

A Direção da Revista, por considerar absolutamente relevante a publicação da nota seguinte, em face do excepcional significado da «redescoberta» do manuscrito, *The Lisbon book of pantuns* (século XVIII), apresenta-a n'O *Arqueólogo Português*. A importância de divulgar de imediato estes «achados» nas nossas coleções bibliográficas levou-nos a incluí-la desde já neste volume da revista. Posteriormente o manuscrito será estudado, comentado e publicado também em fac-simile.



# The Lisbon book of *pantuns*

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Recently, in the archives of Lisbon's *Museu Nacional de Arqueologia*, a manuscript of considerable historical, linguistic and literary interest, presumably hailing from 18<sup>th</sup> century Batavia (now Jakarta, in Indonesia), has been discovered. «Rediscovered» might be a more accurate term, since the manuscript, which bears the title of *Panton Malaijoe dan Portugees* (Malay and Portuguese Pantuns), was not entirely unknown. In fact, it surfaced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was mentioned by one of its former owners, Professor Hugo Schuchardt from the University of Graz, in his description of the Portuguese-lexified creole of Batavia and Tugu.<sup>1</sup>

Later on, it was once again described by its subsequent owner, Leite de Vasconcelos<sup>2</sup>, who saw it in Schuchardt's possession in 1900 and was so impressed that he requested a copy for himself. Schuchardt refused at first but, after an ugly quarrel,<sup>3</sup> relented and promised to bequeath the manuscript to Vasconcelos after his death. When this finally occurred, in 1927, Vasconcelos did receive the manuscript but was so busy with other projects that he never found the time to study it in depth, nor to make it known that he had it in his possession. Vasconcelos' extremely detailed will and testament, while identifying several items of his personal library, made no mention of it.

As a result, the manuscript was considered lost, or displaced, for almost a century. Recently, however, as the librarian of the Museu Nacional de Arqueologia, Livia Cristina Coito and Ivo Castro went through some boxes of assorted documents in Vasconcelos' archives in search of something else, they came across the book of *pantuns*, still kept in the very envelope in which it was sent to Vasconcelos by a librarian of Graz. Having previously published the correspondence between Schuchardt and

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1 SCHUCHARDT, H. (1890) – Kreolische Studien IX. Über das Malaioportugiesische von Batavia und Tugu. *Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Wien (philosophisch-historische Klasse)*. Vienna. 122: IX, p. 17.

2 In his *Esquisse d'une Dialectologie Portugaise*. Paris, 1901, §18, Vasconcelos says : «M. Schuchardt possède un très intéressant ms. du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, contenant une collection de *Pantuns* («chansons») en malais et portugais-créole de Batavia, que j'ai vu chez lui».

3 For details, see CASTRO, I.; FRATESCHI VIEIRA, Y.; RODRIGUES-MOURA, E. (2008) – Cartas a três (Carolina Michaëlis entre Leite e Schuchardt). *O Arqueólogo Português*. Lisboa. S. 4, 26, p. 451-470.

Vasconcelos,<sup>4</sup> Castro was able to identify the manuscript as well as its importance, and subsequently invited the collaboration of specialists of Asian-Portuguese creole languages (Hugo Cardoso and Alan Baxter) and of Malay/Indonesian language and literature (Alexander Adelaar and Gijs Koster) to work on it.

This particular combination of expertise is warranted by the contents of the manuscript. About half of it consists of sequences of *pantuns* written in Malay and the other half of sequences of *pantuns* written in a Southeast-Asian Portuguese-lexified creole which is now identified, with some degree of certainty, as the variety formerly spoken on the Indonesian island of Java.<sup>5</sup> In addition to these, the manuscript also contains one *pantun* written in an admixture of both languages. To illustrate its contents, an excerpt from one of the Malay *pantuns* in the manuscript is given in (a), one from a Creole *pantun* is given in (b), and a section of the mixed Malay/Creole *pantun* in (c); in the last excerpt, verses 1 and 3 are in Malay and verses 2 and 4 in Creole Portuguese:

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| (a) <i>Laksamana ilir berguri</i><br><i>Singgah ke batu mengintai suluh</i><br><i>Tuan laksana minta bercerai</i><br><i>Tinggal baju bekas kan tubuh</i> | The admiral sails downstream to dock his ship.<br>Calling in at the rock he spies a scout.<br>It seems you, my lady, request us to separate,<br>That leaves me only your old jacket to put on. |
| (b) <i>Wika todo dosi mana</i><br><i>Owi parmie, que, eúi vala</i><br><i>quando nos schega tangerang</i><br><i>todo noos miste balla.</i>                | Come here, all of you, sweet sisters,<br>Listen to what I say:<br>When we reach Tangerang, <sup>6</sup><br>We must all dance.  |
| (c) <i>Marie sienie doedok</i><br><i>nonjha d' meu almâ,</i><br><i>doedock nonjha doedoeck</i><br><i>minha vloor d' palma:</i>                           | Let's sit down here,<br>Lady of my soul,<br>Sit down, lady, sit down,<br>My palm flower.   |

A *pantun* is a Southeast Asian poetic form consisting of a quatrain in which the first line rhymes with the third and the second one with the fourth (A-B-A-B). Its first

4 CASTRO, I.; RODRIGUES-MOURA, E., eds. (2015) – *Hugo Schuchardt / José Leite de Vasconcellos. Correspondência*. Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press. Available at <<https://opus4.kobv.de/opus4-bamberg/frontdoor/index/index/docId/45504>>.

