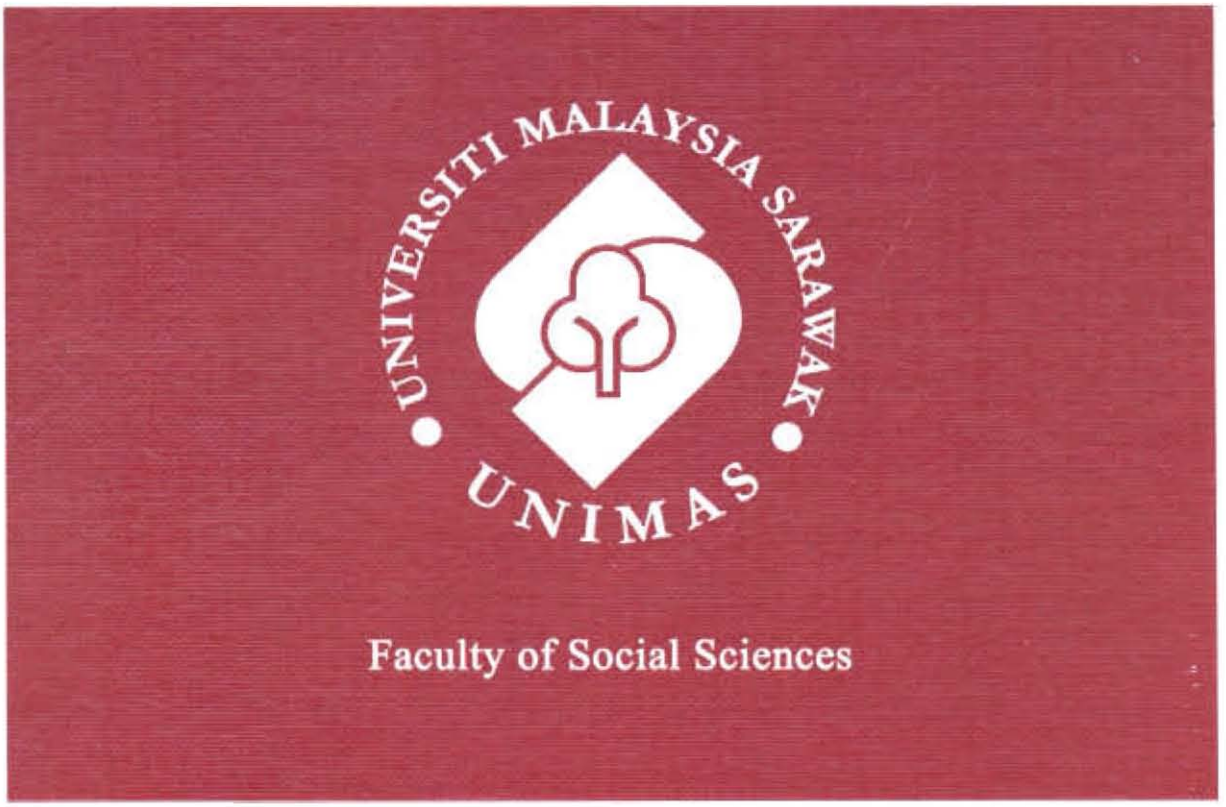


A History of *Lun Tauh* Our People at the Borders of the Kelabit Highlands: from Warfare to the Life of Government and to the Life of Christianity

Valerie Anne Mashman

Doctor of Philosophy
2018

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. The thesis is not accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any other degree.

……

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Ose without whose support and insights this thesis would not have been possible. It is also dedicated to Joel and Alena who have sustained me with their enthusiasm and encouragement.

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This thesis would never have come about without the support, encouragement and help of a number of people, too many to name here. However, it is necessary to acknowledge Malian Tepun, the narrator of the Long Peluan narratives, my husband Ose Murang, and my supervisors Associate Professor Dr. Poline Bala and Dr. Peter Nwanesi Karubi and the Faculty of Social Sciences at UNIMAS, all of whom have been instrumental to the production of this thesis. The research was funded by a Zamalah Graduate Scholarship and through a DPI Investigation grant. In addition, the School of Archaeology and Anthropology at the Australian National University granted me the status of School Visitor in 2014, which enabled me to attend the ANTH8081 Contemporary Anthropology Theory course and to join the Anthropology Thesis Writing Group for three months. This experience greatly enriched the outcome of this thesis.

ABSTRACT

The Kelabit are about to forget their past. This is because since embracing evangelical Christianity in the 1940s, they no longer recite epics, legends or narratives relating to warfare, headhunting and their previous belief-system. This thesis provides an unprecedented insight into Kelabit values and their worldview through the recital of three historical narratives from a longhouse on the edge of the Kelabit highlands, located in northern Sarawak, one of the East Malaysian states on the island of Borneo. The first narrative is about warfare and the migrations of *lun tauh,* "our people." The second is about the life of government and the third story is about the life of Christian prayer. The aim of this study is to provide a context and understanding of the purpose of the headman-narrator in telling the narratives using an anthropological approach to deal with his subjectivity. The research problem is to establish the meanings of these three oral historical narratives, of three different episodes in longhouse history, which the narrator calls "stories of history" *cerita sejarah*. Geertz' interpretative approach using the process of "jungle fieldwork," entails letting the narratives shape the research journey. Although these three narratives are about episodes that mark transformational change, I argue that there is an underlying continuity uncovered through the value system which prizes the quality of *doo'*-ness, goodness, or prestige which is both inherited at birth and acquired through effort. This provides an opportunity for an analysis of the mobility (*iyuk*) of value which continuously generates the standards of *doo'*-ness which enhance social relationships and provide the means for the bringing together and consolidation of *lun tauh,* "our people". Furthermore, another continuity through the narratives is the voice of the headman-narrator who urges for the conventional values of unity and peace in the longhouse at a time when his authority is facing challenges. In the process, I uncover another common thread that runs through each of the three narratives, the quest for the good life, *ulun nuk doo'*. In the first narrative, this is at Long Di'it

where “our people,” *lun tauh* find the soil is fertile for abundant harvests of rice. In the second narrative, the good life is living the life of government, with consensus in the community, reinforced by the values of peace-making. In the final narrative, the good life comes in the era of the life of prayer; a time that is free from omens, a time of change, yet a time for extended sociality and living close to the Penan. This is history garnered through the value indigenous people give to their experiences, which is unlike national and post-colonial histories that represent people on the margins as the helpless victims of colonial power. This approach to history can only be fulfilled by using oral histories which demonstrate how indigenous peoples manage their lives through their value system and how these perceptions account for their actions. This affirms their agency and their capacity to impact episodes of history.

Keywords: historical narratives, interpretation, value system, ethnicity, change.

Sejarah Lun Tauh "Orang Kita" di Sempadan Tanah Tinggi Kelabit: Peperangan dan Penghijrahan Serta Kehidupan dalam Sebuah Kerajaan dan Kehidupan dalam Agama Kristian

ABSTRAK

Orang Kelabit akan melupakan masa lalu mereka. Ini adalah kerana sejak memeluk agama Kristian evangelis dalam tahun 1940-an, mereka tidak lagi ceritakan syair, legenda atau kisah-kisah yang berkaitan dengan peperangan, ngayau dan sistem kepercayaan mereka sebelumnya. Tesis ini memberikan gambaran yang belum pernah dibentangkan berkenaan nilai serta alam maya Kelabit melalui tiga kisah sejarah naratif dari sebuah rumah panjang yang terletak di pinggir kawasan tanah tinggi Kelabit di utara Sarawak, sebuah negeri di Malaysia Timur di Pulau Borneo. Kisah yang pertama adalah mengenai peperangan dan migrasi "lun tauh," "orang kita". Kisah kedua adalah berkenaan kehidupan sebuah perintah dan kisah ketiga, mengenai kehidupan melalui sembahyang dalam agama Kristian. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan sebuah konteks serta pemahaman terhadap fungsi seorang ketua kaum yang memainkan peranan sebagai pencerita dan menceritakan kisah-kisah sejarah melalui pendekatan antropologi demi untuk menangani subjektivitinya. Persoalan kajian ini adalah untuk mengwujudkan makna kepada ketiga-tiga kisah lisan ini, dalam tiga episod berkenaan sejarah sebuah rumah panjang, yang dikenalkan oleh pencerita sebagai "cerita sejarah." Geertz, dalam pendekatan tafsirannya, menggunakan proses "kerja lapangan di hutan" yang melibatkan perkembangan kisah-kisah itu dalam penentuan perjalanan sebuah penyelidikan. Walaupun ketiga-tiga kisah ini adalah episod yang melambangkan perubahan dan transformasi, saya berbicara bahawa secara dasar ada kesinambungan dalam sistem nilai yang menaksirkan kualiti bahawa "doo'-ness," kebaikan, atau prestij adalah diwarisi sejak

lahir dan ia juga diperolehi melalui usaha seseorang. Perkara ini telah memberi peluang dalam analisis berkenaan mobiliti (iyuk) nilai atau "maksud sesebuah nilai" dan secara berterusan menjanakan nilai piawan "doo'ness" demi mempertingkatkan hubungan sosial dan silaturahim serta penyatuan kumpulan "lun tauh," "orang kita". Selain itu, kesinambungan melalui naratif ini adalah suara ketua kaum sebagai pencerita yang mengesakan perpaduan dan keamanan oleh kerana menghadapi cabaran di rumah panjang keatas pimpinan beliau. Melalui kajian ini, saya juga menemui satu tema yang menghubungkan ketiga kisah ini, iaitu usaha dalam mencari kesejahteraan hidup, "ulun nuk doo'." Dalam kisah pertama, "lun tauh" "orang kita", menjumpai kawasan tanah yang subur di Long Di'it yang melimpahkan hasil padi mereka. Kisah yang kedua menunjuk kehidupan yang sejahtera dalam kehidupan berperintah di mana terdapat sepakatan dalam masyarakat yang diperkukuhkan dengan nilai melalui pendamaian. Dalam kisah yang terakhir, kesejahteraan hidup dinikmati melalui hasil kehidupan bersembahyang oleh kerana kebebasan daripada adat pantang larang yang lama, zaman yang berciri perubahan tetapi juga memperluaskan silaturahim dalam masyarakat serta hidup berdekatan dengan masyarakat Penan. Ini adalah sejarah yang dihasilkan melalui makna yang diberikan oleh orang asal terhadap peristiwa-peristiwa yang mereka alami, iaitu sesuatu yang berlainan daripada sejarah nasionalis dan pasca-kolonial yang menggambarkan orang-orang asal sebagai mangsa pasif kuasa penjajah. Pendekatan sejarah sebegini hanya boleh dikecapi melalui sejarah lisan yang menunjukkan bagaimana orang-orang tempatan menentukan kehidupan mereka melalui sistem nilai dan persepsi yang menjanakan tindakan mereka.

Kata kunci : *naratif kisah sejarah , tafsiran, sistem nilai, etnik, perubahan.*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Kelabit are about to forget their past. This is because since embracing evangelical Christianity in the 1940s, they no longer recite epics, legends or narratives relating to warfare, headhunting and their previous belief-system. This study is about three unique historical narratives from a longhouse on the edge of the Kelabit highlands, located in northern Sarawak, one of the East Malaysian states on the island of Borneo. The first narrative is about warfare and the migrations of *lun tauh,* "our people." The second is about the life of government and the third story is about the life of Christian prayer. The aim of this study is to provide a context and understanding of the purpose of the headman-narrator in telling the narratives using an anthropological approach to deal with his subjectivity. The research problem is to establish the meanings of these three oral historical narratives, of three different episodes in longhouse history, which the narrator calls "stories of history" *cerita sejarah*. Geertz' interpretative approach using the process of "jungle fieldwork," (Geertz 2000 [1973]) entails letting the narratives shape the research journey. Although these three narratives are about episodes that mark transformational change, I argue that there is an underlying continuity uncovered through the value system which prizes the quality of *doo'*-ness, goodness, or prestige which is both inherited at birth and acquired through effort. This provides an opportunity for an analysis of the mobility (*iyuk*) of value which continuously generates the standards of *doo'*-ness which enhance social relationships and provide the means for the bringing together and consolidation of *lun tauh,* "our people".

This chapter explains how I came to be given the three Long Peluan narratives, which are at the core of this dissertation, and the subject of this study. After this, I explain what these are about and how I decided the title of this thesis: *A history of* lun tauh *our people at the borders of the Kelabit highlands: from warfare, to the life of government and to the life of Christianity.* I then identify the scope and the statement of problem for this study, frame further research questions and establish objectives. Next, drawing on a review of relevant literature, I establish the significance of this study, before finally outlining the contents of the chapters.

This project came about by pure chance, prompted by a serendipitous discovery. One day, sometime in 2010, I was visiting Long Peluan, my husband's longhouse to follow up on some previous research on basketwork (Mashman 2006, 2012a). I was unexpectedly given three cassette tapes and a tape recorder complete with batteries. Malian Tepun, the headman of Long Peluan, wanted me to listen to three narratives he had recorded for his eldest son, Berrick, in 2006. Sadly, Berrick had since deceased. Malian's desire to record these narratives was so that firstly his sons and then the wider community would know in his words "why things are the way they are." As I listened to the narratives I became very excited as I realized there was a great deal of new material that had never been documented before, worth transcribing and translating. This was accomplished with the assistance of my husband, Ose Murang, a cousin of Malian Tepun and Ose's cousin, Elis Belare.

It has long been said that there is an element of serendipity in fieldwork. The best gifts or insights from the field are never planned. Serendipity is, as coined by Horace Walpole, "the combination of accident and sagacity in recognizing the significance of a discovery" (Remer 1965:6). So, this research project was borne out of a combination of luck and chance. I came to accept that serendipitous discoveries were part of the quest for insights into the narratives as coincidences boosted the research journey. For instance, there were surprises during fieldwork

when I unexpectedly found a photograph of a deceased leading informant, Sina Jau from Long Banga Sarawak, which I myself had taken and had given to her Sarawak-based family. This was displayed in a house in a village in the farthest headwaters of the Krayan River, in Kalimantan. Another surprise came at the Baram Regatta in 2011, when I was tapped on the shoulder by Peter and Philip, Ngurek descendants of the hero of the second narrative Tai Iwan, who were anxious for me to hear their story. This came at a time when I was giving up hope of finding anyone who could help with stories to cross reference the narrative of Tai Iwan. Another revelation was the chance singing of a Kelabit song "The Song of Dayang" by my husband's relative Sina Radu Ulun at my house, which led me to make connections about Kelabit ideas of value or *doo'*-ness. Another unexpected moment was when Tama Gerawat told me, while cleaning up a megalithic grave, that according to Kenyah beliefs, the power of building megaliths in the Kelapang river system was attributed to the presence of a friendly white crocodile. All these serendipitous moments generated so much material and inspired the ideas that gave birth to three papers that helped me further define the shape of this project.

The first paper traced the process of discovering common ancestry and kinship by a Ngurek family with Tai Iwan the ancestor-hero of the narrator, Malian Tepun. This story I had to exclude from this thesis project as it became tangential (Mashman 2012b). The second paper helped to provide insight into notions of goodness, prestige and value, which are discussed as themes in this thesis (Mashman 2015). The third paper was prompted by an unexpected story telling a Kenyah version of the history of the stone culture in the highlands. It highlights parallel accounts of history and the need for a more dynamic and heterogeneous history of the highlands, something I touch on in Chapter 5 (Mashman 2017).

As I came to understand that serendipity is 'the essence of fieldwork research' (Pieke 2000: 138, cited by Rivoal and Salazar 2013), I learnt that it is not pure chance that generates a

serendipitous discovery in ethnography. Even though serendipity has long been recognized as a key feature of an ethnographic journey, scholars caution that serendipity alone does not generate a classic ethnography (Powdermaker 1966, Merton 1968). It has to be combined with that "sagacity" that was alluded to earlier. Sagacity refers to the preparation and insight of the researcher, combined with the intuitive ability to develop relationships and theoretical insights, identified as relational serendipity and analytical serendipity (Fine and Deegan 1996: 441). The task of the anthropologist is to 'make method out of a rhetoric of circumstance' (Marcus 2002:198). "Making method" of the serendipitous gift of the narratives led me to search for insights into the narratives. These insights continually eluded the task of creating a methodological framework for this thesis. However, they led me to explore a number of interesting tangents in the papers mentioned above, which delayed the prompt completion of this dissertation, much to the consternation of my long-suffering supervisors.

Although I did not realize it at the time, to begin with a project with a serendipitous finding meant that my research journey did not follow a conventional pattern of formal research that assumes that the researcher knows what she is looking for. Instead, I had to find ways of establishing connections between strands of the narratives with theoretical concerns, engaging with what Fine and Deegan call "analytical serendipity" (Fine and Deegan 1996:441). However much I had prepared, unlike the experiences of other social scientists, my fieldwork and interviews reflect Metcalf's words "the learning experiences of the anthropologist cannot be learned in advance." Because of the serendipitous nature of the work, the topics had to be approached repeatedly from different angles; following up different clues, but like good detective work meanings only came after time (Metcalf 2005:12). This supports the idea that "in anthropology, the 'field'" shapes "the research design, rather than the other way around" (Rivoal and Salazar 2013:3). In order to do this, reflexivity and an open mind are prerequisites

for “making a method” out of serendipity in fieldwork (Powdermaker 1966:10, Pieke 2000: 138, Rivoal and Salazar 2013:3).

At another level, the serendipitous gift of the narratives caused me, in reflexive mode, to ask myself another question. Why had Malian Tepun given these narratives to me, rather than anyone else? In many ways, I was a good target for disseminating the content of the narratives as I had been busy with my husband asking questions in the village for over twelve years in relation to baskets (Mashman 2006, 2012a) and recording traditional songs (Mashman et al. 2014). Another clue to answering this question comes in the word *turis* that Malian himself uses in the first narrative to refer to visiting scholars who have been researching the stone culture and investigating the cultural sites in the highlands (Barker et al 2008, 2009, Hitchner 2009, Lloyd-Smith 2012). He says that it is *turis* who say that the stone megalithic graves represent the earliest history of the Kelabit people and he states that they say the land in the upper Kelapang belongs to the Kelabit. He uses the word *turis* to refer not to tourists, who very rarely come to Long Peluan, but to researchers as outsiders and authorities (Mashman 2017:415). So it may be that he saw me as a *turis,* a person who is an outsider with authoritative knowledge.

Therefore, at one level, this dissertation in some way fulfills the mission that Malian Tepun has given me of disseminating and circulating the narratives. In order to attain this, one of the main aims of this study is to provide a context for headman-narrator in telling the narratives. Geertz’ (2000 [1973]) method of “thick description” provides a tool for the interpretation for emergent and underlying concepts in the narratives. This enables the analysis of the way underlying values and value system which prevail in the community, have impacts on the way the story is told.

1.2 What the Narratives are About

The first narrative which I call "Warfare and the migrations of *lun tauh*, 'our people'", describes the migrations and separations of the Ngurek, Sa'ban and the Kelabit, as "our people," and how they came to Long Moyo downriver to Long Peluan. After this, a group under the leadership of Telen Sang, eventually defeated their enemies and migrated to Long Di'it, the homeland of the southern Kelabit. Malian Tepun, the narrator, heard this narrative from Seraya Balu Bun Kalang, a Ngurek woman from Long Semiyang.

The second narrative, entitled "The quest for the life of government," deals with Tai Iwan, an ancestor-hero, and his alliance with the Ngurek chief Aping Nyipa and his mission to end warfare from across the border. This came about by seeking the intervention of both the Brunei and the Brooke authorities. The latter eventually support an expedition to raid Tai Iwan's enemies at Pa Ibang. This leads to Tai Iwan engaging in peace-making, giving taxes to the government and summoning "our people" from over the border to build a fort, a government office at Lio Mato. Around this time his descendants and other family members set about moving downriver to be closer to the fort, and Long Peluan begins to be established, as a longhouse settlement. The source of this narrative was Po' Araya Kapan Tepun, an elder from Batuh Patong.

The third narrative is entitled "The coming of the life of prayer." The narrator's father So Tepun goes to seek Christianity in the Krayan River area of Dutch Borneo arranging for an Indonesian missionary to come and teach people about Christianity. He describes how people gave up rituals of observing omen birds and animals and how they were asked to stop drinking *borak* (rice beer). However, not everyone converts at once. He also outlines how So Tepun and others in turn evangelized the Penan, how they gradually became settled neighbours at Long Beruang and helped the Kelabit in carrying goods and letters from downriver into the highlands.

This narrative comes from Malian himself with recollections obtained from his father, Soh Tepun.

1.3 Establishing a Title: The History of *Lun Tauh*, "Our People"

In analyzing the three narratives, the first title that came to mind was *The Making of the Longhouse.* This was because of episodes describing migrations and histories of the ancestors of the current population of the longhouse of Long Peluan. However, this title gradually became transformed in my mind into *The History of Lun Tauh,* "Our People." This came about as I began to think about the longhouse of Long Peluan and the original migrations from Pa Di'it and the Bahau River and the shifts in the composition of households and migrations in and out of the longhouse. I then realized that the narratives were less the story of *the making of the longhouse*, which was too confined, and too static an idea, but more a history of *our people*. The breadth of this sense of connection became increasingly evident as we journeyed to the Krayan district of Kalimantan, in search of shared histories. This was articulated strongly by our hosts on our first evening in Long Layu in the Krayan as they talked about their kin relationships with the Kelabit. For example, Tingang said to us "My father's side of the family comes from Pa Di'it," which is in Sarawak. The concept of *lun tauh* recalls a time before the establishment of borders and states when people thought of themselves in terms of locality rather than ethnicity. Underlying this is a different understanding of the possibilities of identity and ethnicity, projected through kinship, alliances and peacemaking. This undercuts the contemporary currency of the primordial ethnic labels such as "Kelabit" and "Sa'ban" that have come into use with the colonial state, that define and reify ethnicity, as will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Through the concept of *lun tauh* (our people) the narratives evoke the alliance with the Ngurek and a wide network of kin connecting people beyond the locality of the longhouse, to

places such as the seat of the Brunei and Brooke administrative power in Marudi, or the Fort at Lio Mato or the church at Long Budong in the Krayan in Dutch Borneo. This creates a wider social world, as a stage on which the headman-narrator can vicariously exhibit his prestige and agency through the actions of his ancestor-heroes.

1.4 The Scope of the Study and the Research Problem

In his analysis of Kelabit history and processes of change among the Kelabit in the 1990s, Amster writes, "Historical discourse among the Kelabit …is disappearing," (1998:7). He was shocked to discover that the Kelabit were not interested in their history and that most people he interviewed "had very little knowledge of their collective past." In fact, there was a tendency amongst them to suppress and reject their knowledge of the past. Some twenty years later, Amster's acute observations were affirmed by a Kelabit anthropologist, Poline Bala (2008:116). She describes how past practices were seen "as a burden from which they seek to be freed." Her observations resonate with Amster's description of the Kelabit disregard for their past that was a consequence of "a future-oriented focus in progress" (Amster 1998:6).

The serendipitous ways in which the three historical narratives, which are at the heart of this dissertation, have come about seem to challenge these initial observations made both by Amster and Poline Bala. In fact, as described earlier, the narratives are laden with stories of episodes from the past, providing glimpses into the life of the Kelabit community through time and space. Hence, the pressing questions that this dissertation deals with are as follows. Why are these three oral historical narratives told at this point in the social history of the community? What is their significance in the contemporary world of the Kelabit? Why are they introduced as *cerita sejarah* (stories of history) by their narrator, Malian Tepun? Will they be able to provide a window into the Kelabit knowledge of their collective past? Or, will the narratives

offer what Maxwell describes as "conceptualizations, which the group has, about its own past" (Maxwell 1989b: 168).

Related to the above issues is the position of the oral historical narratives of indigenous people, such as the Kelabit, in the national history of Malaysia. The documentation of oral historical narratives of indigenous peoples has yet to gain a place in the national history of Malaysia. It is important to note that the oral history and the voices of minorities is an issue that Wang (1979:4) has already highlighted fifteen years after the formation of Malaysia. Wang then has identified that the voices of minority groups have been left out from the body of colonial and nationalist history. In fact, there is an argument that suggests Malay nationalist historians have used written history as a political tool to unite Sabah, Sarawak and Peninsula Malaysia under one nation. In this process, variations in experience of major events such as colonialism and nationalism and their own spatial perspectives on their own history have become subsumed to the project of national history. From this perspective, each locality on the margins has its own historiography, its own fragile traditions which need to be affirmed in the face of the cultural domination of the homogenizing tendencies of national history at the centre.

However, to attain this, there is a need for a methodology for understanding and discussing history in a plural society. As mentioned, there has been a deliberate omission in the documentation of the voices of minority groups in the body of colonial and national history. This was because of repeated distrust by colonial historians of oral histories on the grounds of a lack of reliability (Wang 1979:4, Vansina 2006:11). In keeping with western imperialist history, reliability was equated with the idea of scientific objectivity, and that "any culture or people that did not do this, did not have a sense of history and was thus inferior to those who did" (Wang 1979:5). From this perspective, history was based on the reports, letters and diaries of the colonial governments and because the colonized did not have written documents, their

perceptions were not considered relevant. This negation of indigenous history has become explained by the concept of Orientalism as a system of thought which was described as "…. a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said 1985:3). In other words, to include indigenous history in the historical discourse of the nation, there is a need to explore "ways that different cultures formulate their own historicities" in relation to nationalist ideology (Hoskins1987: 606). Since the scope of anthropology provides tools for dealing with the subjectivities of oral history and meanings, both partial and varied, which emerged from fieldwork, this study turns to anthropology as a tool to analyze the historicities inherent in the Long Peluan narratives. This gives a new perspective in history, creating multiple viewpoints (Lai 1998: 101). This is a consequence of interpreting history as it is influenced by culture and values using ethnography. Another advantage of using anthropology to understand oral history is that it enables a view of the past from the margins on the periphery of the state, redressing the balance from the dominant view from the centre, which often denies an active historical role to the borderland population, on the periphery (Baud and Schendel 1997:238).

1.5 Research Questions

The following questions arise in dealing with the problem: firstly, what meanings is the narrator conveying through the narratives? What are the underlying themes, if any, that link these three narratives? Further questions arise when examining the narratives against parallel accounts or documented history: what is the oral or written evidence to support or refute events in these narratives and how do we deal with historical anomalies?

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The main objective is to contextualize the narratives, and to provide commentary and analysis. This is in line with the need to understand the significance of the narratives and their meanings. To attain this, the three narratives are first of all translated into English with subheadings in three chapters, (Chapters 5, 6 and 7). A secondary objective is to juxtapose the narratives against records of events that are known or other oral accounts and examine the significance of the differences in events.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The presentation of these historical narratives on cassette tapes to me in 2010 is remarkable since the Kelabit are forgetting their history as highlighted in section 1.4 above. As Matthew Amster suggests this is happening for a number of reasons: formal education; large-scale migration out of the highlands; intermarriage with other ethnic groups and the loss of the language (Amster 1998:6). However, he also states by far the most significant reason is conversion to Christianity. Since embracing evangelical Christianity in the late 1930s, the Kelabit have made a break with the past and become reluctant to talk about warfare and pre-Christian belief systems (ibid.:292). Taking this theme further, Bala explains that this reluctance to talk about the past indicates the extent to which many have rejected it (Bala 2008:116). Thus, the documentation and analysis of these three historical narratives contribute historical understanding of Kelabit interactions with other ethnic groups and the state at the turn of the 20th century and the first stage of their conversion to Christianity.This has not been covered in previous major studies, which touch on the Kelabit and their past (Talla 1979, Lian-Saging 1976/1977, Janowski 1991, Bala 2000, 2001, 2002, 2008, Amster 1998, 2005, 2006, Bulan 2011, Hitchner 2009, Ewart 2009). However, the circulation of these narratives in 2010

indicates a change in attitudes on the part of the Kelabit towards history. The current generation of educated Kelabit, aged in their fifties and sixties, understand the need to document history, particularly in relation to migration, megaliths and use of land, which are current issues relating to the gazetting of land by the state. Nonetheless, I still encountered a resistance among the elder generation to talk about the past.

As highlighted earlier in Section 1.3, there has been an omission in the documentation of the voices of minority groups in the body of colonial and nationalist history. A consequence of this system of thought was, that in Sarawak, local ethnic groups became identified by the idiosyncrasies of the Brooke administrators' ideas of bounded homogenous categories. There was no historical understanding of the fluidity of peoples' movements and relationships facilitated by extensive river systems, which gave rise to heterogeneous ethnic identities across a landscape devoid of political borders. Groups became stereotyped and labeled with fixed identities to facilitate the government's policies for social control through pacification and taxation. This situation has been highlighted by Malaysian scholars such as Noor (2010:79) who observes that historical texts written in the post-independence era have been uncritical of the notion of the fixed racial categories introduced in the colonial era. These texts often negate the heritage of a racially mixed Malaysia, composed of heterogeneous rather than homogenous communities. To establish a balance, Noor points out the need to re-evaluate this situation and to take a multivalent view of history.

The contribution of this study to the discipline of anthropology is to demonstrate how anthropology can be used to interpret oral history and uncover underlying concepts. The identification of the indigenous concept of *lun tauh,* (our people) as a heterogeneous identity across Borneo before the institution of borders and the establishment state, impacts on the on-going debate about ethnicity in Borneo and Malaysia (Babcock 1974, Rousseau 1990, Shamsul

2004, Chua 2007, Lim Teck Ghee, Alberto Gomes, Azly Rahman 2009, Thambiah 2009, Metcalf 2010, Hoffstaedter 2011, Kahn 2012, King 2012a, Sillander 1995, 2016, Sillander and Alexander 2016). Furthermore, this study goes further by establishing a connection between the generation and consolidation of the social grouping of *lun tauh* (our people) and the value system which prizes the quality of *doo'*-ness, (goodness, or prestige) which is both inherited at birth and acquired through effort. This provides an opportunity for an analysis of the mobility (*iyuk*) of value or "what value does" (Miller 2008) supported by the work of Bala (2008), Graeber (2001, 2013). "What value does" is to continuously generate the standards of *doo'*-ness which enhance the social relationships, which are the key to survival in the Kelabit longhouse and the community beyond.

Finally, this study makes a contribution to the discipline of history because it establishes the meanings local people ascribe to the events they experience, through their value system. This highlights their agency and is markedly different from nationalist and post-colonial histories that convey indigenous people as the passive victims of imperial power. This comes about through understanding how local people negotiate the world through their value system and how this explains why they act the way they do (Walker 2002:xv). How this takes place is further reflected in the outline of chapters below.

1.8 Outline of the Chapters

To begin with Chapter 2, I identify the genre of the narratives as oral historical narratives, in terms of "memories of memory" (Morrison 1998:2) against other forms such as oral traditions and oral histories. There are several features that characterize this genre. The action is set in historical, rather than mythical time, and events take place within an episodic time frame. To further legitimize the authority of the narrator, genealogies are used to create links with the narrator, the audience and the central characters or heroes. In addition, a sense of place is

evoked, through features on the landscape, to provide a visualization of action in a familiar setting, and to give prominence to salient features of territory. A technique commonly used within the genre is the voice of the narrator who articulates the purpose of the narratives, which can be understood in terms of his concerns as a leader. These can be better grasped through the Kelabit ideas of prestige and standing or the state of being *doo'* (good) and movement or agency (*iyuk*) (Bala 2008). This is linked to the wider notion of value and values as a tool for analyzing the narratives (Graeber 2001, 2013). I suggest that using the tools of values and agency widens the parochialism of the narrator's perspective for the reader. I then demonstrate how the narratives themselves create value for the narrator who uses the narrative as a vehicle for extending his social worlds and promoting his own prestige.

Chapter 3 deals with the function of an anthropological method to analyze the oral narratives. I look at the role of the narrator, the chain of transmission, concepts of time and multiple viewpoints. The issues and challenges of translating and transcribing the narratives are also discussed. Finally, I touch on my position as an anthropologist in this study and I consider utilizing the concept of multi-sited fieldwork.

Chapter 4 provides a general context to the narratives through a description of the geographical setting of Long Peluan at the intersection of a number of ancient routes, which have been part of people's conception of their surroundings and their ordering of space. This explains how the Kelabit and the Sa'ban are linked to a wider group of people embraced by the term *lun tauh* (our people) through language, kinship and historical allegiances. I then go on to describe the settlement of Long Peluan outlining features of households, ethnicity, levels of education, subsistence and income. After that I consider the mother settlement at Pa Di'it. A further common factor is touched on: the history of a shared cultural practice of secondary burial, the traces of which are to be found in a stone culture consisting of dolmen, stone mounds

and standing stones across northern and central Borneo. These monuments, which marked the decease of illustrious chiefs were associated with prestigious death feasts which connected *lun tauh* (our people) across mountain ranges, headwaters and political boundaries. The sponsorship of such feasts promoted the status (*doo'*-ness) of the hosts in many complex ways as they mobilized a large workforce to prepare for the feast and erect a monument.

In Chapter 5, I present a summary of the first narrative "The migrations of *lun tauh* (our people) under the leadership of Telen Sang" and the translation of the text. After that, I analyze the contents of the narrative and in the discussion section explain at length how two notions of identity emerge from the narrative, a fixed reified notion of being Kelabit and a fluid heterogeneous identity of *lun tauh* (our people). I seek to define this concept within the narrative and set this against a review of pertinent literature on ethnicity and link the reified notion of Kelabit ethnicity with the nascent Brooke state, and contemporary articulations of ethnic categories in Malaysia. This is further linked to the narrator's own perception of territory belonging to the Kelabit people.

The story of *ulun perintah* "the life of government" is the theme of the second narrative and Chapter 6. The hero, Tai Iwan goes to Marudi, seeking *ulun perintah* (the life of government) which means peace and security. There are insights into the narrator's view of *perintah* (government) and the value of peace-making, which can be understood both as a means of extending the breadth of *lun tauh* (our people) and as a means for the narrator to exhort consensus and unity within his own longhouse.

In the introduction to Chapter 7, I set the context of the history of conversion in Borneo and the context of literature of the transition of the Penan from nomadism to a settled life and conversion to evangelical Christianity. After presenting the translation of the narrative and the commentary, the fourth part of this chapter highlights arguments about change, continuity and

discontinuity (Sahlins 2005, Robbins 2007, Chua 2012). This provides a means of evaluating the nature of religious change as it is described in the narrative and the underlying continuities of the value system and the concomitant aspects of sociality. Through a close examination of events described in the narrative and the support of other ethnographic material, the power of prayer, (*sembayang)*, linked to a new form of sociality, in the process of conversion is identified. The second part of this analysis deals with the conversion of the neighbouring Penan and how they come close in the eyes of the elders to becoming like the Kelabit, as "Penan *tauh* (our Penan), a significant extension of their social world. However, the Penan in Sahlins' words "become…more like themselves," as the values of Penan-ness become reinforced through conversion (Sahlins 2005:23).

The analysis of these narratives is treated in a similar manner. Each narrative has been given its title by me as the editor and I have broken each narrative into parts with subheadings in order to guide the reader, and to facilitate cross-reference between the translation and the commentary and the original transcriptions in the appendix. The first narrative, Chapter 5, develops the theme of *lun tauh* (our people) through the allegiance with the Ngurek and Sa'ban and this is explored more fully in the discussion section after the commentary of the narrative text. Chapter 6 features the second narrative, which takes place at the beginning of the Brooke government and provides rich and unique perspectives of this era from the borderlands. These are juxtaposed with alternative narratives and Brooke accounts, which are to be found in the appendices. The discussion at the end of the chapter focuses on the meanings that the narrator conveys through this narrative and links are uncovered with the theme of *lun tauh* (our people) and the pursuit of *doo'-ness* and value. Chapter 7 sets the background of the history of the conversion to Christianity in Borneo and the transition of the Penan to a settled life. The commentary and the final analysis examine how far change really takes place for the Penan and

the Kelabit in the context of the anthropological debate regarding conversion, continuity and change (Sahlins 1992, Robbins 2007, Chua 2012).

1.9 Summary

In this chapter I have described the way I was given the Long Peluan narratives by sheer chance, as a serendipitous event and I examined the place of serendipity in ethnographic fieldwork and how this needs to be supplemented with understanding gained by preparation, comparison and insight. I also suggested the reason I was given the narratives rather than anyone else. This hinges on chance and the ambiguous way I am seen by the narrator both as a *turis*, a researcher, an outsider with authority and as the wife of a leader in the community. I also explained how I chose the title for this study as I came to realize that the narratives were about the history of *lun tauh* (our people).

In addition, I have outlined the research problem and scope of the study. This is about elucidating the meanings of the narratives using an interpretative approach (Geertz 2000), indicating that anthropology provides the tools for dealing with the subjectivities and anomalies embedded in the narratives. This involves unraveling the web of networks of kin and alliances which connect the narratives, through journeys downriver and over the Indonesian border and exploring the historical, and social influences that are shaped by the underlying values.

I established the significance of the historical narratives in the context of previous ethnographic and historical work on the Kelabit who negate the role of history in their cultural discourse. This dissertation is also important as an example of the documentation of the voices of minority groups in the history of Malaysia, which have hitherto been omitted from the chronicles of the history of the nation. Moreover, the narratives represent three episodes, the migration to Pa Di'it, the life of government and the life of Christianity. These represent the enormous changes brought about by the inception of Brooke rule and the introduction of

Christianity and this dissertation will examine these changes for underlying continuities. In order to do this, I will make a comparative study of the genre of historical narratives in the literature review in the next chapter, which leads to the common factor inherent in historical narratives, that at a deeper level, they express a value system, which persists as a continuity in the wake of change. It is the very way the headman-narrator expresses his concerns that reveals how the value system prevails and this is discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

ORAL NARRATIVES AND UNDERLYING VALUES

2.1 Introduction

The first part of this chapter seeks to clarify terms such as oral history and oral traditions before identifying the Long Peluan historical narratives as a genre of historical oral narratives, within oral traditions. I then go on to discuss certain characteristics and functions of historical oral narratives, looking at the use of genealogies, the use of place and conceptualizations of the past and episodic time. This analysis reveals a political intention articulated through the voice of the narrator reflecting his own value system and that of his audience. In the second part of this chapter I deal more fully with Kelabit ideas of value associated with prestige, standing and the state of being good, *doo'* and a related flexibility and dynamisim *iyuk* (Bala 2008:54), which is linked to the wider notion of value as a tool for analyzing the narratives (Graeber 2001, 2013). Such an examination of the underlying notions of values and agency widens the parochialism of the narrator's personal political perspective for the reader. I then argue that the narratives themselves create value for the narrator who uses the narrative as vehicle for extending his social worlds and promoting his own prestige.

2.2 Defining Oral Historical Narratives

This section clarifies some terms such as oral history and oral traditions and locates the Long Peluan oral narratives as a genre. To begin with, I will deal with oral history: Finnegan (1992:47) outlines how oral history has come to be recognized as a discipline with its own methodology, organizations and journals. As a discipline, oral history developed from the rise of a perceived need to determine the history of peoples who had no documented history. As

such, oral historians have set out to use oral traditions that had been handed down by word of mouth to discover the history of non-literate cultures. Vansina pioneered a methodology for using oral history with his work in Africa (2006 (1961)). In addition, oral history rose in importance, out of a theoretical demand to look at "history from below" for example, from the experiences of slaves in America, and this often relied on personal recollections (Finnegan 1992:47).

Thus, oral history has two aspects, the first is derived from oral traditions that have been transmitted over generations and the second is from personal accounts of an event in the past. How does oral history relate to oral traditions? Morrison (1998:2) draws a useful distinction between oral history and oral traditions. Oral history is "an account of a historical event, person or place, a first- person narrative of the past, by an eye witness." On the other hand, he argues, an oral tradition goes back further in time. It is "a memory of memories" and tends to be considered within the realm of the anthropologist. Morrison also cautions that the term "oral history" can lead to the assumption of a greater totality of knowledge of the past than the informant may possess and those who utilize oral history may omit to consult or acknowledge other sources, deriving from archaeology, linguistics, archival material and anthropology. Similarly, Finnegan (1992:48) identifies another problem with the term "oral history", namely that it becomes subject to the same sort of scrutiny as the discipline of history with the requirement of evidence and the examination of the text for bias or distortion, and a quest for objectivity.

Taking my lead from Morrison (1998:3), who defines oral historical narratives as giving "an account of events that occurred before the informant was born – one, two, three or more generations ago…" (ibid.), I prefer to consider the Long Peluan oral historical narratives as

"a memory of memories" rather than oral histories. Oral histories and oral historical narratives are part of the wide repertoire of the oral traditions of a group.

As mentioned above, oral traditions, is a general term for all aspects of the past that are passed down by word of mouth, from one generation to another and it is useful to consider their functions. Examples of such traditions may consist of folk stories, proverbs, war songs, love songs, epics, lullabies and ritual chants.[1] Scott argues that the function of such traditions is to encompass ritual life, cosmology, values, belief systems, social institutions and law (2009:237). Adaptable and flexible, they can be adjusted to the social and political needs of the community at the time of transmission. For the people of Long Peluan, like Scott's hill-peoples on mainland Southeast Asia, these traditions are the repositories of knowledge of peoples on the move, who pioneer land for swidden farming, seeking vantage points against enemies.

Maxwell conducted an extensive survey of oral traditions in Borneo. Of particular interest is his definition of "ethno-historical texts" as he says these cover origins and migrations of the history of a people, like the Long Peluan narratives. Maxwell states they:

> … contain considerable information on the place of origin of a group, and the events and episodes, which relate to the life and times of their earliest beginnings. They often trace in poetic form the historical development of the group, and sometimes even bring the sequence of events up to present times (1989b: 168).

In his review, he highlights "ethno-historical texts" which are sung as poetry, but he has nothing to say about the shorter prose historical narratives, which are at the centre of this study. Similarly, Harrisson's account of Kelabit oral traditions (Harrisson 1949a) overlooks this genre as does Rubenstein's survey of oral traditions in Sarawak (Rubenstein 1973). Indeed, it is difficult to define Kelabit historical prose narratives as a genre within the Kelabit oral traditions (see Table 2.1). This is because such narratives are no longer recited and also because it is hard

[1] See Appell (1990) and Finnegan (1992) for a discussion of the full range of oral traditions.

to determine whether there are any other such recordings in existence. There are only the recordings of the three Long Peluan narratives, which are the focus of this study, available as examples of the genre.

Malian, the narrator, could only find Malay rather than Kelabit words to classify these narratives, which he calls *cerita sejarah* (stories of history) which is similar to "a memory of memories". They bear some similarity to what Sather describes as *jerita lama'* or *jerita tuai* in his account of Iban oral traditions (Sather 1994:55, Sather 2012:136, Wadley 2004:626). According to Sather, these were sometimes composite accounts from more than one source about migrations and early pioneers and were often condensed.

However, the Long Peluan narratives make no claims to supernatural and mythical origins of the group, and this defines them as being different from other types of narratives, which do, and the song traditions of the Kelabit. Sellato (1993:157) suggests that a historical narrative only generates mythical elements through transmissions over the generations and thus a narrative that is merely historical in theme is likely of a later origin than narratives which contain myths. Further to this, the absence of supernatural elements in the Long Peluan narratives may be a consequence of the narrator, Malian Tepun, and his community being Christian. Thus, the Long Peluan oral historical narratives are "stories of history" in the words of the narrator, which share features and functions to similar genres within oral traditions.

Table 2.1: Types of Kelabit oral traditions

Kelabit name of form	Gender of singer	Type and purpose	Type after Vansina 2006	Examples	References
Ulin	Women	Spontaneous love song	Poetry	Ulin 1,2	Rubenstein 1973, Mashman et al. 2014.
Lakuh	Women (modern lakuh also men)	Personal song releasing feelings Also for event e.g. arrival of Tom Harrisson	Personal poetry	Lakuh 5,6,7,	Rubenstein 1973, Mashman et al. 2014, Bala 2002, 2007.
Layot	Women	Song with parody and humour	Poetry	Layot Tuan Paolus	Rubenstein 1973, Mashman et al. 2014.
Adih and Dukan	Women or men with chorus	Entertainment while working sung at weddings	Epic	1. Agan Tudun 2. Tingang 's dream	1.Rubenstein 1973, Maxwell 1989 Harrisson 1949a 2. Mashman n.d.
Benging	Men	Warrior song celebrates exploits	Epic myth	Banging Raja Ubong	Janowski 2008, Maxwell 1989.
Sedadai	Men	Warrior song celebrates exploits	Epic of artistic merit	Balang Lipang	Rubenstein 1973, Harrisson 1949a, Maxwell1989.
Sedadir	Men Women	Warrior song celebrates exploits. Describes formation of earth. Chorus	Aetiological myth Longing for homeland	Tukad Rini Ngilo'	Rubenstein 1973, Labang 1958, Janowski 2014, Bala 2002, Maxwell 1989.
Dawar	Both	To invite intervention of the spirits	Religious poetry	Dawar Kanew Dawar Ada' Pade Nuwat Anak	Rubenstein 1973, Talla 1979.
Sekuno	Both	To instruct and entertain	Fable		Harrisson and Ribuh 1955, Harrisson1956.
Kuwab aki	Men and women	To promote headhunting			Rubenstein 1991b, Talla 1979.

2.3 Characteristics of Historical Oral Narratives: Genealogies

The absence of references to supernatural origins or mythical ancestors makes the Long Peluan narratives comparable to the so-called "true" tale of Oemau, found on the island of Roti, in the Indonesian archipelago. This is because it is not based in mythical time but in time, which is generated through the genealogies of identifiable people. This makes the "true" tale different:

> … from the more inclusive category of "tale" (tutuik) by reference to specific persons, places, and genealogical periods. The characters in such tales are ancestors whose names can be found in the ordered genealogical sequence recited by some contemporary group (Fox 1980:65).

