level of moral virtuosity that a person has achieved. Moral righteousness is the desire to achieve higher values, whereas unscrupulous morals have the lowest values (Wahana 2004: 62). The concluding part of *Serat Wedatama* is the *Pupuh Kinanthi* song, which provides moral teaching that after 'cultivating the mind,' it is necessary to preserve and maintain knowledge to ensure its endurance. Therefore, in life, it is important to always practice *urip lan eling*, or to remain vigilant and conscious.

Women were the main asset in the establishment of Praja Mangkunegaran, and they have been fully involved in enhancing the intelligence and prosperity of the people, as explained in detail in the previous discussion. The physical and spiritual appeal of Javanese culture is closely related to the diverse characters in the *wayang* ('puppet') tradition. The Javanese believe that the *wayang* tradition is a universally accepted religious mythology, enabling them to form deep intellectual and emotional attachments (Anderson 2016b: 13-14). The *wayang* tradition, which originated during the Hindu era, employs distorted characters to convey Islamic teachings, thereby illustrating the dichotomy between good and evil in a manner that is accessible to a broad audience. The diversity of characters inspires the behavior and actions of the Javanese people. One of the female characters is Srikandhi, Arjuna's wife. This character is described in the *Serat Candrarini* script, composed by Mangkoenagoro IV, and the *Pupuh Kinanthi* song, which originally consisted of 13 verses and was dedicated to Inkgang Sinuwun Kanjeng Susuhunan (ISKS) Paku Buwana IX.⁴ This script illustrates the characters and personalities of Arjuna's five wives, each represented by *Pupuh Sinom* (8 verses), *Pupuh Dhandhanggula* (5 verses), *Pupuh Asmarandhana* (5 verses), *Pupuh Mijil* (6 verses), and *Pupuh Kinanthi* (13 verses). The fifth wife, Wara Srikandhi, is portrayed as a female protagonist character in *Pupuh Kinanthi* whose character is described as follows:

Amung lawan kakungipun, kalamun den andikani, patitis saulonira

When advised by her husband, she responds properly and politely (*Pupuh Kinanthi*, 4th verse, lines 1-3).

Bangkit mantes lan memangun, jumbuh ingkang busanadi, tumrape marang sarira, ing warna tibaning wanci
(*Pupuh Kinanthi*, 7th verse, lines 1-4).

⁴ Based on *Serat Iber-iber Yasan Dalem* written by Mangkoenagoro IV in the manuscript MN.532.35.

She is skilled at putting on makeup and dressing; she knows how to match her clothing to both her body and the occasion.

Para maru rinacut dipun slondhohi (Pupuh Kinanthi, 8th verse, lines 1-2).

She always gives way to the other wives.

The five wives of Arjuna in the *Serat Candrarini* script symbolize the five levels of the universe. The *Pupuh Sinom* song represents this by describing the character of Dewi Wara Sumbadra as the physical or *kewadagan* universe. The *Pupuh Dhandhanggula* song portrays Dewi Manohara representing the astral or sensory (feeling) universe. *Pupuh Asmarandhana* depicts the character of Dewi Hulupi, representing the mental realm or universe of the mind (thoughts). *Pupuh Mijil* describes Dewi Gandawati representing the realm of *buddhi* or the universe of consciousness (awareness). *Pupuh Kinanthi* portrays the character of Dewi Wara Srikandhi representing the realm of true *nirvana* or the universe of true liberation, which can be achieved by an individual with the highest soul and a keen interest in reading *wulang* books, and *tembang Wisatikandhah* songs (*lawan sukane sang ayu, maos sagung srat palupi, kang sekar Wisatikandhah*). The princess is fond of reading books about good things that are exemplary in the form of the *Wisatikandhah* song. *Serat Candrarini* explains the existence of goddess and nirvana in Hindu cultural concepts that are adopted to convey Islamic teachings. This indicates K.G.P.A.A. Mangkoenagoro IV's intellectual approach in spreading Islamic principles of justice through the existing culture, encompassing phenomena of life, religion, and art.



Figure 3. Wara Srikandhi character in the shadow puppet form.

The content of the *Serat Candrarini* script does not suggest that Arjuna reached perfection after having five wives with their respective characters. Instead, each wife symbolizes the universe that exists in a man (Arjuna). The five levels of the universe owned by Arjuna are:

1. physical or bodily actions;
2. feelings or emotions;
3. mind or logic, ideas;
4. consciousness, will or intention;
5. true nirvana.

