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MALAY SONNETS
PANTUN MĒLAYU



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Introduction.

The most popular vehicle for poetic expression amongst the Malays, and one, moreover, peculiar to this people, is the versicle called in their tongue a pantun.

The pantun is a quatrain in which the first and third and second and fourth lines not only rhyme but, in many examples, possesses a pleasing property of assonance. The first two lines are figurative and poetic statements of fact, which may contain either one, or two, unconnected images, and form the carved frame on which to hang, the delicately sounding gong of the pantun's significance. The last two lines present the true poetic thought and may be amorous or sentimental, suggestive or sarcastic, moral or the reverse.

Given assonance and rhyme, and an implied similarity in thought between the statement in the first half and the actual meaning of the second, and the perfect pantun results.

Anyone with a sufficient knowledge of the language is capable of creating a pantun which, if it has sufficient originality and appeal, may take its place with the legion already in existence, and be handed down orally from generation to generation. Most Malays, both men and women, have absorbed from childhood a number of the more popular quatrains and to these are added, from time to time, others which they may hear and fancy from the repertory of their acquaintances.



MALAY SONNETS.

1. Whence the dove on outstretched pinion?
From the swamp to fields apart.
Whence the dawn of love's dominion?
From the eye it fires the heart.

2. However high the palm tree stretches,
Higher still is smoke of fire.
However high Mount Ophir reaches,
Higher still my heart's desire.

3. High the sun in midmost heaven;
Dead the tethered calf on ground.
All this while that I have striven,
Now, at last, my quest is found.

4. Soft the sands of Indragiri,
Where the clams bake in the sun.
The Prophet loved his people dearly,
Just as I love you my own.

5. If Malacca's fort be broken,
Planks I'll raise on Javan land.
If the truth you now have spoken,
Heart and soul you may command.



PANTUN MĒLAYU.

1. Dari mana punai mĕlayang?
Dari paya turun ka-padi.
Dari mana datang sayang?
Dari mata turun ka-hati.

2. Bĕrapa tinggi puchok pisang,
Tinggi lagi asap api.
Bĕrapa tinggi gunung Ledang,
Tinggi lagi harap hati.

3. Tinggi-tinggi si mata hari
Anak kĕrbau mati tĕrtambat
Sakian lama sahaya mĕnchari
Baharu sakali sahaya mĕndapat.

4. Indĕragiri pasir-nya lumat,
Kĕrang bĕrjĕmor dĕngan lokan.
Bagaimana nabi kasehkan umat,
Bagitu-lah sahaya kasehkan tuan.

5. Kalau roboh kota Mĕlaka,
Papan di-Jawa sahaya dirikan.
Kalau sunggoh bagai di-kata,
Nyawa di-badan sahaya sĕrahan.



MALAY SONNETS. .

6. Gems may fall to earth, alas,
Yet untarnished is their ray.
Love is dew on blades of grass,
Sunrise—and it fades away.

7. What goes with sodden rice? Above—
A pumpkin, at the dawn of day.
What nostrum cures the pangs of love?
A fiddle and a roundelay.

8. Curried doves are rich to taste:
Basil grows beneath the tree.
Though the road be wet and waste,
Due to love, I'll win to thee.

9. Singapore—the Straits in being,
And the Straits are known as new.
Though my eyes appear unseeing,
Yet my heart is in a stew.

10. O'er the hill the swallows wing:
Mangrove wood from yonder shore.
Love is not a little thing:
You are both its cause and cure.

PANTUN MELAYU.

6. Pěrmata jatoh di-dalam rumput,
Jatoh di-rumput bėrgilang-gilang.
Kaseh umpama ěmbun di-ujong rumput,
Datang matahari nėschaya hilang.

7. Apa lauk nasi rėndam?
Sayur pėtola dinihari.
Apa ubat hati yang dėndam?
Gesek biola tarekkan nyanyi.

8. Tėkukur di-gulai lėmak,
Sėlaseh di-bawah batang.
Sudah lumpur jalan-pun sėmak,
Sėbab kaseh sahaya datang.

9. Singapura bėrnama Sėlát,
Sėlát bėrnama nėgėri baharu.
Pura-pura tidak mėlihat,
Hati di-dalam bagai di-garu.

10. Layang-Layang di-atas bukit,
Kayu tėngar dari sa-bėrang.
Chinta sayang bukan sa-dikit,
Rachun pėnawar tuan sa-orang.



MALAY SONNETS.

46. Sow not seed upon this plot,
It will never swell with grain.
Sow not kindness on this spot,
If you do, 'twill be in vain.
47. A mangoe sprout, a ruby true,
A baby catfish in the hand,
Forget me not, when lost to view,
The world is one, though far the land.
48. Narrow is Sarawak's river,
Where the pines bob up and down.
This small craft can hold you never,
Fare thee well my golden crown.
49. If your needle be not strong,
Do not put it on the shelf.
If you know a snatch of song,
Do not keep it to your self.
50. Whence are you and whereaway?
Grass is taller than the grain.
When's the year, and when's the day,
That we two shall meet again?

PANTUN MĒLAYU.

46. Bukan tanah mĕnjadi padi,
Kalau jadi hampa mĕlayang.
Bukan bangsa mĕnanam budi,
Kalau tanam chuma tĕrbuang.
47. Puchok pauh dĕlima batu,
Anak sĕmbilang di-tapak tangan.
Sungguh jauh, nĕgĕri satu,
Hilang di-mata, di-hati jangan.
48. Sĕrawak sungai-nya sĕmpit,
Buah nĕnas lambong-lambongan.
Hĕndak di-bawa pĕrahu-nya sĕmpit,
Tinggal ĕmas tinggal junjongan.
49. Kalau ada jarum patah,
Jangan simpan di-dalam pĕti.
Kalau ada pantun sa-patah,
Jangan simpan di-dalam hati.
50. Dari mana hĕndak ka-mana?
Tinggi rumput dari padi.
Tahun mana bulan yang mana?
Hĕndak kita bĕrjumpa lagi.

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