The Rotinese tale of Oemau, tells of the origin of a water source that is crucial to successful wet-rice cultivation, thus establishing ownership and rights to use. It is *true*[2] according to Fox, because it is rooted in genealogical, rather than mythical time. In addition, its narrator is part of a relevant legitimate lineage and moreover, places mentioned in the narratives are readily identified by the audience. Similarly, the narrator in the Long Peluan narratives relates his lineage at the beginning of the second narrative and the community of listeners, through their local knowledge, is able to identify the names of specific rivers, mountains, mountain passes, rock and valleys embedded in the local landscape that are mentioned in the narratives.

At this point, it is worth examining in more depth some of the characteristics of historical oral narratives, identified in the discussion above. Let us begin with looking at genealogies, which Wadley (2004:626) observes are a means for recording and transmitting historical memory. The narrator of the Long Peluan narratives, Malain Tepun recites a public genealogy across seven generations. This establishes his authority as a narrator and validates his position as a leader through the references to his ancestors. This convention is similar to the recital of

[2] My italics –also in the subsequent quotations

narratives on the island of Roti, where according to Fox, a narrative is considered authentic, if the narrator is the descendant of the ancestor whose deeds are narrated. As Fox notes, the very deed of evoking names, and establishing a personal connection with ancestors through descent is an expression of power (1979:18). Sillander builds on this idea drawing on a collective repertoire of Borneo ethnography and explains explain this belief:

> …the authority of ancestors legitimizes the authority of elders and thus motivates them to reproduce it, and …the elders' constant invocation of it in discourse and the manner in which it is represented, establishes it as authoritative doxa (Sillander 2012:96).

Sillander (ibid.) goes on to state that the potency and authority of leaders, demonstrated during their lifetimes, transcends death and continues as they become recalled publicly as ancestors. Further to this, Sather (1994:54) indicates that the act of the recalling of potent ancestors through the recital of genealogies also evokes a wide network of kin, who are endorsed, by the reference to mutual ancestors, leading to the acknowledgement of active kindred relations. However, he also notes that the deliberate selection of genealogies is a function of the Iban recital of genealogies (*tusut*) which are "localized" and are "of direct concern to those who memorize and recite them." Drawing on Sandin's own experiences of documenting genealogies he explains these are subject to "manipulation and lapses of memory." This all points to the way genealogies can be described in a subjective and political manner as highlighted by Scott (2009:233), who observes which "lines of ancestry to omit, to trace, to emphasize, is, in one sense, arbitrary." This is because of the vast number of linkages that are generated through bilateral reckoning of descent through both the female and male lines. However, there is more to this process of selection of genealogies by the narrator of the Long Peluan narratives as these relate to the prestige of his own lineage and other political ties that he wishes to emphasize. As Sather points out (2012:136) ancestors can be evoked not necessarily in terms of biological

genealogies but "as sources of local authority, exemplars of tradition." This is the case in the recital of genealogies at the beginning of the second Long Peluan narrative, as this genealogy of leaders does not follow a direct line of descent and what is significant is that a certain name that has been left out of the list of ancestral leaders which will be discussed in Chapter 5. Thus, while the act of reciting a genealogy is a charter for the foundation of the longhouse, it also represents the prestige and interests of the narrator and his immediate kin. This problem of the partiality of the narrator will be dealt with in the next section.

2.4 Characteristics of Historical Oral Narratives: the Narrator

Following on from the previous discussion, it can be argued that the purpose of the Long Peluan narratives is to consolidate the leadership of a family of leaders. Like Alasa'a, in *A Solomon Islands Chronicle* (Burt 2001:6), Malian's voice is one of many potential voices regarding the subjects he raises, and "his historical perspective is very local, often parochial," as his concern is for the origins of his longhouse and the affirmation of his own leadership. Further to this, as Bernard Sellato reminds us, the telling of historical narratives is often related to the maintenance of power of the ruling families in Borneo, as these stories are transmitted within their group from father to son. The history that is narrated is the history of the ruling dynasty (Sellato 1993:168), a factor common to the genre of historical narratives at a universal level: "the general history of the tribe is often identical with the history of the ruling house" (Vansina 2006:156). However, while it can be argued that the purpose of the Long Peluan narratives is to consolidate the leadership of a family of rulers, it is important to remember that "ethno-history serves…as an important factor for the maintenance of ethnic identity" (Nicolaisen 1976b: 63), and is thus of potential relevance to a much wider community. In fact, as will be argued in Chapter 5, the Long Peluan narratives pull together kinship strands to demonstrate how everyone within the longhouse is interconnected, to a wider social world. This belies

notions of bounded fixed ethnic identity as the bigger grouping, *lun tauh* (our people) extends to the Ngurek and Sa'ban and across to their kin on the Krayan river, Dutch Borneo. These kinship strands become reciprocally affirmed by counterpart narratives, by Sa'ban, Penan, Ngurek and Krayan. Further to this, their social world is extended as their leaders interact with sources of administrative power in Marudi during the Brooke period and the sources of spiritual power in Dutch Borneo, as they seek out the Christian life. The breadth of kinship is recollected in the narratives through references to place which is discussed in the next section.

2.5 Characteristics of Historical Oral Narratives: Place

Sather (1994:54) notes that genealogies are localized and are associated with the delineation of longhouse and regional land boundaries and other property rights. A sense of place is recalled in the minds of listeners as they remember ancestors who lead migrations and open new areas of land, becoming the first to fell forest, and found a longhouse in a certain place. He emphasizes, "such ancestry continues to carry considerable prestige." As the pioneers make way for others to settle, their names are remembered by descendants claiming rights to use land through their ancestors. The Kelabit, like the Iban, recall their history through the landscape (Sather 1990:37), associating memory with place and have a similar practice of tree tenure (Bulan 2003:30). In the Long Peluan narratives trees are recalled in association with a padi-harvest: "These trees are still there today. They were harvesting and as they sat down they planted in a row they planted the seeds from the fruit they ate."

Wadley (2004:627) touches on this characteristic in more detail, explaining that inherited fruit trees are linked to the descendants of the first planter, in the same way that the fallow lands are linked to the descendants of the first people to open up land for swiddens. The recalling of names of places is another feature identified by Fox (1979:19) for establishing the "rootedness" of historical narratives. He goes onto say that this notion of place is manifested in a complex

"social geography" and it parallels knowledge of ancestral names in genealogies. Accordingly, this creates not just a point of continuity between the past and the present, but a complex knowledge of territory. This device, identified as topogeny by Fox, is used by Austronesian-speaking peoples, (which include the Kelabit), for assuring authenticity. Topogeny might recall the journey of an ancestor, a migration of a people, or the transmission of an object. Its key component is identified as a *topoi*, which is a physical point where culturally important knowledge is evoked (ibid.:9,13). For instance , the naming of places indicates a chronology of movement that recalls previous longhouses, creating points of spatial reference within the domain. More significantly, this device is also a means of indicating a memory of time, what Fox (ibid.:13) calls the "spatialization of time," an alternative means of organizing memories of the past, commonly used by Austronesians. An example of this, is in the first Long Peluan narrative, where a stone outcrop Batuh Long Lingap is evoked. This stone outcrop recalls the separation of the Ngurek from the Kelabit, as it is the place where two lovers, one Kelabit and one Ngurek committed suicide because their elders wanted them to separate.

Topogeny also works as a mnemonic device triggering memory for both the narrator and the audience. It is used to "provide a framework for the placement of more extended knowledge" (ibid.:13). Such a framework works firstly to define origins and claims to the earliest occupation of place, the practice of precedence. In the Long Peluan narratives, the early occupation of place is recalled by the migration of "our people" and the Ngurek: "The Ngurek lived with our people in Bale River, Long Peluan and Long Puak. A place where they lived together, was at Long Moyo. The Ngurek called this place Lulau Terong."

The audience listening will recall that most of the places that are mentioned are within the domain, the territory of the longhouse area *(tana' tauh*). Further to this, they will recollect that there are sites of cemeteries of stone graves that further testify to this early migration.

As Fox (ibid.:17) notes, the references to place define the extension and transformation of the social world, setting the extent of knowledge of the narrator. Bulan (2003:51) acknowledges the significance of the way this spatial knowledge is transferred through narratives from one generation to the next and that "the culture and the knowledge of a people is embedded in the landscape." For example, in the first Long Peluan narrative, significant places are marks (*edtu*) on the landscape, which provide a visible link with the past, such as the stone graves:

> As the Kelabit moved upriver, one can see stone mounds, and standing stones that they built along the river, and slab graves at Long Nonar. These are the signs (*edtu*) left by them.

These monuments, used to signify early presence in the domain, are an important resource for the community because they testify to the continuity of the passage of generations of ancestors in past time and are also marks of permanence that are visible in the present (ibid.: 45).

2.6 Characteristics of Historical Oral Narratives: Episodic Time

Maxwell in his discussion of "ethno-historical texts," refers to the way people conceptualize the past. He writes, "they contain the system of traditional values that are often expressed in the *conceptualizations*, which the group has about its own past" (Maxwell 1989b: 168).

Inherent in this definition, is the notion that an oral historical narrative, like the *cerita sejarah* (stories of history) of Long Peluan, works at different levels. Firstly, the narration tells of origins, migrations, and events in the history of the group. Secondly, it outlines their *conceptualization* of the past. In the Long Peluan narratives, events are remembered in an episodic manner. The first narrative is about "our time with the Ngurek and warfare," the second about "the life of government" and the third about "the life of prayer," reflecting three eras of change. Within these narratives, events unfold in a further episodic manner, without any deepening speculation of causes and motivation, like the genre of Malay *hikayat* described by

Errington, "events are temporally flat, recounted when they come up." Episodes are told in discrete units, separable from what was narrated previously. As Errington observes, "to follow the story you must go close up and take each bit as it comes" (1979:35).

A good local example of episodic historical narratives is that of Kalom and Hudson (1970:284) who wrote about the origins of Kampong Pueh, in Western Sarawak. The series of six narratives they transcribed and translated describe episodes which touch on the relations of the Selako to the people around them, their relationship with the Sultan of Sambas, their historical conflict with the Chinese and the migrations across Borneo from West Kalimantan to Western Sarawak and their exemption from land tax (ibid.). As Wadley notes for the Iban, who describe warfare (*musim kayau*) against the Brooke regime as a time of great upheaval (*musim kacau*) the purpose of such narratives is not sequential history, but what makes sense morally and culturally, and this is relayed in the form of episodes (2004:627). Thus, to return to Maxwell's point at the beginning of this section, the conceptualization of the past comes through moral and cultural filters, which are influenced by the value system.

Another important aspect of the use of episodic time is described by McDowell (1985:30) who examines the way the Bun in Papua New Guinea, conceive of the past in episodic terms, with a clear delineation between before and now:

> What we might call historical time is structured in two periods with a chasm separating the before from the now. Only complete radical change –a paradigmatic revolution is possible. If cannibalism is not part of the contemporary paradigm then no one currently alive can be a cannibal (ibid.).

Thus, time for the Bun is conceived in terms of transformative episodes such as before and after cannibalism, before and after the arrival of the Europeans, or before and after Independence. Such notions of before-and after-time are morally loaded. Yet, at the same time, McDowell goes on to suggest that culture remains constant in the face of change. She cites Lawrence

(1964) who states that in spite of dramatic social change caused by colonialism in Madang province, the core value system of the people did not change (McDowell 1985:30). This leads to the major premise at the basis of this study: that despite the fact that the narratives present three eras that transformed the lives of the Kelabit people, there is an underlying continuity which is articulated through the voice of the narrator reflecting the value system. This central argument relating to value will be dealt with in the next section.

2.7 Characteristics of Historical Oral Narratives: Meanings and the Narrator

So far, this discussion has indicated that an oral historical narrative at one level is about the origin of the group in the past, stating the motives for migration, warfare, and events in the group's history, such as the coming of government and Christianity told in an episodic manner. At another level, what is narrated has an important political function for the narrator and the community of listeners in the longhouse at the time of transmission. As Fox observes, (1979:18) a narrative regarding the past is told, because it is relevant in the present. This relevance to the audience comes across through what is meaningful to them. It inherent to the idea of oral traditions that oral histories have a meaning. For example, in the oral tradition of the Punan Bah, another Borneo minority group, see the meaning of their narratives as the source of their identity and their rights to land:

> The oral tradition is seen as "the truth" as a proof of the legitimacy of their claims on a number of traditional rights within their territory, and is by them described as a weapon (Nicolaisen1976b: 91).

Thus, for the Punan Bah, the *meanings* or *truth* derived from the context of the act of narration in the present relate to migrations, warfare or the legitimacy of claims to territory, which are

the very reasons for their community's existence.[3] In this instance, the concerns of the audience are significant to the meaning of the narratives. Without an audience there is no transmission of knowledge. However, it can also be argued that the narrator who has a purpose reciting the narratives, also makes meaning. Wadley, who highlights the subjectivity of the narrator, endorses this point. He states that, "It almost goes without saying that oral histories are narratives of the past that have *meaning* for the people who tell them, rather than for those they are about" (2004: 610). As argued above, this comes through the different features of the narratives, such as the recital of genealogies, the references to place, and the creation of episodes with an underlying moral structure. In the Long Peluan narratives, such *meanings* relevant in the present become expressed through the voice, borrowing Errington's use of the literary term of the "omniscient" narrator (Errington 1979:26). The voice of the "omniscient narrator" is revealed when he departs from the action of the narrative and uses his voice as a vantage point from which to address the longhouse audience. He does this in order to offer advice, or to outline genealogies of leaders or kinship in the longhouse, or to point to his role as a leader or to define the extent of the delineation of Long Peluan territory.

The question thus arises how does the scholar interpret such meanings? To explore this question further, I turn to Geertz's groundbreaking work; the interpretive approach. The narratives themselves yield what Geertz (2000:6) calls "thick description," that is sufficiently deep and textured accounts that lend themselves to an interpretative approach, through the use of "jungle fieldwork" to establish meaning (Geertz 2000:10). Geertz (ibid.) makes a pertinent caution regarding the use of theoretical tools that may focus too much on "abstract regularities"

[3] In parenthesis, Nicolaisen's (1976b) transcription of Punan Bah oral history has become a crucial tool in their court cases against the logging companies encroaching on their land some forty years later: theborneopost.com: "Punan longhouse sues 7 firms for encroachment," July 22, 2014. Malay mail online: "Sarawak villagers sue government, timber firms over encroachment "January 12, 2016.

and impede the possibility of "thick description" (ibid.:26). He sees the task for the anthropologist as twofold:

> …to uncover the conceptual structures that inform our subjects' acts, the "said" of social discourse, and to construct a system of analysis in whose terms what is generic to those structures, what belongs to them because they are what they are, will stand out against the other determinants of human behavior (2000:27).

What he is saying is that the task of the anthropologist is to uncover the underlying cultural beliefs that motivate and characterize his subjects' behaviour. Theory should emerge from "thick description" rather than be imposed upon it. Hence, the concept of *lun tauh* (our people) emerged as I began to analyze the first two narratives, and this led to the exploration of ideas of ethnicity and identity. In order to understand the narrator's motivation in telling the narratives, and the role of the hero, I had to look at how leadership functions through the Kelabit value system. Returning to the problem at hand, that of interpreting meaning in narratives, Maxwell comes up with an answer in terms of understanding the value systems that are revealed through narratives as these have a significant bearing on the peoples' worldview in the present:

> In order to understand the thinking of a people in contemporary times, knowledge of their traditional values as expressed in their thinking about the past, can be crucial to any understanding of how they interpret what is happening in the modern world (1989b: 168).

This is close to Geertz's notion of using a system of analysis that belongs to the people being studied ("our subjects"). Firstly "traditional values" are identified in the narratives and values are used as a framework for interpretation. An appreciation of notions of "traditional values" addresses what inspires the narrator's political intentions in recounting the narratives and sets the discussion beyond the limited focus of the narrator's narrow agenda and provides insights into strategies for augmenting status and power. This provides an opportunity for evaluating the episodes of the narratives not objectively, but in terms of the subjectivity of narrator and his

audience, understanding their "customary ways" and "fundamental modes of ordering reality":

> It means accepting the possibility that we cannot really understand the nature of events from an objective point of view, but can only grasp their significance when we understand how the people themselves experienced and understood them at the time and in retrospect. The narrative forms that mold oral accounts, the customary ways in which people of other cultures typify events and categorize experience represent fundamental modes of ordering reality that do not distort the facts as much as define what they are and what they mean" (Schieffelin and Gewertz 1985:2).

Seen in this manner, what some scholars identify as "falsifications" and "lapses of memory" (Sather 1994:41), or "manipulation of the traditions" (Sellato 2002:138), or as distortions, gaps and inaccuracies by the narrator are not to be dismissed as ahistorical anomalies, but are to be utilized as a strategy for approaching the purpose of the narratives by the narrator. The next section will address the bigger issue defining value as a theoretical framework, providing insight into Kelabit concepts of "traditional values," or *doo'*-ness. This provides a tool for analyzing the meaning of Long Peluan narratives through the perspective of the narrator and his audience.

2.8 Thick Description, Value and the Kelabit Notion of *Doo'*-ness

In order to utilize thick description as a technique the anthropologist has to immerse herself in the culture. This is to provide the context and the meanings of the social actors, so that a person who is not of the culture can understand the actions or behaviour of the subject at hand. I will examine Kelabit notions of value as "conceptual structures that inform our subjects' acts" (Geertz 2000: 27). In other words, I will explore values that explain and motivate Kelabit action.

The Kelabit, like other humans, organize their lives around the pursuit of something called value (Graeber 2013:219).The Kelabit compete to be considered *doo',* a state of goodness, worth and honour because they "…differentiate between people according to how 'good'- *doo'* they are…" with the highest status being *lun doo' to'oh* which means very good

people (Janowski 2007:105). This section will first describe and analyze the practice of *doo'*-ness[4] or goodness as a definitive quality of the Kelabit value system which endures over time and through social change and is an underlying continuity in the narratives. Next, it will focus on the dynamic quality of the Kelabit concept of value and the mechanisms of assessment of *how* good people are. This will lead to the discussion of how this notion of value informs the agency of the central characters or ancestor-heroes in the narratives and how their alliances and journeys mirror those of the narrator, generating prestige. Ultimately, this leads to a possible explanation of how community is created through the narratives, and how the audience becomes part of a social world, which affirms the prestige of the narrator and the narratives.

The concept of value is complex and difficult, as scholars have been quick to observe: "As elusive as questions of "value" are, approaching them in terms of anthropological theory becomes equally, if not more, difficult to pin down" (Otto and Willerslev 2013:1). David Graeber also has difficulty in coming up with a meaning, given the confusing nature of the differing meanings of value and values. He states:

> While there is a fairly widespread feeling among anthropologists that there is something out there that can be called "value" (or maybe "values," or more likely both), and that all human beings do, in some sense, organize their lives, feelings, and desires around the pursuit or furtherance of them, it often seems as if the term could mean almost anything (2013:219).

To facilitate a meaningful discussion on the subject of "value" and "values", it is useful at this point to focus on some definitions by anthropologists. The term *value*, which has material and economic connotations, denotes "the degree to which objects are desired, particularly as measured by how much others are willing to give up to get them" (Graeber 2001:1). The term *values* on the other hand, describes what is ultimately important in life (Graeber 2013:224) or

[4] *Doo'*-ness: this hybrid linguistic term referring to the quality of the state of being *doo'* is derived from Janowski (2003b) and Bala (2008).

what has meaning and significance because it is inalienable and cannot be evaluated in terms of money (Miller 2008: 1123), or is "shorthand for different worldviews or cultural systems, …how people express their religious and social values and how this informs their actions." (Otto and Willerslev 2013:1).

To complicate matters further, the term *values* as defined above, has also come into use in the singular as *value* (Graeber 2001:2). The paradox that the same word describes a monetary and non-monetary phenomenon has led anthropologists such as Graeber to consider whether there is some underlying connection (Graeber 2013:224). The term "value" is used interchangeably for these opposing ideas suggesting that the core concept of value is at the centre of these two different meanings. Miller rises to this challenge of finding a connection between the economic and the non-economic notions of value:

> That *what value does*, (my italics) is precisely to create a bridge between value as price and values as inalienable, because this bridge lies at the core of what could be called the everyday cosmologies by which people, and indeed companies and governments live (Miller 2008:1123).

In other words, the key to understanding this idea of value, as a bridge, is to look at *"what value does,"*(idid.) that is, how value becomes a springboard for action. This idea is taken further by Otto and Willerslev (2013:1) as they try to bring about reconciliation between exchange-based theories and values as worldviews by suggesting that action is informed by values and simultaneously creates value.

This key notion of action "what value does" as a bridge between value as an economic term and values as worldview, provides a counterpart point of connection between the Kelabit status ascription of *lun doo'* and the value of *doo*'-ness which represents social standing. This idea of "what value does." is expressed in terms of the mobility *(iyuk)* between these two kinds

of value, *lun doo'* and *doo'*-ness. Before proceeding further, it is necessary to explain these Kelabit terms, which will be discussed in the next section.

2.9 Definitions: *Doo'*-ness the Kelabit Value

To begin with, *doo'* means good in Kelabit and its opposite is *da'at* bad and this plays an important part in the Kelabit value system. Following on from this, the discussion about the Kelabit notion of *doo'*-ness starts with *lun doo'* (the good people). It is important to place the concept of *lun doo'* in the context of the previous literature on Kelabit society. The focus on *doo'*-ness and mobility (*iyuk*) identified by Bala (2008) serves as a marked departure from the earlier accounts of Kelabit social structure which has been described as being composed in the following manner: big people (*lun merar*) which comprise two further categories good people, (*lun doo'*) and nobles, (*lun paren*). Next, is an intermediary category for commoners, (*anak katu*) people in between, (*lun upa upa* or *lun pupa*). Lastly, the "worthless" people, (*lun da'at*) and slaves (*demulun*) are ranked at the bottom (Talla 1979, Lian-Saging 1976/77, Bulan 2011:106). As noted by Janowski (2003a:45), there is some disagreement regarding the currency and usage of these terms particularly with regard to *lun paren* (*nobles*), *lun pupa*, *lun upa upa* (people-in between), *anak katu* (commoners) and *lun da'at* (slaves). [5] Bala argues

[5] Such accounts of Kelabit society were influenced by the earlier structured description of rank of upriver societies in Borneo (Rousseau 1973, King 1978) which have been since critiqued for being static and not taking into account historical change (Armstrong 1992) and for being derived from European enlightenment ideals of equality and freedom (Helliwell 1994). Some of the confusion regarding Kelabit social structure is likely to have arisen because there has been a deliberate forgetting of the past social distinctions, which are considered incompatible with being Christian. Consequently, there is a lack of clarity among contemporary Kelabit concerning the usage and significance of terms relating to hierarchy and difference. It is likely that Kelabit in certain areas borrowed some of these terms and ideology from their neighbours, the Kayan and Kenyah, to ensure their own leaders were considered on a par with them.

that Kelabit social differentiation is fluid and based on movement (*iyuk*) which means that personal agency can create social mobility to obtain *doo'*-ness (Bala 2008:80).

The opposite of *doo'* is *da'at*. In the past, being *da'at* meant that you were a descendant of a slave, unable to maintain your own household, and that you were dependent on others. At this point it is useful to bear in mind Deegan's useful observation for the neighbouring Lun Bawang, that the simple distinction present in people's minds remains between who is descended from *lun doo'* and who is descended from slaves (Deegan 1973:86)[6]. However, today, any direct mention of inequality or of anyone having slaves as ancestors is considered very inappropriate and is strongly discouraged by the Borneo Evangelical Mission (B.E.M.) church leadership. For this reason, it is difficult to discuss these terms with informants. Yet these old divisions still surface as explanations for why someone holds a grudge against someone else, why someone looks down on others, why someone behaves defensively, reflecting some kind of inferiority, and why some people think that they are born to be superior over others, and why some people do not succeed in measuring up to the appropriate level of *doo'*-ness.

Drawing on the analysis made by Deegan (1973:87) and Janowski (1991:272), it is possible to infer that to be a *lun doo',* one of the "good" or "honourable" people, means to belong to a status category and to be differentiated somewhere along an imaginary scale measured against the ultimate standard of *lun doo' to'oh* (very honorouble) which represents the ideal person. A person's position may be inherited by being born into a good or honourable family but it is subject to change because there is also flexibility in the system, so that there is dynamism within the hierarchy. Being *lun doo'* is at the highest level in the community and this

[6] Deegan's study of status and the Lun Bawang is relevant here as the Lun Bawang are part of the same language group as the Kelabit. See Section 4.17.

is inherited at birth, and passed from generation to generation. It is from families of *lun doo'* that leaders, like the narrator Malian Tepun are still identified today. In the words of the late Pemanca Ngimat Ayu in an interview in the months before he died in 2013:

> If you are people not having an ancestral lineage, shouldering this responsibility before, it is for sure that you will not be able to do it. Such people are just ordinary people, even the young will not listen. The blood must be in you so nobody will look down on you.

What he is saying is that only *lun doo'* have a heritage of leadership and only they hold the necessary respect from the community to operate as leaders. This belief is also widely held by the *lun doo'* themselves. In practical terms, being born into a *lun doo'* family provides the necessary preparation in gaining authoritative understanding of the *adet* (law) as cases relating to customary law are often discussed within the household setting. Further to this, the members of the *lun doo'* family are accustomed to work together to mobilize the resources they need to provide hospitality for anyone and everyone. However, despite the fact that belonging to *lun doo'* comes through birth, a person's position or *standing* is fluid. This is similar to Errington's analysis of prestige in Luwu. Standing depends on the respect a person can generate through his or her character and behaviour (Errington 1989:189). Being *lun doo'* is not a clear and rigid distinction, but something that is blurred and under continual assessment. This is because there is fluidity *iyuk* derived from bilateral kinship, adoption, marriage, and the potential for upward social mobility through acquired prestige, *doo'*-ness, which come about through generosity, diligence, responsibility, success in farming and personal achievement (Deegan 1973:87, Talla 1979:85, Janowski 2003b: 101). Today, education, professional success, material wealth and positions in church leadership provide new means of enabling mobility (*iyuk*) creating new indices of *doo'*-ness (Bala 2008: 124). Being *doo'* or *doo'*-ness, depends on the accepted criteria within the value system which are manifested through the consistent action and steadfast

behaviour, for example, *doo' gai',* (industrious); *doo' kenail,* (hardworking) ; *doo' mukul,* (diligent) ; *doo' rema'* (kind, generous) ; *doo' baya',* (loyal and supportive), *doo' galih* (cheerful) ; *doo' niat,* (kind-hearted), *doo' ngai karuh,* (soft spoken and well-mannered). These values resonate with the appropriate demeanor for a ruler at a Malay court (Milner 2008:65), which would enable a leader to be well accepted, and suggest that a balance between courtly dignity that commands respect and the agency is required to be an effective social actor. For the Kelabit, living at close proximity in longhouses, these qualities reflect responsibility and manners in relationship to others. Being *doo'* or "good" was taught in school at an early age as one elder, Ira Tanid recollects:

> We used to pray at school and when the situation arose, Kelabit values like: *doo' singalai, benriaan, gaai'* and so forth (being respectable, wise and industrious) were openly discussed in the classroom. The best part of it was that we had a lot of role models in the community; and so this is not just 'head knowledge' so to speak. Prizes were given not only on basis of good grades but also being a good person (Ira Tanid 2015:34).

These values are learnt from a young age and reinforced within the family, which nurture self-discipline, responsibility for others, and personal effort. These have become easily integrated within the belief system of evangelical Christianity, which is shared throughout the whole Kelabit community. As Sina Raja Ngatan, a female elder explains "What *doo'*-ness now means is how you lead your life as a Christian." Integrity and worth are gauged by how a person lives up to the Christian ideals of the community in words and actions, through self-discipline. This idea recurs in discussions with elders, regarding leadership. A senior leader advises his junior, "You have to be strong in your faith, be active in church." Thus, in the modern context, standards of *doo'*-ness overlap with moral values taught by the church. Moral goodness and *doo'*-ness are synonymous and become a means of gaining material reward as blessings from

the Christian God. Thus, the word *doo'* implies two meanings.[7] One of these is related to the context of *lun doo'* that is the status category inherited at birth, which gives a person standing. The other is being *doo'* through consistent *doo'*-ness of action and behavior, an achieved standard of value. Significantly, being *doo'* or attributing *doo'*-ness to others is rarely articulated openly. At the same time, aspiring to *doo'*-ness is a principle that underlies action. In the same way *"what value does"* is a bridge between the concept of value and values, movement (*iyuk)* also mediates between *lun doo'* and *doo'*-ness. These two ideas can be bridged by the action and behaviour that prescribe the values encompassing *doo'*-ness, which are prerequisite to maintaining the status of *lun doo'.* The discussion that follows will now consider how this works.

2.10 "What Value Does" Towards a Theory of Action

Poline Bala identifies the Kelabit concept *iyuk,* (movement) to describe the fluidity of the Kelabit system of prestige differentiation based on the index of *doo'*-ness which is characterized by competitive mobility (Bala 2008:54). To elaborate further, *iyuk* when used together with *doo',* conveys social mobility and success. For example, the phrase "*doo' iyuk neh lem ulun nedih*," means, "this person is getting on well in life". Similarly, failure can be described as *da'at iyuk*, which literally means *"*a bad move," when things are going badly. Such causes of failure can be loss of wealth or lack of respect for the customary law, *adet*. According to Bala, while *iyuk* conveys mobility and agency, *doo'*-ness consists of values as "fixities," which are markers of status, which are constant, but are redefined contextually according to the situation.

Bala's ideas on agency and mobility (2008) can be taken further when considered alongside the work of David Graeber, who investigates value in terms of relativism and process.

[7] See Bala for more on *modes* of *doo'*-ness (2008:81).

He indicates a way into grasping understanding of fixities and movement by considering "…what seem to us to be fixed objects as patterns of motion, and what seem to be fixed 'social structures' as patterns of action" (Graeber 2001:xii). Thus, Graeber takes his inspiration from Heraclitus and sees society in terms of process and action, that is "objects as processes as defined by their potentials and constituted by actions" (ibid.:52). This leads him to consider "that people may be able to affect the course of history in some sort of way" (ibid.:xii). For Bala, similarly, the quest for mobility through movement *iyuk*, to attain *doo'*-ness, the state of ultimate goodness, or ultimate value provides a rationale "why the Kelabit have been active agents and subjects of their own history" (Bala 2008:83). For the Kelabit, movement, agency and action provide a point of connection between *lun doo'* "the good people" and the continual striving for the state of *doo'*-ness. Thus, the work of Bala (2008) Miller (2008) and Graeber (2001, 2013) provide a focus on human agency as a means for a bridge between value, what people desire (for the Kelabit, *doo*-ness) and the values which can bring this about. Agency is projected at different levels in the narratives, through the heroes going on journeys, through the maintenance of crucial alliances, and through interventions with the sources of power that bring about historical change. At the same time, as will be shown through the commentary of the narratives, the heroes are the ancestors of the narrator and their interventions in the past mirror actions of the narrator in the present, thereby consolidating his standing. However, to appreciate the significance of *doo'*-ness, it is important to consider the place of rice in the prestige system.

2.11 Rice Cultivation, Prestige and Value

At the heart of the Kelabit value system is the cultivation of rice. The material and economic manifestation of *doo'*-ness for a couple is having large padi-fields and successfully feeding their children, their household and having surpluses. Clearing large tracts of virgin forest, felling large trees, burning, dibbling, planting, weeding and harvesting require a great deal of

concerted effort and the successful outcome is prestigious. *Doo'*-ness is manifested in the hard work, physical strength, perseverance, self-discipline and co-operation that are necessary for success. However, there is something much bigger going on beyond the merely economic:

> Productive labour mainly creates value in potential. This is because value is inherently contrastive thus it can only be made into a reality (realized) in a relatively public context as part of some larger social whole" (Graeber 2001:70).

This means that the work put into producing rice surpluses is an investment in something bigger, which is only more fully realized when it is put into action and assessed comparatively and competitively in a social context. This social context comes about by attaining and maintaining *doo'*-ness, through feeding others, nurturing kin, and if you have ample surplus, by being a generous host to visitors, holding large feasts, and buying jars and beads which proclaim status, socially and cosmologically. Another aspect of "value in potential" is giving rice out in times of famine, or when others are in need for their own feasts. Such generosity is not without disinterest and means that you have others beholden to you. In turn, these people will grant you favours or give you support in times of need. In this manner, the relationships of alliance and kinship of *lun tauh,* (our people) are maintained and created, as discussed in Chapter 6, when the expedition bound for Pa Ibang stops in the Kelabit highlands. This social aspect of *doo'*-ness is considered more fully in the next section.

2.12 *Doo'*-ness, Value, Social Worlds and *Lun Tauh,* "Our People"

It was highlighted earlier that the qualities of *doo'*-ness created and enhanced relationships with others such as generosity, good manners and the ability to provide for others through self-discipline and hard work. Similarly, Poline Bala argues for movement or *iyuk* to work and to generate the necessary prestige to enhance a person's standing, *doo'*-ness has to be performed in relationship to other people:

> Most important among the Kelabit is the encompassment of persons within multiple relationships as at the village level. It encapsulates the notion that one's doo-ness has no reality except in relation to others, and therefore incorporates the idea of interdependent (or inclusive) selves (Bala 2008:62).

Thus, *doo'*-ness cannot come into being without it being seen, noticed and evaluated by others. What is being stated is that value only exists in the way others see you and this can be different according to the way you relate to different people. This reveals the complexity of the way *doo'*-ness operates. However, this movement cannot take place unless there is an audience who gauge the actions comparing them against what has gone on before. As Graeber observes, talking about values in the singular, "Value is social, it is always a comparison; value can only be realized in other people's eyes. Another way to put this is that there must always be an audience" (Graeber 2013:226). Value, or in this case *doo'*-ness, is measured by what people say about you: social status is what others in the society assign to persons, as Bala observes "…It is others in the society who evaluate whether a person has arrived at a given level or position in the system. They give him the status and ascribe to him his position and roles." (Bala 2008:78). This is because the community plays a strong role in judging the performance of its members and in creating a person's reputation. Talk and gossip play a significant part in forming perceptions. Such opinions are continually reconstructed and imagined through talk (Amster 2004:3). However, the society that creates perceptions is not real, but an imagined "totality":

> This also means that in the ordinary course of events, "society" exists largely in the imagination of the actors. If society takes concrete, material form, this tends to happen only during important ritual events (funerals, graduation ceremonies, marriages, games, trade summits, etc.). Yet when it is imagined, it is always as some magnificent, all-embracing totality of some sort or another, a kind of universe" (Graeber 2013:226).

Thus, together with the "totality" of imagined community is the index *doo' to'oh* (to be very good or honourable) which is used to evaluate performance. In the Kelabit context, society is

imagined in that it is always bigger than the locale of the social actors. I will argue in Chapter 5 that it is encompassed by an inclusive relational term, *lun tauh*, meaning "our people," which is inherent in the narrative. Society cannot be circumscribed merely by events such as funerals, weddings, naming ceremonies, and church services as the imagination of the actors takes the events beyond the immediate locality to the places of other kin beyond the immediate locality, in space and time. Thus, the narrative evokes alliances, such as with Ngurek and places beyond the locality of the longhouse, such as the seat of administrative power in Marudi, or the church at Long Budong in the Krayan in Dutch Borneo, to create a wider social world, as a stage. On this stage the prestige and agency, *doo'*-ness, of the narrator are demonstrated through the imagined universe of the narratives through the actions of his hero ancestors. The recital of the narratives creates an instrument of movement *(iyuk)* of reinforcing and recreating the *doo'*-ness of the narrator as he creates community *lun tauh,* (our people) through his narration and evokes social worlds. This creates a legitimate, open and public means of reshaping opinions.

Graeber helps to take this analysis further, by emphasizing that the creation of value (or values) is an on-going process:

> Rather than value being the process of public recognition itself, already suspended in social relations, it is the way people who could do almost anything (including, in the right circumstances, creating entirely new sorts of social relation) assess the importance of what they do, in fact, do, as they are doing it. This is necessarily a social process; but it is rooted in generic human capacities (Graeber 2001:47).

What he now suggests is that value does not necessarily lie in the way others see us, but in the way the actors understand and assess their actions as they commit them. This takes us to the omniscient narrator who uses the indices of value to create *doo'*-ness through the recital of the narratives. He does this through the presentation of genealogies of potent leaders and through the use of topogeny to mark out the domain. In doing so, he creates more value in the potential relationships in his social world that are reinforced in the present through the narration of

alliances, migrations, genealogies and founders of the longhouse, which will be dicussed in the analysis of the narratives in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

2.13 Summary

In this chapter I first clarified the differences between oral traditions and oral histories, and I defined the Long Peluan narratives as belonging to the genre of historical oral narratives. I then sought to identify their features and functions which point to a covert expression of the political intent of the narrator: the selective use of genealogies to evoke potent ancestors; the reference to place and topogeny for organizing memory and making claims on the domain and the conceptualization of time in episodic terms, conveying a moral and cultural framework for viewing the past. I explored how meaning is constructed for the audience in the present through the voice of narrator and highlight the use of an interpretative approach after Geertz (2000), which leads to the uncovering of a generic analytical tool that informs actions and motivations, utilizing Graeber's theory of value. This is applied to Kelabit concepts of value *doo'*-ness and of movement (*iyuk*) which motivate action. I then argued that the recital of the narratives creates an instrument of movement (*iyuk*) reinforcing the prestige or *doo'*-ness of the narrator as he recreates the kinship and social worlds of *lun tauh,* (our people) through his narration. This generates a legitimate, open and public means of reshaping opinions and aligning political intent and provides a theoretical underpinning for the analysis of the narratives in the ensuing chapters of this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND THE POSITION OF THE ANTHROPOLOGIST

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explain the function of an anthropological method to analyze the oral narratives. This is because anthropology provides the key to understanding the underlying cultural beliefs that motivate the narrator and his audience. Firstly, I look at the position of the narrator on the margins, metaphorically and physically, and look at marginality as a conceptual space, where access to power is limited which enables a focus on the experience of the people at the border and how they look at different centres elsewhere as loci of power. Next, I consider the different issues for analysis such as the chain of transmission, concepts of time, and multiple viewpoints drawing on examples from the narratives. I then look at the issues and challenges relating to my experience in translating and transcribing the narratives. The second part of the chapter examines issues relating to fieldwork in this study; the position of the anthropologist, ethical issues, and the challenges of multi-sited fieldwork.

3.2 The Role of Anthropology in the Utilization of Oral History

The use of a theory of value as a theoretical tool supports an anthropological approach as a means to investigate the historical narratives. Knowledge of language and culture is essential to approaching meaning (Grenle 1985:204, Vansina 2006:75, Lai Ah Eng 1998:101) and this will be further explored in relation to issues regarding translation. The anthropologist's task is to provide cross-references from her own fieldwork research within the community and clarify cultural associations within the narrative and references outside the narrative "to elucidate the full communicative structure of the text" (Fox 1980:57). Questions need to be raised regarding

the reasons for transmission, the sources, the meaning and role of writing and the meaning of language within a particular time and context (Errington1979: 42).

Further to this, the scope of anthropology accepts the "subjective relevance, meanings and interpretations," of oral history and fieldwork "gets at truths, partial and varied in version as they may be." This enables a new departure in history to move in a new direction allowing for multiple viewpoints (Lai Ah Eng1998: 101). This comes about by looking at history as it is shaped by values and culture, through an ethnographic perspective. Further to this, Baud and Schendel (1997:238) provide a rationale for the use of oral history at the borders. They call for oral history to be used as a conceptual tool and as a means to explore new sources of knowledge. This redresses the balance from the dominant view, often taken from the documented archives on one side of the border, from the centre, which often denies an active historical role to the borderland population, on the periphery of the state.

An anthropological approach to oral history with fieldwork provides an opportunity for grasping people's experiences and cultures on their own terms and understanding their ways of knowing with all their partiality and subjectivity. First of all, it is useful to consider in relation to subjectivity, the positioning of the narrator, who as a "borderlander"[8] is physically located on the political borderlands between Kalimantan and Sarawak. He is also on the margins of the state in both a physical sense, given the remoteness of the longhouse, and concomitantly in a metaphorical sense, given the limitations of his access to central locations of political and economic power.

3.3 Anthropology on the Margins

Tsing defines a view "from the margins" which utilizes narratives from Uma Adang to create

[8] I use the term "borderlanders" after Horstmann and Wadley (2006).

conceptual space for exploring marginality. This consists of "the zones of unpredictability at the edges of discursive stability, where contradictory discourses overlap, or where discrepant kinds of meaning-making converge; these are what I call margins" (Tsing 1993: 279). Similarly, Ishikawa working on the western border of Sarawak observes how borderlanders "consciously locate as well as dislocate themselves in …national and ethnic categories" (Ishikawa 2010:7). Similarly, the Long Peluan narratives, told by a narrator from the borderlands, enable a comparable positioning to further examine a dialectic, which is accentuated by analyzing the gaps created through the placing of episodes described through oral history against Brooke archival records. These are "contradictory discourses," because the historical records contradict what the narrator is telling his audience. Such anomalies can be better apprehended utilizing the perspectives of the borderlanders, people living between two nation-states, through the notion of marginality, through local conceptions of space and identity and understanding how the borderlanders deal with the "centre" (see Bala 2000, 2001, 2002 and Amster 2005, 2006). To explain this further, marginality is a concept that depends theoretically on a binary opposite, a powerful centre. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that the "centre" as the locus of power, in the eyes of the borderlanders often shifts (Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin 2007:121). For example, in the second Long Peluan narrative the "centre" is the representative of the Brunei government in Marudi and then it moves to the Brooke representative of government. In the third narrative, the "centre," the location of another kind of power, is Long Budong, the focus for Christianity in the Krayan. So, although the borderlanders are on the margins of the state both physically, and in terms of their limited access to resources and power, they seek out and consult different "centres", indicating the strategies and agency borderlanders employ to negotiate the complexity of relationships between different kinds of centres and the margins. This is supported by Bala's observation that the Kelabit mediate and negotiate the

imposition of coercion and hierarchy, rather than retreating, resisting or rebelling and use the same tools of state as a way of engaging with their minority status within a national discourse (2008:102). Further to this, Amster's work (2005, 2006) in the Kelabit highlands argues that local agency and the state are interrelated and reaffirm each other on the border and that local interests are expressed in "a vernacular of stateness" (2005:24). The state becomes conceived as fluid and under continuous reconstruction through the interaction of local and exogenous interests (2006:224).

This argument above demonstrates how marginality is a useful analytical concept, embracing both the oppressive and creative potential of being "on the margins" (Horstmann and Wadley 2006:21). This concept of marginality encompasses the fluidity of identities that Tsing identifies among the Meratus, where "the margins are sites from which we see the instability of social categories" where "creative living fosters heterogeneity and dispute" (Tsing 1993:279) This links with the heterogeneous identity of *lun tauh* "our people" in the first narrative who form themselves into political alliances in warfare and merge, separate and disperse before adopting the ethnic identities given by the Brooke administrators.

3.4 The Chain of Transmission and the Message of the Narrator

An understanding of the chain of transmission is important to discern the layers of time and the meaning of the narrative in the present. As I was unexpectedly given the three Long Peluan narratives by the narrator to listen to on a cassette recorder, I decided that the three narratives presented some very exciting new and interesting material and this study began. As I listened to the recordings this was the last stage of transmission before transcribing them for this dissertation. For the previous stages of transmission of each narrative, Malian the narrator explains each source, as he narrates. The first narrative was from Seraya Balu Bun, a Ngurek at Long Semiyang; the second narrative from Kapan Tepun from Batu Patong; a descendant of

the hero Tai Iwan and the third narrative was Malian's own account from his memories from childhood. Thus, the chain of transmission follows this process: first an observer witnesses an event. This is the initial testimony. Next this "hearsay account" becomes the chain of transmission, as it is passed from each person who hears it to another person (Vansina 2006:21).

Once the transmission has been made, it is important to recognize that the perspectives of the audience, the researcher and the narrator are all components of the oral history. The past can be seen through different filters, that of the narrator and that of the audience which will fine-tune their understanding of the narrator's recital and that of the researcher who may be selecting certain aspects of the narrative for her own purposes. As Hong (1998:40) points out, particularly if a tape or digital recording is used, there are different layers of time in the recording of an oral history "the past which is being narrated, the time during which the narration takes place, and the time when the tape is being used." This enables the anthropologist to interpret the narrator's message for the present. For example, the layers of time, which are identified in the second Long Peluan narrative, are illustrated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Layers of time in the second narrative

1. The second narrative sources the story from Pa Di'it, the place of origin of the Long Peluan people. It is the home of Tai Iwan, the central figure of the narrative and the grandfather of Malian Tepun, the narrator.
2. The first layer of time is the transmission of the story from Kapan Tepun who lived in Batu Patong in the 1950s, the settlement from which many of the people of Long Peluan migrated.
3. The next layer of time is the narration of the story by Malian in 2005 into a cassette tape for his family. This is where Malian has the opportunity to locate himself in the narrative focusing on what is important to him. He establishes a "prestige" genealogy of leaders of Pa Di'it, passing on the knowledge of the family lineage for his audience, who are at the first stage, his sons. However, his comments extend to the wider community as he describes the ethos of his leadership, describing sacrifices made in service and his duty to help people.
4. At the end of the narrative he outlines the network of kinship connections that embrace the whole longhouse:[9] "Long Peluan was established by the descendants of a brother and his three sisters. All of us are the grandchildren of Araya Ajin, Seraya Awan, Seraya Anan Alo and Seraya Aleang; and we are all their descendants…That's the history of Long Peluan; we are more or less from one family, we cannot be so individualistic… so, let us be wise (*milah-milah*) and live without discord as brothers and sisters, as cousins, and as relatives among ourselves."
5. This shows that his own narration has an objective of affirming his genealogy to his sons and to the wider community and of calling for unity in the longhouse. The next layer of time is the listening of the tape in Kelabit and the process of translation.