Wara Srikanthi, as described in *Pupuh Kinanthi*, can be interpreted as an inner journey to reach stability and persistence in achieving true perfection, so that it is realized in *wruh ing sangkan paraning dumadi* ('with full awareness of one's origin and purpose as God's creature'), *manunggaling kawula Gusti* ('a union between man and God'), and *memayu hayuning bawana* ('perfecting the already-beautiful world and contributing to the preservation and beauty of the universe'). The reference to God pertains to the God of Islam. This is evidenced by the fact that *Serat Candrarini* originated during the period of K.G.P.A.A Mangkoenagoro IV. The characters of Arjuna and his five wives serve to illustrate the notion of the Javanese Muslim individual who is fully conscious of his life's purpose. Symbols or allusions to Javanese society are employed as a means of indirectly conveying a message (Herum Marwoto 2014). Arjuna's life reached the level of true *nirvana* after undergoing a spiritual journey, controlling his body, emotions, thoughts, and consciousness. He became a true person, a harmony between inner and outer, and embody the ideal of a *pinandhita satria*. The educational approach of *Serat Candrarini*, developed by K.G.P.A.A. Mangkoenagoro IV, is predicated on the conviction that religion and culture are inseparable, creating a distinctive ethical, normative, and behavioural framework.

4.2. Mangkunegaran women in the 'Flaming womb' concept

In the Hindu epic poem *Serat Pararaton*, Ken Dedes is a female character from Java. She is considered an ancient figure and is depicted as a beautiful and gentle woman, bearing the mark of *Stri Nareswari*. She is enlightened through her understanding of mild karma and possesses a special sign, the shining *Rahsya (Prabha)*. This sign, witnessed by Ken Arok, signifies domination over Java and the birth of the kings of Singhasari. Ken Dedes is not the heir to the previous king but the daughter of a clergyman. However, she is a remarkable woman, as Southeast Asian standard records rarely allow women to play a historical role (Andaya 2006). She is considered a matriarchic symbol on the throne of the Rajasa dynasty.

Raden Mas Said's struggle to establish Mangkunegaran Praja is similar to Ken Arok and Ken Dedes. During a guerrilla struggle, he saw *Stri Nareswari's* sign in Roro Rubiyah's body. Roro Rubiyah (the daughter of Kyai Kasan Nuriman -*ulama* from Nglaroh Village), later R.M. Said's wife, became an *estri* warrior. R.M. Said together with his grandmother, R.Ay. Kusumonarso, and his wives, continued the fight for the establishment of Mangkunegaran Praja (Supardi 1998). When Praja Mangkunegaran was established, R.M. Said became the first king, Mangkoenagoro I, and Rubiyah became his queen consort with the royal title of *Bandoro Raden Ayu* (B.R.Ay.)⁵ Kusumopatahati. Roro Rubiyah fulfilled *Ardhanareswari* by marrying R.M. Said, making her husband the first King of Mangkunegaran. During the reigns of Mangkoenagoro II and III, the roles of R.Ay. Sayati (Mangkoenagoro II's daughter) and R.Ay. Sakeli (Mangkoenagoro II's daughter) were significant as the mother of Mangkoenagoro III and IV respectively.

During the reign of Mangkoenagoro IV, his second wife, R.Ay. Dunuk, became the queen consort. His first wife, R.Ay. Semi could not hold this position because at the time of their marriage, Mangkoenagoro IV was still serving as a soldier. Consequently, his son from his marriage to R.Ay. Dunuk was designated as the crown prince. This is emphasized in Mangkoenagoro IV's will in *Serat Paliatmo* script, *Pupuh Dhandanggulo*, verses 6th to 10th. The following is the text of the 9th stanza:

*Awit iki tumêkaning benjing/ingsun titip para arinira Prangwadana sakadange/rêksanên ayunipun/aja taha
amituturi/kang marang karaharjan/supayane besuk/yèn gumanti jênêng ingwang/lêstaria bisa mêngku
angaubi/mring kadang warganira//*

From now until tomorrow, I will leave your brothers and sisters, Prangwadana and his brothers. Keep him safe; do not hesitate to advise him in terms of good behavior, so that when the time comes to replace me, he will be able to protect all his brothers and citizens sustainably.

