

Hikayat Parang Puting

BY R. O. WINSTEDT D. LITT. (OXON.)

All the recorded MSS. of this tale are in English libraries. There are two copies in the library of the India Office and one in King's College Library (*J. R. A. S., S. B.* No. 82, 1920 p. 156; *Essays relating to Indo-China*, 2nd series, vol. II, p. 53). Mr. R. J. Wilkinson has given a MS. of it to Cambridge University Library. The present paper is founded on a MS. in the possession of the Committee for Malay Studies, Kuala Lumpur. This MS. is modern (1920 A.D.) written in Singapore but exhibiting in *patek apa* to express the plural "all your servants" traces of a Kedah copyist: it fills 139 pages of a note-book.

There are no references to Allah or Islam in the tale. Betara Brahma is the Supreme God and the world is governed by the "high great gods" (*dewata mulia raya*). There is mention of a *silambara* (Skt.) where a princess chooses a husband from a crowd of rivals.

There are only two quatrains in the tale, uttered by the hero when he is on the princess' raft beset by dragons:—

*Dian dua, damar pun dua,
Tanglong di-rumah Dewa Laksamana.
Diam juga, sabar-lah jua,
Ada untong tiada ka-mana.*

*Ēnche' Baya sēlendang batek,
Pandai mēngarang bunga di-ukir.
Adohai tuanku! junjongan patek!
Jangan-lah tuanku bērbanyak fikir.*

The process by which a pleasance is created by a magic stone is described as putting the stone exposed on the spot where the pleasance is wanted: by taking it up the hero causes the pleasance to disappear (*Maka Mambang Dewa Kēindēraan pun mēngambil guliga hikmat-nya yang di-tambangkan-nya pada taman itu: maka taman itu pun ghaib-lah dēngan sa-kētika itu juga.*)

There are numerous Indian parallels for the main plot, tales of a prince who buys a snake, a parrot and a rat (*Jataka*, No. 73. vol. I, p. 178) or kitten and snake, or cat, otter, rat and snake, and is taken in all the tales by the snake to his father the king of the snakes who gives the hero a ring that will create a palace and kingdom and bring him a royal bride. (*The Story of Madana Kama Raja*: Natesa Sastri, p. 20; Bodding's *Folklore of the Santal Parganas* p. 88; Thornhill's *Indian Fairy Tales* p. 67; Mrs F. A. Steel's *Tales of the Punjab*, p. 185; Knowles' *Folk-Tales of Kashmir*, 2nd ed., p. 20; Parker's *Village Folk-tales of Ceylon*, vol. III, pp. 127-131.)

The incident of a dragon growing too big for a river occurs also in the Perak folk-tale *Raja Budiman* (ed.—Clifford, Singapore, p. 5) and in the Achehnese *Hikayat Banta Ahmat* (Snouck Hurgronje's "The Achehnese," vol. II, p. 142).

The following is the outline of the story:—

Prince Dewa Laksana Dewa ruled in fairy-land. His consort Chahaya Khairan bore a beautiful daughter Putri Langkam Chahaya. One day when she was plucking flowers in the pleasance, a fairy (*dewa*) Mambang Indra Segara espied her and fell in love. He cast a spell on a grass-hopper and sent him to fly and settle on the princess and awaken in her thoughts of love. Then wearing his creese and burning "as if he would set fairy-land afire," he entered the pleasance. The princess sent a maid to call him. His hot words of love call forth her reproof and she bids him seek her parents. He flies away in dudgeon and resolves to bring a sickness upon her. He is sleepless till the dawn when "the cocks crowed, the birds of paradise (*chëndrawaseh*) sang in the heavens, parrots sang in the *angsoka* trees, parroquets on the boughs of the *nagasari*, mynahs on the *chěmpaka* trees and a drizzle of rain made all the flowers in the garden bloom."

