R. Roolvink

A puzzling point in the Malay annals

In: *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 131 (1975), no: 2/3, Leiden, 338-338

This PDF-file was downloaded from <http://www.kitlv-journals.nl>

KORTE MEDEDELINGEN

R. ROOLVINK

A PUZZLING POINT IN THE MALAY ANNALS

In Wilkinson's Malay-English Dictionary we find entered under *paut*: umur kita telah pautlah, "my life is being torn away from me". This translation is unsatisfactory in view of the general meaning of *paut*, "catching on to anything, fastened, clinging", etc. The reference is to a passage in the Malay Annals which reads as follows: (Edition Teeuw-Situmorang, ch. 26.4, p. 203; Shellabear, OUP, Kuala Lumpur 1967, p. 179) Ketahui olehmu tuan2 sekalian, bahwa umur kita telah pautlah, ajal kita pun hampir rasanya. Raffles 18 (JRASMB, Vol. 16, Pt 3, p. 149) has an altogether different reading: Ketahui oleh tuan-tuan, umurku ini putuslah rasanya.

The correct or full *jawi* spelling of *paut* would be: p-alif-hamza-wau-t. However, the *jawi* editions of the *Sejarah Melayu* of both Klinkert and Shellabear spell what has been read as *paut*: f-alif-wau-t, = *fawat*, and this solves the problem: *fawat* is a (Malay) misspelling of Arabic *fawāt*, "passing by, passing away, gone", which to my knowledge is not found in Malay and apparently was misunderstood by a Malay copyist who made it into *paut*, a word familiar to him. The translation now becomes clear: "Know, gentlemen, that my span of life is (rapidly) running out and the moment of my death is near, so I feel".

HARRY AVELING

THE FATHER'S VISION IN *BUKAN PASAR MALAM*

Just before he dies, the father in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novel *Bukan Pasar Malam*¹ becomes delirious. The narrator is summoned to the father's bedside by a younger sibling who says:

*"Mas, bapak bicara tentang jagung. Aku tak mengerti. Bapak bicara juga tentang jagung yang ditembak. Aku tak mengerti, mas."*²

(Brother, father is talking about corn. I can't understand what he's saying. He says too that the corn is being shot at. I can't understand, brother.)

¹ First published by Balai Pustaka, Jakarta 1951. All subsequent references are to the third printing, Jajasan Kebudayaan Sadar, Jakarta 1964.

² *Bukan Pasar Malam*, p. 86.