K.G.P.A.A Mangkunagoro IV (1853-1881) entrusted his sons with the responsibility of educating and protecting his younger brothers, who became Prangwedana from his second wife. R.Ay. Dunuk was appointed as the consort with the title of *angamatjani*, giving birth to the next king, and *ardhanareswari*, the woman who elevated her husband to the status of king. The titles of *angamatjani* and *ardhanareswari* were rightfully given to the consort of Mangkoenagoro VIII, Gusti Kangjeng Putri (G.K.P.) Soenitoeti, who gave birth to Mangkoenagoro IX and upon the consort of Mangkoenagoro IX, G.K.P. Mangkoenagoro IX (Prisca Marina J.S.), who gave birth to Mangkoenagoro X. The concept of the

⁵ The royal title for the Queen Consort of K.G.P.A.A. Mangkoenagoro I.

flaming womb has been implemented in the reign of the Mangkunegaran kings. This is in line with Andaya's (2006) concept of the ideal balance between women and men.

Javanese people believe that Islamic believers receive revelations from God through women, as taught in scripts like *Pupuh Pangkur*, the 12th stanza; *Pupuh Gambuh*, the 48th stanza; the 3rd and 4th stanzas of *Serat Centhini* volume III; and *Serat Candrarini*. During the presidency of Soeharto, R.A. Siti Hartinah (the third generation of the line of Mangkoenagoro III, 1835-1853) received a revelation that her husband would become the second president of the Republic of Indonesia. It supports the claim that Mangkunegaran women fulfill the roles of *angamatjani* and *ardhanareswari*, providing spiritual support for their husbands and families.

4.3. Meaning of *Kâncâ Wingking* by Mangkunegaran women

The Mangkunegaran Palace complex, a Javanese architecture structure, includes *Pendapi Ageng*, *Pringgitan*, and *Dalem Ageng*. *Pendapi Ageng* symbolizes male power and a profane area for ceremonies. Meanwhile, *Pringgitan* is a VVIP area for nuclear families and important guests. *Dalem Ageng* is a sacred place with three chambers: *senhong kiwâ* ('left'), middle, and *tengen* ('right'). The middle room is used for storing heirlooms and treasures, symbolizing the goddess of rice, Dewi Sri. *Dalem Ageng* is often referred to as the back house. Furthermore, the existence of *Dalem Keputren Pracimosono* located behind the right side of *Dalem Ageng* is the territory of Mangkunegaran women. The position on the right side is a form of respect, while being situated behind represents protection. Therefore, women are referred to *kâncâ wingking* or friends who stand behind.

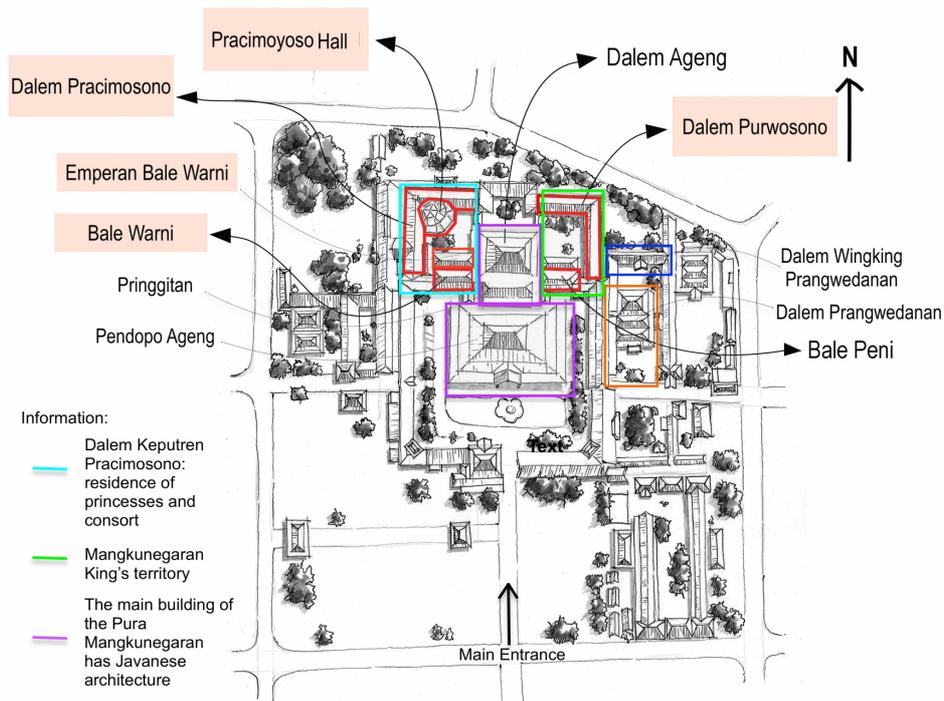


Figure 4. The location of *Dalem Keputren Pracimosono*, as designated residence for princesses and consorts, contrasts with zoning and grouping of buildings at Pura Mangkunegaran Palace (image by Hastuti 2024).