After waiting seven days he charms (*puja*) a frangipanni flower and throws it into the bosom of the princess as she and her maids are picking flowers. She becomes pregnant. Her father curses her and changing her into the form of an ugly mortal woman casts her down into the world. She bears a child in the forest. She lives in an abandoned hut, at first begging rice and cooking-pots and later pounding rice for hire. One day in her absence, while her boy is playing under the house, a stranger offers to sell him a young snake for half a coconut-shell full of rice. He buys the snake and makes it his plaything day and night. Another day he buys a young hawk and later a white rat. The snake grows the horns (*chula*) and claws of a dragon. The boy rides about on the dragon's back and other children give fruit in return for permission to play with the hero. The harbour-master (*shahbandar*) hears of it and sends for the boy who goes riding on his dragon with the young hawk flying above his head and the white rat following. He is given fruit and rice and raiment. The Raja of the country hears of the marvel and sends for the boy to come on his dragon. He bestows on him rice, raiment and two slaves (*sahaya*).

One night the dragon who has grown so big he cannot bathe in the river without flooding the country decides to run away to the lake where his father and himself live. His little master follows and overtakes him. The dragon's grandsire, a terrible beast, gives him a ring out of his mouth which in a moment can provide food for a thousand men. He bids the boy call upon his whilom plaything if ever he needs his help. The hawk and the white rat take leave of their dragon playmate.

The hero's mother is in great distress at the disappearance of her son. On his return he loses his way in the forest. His dragon's granddam, angry at hearing that the magic ring has been given to the boy, sends a warrior dragon to ask for it back in return for a magic stick. The dragon finds the boy. When he goes to bathe in a pool, the boy siezes the stick and striking the pool thrice prevents the dragon from leaving it. He hurries away, taking the magic stick. He hears the sound of men felling in the jungle and going near espies a masterless knife (*parang puting*) felling a tree. At sight of him the knife runs off to a hut where an old man lives. The hero spends the night at the hut and shaking his magic stick provides food for them both. The old man gives him in return for the magic stick his knife which will obey all behests and can enlarge itself and fight foes. Our hero reaches home and goes to pay his greeting to the harbour-master. Always he provides cooked food for his mother and himself by means of the magic ring.

Now the ruler of the country, Raja Indra Mahadewa was childless. He went to the island Chahaya Permana (قرمان) to pay vows that he may get an heir. He and his consort bathed in a lake on the island, prayed and burnt incense. Betara Kala heard the prayer and dropped a manggo in the king's path as he went up from the lake. There was no manggo tree in the neighbourhood. The king accepted it as a sign, and he and his wife partook of the fruit. On their return a dragon bars the bark's way and the king induces him to desist by promising that his child if a girl shall be the dragon's wife, if a boy his friend. The queen bears a daughter "Princess Mengindra, First Day of the Moon." The dragon king sends a lobster to see if the king has got a child. The lobster hiding at a royal landing-stage hears maids grumbling at having to carry up bathing water for the princess. He bids a prawn enter one of the water-vessels and report on the beauty of the princess. The lobster conveys the tale of her loveliness to the dragon king. The dragon king sends one of his warrior dragons to block the estuary of the country of Raja Indra Mengindra and flood the land so that he may remember his promise. A warrior goes down to the estuary and questions the dragon. The king asks for three months' grace, wherein to prepare for the nuptials. His viziers advise him to offer his daughter's hand to whosoever can worst the dragon king. The king sends missives accordingly to the neighbouring princess and all accept the offer. He puts his daughter on a raft in an iron chest and all the princes who have accepted the challenge on other rafts and sends them down to the estuary where the dragon waits. Leaving the hawk and the white rat to look after his mother, our hero takes his magic ring and knife and goes aboard the princess' raft where he is allowed to stay. At the estuary the waiting dragon scatters the rafts of the princes with his breath and bids our hero leave the raft of the princess.

The princess promises him her hand if he can worst the dragon suitor. He bids his magic knife decapitate the dragons who approach the raft. The princess and her maids are hungry. The hero's magic ring provides food. He invokes his young hawk and all the hawk tribe fly off with the raft back to the shore, pecking the eyes of all dragons that approach. The king of the dragons sends a huge warrior dragon who swallows the raft with all its crew. The hero by means of his magic ring provides food and lamps. The hawk flies and tells the white rat of his master's predicament. The white rat seeks Mambang Indra Segara who comes with his forces. A great battle follows. The dragons kill the fairy warriors with the blasts and fires of their nostrils. The fairies slay the dragons with arrows. Mambang Indra Segara bids the young hawk enter the dragon's belly and see if his grandson and the princess are alive. The young hawk protests that he is unable and the white rat enters and finds them still alive. The hero bids him tell the fairies to attack the other dragons. He orders his knife to cut the heart of the dragon that has swallowed them and then to cut through the dragon's body and release them. Mambang Indra Segara sends Mambang Ratna Dewa to fetch his son whom he names Mambang Dewa Keindraan.