3.5 Concepts of Time

In addition to the chain of transmission, there is a wider question of whether the narrator has the same concept of time and the past as the researcher who has to consider not only indigenous concepts of time and history, the distant past of the history at hand, but also the history of the tape or its transcription, factors that would be inevitably condensed into just one layer of time if a positivist view of history were taken. These different concepts of time are highlighted when

[9] With the exception of one family of newcomers.

events in the second narrative are set against the timeline of recorded history as can be seen in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 indicates that the narrator sets the major part of the action in the time of the Brunei government, which conflicts with the official chronology. For example, the attack on Pa Ibang in 1905 actually took place during the time of Brooke government rather than Brunei government.

Table 3.2 : Events in the second narrative set against the time-line of recorded history

Events in narrative	**Events in recorded history according to Sarawak Gazette**
Tai Iwan visits Brunei representative, then the representative of the Rajah. The narrative suggests the attack against Pa Ibang took place during the rule of the Brunei Government.	1883: Baram ceded to Brooke government. Brunei no longer rules the Baram.
	1905: Attack on Pa Ibang, supported by representatives of Brooke government in Marudi.
Request sent to build the fort to Brooke representatives.	1908: Request is received to build a fort at Lio Mato.
	1910: Longhouses move to main Baram River.
Tai Iwan was an elderly man when the fort was completed.	1911: The Fort at Lio Mato is officially gazetted.
	1912: Tai Iwan receives visit from Owen at Long Diit.

The implications of this are that the narrator has a different concept of what took place in the Brunei era to what has been officially recorded. The scholar should not examine this oral history with a linear sequential notion of time. Time needs to be considered in relation to a point of view. The narrative needs to be understood not as a record, but as a "perception of the past," as Fox notes (1979:22).

To take this argument further it is useful to look at events from a spatial rather than a temporal perspective to understand the action (Errington1989: 12). For instance, the action of

the second narrative consists of a number of journeys that Tai Iwan makes to the centre of power, to the representative of the Sultan of Brunei in Marudi and further afield to lead an army over the border at Pa Ibang and eventually to journey along the Baram to make peace. The representative of the Brunei government is at the centre, and action takes place in a number of widening circles around him rather that in a temporal sequence. This contributes to understanding the anachronism of the presence of the persona of the Brunei representative rather than that of the Brooke representative. The argument is developed further in Chapter 5.

3.6 Multiple Viewpoints

Another way of putting anomalies in perspective is to keep in view that the memory of the narrator is shaped by his immediate community around him, including his relatives (Kwa 1998: 22). Malian's voice is one of many potential voices regarding the subjects he raises, although within the Kelabit community there are very few people alive in a position to dispute him. This is a common problem in dealing with oral history that is identified by Burt, who advocates the importance of presenting a narrative together with alternative views, so that readers might "reflect that there is always a multitude of voices which have something to say about any single history." Burt goes on to address the problem by setting the narrative against "the culture, world-view and historical perspectives of a past generation." He presents a narrative together with other texts which present alternative views and other voices, in an effort to capture the fluidity of oral history (Burt 2001:7).

Oral narratives vary according to their narrators whose reminiscences differ from one another and from written accounts in official records. Thus the researcher needs to document both the perspectives of the narrator and the points of view of other communities and to put these side by side. An example of this problem is shown below in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Conflicting accounts of Tai Iwan

1. An illustration in the Long Peluan narratives of the way in which different communities remember things differently is found in the treatment of Tai Iwan, of Pa Di'it, the hero of the second narrative, who is declared the first Penghulu of the Kelabit. Although this version is endorsed by Barker et al. (2008) and Pun Nibu (Janowski 2010), Tai Iwan is completely sidelined in two other narratives of Kelabit history. 2. Lian-Saging (1976/77) and Talla (1979) state that Tai Iwan's contemporary, Tingang, who lived in Ramudu is the first Penghulu and led the attack on Pa Ibang. Lian-Saging claims that Tingang is the host of peace making, he opens new route out of the highlands and asks the other groups to move onto the main river and leads the making of the fort at Lio Mato. 3. These are all achievements which Malian Tepun the narrator of the Long Peluan narratives tributes to Tai Iwan. 4. Further to this, Talla (1979: 182) states Tai Iwan could not get people's support – he was only a temporary leader because there was "no one suitable and capable enough."

Table 3.3 shows an example from the Long Peluan narratives demonstrating how there are alternative accounts of the life of Tai Iwan shaped by different sources from different communities. Thus, because the oral history is partial, being based on the interests of the audience at a particular time, and on the memories of a community, it is important for the researcher to detail the processes involved in documentation as suggested in Section 3.6. below. Such a comparison, which highlights division and conflict, sheds further light on motivations for migration. Migration stories are often recounted as sequences of names of "consolidated communities" which suggest that movements took place in a synchronized way with common agreement. It is only by making analogies such as the above that the "factionalism and dispersal" that created new communities can be better understood (Metcalf 2010:93). However, the anthropologist needs to be aware that there is the potential to provoke conflict, as there will be people who have their own stake in issues raised in the narratives, or they may feel the narratives challenge their own traditions and present-day interests. This ethical problem is discussed more fully later.

3.7 Transcribing and Translating

An anthropological approach reveals a number of gaps and inconsistencies in the narratives and it is important to acknowledge the discrepancies and difficulties in transcribing and describing oral history as part of the analytical process (Strickland 1995:611). These problems relate to the source of the material, inconsistencies in chronology or the translation, and the interpretation involved in translation, and the understanding of symbolism and figures of speech. My journey is documented in Table 3.4. I learned that it is important to transcribe a version in the original language, in this case Kelabit, and then translate with a word for word meaning.

Table 3.4: Learning to translate the hard way

1. Malian gave me the cassette tapes of the narratives to listen to on a tape recorder powered by battery in Long Peluan in February 2010. I listened to these with Elias Balare, my husband's cousin who helped me write directly a first outline in English. Malian would come and join us in the evenings explaining anything that wasn't clear and was ever ready to answer our questions.
2. I came back to Kuching with a digital version of the recording, and an outline in English of the narratives. I listened to these again with my husband Ose Murang and we realized we wanted to work on a closer translation of the original. So we played the tapes and wrote a translation as we listened. I enhanced the literal translation to make this more interesting to read in English. At the same time I started annotating and cross-referencing the narratives.
3. Then I started my PhD and realized that we had missed a vital stage in the process, transcription into Kelabit. We had avoided this task in the hurry to get the meaning of the tapes in English.
4. There were factors inhibiting transcribing. There were moves afoot in the Bario community to change the orthography of Kelabit as it had been established by the missionaries who had taught adult literacy and translated hymns into Kelabit. The apostrophes that indicated glottal stops were to be replaced with *q* and the spellings of word endings were to change from *e* and *eh* to *ey*. The spelling of certain vowel sounds was to change from *i* to *a*, and where there was an extra *w* or *y* sounds in certain vowel combinations, the *w* or *y*, this was to be introduced into the word. In addition, the schwa vowel had previously been written with *a* would be represented by an *e*. A further complication was that this was being drafted by Kelabit in Bario who have a different pronunciation especially with vowel sounds to the southern Kelabit language, which is spoken in Long Peluan. Another argument that was raised was that the Kelabit should abandon these proposed changes and use the same orthography as Lun Bawang. This is because the Kelabit use the Lun Bawang Bible, and this is a major text in use.
5. Feeling insecure about this transition in orthography, and realizing that a number of Kelabit were reluctant to face these changes, particularly as some enthusiasts were inconsistently using the letter *q* and *k* everywhere on internet sites such as Facebook, we decided to stick to the orthography that Ose had grown up with, and that is still used by the church. So, we have started to transcribe the tapes directly into Kelabit and at the same time we are reviewing the original English translation of the original. It was then that I realized that there were certain key words such as *ulun*, meaning "life" that had been wrongly translated.

There are certain lessons to be learned from the work of Rubenstein, who produced two volumes of transcribed and translated songs of the indigenous people of Sarawak from seven different ethnic groups (1973). Her work attracted much criticism from anthropologists

Maxwell (1989a, 1990), Rousseau (1989,1990a) and Brosius (1989), who claim that as a translator she failed to grasp the meaning of the texts because she did not have the prerequisite anthropological background and the linguistic skills to evaluate the work of people who translated on her behalf. In some cases, her work is considered inaccurate and "truncated" (Rousseau 1990a: 164). Other criticisms state that she lacks understanding and misses the point and creates "fictitious meanings" (Brosius 1990). What can be learned from this critique, is that it is important to work with a basic knowledge of the language and a knowledge of the culture and situation of the speaker. In Brosius' words (ibid.:264): "translation requires prior familiarity with the social, moral and linguistic foundations of a society, and with the particular social contexts in which performers operate." Furthermore, translations need checking and cross checking with the original transcript and it is important to avoid the temptation of interpretation at this stage: "Any meanings and interpretations included in a translation, whether literal, interpretive, or reconstructive, must be anchored in the information contained in the original text" (Maxwell 1990:167). Translations and transcriptions need to be consistent, and any gaps in understanding are better left unanswered rather than being filled with inaccurate and creative attempts at meaning. The translator has to decide between a word for word literal translation that may need further elucidation for a non-native reader, or a fluent translation that reads well in English but loses or even distorts the original meaning. It is important to note that Rubenstein and those who assisted her produced a significant collection of Kelabit oral traditions, many of which are no longer sung today, and her work is used as a point of reference by many Kelabit today.[10]

[10] However, none of these works come into the category of ethno-historical prose narratives, because these are poetic songs that are sung.

3.8 Thoughts on the Process of Ethnographic Fieldwork

The goal of fieldwork is to interact with the people researched on a daily basis, in their language. This involves an extensive stay in the field site and learning the language. Participant observation is living with the people researched, doing what they do, interacting in their language. Metcalf offers a caveat: most anthropologists are incompetent at learning to live in the same manner as the people they study and this goal is usually only partially met (2005:11). (This provides me with some consolation as I find it daunting to fulfill the expectations of the role of a woman in the Kelabit longhouse).

What is sobering is that the actual participation of the anthropologist is irrelevant, what is important according to Holy is "the competence of introspection and the ability to reflect on the experience" (Holy 1995: 32). This competence can only be derived from participating in the lives of the social actors and interacting with them. This leads to gaining insight into their social worlds and values and it is through this experience that I as the anthropologist might be able to construct meaning on a par with a native. Thus, the reflexivity of the anthropologist is important as the data is collected through the experience of participation of fieldwork. At the same time, the subjective positioning of the anthropologist becomes crucial. The emphasis on this reflexivity and positioning is part of the postmodern and feminist response to the Western-centred positivist anthropology of the 1950s to the 1970s that focused on the ethnographer's authority and objectivity. As Okely (2001: 24) puts it, "The reflexive I of the ethnographer subverts the idea of the observer as impersonal machine." Inevitably, anthropology in the field is about relationships and how the people studied relate to the ethnographer as a person, who has a history, a culture, a gender and a political and age status. The purpose of a reflexive analysis of the position of the anthropologist is to highlight the dynamics of politics, class, race, gender, and religion that come to play in these relationships in fieldwork. Nonetheless, Marcus

(2009:11) emphasizes there is a challenge in this "so called reflexive turn of the 1980s" to make the "phenomenological intimacies of fieldwork" engage with theoretical issues relating to communities, systems, institutions, and "global processes." Thus, bearing in mind Marcus' caveat, I turn the discussion to the positioning of the anthropologist, before engaging with challenges of multi-sited anthropology, and the ethical issues raised by this study.

3.9 The Position of the Anthropologist

In order to position myself as the anthropologist in this study, I want to examine this in relation to the notions of outsider and insider. Useful definitions are given by Rabe (2003: 151) who states the insider has "inside knowledge" whereas the outsider has a lack of knowledge. I will go on to argue that neither of these definitions sits comfortably with my situation. Let me explain how I might qualify as an insider. I have a personal history extending to thirty years association with the Kelabit, having been married to Ose Murang, a member of the longhouse community at Long Peluan, since 1983. My husband's brother and sister, sister-in-law, nephews and nieces, aunties and uncles, cousins are my family. In the first ten years or so of our marriage, our house in Kuching was full with cousins, nephews and nieces, working or studying in the city. We would cook and eat together rice sent to us by my sister-in-law and cousins from the longhouse. Our interactions continue over the years as we celebrate births and birthdays, weddings and name-changing festivals and as we visit one another in hospital, as we give support at times of illness and crises and give financial help when needed. I get news of what is happening in the longhouse or in Miri from visitors to Kuching and from phone calls and social media groups. When I stay in the longhouse, I stay in our simple family apartment rebuilt around 2000 by my sister-in-law, Pastor Remat. I join in whatever is going on, whether it is *gotong royong* around the longhouse to clean up the surroundings, prayer meetings, collecting food, for example ferns or ginger stalks from the land around the longhouse, and I

have helped to harvest padi with mud seeping into the cracks in my feet and the sun beating on my neck and hands.

So, even though I become immersed in the life of the longhouse, this has led to me having certain reservations about how I approach fieldwork. I lack the brazenness of a young outsider, and wait anxiously for the right time to interview people in the longhouse knowing that there is little free time in between farming, food preparation, child care and church. I worry about asking questions regarding sensitive matters and I don't dare take any gambles as I feel I'm accountable to all the relationships I have with my family and the rest of the community for the rest of my life. As an insider, I know that I cannot take too many risks in the questions I might ask or what I can research without collaboration. Unlike an outsider with a readily enquiring mind, I have settled and I take daily life for granted and after 30 years I do not question or query, as I might have done when I was first married.

Let me now put forward the case for being an outsider. Despite a position of "intimate affinity" (Narayan 1993: 671) and despite living with a Kelabit husband in the city where our cultures are shared in our everyday lives, in the things we say and the food we eat, I cannot claim to be bicultural, that is both Kelabit and English. My command of the Kelabit language is limited to pleasantries rather than any meaningful discussions and unlike other Kelabit women of my age, my cooking skills do not extend to the making of *nuba' laya'*, a soft rice paste, and wrapping it boiling hot into a symmetrical leaf packet with my bare hands. If I could do these two things well I might pass more notionally for a Kelabit, albeit a Caucasian one. In the village, I am unable to withstand the discipline of working for long periods of the day in the sun. I suffer from acute vertigo when faced with negotiating makeshift bamboo bridges and will happily wade through rivers as an alternative. I am utterly dependent on the community to share their lives with me. I need to be taken to the padi field, to the forest or to the river. To

have me tagging along is a liability. I slow down the pace of the walk to the farm or forest by my lack of stamina or agility. I am further dependent on the goodwill of the long-suffering community to answer my questions to clarify what has been said.

In fact, it is more comfortable to be an outsider. People might make allowances for me. Thus, my identity shifts from insider to outsider although some experts argue the opposite that the journey through participant observation can provide transition for the researcher from the outside to the inside (Rabe 2003:150). My position is ambiguous, as a family member or a researcher, who is always an outsider by virtue of her job. From another angle, Narayan suggests we should move away from using the opposite categories of observer and observed and insider and outsider and consider the anthropologist "in terms of shifting identifications amid a field of interpenetrating communities and power relations." (1993:673). This emphasis on fluidity moves on from ideas of generalization and discourses of "homogeneity coherence and timelessness" to situate the ethnography on "particular individuals and their changing relationships" (Abu-Lughod 1991:147).

This leads to situating myself in relationship to my government-servant husband, Ose Murang, who is a cousin to Malian Tepun, the narrator. He has assisted me with transcription and translation of the narratives and many of the interviews. During my research, questions I wanted to ask remained unasked because of certain sensitivities. I encountered a number of issues relating to political dominance in the area, ancestral land, and encroachment that were sometimes discussed openly and sometimes were muted and it was difficult to broach these subjects for fear of damaging friendly relationships. I was occasionally aware that my family associations restricted the scope of my enquiries. This brings the discussion onto the question of ethics.

3.10 Ethics in Anthropology

There are a number of ethical concerns relating to undertaking an anthropological project (Spradley1980:20). The most important is the imbalance of power and wealth between the persons studied and the anthropologist. This has been highlighted in the Marxist critiques of the 1970s (Ortner1984:138), which denounced the colonial foundation of the discipline (Asad 1973). Naturally, in order to redress this balance, it is important to respect the rights of the main collaborators and the main collaborators to involve them in the research. Firstly, they should be fully informed and should give their consent to what is taking place and they should be given the right to opt out of the project (Soyini Madison 2005:27). In addition, the collaborators are protected to ensure, where necessary, that data is kept confidential, and they are not harmed in any way by the project. Further to this, they are remunerated for time spent on the project. Recognition of collaborators needs to be made in such a way that there is parity within the community and divisions are not enhanced. In addition, the collaborators have the right to edit any material relating to the publication of the research.

In the case of the current project, the main collaborator to this project is Malian Tepun, the narrator. He gave me the three narratives on a cassette with the full intention that they should be transcribed, translated and circulated. Thus, there are fewer ethical issues relating to putting an oral narrative into print that was originally intended for oral transmission. I have taken steps to explain to Malian that when I look for other versions of the narratives, I am not doubting what he is saying, rather I'm just getting another perspective. I share every transcription with him and his son, Loris Tuloi who is a headmaster. Given my long association with the longhouse, and my family connections I am careful not to print anything that would harm Malian or his relationships with others, at the cost of withholding material that might be

extremely sensitive. I have considered using pseudonyms to protect his identity, but given the small size of the community anyone who is interested can easily find the people I mention.

3.11 Method: Multi-Sited Fieldwork

Ortner (1984:142) points out that in the past, ethnographies failed to address the larger systems such as regional history or the state beyond the unit of study such as the village. One of the few exceptions to this is Edmund Leach's *Political Systems of Highland Burma* (1954). This classic work has enjoyed an upsurge in interest as recent studies focus on remote marginal communities in the borderlands and their relationships with the nation state and forces beyond (Horstmann and Wadley 2006, Scott 2009 and Metcalf 2010). Thus, for this study, a theoretical and methodological challenge is to address the concept of the physical longhouse as a building and settlement which is linked to the abstract notion of Long Peluan as a community, consisting of people who live and have lived in different places and who move in and out of these spaces at different times. It is important to move on from the idea of the longhouse and household as reified entities, which has been a legacy of the British school of structural functionalism of 1950s and 1960s (cf. Helliwell 2001, Postill 2008: 25). Hence the longhouse is often thought of as a discrete entity within bounded space, which "incarcerates natives in cultural wholes." (Appadurai 1988: 38). I wish to argue that the longhouse is situated in time and space, factors which shape and change its formation. Following on from this, the identities of *our people* are fluid across borders.

At this point, it is useful to consider the notion of multi-sited research as a framework for such a study that encompasses such groupings and networks:

> … multi-sited research is designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some kind of literal, physical presence, with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites that in fact defines the argument of the ethnography (Marcus 1995: 105).

Thus, it is important to have different areas of focus for multi-sited research. One such focus for this study is the longhouse "a strategically situated single site locale." The longhouse acts as a point of reference, the centre of a hub of networks, which are outlined in the narratives through kinship, alliances, journeys and migrations. These networks take the anthropologist, for instance, to investigate connections with the descendants of Tai Iwan from Pa Di'it, a previous homeland, to take a boat journey downriver to talk to the Ngurek at Long Semiyang, and to find out more about the Sa'ban homeland on the Bahau river over the border and to visit the descendants of the people who lived at Pa Ibang in the Krayan, the site of warfare.

Most relevant to this study, Marcus identifies narratives as a point to explore multi- sited fieldwork highlighting the significance of social connections across landscapes:

> The character of the stories that people tell as myth in their everyday situations is not as important to fieldworkers tracking processes and associations with a world system, as is their own situated sense of social landscapes. Reading for the plot and then testing this against the reality of ethnographic investigation that constructs its sites according to a compelling narrative is an interesting, virtually untried mode of constructing multi-sited research (Marcus ibid.:109).

This is one of the major physical, methodological, and theoretical challenges that are being undertaken in this study; to capture and define the social landscapes that are generated by the narratives given by Malian Tepun. These are the starting point for the analysis highlighting connections across borders through kinship and alliances to people and places, through time and space at the same time juxtaposing different historical, social and personal forces shaped by the values and perceptions of the narrator.

3.12 Summary

I have argued that an anthropological approach is the key to dealing with the subjectivity and partiality of oral historical narratives. Further to this, it is a useful strategy to deal with the

people who live across borders as being on the margins as they gravitate to different centres of power. I have also considered various techniques of presentation and analysis, from utilizing multiple viewpoints, documenting the chain of transmission, looking at concepts of time, transcribing and translating. After this, methods of fieldwork and participant observation are discussed, highlighting the importance of reflexivity. This leads to a discussion of the position of the anthropologist and ethical issues before concluding with a consideration of the breadth of social landscapes that emerge from a multi-sited approach to fieldwork. This ties in with a major theme that emerges from the narratives, that of the making of social worlds.

CHAPTER 4

PLACE SETTLEMENTS AND OUR PEOPLE

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a general context to the narratives. First, I will give an overview of the geographical setting of Long Peluan at the intersection of a number of ancient routes which even today, defy the limitations of international borders, as there are no official crossing points. These routes have been part of people's conception of their surroundings and their ordering of space for a long time, which is reflected in the Long Peluan narratives. This helps to explain how the Kelabit and their Sa'ban neighbours are connected to a wider group, *lun tauh* (our people) through language, kinship and historical allegiances. These relationships provided a basis for journeys, trade and intermarriage, which kept people, linked across river systems and mountain ranges despite the introduction of international borders. As argued in Chapter 2, these connections and relationships were maintained by the value system, which promoted sociality, social connections and prestige through farming, feasting and longhouse life. I then go on to describe the settlement of Long Peluan in the present, focusing on changes and a survey conducted during the second year of this study in 2013. I outline features of households, ethnicity, levels of education, subsistence and income. I consider institutions in the village.

I proceed to describe the mother settlement at Pa Di'it and outline the history of the settlement of Long Peluan. This is linked to the relationships with people across the border which are then set against the background of the larger groupings of the Apad Wat groups and the Ngurek. A further common factor is touched on; the shared cultural practice of secondary burial, the traces of which are to be found in a stone culture consisting of dolmen, stone mounds

and standing stones across northern and central Borneo. These monuments, which marked the decease of illustrious chiefs, were associated with prestigious death feasts, which connected populations across mountain ranges, headwaters and political boundaries. The sponsorship of such feasts promoted the status (*doo'*-ness) of the hosts as they mobilized a large work-force to prepare for the feast and erect a monument.

4.2 Location of Long Peluan: Connections across Borders and the World Beyond

Long Peluan is located on the Bale River; close to confluence with the Kelapang River which is the headwaters of the Baram River, in Sarawak, East Malaysia. The elevation is about 1,700 feet above sea level and forms the southernmost region of the Kelabit highlands. The village was established at the intersection of trading routes within the highlands and across the border (see Figure 4.1). Long Peluan became a stopping point on a route out of the highlands to the Baram River at Lio Mato. From Batuh Patong the path went over Apad Masia' and then to the headwaters of the Kelapang and then over Apad Riku' and then down to Pa Bale, Pa Sebua' to Long Peluan, Long Balong, Long Metapah and then Lio Mato, the last navigable point on the Baram River to Marudi, the administrative centre for the Baram district. There was also a different route between Batuh Patong and Long Peluan. The path went over Apad Masia' to Lepo Ano, Raan Luyu, then Lepo Wei, Pa Beruang then across the Bale to Long Peluan.

From Long Peluan, there is a route over the border to the Krayan River through the next village upriver, Pa Dalih, (before the 1940s this was through the former mother settlement of Pa Di'it) and this took a four-day walk until the 1990s. Pa Dalih is about nine kilometers from the border and the journey to the nearest settlement at Long Layu, on the Krayan River, takes a day on foot on a muddy track or two hours by motorbike. In the past there was also a route that connected Pa Atang in the headwaters of the Bahau across the mountains at Apad Riko' to the headwaters of the Bale and Kelapang. Another route from the Bahau is across the ridges at

Batu Kalong[11] to the headwaters of the Sekuan River and then down to the Puak River. This route, which used to take two days on foot, is now connected by a logging road to the Sarawak border and is reached in one hour from Long Peluan. These two routes were used by the Sa'ban on the Bahau River from Pi Angau, Pi Nar and Long Tuah to travel and migrate to Long Puak, Long Banga and Long Peluan.

Although Long Peluan has been set in a very isolated location with much hardship involved in getting to the administrative centre of Marudi, or Miri on the coast, until the 1990's, there has been a steady connection with the outside world. In the 1930s the community in Long Peluan began to seek out Christianity in the Krayan by visiting the mission in Long Bodong, as recounted in the third narrative in Chapter 7. Links were established and Indonesian and Australian missionaries visited the community and eventually in the 1950s, villagers were trained to read the Bible and to be church leaders, or deacons *(pelayan)* within the village. In addition, youths went to the first Kelabit school at Pa Main.

In 1963, an army camp at Long Banga was established to monitor the nearby border due to the deteriorating relationship between the newly formed state of Malaysia and Indonesia. This provided employment for a number of men from Long Peluan, who worked as border scouts, radio operators, cooks and translators for the Britsh forces. The local cash economy was further boosted as farmers began to sell their agricultural produce including rice, vegetables, fish and wild meat to the army camp.

[11] This route is associated with Lang Tajit, who is said to have pioneered the route and settled at Long Puak.

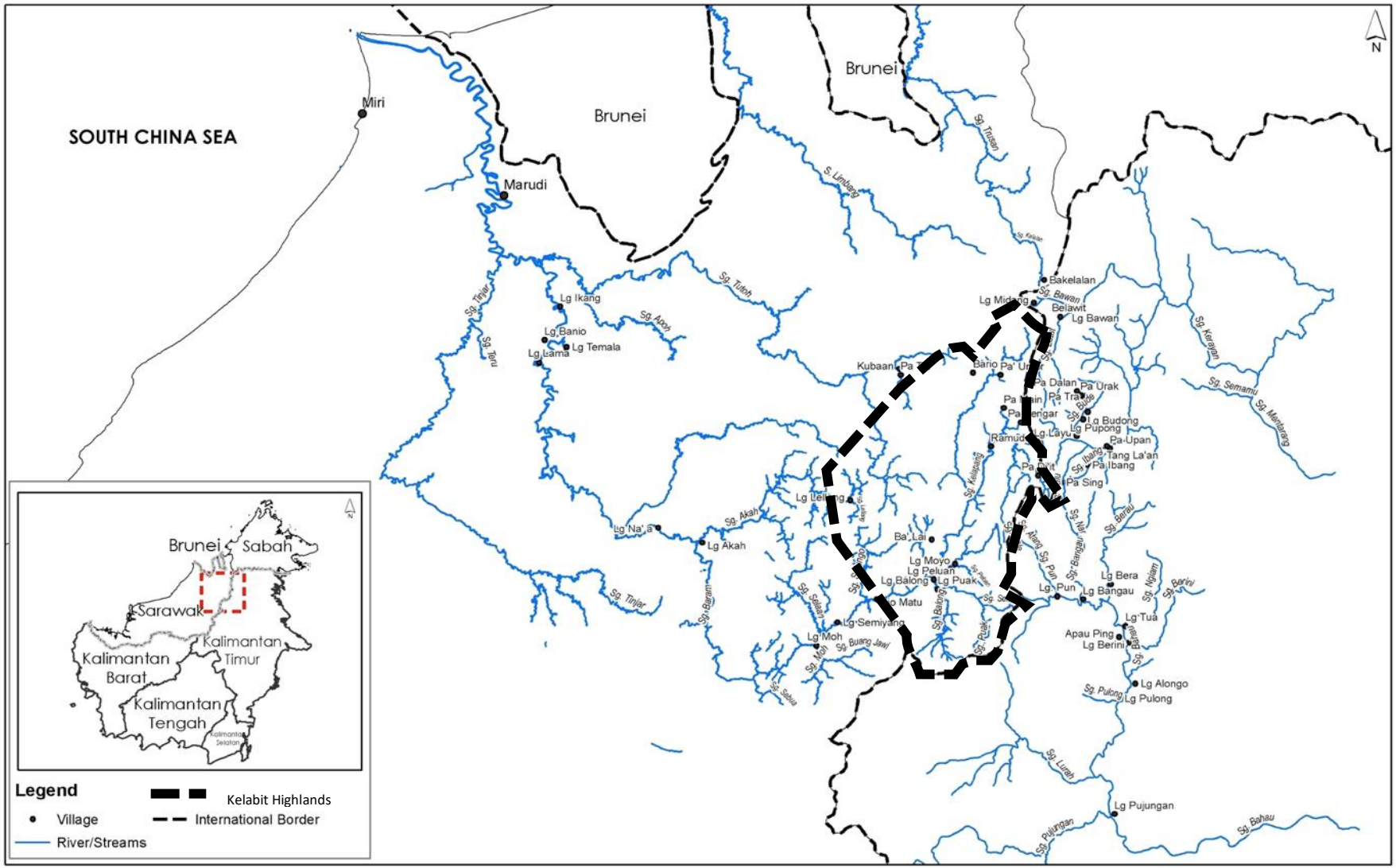


Figure 4.1: Places of our people and the coast

The hearts and minds of the local population were won over with the presence of a young English medical orderly, Paul Bostock, who treated civilian patients. He reminisced in an interview how he used to clandestinely meet with a young Penan woman after curfew, until the army realized something was happening and mistook him for an Indonesian enemy. Apart from this anecdote, there seems to be no visible consequence of unions between soldiers and local women, and the camp was segregated from the community. After the army left the area, in the late 1960s, metal footbridges and piped water were installed with some of the materials left behind and the newly acquired expertise of the local community.

The building of an airstrip at Long Peluan and at Long Banga by the community for the missionary planes facilitated contact and trade. To collect jungle produce and trade *(ngerang)* was a prestigious activity (Bala 2002:23), and this became for some, a financial necessity, as the demands of a cash economy began to filter into Sarawak in the years after the Japanese occupation. A number of men sought wage labour for short periods of time in the rubber plantations, quarries on the Baram, and on the oil palm plantations in the Miri area. This generation, eventually returned to the longhouse, are now in their sixties and seventies, and have been replaced by a younger group who tended to work in the oil and gas industry offshore.

In the 1980s, the journey to Marudi, the nearest administrative centre and market town, used to take three days on foot and three days by a boat powered by an outboard engine. The construction of a logging road in 1995 has meant the journey to the coastal city of Miri, by-passing Marudi, can now be done in less than twelve hours by truck.

4.3 Long Peluan and its Neighbours

The settlement of Long Peluan consists of two parallel longhouses, one housing eleven hearths, another six hearths and some nine separate houses scattered in the vicinity, and a church

belonging to the Borneo Evangelical Mission and an adjoining pastor's house.[12] Long Banga, on the Puak River, the nearest significant village in terms of kinship, is 20 minutes away from Long Peluan by truck and is the home to the Sa'ban community together with families at Long Puak, at the confluence of the Balong and the Puak rivers and the Kenyah Lepo' Ke' community at Long Pulong (see Figure 4.2). There is a primary school and a clinic. Since the 1990s, Long Banga is served by flights from Miri and Marudi on a twice-weekly basis. The close proximity of the Indonesian border means that Long Banga is a vibrant centre as the first point of call for Indonesians who wish to find work or settle in the surrounding area. Other settlements include Long Beruang, a Penan village, established in 1960, which can be accessed by an hour's walk or a road journey from Long Peluan. Long Lamai, another slightly older Penan village, is two hours' walk from Long Banga. Both settlements have between forty to fifty households.[13]

The concept of *daerah* or district was created by the Borneo Evangelical Mission and is a means of providing spiritual leadership at the local level to a cluster of villages each with their own church. This brings together all the pastors and deacons under a locally elected leader, the Ketua Daerah from the different villages in the district, to organize seminars and festivals such as *irau rayah* (Easter) and Christmas, which bring the different communities together on a regular basis for prayer, and more significantly at times of festivals. In each village, the church is very much at the heart of community.

[12] Janowski (1991:67) notes a similar pattern of two longhouses and scattered single dwellings in Pa Dalih and observes it to be a common pattern in the Kelabit highlands. In the case of Pa Dalih, the two longhouses mark the different origins of the local population, Pa Dalih and Batu Patong, this is not the case in Long Peluan where the settlement site can only accommodate two short longhouses.

[13] Approximate household numbers are taken from Sarawak Development Institute (2014).

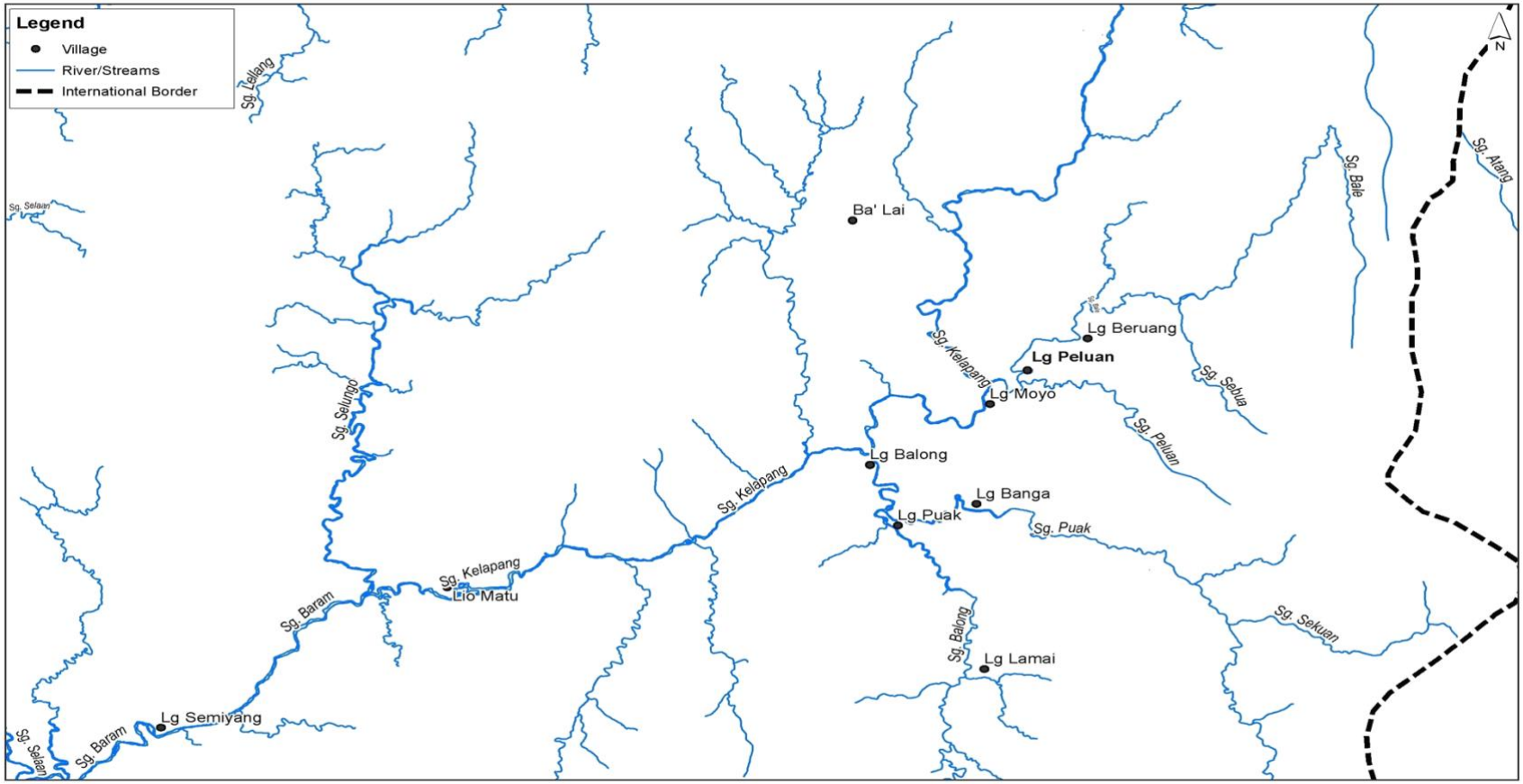


Figure 4.2: The Long Peluan area

It is the place where people meet every day to pray before going to work in the morning, and where they come together in the evenings. It is where messages affecting the spiritual and civil life of the community are conveyed. The district (*daerah*) contributes to the dynamism of inter-village relationships, which is built on the heterogeneity of the Sa'ban, Kelabit and Lepo' Ke' communities, who embrace the concept of *lun tauh* (our people).

Notions of discrete, self-sufficient settlements are blurred by social and kinship networks between villages and borders. Long Peluan and the neighbouring settlements of Long Banga, Long Puak and Long Balong have always been heterogeneous, with kinship networks extending across the border to the Bahau and the Krayan areas of Kalimantan and to the Ngurek settlements on the main Baram River. Inter-village marriages have always taken place. Despite the distance of a four-day journey mostly on foot between Long Peluan and the Bahau river area, there were big *irau* (festivals) to mark death or child-initiations. Sina Jau explained:

> In those days there were frequent visits between the people on the Kelapang River and people on the Bahau because of the drinking festival during the child initiations. They used to make up to thirty jars of rice wine. That's why there were so many marriages between all the different ethnic groups.

Dynamism continues between settlements for a number of reasons. Young couples sometimes move between settlements spending the early years of their marriage in the wife's household and they eventually relocate to an independent household or to the husband's household. In turn, parents might stay to help children when grandchildren are born, or for harvesting. At the community level in times of need such as padi planting, harvesting, and festivals, neighbouring villages are always ready to assist on a reciprocal basis.

4.4 Recent Changes: Logging and After

A veneer factory was set up by a logging company, Umas, at Long Metapah in 1993, processing timber from their nearby logging concession, which extended from Long Metapah along the Kelapang and Dapur rivers to Bario. This factory provided opportunities for employment for villagers and for sales of agricultural and jungle produce, and wild meat, which was purchased by the workers at the factory. The factory eventually closed with the failure of Umas. This concession and one other covering the Balong Puak and Bale Rivers were taken over by Samling just before the year 2000. Although many in the Long Peluan community were concerned about the uncertain changes logging would bring to the landscape around Long Peluan, they felt they were not in a position to contest the commercial extraction of timber from the area. This was because they had witnessed other communities challenging logging operations in the Baram district, without success. Consequently, they strategized on the issue and negotiated for the logging road to reach the longhouse, opening the road to the coast for the inhabitants to Long Peluan in 1995. Penghulu Aran Tuan refrained from asking for cash handouts, having seen how divisive such compensation had been to other communities, and opted to negotiate for benefits in kind. These were a generator, new water pipes for the water supply and the leveling of terrain for more wet padi-fields and fishponds. The presence of Samling provided lucrative opportunities for the younger men, previously labourers on the coast to find work as drivers of heavy machinery. An area of community forest was negotiated and retained around Batu Salit, but a large area of this forest was destroyed in the forest fires of 1997.

Logging intensified in the area, and road communications became established with the southern highland settlements of Ramudu, Pa Dalih and Pa Mada. Logging operations ceased in 2009. Since then the road system has connected the major settlements of the southern

highlands with Bario, albeit with intermittent problems with bridges and landslides. In 2013, the road was taken over for maintenance by the government, with Samling providing the manpower and the machinery for the road maintenance.[14]

In most peoples' minds in Long Peluan, the benefits of the road outweigh the negative aspects of logging. The journey to the coast, which used to take eight days, can be done in ten hours, and people are more connected with family on the coast and in the surrounding villages. Most people enjoy a higher standard of living (as indicated in Figure 4.11.) with the acquisition of a range of labour saving technology from rice mills, gas stoves and washing machines, to motorbikes, creating easier access to school for children studying in Long Banga and to the clinic when people are ill.

Thus, to most people in Long Peluan, the experience of logging to date has not been catastrophic nor disempowering, nor has the sound of chain saws heralded the destruction of their ecosystem as anticipated by Amster (2008). While the areas close to the logging roads indicate bare soils, and erosion, there has been some regeneration of the forest since it was logged nearly twenty years ago. We trekked on the edge of the logged forest along the Kelapang River to Pa Nonar in 2012 and observed that the trees had been selectively removed and the canopy had grown back over to create forest cover. Furthermore, land has not yet been degraded to the extent that the community is unable to hunt or subsist as predicted by Hitchner (2009:107). Although the water in the rivers has become more regularly silted as a consequence of the road building and there is a marked decline in big fish, wild meat is still obtained by hunting and is sold or served at meal times. In the long-term, however, measures will need to be taken to prevent the over-exploitation of resources by the communities involved and by

[14] The rationale for this is that Samling has all the logistics in place on the ground with expertise, manpower and machinery and is be able to provide maintenance at a much lower cost than the market rate.

outsiders who come from logging camps in the vicinity. Another consequence of logging in the area that there is more pressure on land available for the farming of hill rice, although the presence of the road opens up and makes available new sites. This means that larger households who have the means of transport and labour are keen to clear new areas of land for hill-rice to eventually increase the land bank available to their family. Decisions to clear such land are made within the household and there is no longer a process of consultation with the headman, community elders and neighbours. This inevitably gives rise to friction within the community and the headman-narrator alludes to this problem in the narrative. Much of these observations are anecdotal and it is beyond the scope of this discussion to quantitatively assess the impact of logging in the area, and it is likely that the impact will be greater if and when the logging companies reenter the concession. With the presence of the road the local cash economy is stimulated with many more transactions taking place as items such as wild meat, fish and jungle and agricultural produce are sold for the most part rather than shared. Nonetheless, most families seem to enjoy a diet which is rich in fresh jungle produce, and nutrition is not greatly affected by imported food. People in the village are in greater contact with their families on the coast and there is a flow of rice, fish and wild meat from the village in return for money and consumer goods. Further to this, the building of a telecommunications tower in 2012 on the road to Long Peluan has provided nearly consistent reception and all households have at least one mobile phone.

The Ministry of Modernization of Agriculture started a pilot rubber mini-estate project at Long Peluan in 2012. The project is implemented through a contract awarded to a Kuching-based company who plants and maintains the rubber. The community of Long Peluan participates through a company, Ruyud Sdn. Bhd. which represents the community. Certain arrangements have yet to be sorted out by the Ministry with Ruyud, such as establishing the

principle of share ownership among the households of the community, and how to compensate families who have given up land to the project. There is the option for members of the community to work on the project, however many families do not have the time to support the project because of their everyday subsistence needs. Nonetheless, Elias and Abel have worked on the project in a supervisory capacity to monitor the work of the contractor, for Ruyud. Currently, Tama Gerawat is overseeing the planting of further seedlings at Long Moyo for the Kuching-based contractor. As the project sites are at some distance from Long Peluan, there is little contact by the community and much effort is required by the Agriculture Department and Ruyud to give the villagers a sense of ownership in the project.

A long-awaited suspension bridge has been built across the Bale river and a solar hybrid power station has been set up by the federal government which provides 24 hours electricity. This project provided the local community with the opportunity to supply sand and gravel from the river and transporting materials across the river to the building site of the solar hybrid power station.

4.5 The Longhouse Settlement

The early settlers at Long Peluan never stayed in the same site for very long and they rebuilt their longhouse nine times (Table 4.1). Calculating that the house site changed 8 times before 1957 and estimating five years as the average span of time for a settlement, it is likely that the first settlers were in the area around 1917 or slightly earlier if their migration is considered in relation to the establishment of the Marudi fort in 1911. It is difficult to state that the settlement was established in a certain year as pioneers were in a state of transition with families split between their original and the new settlement as the advance group prepare the way for more

people to settle and farm.[15] The term *lobong* applies to a temporary hut used while building a more permanent structure. Table 4.1 is significant as the villagers locate the time of events according to which longhouse site they were at the time when they wish to recall the past.

Table 4.1: Long Peluan settlement location sites circa 1917-2014.

1	*Lobong* (former temporary site) opposite the mouth of the Peluan river
2	Takung Buit longhouse (between bailey bridge at the Peluan river and suspension bridge *apir lawat* by the durian tree)
3	Long Sebaleng longhouse by the present jetty
4	Rumah Ma'un Mesip longhouse by the Peluan river (rebuilt twice)
5	*Lobong* at Arur Mering (present site)
6	Longhouse between the durian tree and Takong Buit
7	Two *lobong*: by the riverbank at the present site and the *lobong* by the durian tree
8	1957 longhouse opposite Arur Mering using belian shingles from Long Beruang and Arur Mering.
9	1992-present: 2 new longhouses opposite Arur Mering (same site as 8)

The longhouses in the early years were built of soft timber, split bamboo and tree bark with roofs made of leaves (*daun isip, Phacelophrynium maximum*) and were rebuilt when the timbers started to decompose after six to seven years. It was only when people obtained axes and handsaws from the coast after the Japanese occupation that people were able to build more permanent structures and the longhouse that was built in 1955 lasted until 1990. It is said that the building of this longhouse was inspired by the style of Kenyah Ngurek longhouse at Long Semiyang and the Badang at Lio Mato that were built with belian shingles and timber walls.

The size of the longhouse has varied over the years as Table 4.2 indicates below. The increases in household size over recent years can be attributed to a few reasons. Firstly, younger families have found the resources to establish new households on their own, moving out of their

[15] Lian Ajin, son of Araya Ajin and father of Apoi Lian and family was a young man, possibly in his twenties, when he arrived with the pioneering group of settlers. He died of old age in the early 1960's. He was possibly born around 1895.This is further evidence for the above estimate for the year of settlement.

parents' households and secondly some urban families have maintained their houses after their elders have passed away and return to the village frequently, availing themselves of the improvements in communication in the 1990s. In addition, a Kenyah deacon and his Sa'ban wife joined the village in the 1990s establishing two more households with his offspring.