5 For further information on the extinct Portuguese-based creole of Java spoken predominantly in the city of Batavia (modern Jakarta) and nearby Tugu, see: BAXTER, A. (1996) – Portuguese and Creole Portuguese in the Pacific and Western Pacific Rim. In WURM, S.; MÜLHAÜSLER, P.; TRYON, D., ed. lit. – *Atlas of languages of intercultural communication in the Pacific, Asia and the Americas*, vol. 2.1. Berlin; New York: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 299-338; MAURER, P. (2011) – *The former Portuguese Creole of Batavia and Tugu (Indonesia)*. London: Battlebridge; MAURER, P. (2013) – Batavia Creole structure dataset. In MICHAELIS, S.; MAURER, P.; HASPELMATH, M.; HUBER, M., ed. lit. – *Atlas of Pidgin and Creole language structures online*. Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. [accessed 27 Sept. 2019]. Available at <<http://apics-online.info/contributions/43>>; CARDOSO, H. C.; HAGEMEIJER, T.; ALEXANDRE, N. (2015) – Crioulos de base lexical portuguesa. In ILIESCU, M.; ROEGIEST, E., ed. lit. – *Manuel des anthologies, corpus et textes romans*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 670-692.

6 Tangerang is a city in the province of Banten, just west of the Indonesian capital Jakarta.

couplet (called the *pembayang*: the foreshadower) may, through relations of assonance and alliteration with the words in the second couplet, riddlingly suggest the real meaning (*maksud*) that is conveyed there. *Pantun* poetry, frequently taking the shape of sequences of quatrains, is essentially a form of oral literature, normally composed *ex tempore* as it is sung, either solo or in alternation, often with musical accompaniment. It is thematically varied, but the theme of love is particularly prominent.

The composition of quatrains in a Portuguese-based creole following the *pantun* structure appears to have been frequent in Southeast Asia. Available evidence comes from Malacca and even Timor,<sup>7</sup> but Indonesian samples are very scarce. Therefore, the Creole Portuguese *pantuns* in this manuscript become extremely relevant, given the shortage of sources for the extinct creole of Java. In fact, our knowledge of this language is based on a limited set of written records<sup>8</sup>, which do contain a few quatrains, so this manuscript is a significant addition to the available corpus. As such, it greatly improves our understanding of this variety and also of the historical developments surrounding the establishment of a Portuguese-lexified creole on the island of Java.<sup>9</sup>

On the other hand, the Malay *pantuns*, of which the manuscript also contains a rich corpus, are equally relevant, from many perspectives. They appear to be a product of the Portuguese Creole-speaking community of colonial Batavia, known then by terms such as *mardijkers*, a term which identified South Asian and Southeast Asian mercenaries serving and living in the region. As such, these poems, much like the Creole *pantuns*, provide local Indonesian perspectives that are otherwise hard or even impossible to come by. Through them, we not only get a rare insight into the use of Malay – an early form of what is now Batavia-Malay (*omong Betawi*) – as spoken by the *mardijkers*, we can gauge how this particular population experienced early colonial society and how it reacted to important historical events taking place in its time.

In view of the linguistic, historical, literary, and ethnographic significance of this archival source, the authors of this note have embarked on the preparation of a diplomatic edition and facsimile of the manuscript, together with translation and commentaries, in order to make it available to scholars of various disciplines. This collaborative work will soon result in the first ever publication of *Panton Malaijoe dan Portugees*, the Lisbon book of *pantuns*.

7 For Malacca, see RÊGO, A. S. (1942) – *Dialecto português de Malaca; Apontamentos para o seu estudo*. Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias; for Timor, see CASTRO, A. O. (1908) – *Flores de coral; Últimos poemas*. Dili: Imprensa Nacional. The Timorese data is discussed in BAXTER, A.; CARDOSO, H. C. (2017) – Early notices regarding Creole Portuguese in former Portuguese Timor. *Journal of Language Contact*. Leida; Boston.10:2, p. 264-317.

8 Essentially, those collated and studied by Maurer (2011), op. cit.

9 For a first linguistic exploration of the data contained in the manuscript, namely with respect to the Asian implantation of a Creole Portuguese causal morpheme, see CARDOSO, H. C. (2019) – The synchrony and diachrony of an Asian-Portuguese causal morpheme. *Journal of Ibero-Romance Creoles*. 9: 1, p. 27-54.