Dalem Keputren Pracimosono is a private zone for princesses and consorts, where daily activities and communal ceremonies take place. It fosters respect and community by incorporating Javanese Mangkunegaran cultural values, such as meditation and fasting, into the princesses' lives. The collective rituals encompass the commemoration of life cycles, the designation of heirs, and the observance of *sungkeman* ceremonies, which signify the ascension to the throne and the subsequent coronation of king. The private rooms are located in two distinct buildings that are *Dalem Pracimosono* and *Bale Warni*. Princesses and consorts in *Dalem Keputren Pracimosono* participate in traditional ceremonies attended by the king. The role of women in this context is to organize ceremonies that reshape the power of the king while providing him with spiritual support. Additionally, their role in cultural diplomacy is evident in their performance of dances, which serve to enhance their intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence. It was a widely held belief within the Mataram dynasty that princesses were not allowed to dance in public.



Figure 5. G.R.Ay. Retno Astrini, a princess of Mangkoenagoro VIII (1944-1987), in Javanese classical dance attire, represents her inner and outer beauty (picture: Mangkunegaran Palace documentation).

The women of Mangkunegaran, from the guerrilla war alongside R.M. Said to the reigns of Mangkoenagoro I-IX, have upheld the noble role of *kāncā wingking*. R.M. Said's paternal grandmother, R. Ay. Kusumonarso, played a role as a kingmaker, a source of warrior spirit, and the *Sumber Tukung* (spring) mother of Mangkunegaran relatives. B.R.Ay. Kusumopatahati Mangkoenagoro I's guerilla companion and consort, served as political and administrative roles (official envoy to pay tribute money to *Karaton Kasunanan*). B.R.Ay. Partini. The first daughter of Mangkoenagoro VII, play an active role in the Java Institute. She visited the areas of Praja Mangkunegaran and accompanied her father to the *Volksraad* session in Jakarta. Additionally, she authored notable works, including *Widyawati*, *Tunjung Biru*, *Sepasar*, and *One Night* (under the pseudonym of Arti Purbani).

G.K.R.⁶ Timoer, the consort of Mangkoenagoro VII (1916-1944), contributed significantly to the development of women's education in Mangkunegaran. She taught dance at van Deventer School and involved in cultural development and preservation. She also instilled anti-polygamy values in her

⁶ G.K.R., or Gusti Kanjeng Ratu, is the royal title for the Queen Consort.

daughter, G.R.Aj. Siti Noeroel N.K., who later became the crown princess and took charge of cultural diplomacy and other official responsibilities. G.K.P.⁷ Soenitoeti was involved in sustaining the Mangkunegaran economy through various entrepreneurial activities such as producing Wasp-brand syrup, selling batik made by Mangkunegaran women, making body scrubs and traditional herbal medicines (*jamu*), becoming a brand ambassador for beauty products, and other economic activities. During the transition period when Mangkunegaran became part of the Republic of Indonesia, she donated her batik collection to the Textile Museum and Fatahilah Museum in Jakarta. She also co-founded and managed institutions like Bank Mekar Nugraha, PT. Astrini and Mangkunegaran Hotel on the west side of Pamedan Hall. Moreover, she was actively involved in the political activities of Golkar Party, supported by *Himpunan Wanita* Mangkunegaran (the Association of Mangkunegaran Women).⁸ G.R.Ay.⁹ Retno Rosati Notohadiningrat Kadarisman (Mangkoenagoro VIII's daughter) in Mangkoenagoro IX period (1987-2021) has played some important roles. She has fostered relationships with external parties interested in Mangkunegaran and serves as the Head of Reksapustaka Library. Moreover, she facilitated the ascension of Gusti Pangeran Haryo (GPH) Bhre Cakrahutomo to the throne as K.G.P.A.A. Mangkoenagoro X following Mangkoenagoro IX's passing.