Table 4.2: Households based on the payment of door tax in the longhouse of Long Peluan 1945-2013

Time	Number of households	Location
1940's	16	Rumah Maon Mesip
Early 1950's	13	Lobong at present site and Lobong by the durian tree.
1957	17	Arur Mering
1984	17	Arur Mering
1991	17	Arur Mering
2016	26	Arur Mering

4.6 The Household Survey

The current village consists of two parallel longhouses built in the early 1990s and eight individual houses, with a total of 26 households.[16] These are recognized by the headman for the purposes of paying door tax to the district office in Marudi and distributing benefits such as electrical wiring and zinc roofing from the government. To be considered a household (*lobang ruma'*) the structure must have a hearth, (*tetal*) or a gas cooker. Some households have two hearths, as the residents provide support for single parents, such as Keling, and Ronnie in their natal households. In such cases they are considered two households under the same roof and they also farm as separate farm groups on separate plots of land. Not all households or hearths correspond to farming groups as some households do not farm rice, due to age or other family

[16] Amster (1998:23) records a range of 8-27 doors for longhouses in the central and southern highlands (excluding Long Peluan, Long Seridan and Long Lellang) in 1989, and this works out to an average of 17 doors per longhouse.

problems, or they farm rice in Long Banga, or the household residents are away in the city for long stretches of the year. Alternatively, some single hearths have more than one farm group, and also more than one household structure. Thus, Maran Raja's daughter Sandra, uses her father's household as a base to farm for the duration of the rice-cycle but she alternates this with living in Miri. Her stepbrother Brahim has built a separate adjoining house to his father's household, which he visits from time to time, but utilizes his father's kitchen.

In two cases, farm groups only exist for the farming cycle, which is usually from planting in October to harvesting in February and the farmers then return to live in Miri. These cases demonstrate the difficulties of the assumptions inherent in utilizing households as discrete units of analysis for the purposes of data collection and these have been well documented. Such assumptions, inherited from colonial administration, are based on biological family groups are the same as in Western countries (Yanagisako 1979). Helliwell (2001) takes the argument further by reconsidering Freeman's analysis of the Iban *bilek* family in the longhouse as a discrete, corporate group, that endures in time, which she suggests is based on the static visualization of the structure by a Western ethnographer, rather than the way the people being studied see themselves as a residential group at any one time. Helliwell highlights the need to consider the fluidity of relationships between households and to focus on relationships between households and within a community of neighbours.

In Long Peluan, the populations are dynamic, moving between households in the longhouse, in neighboring villages and residences in coastal towns and cities. Rose provides an example of this fluidity between households. As a child she was adopted by Sina Doo' Inan and their longhouse apartments are adjoining each other. The two families sleep and live in separate households, but share food and meals at times. Rose also keeps an eye on the needs her niece Ella, living in a separate house close by, who works hard to obtain food for her family of five

children. Married women, such as Dora and Mina travel between households and farms in Long Banga and Long Peluan to tend to ageing parents or to help with farming activities depending where they are most needed. Adopted family members sometimes also move between households such as Lipang who lives between her husband in Long Puak and her mother Sina E'o, and her adopted father, Balang Maran in Long Peluan. For some of the men, working off-shore on the oil and gas industry provides the opportunity to spend extended breaks in the village. A number of the male members of the community like Lut, Matthew, Osman, Yakub, Peter, Isaak and Lucas come and go with and without their Miri-based wives for hunting and fishing and supporting activities on the padi farm. Loris and Pierce, who are teachers, often return to spend school holidays with their parents. In addition, there are men and women separated or divorced from their families who have returned alone to their natal households. Some elderly members, such as Sina Balang Lipang, and Apoi and his wife Elis, move between children in the city and living in the kampong, after harvesting. Further to this, there is a large diaspora population mainly living in Miri and Kuching and Kuala Lumpur, which provides support for the resident population.

Thus, it is important to bear these parameters in mind considering the data that is presented below. It is extracted from the survey I conducted, based on all 26 resident households in December 2013 to provide information on the resident population based on name, age, sex, family members, education, occupation, languages spoken, and economic activities. I found it difficult to obtain information on the volume of padi harvested, or on income generated by sales of produce in the village, or the extent to which salaried family members in town subsidized residents. For example, some of the hunters who I knew sold game told me they distributed it freely. Women, who told me they didn't sell rice, did in fact sell rice to visitors from timber camps or when other opportunities arose. People are sometime reluctant to say they sell things,

particularly wild meat that has been hunted as this goes against a value system with which they grew up, when everything was shared. It is therefore difficult to estimate the amount of income that is generated by farming and other activities. Further to this people don't want to reveal personal information such as income, an issue that Amster also encountered (1998: 69).[17] This factor may be related to my own position as an insider researcher as is discussed in Chapter 3 on methodology. I also began to hesitate when I asked questions related to languages spoken, as it seemed that I was defining the village into separate groups, the Sa'ban, the Kenyah and the Kelabit, which also seemed divisive and sensitive, so I abandoned this question in the course of the survey.

4.7 Number of Households and Resident Population

Table 4.3 shows the number of households according to hearths. Included in the resident population of 95, are children who are studying outside the village but who are dependent on their parents in the village and who return during school and college holidays. Ten households support children in school or college. The absent population includes families of people who were born in Long Peluan and their spouses and children who live elsewhere. The households where there is no resident population (indicated as 0) are maintained by families who visit frequently, or who have undertaken to maintain the house of a deceased relative. The total population is 470. Thus 20% of the population live in the village and 80% outside. These figures were obtained through the survey and through updating of the census of village population conducted by members of the community in 2011.

[17] Hew and Al Idrus (1998:322) project the income from sales of padi per field per acre, based on estimates from padi-yields without considering that farmers may also hold back part of their best padi for their own consumption or to distribute to family members.

Table 4.3: Population according to hearth groups in Long Peluan, December 2013

	Household	Resident population	Absent population
1	Supang	3	33
2	Malian	1	27
3	Ujong Jawa	6	27
4	Remat	1	17
5	Mbang	3	23
6	Maran Raja	3	31
7	Augustine	8	8
8	Arang	3	20
9	Apoi	2	32
10	Oyau	9	10
11	Radu	1	8
12	Balan	4	0
13	S .Keleng	3	0
14	Supang Balan	2	20
15	Abel	1	0
16	Julhi	5	0
17	Baun	0	4
18	Osart	0	4
19	Josephine	0	3
20	Collin	7	27
21	S.Nakap	10	18
22	Ali Teling	3	11
23	Lugun	3	39
24	Eing Engan	8	0
25	Suria	6	0
26	Betty	3	13
	Total	**95**	**375**

4.8 Issues Relating to the Census and the Survey

In updating the 2011 community census, I found what I thought were a number of inconsistencies. According to the customary law, (*adet*) men and women who leave the village for marriage and farm in other villages are no longer considered as members of Long Peluan, even though they might return for visits to support and assist in farms for aging parents. This is

because they have new commitments and new loyalties to their new village where they reside. So, a Long Peluan-born woman, Dayang, who lives in a village which is in fact a suburb of Kuching, is not considered part of the diaspora population of Long Peluan, according to the community census conducted in 2011 (see section 4.7). This is despite the fact that her mother stays with her for parts of the year and she supports siblings in Long Peluan. This is because she lives in another village. Men and women who leave the village for marriage and employment in a city, such as Kuching or Miri, are still included on the census on the grounds that they are not living in a village and their loyalties not divided. At the same time, men and women and their spouses who are employed outside the village are included, regardless of whether they ever return or support their siblings or parents in the village. The basis for these inconsistencies is that the diaspora population wishes to be as inclusive as possible, mobilizing as many people to come together to provide the basis for teams for competitive Kelabit events such as the highland games. Further to this, the diaspora gives the opportunity for people who are on the edges of the community to show support for events by sponsoring lucky draws or football jerseys etc.

However, when it comes to considering the local population in terms of the traditional *adet* (customary law), women and men who have left the village to farm in a different village are not considered part of Long Peluan. Thus, for the purposes of creating a profile of the diaspora in relation to resident households, the previous census has been updated in terms of births marriages and deaths of the existing families who are considered as part of the community. No further additions have been made.

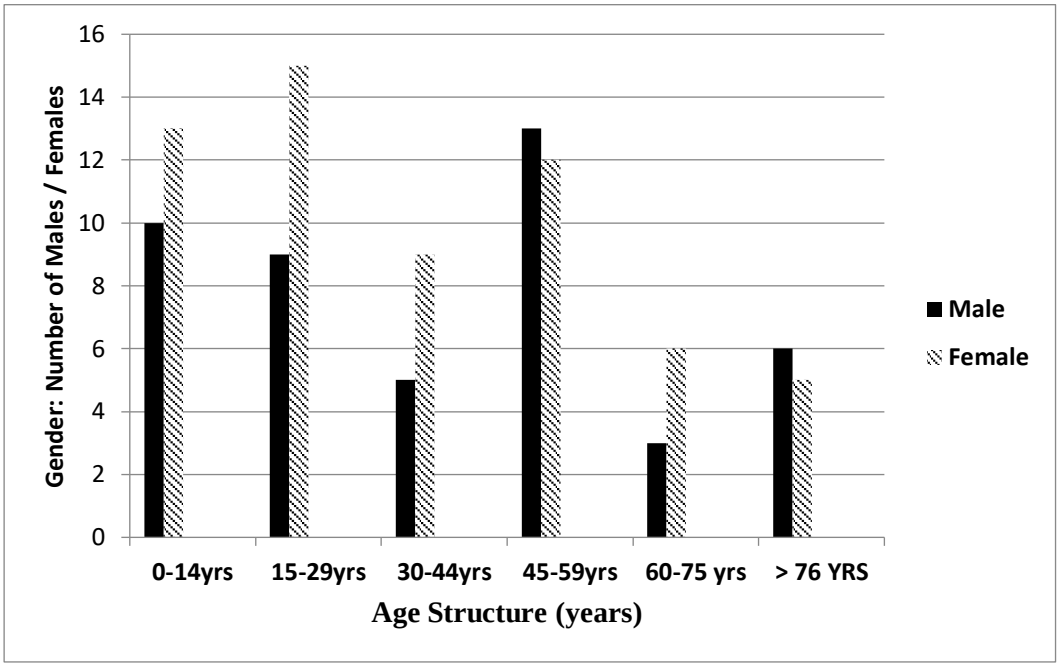


Figure 4.3: Age categories of the Long Peluan resident population according to gender

Figure 4.3 shows the age structure and gender of the resident population. The first column indicates children aged 1-14, who are either toddlers living with their parents in Long Peluan or are at school in Long Banga, Bario or Marudi and who return to their parents for their school holidays. The second column indicates both youth studying outside the kampong who return for holidays and youth who have returned to live in the kampong. The former group relies on their parents for support (with some input from wage earning relatives) and the latter group might in part contribute to the household financially or materially by farming, fishing and hunting.

Thus, the population aged from 0-29 forms 49 people, represents over half the resident population of 95 people and they are dependent on their parents in the village. The decreasing numbers of younger men living in the village in the first three age categories are accounted by a large number working in the oil and gas industry offshore. The third and fourth categories

cover parents of children in the first two columns. The increase in the male population in the fourth category is accounted by the presence of four men who were previously married and live in the village without their families. There are four widowers and five widows among the elderly residents. Most of them live with other family members in longhouse accommodation, except for two men Lugun, and Malian who live on their own.

Even the most senior members of the community in their seventies and eighties manage to contribute in some way to the household. Sina Balan and Sina Doo' Inan although unable to withstand the rigours of padi planting, still process padi and do the winnowing. Sina Balan collects firewood. Sina Lipang forages for wild ferns and shoots. Lugun still rears his chicken and Malian maintains his own padi farm.

4.9 Education

This section will give a broad outline of the history of education in the area with reference to both the resident population who have participated in this survey (Figure 4.4), and the diaspora population who have contributed to the community census. The highest education qualifications among the resident population are diplomas in theology obtained in Lawas and Buduk Aru by the three retired pastors who live in Long Peluan. Women slightly outnumber men in this category as well as the next category, which indicates those who have been educated up to Form 5 in secondary school, in Marudi or Long Lama. These constitute a majority. Men outnumber women in the remaining categories consisting of those who left school after form three in Bario or after primary 5 or 6 in Long Balong or Long Banga. A Bible school for deacons was set up in the late 1950's by Tama Lawai Lahang at the request of the Wakil Penghulu So Tepun. As a result, nine of the men who are in their 60s and above have basic literacy skills.

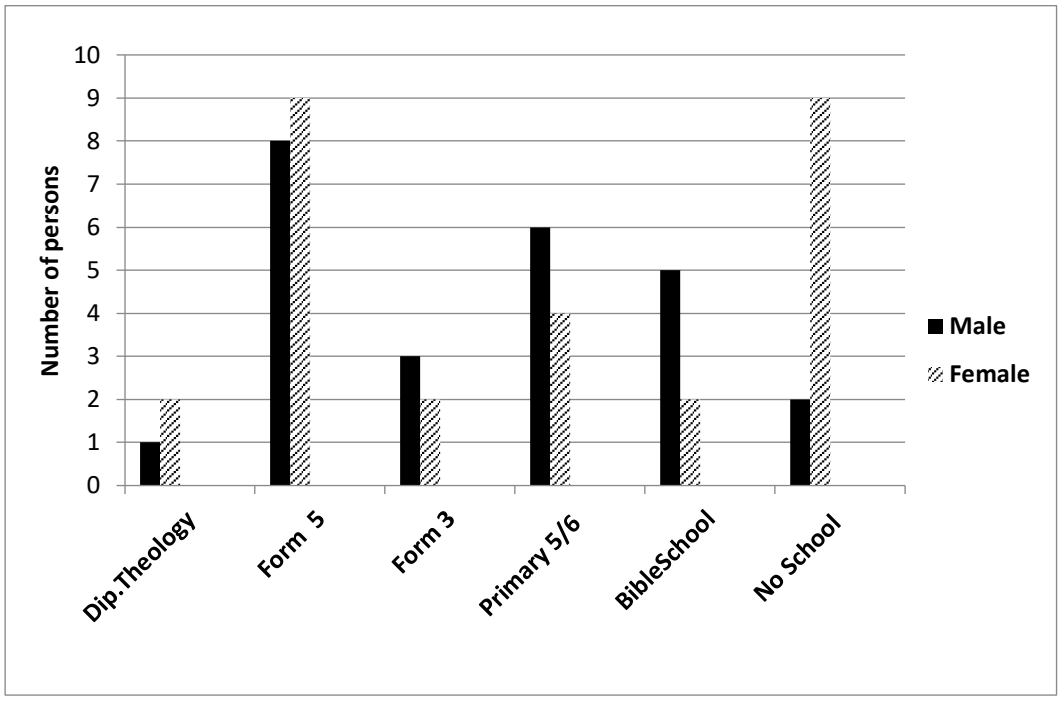


Figure 4.4: Educational background of resident population aged 30-60 years and over according to gender

There are many more women than men who did not go to school at all and most of these are in over 60's age group except one man and one woman who are in the 45-59 age group.

Some of the first generation, now aged between 55 and 60 years went to board at Long Balong, a pioneering primary school set up and sponsored by the Long Balong, Long Banga and Long Peluan communities. It was set at a convenient point midway by river from each settlement and it attracted founding teachers such as Usup Maran and Maran Talla who were graduates of Guru Paul's first Kelabit school in Pa Main. About half of the first students to attend this school succeeded in completing their education beyond primary level. When the Kenyah community at Long Balong migrated away from the area, some of the Long Banga population withdrew their support for the school at Long Balong and this had to eventually close. As a result, children had to go to board at the government schools at Long Lamai and Pa

Dalih, which involved a six-hour walk or three days, respectively. The early students endured a number of hardships in going to primary and secondary schools particularly to Bario, such as the five-day journey to school, lack of contact with their families over the school year, shortage of money for clothes, shoes, blankets and extra food. Some of these early students still grieve for the loss of childhood spent in the longhouse with their own parents. The first batch that qualified at the end of their years in Bario school started the journey away from the village to secondary and tertiary education in Marudi, Miri, Kuching and Kuala Lumpur. Many of this generation did not return to the village for very many years, because communications were very difficult and the journey was a considerable undertaking both physically and financially. Many of this generation faced many challenges with divided loyalties. For example, Ose Murang remembers the difficulties of this time:

> My father, when he was very ill, asked me to stay back in the village to keep him company as he knew he didn't have much time left, but I was already set on going to University. Then he was hospitalized in Miri where I was studying. I remember while I was sitting for my Form 6 exams at school, I used to go to sleep in his ward at the Miri hospital, to keep him company.

Many like Ose, who rarely spent time with their parents due to their education away from the longhouse, were torn between their families in the longhouse and the investments that had been made in their education. Many of this and successive generations who left the village went on to gain higher educational and vocational qualifications which provide them with employment away from the village. These include 56 people with university degrees, four with master's degrees and one with a PhD, according to the community census. The presence of the absentee population as jural members of the community on the voting list is justified in the words of one member, "It's not that we don't want to live in Long Peluan. Our hearts are here, it's just that

there are no employment opportunities for us in the area near Long Peluan.[18]" The patterns of residence of those with lower qualifications staying in the kampong and those with working higher qualifications in town are in accordance with a previous study conducted by Murang (2000:5). Currently, children attend primary school in Long Banga and go on to secondary school in Bario or Marudi.

4.10 Ethnic Composition

In the early days the founding population were very mixed between Sa'ban, Ngurek and Kelabit (See Chapter 3). This trend has continued as indicated in Figure 4.5 which shows ethnicity of households today based on parents.[19]

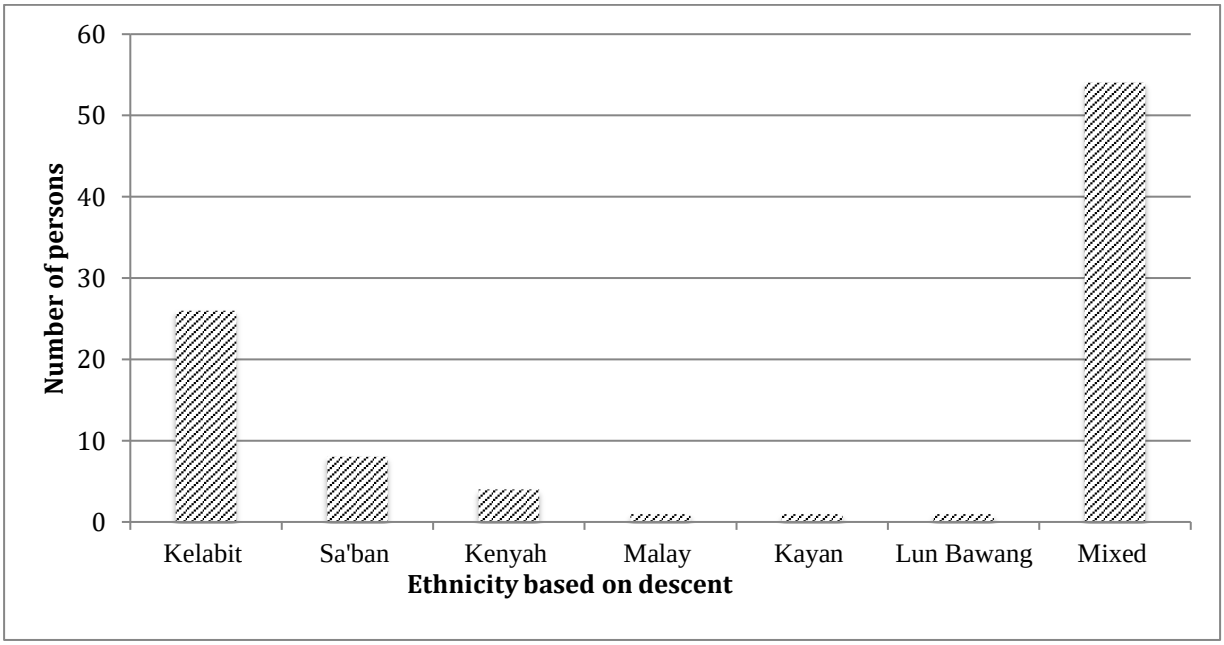


Figure 4.5: Ethnicity of current residents of Long Peluan based on both parents

[18] For further details of Kelabits' own experience of education see Bala (2002:49).
[19] The Ngurek are reflected in the mixed category. Although there were Ngurek among the founding population, there is nobody of pure Ngurek descent today in Long Peluan.

Long Peluan has eventually been considered Kelabit as the majority of families came from the mainly Kelabit communities of Pa Di'it and Batuh Patong. The purpose of Figure 4.5 is to highlight the high number of the current residents with parents of mixed ethnicity compared to those who have both parents of the same ethnic group. Thus the ethnic categories marked Kelabit, Sab'an, etc. denote those who have both Kelabit parents, both Sa'ban parents etc. As can be seen, Kelabit is the largest single ethnic group indicating those who are of Kelabit parents, and the majority of people are of mixed ethnicity. This means that their parents are of different ethnicities, most commonly Kelabit, Ngurek and Sa'ban, but there are other variations as both Kelabit and Sa'bans have intermarried with Kayan, Kenyah, Lun Bawang and Malay**.** There is even greater ethnic diversity reflected in the diaspora population but this is beyond the scope of the current discussion.

4.11 Subsistence

As indicated in Figure 4.6 fishing and hunting are the main traditional subsistence activities, which are carried out only by men with the exception of Lipi, whose husband has shared his skills with her. She goes out hunting and fishing with him and sometimes alone. In the last twenty years the arrival of road and the purchasing of freezers to store and sell wild meat and fish has contributed to a decline in supplies of large fish such as *luang pelian (empurau), luang geraga (semah)* that were in plentiful supply before the arrival of the logging road. The demand for this fish was such that Long Peluan fish became readily available in the households of the urban community and some families also began to reap a lucrative side income. The decline in fish is due to the siltation of the rivers[20]and the intensification of cast-net fishing, due to increased road access by both the local community and outsiders who come on fishing trips to

[20] Mac Kinnon et al (1996:406) document increased sediment in rivers due to logging but also indicate that sediment is reduced within a year of logging ceasing.

the area. The community has made efforts to reverse this trend by implementing a *tagang* system in 2010 with the release of fish fries into the river and the barring of certain parts of the river from fishing. This is at the early stage and it remains to be seen if the community are able to play a part in enforcing the system. The aim is try to recover the stock of big fish in the river such as *empurau* (*luang pelian*) and *semah* (*luang geraga*) and to encourage fish fry introduced to the river by the Agriculture department over the last couple of years to mature.

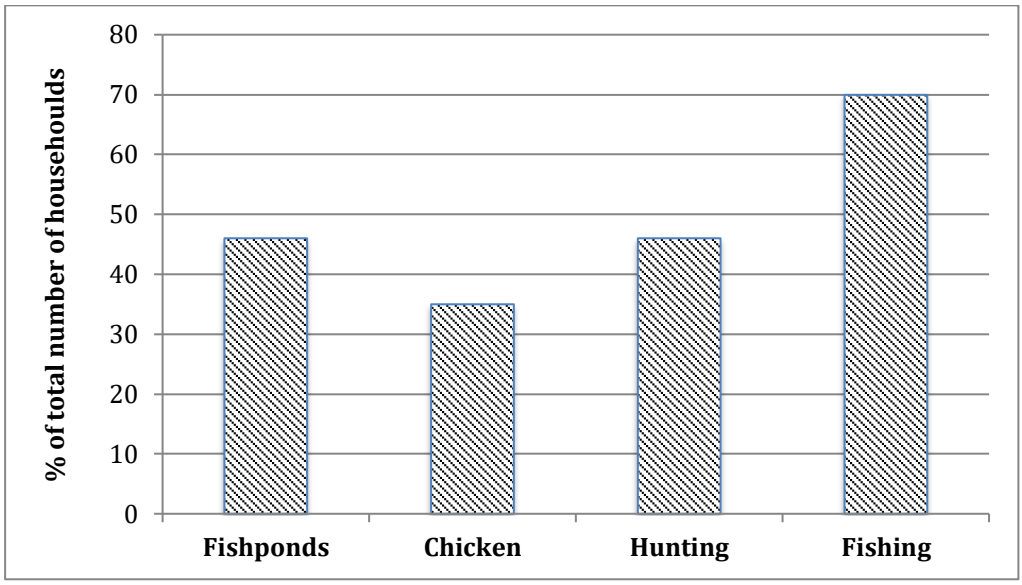


Figure 4.6: Percentage of households involved in subsistence activities

It is difficult to tell how far the opening of the road and logging had led to a counterpart decline in the main source of meat, wild boar, as the road has opened up new areas for hunting and most men who hunt are successful on a weekly basis, and there always seems to be fresh wild meat on the table. It is noted that wild boar and deer survive well in secondary and logged over forest, but the incidents of mast fruiting and large wild boar migrations seem to occur less in recent years after logging and road building. Access to new areas, using motor bikes and four wheel drive vehicles and the use of shot-guns instead of spears are all factors which contribute

to the increase of hunting in the area both by locals and outsiders, which is reaching levels which will be difficult to sustain in future. There are four female-only households that rely on shared or purchased fish and game from their relatives in other households. With the arrival of the road, families have managed to make use of excavating equipment owned by Samling to make fishponds. The bran obtained from milling padi seems to be the standard feed. Poultry farming is only practiced by less than half the population because it is inconvenient to maintain livestock when absent from the village. Thus, it is only families who predominantly live in the village who keep chicken, and these are sold when there is an opportunity.

4.12 Padi-Farming

Both wet padi and hill padi are farmed in Long Peluan. Wet padi was introduced in the 1970s by Maran Raja from Pa Mada and was encouraged by the Agriculture Department. Some relatives from Long Layu in Kalimantan came to help with technical advice and practical support. All plots are owned by the resident households. Many families have repeatedly farmed the same plots over a number of years due to the fertility of the soil and some are able to harvest wet padi varieties cultivated in rain fed fields as opposed to irrigated fields. Most of the wet padi farms are accessible by walking whereas the hill-padi is planted in new areas opened up by the land cleared for the road to Bario. Clearing land and planting padi is now done without any formalities or prior consent from the headman, and this is a means of obtaining more land for the household although technically any land previously not farmed before 1958 is legally claimed by the government as state land. This is a contentious issue and I have avoided discussing how households came to inherit or farm a piece of land with the community.

Figure 4.7 shows the number of plots farmed by each farm group in 2013. As indicated previously, a farm group does not correspond necessarily to a household as some households may house more than one farm group. From the chart it can be seen that over half of farm

groups farm one plot of wet padi, around 55%, and the majority, nearly 70% do not farm any hill-padi or wet padi. Just fewer than 20% farm two plots of wet padi. It is significant that well over 20% have no wet padi fields and these farm groups farm hill padi, opening up new areas to be farmed close to the road, utilizing motorbikes to gain access.

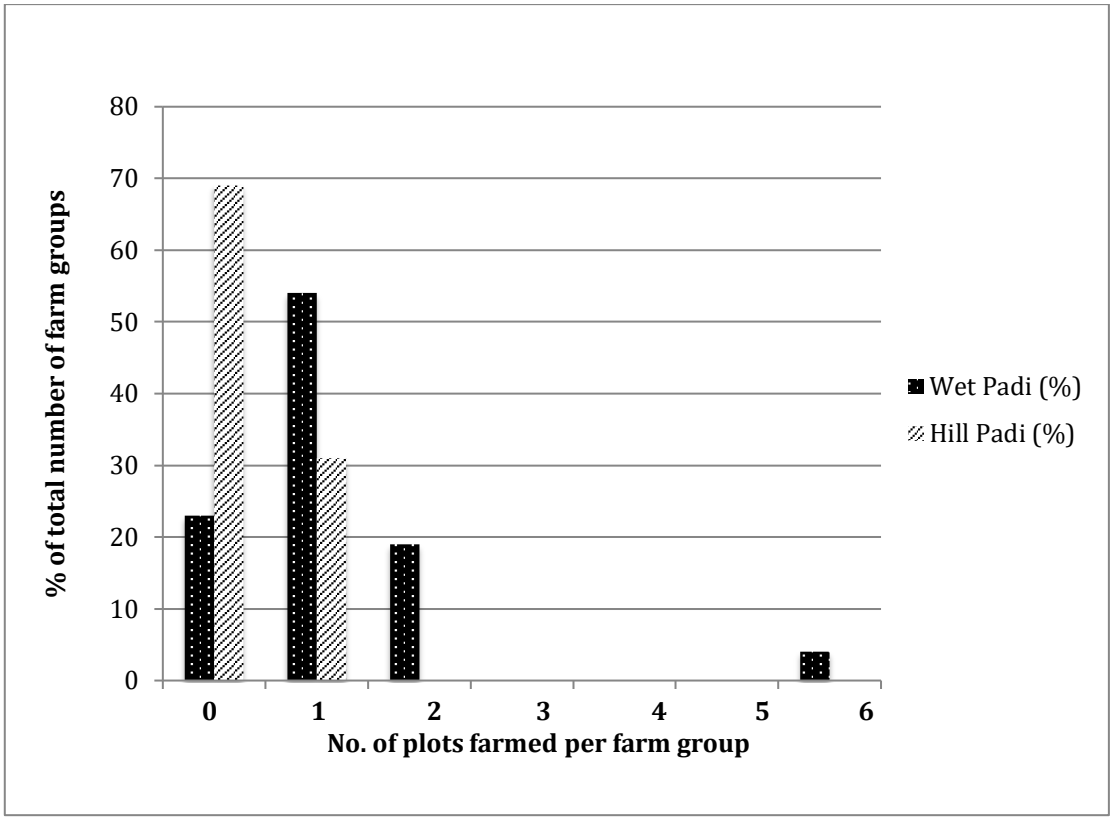


Figure 4.7: Number of plots farmed by percentage of total number of farm groups

Three farm groups planting hill padi plant *pade turi* and a variety of black glutinous rice, *pade obak sia* that fetches premium prices for sale. *Pade turi* is said to be more suitable for making into the rice paste of beaten hot rice, *nuba' laya,'* that is packaged in leaves to take to the fields on a daily basis. Those planting wet-padi plant *pade pengiran, pade roti, pade adan, pade kanowit, padi to'oh* and glutinous rice *pade obak.* Little money is spent on extra inputs. People use weed-killer to maintain their fields and rarely spend more than RM 80 per field per farming

cycle on this. Just over half of the farm groups utilize extra paid labour at peak times harvesting. The Penan at Long Beruang provide labour. One Long Peluan farmer lamented:

> It's quite an undertaking to take on extra labour. They expect you to go and pick them up if you have a means of transport. You have to provide lunch for them, and often the Penan want to stop work early say by four.

However, another farmer also remarked, "The Penan are just like us they can really work hard in the padi-fields under the sun." A few households manage to get help of relatives from Long Banga and Long Puak who can withstand working longer hours and provide their own transport. There is little evidence that hiring wage labour is done solely by men as found by Hew and Al-Idrus in Bario (1998:323), as many of the women in Long Peluan find their own ways and means to contact Penan labourers in Long Beruang by telephone. Interestingly, it is not the case that certain labourers became attached to certain families as these relationships are quite fluid. People were reluctant to quote a sum spent for a farming cycle on labour in the padi fields mainly because they do not keep records and it would take some time to make the necessary calculations. The average daily wage is said to be RM 20 and families quote amounts ranging from RM 60 to RM 1000, spent on labour but these sums are purely anecdotal. Seven families all living in the larger longhouse, work together on a system of reciprocal labour, known as *baya'*. The system is flexible and they are sometimes joined by one or two other families. In Long Peluan the *baya'* system is based on strict reciprocity and is not a case of the strong helping the weak as suggested by Hew and Al-Idrus (1998:315). As each family has a different number of padi fields and different labour needs, reciprocal labour is supplemented with paid labour either within the *baya*' group or utilizing workers from Long Beruang or Long Banga. Unlike Bario, (Hew and Al-Idrus 1998:315), the *baya'* system in Long Peluan has not been replaced with the church-led *kerja peroyong*, co-operative work, with the host donating money to the church, as not everyone participates in the system and others choose to use their cash to

pay for labour in their fields. No money is paid to the church. Almost half of these farm groups, who have single wet-padi plots rely just on the *baya'* system to farm, and do not use extra wage labour.

Kerja sama (kerja peroyong) is utilized to raise funds for the church. It is not used on a regular basis for farming. The absence of a pastor, *gambala* to support is another reason why this is not often in practice. It might be used on an add hoc basis when there is a major job to be done by a particular household and help is needed, for example clearing undergrowth before cutting down trees to clear land for planting of cash crops or fruit trees.

Padi cultivation is the basis of the economy as about a third of the community sell their rice as and when there is a demand. Further to this, the majority of the resident population, consisting of twenty households (Figure 4.4), has family members in town, and whenever possible the residents of the village send them rice and other food-stuff, such as smoked meat or fruit. In return, the urban population provides material support when the villagers come to town or send cash, clothes and other household items back to the village.

The chart at Figure 4.8 depicts the percentage of households using consumer items, which contribute to household efficiency. Boat engines and chainsaws were used in the village before the arrival of the road in the 1990's. These were carried on foot over slippery mountainous terrain from Lio Matu for three days. The other items were purchased when access was available to transport these items from Miri by road. Half of the population has no access to a means of transport such as motorbikes and boat engines and all the women in the village with three exceptions are dependent on their husbands or other relatives to provide them with road or river transport either to Long Banga, or to their farms. Before the road came this was less of an issue

as everyone walked, unless it was necessary to use a boat.[21] The patterns on the chart indicate that more than half the households do not possess items such as rice mills, motorbikes and boat engines, indicating a widening gap of inequality that did not exist prior to the inception of the road. Although Samling bought the village a public generator, nearly 80% of individual households have their own generator. TV and washing machines are both owned by 54% of the households. The TV programmes viewed are mainly from Indonesia and evangelical gospel stations in Indonesian are very popular. Washing machines are time consuming to use, as they have to be operated manually due to poor water quality. The fridges purchased by 69% are fridge freezers, which operate on limited hours of electricity. Their function is to store surplus meat and fish for future use or sale.[22] However, it is possible to note that inequalities between households become more marked as some families receive fewer benefits than others from their urban kin, and some families have more problems making enough cash to buy useful consumer goods which can help them with their work (see Figure 4.8). It is important to note, however, that one family with no urban kin manages through their own efforts to acquire the whole range of consumer items, whereas another family with a range of offspring in lucrative professions in town has less than half the range of items. Everyone in the community uses gas cylinders for cooking, which are sold on a subsidized basis, by one of the two local shops. Every household owns a mobile phone, which can be reloaded through the shops or by relatives in town. There are two shops in the village. Sigang and Lucas run one shop supplying items themselves from Miri. They do not sell tobacco or alcoholic beverages and their pricing strategy attracts a clientele from the local Penan community at Long Beruang,

[21] Similarly, Windle and Cramb (1999:226) note that rural road access increases the mobility of the male population more than that of the female population.
[22] These figures have changed with the availability of 24-hour electricity from the solar farm in 2016. All households now have a freezer.

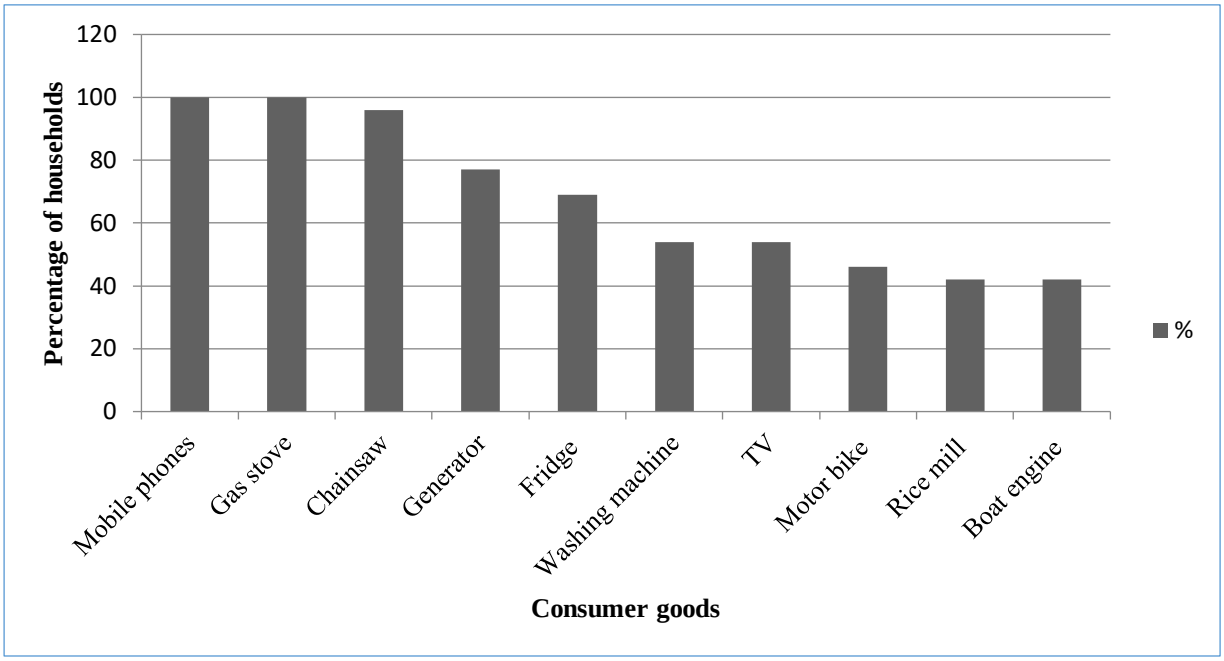


Figure 4.8: Percentage of households owning consumer items (2013)

who eschew the higher prices in their own village shop. Sigang provides credit and is generous to those in need in the community. However, she and her husband are beginning to find that the business is not making sufficient money to make their shop worth the effort of purchasing and transporting goods.

The other shop is run by Suria and her Malay-born husband Tama Anau. Less is known about the running of this shop, but Suria when interviewed told me she collects cash for items sold and her business is doing well. She gets her stock by delivery from a Chinese businessman in Long Banga who has married a local Sa'ban. The clientele of Suria's shop is different to Sigang as she sells beer and cigarettes, which is disapproved of by many in the community.

4.13 Institutional Systems in the village

For a number of years Long Peluan has enjoyed the privilege of hosting the southern Kelabit Penghulu. After the Japanese Occupation, So Tepun was Wakil Penghulu (representative of the

Pengulu) for the Southern Kelabit area, including the Sa'ban, Kenyah and Penan villages. In fact, it is said that he wasn't made a full Penghulu because Penghulu Lawai told Tom Harrison there should not be any other full Penghulu posts in the Kelabit community apart from his own, thus establishing himself as the paramount chief, without contestation.[23] So Tepun's son, Aran Tuan, took over as Penghulu in 1998 until he died in 2012, and brother Malian Tepun is currently headman, his post having been recently renewed.

The headman is assisted by a community development committee (JKKK – *Jawatankuasa Kemajuan dan Keselamatan Kampung)*, which reports to the District Office in Miri. The headman is the chairman assisted by an elected secretary, treasurer and committee members. Their duties are to identify the needs of the community and assist in making proposals through the headman to the government. Their presence assists the headman with accountability to the village with the processes of accounting, banking and keeping records of meetings but there is a gap in expectations of roles between the headman and the committee. This is because most of the committee members are more educated and younger than the headman, and have more open views on participation in decision-making, gained from experience in church work. At the same time, the headman expects the committee members to defer to him, as is the custom, because of his age and seniority. The church is the focal point of the village and residents meet to pray every morning at 5.30am and five nights a week as well as Sunday mornings and afternoons. The church functions not only as a place of worship, as notices are given out which affect the community, such as the fixing of prices of local produce, or the visits of government officials.

The Church is run by a number of deacons (*pelayan*), both male and female, elected on a yearly basis, headed by a leader (*ketua sidang*), who sets up a roster for leading services,

[23] Thus the Full Penghulu post at Long Lellang and for the Southern Kelabit were demoted as Wakil Penghulu. The government reinstated the full Penghulu posts for these two areas in the 1990s. See Appendix 2.

preaching, cleaning and maintaining the church. Currently at the time of writing, there is no pastor in Long Peluan. Funding the church is the responsibility of the village. The district leader (*ketua daerah*) is elected to head the district, and is accountable to the head office in Miri. The role of the latter is to organize inter-church meetings for church leaders, visits, (*lawatan*), and inter -village celebrations.

4.14 The Origins of Long Peluan: Pa Di'it

According to the Long Peluan narratives, the ancestors of the Long Peluan people migrated from Long Moyo, through Ramudu to Pa Di'it under their leader Telen Sang. It is difficult to locate a precise time frame for this migration, although following accounts of counterpart Ngurek migrations (see section 4.18), this may have taken place in the early 1800s. Another ancestor, Tamabo Inok, migrated from Arur Dalan followed by Raja Obong who lived in Long Terotong on the Di'it River possibly in the early part of the 19th century. The latter was the father of the first Kelabit Penghulu, Tai Iwan. Tai Iwan is said to have moved from Long Terotong to Raan Teramaan. The term Pa Di'it refers to the river system, the area where there were different longhouses located at different times, whereas Long Di'it refers to a settlement at a specific place at the confluence of the Di'it and Kelapang rivers. However, these terms are used loosely and interchangeably in everyday speech. The settlement of Long Di'it was linked through intermarriage and alliances to communities on the Dalih and the Da'an rivers over the past 200 years (Barker et al. 2009: 125). There has been extensive ethnographic and archeological research in the area around Pa Dalih, and Batuh Patong contemporary settlements related to Pa Di'it and over thirty sites of archaeological interest have been surveyed. These consist of previous settlement sites, megalithic sites, jar cemeteries, stone mounds and ditch cuttings. Radiocarbon dating reveals early human activity in the form of forest clearance and management possibly as early as about 4000BC, (Lloyd-Smith et al. 2013:48) and definite

occupation at the site Menatoh Pa Di'it from 300 BC until AD 600. Sometime after AD 1000, this site was turned into a cemetery, and there has been likely repeated burial there from about AD 1600 until the 1950s (Lloyd-Smith et al. 2013).

There are a number of settlements associated with migrations from Pa Di'it. The descendants of these migrants could be found in the 1950s living at Pa Bengar, Batuh Patong, Pa Dalih, Pa Mada, Long Peluan, Long Banga, and over the Indonesian border at settlements on the Bahau and Krayan rivers (Figure 4.9). There was significant intermarriage between settlements and contemporary Sa'ban women in Long Banga and Long Puak, Sina Poyang, Sina Jau, Selong Bulieng trace ancestry to Pa Di'it. Going further back in time, a paramount chief of the Sa'ban in the Bahau, Laih Raya Baya Nyipa who went to the 1908 peace-making, came from Pa Di'it.[24] His genealogy links leading Kelabit and Sa'ban families (see Appendix 4). Two of Tai Iwan's wives were Sa'ban, Ronan Alap, the sister of Song Anap and Hnan Lin, the daughter of Laih Raya Angang. Another significant Pa Di'it chief in the Krayan was Penghulu Ipoi Bulan Apoi. He was the ancestor of Pa Suyud in Long Layu.

Many of the early migrants who went to Long Peluan from Long Di'it continued a pattern of intermarriage, for example, Sat Laeng married to Hnan Jok and Paran Langat, married Hnan Alang, Kiai who married Dayang, Pangot married Lipang. Further to this, there were two Ngurek who married into families at Pa Di'it whose genealogy is to be found at Appendix 3. Sina Kuir summarizes the nature of Pa Di'it, where networks extended to the Bahau and the Krayan:

> Our ancestors were from Krayan, from Ba Siok… One was Penghulu Tama Adong, and then followed by A'it Parir (Paran Jalong). There are also Sa'ban relatives such as Tama Jau, Tama Lasau. These are our ancestors; we talk about them but we must not boast about this. We are partly Krayan, part Sa'ban and also Ngurek.

[24] Source: Paulus Balan, See also Jongejans (1922: 227).