Mambang Indra Segara creates a country and castle by means of a magic jewel. He provides food by means of a ring. Their army is put under four leaders, Mambang Ratna Dewa, Mambang Gangga Dewa, Mambang Beranta Dewa and Dewa Keindraan. But when a great dragon (*Naga Gëntala*) arrives they are so hard pressed that the hero hugging his body invokes his whilom dragon playmate, Naga Ratna Gempita, to their aid. Naga Gëntala cannot prevail and returning to the dragon king, Raja Gangga Indra, advises him to make peace. Raja Gangga Indra and all his warriors enter the fray. Ratna Gempita attacks him. The rival dragons turn themselves into crow and hawk, ape, (*běrok*) and tusked monster (*gěrgasi*), harpy and roe. Ratna Gempita bites the neck of the harpy and so Raja Gangga Indra dies. Ratna Gempita becomes king of all the dragons. He tows the raft of the princess up-stream. The hero's father retires to fairy-land, leaving him the magic stone which can make cities and bidding his son call him at need. The hero leaves the princess' raft when it approaches the royal settlement. All the princely suitors for her hand seeing her raft drifting on the tide rush and welcome her. They pretend they have saved her from the dragon. Her father builds a dais on a plain where the princess shall sit and choose the prince she favours (*di-buat silambara di-těngah padang*, p. 110) by throwing him a posy of golden flowers. All the princes, all the chiefs and people of the country, even the halt and blind pass before the princess but she does not throw the posy. At last the hero is told to pass before her. He passes carrying his magic knife, the hawk flying above his head, the white rat following him. The princess throws the golden flowers on him. The 99 princes demand that the marriage shall take place after a procession to the

palace (*bĕrtandang*), hoping to kill the bride-groom on the way. By means of his father's magic stone the hero creates a city and palace and castle. The white rat, who is really Raja Indra Bayu in animal shape, goes to fairy-land and invites Mambang Indra Segara and his younger son Mambang Ratna Dewa to the wedding. The harbour-master comes and with limbs and beard trembling and face as "white as a peeled mushroom," sees the city and palace the hero has created, understands he is a fairy prince and does obeisance. The princess' father hears music and sends viziers to see what it portends. They are fed by means of the magic ring and return and tell their master of the city and palace and its furniture. The king sends his future son-in-law word that the 99 princes will attack him during the wedding procession. The hero begs him not to prevent them. Mambang Indra Segara descends to earth on a magic carpet (*hamparan kĕsaktian*). The hero's mother sorrows over her mortal form. The young hawk who is really a fairy Darkasila (درکاسیل) flies to fairy-land and pleads for her with Dewa Laksana Dewa, who with his consort descends to earth for his grand-child's wedding after begging Dewa Betara Brahma to restore to his daughter her fairy shape. On a moonlight night Betara Brahma descends and sprinkling Princess Langkam Chahaya with golden flowers and rainbow water (*ayer pancha rona dari kĕyangan*) restores her fairy beauty, addressing her as "Blue Lotus." The hero goes to the wedding on the flying carpet. Darkasila and his hawks fight the followers of the 99 princes. After the wedding Dewa Laksana Dewa and his fairy followers fly up to fairy-land on a magic carpet. A marriage is arranged at last between the hero's mother and Mambang Indra Segara. The hero picks up his magic stone. City and castle vanish. He and his bride and her father set out for home. The 99 princes waylay them but let the father pass. By his magic stone the hero creates a pleasance. His magic knife fights the princess. Fifty of them surrender and later fight the remaining 49 but fail to worst them whereupon the hero calls his dragon friend Ratna Gempita to capture them:—the magic knife would kill them and the hawks blind them. All the princes who escape death acknowledge the hero's suzerainty. The hero releases the hawk and the white rat to return to fairy-land, whence they visit him often. He rules the kingdom of Indra Mahadewa happily with his consort.





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