From the reign of Mangkoenagoro I (1757-1796) to the present Mangkoenagoro X (ascending to the throne on March 12, 2022), the roles of *kāncā wingking* within the authority and administration of Praja Mangkunegaran have undergone certain transformations, especially regarding the differences in their responsibilities. Mangkunegaran women have afforded the opportunity to play an instrumental and active role in the political, governmental, economic, and welfare affairs of the community. These roles bear resemblance to those held by figures in the Hindu and ancient Javanese kingdoms between the 7th and 15th centuries CE (Erlangga and Nelsusmena 2022), as well as during the Islamic Mataram period in the 18th and 19th centuries CE (Carey 2019). The women of Mangkunegaran exemplify a commitment to the principles of Islamic justice and Hindu equilibrium, as outlined in the *serat piwulang*. This is evidenced by their collaborative approach to sharing roles and responsibilities with men in upholding and preserving civilization. Therefore, *bobot* ('social status'), *bibit* ('ancestry lineage'), and *bebet* ('wealth') are supposed to ensure that women of Praja Mangkunegaran can contribute not only to their families but also to the *praja* (kingdom) in accordance with their inherent nature. Supported

⁷ Gusti Kanjeng Putri is the royal title for the Queen Consort.

⁸ G.R.Ay. Retno Rosati & G.R.Ay. Retno Satoeti Y, in-depth interview.

⁹ Gusti Raden Ayu is the postmarital royal title for a princess.

by an educational foundation rooted in the *Babad Tutur* and *Serat-serat piwulang* from Mangkoenagoro IV, Mangkunegaran women continue to embody and fulfill the role of *kāncā wingking*.



Figure 6. G.R.Aj. Siti Noeroel Kamaril NK (left), the crown princess of Mangkoenagoro VII (1916-1944), riding and mastering various skills for cultural diplomacy at the international level (picture: Reksapustaka Library, 2022).

5. Conclusion

The concept of *kāncā wingking* has been interpreted in various ways, depending on the specific age criteria, social group, and social status. This is proven in *Babad Tutur* script by Mangkoenagoro I and *Serat Piwulang* script by Mangkoenagoro IV. The teachings from these manuscripts have been integrated into the lives of the princesses and consorts of Praja Mangkunegaran residing in Pura Mangkunegaran Palace. Mangkoenagoro I laid an impartial foundation for women's roles and positions, as demonstrated by their active participation in his 16-year guerrilla struggle and their subsequent involvement in the administration of Praja Mangkunegaran. The role and position of Mangkunegaran Javanese women is in accordance with Islamic principles of justice, enriched by the integration of Hindu cultural elements, as illustrated in the *Serat Piwulang* manuscript. The intellectual, spiritual, and emotional intelligence of the princesses complements the physical beauty of Javanese Mangkunegaran women, where inner beauty manifests in outer beauty. The role of *kāncā wingking* represents a profound

journey in the noble meaning of *Pāncā Wastā*, flaming womb, expressed through the terms *angamatjani* and *ardhanawari*. This process underscores the balance of roles and responsibilities between men and women to maintain mutual respect and harmony in life.

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Dhian Lestari Hastuti is a graduate of the Doctoral Program in Fine Arts and Design at the Faculty of Fine Arts and Design, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Bandung. She obtained her master's degree in art studies from Institut Seni Indonesia, Surakarta. Her research focuses on interior design, anthropology of design, sociology of design, interior and building heritage, and aesthetics. Dhian can be contacted at: dhian@isi-ska.ac.id

Imam Santosa is a lecturer of Interior Design at The Faculty of Art and Design of Institut Teknologi Bandung, Bandung. He received a master's degree and Doctorate in Aesthetic Philosophy in Interior Design from Institut Teknologi Bandung, Bandung, Jawa Barat. His fields of expertise include design science and interior design. Imam can be contacted at: imamz.santosa@gmail.com

Achmad Syarief is a lecturer of Product Design at the Faculty of Art and Design of Institut Teknologi Bandung, Bandung. He is currently the Head of Human and Industrial Product Research Group. He earned a master's degree in design history, Theory and Criticism from Arizona State University and a Doctor of Philosophy in Design Psychology from Chiba University, Japan. His research interests cover product semantics, psycho-physical evaluation of visual objects, and human-object interaction. Achmed can be contacted at: asyarief.phd@gmail.com