The heterogeneity of these communities of origin on the Pa Di'it and the Bahau rivers is embraced by the concept of *lun tauh* (our people) that is more fully explored through the first Long Peluan narrative in Chapter 5. Common factors to be found along these rivers systems are stone graves and megalithic burials, which are more fully explored in Section 4.19

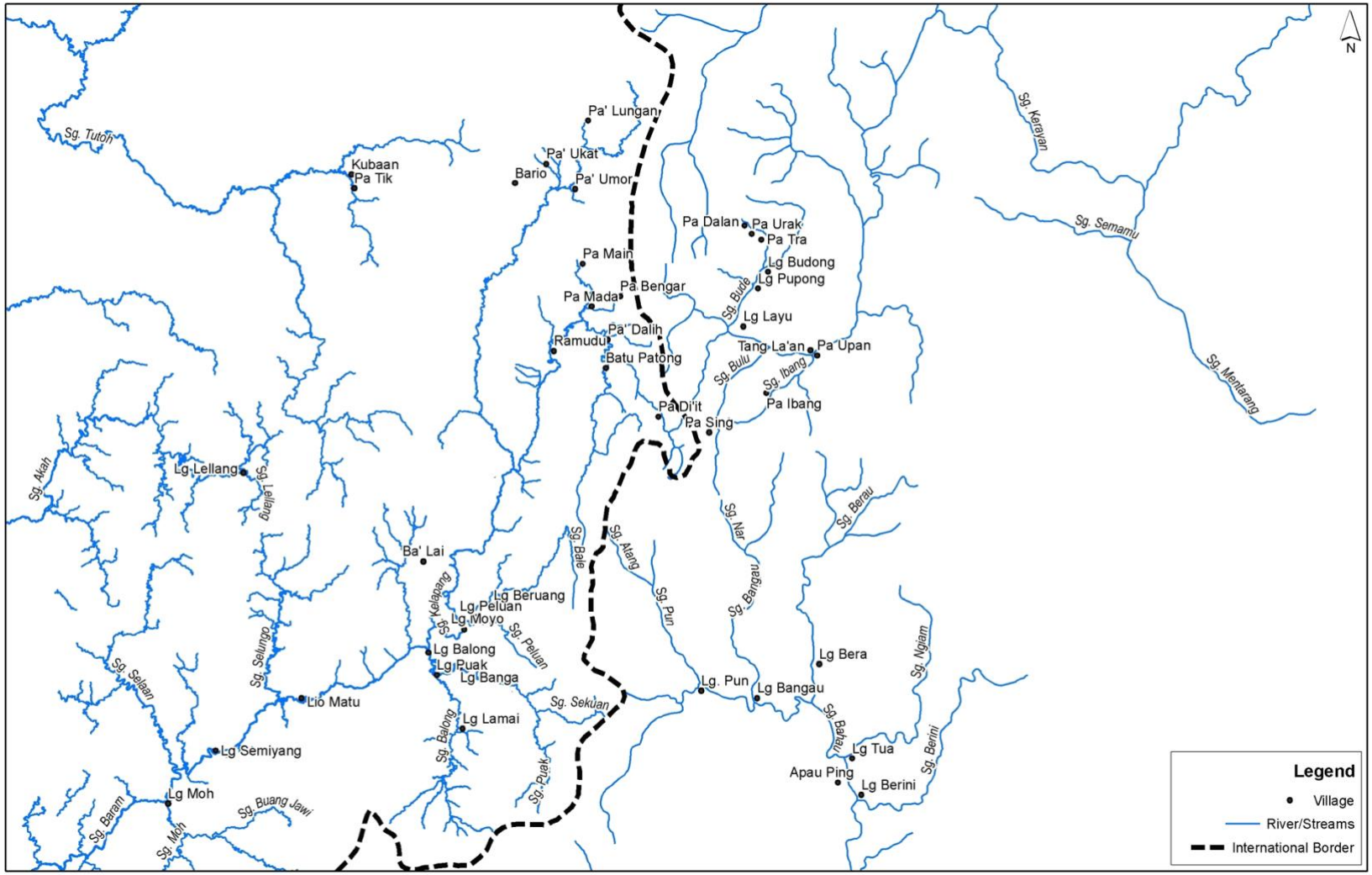


Figure 4.9: The places of our people

4.15 The Last Hundred Years and the Story of Long Peluan

In the late nineteenth century there had been small scale warfare between the ancestors of the Long Peluan people and different groups in Dutch Borneo, culminating in a combined government sponsored expedition, involving Kayan, Kenyah, Iban, Berawan and Kelabit groups, which attacked longhouses in the Kerayan river area in 1904 (see Chapter 6). In the aftermath of this expedition, the Marudi Peace-making in 1908 was a significant date for the history of Long Peluan and Long Banga. The Sa'ban went to Marudi from the Bahau area in Dutch Borneo to make peace. This came as a response to a representation made by Wan Baya, a Kayan, and a Ngurek called Sawa Lawai who went to the Bahau river at the request of the Marudi Resident, Douglas, and his assistant Adams. They met Baya Nyipa, the son of the paramount chief, Belawing Tungang, Balan Wa' Deng, both from the Bangau River and Brueng Ajueng from the Berau River (Clayre and Usat 1997:19).[25] They went together with other headmen, Adan Kayan and Kuen Paran of Pa Sing in the Krayan River watershed and some three thousand Kayan and Kenyah from the Baram (Douglas 1908c :263). When they went back to the Bahau they went up the Kelapang and saw that the land in the area was very fertile. It was from this visit that the idea of moving to the upper Kelapang began to take root in people's minds:

> When our people returned home from the peace-making at Marudi, they saw the land at Long Banga and in the Bale river was very good. No one lived there, except the Penan who lived in the hills; they did not live in the river valley.[26]

It is generally agreed by Kelabit, Sa'ban and Penan sources that the first person to come to the area was Sat Laeng from the Bahau River at the beginning of the twentieth century (Murang

[25] According to entries in the Sarawak Gazette this took place on August 6 1908, a month or so after the peacemaking held at Tingang's house.
[26] Balan Usat (n.d.) unpublished account translated by Paulus Balan.

1989:187, Egay 2009:144[27]). He was with the group of Sa'ban who went to the Marudi peacemaking according to Paulus Balan. He was of mixed Sa'ban and Kelabit ancestry. It is said that his parents came from Pa Di'it. He came to get away from the complications of a love affair with the wife of Lang Tajit. One consequences of this was that he had lost one of his ears in a fight.[28] He came, having stopped, stayed for a while at Long Di'it, with two companions, Araya Oyan[29] and Araya Laweng. They did not settle and plant padi initially but foraged and hunted in the area for about a year. They then returned to the Bahau.

The next significant moment was when Penghulu Tai Iwan, the chief of Pa Di'it and other Kelabit, Krayan, and Sa'ban leaders requested for the fort to be built at Lio Matu. The fort was gazetted in 1911. With the encouragement and protection of the Ngurek Penghulu Aping Nyipa, in Long Semiyang, who had married a Kelabit, Dayang Ubong (see Appendix 5 for genealogy), Araya Ajin came from Pa Di'it with his three sisters and this family pioneered hill padi farming in the area. They were joined by Pun Maha, his brother in law and Araya Kiai and Bilong Pangot, who were the husbands of his nieces, Lipang and Dayang (see Appendix 6 for genealogy). Sometime later a chief of Pa Di'it, Araya Keo[30], brother-in-law of Araya Ajin came and acted as leader.[31] Ose Murang's ancestors, his widowed grandmother Ubar was in this group, with Murang, his father. The transition to establishing a settlement was a gradual one with more families coming to and fro from Pa Di'it. At some point in this early period, there was an epidemic that was responsible for a number of deaths. Not much is known about this

[27] This is further discussed in Chapter 5, where Sat Laeng's role as an early pioneer is dealt with. Egay (2009) disagrees with Murang's (1989) history of the area.
[28] Interview with Supang, mother of Tama Ken, Long Banga.
[29] An ancestor of Mengah Tepun of Long Peluan.
[30] One source suggests he was born in Pa Main.
[31] There is some confusion regarding with Murang's statement that Araya Keao arrived before Sat Laeng (Murang 1989:187). The presence of Araya Keao is doubted by one or two members of the Long Peluan community and is affirmed by others. See Egay (2009:144) and 6.4.9.

but there is a place in the river called Long Arur Boro, meaning the place to where people fled during the epidemic.

By the late 1930s there were two settlements one at Long Peluan and one at Long Arur Ra downriver from Long Banga. After the Japanese Occupation more Sa'ban and Lepo' Ke' their neighbours on the Berau River, came from the Bahau to Long Banga to form additional settlements at Long Puak and Long Pulong which they believed to be their ancestral lands. They had several reasons for coming. They had been forced to give up farming on their own land in the Bahau due to poor harvests and they found it difficult to work for the neighbouring Kenyah under the leadership of Penghulu Apoi at Long Lango, who they said exploited them. Further to this, they were encouraged to settle at Long Banga by Tom Harrison as a reward for killing two Iban who had murdered Donald Hudden in the Bahau area (Murang 1989:188). At the same time, more Kelabit of Pa Di'it origin came from Batuh Patong to Long Peluan.

Some of this history is touched on in the first Long Peluan narrative, which also recalls a much deeper history with the recollection of sites of stone monuments within the area. This is part of a wider culture of secondary burial that is shared by the Apad Wat groups and other early groups such as the Ngurek across central and north eastern Borneo (Sellato 2016). The history of these groups is outlined in the next section.

4.16 The Krayan, Sa'ban, Kelabit as *Lun Tauh* "Our People"

> We have no other homeland, save the patar dita' (highland plateau) Borneo where we have lived for generations. We are of one root, one ancestor, one tradition. We are divided into two groups, a boundary drawn between us. We in the Krayan; you in Sarawak and Sabah. (Eghenter and Langub 2008:293).

Pak Liwi Gala, quoted above, is speaking on the formation of Formadat, a transnational forum promoting economic networking and environmental sustainability in the areas where the people

who speak Apad Wat languages live, which cuts across the national boundaries of Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei. How have these people come to consider themselves one people?

The Kelabit, Lun Bawang and Krayan are part of a larger language group described as "Apo Duat" by Hudson (1978),[32] and by Blust (1993). In fact, Hudson was erroneously spelling "Apo Duat" to refer to the Apad Wat, a mountain range between the Krayan and Kelabit plateaux, characterized by it roots, *wat*, (Eghenter and Langub 2008:287). The Apad Wat language group, speaking mutually intelligible dialects, comprises the Lun Dayeh of the Padas area in Sabah, the Lun Bawang in Lawas, Long Semado, Trusan and Ba Kelalan, the Kelabit of the Kelabit highlands and Long Seridan, and Long Napir. In the Krayan Selatan and Krayan Utara areas, these peoples include the Krayan, Brian, Merau, Berau or Sa'ban, Miyau or Lengilu', Nyibun and Potok (also known as Putok) all collectively known as the Lun Daye of East Kalimantan. In Sarawak, the descendants of the Merau and the Berau are found in the populations of Sa'ban at Long Banga and Long Puak, close to the Sarawak Kalimantan border in the upper Baram and the Nyibun have become assimilated into the Kenyah. The Tabun and Tring in Sarawak are also Apad Wat speakers: the Tring now live with the Berawan on the Tutoh at Long Terawan; the Tabun live at Long Medamit (Eghenter and Langub 2008:289).[33]

The Tring and their offshoot the Tabun were once a numerous group who were in the Tutoh and a large part of Limbang, but were overthrown by an alliance of the Berawan and other downriver groups (Metcalf 1976:96). This is echoed by the recollection of the late Wakil Penghulu So Tepun of Long Peluan: "The Tring were the people originally referred to as Lun Kelabit, as they lived in the headwaters of the Tutoh rivers around Long Labid." [34] The Tring

[32] These people are described as Kelabitic-Murut by Rousseau (1989: 8).
[33] Tabun also live at Nanga Melaban with the Iban in Limbang.
[34] Interviewed in Long Peluan 1984.

were our people, they came from Batu Lawi."[35] Place names in Lun Bawang and Kelabit such as *Pa Birar* (yellow river) and *Gunong Buda'*(white mountain) on the upper Tutoh support the notion that these places were once inhabited by Kelabit-Lun Bawang peoples.

The Sa'ban are not easily understood by other speakers of Apad Wat languages. Their language shares 82% of its vocabulary with the Kelabit spoken in Bario, but the Kelabit, unless they have lived alongside them as at Long Peluan, find Sa'ban difficult to understand, as it has gone through very rapid phonological change (Blust 2001). The Sa'ban previously told researchers they were close to Ngurek (Clayre 1972:186, Lian- Saging 1976/7:26), but linguistic research indicates that the latter are a Kayanic group (Blust 1974, Soriente 2004). However, the Ngurek are classified as a Kenyah group in Sarawak. Their relationship to the Kelabit and the Sa'ban will be discussed in the context of migration sequences below.

4.17 Origins and Migrations: the Apad Wat Groups

Although there are a variety of origin stories quoted by the Kelabit there is a common acceptance of close relationships and shared origins with the Sa'ban, Lun Bawang and Krayan. Kelabit scholars Lian Saging (1976/77) and Talla (1979) consider a range of origin stories for the Kelabit. Firstly, they both cite the widespread Kelabit belief that the Kelabit have always lived in the highlands "from time immemorial," which is also echoed by Bulan (2003:45). Talla suggests that the Kelabit migrated from the Brunei basin up the Limbang River into the Adang and then to the Leliu' plain. From the Liu' some people went to the Kayan and Mentarang and some to Sabah and Trusan, Tinjar, and Tutoh (Talla 1979:17). Ramy Bulan, on the other hand, identifies the Liu' plain as a place of major Kelabit settlement with some fifty longhouses and she suggests that from the Liu', people moved within the highlands to Pa Berang and Pa Derung

[35] Interview with Ribuh Balang 2012.

and then the Adang (Bulan 2005:77).[36] Lian-Saging considers a similar range of hypotheses and like Talla, also touches on the possibility of the origin of the Kelabit coming with a northward movement from the Krayan, acknowledging the bigger picture of the Apad Wat peoples, but is unable to take his arguments further because of a lack of data.

From a different perspective, based on research across the border, a number of writers suggest a northward migratory movement. Bernard Sellato (2009:21) suggests the Apad Wat peoples came from people labelled as Putuk by the Dutch who came from the Putuk River, not far from Malinau town where they had lived close to the Tidung. The latter converted to Islam sometime in the 17th century as they came into contact with Moslem sea raiders who took control of trade from upriver (see Okushima 2008). The Putuk moved upriver in three different directions, some went to the Mentarang, some went to Krayan Tengah and others went to the Krayan Ulu. Part of those who went to the Mentarang went up the Krayan River and into the Kemaloh and the Lutut river areas. From the Kemaloh they went to the upper Padas in Sabah. From the Lutut there was a migration to the Limbang and Trusan areas.

Sellato (ibid.) goes on to state that those who went to Krayan Tengah moved west to a large lake area and eventually after some migrations became the *Lun Baa*' as they planted wet rice. These are the ancestors of the Kelabit wet-rice farmers who farmed the Kelabit plateau. The phenomenon of an area of lakes is also is a point of reference for both Schneeberger (1945:556) and Harrisson (1967:127). Furthermore, this is supported by the fact that there are former lake areas such as Taka Bulan (moon lake) between Pa Mada and Ramudu and another lake (*taka*) at the Dapur River and the peat swamp of Bario which was formerly waterlogged.

Lastly, some early groups went from Krayan Ulu into the Bahau. These were the ancestors of the Sa'ban. The Lengilu are a related group who used to live on the Krayan and then moved

[36] Sources in Pa Lungan state the existence of standing stones in the Liu' area.

to Krayan Tengah and Ulu (Sellato ibid.). Sa'ban informants claim to be autochthonous to the Bahau River basin, like the Ngurek (Topp and Eghenter 2005:77). According to Jalong (1989:160) the Sa'ban were with Ngurek on the Lura and they migrated together up the Bahau to escape their enemies to the Ma'o River which is in the headwaters of the Puak River, in the Kelapang area. From here the Ngurek moved downriver to the Baram. According to the first Long Peluan narrative (see Chapter 5) there was a migration to the Di'it with Telen Sang and then there was a split with some going to the Bahau and some staying in the Di'it area. This is described as a major separation across a ditch and it recurs in Kelabit and Krayan narratives. This major movement from the Di'it might be traced to groups that moved from the Krayan Ulu in about 1800 to the upper Bahau river system and split mainly into two different groups, one in the Bangau River and another to the Berau River (Sellato 2009:33). Some Sa'ban then moved from the Bangau River and Long Tua to Pa Sing, Pa Ibang Pa Kabir and Pa Upan in Krayan Ulu where they are now resettled at Tang La'an (Topp and Eghenter 2005:104) (Sellato 2009:33). Many of the residents of Tang La'an are connected to families in Long Banga and Pa Dalih. This became apparent during fieldwork in Tang La'an when I was amazed to find a photograph that I had taken of the late Sina Jau on the wall of a house in Tang La'an. I was also surprised to discover that Rinai, a descendant of Tai Iwan from Pa Ibang, who features in the second Long Peluan narrative, was actually the aunt of Evelyn who had married my husband's first cousin, Nicholas Kusing.

Returning to the subject of Apad Wat migrations, researchers on the Lun Bawang and the Lun Dayeh also espouse the theory of a northward migration. Crain traces a northward movement into Sipitang from the Sesayap river in Kalimantan (1970:35). More specifically, the Lun Bawang are thought to have been living in the Brunei hinterland since before 1700 AD and possibly even earlier, having come from more southern Kelabitic-Lun Bawang areas of

Central Borneo (Deegan1973: 162-3). There were Lun Bawang villages close to Brunei, such as Kruei, some 17 miles south west of Brunei, led by an Adang Murut and the village of Balat Ikan was the first settlement up the Limbang river and many Brunei Malays are conscious of having Murut (Lun Bawang) ancestry (ibid.: 1973:170) .

This northward movement continued in the beginning of the twentieth century in the Kelabit areas after peace-making as people came to Long Peluan from Pa Di'it and the Bahau River, to Long Lellang from Pa Butong near Ramudu, and Long Seridan and Long Napir from the Adang valley.

4.18 The Ngurek as *Lun Tauh* "Our People"

The Ngurek called themselves *Hweng Mbau,* meaning people of the Bahau River (Sellato 1995:6). When there are references to the people of the Bahau River in migration stories it is important to remember that these are not necessarily relating to one ethnic group such as the Sa'ban, but to many more, including different Kenyah groups and the Ngurek (Sellato 2016:120). Sellato suggests that the Ngurek were composed of a number of smaller autochthonous groups living across a wide area, which included the Bahau, the Iwan, and the headwaters of the Baram and Balui rivers in the early 17th century (1995:8). The Ngurek claim to be the first people to settle on the Baram River and their name for the river, Telang Usan is widely used by most of the ethnic groups now settled on the river. Indeed, it is thought they were originally in the upper Baram and that they then moved into the Bahau watershed in the early eighteenth century, (Sellato 2016:120, Arifin and Sellato 2003:199). However, these writers attribute the reason for their move away from the Baram to war with the Kelabit peoples, but both contemporary and archive sources are unable to verify this.

In the mid-eighteenth century, the Kayan, Modang and Kenyah attacked Ngurek and took over Pujungan, Lura and middle Bahau (Sellato 1995: 8).[37] The allies of the Ngurek were the Sa'ban and the Kayan Uma Po with whom they stayed on the Lura (Jalong 1989:160). Consequently, a group left the Lura in 1770s under Eju Jalong and went north up the Bahau, settling in upper Baram in an area close to Long Peluan at Long Puak, Long Balong, and Long Moyo (Lulao Trong) (Jalong 1989:160). This was sometime before 1820 (Sellato 1995: 28). It is possible that some of the stone graves and mounds along the river system date back to this time. At Long Balong, their leader was Ngo Awan. It was in this area, at Long Moyo that they lived with a group of Kelabit and they encountered an attack by the Lepo Tepu, which is described in the first of the Long Peluan narratives.[38]

The Ngurek led by the son of Ngo Awan, Lawai Ngo, moved onto the main Baram River where they eventually settled at Long Semiyang with over three thousand people (Jalong 1989:162). This was sometime in the early nineteenth century (Sellato 1995: 28). They were eventually joined by the Ngurek Mandun from the Bera River (ibid.:1995:8, 31). They prospered in Long Semiyang until there was a smallpox epidemic so they moved to the Selaan River where the Kayan Uma Po lived opposite them. Here they suffered a devastating attack from the Lepo' Tepu and their allies in revenge for their defeat under the previous attack led by Jau Luhong.[39] They eventually moved to the Akah River with the Kayan Uma Po who settled there. However, the Ngurek moved back to the Selaan where they witnessed the eruption of Krakatoa in 1883. From here they began to travel downriver and established trade with the help

[38] Engang Ngau sets this attack at Long Balong and Jalong at Long Belaan (Jalong 1989:161).
[39] For more details, see Chapter 5. The enmity between the Ngurek and the Lepo Tepu is mentioned by Rousseau (1990:336) who states that the migration of the Ngurek into the Baram was the reason for the Lepo' Tepu to move to the Iwan River.

of the Tring with the Brunei *Alo* in Marudi, where they bought salt and cloth in exchange for resin. It was through this contact that they became infected with smallpox again and their community diminished. Those who survived moved to Tanyit Patah below Batu Gading above Long Lama under the leadership of Larah Ngo, Epi Lawing and Api Jalong (Jalong 1989:164). [40] This was a place where there were two tapang trees according to Engan Ngau. They then moved to Long Temala and eventually Long Banyok. This took place during the Brooke administration. In his words "When they were already in Long Banyok, it was the time of the Perintah Raja. When the Sultanate of Brunei was over, people came to collect people's Brunei currency."[41]

In the twentieth century, with the establishment of the fort at Lio Mato, the Ngurek under Aping Nyipa became based at Long Semiyang, where he took on the role of intermediary between the Brooke government and the Upper Kelapang groups. This relationship is touched upon in Chapter 5 with the second narrative. The Ngurek provided boats for the Kelabit and Sa'ban to travel to Marudi. Aping Nyipa married a Kelabit, Dayang Ubong and there was intermarriage between the Ngurek and the Kelabit, so much so that it was reported that Kelabit was a second language in Long Semiyang and Long Temala (Bolang and Harrison 1949:129). Examples of such kinship links are detailed in the genealogies of Long Peluan and Long Di'it at Appendix 4, 5, and 6.

Further to this, the association of the Ngurek with the Kelabit is emphasized by Rousseau, who classifies them as Kelabitic on the basis of Kelabitic ancestry (Rousseau 1990: 20). He makes this classification even though scholars classify their language as Kayanic (Blust

[40] According to Douglas after the attack by the Lepo Tepu those who survived went to Long Tamala (1911:146).
[41] Engang Ngau is possibly remembering the end of the Japanese occupation when "banana" currency was collected. This recollection regarding the collection of currency marks the end of an era, rather than a possible historical fact.

1974:157-8). He argues that this position is further supported by the fact that the Ngurek do not consider themselves Kayanic and that they have a similar culture of secondary burial, stone graves and monuments which is discussed in the next section.

4.19 Deep History and Secondary Burial

The Kelabit and Ngurek shared common cultural practices not only with peoples of the Apad Wat language group but also together with the Berawan, Kajang and Melanau, who formed "an ancient cultural sub-stratum" through their practice of *nulang* (secondary burial) and death feasts, and stone monuments, across Northern Sarawak before the migrations of the Iban, Kayan and Kenyah (see Sellato 2016, Metcalf 1976).[42] The visible artifacts of secondary burial practices are to be found in stone jars, stone slab graves, and dolmen which are found in significant density in the Kelapang valley (Barker et al 2008) and elsewhere in the Kelabit highlands and the Krayan river basin (Topp and Eghenter 2005). Examples of the extent of these practices can be found in the evidence that the Tring practiced burials on the Apoh River similar to the Berawan with jars inserted in carved posts (Metcalf 2010:186).[43] Kelabit also claim that stone graves on the Pata and Apoh Rivers are those of their ancestors (Lian-Saging 1977/8:55). Further to this, there are indications that there was a culture of burials in jars in Brunei attributed to the Murut (Lun Bawang). Moreover, Harrison concluded after excavation close to the Belait River in Brunei, "the whole of this part of Borneo was occupied by people with a jar cult" (Harrison 1958:304).

[42] Evidence of widespread secondary burial dating back to Pre- Neolithic and Neolithic times (7000-3000 b.p.) have been found at Niah, and Mulu National Parks (John Kingbaum personal communication).

[43] There is a residual Kelabit population at Long Apu in the Apo. This is possibly a remnant who were related to the Tring, who originally went to seek their ancestors' former settlement.

It is possible to infer from this that in the Brunei hinterland and in North Eastern Borneo the speakers of the Apad Wat languages and other early groups practised secondary burial and that their languages and culture before the arrival of the Kayan were central rather than marginal to the area (see Metcalf 2010:244).

Secondary burial practices involved prestigious large-scale feasts and the erection of funerary monuments. These feasts functioned as a display of prestige or *doo'*-ness, power and wealth of the hosting family. Large quantities of rice, rice beer and meat were prepared, which testified to the hosts' prestige in attaining such surpluses through diligent farming and through extra provision by supporting kin and the calling in of debts. The size and visibility of the monument testified to the extent of the workforce that could be mobilized for its erection (Harrisson 1984). This was a manifestation of the competitive nature of the Apad Wat societies, in which chiefs had to compete in standing and prestige against other elders who were ready to take over their role.

4.20 The Signs of Early Settlement in Long Peluan –Ngurek and Kelabit

The signs, (*edtu)* of the first inhabitants to the Long Peluan area, which are to be found in the form of stone monuments of different kinds, mentioned in the first narrative, are situated in the river valleys of the area (Figure 4.10). There was a time when people said the Ngurek built these sites. Beatrice Clayre in her field notes dating back to the 1960s recalls these as "Ngorek graves" and when I first visited Long Peluan in 1983, people said these were Ngurek graves. Further to this Sina Ellie, the sister-in law of the headman-narrator recently mentioned on a visit that the graves at Pa Nonar were built by the ancestors of Araya Ajin, one of the founders of Long Peluan, whose father Bilong Salo was known to be Ngurek.

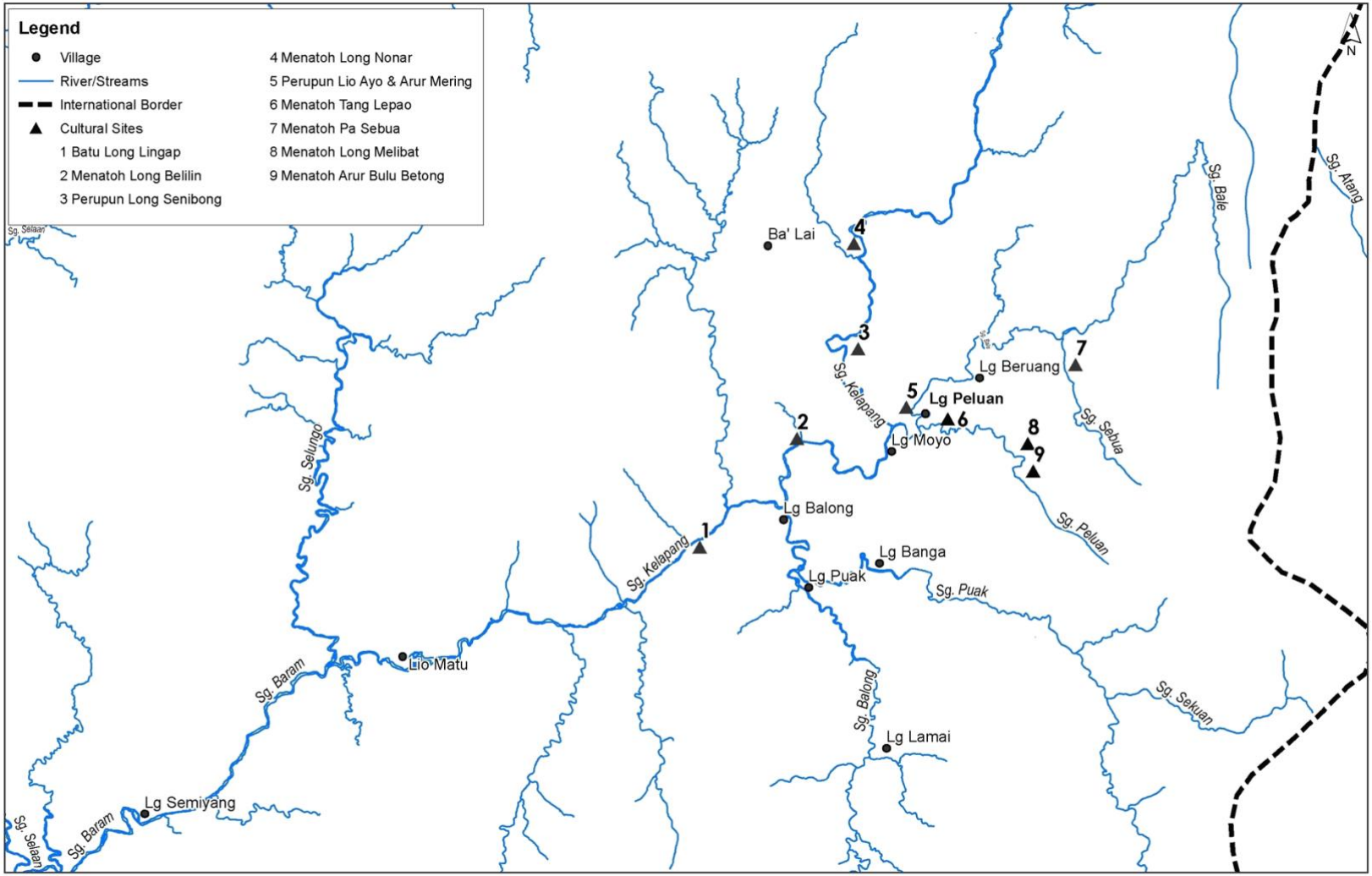


Figure 4.10: The Long Peluan area and cultural sites

However, this is not said very much at all now as many archaeological sites elsewhere in the highlands featuring similar monuments have been associated with the Kelabit by local populations and scholars (Hitchner 2009, Barker, et al 2008, 2009, Lloyd Smith et al 2010, 2013, Lloyd Smith 2012).

These sites fit into a location pattern observed by Sellato who documented similar sites, also associated with the Ngurek, on the Bahau and Krayan rivers in Kalimantan as they are placed at the confluence of a river and a stream or on a high river bank, opposite a human settlement site (Sellato 1995:11). However, apart from the village of Long Peluan itself, which has a grave site opposite the site of the present settlement, and two stone mounds within walking distance, sites of settlement in relation to the numerous grave sites in the area have yet to be investigated and gazetted. Some of these are graves *(menatoh)* and stone mounds *(perupun)* and are linked to the death feasts and secondary burials that were widely practised before the Kelabit embraced Christianity in the 1930s. The stone monuments testify to the long history of settlement in the area with at least three sites within walking distance of the current village. These are explained below in Table 4.4 and 4.5.

4.21 Perupun Stone Mounds

Close to Long Peluan is the stone mound (*perupun*) at Oloh Lio' Ayo located about twenty feet from the riverbank of the Bale river. The place name Lio' Ayo refers to the "island of the enemies" in the vicinity on the river and the word *Ayo* is derived from the Ngurek word for enemies (*ayau)*. This recalls the time of warfare and alliances with the Ngurek, which is evoked in the oral histories of the community, and is the subject of Chapter 5. About two hundred metres down river are the vestiges of another stone mound (*perupun*) at Arur Mering, which was identified in 2013, forming the padi-bund of Balan Ngau's wet padi-field (*sawah*). Another

stone mound (*perupun*) is at Long Senibong, on the Kelapang river located about 150 feet from the edge of the river. This is the largest of the stone mound (*perupun*) in the area.

Table 4.4: Types of monuments and cultural sites in the Long Peluan area

	Type of monument	**Details**
1	*menatoh*	cemeteries consisting of dolmen *(batuh nangan)*, stone slabs placed on upright stones.
2	*batuh senuped /senuie*	standing stones, erected in memory of aristocratic leaders after secondary burial.
3	*batuh narit*	carved stones which feature throughout the highlands. The examples in this area feature abstract designs and little is known about them. It is said that they were connected to death feasts like the standing stones mentioned above.
4	*perupun*	stone mounds that were built for wealthy women who had no heirs. Their valuables, such as beads ceramics, jars and gongs were buried in these mounds to prevent conflict between relatives on their death. Stones were collected from the river and they were passed by one person to the other in a long line to the site of the perupun. Carbon dating reveals an age 2400 years at a *perupun* at Pa Lungan in the Kelabit highlands, and archaeological research indicates that such stone mounds might be added to or looted over periods of time (Lloyd -Smith 2013 personal communication).
5	*menatoh belanai*	a cemetery consisting of Chinese jars with human bones which have been inserted as a secondary burial practice. Jars in similar cemeteries in the Pa Di'it are dated to 18 and 19 centuries (Barker et al. 2009:159). In Long Peluan, there is reluctance to visit this place as it is considered a recent pre-Christian cemetery.
6.	*nabang*	a trench dug to commemorate the passing of a father by a son, or a deceased ancestor. There were two dug by Araya Ewat, and the traces of this trench have disappeared due to road building.
7	*kawang*	spaces cut by felling trees on ridges in the landscape to commemorate deceased ancestors.

Table 4.5: Long Peluan stone monuments and cultural sites

	Monument	**Title**	**Type**	**River location**
1.	Perupun	Oloh Lio' Ayo in Balang Lipang's field	Stone mound	Bale
2.	Perupun	Arur Mering Balan Ngau's field	Stone mound	Bale
3.	Menatoh	Tang Lapao	Dolmen	Peluan
4.	Menatoh	Long Melibat	Dolmen	Confluence of Peluan river and Melibat stream.
5.	Menatoh	Lem Dusur	Dolmen	Confluence of Peluan river and Lem Dusur stream, across from the site of Long Peluan settlement.
6.	Menatoh	Lungun Belanai	Chinese Jars	Peluan river .
7.	Menatoh	Long Belilin(first narrative)	Dolmen	Confluence of Belelin stream and the Kelapang. Near Long Moyo
8.	Lungun Batuh	Lio' Pa Sebua'	Stone jar coffin	Confluence of Bale river and Sebua' stream .
9.	Menatoh	Long Nonar (first narrative)	Dolmen	Confluence of Kelapang and Nonar rivers
10.	Perupun	Long Nonar	Stone mound	Confluence of Kelapang and Nonar rivers
11.	Menatoh	Arur Bulu' Betong	Dolmen	Confluence of Peluan river and Arur Buloh Betong
12.	Batuh Senupid	Long Debpur	Standing stone	Confluence of Debpur and Kelapang rivers
13.	Menatoh	Pa Merir	Dolmen	Confluence of Merir stream and Kelapang river
14.	Batuh Narit	Batuh Narit Araya Malian @ Tama Pasang	Carved stone	Peluan river close to Arur Bulu' Betong. Stone dislodged
15.	Batuh Narit	Batuh Narit Araya Malian @ Tama Pasang	Carved stone	Punang Arur Mering Batu Salit
16.	Batuh	Long Lingap	Wooden coffin placed under an overhanging rock	Confluence of Metapah and Kelapang rivers. Mentioned in the first narrative Site inaccessible.
17.	Perupun	Long Senibong	Stone mound	Senibong and Kelapang rivers , opposite mouth of Nonar river
18.	Nabang (2)	Araya Ewat	Ceremonial trench	Long Sebaling I'it. Destroyed by road
19.	Menatoh	Long Sena	Stone graves	Sena and Puak rivers
20.	Menatoh	Ma'oo	Stone jars	Ma'o and Puak river
21.	Batuh Nangan	Rumah Ma'on Long Banga	Dolmen	Puak River
22.	Batuh Narit	Long Polong	Carved stone	Stream near airport. Associated with the Ngurek. Evil aura.
23.	Batuh Kalong	End of Ma-oh river	Carved stone	On border pass. Attributed to the Ngurek.
24.	Kawang	Batu Salit	Cut pass on ridge	Covered by vegetation.
25.	Menatoh	Arur Telingan	Dolmen	On true left bank of Kelapang river opposite Arur Telingan stream

4.22 Menatoh Stone Graves

Also very close to the current settlement across the Bale river is the site of some ten stone slab graves at *Menatoh* Lem Dusur, some supported by dolmen. A more recent grave site is the jar cemetery at the mouth of the Peluan River, which is probably about a hundred years old and is the burial place of known ancestors before they converted to Christianity. It is perhaps for this reason that villagers are reluctant to take visitors to this site. Downriver on the Kelapang is the *Menatoh* Long Belilin consisting of a series of stone slab graves placed close together. This is close to Long Moyo, the site where the Kelabit and the Ngurek settled according to the Long Peluan narratives and is known as Lulao Trong in Ngurek oral history. *Menatoh* Long Nonar is further up the Kelapang River and is difficult to access due to rapids and the lack of paths. I went on an expedition last year and we failed to find the site, partly due to changes in the landscape brought about by the building of the logging road. It is of interest, because it is specifically mentioned in the narratives, and it is said to be associated with the ancestors of Araya Ajin, one of the founders of Long Peluan, whose father Bilong Salo' is said to be Ngurek, and with Telen Sang, the leader of the migration to Long Di'it in the first narrative.

4.23 Summary

This chapter touched on some of the issues that affect the community at present, such as the changes from sharing and distributing food to selling surplus produce, a consequence of entering the cash economy over the last thirty years. Further to this, remittances from families in town have heightened disparities in household cash income and the use of labour-saving devices and electrical commodities. In addition, families who have the transport and the labour resources have begun to clear and claim land by the logging road, without reference to the elders

of the community, which is a source of continual friction and a concern for the headman-narrator which he touches on in the narratives.

The context has been set for the narratives with the geographical setting of Long Peluan close to the border between Sarawak and Kalimantan at a time when this border was not enforced. The historical relationships between the Kelabit, Sa'ban and Ngurek as *lun tauh* "our people" have been outlined through migrations and linguistic and territorial affiliations. These are further related to the wider and deeper history of people on the Bahau and Krayan river systems and the Apad Wat peoples, who shared common cultural practices such as secondary burial, associated with huge competitive feasts, which became indices of prestige for chiefs. Traces of this culture are to be found in the extensive sites of stone slab graves, standing stones and dolmen in the Di'it and Upper Kelapang river systems, where recent archaeological research provides evidence for the antiquity of settlement in this area. There has been a shift noted in the way the local population refer to these standing stones and stone slabs as Kelabit rather than Ngurek in recent times and this will be further discussed in Chapter 5. This is the setting for the three narratives, which provide episodes in the history of *lun tauh*, (our people), across Borneo.

CHAPTER 5

WARFARE AND THE MIGRATIONS OF OUR PEOPLE

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is in four sections. The second section is the summary of the first narrative. The third section presents the translation of the narrative with supporting footnotes which provide contextualization and supplementary information. The narrative has been broken into sections with headings for easier reading, and to provide cross-references with the original transcription in Kelabit (Appendix 7). The fourth section provides a commentary and analysis of the narrative according to sections. The purpose of the fifth section of the chapter is to provide an exegesis of the narrative, extracting the theme of identity as it comes through the narrative in a pre-colonial era, and setting the discussion in the context of identity and ethnicity in Borneo. The narrative outlines migrations, separations and coming together of heterogeneous communities in a time before the imposition of international borders, shaping an understanding of *lun tauh* (our people) through episodes which tell of the escape of attacks from enemies and journeys to new land. This fluidity permeates everyday life today in the longhouse of Long Peluan, as people see themselves as an inclusive group, together with their in-laws, cousins and neighbours. This identity provides for the maximum generation (*iyuk*) of value or *doo'*-ness, as value to be realized, has to be "…part of some larger social whole" (Graeber 2001:70). Yet at the same time, the narrator formulates an exclusive sense of identity that territory belongs to "the Kelabit people." As will be discussed later, this is related to the pressure of being a minority group competing for autonomy over land in the context of the Malaysian state.

5.2 Summary of the First Narrative

This narrative describes the migrations of *lun tauh* (our people) with the Ngurek from Bawang Ipong on the Lura River to Long Upon, in the Bahau river basin, where they lived alongside the Sa'ban. From there they moved into what is now Sarawak up the Puak river, eventually to Long Moyo on the Bale river in the upper Kelapang where an alliance of the Ngurek and the Kelabit, as "our people," at Long Moyo was formed against an attack by the Lepo Tepu. The narrator identifies a rock on the landscape, Batu Long Lingap, as the scene of a tragic love story. It is also the mark of a point of separation between the Ngurek and the Kelabit in the area of the headwaters of the Baram. The narrator pinpoints slab graves, and standing stones on the landscape as evidence of the presence of Kelabit in the river system at a time when there is competition for land with their neighbours. The narrative also describes the feats of a Kelabit hero, Telen Sang, who had supernatural strength, and how he led our people to migrate to the Remudu River and Long Di'it. The community then separated at a prominent ridge. Some went to the Bahau river, some stayed at Long Di'it. This explains how our people separated and are now scattered across the tributaries of the Bahau and Krayan rivers in Kalimantan, and the Kelapang and upper Baram in Sarawak.

5.3 The Translation of the First Narrative

5.3.1 The opening of the narrative

"We want to know our relationship, our history of being together with the Ngurek."

5.3.2 Early migrations

In early times the Ngurek lived in Bawang Ipong, on the Bahau River. They then moved up the Bahau River to a place in Lem Budud called Pu'un Aie. Aie means the lalang grass. They lived

at Long Upun for quite a long while together with the Sa'ban of Pa Nar, who are considered as our own people.

They moved from there following the Bahau River and along the path by Belarong River, up the Puak River (in Sarawak). They followed the Puak River until they arrived in Long Balong. They stayed together with our people who had been staying there. Telen Sang was the one who looked after our people, the Kelabit. Telen Sang was their chief. The chiefs of the Ngurek are Linga Paran, Linga Lange and Linga Lawe. These three brothers together looked after the Ngurek. The Ngurek lived with our people in Bale River, Long Peluan and Long Puak. A place where they lived together, was at Long Moyo. The Ngurek called this place Lulao Terong.

5.3.3 The attack from the Lepo' Tepu

After staying there together for a long while, there came a time when their enemy, the Lepo' Tepu, tracked them down to Long Moyo. We do not know where the Lepo' Tepu came from. They must have been fighting each other previously, so they followed their trail. Members of the leading class *(paran)* of the Lepo' Tepu are usually carried on a seat *(ngatang)* on the shoulders of their followers. There is a bird with white tail feathers called *aweyh berenging* (the Asian paradise flycatcher). They would chase and catch the bird and pluck out the tail feathers and use them to decorate the headdresses of their leaders.

When they arrived on the opposite side of the river from the village of Long Moyo, they called the Kelabit and the Ngurek for assistance to cross the river by boat. And they shouted, "Come and help us cross the river. Once we have crossed the river then we shall fight!"

They said, “Alright”, and they ferried them across. After each crossing, the enemy were overcome and stealthily killed, unbeknown to their kinsmen who were still waiting to be brought across the river. Eventually, the remaining enemy became suspicious.

“Where are our kinsmen who came ahead of us?” they inquired.

“They are drinking in the longhouse,” came the answer.

“Then why can’t we see them? Perhaps you have killed them? We had better take our leave of you and go back home. Do take good care and feed your children well. Go and feed your children and the womenfolk well. Next year we will come back to pay you a visit,” they replied.[44]

5.3.4 The consequences of the attack by the Lepo’ Tepu

After the departure of the Lepo’ Tepu, the Kelabit and Ngurek of Long Moyo had discussions to plot their strategy.

“Let us have a discussion to find out how everyone feels. What shall we do? If we stay here, I feel they will come again. We won’t be able to repel them. They will return with a large group of reinforcements.”

So the Ngurek suggested, “Let us all move downriver”.

But the Kelabit said, “We cannot go downriver. We are not used to handling boats so we shall go up into the headwaters."

They were unable to agree.

[44] The Ngurek sequel to this story is as follows. The Lepo’ Tepu returned with their allies with a retaliatory attack when the Ngurek were living on the Selaan River after harvest when many of the men were away hunting and building boats (Jalong 1989:163). According to the Resident, Douglas this was “a great slaughter” (Douglas 1911:146). By examining the sequence of migrations and dates indicated by Jalong, this happened sometime before the eruption of Krakatoa, in 1870s.

And so they said, “If that is the case, we shall then part ways”.

And so they went their separate ways. The Ngurek went downriver and the Kelabit went up into the mountainous country of the headwaters. That is why we have Ngurek ancestry. Our ancestor, Bilong Salo, was an Ngurek. He was the father of Araya Ajin and Seraya Aleang.[45] That is how we are related to the Ngurek. That is why we have partially Ngurek ancestry.

Back to the journey of our people into the headwaters, Telen Sang led them. He was a strong man of outstanding supernatural prowess. It was said that he did not wade across the small rivers but would leap across to land on the opposite bank. He was a strong man. He is an example of a man who is daring enough to meet any challenge.

5.3.5 The story of the lovers of Batu Long Lingap

Do you know that there were two young people whose parents did not want them to get married?

They said, “If we can’t get married what shall we do?”

But then they were so much in love and they said “It’s better we die together.”

So they went on top of a rock at Long Lingap and they held each other’s hands tightly and they jumped down from the rock and died.

That is why there is a partially decaying wooden coffin found in a ledge in the rock, which we used to see. This is a mark to show the Ngurek went down river.

5.3.6 Signs on the landscape

As the Kelabit moved upriver, one can see stone mounds and standing stones that they built along the river, and slab graves at Long Nonar. These are the signs left by them. Another

[45] For the genealogy of Araya Ajin see Appendix 6.

example is the row of trees [46] just below the Remudu River. These trees are still there today. They were harvesting and as they sat down, they planted the seeds in a row, from the fruit they ate.

5.3.7 Telen Sang foils the enemy

They finally arrived and settled at the Ramudu River. The men were asked to be on guard.

"You go downriver and look out for the enemy, you never know they may still be coming after us."

And so they went to patrol the area. They stationed themselves at a steep gorge waiting to ambush the enemy. As anticipated, they appeared and fighting started. At this point, Telen Sang jumped onto a rock. Spears were thrown at him but he nonchalantly repelled them with a mere swing of his arms. The enemy had run out of spears as Telen Sang brushed them off into the river.

The enemy said, "Oh, this is no way to fight. This man must be a spirit. Let us retreat and go home!"

Many of them died and their bodies were carried back as they retreated.

5.3.8 The migration to Long Di'it

After this victory, they went back to the village and told the young men:

"You go over the mountain to see if there is a suitable place to move to. Look for trees such as *kayu tu'ar*[47] and other trees that grow on fertile land. If you see these trees, then that is good land. That's the place we should move to."

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[46] Local sources state that these are langsat trees, *langaat, Lansium domesticum* (Christiansen 2002:376).

[47] This might be what has been recorded elsewhere as *toar, Bischofia javanica* (Christiansen 2002:321). This wild tree is used for making coffins, rice mortars and planks for building.

They went to Long Di'it and found that the land there is good. They returned to Ramudu to tell the elders.

They said, "The land is good over there." And so, they moved to Long Di'it and stayed there some time.

5.3.9 The separation of the community

Life in those days was different. They did not settle for long in one place. At the most they stayed in one place between five to ten years and they would move on. This is because the houses in those days were not as good as the houses now. They were built just to provide shelter. Why is this so? This is because they do not want the enemies to know where they were living. They were anxious that the enemy would come and attack. And so they moved every year.

And so they started to think again, "What now, why don't we go back to the Bahau River?" They asked themselves. They started to talk about it. They couldn't all agree but some really wanted to go.

And they said, "Let us go."

In order to resolve this matter, they went out to a ditch.

When they arrived there, they said, "Let us split into two groups."

A piece of rattan was laid across the ditch. Those who wanted to stay would grasp the rattan from one end while those who wanted to go to Pa Bao would grasp the rattan on the other end. That's how they organized themselves.

The group who wanted to go to Pa Bao were manipulative, and pleaded, "There are only a few of us on this side, please let some more people come over to us."

Eventually, there were so many people on the Pa Bao side that there was no more rattan to hold.

When they were so many of them, they said, “Cut the rattan now.”

The rattan was cut and they left for Pa Bao and Pa Atang. Those who remained went back to the village.

That’s how we all come to live in different places. Some went to the Bahau River and others remained here. In fact, many went to Bahau River but life was tough. That’s why there are fewer people left there. That is how life was in the old days.

5.3.10 Conclusion

In the old days, people did not settle in any one place for a long time. That is why we are very thinly spread in the headwaters of the Kelapang and the Bahau rivers.

If anyone should ask, the source of this story is Seraya Balu Bun Kalang. During one of the times when we stayed at Long Semiyang, we went to make boats. I was a young boy then and she told the story of the time they stayed with the Kelabits, their time in Lem Budut, Pu’un Aie, the time they moved from Bawang Ipong. That’s how I came to know about this story.

The Ngurek were the first people to come to the Telang Usan river. When they first came to the river, they wondered what this river is called. There were no people living there at that time, so they said, “This is rain water. So let us call it Telang Usan.” And that is how it comes to be known as Telang Usan.[48] The Kelabit who are upriver, however, called it Pa Kelapang; and that was the reason why the Kelabit were then called Lun Lapang. This is the history of us and the Ngurek.

[48] For more details of Ngurek migration see Chapter 4, section 4.16. *Telang Usan* according to Jalong (1989:161) means in Ngurek “juice of the pineapple” because when the Ngurek first tasted the water it tasted sweet. Kayanic groups also remember this name for the Baram river, the basin of which is understood, to have been an early homeland (Okushima 2006:106).

5.4 Commentary and Analysis

5.4.1 The opening of the narrative

"We want to know our relationship, our history of being together with the Ngurek." *Tauh la' kali' idih atur tauh, sejarah tauh, peruyung ngan Ngurek.*

This opening sentence announces the theme of the narrative, the history of the relationship of *lun tauh* (our people) with the Ngurek. To begin with, it is useful to focus on the Malay word *sejarah*, for history and the use of Malay, as the language of the public sphere throughout rural Malaysia, as the Malay language gives an official and universal quality to the narrative as history.[49] The emphasis is on inclusion, through the use of the word *tauh*, referring to *our* history. *Peruyung ngan* translated as "together with" the Ngurek suggests an inclusive understanding of identity.

5.4.2 Early Migrations

The migration of the Ngurek as described above is very similar to Ngurek accounts by Jalong (1989), Sellato (1995), and Claimants' Documents (2005). The summary in Appendix 8 indicates some approximate dates proposed by these sources. This concurrence is unsurprising given that the source of Malian's story is Seraya Balu Bun, the wife of the Ngurek headman of Long Semiyang, Tama Bun Kalang. Thus significantly, Malian's narrative is supported by parallel accounts by both written sources (Jalong 1989, Claimants'Documents 2005) and the oral testimony of Engang Ngau, a Ngurek elder. All the places mentioned in all the sources stated above are in the Kelapang river area: Long Moyo; Long Bale; Long Balong and Long Puak. Moreover, these places are relatively close to sites of ancient stone cemeteries, which are

[49] See Pannell (1996:172) for a similar discussion on the use of the word *sejarah.*

later described by the narrator as marks (*edtu*) on the landscape. Places such as Lulao Terong (Long Moyo) are still referred to locally in the Ngurek language. Other river names in the locality also connote meaning in the Ngurek language such as *banga* means "staying on", *puak* "fast flowing." The act of naming and the continued reference to places in both languages is deeply significant, as this provides authenticity and authority of knowledge. References to places, and geographical features are part of the deliberate identification of the domain of the migrations of the ancestors, and the telling of the narrative is a means for establishing the transmission of this knowledge. It creates a map in the minds of the listeners and a sense of belonging as *lun tauh* and the points of separation are marked by stones and ridges forming natural boundaries for different domains.

The narrative affirms that the Sa'ban[50] lived with the Ngurek at Long Upun as they did in the Lura (Jalong 1989), which resulted in continuing intermarriage and an ethnically mixed community. The Sa'ban are considered "our people," (*lun tauh*) to the Kelabit population of Long Peluan as they first settled together in the area and most households in Long Peluan have Sa'ban members or relatives. Thus, this inclusive history (*sejarah tauh*) is not just about the Kelabit and the Ngurek but also about the Sa'ban. When the narrator states that "our people" had been living in Long Balong, the audience imagines a heterogeneous group of people in much the same way as Long Peluan is today. In addition, it is important to note that the Lepo' Ke who also stay in Long Banga, have had in the past a history of alliances and intermarriage with the Ngurek.[51] Thus, this narrative is of interest not only to the Kelabit of Long Peluan but their Sa'ban and Lepo' Ke relatives and neighbours. Malian, however, as he narrates this story gives little note to the presence of the Sa'ban in the history of the community. This to some

[50] See Jalong (1989:160).
[51] Jalong (1989:158).

extent maybe because he is working with a narrative which came from a Ngurek source. Further to this, in the past the Kelabit and Sa'ban did not differentiate between themselves ethnically and the Sa'ban are described as "our own people" in the narrative (see section 5.3.2). Malian's own wife was Sa'ban. He claims territory on behalf of the Kelabit, because his political position is that of a Kelabit headman of a mixed-Sa'ban Kelabit longhouse.

The breadth of the contact of Kelabit, whose original migration as a group is not mentioned, with the Ngurek and the Sa'ban extends to the Bahau and Krayan river area, which is now in Kalimantan Borneo. The narration of the story connects communities, as *lun tauh*, (our people), through their shared history of alliances across these river systems at a time before the establishment of the border.

Malian Tepun's account of the earliest history with the community and the alliance with the Ngurek has resonance with the inhabitants of Long Peluan because over three quarters of the community have Ngurek ancestors, or a recent Ngurek connection. First, the descendants of Lian Ajin, claim Ngurek ancestry, through an ancestor Bilong Salo (also known as Balang Pulo') and at least a half of the community is linked to the Ngurek through this ancestor (Appendix 6). Furthermore, two households have another Ngurek ancestor, Ngau Langat, a descendant of Aping Nyipa, the great Ngurek chief who led the community together with the Kelabit leader, Tai Iwan, during the period of peace-making (Appendix 5) (see Chapter 6). Another three households have Ngurek blood through the late Nu'uh Pun and Lugun Bala (Appendix 3).[52] Another eight households have Ngurek blood through Nak Lin the grandfather

[52] Sina Kuir of Padang Pasir relates that Nu'uh Pun was descended from Olo, and she herself is descended from Jangin, Jangin and Olo were two Ngurek brothers who came to Long Di'it to trade and who eventually married. These brothers were said to be related to Maping Nyipa, Penghulu Gau, Tama Bun of Long Semiyang and Ngau Langat who married into Long Peluan. This indicates their status as being linked with prominent Ngurek.

of the late Balang Meput and Tama Bulan (see Appendix 9). Moreover, Malian and the late Penghulu Aran Tuan, recently received a Ngurek family, into their own family, based on recently confirmed kinship links with Penghulu Tai Iwan, the subject of the second narrative and Chapter 6 (Mashman 2012).

5.4.3 The attack from the Lepo' Tepu

The attack that is narrated by Malian above is also recounted in more detail by Philip Jalong (1989:161), and has been recently told by Engan Ngau (2012) (see Appendix 10 and 11). The enmity between the Ngurek and the Lepo' Tepu is documented by Philip Jalong as having begun at the time when the Ngurek flourished in great numbers in the Apo Kayan. According to Jalong, the Lepo' Tepu with a combined force of groups of Lepo' Ke, Lepo' Tukong, Uma Alim, Uma Long, and Kayan Uma Lekan attacked the Ngurek when they were staying at Long Belaan, downriver, below Lio Mato. The enemy was under a Kayan chief called Jau Luhong. The features of the attack are similar, with reference made to tricking the enemy at a river crossing, but this is set in Long Belaan and not Long Moyo. Engan Ngau recalls the attack described by Malian as set in Long Balong, in the upper Kelapang area, which is closer to Long Moyo, under the leadership of his ancestor Mawat Ngau.

All three narratives by Philip Jalong, Engan Ngau and Malian entertain the listeners with the details of the trickery of how the Ngurek outwit their enemies and the graphic images of boats overflowing with severed fingers. A common detail is the use of distinctive bird feathers by the Lepo' Tepu[53] and the carriage of the chief by his entourage. This highlights the difference between the enemy and "our people," distancing the enemy. A further device often used is the

[53] The Lepo' Tepu are identified as a Kenyah group by Rousseau (1990:17).

use of the word *munu'* for enemy to refer to an undefined enemy of the headhunting era.[54] The discrepancy over the location, cited as Long Belaan, by Jalong, and Long Balong by Engang Ngau, highlights Malian Tepun's perspective in setting the story in Long Moyo[55], a location on the upper Kelapang river within the domain of Long Peluan as this emphasizes the alliance of the Ngurek and the Kelabit, who are associated with the area today through their own narratives. All accounts end with the sarcastic humour of the defeated chief and his threatened return attack and prepare the audience to anticipate the next phase of migration. The sparing of the leader suggests a tactic of using clemency to mitigate further antagonism.

Surprise dawn attacks on unprepared small communities were the typical means of attack, as it was not easy to conquer a longhouse that had prepared its defenses. Trickery was effective as a means of attack and was a common method of raiding longhouses (Metcalf 2010:51, 59).

5.4.4 The consequences of the attack by the Lepo' Tepu

This episode accounts for the spatial logic of the separation of the Ngurek and the Kelabit and how they went in different directions, with different ethnic identities, based on their aptitudes for different terrain. The Kelabit went into the mountainous headwaters as a defensive strategy against the Kayan, as is suggested by Harrison, "It was the late Kayan expansion, more than any other which drove them furthest inland and concentrated them in the uplands beyond the gorges and falls" (1984:20). This has been supported by archaeological investigation, which indicates that settlements in the Pa Kelapang, the upper Baram area were found to be on the ridge tops (Barker et al 2008:143, Barker et al 2009: 125). The experience of being in these

[54] See Bala (2002:79) for the changing understanding of this word in a different context.
[55] Long Moyo is also said to be the place where the Kelabit moved upriver after fighting according to an interview on 30/1 /2011 with an elderly Penan, the late Tama Bawang.

high upland areas meant that they did not acquire the skills to manage boats on the major rivers of the lowlands. This is further testified by the account of the first Kelabit to reach Marudi:

> They have …absolutely no idea of paddling or using a boat, and when they were first brought down to the Government station at Claudetown and saw the Baram River, they sat down in the bottom of the Kayan canoes and burst out crying, having never seen such an enormous volume of water before (Douglas1907: 53).

With pacification, the Kelabit in the Kelapang area began to journey down the Baram River to visit and trade and they depended on their Ngurek kin who had boats to transport them (See Chapter 6). Even in the 1980s the Kelabit went to Marudi using transport provided by the Sa'ban.

The narrative moves on to give a glimpse of Telen Sang, a Kelabit hero endowed with supernatural charisma indicated by the term *inan lalud* and is able to conquer the landscape. *Lalud* is believed to be a supernatural power suffusing the cosmos, which is managed and channeled by heroes in legends, such as the hero Tuked Rini who could to do impossible things such as fly, change shape, and leave marks on rocks (Janowski 2014:88). Janowski explains that that *lalud* represents the life-force and "the greater a person's *lalud*, the more they can get things done in the world." In the past, the Kelabit believed they managed *lalud* through balancing their relationships with the source of *lalud*, which was the Supreme deity Derayeh. This was done by the reading of omens from the birds and animals (ibid.:26). Certain objects such as thunderstones and trophy heads carried *lalud* as well as heirlooms such as very old jars, gongs ceramic plates and beads (ibid.:32). I found it difficult to cross-check these ideas with my informants as they affirmed that they did not believe that humans could possess *lalud* as a quality for themselves, which they now attributed to a power harnessed through the relationship with Jesus Christ from their Christian God (see Janowski 2012). They also now indicated that

lalud was also a force similar to black magic, associated with *setan* that could be used for evil purposes.

5.4.5 The story of the lovers of Batuh Long Lingap

The narrative about Telen Sang is interrupted by the story of the rock, Batuh Long Lingap, which marks the tragic death of two lovers. Local versions of the story add different details heightening differences in background between the lovers, relating one was Kelabit and the other Ngurek, or that they were of different status (see Appendix 11). Harrisson also relates a similar story of a stone, in the Long Peluan area, which represents the petrification of the corpses of two lovers of different status who committed suicide. However, the details of the story of the suicide are different (1984:103).

This section highlights a memory of a shared story and the rock as a mark (*tada'*) of an era in time, when the Ngurek moved to the Baram River. The rock and the story attached to it, also symbolizes a point of separation, and the beginning of an invisible line between the groups and was an important point of reference on the landscape as it was on the main route between Long Peluan and Lio Mato. Batu Long Lingap is a significant place to both the Ngurek and the Kelabit. It is close to Long Metapah, which currently marks the south-western boundary (*rang tan'a*) for the *tana' tauh* of Long Peluan territory. This marks their domain for hunting and extracting forest resources such as rattan, wild rubber and resins. It serves also as a reminder that the Ngurek and the Kelabit were once living close together and that there are kinship links between the two communities. The recollection of a stone outcrop, Batu Long Lingap[56]

[56] Batuh Long Lingap stone now remains hidden under the logging road from Lio Matu to Long Peluan. The old path from Lio Matu is disused and inaccessible to visitors.

prepares for the development of a major theme, the evidence of previous occupation in the area by the Kelabit.

5.4.6 Signs on the landscape

This section comes to the core in the narrative, to describe the stone monuments in the area, and to link this with migrations.[57] According to the narrator, these are proof of previous occupation of the area by Kelabit. The word *edtu* can also be used to describe a mark that denotes the ownership of a fruit tree (Bulan 2003:32). The rows of fruit trees, locally said to be *langaat* trees (*langsat*, *Lansium domesticum*) (Christiansen 2002:376), were deliberately planted, and are evidence of cultivation and previous settlement of land. The use of this word is discussed by Janowski and Langub (2011:128) to explain how it can be used to refer to the stone monuments, which are permanent marks on the landscape: "*Edtu* are proof for the Kelabit of the ancient ancestry of the Kelabit occupation of the highlands."

5.4.7 Telen Sang foils the enemy

Telen Sang displays the same supernatural strength (*lalud*) of the Kelabit heroes such as Agan Tadun, Tuked Rini and Balang Lipang who featured in Kelabit epic songs. For example, Balang Lipang can leap over a valley in just one step, escapes defeat by swimming along the bottom of a river, is reduced to skin and bones by his ordeals and is put back together as an invincible warrior with an iron body through the ministering of Pun Anan, the blacksmith, (Rubenstein 1973:823). Such descriptions of heroes entertain and reinforce the martial values required of a headhunting community, where the status (*doo'*-ness) of leaders was measured by their

[57] For more details of the stone culture in the Kelabit highlands see section 4.18- 4.22.

strength, power, bravery, and daring and their ability to protect their followers (Bala 2008: 69, Janowski 2014:100).

Telen Sang's agility and invincibility are such that the enemies think he is from the spirit world. The details of enemy identity are not revealed, keeping the focus on Telen Sang, although it is implied that this refers to the Lepo' Tepu. Even though Telen Sang's feats defy belief that he was a real historical person, rather than a mythical hero, it is important to bear in mind that invincibility was a quality that was both inherent and also sharpened with rigorous training. The Kelabit were known to have exceptional strength and physique:

> They are tremendous walkers (a fact that is impressed on one side by the size of their feet) and it is said by Kayan that they are capable of walking in one day what other people would take two days to accomplish" (Douglas1907: 53).

Kelabit men were schooled in being courageous from childhood. As young boys they were challenged to accomplish challenges as overcoming their fear of the dark, by running alone to the river to collect a wet stone, or withstanding the pain of burning objects on the skin.[58] Further to this, men celebrated their strength by participating in competitive activities that involved throwing boulders, pushing stones up hill, running up mountains and climbing slippery poles. Thus, the fact that Telen Sang had extreme power and strength does not necessarily mean he was a mythical hero rather than a historical leader. Little is known about Telen Sang today. However, he is the subject of a recording made during my first visit to Long Peluan in December 1984. From this account it is said that he was an ancestor of Balang Meput an elder of mixed ancestry who died in the 1980s in Long Peluan and that it was possible to link his genealogy to living descendants (Appendices 9 and 14).

[58] For more examples see Bala (2008:65).

This story reinforces the events in Malian's migration sequence and associates the cemetery at Long Nonar with Telen Sang's migration there. This strengthens Malian's claim to these sites as part of the domain of Long Peluan. Although Telen Sang from the beginning of the narrative is said to be the leader of the Kelabit his identity is ambiguous, as his name is not typically Kelabit at a time when whole communities were heterogeneous. However, when asked, Malian says he was Kelabit, and Long Di'it today is considered a Kelabit settlement. Telen Sang and his followers made a *perupun* (burial mound) at Pa Nonar according to Balang Meput and other elders say that the cemetery at Long Nonar was the burial site of the ancestors of Araya Ajin, one of the founders of Long Peluan. His father Bilong Salo is said to have been Ngurek.

Unfortunately, several expeditions to Long Nonar have failed to locate the stone mound and cemetery. The journey involves crossing two sets of rapids and trekking over rock-strewn riverbanks, indicating that the site was well protected from approaches downriver. There is a possibility that logging activities destroyed these sites some twenty years ago, although villagers who worked for the logging companies are unable to provide evidence for either the existence or destruction of this site.

5.4.8 The migration to Long Di'it

Despite the victory below Ramudu, the group decides to move on. Young men are sent ahead to check out the lie of the land ahead of them. They are looking for fertile land that is not being occupied by anyone else. Fertile land is important for growing large quantities of rice needed for the big child-initiation and death feasts, which were important for the generation of prestige and the maintenance of the kinship and alliances of *lun tauh,* (our people). This is very typical of pioneering settlement patterns in the nineteenth century:

> Migrations were elaborate affairs and had to be coordinated with the agricultural cycle. They took place only after a thorough evaluation of the destination, both in terms of its agricultural potential and social considerations (Rousseau1990: 119).

Many of the Long Peluan community today claim descent from ancestors who lived in Long Di'it.

5.4.9 The separation of the community

People were on the move at this time to avoid enemy attack and had to build houses in a defensive location, and to be in an area where land was fertile.[59] Longhouses were built to be easily dismantled so that communities could move quickly and easily: roofs were made of leaf thatch, walls and floors were of bamboo. This story of separation, with two different sides pulling on a rattan rope, is told in many versions in the highlands (see Lian Saging 1976/77:27). This explains why the Kelabit have a tradition of mixed ancestry with the Ngurek and the Sa'ban of the Bahau and there was a movement of people who migrated out of the highlands to the Bahau. Some of the Bahau population went to Pa Ibang and eventually Tang La'an in the Krayan. The story is retold within the community so that bonds are kept with kin on each side, reinforcing the porous nature of this division. Vansina identifies this type of episode as a complex stereotype to be understood as a literary device, a metaphor, rather than a historical fact (2006:73).[60] However, as mentioned above, some kind of major separation must have taken

[59] Another reason for moving in the 19th century was the frequency of epidemics (Lian Saging 1976/77: 46).

[60] Vansina (2006:73) describes another example of this literary device as flows: "A tale describes how a bridge of twisted fibres broke as a tribe was passing across it, so that the tribe was divided in two." A Borneo example of this explains how the different Borneo groups came to be settled on the coast, inland and the centre of the island. The groups were trying to cross from the mainland by bridge to the island of Borneo. When the bridge broke the Penans and Punans had already reached the shore and were able to reach the centre of Borneo more quickly than the rest, who fell into the sea and had to swim to the shore (Sandin 1980: 100).

place to explain the scattered range of kin from Pa Di'it and the related longhouses of the Kelabit highlands to the Bahau and Krayan rivers.

It is in the interests of people on each side to keep up with each other for purposes of maintaining kinship ties and trade contacts as Rousseau points out:

> After migration to another river basin, relations are kept for a long time with relatives remaining in the original area, especially if visits are an opportunity to trade (Rousseau 1990:119).

Kinship networks provide reciprocal access to households and communities on both sides of the border. Contacts are maintained across the numerous paths and tracks, which provide access across mountain passes and watersheds. These bonds between communities as *lun tauh*, (our people) are connected to places which are defined by marks on the landscape. According to the narrator, these are proof of previous occupation of the area by Kelabit. The word *edtu* can also be used to describe a mark that denotes the ownership of a fruit tree (Bulan 2003:32). The rows of fruit trees were deliberately planted and are evidence of cultivation and previous settlement of land. These details of place are present in conversations and recreated through narratives on each side of the border.

5.4.10 Meanings and the voice of the narrator

The headman-narrator gives another reason in addition to warfare why the Kelabit moved so frequently in the past, that is scarcity of land for farming. He then returns to his own theme, that emerged earlier in the narrative, that the stone monuments are evidence (*edtu*) of early occupation of land. These cannot be traced to the Kenyah, we are told, because their grave monuments are made of wood. It is puzzling that he suddenly refers to the Kenyah, as they are relatively recent settlers on the main Baram river, and he asserts in response to queries that he

is not referring to the Ngurek who have similar stone monument traditions, as has been indicated in Chapter 4.

Another surprise is the use of the authority of *turis* (visitors or tourists) who declare that the stone monuments can only be found in places previously occupied by the Kelabit. The narrator is referring to the American and British anthropologists and archaeologists and the ITTO[61] group who have been visiting the highlands and investigating the cultural sites from 2004 onwards (Hitchner 2009, Barker et al 2008, 2009, Lloyd-Smith et al 2010). This extensive research identifying continued use of cemeteries over 2,500 years links these sites with the existing local populations. One of the outcomes has been the publication of the claim below that coincides with the subject of this narrative:

> The people of Long Peluan, a community settled about 100 years ago just outside the highlands proper, point to the megalithic cemetery and perupun which they found in the area as proof of the fact that they have a right to the territory, as they believe that their ancestors made these on the grounds that only Kelabit make such things (Janowski and Langub 2011:128).

While Malian Tepun reiterates the same message, his narrative reminds his audience that since the earliest times the southern Kelabit as *lun tauh* (our people), were heterogeneous, related to and allied with the Ngurek and the Sa'ban and who moved through and out of the highlands. His message, as the Kelabit headman of a Kelabit longhouse, is that the land in the Kelapang belongs to the Kelabit people. This is quite a different form of identity to that of the earlier picture from the migration stories of the southern Kelabit as *lun tauh* (our people), who were heterogeneous, related to and allied with the Ngurek and the Sa'ban and who moved through

[61] www.itto-pulongtau.com, *Stone Culture of the Northern Highlands of Sarawak Malaysia A Visitor's Guide*. International Tropical Timber Association, Sarawak Forestry Department, Sarawak Forestry Corporation

and out of the highlands. The discussion in the following section, 5.4 will explore this issue in greater depth, beginning with the meaning of *lun tauh* (our people).

5.5 Discussion: *Lun Tauh* "Our People" in the First Narrative

This section provides an analysis of the first narrative, extracting the theme of heterogeneity before the time of borders, which shapes the meaning of *lun tauh* (our people). In the longhouse of Long Peluan, the inhabitants think of themselves as *lun tauh*, which means "our people", rather than in terms of ethnic groups, such as being Kelabit, Ngurek and Sa'ban[62]. It is important to remember that there is a consciousness in the mind of the narrator and others in Long Peluan that there was a time when ethnic distinctions were less marked than they are in the present. In the past, people identified themselves with their locality, or other characteristics rather than their ethnic group, as suggested by the following reminiscences by members of the Long Peluan community:

> So we were known as Lun Lapang from the river where we stayed. There was no such thing as being Kelabit, Sa'ban or Ngurek.

Lun tauh (our people) is an inclusive term, which conveys the idea of "us" and the Sa'ban and Ngurek as a group of people, each with their own identity but related to each other.[63] The emphasis is on inclusion. The term is used to denote relationships not just within the Kelabit community, and their neighbours but this can extend, depending on the context, to include kin *(lun ruyong)* who are related both through blood ties, and created ties through marriage and adoption. It is a quintessentially relational term, which can relate at the first level to the

[62] Matthew Amster (1998:30) indicates that *lun tauh* was once proposed as an alternative name for the Kelabit, but he does not elaborate further on the use of the term.

[63] See Wadley (2000: 93) for discussion regarding a similar term *banuaka* for the Maloh.

longhouse, the next level, the Kelabit, and then other Kelabit language speakers or Kelabitic groups, such as Sa'ban neighbours, or the Lun Bawang or the Krayan and Brian over the Indonesian border, or even the Orang Ulu groups, which are dominated by the Kayan and Kenyah. This identity is relational, and adapts according to the needs of the situation.

The notion of *lun tauh* (our people) presents a sense of fluid, inclusive identity through the course of warfare, alliances and migrations. This fluidity demonstrates how identity is part of an on-going historical process. This entails a view of ethnicity as situationally based on everyday relationships instead of a reified construct which is part of the bounded nation state which seeks to classify its resources, people, religions, languages, regions to make them countable and visible so they can be controlled through the census (Anderson 2006:184).

Thus, as the concept of the nation-state has become deconstructed, a need is identified to understand alternatives to bounded exclusive ethnic identities. As Horstmann and Wadley note, "The border concept serves to question the very notion of a bounded culture" (2006:16). What is more, Lilley (1990:176) highlights the need to redefine ethnicity as 'a changing alignment of social groups with neither fixed boundaries nor stable internal constitutions.' This process of redefinition should override any preconceptions regarding cohesion and boundedness, because cultural identities transcend western ethnic constructs and territorial borders and consist of 'a choice of identifications and affiliations that are picked up upon because they seem advantageous.' This leads to a different way of looking at ethnicity, which is focused less on discrete groups but more on the construction of social identities on the basis of contexts (ibid.). Similarly, the historian, Michael Aung-Thwin (2013:99) argues for a new angle to be considered regarding ethnicity comprising a framework that focuses on a relational concept of cultural identity rather than a concrete notion of ethnicity that has been long used by colonial historians to explain phenomena such as warfare and the rise and fall of civilizations. Such a

new perspective might come about through a scrutiny of pre-colonial and pre-nation state history to provide elucidation on the way notions of ethnicity are constructed (Rajah 1990:131). This discussion seeks to address these issues by looking at indigenous concepts of identity and ethnicity through this first Long Peluan oral narrative.

5.5.1 The situation in Long Peluan: "our people"

As discussed in Chapter 4, the heterogeneous nature of the Long Peluan community is typical of Central Borneo where it is possible to find several different language groups such as Kelabit, Sa'ban and Kenyah Lepo' Ke' in the same longhouse and everyone can speak and understand the others' languages. This has been demonstrated through the genealogies (Appendices 3, 4, 5 and 6) discussed in Part 3 where Kenyah, Ngurek and Sa'ban names recur as well as Kelabit. During fieldwork, when I ask whether a person is Kelabit, or Sa'ban, people are sometimes uncertain and hesitate before answering. It is as if they do not immediately think of categorizing people into ethnic groups. Another example of this was provided when a pastor started preaching sermons in church in Kenyah, her mother tongue. As this had not happened previously, there were some comments made after the service. One longhouse resident reacted: "It's no problem, in Long Peluan we understand Kelabit, Sa'ban, Malay, Penan, Kenyah Lepo' Ke', Lepo' Tau." Another observation from another resident was 'Yes, we're very mixed (*plamud*) here.' A further visible example of heterogeneity is that Kelabit women wear Kelabit style bead hats, but have Sa'ban tattoos on their arms following the style and custom of their Sa'ban husbands, and speak both Kelabit and Sa'ban. This heterogeneity is a feature of multi-ethnic villages in Borneo, whereby ethnic groups keep certain distinctive cultural features, such as language and tattoos (Rousseau 1990b:123).

5.5.2. Heterogeneity in Borneo: a review

This openness and fluidity reflects a lack of concern for ethnic categories in daily life, which is characteristic in Borneo. For example, Tom Harrisson, a curator of the Sarawak Museum, challenged the legacy of the Brooke administrators' systems of classification of ethnic groups, as he maintained that people in Borneo do not see themselves in this way: "they cannot think of themselves as named, tabbed, static, classified groups" (1958: 295). Such a perception is common in Borneo as Sillander notes: "Ethnicity isn't so important, and why should it be? In everyday affairs ethnicity is only rarely an issue; neighbours mix and are both culturally and structurally similar, and no benefits or interests are distributed on ethnic lines" (1995:81).

At this point, it is useful to ponder on what is meant by ethnicity. Such ethnic classification, defined in the Malaysian context as "authority-defined ethnicity," (Shamsul 2004:147) is rooted in the colonial census and is imposed by the state for the purpose of governance and often differs with how people actually identify themselves on an everyday basis, which is based on processes of interaction, as suggested in the section above. This differs from a broader concept of cultural identity: "Identity is a concept that is related to processes of cultural construction and transformation and the various forms and levels of identity can never be taken to be complete and firmly established. They are always in the process of 'becoming'" (King 2012a:17). This concept of identity as a process is linked to the performative actions of shared experience, which comes from close coexistence, sharing food and water, and sharing histories and knowledge, (Linnekin and Poyer 1990:8). This is explored in this section of the chapter, as the inclusive notion of *lun tauh* (our people) through the longhouse narrative. At the same time, it is set against the exclusive reified ethnic construct of "the Kelabit." Further to this, these contrasting ideas of inclusiveness and exclusiveness (Thambiah 2009), flux and fixity (Chua 2007) and definitions such as every-day defined ethnicity and authority-defined

ethnicity, which is imposed by the state, (Shamsul 2004) recur in the literature on ethnicity in Borneo and Malaysia. These terms are to be reworked in this analysis of the first Long Peluan narrative. I plan to go further by showing how both of these shifting views fluctuating between fluid identities and fixed ethnicities are underpinned by the value system. To begin with, it is important to describe how the Kelabit came to be so defined as a consequence of contact with the administrators of the Brooke state and how they embraced their fixed ethnic label, which contrasts with the fluid relational identity of *lun tauh* (our people) which is sometimes embraced when it is pertinent.

5.5.3 Kelabit ethnicity and the Kelabit Highlands: a review

The Kelabit came to be so called supposedly through a misunderstanding by Charles Hose, a Brooke administrator. When a group of visitors told him through an interpreter, they were "Lun Pa Labid," he mistakenly heard "Kalabit." Thus, they became labeled and classified as Kalabit in line with the Brookes' policy of identifying the tribes under their jurisdiction (Harrisson 1984:182). As a consequence, when Kelabit leaders came to Marudi to seek allegiance with the Brooke government in the interest of security, they came to accept being identified as Kelabit. The Kelabit represented groups of different mutually intelligible dialects, speaking a common language, from different river systems and the highland plateau. They embraced the name from a white administrator, not as a colonial imposition, but something prestigious, a source of *doo'*-ness. It came at a time when recognition by the government was needed to provide peace from warring neighbours in Dutch Borneo, and the leaders themselves earned prestige and influence (*doo'*-ness) by their association with the Brooke administrator, known as the Resident. Such visits feature in the second Long Peluan narrative, and are discussed in the next chapter. Thus, the imposition of an "authority-defined" ethnic label has paradoxically become a source of unity

and "grown to be a sort of patriotism to the tribe." Kelabit themselves account for their own personal achievement by the virtue of being Kelabit (Lian-Saging 1976/77:10). Moreover, Kelabit often repeat that their ethnic group is particularly favoured by their Christian God. This acknowledgement leads them to see their "patriotism" as divinely sanctioned.

Furthermore, the Kelabit today readily take on the idiom of contemporary political discourse, which relates identity with territory, utilizing the convenient equation of being Kelabit with occupying the highlands, which was inherited from Brooke era cartography. This began when the term "Kalabit Country" appeared on the first map of the area by Douglas (1912) (Figure 6.2) and the phrase 'the Kelabit Highlands' became a legacy. In the same way that, within Malaysia, "Malayness" has become a fixed category, equated with owning and living on Malay land (see Hoffstaedter 2011:39) enshrining preferential rights as *bumiputera* or sons of the soil, the Kelabit relationship with their territory, the highlands is synonymous with their identity. The Kelabit differentiate themselves and their territory from their neighbours, such as the Penan, and their Brian and Krayan cousins over the Indonesian border. This is further illustrated by narratives by educated Kelabit, who describe their history in terms of isolation and confinement to their ecological niche:

> …this tribe appears to have been isolated for the past 500 years from all their neighbouring tribes…It was not until the advent of the colonial rule when headhunting activities were outlawed that the Kelabit have dared to venture out of their safe retreat into the outside world of today (Bulan and Labang 1979:42).

Together with the notion of inaccessibility and separation from their neighbours is the emphasis on "their exclusive occupation of their ancestral territory," (Bulan 2003:19) and the idea "that they have roamed the highlands from time immemorial" (Talla 1979:13). The claim suggests that only the Kelabit have lived in the highlands since the beginning of time. Thus, the Kelabit now see themselves as a bounded ethnic group, defined against the outside world and

their neighbours and this persists as they have embraced their own ethnic classification, as Kelabit, with great fervor. This has taken on an "authority-defined" and "fixed" reality as the Kelabit distinguish themselves from other ethnic groups in Malaysia. The term "authority-defined," which conveniently contrasts with "every-day defined", describes the way the ethnic label is officially prescribed by the state through its policy of classifying its population (Shamsul 2004:147) and is perceived as one of the "hegemonic tools" which are utilized for the purposes of governance (Gomes 2013:11). However, unlike the label "Malay" as discussed by Shamsul, the fixed "authority-defined" label "Kelabit" is not contested, but willingly accepted by the Kelabit. This reading of ethnicity, is linked to primordial and essentializing markers of identity that are based on attachment to place, genealogy, and objectified culture. More specifically, these relate to the Kelabit language, their place in the highlands, their stone monuments, their Bario rice, their bead culture, their traditions of name changing on the birth of children and grandchildren, and their descent through belonging to a particular longhouse. These markers are used to create ethnic identity, giving ethnicity a "real and more solid and fixed quality" (King 2012a:21). As Chua (2007:263) notes for the Bidayuh of Western Sarawak, the social actors engage with the ethnic markers as "reified products," which are fixed, by virtue of belonging to the Malaysian state. For the Bidayuh, the quintessence of this fixity is the notion of "being" Malay, which is synonymous with being Moslem. Once a Bidayuh has converted to Islam they cannot reverse the process. This contrasts with the underlying fluidity in the way processes of ethnicity and identity are ambiguously expressed in everyday life. Both Chua (2007) and Shamsul (2004) recognize these two divergent practices of cultural identity and ethnicity and these are explored below in different historical, geographical and social contexts through the oral narrative, which provides "a native exegesis."

5.5.4 The Long Peluan narrative, the history of *lun tauh*, "our people"

The first Long Peluan narrative indicates a dynamic, and heterogeneous history of population in the Kelabit highlands. The narrative recalls a time when there was a close and fluid relationship between the people on the Kelapang river and those on the Bahau due to the absence of the territorial borders, and it uses the inclusive idea of *lun tauh* (our people) to denote this unity. The story recounts the migrations of the Ngurek to Long Upun on the Bahau in Dutch Borneo where they lived with the Sa'ban of Pa Nar, who according to the narrative 'are considered as "our people" *(lun tauh)*.' Today *lun tauh,* (our people) is an inclusive term, which conveys the idea of "us", the Kelabit, the Ngurek and the Sa'ban as a group of people, each with their own identity, but related to each other. The Kelabit term, *lun tauh* is used today in everyday life by Kelabit themselves to denote relationships not just within the Kelabit community and their neighbours but this can extend, depending on the context, to include a church district or *daerah,* fictitious kin who are related through adoption, and ties created through marriage. The context for use of the term is relational, and its features are fluid and flexible. It is a term that is often used when addressing mixed church congregations, or for speeches at big political events in the highlands, or for weddings.

The inclusive concept of ethnicity, *lun tauh* (our people), denotes an outlook that has been passed down from a time when the Kelabit, Ngurek and Sa'ban were small groups forming alliances against common enemies on a river system, and they intermarried and shared resources, cultures and languages. They would have formed work parties, hunting groups and trading groups utilizing and reciprocating resources within their territory. Such openness was necessary because they needed to keep their population at a viable level, for shifting cultivation, warfare and trading journeys (Rousseau 1990:118). The cognatic kinship system, which recognized descent on both male and female lines, facilitated wide kinship networks and new

members to the community could also be assimilated, besides through marriage, through arrangements of fictive kinship, brought about through slavery, adoption and blood-brotherhood. Thus, longhouses survived through time through these open relationships and their identities were often elusive to outsiders (see Scott 2009: 266). So much so, that in more recent times the state had problems of keeping track of communities as they moved and changed the name of their settlements with locations (Harrisson 1958). So *lun tauh* relates to "our people," people who have come together in multi-ethnic villages and settled with heterogeneous families and relatives as *lun ruyung.* Sometimes when I'm asking about the identity of a person who is marrying into the community I might be told that her family are vaguely *lun tauh*, indicating a vague fluid sense of heterogeneity.

5.5.5 Creating a people: alliances and conquests with the Ngurek

The episode in the narrative which describes the attack on the Lepo' Tepu is a good example of how alliances in warfare reinforce group bonds and loyalty works to create a common identity, of a people united against their enemies. According to the version told by Jalong (1989) (Appendix10), the Lepo' Tepu were thwarted because the Sa'ban had alerted the Ngurek and Kelabit of the real nature of their purportedly friendly visit. Thus, each allied group on the river played its part in defending themselves and their territory against a common enemy. The identity of *lun tauh* (our people) is reinforced by the allegiance against the common enemy of the Lepo' Tepu, who are differentiated by their use of feathers in their dress and the carriage of their leader. The process of forging a collective identity through warfare against a common enemy anticipates the way the Kelabit identity as Malaysian citizens became reinforced in fighting the Indonesian army during the Indonesian war of Confrontation, which began in 1963 (Bala 2002). Survival depended on keeping the longhouse together and protecting resources

from a common enemy. So the priority of a longhouse community was to defend its geographical location, on its river system, and its allies might be of mixed ethnicities, often strengthened by marriage ties. Allegiance was not mandatory to people who spoke the same language. For example, the Kelabit went in two separate groups to the Marudi peacemaking in April 1898, and care was taken to keep them apart, lest antagonisms surfaced (Hose 1898:122). As a consequence, the longhouse was the source of primary loyalty. Such alliances were stronger than ethnic allegiances:

> Despite ethnic differences, the members of a central Borneo river-based grouping have a consciousness of kind: they are not simply neighbours, but a people… proximity is the basis of commonality. Throughout Borneo, river-based groupings theoretically avoided headhunting amongst themselves (Rousseau 1990:117).

So the alliance of the Ngurek, Kelabit and Sa'ban enabled them to be more than neighbours, "a people." The broad concept of *lun tauh* (our people) is best understood in terms of a "consciousness of kind" as described above, rather than a rigidly defined category. This is quite different from the Iban concept of *kaban* (kindred), which is defined genealogically, with intermarriage within the same ethnic group (Freeman 1970:75, Errington 1989:250). Errington emphasizes how the Iban, like the To Lowu in Sulawesi, divide the world between their allies and relatives and others, like the idea of *lun tauh* expressed above. However, the term, *kaban,* is not as all-embracing as the term *lun tauh,* as alliances with other neighbouring communities are described in terms of brotherhood, (*sapengabang*) or food-sharing (*sapemakai*) (Sutlive 1978:58).

5.5.6 How communities change

In the aftermath of the attack by the Lepo' Tepu, it was clear that the allied groups of "our people" had to move from Long Moyo as the Lepo' Tepu had threatened to return to counter

attack. Southeast Asian upland groups often split up and "moved out of the way" (Scott 2009: 209). This episode accounts for the separation of the Ngurek and the Kelabit and how they went in different directions, highlighting different skills, the former in using boats, the latter in walking in mountainous country. They were no longer neighbours, yet having common ancestors at some point in the past. Moreover, this episode illustrates how the Kelabit became identified as highlanders, occupying the niche of the highlands in the narrative, and their identity becomes shaped by their territory. Whilst the rapids of the upper Baram provided a protective boundary for them, the mountains between Sarawak and Dutch Borneo were not a barrier, because they are adept at walking in the mountainous terrain. This would account for their ready alliances in the Bahau area to where they could retreat, if necessary. Moreover, Malian Tepun's second narrative, (Chapter 6), outlines how the allegiance with the Ngurek continued in future generations as the Ngurek transported the Kelabit by boat to the administrative centre of Marudi.

Ultimately what the attack of the Lepo' Tepu demonstrates is that the Ngurek and Kelabit had lived together as one community, allied against a common enemy, yet they made their own decision to split and separate according to their own aptitude and skills for survival in a certain type of terrain. This resolution was, according to the narrative, determined by their own agency. The decisions made about whether to stay put or move on, retreat to the hills or go down river, are all examples of choices they made, in important measure, out of their desire to maintain their autonomy at a time when security was paramount.

Accordingly, the communities further split and were identified with two separate territories in the upper Baram and Long Di'it on the Kelapang River. This is an example of the continuous, changing nature of longhouse communities, which are often rebuilt with slightly different populations, which is aptly described by Metcalf:

> Whatever categories colonialists thought they had discovered, longhouse communities were founded, grew, went into decline, and dispersed, in a process of formation and reformation that paid no attention to ethnic 'boundaries' (Metcalf 2010: 313).

The alliance between the Ngurek and the Kelabit, is similar to partnerships in Burma between the PaO and the Burmese which illustrate the way relations are based less on ethno-linguistic allegiances, "but between villagers and partners, whose exchanges and networks contribute to the establishment of social cohesion, albeit an unstable cohesion, in a multi-ethnic landscape" (Robinne and Sadan 2007: 206). Therefore, the analysis above has focused on the dynamics of economic networks and social interaction, which are continually reshaped in creating the stability necessary to forge the identity of *lun tauh* (our people).

5.5.7 *Lun Tauh* "our people" and the value of *doo'*-ness

At this point, it is useful to explore the relationship between the idea of *lun tauh* (our people) and the indices of *doo'*-ness which maintain and create sociality. This is because the migrations of *lun tauh* (our people) that are described in the narrative, were fuelled by the desire to improve one's lot (*miyuk)* and the quest for value, *doo'*-ness. People sought land that would yield better surpluses of padi, or provide better protection from enemies. At times, as indicated in the episode of the separation story using a piece of rattan in the narrative, chiefs competed against each other for followers, when groups separated. People would have followed the chiefs with better standing, *doo'*-ness, and this would have also implied the ability to protect their followers. The standing of a chief was boosted by the possession of prestige objects such as salt, gongs, and jars that could be used to pay fines and settle debts on behalf of others (see Chapter 6). Even when groups separated, they were bound to those with whom they had lived and would be able to seek help from those kin and allies when needed. Chiefs such as Telen Sang represented the martial qualities that were necessary to lead followers into battle and to

survive in warfare. To mobilize followers, chiefs had to demonstrate indices of value or *doo'*-ness, which are assessed in relationship to others, such as the ability to provide for others through self-discipline and hard work, hospitality, generosity, the provision and sharing of food, the repayment of loans, and good manners as discussed in Chapter 2. These qualities are measured comparatively by the community, sometimes openly, sometimes obliquely. For movement or *iyuk* to work and to influence a person's standing: for a person's *doo'*-ness to be given reality, it has to be performed in connection with other people (Bala 2008: 62).

The unarticulated purpose behind maintaining, creating and increasing *doo'*-ness is to create bigger social groupings as *lun tauh*, which is crucial for survival. *Doo'*-ness or value comes into actuality "as part of some larger social whole" (Graeber 2001:70). The way people subsist and survive is by coming together as *lun tauh*. The system of value maintains the relationships needed for this, through the prestige associated with being good at hunting and farming and the importance attached to the sharing of food and participating in reciprocal labour.

5.5.8 *Lun tauh* "our people" and signs on the landscape: territory and ethnicity

The narrator describes places within the territory of Long Peluan and Pa Di'it sharing his knowledge and indicating his authority and standing. The identification of places on the landscape gives the audience the knowledge that their ancestors previously cleared land and the existence of rows of fruit trees, further suggests their tenure, which could be claimed by the descendants of those who planted them. It follows that the process of telling the narrative in 2006, recalling places of occupation, trees and cemeteries, transmits to the listeners crucial knowledge of the land. Thus, the narrative becomes a vehicle for the mapping of territory for the community, at a time that has become particularly urgent, as elders are unable to take the

younger members out to show them the significant features of their land. This situation has come about because of changes in the landscape, or because the younger members of the community are away earning money offshore or in coastal cities (Bulan 2003). However, the narrator stresses Kelabit occupation of the land. The cemeteries and stone mounds in the area are signs of previous Kelabit settlement: "In every place where the Kelabit have lived, there are standing stones and stone slab graves where human bones are buried…this land in the headwaters of Kelapang belongs to… the Kelabit people."

Thus, in present retellings, the narrative is about the kinship between the Kelabit and the Ngurek, who together with the Sa'ban share the history of the *lun tauh* (our people). The Sa'ban angle is muted, as in the mind of the narrator the Kelabit and Sa'ban are deeply interlinked as one people. The narrative is also about transmitting knowledge about the landscape along the upper Kelapang river, with its tributaries, pools, paths, crossing points and stone culture. The narrative functions as a declaration that this is the territory of the Kelabit, while it also, somewhat contradictorily, reveals that the Ngurek were the first people in the area together with the Kelabit. Significantly, what the narrative does not consider is the association of the Ngurek with the stone culture, which has now become an emblem of Kelabit identity. The Ngurek have their own versions of their time of occupation in the area, which I have described and analyzed elsewhere (Mashman 2017).

In the 1980s when I first visited Long Peluan, people said these sites were linked to the Ngurek, who had previously lived in the area. People now say they don't know who built the stone graves. They forget that the ancestor of their founder, Araya Ajin, was Bilong Salo', a Ngurek (see Chapter 4 and Appendix 6). Moreover, Ngurek leaders from Sarawak readily recognize these stone monuments, which feature in Ngurek oral history (Jalong 1989), and visit such sites associated with their ancestors in Indonesia, which have been systematically

excavated and documented (Arifin and Sellato 2003). Thus, parallel narratives by the Ngurek exist alongside the declaration by the Kelabit who say that their ancestors built the stone culture. There seems to be little discussion of the existence of these differing narratives because circumstances have not caused them to be evoked alongside each other as the Ngurek do not live in the immediate area. Implicit in this is the paradox that indigenous groups can often live side by side, each with differing and conflicting narratives regarding origins and rights to territory. For example, the way the Kelabit of Long Peluan see the history of their area at any moment is quite different to the version of their Penan, Ngurek or Sa'ban neighbours, yet people get on with their daily lives, work on one another's farms, trade game and fish among themselves, and rely on each other for labour, cash and food supplies in order to subsist and survive.

This paradox of groups living close to each other with conflicting narratives is part of a phenomenon identified by Linda Tuhiwai Smith as "oral ways of knowing":

> For indigenous peoples … the idea of contested stories and multiple discourses about the past, by different communities, is closely linked to the politics of everyday contemporary indigenous life. It is very much a part of the fabric of communities that value oral ways of knowing. These contested accounts are stored within genealogies, within the landscape, within weavings and carvings, even within the personal names that many people carried. (Tuhiwai Smith 1999:33)

What Tuhiwai Smith describes as "oral ways of knowing" looks at a wider cultural repository for oral traditions, such as genealogies, naming systems, places and stone monuments in the landscape. Yet, as she also stresses, these oral ways of knowing are also complex and multifaceted, characterised by multiple and differing narratives. It is this complex fluidity of local knowledge which enables daily life and daily interactions between different villages to take place.

5.5.9 Inclusion and exclusion: Lun Tauh and the Kelabit

So, there is an inclusive history, of *lun tauh* (our people), set at the time of alliances in warfare, and at the same time an assertion of sole tenure of land in the present tense within the narrative. In the latter understanding, the land is being defined as belonging to the Kelabit and this is explicitly an exclusive notion. Consequently, there are two models of identity, which come through in the narrative. The first is set in the past and consists of the inclusive fluid "every-day reality" of the heterogeneous *lun tauh* (our people), who had shared histories, were interrelated, and had an inclusive mixed identity, and the second is "the Kelabit," the fixed "authority-defined" ethnic group, which has derived its identity by the classification of peoples by the Brooke administration, with an exclusive claim to territory. This recalls the other model of an exclusive notion of identity, related to tenure of land, which is narrated by Kelabit elsewhere:

> These cultural landmarks are revisited as indications and proof of the occupation of the highlands by the Kelabits. …Quite clearly they lived and exclusively occupied the highlands as part of their ancestral homeland for generations from time immemorial (Bulan 2003:45).

These claims assert Kelabit sovereignty over their neighbours, but overlook histories of neighbours such as the Sa'ban and Ngurek who also have narratives, relating to building stone monuments and the time they spent together as *lun tauh* (our people) with the Kelabit. This argument implies that no one else could have lived in the highlands before them and ignores that their ancestors in a previous time may have assimilated a people who were there earlier (Ingold 2002:132).

Underlying this argument is the purpose of the headman-narrator which is both to evoke a wider social world and to assert his power and knowledge of the domain as a means for affirming his own standing (*doo'*-ness). He recounts this narrative at a time when land available

for forest resources is very much reduced to a limited area of community forest, due to forest fires in 1997 and logging activities in the area. In addition, the people of Long Peluan are facing conflicting land claims with their Penan neighbours at Long Beruang. When the Penan settled in 1961 as hunter-gatherers, they did so with the consent of the Long Peluan community. Gradually, they started to farm on land that had been previously cleared by Long Peluan, on the understanding that this land was being loaned. This agreement has become lost in time and in Long Peluan, there is resentment that the younger generation of Penan and new migrants to Long Beruang do not acknowledge the previous history of the land. Consequently, the Kelabit feel insecure regarding their sovereignty over their own territory. Therefore, the narrative concludes with an exclusive model of Kelabit identity, reinforcing their relationship with the land through the stone culture, distinguishing themselves from their neighbours.

5.6 Summary

The first Long Peluan narrative recounts that in earlier times the ancestors of the southern Kelabit were heterogeneous, related to and allied with the Ngurek and the Sa'ban whom they regarded as *lun tauh* (our people). The Ngurek are recognized as the first people on the Baram River and their migration is a shared history with the Kelabit. This is an inclusive fluid model of identity based on past alliances, which contributed to the survival and endurance of the longhouse. Moreover, this fluid concept is used today contextually to embrace inclusive groupings, be it at kinship, longhouse or wider multi-ethnic levels. It is a relational concept and part of the 'everyday-defined' reality of daily life, which enables day-to-day transactions to take place.

On the other hand, a more fixed model of homogenous ethnicity comes with the message that the land in the Kelapang belongs to the Kelabit people, despite the parallel history of

coexistence with the Ngurek and the fact that the Ngurek had a stone culture. This fixed notion of Kelabit identity can be understood as a response to contestation of its territory, and it excludes other people with whom identity and allegiances were shared. The ethnic construct of "the Kelabit" has become a bounded, political identity represented with its own leaders, much in the same way as other ethnic groups in the nation state. For example, for the Malays, it has meant the forgetting of earlier histories of migrations and the identification with a specific domain. Malays are "assigned a more or less fixed stable modern identity anchored in a particular territory through the suppression of the possibility of alternative narratives" (Kahn 2012: xxiii). Scott outlines this process:

> The creation of … ethnicities in this sense might be termed the standard mode of claim–making by stateless people who interact with states …Those who successfully stake a claim to resources on this basis acquire a powerful reason for embracing the new identity. By the same token they exclude others from the access to the same resources. Those thereby excluded and forced into a less desirable niche are often reciprocally ethnicized (2009:263).

In the same manner the Kelabit have begun to claim their land, their history and their resources to the exclusion of their neighbours. Their identity has become related to the niche of the Kelabit highlands and Kelabit maintain its physical and metaphorical borders:

> The point is once created, an institutional identity acquires its own history. The longer and deeper this history is, the more it will resemble the mythmaking and forgetting of nationalism. Over time such an identity, however fabricated its origin, will take on essentialist features and may well inspire passionate loyalty (ibid.:265).

Identity works at two levels for Long Peluan. At one level, the "institutional" identity of being Kelabit has been embraced with great enthusiasm out of a desire for recognition as a minority indigenous group by the Malaysian nation-state (Amster 1998: 28). At another level, there is the history of *lun tauh*, (our people), which recalls alliances and migrations of a people who are a "consciousness of kind," who come together through kinship, marriage and transnational

economic networks and who represent the value of the potential relationships and the social world of the narrator. This sociality is rooted in and generated by value system. The theme of *lun tauh* (our people) continues to the next narrative with the continuing story of the alliance with the Ngurek.

CHAPTER 6

THE QUEST FOR THE "LIFE OF GOVERNMENT"

6.1 Introduction to the Second Narrative

I have argued in the previous chapter that two different kinds of identity emerge from the telling of the narrative, the inclusive notion of "our people" and the emergence of "the Kelabit" as a defined group. In this chapter, the grandfather of the narrator, Tai Iwan emerges as the central figure accompanied by Aping Nyipa, the Ngurek chief, as a significant ally as he journeys on foot across the headwaters and goes downriver to interact with the representatives of the Brunei and the Brooke government. This takes place during a period of significant change, engaging with ending warfare and the processes of the formation of the Brooke state. Alliances and kinship are seen as very important in the narrative and the broad identity of *lun tauh*, (our people) is reinforced in warfare against the enemy longhouse at Pa Ibang, and consolidated with the rituals of peace-making and blood-brotherhood.

Ulun perintah is the original Kelabit term for "life of government". The word *ulun* is a rich word that conveys "life" in its fullest material and cosmological sense. It expresses what it is to be human and the word can only be used in the context of human life. When used in a positive context, it also has connotations of meaning "well-being," "the good life," "life in abundance," and "new life." In peoples' minds, it contrasts with the insecurity and fear of the time of warfare, which was described to me by Malian the narrator as "a way of life, that is not good," *na'am doo' ulun,* which was referred to in the previous narrative.

The phrase "the life of government" conveys the *living* of the "life of government" through agency and participation, rather than submitting to colonial rule as an imposition. It creates history through the meanings that local people ascribe to the events they experience, which is

something of a departure from nationalist and post-colonial histories that portray local people as the objects of colonial power. Such an approach to history can only come about by using indigenous sources that show how local people negotiate the world through their value system and how these perceptions account for their actions (Walker 2002:xv).

The second narrative is different from the first as it deals with the response to the formation of the state. Episodes can be more easily checked against other sources both oral and written, revealing anomalies and the positioning of the narrator. The anomaly of the blurring of the time frame of the Brunei and Brooke regimes provides a perception of government in power (*perintah*), from the point of view of the head-man narrator for further exploration. Other anomalies that need to be elucidated are aspects of the battle of Pa Ibang and the different roles of the Kelabit leaders Tai Iwan and Tingang.

The positioning of the narrator is enforced by conventions such as the use of genealogies that reinforce his standing. The narrator takes advantage of his role to make asides or statements in the narrative, which are sometimes obliquely intended for his audience, and sometimes more fully directed at them. The different meanings of the narrator are collected for a more detailed discussion of his voice in the narrative in the last section at 6.5. We begin with a summary of the narrative, after which there is a full translation, which I have divided into sections and headings for ease of reference, with the commentary and analysis in part 4 and the transcription in Appendix 15.

6.2 Summary of the Narrative

The narrative begins with the recital of genealogies relating to previous leaders of the domain. The narrator focuses on one ancestor hero, Tai Iwan who is his direct ancestor whose life time spanned both the era of warfare and the era peacetime. Tai Iwan's alliance with the Ngurek chief Aping Nyipa is outlined. Aping Nyipa accompanies Tai Iwan on several journeys to

Marudi to seek the assistance of the Brunei representative in brokering peace. After a series of particularly bad attacks from people over the border, Tai Iwan goes to Marudi again and gains the support of a Brooke sponsored expedition to raid Pa Ibang where some of their enemies are located. The expedition is successful and the Pa Ibang people are subdued. This leads to a new phase, the beginning of the life of government in which Tai Iwan engages in peace-making and leads in giving taxes to the government. He requests for a government office to be set up nearer his area and he summons the help of his kin from over the border to build a fort at Lio Mato. At around this time his descendants and other family members set about moving downriver to be closer to the fort and Long Peluan begins to be established. The narrator closes by explaining who the different founding families are in Long Peluan and how they are interrelated.

6.3 The Translation of the Second Narrative

6.3.1 Establishing the narrator's authority: genealogies and leadership

This story was told by our ancestor Po' Araya Kapan Tepun[64]. Long Di'it was at that time a well-known settlement in the Kelabit country. In those early days, during the time of head-hunting (*muno')* our chief was Tamabu' Inok,[65] followed secondly by Raja Ubung; thirdly Tai

[64] Kapan Tepun features in genealogies of Long Di'it. He lived in Long Pelamao, Batuh Patong in the 1950s. He eventually moved to Bario and is reputed to have been close to 100 years old when he died.

[65] Indeed, this genealogy is about pioneers. Firstly, Tamabo Inok was the man who led a migration from Arur Dalan in the Bario valley to Long Di'it, linking the population of Long Di'it to a wider network of ancestors through the Kelabit Highlands to Pa Main, Pa Mada, Bario across to the Sa'ban area of Pa Nar in Dutch Borneo. His story is still widely circulated among the elders who are his descendants living in the area close to Long Di'it and Bario (see Appendix 16: Stories of Tamabo Inok. His son was Raja Ubong had six offspring. These are: Laih Raya Bann, (descendants: Mili Ulun, Sina Tuluh), Balang Ngalaya m. Seraya Aleang (descendants: Pun Nibu, Guna Ulun, Maren Telutu, Ngetan Raja) Seraya Ronan m. Lega Rewat @ Langit Nalan (descendants: Pun Matu, Raja Umong), Seraya Aud m. Pun Ngotak, Seraya Aleang m.? (descendant: Ruid Perait), Tai Iwan m. Hnan Alap, and later Seraya Alah.
Tai Iwan has been identified as the first Kelabit Penghulu, and his son, Malian's father Wakil Penghulu SoTepun, was the first southern Kelabit leader based in Long Peluan. His

Iwan; fourth, Araya Keao; fifth, Bayo Iwan (So Tepun); sixth, Aran Tuan; then myself, (Malian Tepun) who has led since earlier times. Tamabu' Inok led in times of headhunting, Raja Ubong also in times of headhunting, Tai Iwan led half of his time in the headhunting period and the other later half under the life of government. We are now the seventh generation.

This is the beginning of our life, we, the people who used to live by the old way of life. But we are not particularly wealthy. We make sacrifices to help the people over the generations. Even in tough and difficult times, we work to take care of the people.

6.3.2 The quest for the "life of government."

This is our story from before until today. Now I want to tell how we came to know about the life under the government. One of our ancestors was Tai Iwan.[66] He heard the news that the government of Brunei wished to establish peace over the land, discouraging people from fighting and quarrelling against each other.

So he asked, "Eh, where could that place of peace be? Where is that government? Wouldn't it be nice for everyone to know about this so we wouldn't have to live in constant fear for our safety?"

So he looked for ways and means to get in touch with the government.

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contemporary was Wakil Penghulu Laba Aran, residing in Long Dano. Eventually, Malian's younger brother, the late Penghulu Aran Tuan, took over from the latter as a full Penghulu.

[66] Tai Iwan was born sometime between 1840 and 1860. His eldest child was still alive in the 1960s and his youngest son, Wakil Penghulu So Tepun, died of old age in the late 1980s. Tai Iwan is said to have moved house with his family from Long Terotong, the area opened up by his grandfather Maran Katu, to Raan Teramaan in the Pa Di'it area. His first wife was Sa'ban, Hnan Alap, and was a great aunt of the late Sina Jau of Pa Nar and latterly Long Banga, and his second wife Seraya Alah brought two children with her from a previous marriage.

6.3.3 The journey to Marudi with the Ngurek to meet the government

He gathered a few people to go with him, including Apui Nalan.[67] There were others who went but we don't know their names. They travelled through the forest to Punang Nonar until they reached the headwaters of the Selaan River and then to Long Semiang. This was the very first settlement along the Baram and it belonged to the Ngurek. Long Semiang was also known as Long Serap. There they were guests of an elder, Aping Nyipa, who was our relative.

Then they brought along Aping Nyipa with them to meet the government. They travelled on foot across the watershed of the Punang Akah and arrived at Long Lutin,[68] just below Long Na'a. From there they went on to Long Temala. At this point they took a boat downriver and went past Long Ikang, and Long Banio to Marudi. The *kubu* fort at Marudi at that time was made of thatch and the floors were made of flattened bamboo.

6.3.4 The significance of the meeting with the Brunei Pengiran in Marudi

They went to meet the official; the Malays addressed him as Pengiran.

Tai Iwan said, "We come here to ask about the life of government (*ulun perintah*). What actually is this life of government that you are promoting?"

So the Pengiran replied, "The Sultan of Brunei wishes to end warfare for peace over the land so that there is no more fighting and no quarrelling among ourselves."

"It's very good that you have come to see me. We are looking for people who desire peace. When you go back, please tell everyone you meet on your way back to the headwaters to put an end to fighting and quarrelling. This is the life we want for our territory."

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[67] Apui Nalan was an elder who lived at Long Terotong, Pa Di'it. He and another elder, Baya Ratu, went to accompany the *bawa* (army/ force) to the Krayan (personal communication Ribuh Balang).

[68] The Lutin River is a tributary of the Pata River.

The Pengiran gave him a flag and he went about reporting this message to the people as he journeyed back through the settlements along the headwaters of the Baram.

The Pengiran reassured him and said, “Let us be reconciled and cease fighting. If any village wants to fight, refuse to listen to you, challenge them,” he said. “I will send soldiers or the police to fight those villages.”

6.3.5 The violation of peace

Long after peace had been established, a group from Pa Ibang went to Long Di’it with the intention of headhunting. Their leader was a man from a village below Pa Ibang but was married to a local in Long Di’it. And because of that he was unaware that there had been the establishment of peace through the payment of blood debt. Before they reached the village they went to look for easy prey in the farms. They came across Sina Ubar, attacked and killed her and took her head.

Soon after, Tai Iwan told his people, “We must take up this case. Why should this man come and dishonor our peace pact.”

Not long after, the enemies from Pa Ibang came again and killed Tama Arong.

He then said, “Now that we are in this situation of peace, we do not guard and protect ourselves. Our land is now at peace, there is no fighting or quarrelling anymore but why are they attacking and killing us by surprise? Let’s go and tell the government downriver.”

So, Tai Iwan then went on a second journey to meet the government.

He said “The message of peace I delivered on your behalf was very well received by the people. They were very happy with the life of government. But there is a village (Pa Ibang) that has attacked us twice and killed two of our people. So how will the government deal with them?”

"Don't worry, I will get a force of men to attack the enemies," came the reply. [69]

6.3.6 The punitive expedition against Pa Ibang

When he left, the government representative gathered a group of Kenyah, Kayan and Iban[70] in Marudi.

He instructed them, "Go and help Tai Iwan to attack the village that has attacked them (Pa Ibang). I will give two guns and assign to you two *ngaban* warriors.[71]"

One gun, he gave to Tama Kiyut, a Berawan from the Tutoh, from the village of Temenggong Tingang Malang,[72] and the other to Tamuing Ludan,[73] a Ngurek.

So people arrived (at Pa Di'it), from downriver. They were fed but there was not enough food to feed everyone. They slaughtered buffaloes, cattle and pigs. The villagers did not question this because they were asked to do this by the elders.

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[69] A meeting actually took place between Tai Iwan and Hose in June 1903 when Tai Iwan came to Marudi to pay tax and to report that they had in the previous four years suffered four attacks with three people killed by people from the Krayan. The purpose of the visit was to seek permission to attack after harvest with help of Baram Kenyah "under a responsible chief" (Hose1903: 171).

[70] The presence of the Iban in the Baram goes back to when Resident De Crispigny encouraged them to collect jungle produce in the early 1880s. Tradition has it that the purpose of their presence was to assist the Brooke administration in the case of any uprising, and by 1906 their number was around 2000, about one tenth of the estimated population of the Baram, having settled mainly around Marudi and Bakong (Pringle 2010:271-2).

[71] *Ngaban* warriors were believed to be endowed with supernaturally bestowed invincible power *lalud* bestowed or reinforced by the use of charms. This is often considered in Borneo a quality of real (and not necessarily mythical) people who have fought as heroes. (See discussion of Telen Sang, 5.4.7).

[72] The Berawan were allies of the Kelabit. See Chapter 4 and Lian-Saging (1976/77: 24) for details of kinship links through marriage

[73] According to Thomas Jalong of Long Ikang, Ludan, was a Kenyah Long Ulai who survived the battle of Pa Ibang and was well decorated with tattoos and became a famed rhinoceros hunter and went as far as Bintulu.

Then an elder, Aban Jau said, “Let us split up and cover different areas. We, the Kenyah, go to Pa Ibang and the Iban will go to the villages of Liang Alid Da To’ar, Da Kabir and Da Kurid.”

When they reached Pa Ibang, there was by coincidence a headman also called Tai Iwan (the other Tai Iwan) at the first longhouse. Our Tai Iwan posted the flag on the outer verandah of this longhouse.

“Don’t touch this longhouse.” said our Tai Iwan. “We have many relatives here. Go and surround the second longhouse, the dwelling of the murderer of Sina Ubar and Tama Arong.”

They burned it to the ground. The villagers threw water onto the roof to stop the fire and were simultaneously shot. The corpses crashed with a big bang as they fell down. Eventually, all the enemies were massacred. Towards the end, Tama Kiyut, continued shooting the people. When the enemies knew he was out of cartridges, the other Tai Iwan, who stayed there, ran and speared him to death. They took his gun, and realized it was broken. So they threw it away. They had never seen a gun like that before.

Later, the Kenyah went to collect the remains of Tama Kiyut. The Iban fought fiercely and returned each with large padi-baskets of heads. That was life of headhunting before the life of government.

6.3.7 The beginning of the life of government.

And so began the life of government. Tai Iwan journeyed again to Marudi to meet with the government.

He said, “The journey is very far and it’s difficult for me to come and visit the government regularly. Can you encourage the Kenyah and Kayan to move from the headwaters to the river

banks (of the Baram), so it's convenient for them to take me by boat from one village to the next?"

The government agreed to his suggestion and assured him. "After you depart, the government will ask the Kenyah and Kayan to move and settle on the banks of the Baram."

However, Aban Jau, father of Datuk Temenggong Oyong Lawai Jau of Long San,[74] who considered himself an aristocrat from the Usun Apau,[75] said, "Oh, I am a high ranking aristocrat from Usun Apau, who are these Kelabit to suggest that we settle on the Baram river where the land is not fertile?"

They couldn't go against the government. They had to move. And because of this, they may have been the first to settle at Long San and Long Akah.[76]So the government assigned them places along the Baram River and that's how the Kenyah and Kayan came to settle there. When Tai Iwan travelled downriver the next time, he saw people had moved to the banks of the Baram.

He said, "I must go and pay respects to the people and make peace with them otherwise I will not be welcome when I travel to their villages."

He brought a few people with him and they carried with them some braids of tobacco.

"He is going to make peace with the Kenyah", people said.

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[74] Aban Jau lived at Long Dalo in the 1890s on the Pata River protected by waterfalls and rapids. He was the great-nephew of Tama Bulan Wang who had led their migration there (Sagan 1989:121, Ritchie 2006:15). It is stated that people eventually moved to Long Akah not because of the wish of the government as suggested in the narrative above, but due to an outbreak of smallpox (Sagan 1989:121).

[75] The Usun Apau is a plateau which provides drainage for the tributaries of the major rivers of central Sarawak such as the Tinjar, the Belaga, the Plieran, and the Baram and was considered the homeland for a number of Kenyah and Penan groups. People moved out over two centuries ago due to population pressure, but stayed in the headwaters due to the aggressive migrations of the Kayan. They retreated into the Silat, the Pata and the Akah where they were protected by difficult rapids (Metcalf 2010:127).

[76] Contemporary sources also indicate that these Kenyah were unhappy that the first fort should be at Lio Mato rather than Long Akah.

However, there were some others who were laggards who did not believe him. They muttered scornfully, "Tai Iwan is making peace with the Kenyah with tobacco? If he is successful, we will lick his arse."

So he came down and made blood brothers with all the leading elders along the Baram, including Penghulu Mape Arang[77], of Long Moh. [78]

When he arrived in Marudi, many others had also come to downriver Marudi as a result of the new life of government.

The government official said to him, "You have brought good life and restored peace. It is good that each household, each hearth, gives tax. Go and collect latex from the lianas of *war kalang.*[79] The reason we ask you to go and collect this is so we know the number of people in Telang Usan, the number of households.

"Yes," Tai Iwan said to him, but he asked, "Can the government consider, how are we going to send the tax to Marudi which is very far? If possible, build an office or a fort at Long

[77]Southwell (1999: 226, 283) describes meeting Penghulu Mape Arang as an elderly man at Long Moh in about 1947.

[78] Trade flourished with peacemaking and this further encouraged settlement on the main Baram River. However, moving down to the main rivers took time. Douglas observed in 1910 that people were moving down the Akah and the Silat "All these people are moving towards the main river and building fine new houses" (1910a:17). Two years later, he reported that, "Information was received from Penghulu Tama Lawai Jau that he and his people were all moving out of the Pata River into the *Ulu* Baram and that they had already reached Long Pata " (Douglas 1912b:101). The following year, Kenyah Penghulu Oyong Jau reported "The Kenyahs are gradually moving out of smaller rivers into the main river below Lio Mato" (Douglas 1913:7). Eventually, as the Kenyah Badang settled, alliances were made through adoptions and marriages to people in Long Peluan. So Malian Tepun's mother Keling, was adopted by a Kenyah family and returned to Long Peluan when she married, and another elder, Selon Bulieng married a Kenyah Badang, Selieng Ngau, and lived at Lio Mato.

[79] *War kalang* was a vine from which the Kelabit extracted white latex *gutta* which was rolled into balls when it was solidified (Figure 12). *Gutta* was a very important trade item for Sarawak in the early twentieth century, both economically and politically, and with its exploitation, collecting jungle produce began to thrive as a consequence of peace-making. There was an added incentive of bringing *gutta* (latex) to Marudi, as surpluses could be sold for cash, and this marked the beginning of entering the cash economy.

Lama, one at Long Akah and another at Long Lio (Lio Mato). In this way, then it is convenient for us to send our tax to the government."

6.3.8 The building of the fort at Lio Mato

The government official agreed and requested him, "When you return, get the people to cut timber for the fort at Long Lio (Lio Mato). The Kelabit upriver will cut the timber. I will ask the Kenyah to hew the planks and the roofing shingles."

"When you go back, ask the people to go and cut the timber," the official said. He told the people in as far as Pa Tera, Pa Orang, Long Popong and Long Budong on the Krayan River. They came together with the Kelabit to cut the timber at Long Lio (Lio Mato). That was the origin of the life of government, (*ulun perintah*) in Baram.

After this time, the construction of the fort was completed. It seems that Tai Iwan was an elderly man and he could not travel down river. So people tried to find a new leader. No immediate person was considered suitable to take over from him, other than his close relative, Araya Keao. People wanted him to be the Penghulu. [80]At that time, his siblings, his family including Araya Ajin [81](his brother in-law) and Araya Ewat were planning to move to Long Peluan. People discouraged Araya Keao to go with them because they wanted him to be the

[80] Tai Iwan was getting old in Long Di'it and Araya Keao was requested by the people to take over as Penghulu, so he stayed back. This implies that Tai Iwan was the Penghulu. This may have been sometime after the fort was completed in 1911. We know that Tai Iwan was still alive at this time as Owen visited him in 1912 (Owen 1919b :143).

[81] In the meantime, Araya Ajin who had married Araya Keao's sister, Seraya Aleang, and Seraya Aleang's sisters moved to Long Peluan. Araya Ajin went to Long Peluan, to be closer to the protection of the government because he had been involved in a head-hunting fight with Adang who was from over the border. This was reported to have taken place in 1911. (See oral accounts of his fight and the record of event in the *Sarawak Gazette* in Appendix 22). Eventually Araya Keao also moved to Long Peluan. He is considered the first chief of Long Peluan and his daughter Keling was the wife of So Tepun and the mother of Malian the narrator.

Penghulu in Long Di'it. As it happened, nothing came out of this, and he was getting older. He decided to go with his wife to Long Peluan.

The people made Araya Tingang from Ramudu, their chief. He was the father of the late Raja Umong. Araya Tingang was Penghulu for a short while, as he died shortly after. So the people handed over the leadership to the late Raja Umong (also known as Penghulu Miri'). Then, he was said to be still a young man and a bachelor. He was made our Penghulu. Until today, that is how he became Penghulu of the Kelabit. He held the position of Penghulu for a long while since the time of Tai Iwan.

6.3.9 The founders of our longhouse

Now, let us return to the earlier story of Long Peluan. Araya Keao and his relatives, Araya Ajin and his three sisters, Seraya Awan, Seraya Aleang and Seraya Anan planned to go to Long Peluan.

We are in some ways related to the Ngurek. The father of Araya Ajin was a Ngurek called Bilong Salo'. And because of that, Aping Nyipa of Long Semiyang, apparently a relative, wanted them to settle nearer to them, as Long Peluan would be located on what would become the main route out of the highlands. That's how they came here to Long Peluan. The people stopped Araya Keao from coming over because he was elderly. His wife Seraya Aleang, and their two children, Seraya Buang [82]and Seraya Idang[83] came together to Long Peluan.

The very first settlers were three men, Sat Laeng, Araya Laweng and Araya Oyan who came to stay for a year. They came to start the village of Long Peluan. All three of them had no wives and were elderly. They came to stay for a short while. After one year, they were staying

[82] Seraya Buang married Ali.
[83] Also known as Midang Aran, or Keling, married to So Tepun father of the narrator .

together with the Penan, and they were unable to farm the thick forest. They only intended to stay for a short while. Not long after, the three sisters came. With them were two strong young men, Anak Paran (Araya Ewat)[84] and Wa Ayan.[85] There were also younger and less able boys such as Nibu, (Lian,)[86] and Balan (sons of Araya Ajin)[87]. These were the following families to start with; Seraya Buang and her 4 children, Seraya Aleang and her two children, and Seraya Epong[88]

Araya Ajin [89]and his 4 children, Seraya Awan and her 4 children,[90] Seraya Anan Alo and her two children. Araya Ewat (Anak Paran) and his brother Wa Ayan were the strong young men in the village and helped by going back on foot to Pa Di'it to get some meager rice supplies, enough for porridge.

By the end of the year, their own farms had yielded sufficient padi and tapioca. Life had improved and there was less hardship. At that time Seraya Aleang was still in Pa Di'it. She only came in the second year, with her two children to join her brother, Araya Ajin, and sisters in Long Peluan. She farmed her brother's farm on the flat land by the confluence of the Peluan River. By then, the settlement had grown in number.

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[84] Husband of Po' Nang, oldest woman in Long Peluan until her death in 2013.
[85] Murdered with his brother Araya Ewat by Taja when he went amok, killing his wife, Olan Araya Ewat, Wa Ayan and their sister Lipang. Olan's life was troubled by insecurity and jealousy. Her first husband, Tama Lalo, divorced her and she is alleged to have incited her second husband, Taja, to kill her.
[86] Son of Ajin and Father of Mujan, Apui, Aran, Arang, Ubong and Rodia, currently living at Long Peluan.
[87] Father of Sina Bulan who married Yee Dun, parents of Bulan, Gadong, Lelen, Baya, Abel, Jolly, Lagang and Baun.
[88] Daughter of Seraya Anan Alo and Araya Pengiran. Mother of Mengah Tepun from Long Peluan who died on 18 February 2011 at the age of 83, married Lian Aban of Pa Di'it.
[89] Araya Ajin's wife was called Ube, and she was related to Bang. One source suggests she is Ngurek.
[90] Married Araya Aa or Pun Maa from Pa Main. Parents of Seraya Dayang, Seraya Lipang, Araya Ewat and Araya Wa Ayan.

Meanwhile, in Pa Di'it the villagers were discussing the future prospect of the leadership of Araya Keao, who had stayed on at their request while his wife and children had gone ahead to Long Peluan. They decided to let him go and he joined his wife and the family in Long Peluan. In the third year, he came to Long Peluan and he became the headman for quite some time. Around that time the Sultan of Brunei did not have the capacity to rule Sarawak so he ceded the territory to the British Rajah Brooke. He ruled from then on. That is the beginning of our life in Long Peluan.[91]We all know the descendants of Araya Ajin and Seraya Aleang, all of us who are their descendants, let us be wise. Long Peluan was established by the descendants of a brother and his three sisters.

Sadly, Araya Ewat had no descendants except for Balang Maran. That's the history of our life in Long Peluan. So, we cannot be so individualistic because we have the same origin, and have one ancestor; like this land where they brought us to farm, it is like the seed of a fruit tree.

[91] The settlement was initially established by 24 people, a brother, Araya Ajin, and three sisters and their offspring (Appendix 6). It is not clear why names of their husbands are not recited with this founding group. Perhaps they had to stay back and maintain farms single-handedly in their former settlement, at Pa Di'it. The transition of moving between settlements took time. This is because forest had to be cleared to plant padi in Long Peluan. The pioneering families relied on the relay of supplies from Pa Di'it by the younger group of strong young men who were assisting them. This was a three-day journey each way. Pun Maa from Pa Main married one of the sisters Seraya Awan and is remembered as one of the founders. Araya Pengiran (Belulok) married Seraya Anan Alo, and Araya Keao married Seraya Aleang. Other early migrants from Pa Di'it at this time include Mangarit, Ka his son and Ka's wife Seraya Paang, Lian Aban, who married Seraya Ipong, Baru, father of Asiew, Tama Parai, So Tepun who married the daughter of Araya Keao, Ruit Perait his brother (Tama Sigang), Ubar and her son Murang and Pun Gawa. Kiai and Bilong Pangot, came and stopped in Long Peluan on the way back to the Bahau from working downriver, and married Dayang and Lipang.When Pun Maa's grandson, Tingang died prematurely, in the 1930s his bones were taken back for death rites in Pa Nar, his father Kiai's ancestral homeland. These rites were not carried out in Long Peluan, because the community was still in transition and insufficiently established. Kiai returned from Pa Nar with a number of other kin who came to live in Long Peluan, including Selon Bulieng, Nabun Pun, Pu Nang, Sat Laeng, Hnan Lojok, Jungan, Boleng and Lajan Apoi Some of these people went to join Lang Tajit in Long Banga in the late 1930s. A subsequent migration from Pa Di'it includes Tama Sabang, Tama Bun, Tama Kiut, Tama Silon and Anyie Loong. After the Japanese occupation, there were further migrants from Pa Di'it to Long Peluan including Ngaang, Semaga, Lugun Bala, and Belawing who came to live in Long Peluan.

We are just like that. Those of us who are living here are like that. So, let us be wise as we live together as brothers and sisters, as cousins, and as relatives. That is the reason why our ancestors brought us here to Long Peluan. At the end of the day, let us not quarrel and create discord as, brothers and sisters, cousins and relatives. And that is my advice to us about the life created by our ancestors when they came to Long Peluan.

6.4 Commentary and Analysis of the Second Narrative

6.4.1 Establishing the narrator's authority: genealogies and leadership

The narrator, Malian Tepun, opens the narrative with a genealogy of leaders. He declares he is the senior descendant of Tamabo Inok and Tai Iwan, establishing his own authority as a *lun doo'* as a headman and as narrator. His genealogical link to Tai Iwan, his grandfather, the subject of the narrative, consolidates the authenticity of his narrative. Tai Iwan has been identified as the first Kelabit Penghulu. By extending his ancestors to Tamabo Inok, Malian creates a wide network of kin extending the range of *lun tauh* across the highlands and his narrative positions his authority within this context. Tamabo Inok was the man who led a migration from Arur Dalan in the Bario valley to Long Di'it, linking the population of Long Di'it to a wider network of ancestors through the Kelabit Highlands to Pa Main, Pa Mada and Bario across to the Sa'ban area of Pa Nar in Dutch Borneo. His story is still widely circulated among the elders who are his descendants living in the area close to Long Di'it and Bario (see Appendix 16: Stories of Tamabo Inok). Such a genealogy functions as a prestige genealogy as identified by Fox with regard to narratives on the Indonesian island of Roti, and his analysis is relevant in this case. He says:

> (The) prestige genealogy forms the frame of reference for the organization of the domain – the skeletal structure of the body politic. A historical narrative must

> establish its chronology by reference to a particular ancestor in this prestige genealogy (Fox1979: 17).

The domain, of Malian's narrative, extends as far as the descendants of Tamabo Inok, Raja Ubong and Tai Iwan living in Bario Asal, Ulong Palang, Pa Mada, Pa Dalih, Batu Patong and Long Banga and extends also to the community served by the authority of Malian Tepun in Long Peluan. Furthermore, his genealogy provides a framework for understanding the close kinship relationships between households in Long Peluan and this theme will be returned to at the end of the narrative. The selection and emphasis on certain ancestors extends authority, legitimacy and alliances, which are imperative for his position as suggested by Scott (2009:233). For instance, Raja Ubong was by virtue of his name, a man who had been conferred honour by the Brunei Sultanate. According to his descendant, So Tepun, he was one of four men who had this honour. The others were the Orang Kaya Tamanggong the Berawan leader, Tama Bulan the Kenyah leader and Tama Usun the Kayan leader (see Appendix 17). This prestige or *doo'*-ness would inevitably be passed on to his descendants, but the onus would be on them to maintain it, as discussed in Chapter 2.

However, it must also be recognized that tracing a genealogy is an arbitrary process, as in this genealogy of leadership, Malian Tepun mentions headmen who are not in his direct bloodline such as Araya Keao, who is his father-in-law. At the same time, he has omitted to mention another leader of Long Peluan who is not his direct ancestor, Malian's own namesake, Tama Pasang (also called Melian Tepun), who was headman at Long Peluan from 1965 to his death 1974. By omitting Tama Pasang Murang, Malian fails to acknowledge the descendants of Pasang Murang who provide an alternative line of leaders to that of So Tepun and Malian. This omission reveals the partiality of his account. Malian's voice comes though in this section with his views on leadership from a Christian perspective. This will be discussed in the concluding section of this chapter, where I discuss the meanings of the narrator.

6.4.2 The theme of the narrative – the quest for the life of government

While this narrative can be read as a manifesto for the status of Malian Tepun as headman through the narration of the deeds of his ancestors, it also conveys a rare insight to an indigenous view of the transition from the period of warfare to the quest of "the life of government" (*ulun perintah*) This era was the beginning of the history of Sarawak in the minds of many people, with the written records, and narratives of the Brooke administration. This narrative establishes the role of Malian Tepun's grandfather, Tai Iwan, who is portrayed as a person who hears news of "the life of government" (*ulun perintah*), as a means to make peace at a time when people still experienced fear for their lives. Although Tai Iwan lived in the remote border area of Pa Di'it, news still travelled there by word of mouth by people undertaking long journeys.

6.4.3 The journey to Marudi with the Ngurek

The relationship between Tai Iwan and the Ngurek chief, Aping Nyipa and the journey to Marudi are significant as it is an example of what it meant to have allies embraced by the term *lun tauh.* Aping Nyipa was related to a wider network of Kelabit, and through his marriage to Dayang Ubong from Pa Butong, he created a network of alliances through kinship for the Kelabit and the Ngurek, so much so that outsiders deemed the Ngurek to be "Kelabitic" (see Chapter 4 and Appendix 18). This illustrates the significance of marital alliances that meant that communities were politically interlinked and leaders status or *doo'*-ness was augmented. As Metcalf observes: "The prestige of particular leaders often extended beyond their own communities, so that their precedence might be admitted by leaders in other houses" (2010:62). Thus, the alliance not only augmented the combined political strength of the Kelabit and the Ngurek, but also boosted the role of Aping Nyipa as a go-between between the Brooke administrators and the Kelabit, which was acknowledged by the Resident (Douglas1905a: 130).

Their relationship is also important for the inhabitants of Long Peluan, almost all of whom are related to Ngurek either through one of the founders of the longhouse, Araya Ajin, whose father Bilong Salo was Ngurek, or through Aping Nyipas descendant Ngau Langgat who married Bungan of Long Peluan, or through the descendants of Olo and Jangin of Pa Di'it (see Appendices 3, 5 and 6).

The narrator demonstrates his knowledge of territory as he traces Tai Iwan's journey to meet the Pengiran in Marudi. The journey follows a route on foot, taking in the arduous hill-country of the headwaters of the rivers rather than following the main Baram River, something which only the Kelabit and the Penan are skilled in doing (Figure 6.2). It is important to remember that the narrative is set at a time when there were no settlements that would have provided shelter, between Long Semiyang and Long Temala on the Baram River. Indeed, the Penan word for the river, is Ba' Kusan which means, "empty river." Travelling by boat on the main river presented the risks of unknown enemies lurking in the tributaries as well as the natural perils of the eddies of the many rapids. The ability of Tai Iwan to take a route that followed both land and river, demonstrates a specialized knowledge of the terrain, which is described vicariously by his grandson-narrator. Moreover, the skill and stamina of the Kelabit as they negotiated ridges and watersheds on foot gave them a reputation for being able to traverse mountainous country more quickly than other groups:

> They are tremendous walkers (a fact that is impressed on one side by the size of their feet) and it is said by Kayans that they are capable of walking in one day what other people would take two days to accomplish (Douglas1907: 53).

This was the area beyond the navigable rivers to which they could maneuver in warfare. The longhouse of their Ngurek cousins and allies is at the first stop downriver, beyond this area. People relied on the *lun tauh* (our people), scattered across the trading routes to help them at

the difficult stages of these journeys. It is probable that there were many more men, both Kelabit and Ngurek, on the journey to Marudi to enable a safe passage to reach Marudi.

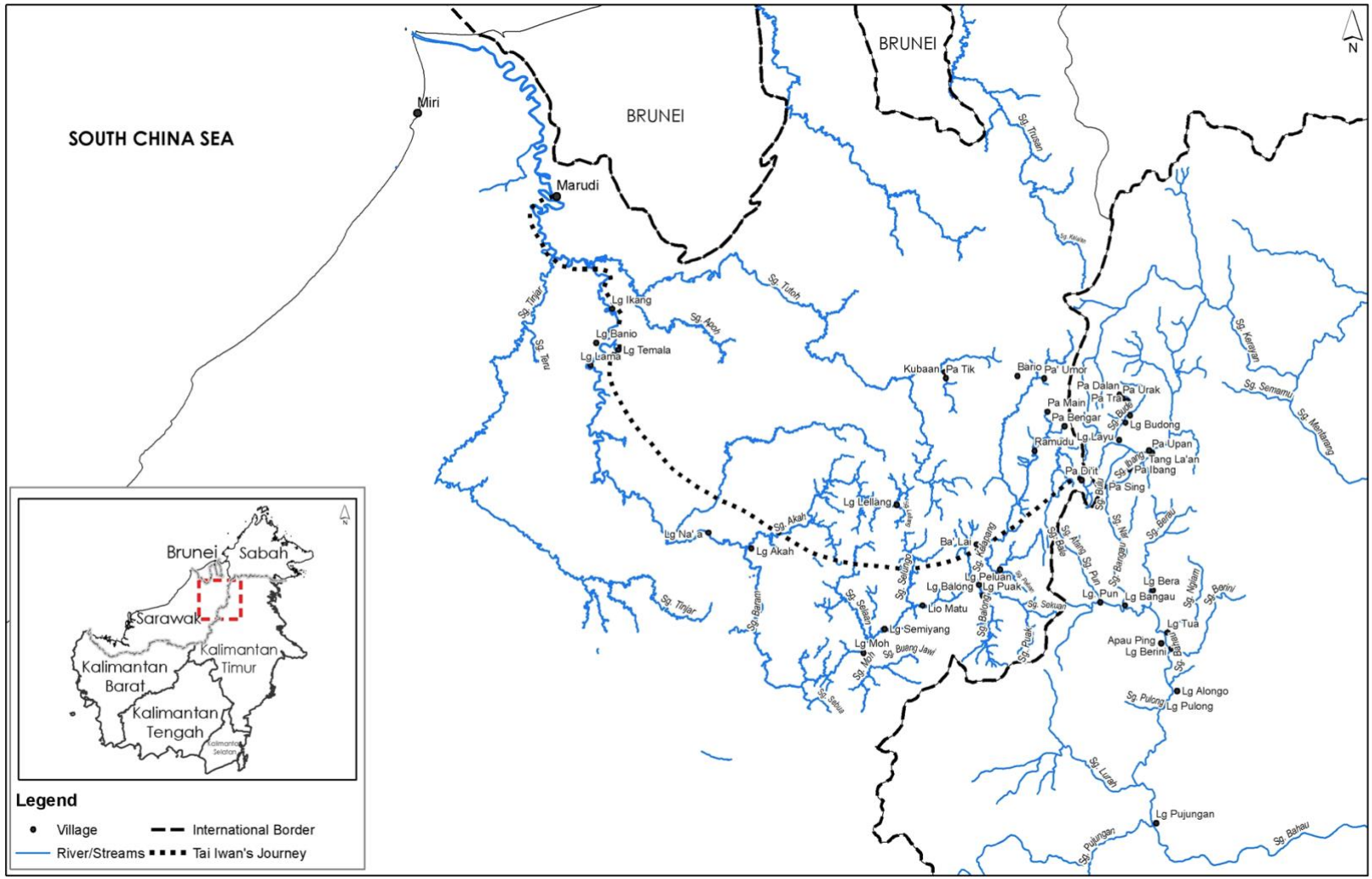


Figure 6.1: Tai Iwan's journey

The Ngurek were very important to the Kelabit as they provided access to the *alo'* (the Brunei Malays) in Marudi (Jalong 1989:165). Brunei traders possessed prestige items, such as beads, gongs and jars, objects of potency and value, which were greatly desired by the Kelabit, as they were used in rituals such as death-feasts, and were also significant as items of surety. In turn the Kelabit supplied them with the commodities that were crucial for the economic prominence of Brunei as a trading centre with China, such as camphor[92], rhinoceros horn, resins, and bezoar stones. These transactions may have taken place directly or indirectly through intermediaries, such as up-river chiefs, often bestowed with the title of *raja,* such as Malian's own ancestor, Raja Ubong, who served as the agents of the Brunei traders and court officials. Trade therefore created a locus of power and the currency of such titles enhanced the prestige or *doo'*-ness of up-river chiefs and contributed to the establishment of local hierarchies (Walker 2002:13).

The Kelabit covered the journey on foot with the Ngurek until they reached the Ngurek settlement of Long Tamala. The Kelabit at this time were still not skilled in using boats on the main Baram River. An anecdote from the late So Tepun illustrates this:

> …the Kayan always commented it was like ferrying pigs to take down the Kelabit by boat (because they were heavy – dead weight, not adept in using boats – *"na'am milah ngalud"*). They also took with them the Sa'ban and the Krayan to Marudi; they were from Pa Asing.

Nonetheless, the Kelabit, like other upriver groups who were able to negotiate the mountainous country of the headwaters, were able to challenge the political and military control pursued by riverine down-river groups by their territorial flexibility (Walker 2002:4). As highlanders, the Kelabit, were able to retreat to their hilltop settlements when they were threatened (Barker et

[92] Camphor was a significant item of trade for the Brunei Sultanate (Horton1995: 353). Although botanical studies (Christiansen 2002 and Pearce 2006) have not identified camphor producing trees in the highlands, camphor trees (*kayu kapan, kayu buda)* are in the forests of Long Peluan. People from Pa Di'it and the highlands would come down and collect camphor and take it down to Marudi to trade until the 1940s.

al. 2008: 143). Moreover, they had their own supplies of highland salt and tobacco and could obtain knives from the neighbouring Kenyah and were not dependent on trade with coastal communities. It is important to remember in the previous narrative, that the description of the separation of the Ngurek and the Kelabit was based on their skills in certain terrains: the Ngurek, as proficient boatmen moved downriver and the Kelabit as hill-people kept to the uplands.

While the aim of the journey of Aping Nyipa and Tai Iwan indicated a practical purpose, it also brought standing or *doo'*-ness to the travellers when they returned to their home community, very much in the spirit of Iban *bejalai* (Mashman 1991, Kedit 1993). For the Kelabit, the act of going on a trading journey (*ngerang*) was considered prestigious as this enabled people to gain access to the networks of trade and power.

The news of "the life of government" would have spread and come to the ears of Tai Iwan through such trading expeditions. Moreover, the acquisition of understanding, knowledge and objects of the world beyond the longhouse, which could not be acquired easily, was the prerequisite quality of potential chiefs (Bala 2008: 70). This resonates with Scott's observations for leadership in mainland Southeast Asia:

> Charismatic leaders in the hills, rebellious or not, have been expected to demonstrate a knowledge of this wider world and a connection with it. They have been without exception, local cosmopolitans (Scott 2009:309).

This is borne out by a report that indicates that the Kelabit elders, who travelled, could speak several languages, and learned to adapt to other cultures, and in later years even taught themselves to write to help with bartering. More importantly, they would not only bring material objects of value such as jars and beads or other indices of status, but latterly also new plants or seeds, or news and stories from the outside world (Harrisson 1954:119). This was a means for enabling *iyuk*, social mobility through the standing (*doo'*-ness) acquired through

bringing back to the longhouse, new knowledge and prestige items. In order to gain standing they would have to attract audiences for sharing their knowledge and wisdom which comes from somewhere else. This resonates with the work of Errington who outlines this process of men becoming centres of "potency" or power in insular South East Asia as follows:

> Men travel far to get potency: yet when they return to their settlements, they must become centers. They must attract audiences and followers to show their potency: shamans must have clients, wise old leaders must be brought cases to settle, warriors must collect allies for expeditions, orators must collect neighbours to harangue (Errington 1989: 293).

Another interesting detail in the narrative is that the *kubu* (fort) at Marudi, the centre for the Brunei representative, described as being made of palm leaves (*atap*) and flattened bamboo, is similar to the fort described at the time of De Crespigny in 1883 (Fong 2008:174). The narrator cleverly creates a sense of history in the minds of the listeners as they imagine the fort as it was at that time, rather than the image of the contemporary fort.

6.4.4 The significance of the meeting with the Brunei Pengiran in Marudi

Tai Iwan was bestowed with authority by being given the flag. This custom went on to become a Brooke ceremonial rite for the conferment of the status of Penghulu and it is still practised today (Pringle 2010:157). Local tradition has it that the Kelabit looked on the Brooke flag with reverence and awe and children were not allowed to touch it, [93] indicating that it was considered a very potent emblem of power. Graeber explains the relationship between the charisma of an object (such as the flag) and its comparable effect on the honourable status of the recipient:

> But in every case, it is easy to observe the same tendency for the object—which represents and embodies the value of a certain genre of creative activity—to seem to generate the very power it embodies, because, in immediate pragmatic terms, that's precisely what it does. Tokens of honor embody the value of honorable conduct, but

[93] Ramy Bulan, personal communication.

> one conducts oneself in an honorable way largely in order to obtain them (Graeber 2013:225).

This is further manifested in the way the flag also guaranteed a safe passage through the areas where communities were loyal to the government as described in the account of the battle at Pa Ibang in section 6.3.6.

Historically, according to Brooke and colonial sources, it was the Brooke government that was responsible for the peace-making in the Baram, mainly through the efforts of the Residents, Hose and Douglas who arranged many peace-making ceremonies.[94] Thus, it is puzzling that the exhortation for peace in the narrative is conveyed by the Brunei Pengiran rather than a Brooke administrator, particularly as the Brunei government was reputed to be weak, ineffective, corrupt and unpopular in the Baram (Metcalf 2010:133). I asked another Kelabit elder from Pa Mada, Ribuh Balang, for his opinion regarding this anomaly. His answer is in line with the received view of history:

> It did not happen in the era of Brunei but in the period of transition to Brooke rule. Brunei officials didn't do anything to bring about peace, they were ineffective. There was no peace in the time of Brunei. That's why the Brookes were asked to rule Sarawak.

Moreover, the Pengiran in the narrative offers a force of men to attack Pa Ibang, which would have been almost impossible at that time as Brunei had few allies. The Baram river was empty of settlements and it would have been less possible to muster a force right up to the headwaters. Ribuh Balang continues his critique:

> There was nobody living on the either side of the Telang Usan (Baram River) at the time of the Brunei government. They couldn't have mobilized all those people to go to Pa Ibang.

[94] Historically, the *Sarawak Gazette* reports a number of peace-makings involving Kelabit. These were first reported to have taken place in 1894 and 1898 (Hose 1894 and Hose 1898) and later in 1908 (Douglas 1909a, 1912a).

So this anachronism is apparent not only to those with access to Brooke records but to others in the Kelabit community. Furthermore, as will be discussed later in this chapter, the major expedition to Pa Ibang was an event that occurred in 1905 during the Brooke Administration and not under Brunei rule as the narrative implies. The question thus arises whether Tai Iwan did in fact meet the representative of Brunei. It is chronologically possible that he met the Brunei representatives before 1883 when Brunei ceded the Baram to the Brooke Administration. Tai Iwan is first mentioned in the *Sarawak Gazette* in 1900.[95] Tai Iwan's son, So Tepun, died in his eighties in 1987, and it is possible that Tai Iwan's life began in the 1850s and ended around 1920, as it is said later in the narrative that he lived to an old age.

When pressed for clarification regarding the setting of the narrative in the era of Brunei, the narrator was insistent that there was no error and was adamant that Tai Iwan lived in two eras; that of Brunei and that of the Brooke rule. In fact, other informants, Pian Lemulun and Sina Ellie, support this view. The narrative states that Tai Iwan was given the flag by the Brunei Pengiran, which symbolizes the ritual conferment of power by the Brunei Sultanate. It indicates that he was among the few to be conferred authority from Brunei, like his father Raja Ubong. It also increases the stature and *doo'*-ness of Tai Iwan as a leader, and as a person who dealt with two different centres of power, Brunei and the Brooke administration.

This anomaly provides a metaphor for the longevity of the life of Tai Iwan, his *doo'*-ness as a leader and his precedence that his time pre-dated other leaders. It can be better understood if western ideas of narrative realism and notions of a linear concept of history are suspended (Walker 2002: xv). Time was conceived by the Kelabit who passed on the narratives by word

[95] Tingang, Oyong Salau and Lian Laang from Lemudok and Teh Wan (Tai Iwan) from Long Lut (Di'it) are represented in a deputation who visit Claudetown in November 1899 (Douglas 1900:17).

of mouth, not in the sequential line of the dates on the Roman calendar, but more in terms of places and incidents, recalled through trees on the landscape, places families farmed, times of bountiful or poor harvests, times of mass fruiting, or wild boar migrations, or incidents such as epidemics and eruption of Krakatoa. As discussed in Chapter 2, Southeast Asian narratives rarely follow a western linear logic, but focus on episodes as units of *meaning* for the narrator and listeners.

Another way of dealing with this problem is to focus on the Kelabit view of Brunei. The Kelabit looked to the Sultan of Brunei and his officials as kin and this relationship is reinforced through myth and oral history. It is said the first Muslim Sultan was a Kelabit who had converted (Harrisson 1984: 21). Other sources suggest that Sima'un the founder of Brunei, was the first Kelabit ancestor (Maxwell 1995: 183). There are other stories that narrate the fortunes of Suit Men Kui, a Kelabit hero, who was the bodyguard to the heroic Brunei ancestor Awang Simawn (Talla 1979: 17, Arnold 1959: 188, Lian Saging 1976/7: 47).[96] Some accounts state that Upai Samaring, a Lun Bawang hero, who married a sultan's daughter, and Awang Simawn are the same person, (Langub1992: 47). The myth indicates a clear link of putative common ancestry, establishing a basis for the relationship between the Sultan of Brunei and the Lun Bawang, Kelabit and the Lun Dayeh over the border. Indeed, reminders of Upai Samaring are

[96] Such is the significance of Awang Simawn that contemporary official genealogies, *silsila* of the Sultanate of Brunei, published by the Pusat Sejarah, link the current Sultan to the founding ancestor Awang Simawn (Saunders 2002:43). The epic narrative of Awang Simawn tells of events long before the arrival of Islam and the first mission to China by Brunei in 977AD (Maxwell 1995: 96). Sultan Dewqa Emas Kayangan was hatched out of an egg that fell from the sky and landed in the upper Limbang Valley and he married a local Murut woman. He eventually is led to another river system while hunting and takes a second wife. The journey continues until he has 14 wives from 14 river systems. They bear him 14 sons who are the heroes who fly to the sky to meet the king of heaven and return to earth to different places around Brunei Bay. These heroes, among whom is the youngest brother, Awang Simawn, are the founders of Brunei (Maxwell 1996:93). This is borne out by Chinese sources that indicated that Poni, (the Chinese name for the Brunei settlement), ruled 14 districts (Andaya1997: 205).

present in the naming of places on the landscape such as a hill close to Long Bawan and stones in Bakelalan. These sites are sought after by contemporary Brunei visitors to Lun Bawang and Lun Dayeh areas to seek out their origins. Such myths, in which the ruling house marries into autochthonous populations, are common throughout the Malay world and they establish a charter for the rulers to have access to the commodities and resources of the peoples of the hinterland (Endo 2002). In the case of Brunei rulers, biological kinship links were further reinforced through their rights to take wives and concubines from people of the interior and Brunei nobles could deal with the tribal chiefs through intermediary kin (Brown 1988:49). Titles were given to the chiefs who became the trade contacts of the tribes of the hinterland, such as Orang Kaya, Raja and Tamanggong to reward them for loyalty and to guarantee their protection. Such status, in Milner's words, "was assumed to be of vital importance, and was carefully regulated " (Milner 2008: 64).

The use of the title *Raja*, as in Raja Ubong and others such as *Dayang* and *Pengiran* originating in the Brunei court are still used now by the Lun Bawang and the Kelabit as good names to use with their underlying connotations of *doo'*-ness and noble status.[97] These names are vestiges of the influence of Brunei on the Kelabit and Lun Bawang, but the extent and nature of this influence is difficult to gauge.

What is more important is the way the up-river peoples viewed the sultanate, as this reveals the way they saw *perintah* (government). Bornean peoples came to the Sultan to settle disputes and to seek well-being. "There are definite signs that from the viewpoint of Bornean peoples it (the sultanate) was effective enough to be seen as the source of the ultimate order" (Brown 1988:47).

[97] The origin of these names goes back to the titles conferred on nobles in the Sultan's court. In Brunei, *Pengiran* refers to relatives of the Sultan and this title together with *Raja* represent core nobility. *Dayang* is the title of the wife of an *Awang*, the highest non-noble strata (Brown 1970: 11,14).

This is manifested in the narrative by the way Tai Iwan visits the Sultan's representative, the Pengiran, with the mission of seeking *ulun perintah* (the life of government) and a resolution to the external conflict his people are facing. Such an attitude towards the Sultan may have been in keeping with the people of the Adang (ancestors of both Lun Bawang and Kelabit) who had never had first-hand contact with Brunei, who held the Sultan with great esteem, as a consequence of his reputation:

> … it would appear incredible – the awe and fear inspired by the Sultan and his nobles in former times; and the idea was universal that the Bornean government was the greatest and most powerful in the world (St. John 1974b:106-7).

Such a notion of government fitted in with the belief held in the Malay world that the ruler was believed to be the ultimate power and that submission and loyalty were expected from his subjects (Maxwell 1996:92). He was venerated for his charismatic spiritual power, which protected his subjects. The title bestowed on a subject by the ruler was the source of status both in this world and the next (Milner 1982: 107, Walker 2002:19). In addition, he was believed to be the source of fertility and ultimately life itself for the people under his governance. This idea is in accordance with the Indonesian notion of the ruler at the exemplary centre, as the source of concentrated power that is a radiance that diminishes as it spans outwards. Such a polity represents the epitome of cosmological and political order (Anderson 1972:22, Geertz 1980:13, Andaya 1997:198).

Vestiges of these ideas are to be found in the Kelabit belief that the Sultan of Brunei was the source of supernatural power and secret knowledge *ilmu*, or magic (see Walker 2002:19, Metcalf 2010:197). For example, a young Kelabit chief, Penghulu Miri went to Kuala Belait in Brunei in the 1930s in order to learn the Malay language to enhance his authority in dealings with people outside the highlands. It is said when Penghulu Miri returned he had not only acquired fluency in the Malay language, but had learnt to use a supernatural skill akin to magic

which enhanced his power. Thus, through these associations, it can be inferred that the Pengiran may have been seen as being close to the source of ultimate power and prestige, *doo'*-ness through his association with the Sultanate and his access to firearms and the literate culture of the Malays (Walker 2002:21). The interlude with the Pengiran at the fort in Marudi, with its historical ambiguity, is a symbolic moment in the narrative and links Tai Iwan with the intangible potency of Brunei power in the Baram.

Another reason why the figure of the Pengiran persists in this story is that the Brunei Malays with whom the Kelabit directly or indirectly traded continued to keep the role of local power brokers at the same time supporting the early Brooke administration. So, Tuanku Hamid escorted the army (*bala*) as far as Long Akah for the 1905 punitive expedition (Douglas 1905b: 253), and the Kelabit paid their tax to Bua Hassan at Lio Mato (Douglas 1909a: 43). For people such as the Kelabit living in remote border areas, the change in rule from the Brunei Sultanate to the Brooke administration, did not mean a great deal, as Andaya observes:

> For some interior groups life continued with simply a change in the administrator with whom they dealt. For others, there was little perceptible difference since the Brunei Sultanate maintained only limited authority over certain coastal areas and important river mouths (Andaya 1997:201).

Consequently, it can be argued that in the transition period when power was ceded to the Brookes there was a lack of clarity in the memory of people upriver as to who was at the centre of power. For the people in the uplands, their main contact, direct or indirect, was with the Malay traders who continued to supply them with the regalia of prestige and *doo'*-ness such as jars, gongs, and beads. At this stage in the narrative, the point of reference for this power, as "an exemplary centre," is the fort in Marudi. However, by the end of the narrative, this shifts to the periphery, to the Fort at Lio Mato, through the agency of Tai Iwan and his neighbouring allies on the Baram and from Dutch Borneo.

6.4.5 The violation of peace

The narrative states that life was difficult as people lived in fear of random attacks while they were farming outlying swiddens. It is likely, in the case of the Berawan, as Metcalf notes, that people at these times had small farms and built their farmhouses together relying on sago to supplement their food.[98] Metcalf aptly sums up the constraints on subsistence at these times:

> In former times, when attacks on outlying farms were an ever-present threat, farmhouses were often built side by side so that they resembled small longhouses. In those days, I was told, security took precedence over production, and farms were smaller. Consequently, people were forced to rely more on jungle produce, particularly wild sago. Life at the farms was hard (Metcalf 2010:63).

There was little rice to go round, with no surpluses of padi for times of need or for feasting. Women were particularly vulnerable. The murder of Sina Ubar is remembered in detail by people in Long Peluan and Pa Dalih. "The Pa Ibang people came to Pa Di'it and took the head of Sina Ubar and her daughter while she was winnowing at her farm at Ra'an Palid." Jeffrey Malang tells the story as it has been related to him by his uncle Pian Lemulun. The murder of Sina Ubar was something that people today still talk about in Pa Dalih, especially when they go to their farms. Sina Ellie remembers this incident when she goes to her farmland, which is close to where the murder took place, because she has found traces of Sina Ubar's beads on her land:

> We have farmland there near Pa Kalabaan. We can see her beads in the ground there, greenish blue beads (*bao bata'*). Maybe she carried them in her padi-basket (*bu'an*) and these got scattered when she was murdered.

Women farming on outlying swiddens were usually the victims of this kind of head-hunting,

[98] The existence of stands of sago (*kenangan, Eugeissonia utilis*) in the highlands, linked to ancestors who first planted them, testifies to this. Rabadui, ancestor of Ose Murang, is associated with a stand of sago, planted on a hill by the Rabadui River at Pa Main. (See also Janowski and Barton 2012).

which took place in small groups. Such an attack was typical of warfare at that time. Potential attackers "preferred to sneak up on single victims, such as old ladies out collecting firewood. People on lonely farms were vulnerable, providing a strong motivation for adjacent farms" (Metcalf 2010:52). Malian Tepun recollects the memories of this time from his grandfather when life was bad (*na'am doo' ulun*):

> It was a time of great fear. If you came across a person you didn't know you'd take his head. People were hungry and scared. In every longhouse, there were two or three men that outsiders would be scared of. You had to always be on guard, there was no peace of mind *(na'am doo' ulun).* That's why the life of government was much easier for us all.

There are more details of the murder of Tama Arong. In the words of headman Jeffrey Malang: "Some time later Tama Arong (the father of Gia') went to collect resin with his brother Belun at Pa Ragatil. They left early in the morning to avoid encountering omen birds. Tama Arong was speared and beheaded by the Pa Ibang head-hunters. Belun managed to escape despite his injuries and reported the incident to the villagers at Long Terotong." The violation of a peace-agreement provided the opportunity for revenge and head-taking, but Tai Iwan in the narrative was restrained and sought out government assistance as an alternative way of dealing with the problem.

This series of events demonstrates that the coming of peace took time and that the enemies of the people at Pa Di'it continued to threaten people's security. Peace-making did not instantly resolve the series of feuds in the highlands that are reported in the *Sarawak Gazette*. For example, Douglas (1900:17) reports disputes over the movement of buffalo between Gali Balangan (Galih Balang) of Pa Mein and Balang Kewat of the Libbun, which led to the murder of Paran Baru, a Baram Kelabit, by one of Tingang's followers. Moreover, there was conflict between the Mada and the Bah Kelabit. The people from Pa Mada refused a buffalo as compensation from the Bah people, who eventually sent a female slave, Sina Kayong, who was

ritually murdered on arrival (Douglas 1907:32) (Harrisson 1984:183). Another report described Utong Ratau of Pa Mein attacking the Long Utak Kelabit, killing one man and injuring another, as revenge for a previous attack (King 1908:40). Feuding between individuals seemed to be a particular characteristic of Kelabit warfare as individuals were quick to respond to insults against their pride (Harrisson 1984:95). As Deegan (1973:123) reports for the Lun Bawang, feuds were carried over from generation to generation and could be revived indiscriminately, leading to the involvement of a growing number of people. The arbitrary nature of such warfare was an indication of the way strong men competed against each other. In the words of a Krayan elder, Pak Lewi, "In the olden days they always fight. Fighting then was like a sport. Killing people was normal. It was the same in the Krayan. Whoever is strongest will be the king."

Tai Iwan is portrayed in the narrative as a man of action. Nonetheless, he does not arrange a local attack in response to the murders, in the style of an epic-like hero like Telen Sang. In order to solve the problems of incursions into his territory, he readily goes on another journey to seek the assistance of the government. It is not clear which government is in power and this is not relevant, as the narrator's intention is to focus on the agency of Tai Iwan, who conveys the message that his followers accept government, as they want peace.

It was in his interest to seek for peace, as an ultimate value, as with it his reputation would flourish with his power and influence. It was not acceptable for his allies to live under the threat of warfare if action could prevent it. Thus, Tai Iwan has to act in order to protect and maintain his followers (c.f. Deegan 1973:130). This is an example of the way that movement, agency (*iyuk*), is used to maintain standing (*doo'*-ness) and can be interpreted as a political action, as discussed in Section 2.10 above . There is a useful analogy with the work of Errington, which helps to elucidate this concept of movement *iyuk*, to maintain standing, "The continual process of locating oneself in the range of prestige by differentiating oneself from others is a process

that, viewed from secular perspective outside it, would be called politics" (Errington 1989:190). Tai Iwan was making a political representation in seeking the protection of government to deal with these attacks from his enemies, as there is an implicit understanding that his people should not retaliate against their enemies without the authority of the government. Moreover, for the government, this was an opportunity to demonstrate its power in mobilizing a very large combined force to the remotest parts of their domain. The government acts as a superordinate power to adjudicate conflict and its presence supports the curtailment of the conflict (Helbling 2006:119).

A meeting actually took place between Tai Iwan and the British Resident, Charles Hose, in June 1903 when Tai Iwan came to Marudi to pay tax and to report that they had in the previous four years, suffered four attacks by people from the Krayan, with three people killed. The purpose of the visit was to seek permission to attack after the harvest with the help of Baram Kenyah "under a responsible chief" (Hose 1903b: 171). The expedition did not take place until 1905 because it took time for the Brooke officials to negotiate the conditions of government support with the Kelabit for an expedition to the Krayan. Aping Nyipa, the Ngurek chief acted as go-between and he reported problems in establishing the terms of engagement in battle with the Kelabit:

> …Murik chief Tama Aping Ngipa returned from Upper Baram where he had been to inform the Kalabits living there of terms which His Highness the Rajah was willing to allow the Baram Kayans and Kenyahs to assist them in retaliating on Krayan people for the murders that they have committed during the past two years. As the reply of these Kalabit was not very satisfactory, I decided to wait till next month before doing anything decisive … (Douglas1905a: 130).

This report anticipates the discussion of the terms and conditions of war sanctioned by the Brooke government, which are discussed in the next section and detailed in the official account in Appendix 26.

The people at Pa Ibang on the Krayan River in Dutch Borneo were customary enemies (Lian- Saging, 1976/77: 78) and a war-song (*kuab*) from the period is still remembered by Selon Bulieng in Long Puak, near Long Peluan. Such songs condemning their enemies, were sung to encourage warriors about to go into battle. The song conveys that this battle was fought on land and by river and people carried back their dead in boats for fear of the bodies being decapitated and dismembered.

Pa Ibang alud-alud
Pa Ibang going by boat
Alo alo lem Pa lotot
Chasing each other in murky waters
Ngalud botong mey laud
Carrying corpses downriver
Botong mabi kinan besok
Corpses all devoured by pig-tailed monkeys
Mabi kinan baya'ulud
All eaten by fools

Pa Ibang alo-alo
Pa Ibang is where they chase each other
Alud-alud lem pa li'o
By boats in the clear waters
Ngalud botong da'mey mado
Carrying corpses to distant places
Botong mabi kinan delo
Corpses devoured by eels
Mabi kinan baya'ulud
All eaten by fools

6.4.6 The punitive expedition against Pa Ibang

Punitive expeditions, such as the one against Pa Ibang, were used by the Brooke government to bring about the end of head-hunting. They deployed Malays and downriver tribes to fight rebellious tribes upriver. This method of divide-and-rule was the only practical means of exercising power, given the difficult terrain and the paucity of Brooke officers. However, there was also criticism of the use of Dayak head-hunting as a means of warfare as "illogical." This is because tribes engaged on punitive expeditions were allowed to take heads, even though the government was seeking to eliminate head-hunting (Durrans1993:xxx). Brooke contemporaries such as Spenser St John condemned the damage to livelihood wrought by such methods and advocated the use of blockades (Walker 2002:92).[99] The effects of devastation caused by the government-sanctioned expeditions eliminated any opposition to Brooke control of the Baram. For example, such was the destruction caused by the Great Kayan expedition of 1863, that it "demonstrated Brooke's power, and the Baram accepted his authority without a fight." The Baram tribes under the Kenyah chief Tama Bulan submitted to Brooke authority (Rousseau 1990b:32).

What is interesting about the 1905 expedition against Pa Ibang is that it ventured across the border, which had been previously delineated in 1891 by the Anglo-Dutch treaty (Trocki 2000:4). The non-existence of the Dutch presence in the Krayan border areas at this time created a blurring of demarcations of territory. Thus, Douglas was able to authorize an expedition over the border without fearing repercussions from the Dutch. Douglas' first map of the highlands (Figure 6.2.) published in 1912, marks the approximate site of allied and enemy longhouses on the Krayan, at the time of the 1905 expedition (Douglas 1912a), indicating that these were

[99] Walker sources this criticism to a letter written by Spencer St John to Brooke Brooke, 8 November 1858, Basil Brooke Papers vol.15, f.211 (Walker 2002:239).

within his domain. It is pertinent to note that the border is not marked, only the footprint of the Douglas expedition of 1908. With peace-making, these longhouses came under the realm of Sarawak and they paid tax at Marudi and eventually at Lio Mato, until the Dutch made their presence felt in the border areas. In 1912, Douglas reported the presence of a "Dutch military mission under Captain Van Gusderen Stort on borders of the Kalabit country" (Douglas 1912b: 101). It was about this time that the border tribes stopped paying tax to the Brooke authorities (Clayre and Usat 1997:1).

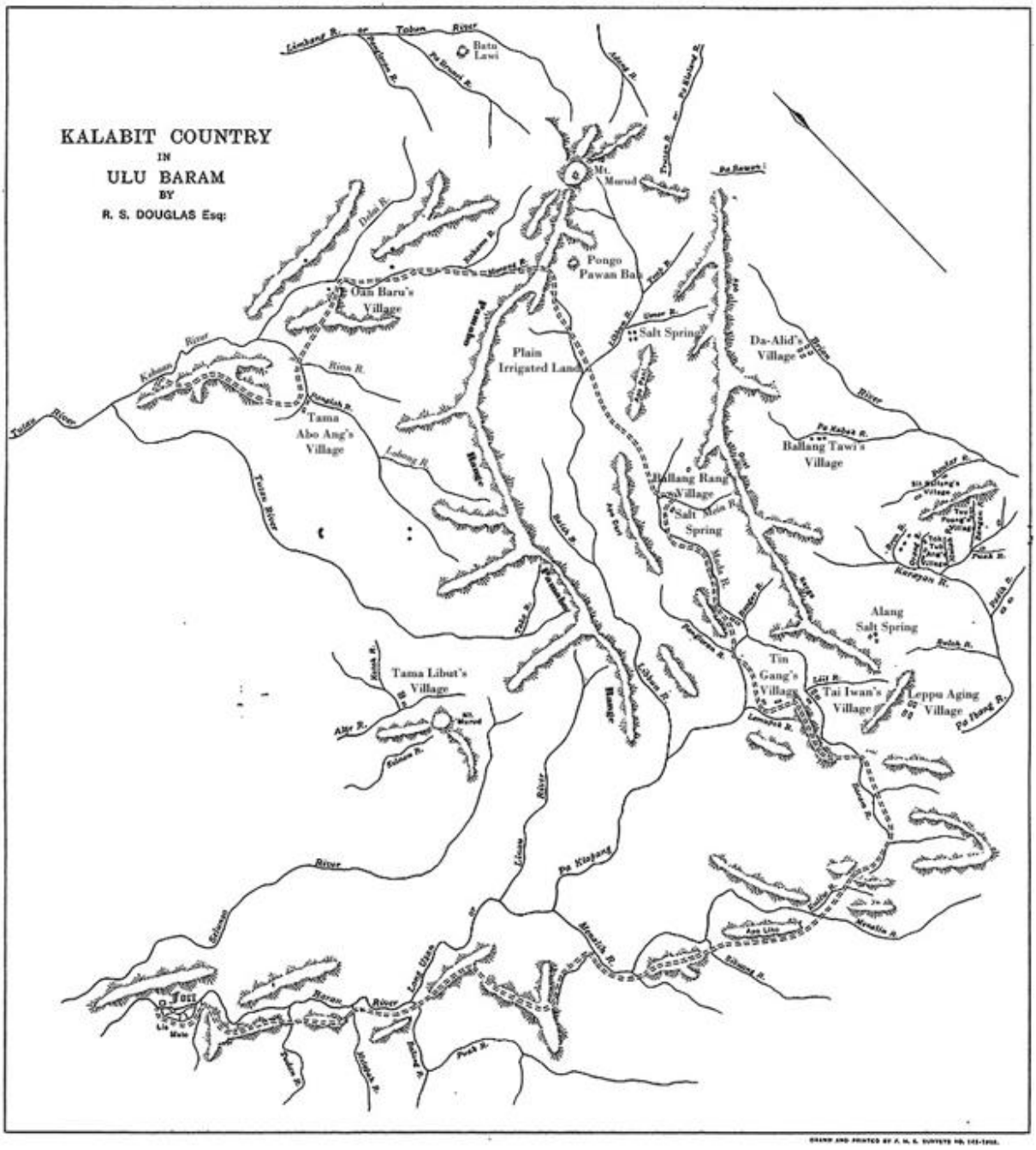


Figure 6.2: Kalabit Country (Douglas 1912a)

In the narrative, two guns were given to two warriors who were endowed with the quality of invulnerability. The use of guns was a novelty upriver as guns and firearms were very much under the control of the Malays (Walker 2002:21). Nineteenth century reports indicate that the Kayan were initially intimidated by the Bruneians' use of gunfire, and that they had problems keeping their guns in working order (St. John 1974a: 87). This is probably because gunpowder

had to be kept dry to be effective. Moreover, a gun was more useful when utilized in a longhouse as a means of defence rather than a weapon for attack, as it was difficult to keep dry when carried through the rainforest (Metcalf 2010:61). When Tai Iwan actually visited Hose in Marudi in 1903, he reported to Hose that their enemies in the Krayan were using gunpowder and guns supplied to them by the Trusan Murut (Hose 1903b:171) and this may be the reason why the most powerful warriors were given guns.

When the expedition reached Pa Di'it, this was clearly an overwhelming moment for the Kelabit there at Pa Di'it, who had limited supplies of food for the huge crowd. It was an unusual situation, because it was not a time for entertainment such as a feast for which there would have been some years of anticipation and preparation. Nonetheless, it would have meant a great loss of face to be unable to feed people. According to the official record, the expedition that had left Long Akah consisted of some 3,700 Kenyah, Kayan and Iban (Douglas 1905c: 231). However, there is a local version according to a Kelabit elder, Pun Nibu who says the Kelabit negotiated for a smaller number of people, as they were unable to provide for so many:

> The people asked Tai Iwan to take a force of 3,000. But this was a time when people were short of rice because of a drought. So he said, we take 2,000 people. The 2,000 came and met in Lio Matu. Two persons from Pa Di'it came to guide them. When they arrived, some of the army were sent off to be fed by the people of Ramudu, Pa Di'it, Pa Dalih, Pa Mada, Pa Bengar, Pa Main.

Thus, there was a larger group of "our people" within the neighbouring villages who supported Tai Iwan's efforts to feed the expedition. The problem of feeding the expedition might have been a reason for the ambiguous and slow response of the Kelabit to take part in the expedition as recorded by Douglas in the *Sarawak Gazette* (Douglas1905a: 130).

According to the narrative, the Kenyah leader Aban Jau directed the expedition, which concurs with the Kenyah version of this expedition, derived from his descendants among the Long Tikan Kenyah (Ritchie 2006:18). However, Douglas in the *Sarawak Gazette* states that

one of the leaders of the expedition is Aban Tingang (Douglas 1905b: 231).[100]It is possible that Aban Jau, his nephew, stood in for him as the army proceeded upriver from Long Akah, or that they both went.[101] The Iban were sent to the remoter areas belonging to the Koerid, who were longstanding enemies of the Kelabit. Tai Iwan guided the Kenyah to post a flag at the longhouse of the other Tai Iwan living in Pa Ibang ensuring safe passage. There were relatives who needed to be protected in this longhouse, and it indicates that attempts were being made to be selective in attacking enemies. This was in keeping with the orders issued to the expedition at Long Akah, according to the official report of the expedition by Douglas (1905c: 231) (see Appendix 20). Accordingly, the Brooke government representative Tuanku Hamid, had instructed under the terms of engagement that they should only attack enemy tribes and not others.

The existence of a second person called Tai Iwan at Pa Ibang is confusing in the narrative. Yet, such a person by the name of Tai Iwan really existed at Pa Ibang and played a part in the battle, according to Pak Suyud and Pendita Ramly who were interviewed in Long Layu and Tang La'an in 2014 (Appendix 20). The great-niece, of the other Tai Iwan, Rinai, is alive in Tang La'an to confirm this. [102] The fact that his name, which is the same as the ancestor-hero of the second narrative, has survived in local memory indicates the complexity of relationships between people of Pa Ibang and the people of Pa Di'it. According to the narrative, the ancestor-hero Tai Iwan showed the army to the enemy longhouse which was to be attacked, where the people who killed Tama Arong and Sina Ubar lived. He is not described as taking part in the action, possibly because the narrator does not want him to appear controversial. Burning down

[101] Harrisson's manuscript TH48/4 from a Kenyah source states on p.39 that Aban Tingang and Aban Jau went to make war on Pa Bawan to aid the Kelabits. Tama Bulan was ill.
[102] Interestingly, Rinai is the aunt to Evelyn Keling from Long Banga who married Nicholas Kusing Ngaang of Long Peluan. She is also a cousin of Pun Isak who features in the third narrative (Chapter 7).

a longhouse was a destructive act, wiping out accumulated ritual regalia such as heads, jars, gongs, beads and charms, and their means of livelihood, such as seeds, baskets and knives and possibly also supplies of rice. The Brookes used this strategy as a means of demonstrating their power and deterring head-hunting:

> An attack upon a Dyak force, the destruction of the whole of it, with the lives of all the men, is no permanent advancement towards cessation of head-taking. But the burning down of a village loss of goods, old relics –such as heads, arms, and jars – and putting the inhabitants to excessive inconvenience –all this fills them with fear and makes them think of the consequences of taking the heads of strangers (Brooke 1990:160).

The other Tai Iwan originally appeared as an ally, earlier in the narrative, as the flag was placed to protect his longhouse. Yet it is he who killed Tama Kiyut, one of the expedition leaders. When I raised this contradiction with Malian the narrator, he explained that there were mixed loyalties and the other Tai Iwan had to defend his own kin in Pa Ibang against the attack. The demise of Tama Kiyut is related in similar accounts by Pian Lemulun and Penghulu Herbert (Appendices 19 and 20). The slaying of Kiyut by the other Tai Iwan is also related in the account from Pendita Ramly of Tang La'an:

> Then another elder called Tai Iwan, (uncle of Rinai) thought Kiyut was dead, and as he approached him, Kiyut got up and attacked Tai Iwan with his parang. Tai Iwan was hurt on the knee partially protected by the pakel, metal knee bangle. The mark of the wound could be seen on his leg. Dun Kayan of Pa Ibang shot at them and Kiyut died. The Kayans fled when they arrived at the mountain of Kot Langan, the people of Pa Sing heard them mourning. Kiyut was beheaded and his head was put on a wooden pole in Pa Ibang.

In the aftermath of the battle, the narrative says the Iban took the heads and the Kenyah collected the body of Tama Kiyut. It is recorded elsewhere in more detail that different groups fulfilled different roles in the aftermath of the battle. The Iban and Kayan took heads and the Kenyah took children. The Kelabit who lived closest to the theatre of war, would not have taken human remains such as heads for fear of further vendettas. Instead they took jars and beads as these

were of use for future negotiations with their enemies regarding the payment of blood-debts, (*dawi*) during the peace-making (Lian-Saging 1976/77:118) Harrisson (1984:91).

To sum up, Malian's narrative and the other oral accounts give graphic descriptions of the burning of the longhouse and the final combat between Kiyut and his opponents, which make the narrative compelling for the listener. On the other hand, the official account deals with a bigger picture. It is clear that the expedition set off upriver from Long Akah without any government representative, but Tunku Hamid had issued clear guidelines to be followed that only certain tribes were to be attacked (Douglas 1905c: 231), in keeping with the negotiations made prior to the expedition (Douglas 1905a:130). Thus, the official report details the sparing of villages that surrendered:

> During the march, the following villages flew the white flag and asked for mercy, which was granted them, as they were not concerned in the Baram raids: Long Padalan, Long Padui and Long Orang and their chief Tok Tubong sent down a token of submission whilst they were waiting at Long Orang for Aban Tingang's part (Douglas 1905c: 231).

The detail that the expedition showed "mercy" and that rules were followed is to offset any condemnation by critics of the Brooke regime of the scale of destruction. The consequences of the expedition were dramatic with many villages in the Krayan laid waste. Douglas reports as follows:

> I met Laki Batang, the Kayan Penghulu, who reported the entire success of the expedition which he had led against the people in the Krayan R. He stated they had burnt 30 villages and killed over 200 and captured 25 of the enemy. The 'bala' only sustained a loss of 6 killed (Douglas 1905d: 253).

There is an official source for the 1905 Punitive Expedition to Pa Ibang in Dutch Borneo published in the Sarawak Gazette (Douglas 1905c: 231, Appendix 20). The details of this report have escaped a couple of scholars. Amster searched for details of the raid in official records (1998:34) and looked for oral sources, but to no avail (2003:261). Ewart (2009:171) misread

Douglas' official account of the 1905 expedition against "some tribes of Kalabits" (1912a: 18), and misconstrued Douglas' account as referring to the expedition of 1892 instead of the expedition of 1905. Lian-Saging (1976/77:171) states that the Kelabit led a combined government-sponsored expedition to Dutch Borneo in 1898.

Harrisson refers to an expedition "of a thousand armed men" that was "unsupervised by the government" and went to the closer Bawan River in Dutch Borneo instead of the remoter area where the real troublemakers[103] were (1984:91). In his opinion, the Bawan people were "falsely and fiercely treated" in this attack (ibid.:213). On close reading of Lian-Saging (1976/77) and Talla (1979), it seems that the Bawan expedition was part of the combined authorized 1905 expedition, but it is not mentioned in the official account, nor is it remembered by the contemporary elders interviewed who recall the attack on Pa Ibang. Lian-Saging says the expedition to the Bawan was led by a Kelabit, Ballang Maran, and joined by Southern chiefs including the Kelabit Penghulu Tingang, the Tutoh based Tama Laing,[104] the father of Temenggong Baya Malang and Kenyah chief Uding Saging (Lian-Saging 1976/77:192-3). The breadth of the participation suggests, that the expedition to the Bawan was part of the expedition to Pa Ibang. Talla highlights that the expedition targeted the Bawan valley, where there was more wealth, rather than the Murut areas (Talla 1979:108). The official account is silent on the journey to the Bawan and commends the Kayan leader, Laki Batang, for the control exercised over his men and it hints at the misconduct by the leader Kenyah Penghulu Aban Tingang (Appendix 20). This could refer to the group that attacked the Bawan, which was not authorized by the Brooke authorities. Douglas noted that the people from Pa Bawan and the Uma Lim were

[103] Tai Iwan complained to the authorities that the Murut (Lun Bawang) in Trusan were supplying their enemies with gunpowder (Hose 1903b:171).
[104] This is possibly the fatherhood name for Kiyut.

absent (1909a:30) from the peace-making of 1908 in the highlands, indicating that they may have been wiped out, or that the survivors were still harbouring bad feelings.

Another difference in the accounts of the expedition is that Lian-Saging claims that the expedition to the Krayan was led by the *Kelabit Penghulu* Tingang who lost favour with the authorities and was demoted (Lian-Saging 1976/77:182). This is strikingly similar to the official account which states instead that the *Kenyah leader* Penghulu Aban Tingang led the expedition but he lost his position due to wrongdoing during the expedition. Aban Tingang was required to deposit in the fort a surety of $200 for misconduct (Douglas1905d: 254) and he later lost his Penghuluship because of charges against him by Aw Atong from Long Pata (Douglas 1906b: 127)[105]. Thus, it is possible that there has been confusion regarding the two Tingangs in the recollections of the event, and some possible misreading of the official accounts. It is also said that Ballang Maran lead the expedition to the Bawan and it is he who originally sought permission in Marudi to attack (Lian- Saging 1976/77:192, Talla 1979:107). Given Harrisson's account cited above, it would seem that there were further losses on the Bawan River that were omitted from the official report. The court case against Aban Tingang and the demotion of his status for his part in the raid, gives cause to consider that the expedition did not follow the instructions set out by Tuanku Hamid. The ambiguity in the reports of this raid is similar to the second Kayan expedition of 1896. As there were no European officers on the latter expedition, there were no clear official reports of the chaos and devastation caused (Metcalf 2010:84). The consequences of the raid on the Bawan, which is beyond the scope of the current discussion, requires further research.

[105] The nature of this misconduct during the expedition is not specified. However, in a later incident, Douglas accuses him of disturbing the peace (1906b: 127).

Another variation between Malian's account and others, is that none of the sources consulted, neither written nor oral, suggest that Tai Iwan was a significant leader in the expedition apart from the accounts by Pian Lemulun, who originally came from Batuh Patong, and Pun Nibu whose grandmother Belun, was a sister of Tai Iwan.[106]The Table of Comparison (Appendix 19) indicates the range of sources for accounts of the expedition, from Malian's own relative Pian Lemulun, to Penghulu Herbert, the descendant of Tama Kiyut the Berawan hero, to the accounts from the descendants living in the Krayan. Pak Suyud's family now live in Long Layu, but originally came from Pa Di'it. Pendita Ramly's family came from Pa Ibang, but he now lives between Melinau and his village of Tang La'an.

It is possible to conclude that according to the oral traditions of their descendants, all three Kelabit leaders; Tai Iwan, Tingang and Ballang Maran, played a major part in the events of 1905, borne out by the significance of their roles in the peace-making of 1908 in the aftermath of the expedition. Each leader hosted a major peace-making ceremony in 1908 with their former enemies at each of their longhouses (Douglas 1909a: 29).

6.4.7 The beginning of the life of government

The theme of Tai Iwan's journeys to meet government recurs as a motif in the narrative and is a reflection of the narrator's own desire to act as a link between his village and government. The life of government came about with the end of warfare and the beginning of peace-making and it was widely recognized that this was an era of considerable change. In the narrative, Tai Iwan asked the tribes living in the headwaters to come down to the main river to enable the Kelabit who are dependent on others to take them along the main Baram River to catch boats

[106] Pun Nibu's account is not listed on the table as it is fragmentary in nature, but it is referred to in Appendix 19.

with greater ease from one settlement to the next. This presents a further extension of Tai Iwan's social world, which is enhanced through peace-making.

Tai Iwan set about peace-making on the main Baram river, despite the fact that there were disparaging voices speaking against him, indicating that it was not an easy task, as he faced critics. These people were branded as laggards, (*muwau)* as people who were lethargic and unable to do anything for themselves, and represented the opposite of Tai Iwan who was actively promoting peace by offering tobacco, making friends, extending the boundaries of *lun tauh* and increasing the extent of his reputation.

People at Pa Di'it grew a lot of tobacco and it was an important item of trade right until the 1970s when the Christian revival discouraged the cultivation and use of tobacco. Tobacco was not merely a ceremonial gift, used for socializing, but was used in rituals of blood brotherhood. The nature of the blood-brotherhood rituals varied from place to place with the reciprocal smoking, licking, sucking and the swallowing of blood. Blood was extracted by making a cut from the parties involved on the hand or forearm. It was placed on tobacco which was then rolled into a cigarette, and on occasion invocations were made to "their god and all the spirits of good and evil to be witness of this tie of brotherhood" St. John (1974a: 107). Then the parties involved would inhale the smoke of the tobacco that had been dipped in the blood of each of them, accompanied by invocations to the spirits, or the sprinkling of the blood of fowls and pigs on the parties involved. Such a pact was supernaturally binding for which any betrayal incurred supernatural sanctions (Rousseau 1990b:100).

For the Kelabit who wanted to travel to Marudi or visit relatives in the Krayan, the making of blood-brothers meant becoming adopted as brothers into a community (*palap dinganak*) (*sebila'*). Once this ritual had been undertaken, the whole longhouse would provide shelter, protection and the means for safe journeys. After these rituals, which took place between

individuals on their own terms, as the narrative explains, people lived peacefully. Relationships forged between families of blood brothers continued for subsequent generations, as many Kelabit will testify. For example, in the 1950s Tama Pasang, the headman of Long Peluan, had a blood-brother, Tama Ubong Ose, the Kenyah headman of Long Apu. Subsequently Tama Pasang called his son, Ose, in honour of his blood brother, and the families continue to stay in touch.

Trade flourished with peace-making and encouraged further visits to Marudi. Thus, Tai Iwan and his allies gained a high-profile and were requested to give tax in the form of wild rubber. The question comes to mind how did the Kelabit become so compliant and willing to pay tax? In other parts of Sarawak, their Iban counterparts on the border resisted paying taxes and rebelled against Brooke rule as they saw themselves as free Dayaks *(mardaheka Dayak)* beholden to nobody and had never paid tribute to the Malay Sultanates (Eilenberg 2012:77). This contrasts with the Kelabit view of government conveyed through the narrative as a source of life and protection (*ulun*) and as an exemplary centre.

Following on from this, the giving of taxes to the Brooke administration continued a tradition of offering rice or jungle produce decades previously to the representatives of the Brunei sultanate as a symbol of loyalty to their authority (Pringle 2010:162). The representatives of the Kelabit continue the custom today of giving rice to those at the head of government, such as Sarawak's Chief Minister or the Governor, "not to carry favour, but to make them part of us," as explained by one informant. The concept of taxation conveyed is not one of being forced to pay, but of something that is willingly given (*merey*). It represents a factor in the Kelabit view of collaboration with government, which will be further discussed in the concluding section with reference to the meanings of the narrator.

However, although I argue above that the Kelabit continued a tradition of tribute to Brunei in paying taxes, the historical record indicates that they were not initially compliant to Brooke rule. The Kelabit were the last tribe on the Baram to submit to Brooke rule, as by 1891 the Kayan and the Kenyah had accepted Brooke authority (Rousseau 1990:32). They began their submission as a consequence of the little documented first punitive expedition against them in 1892 led by Tama Bulan Wang from the Pata (Pratt-Barlow1893a: 30). He subsequently brought two Kelabit chiefs to meet the Rajah, (Pratt Barlow 1893b: 135) and this eventually led some 26 chiefs and a couple of thousand Kelabits to a peace-making in 1898 (Hose 1898: 121). Being very much in a minority, they had no choice but to accept the terms of Brooke rule. If households did not have the means to pay tax immediately, there was no pressure; payment was accepted later and tokens were accepted in the meantime. The first items of tax were in the form of shell bangles.[107] Eventually a very large group of Kelabit chiefs came to Marudi in 1898 for a peace-making: "Most of them have paid in their tax and those who could not this year paid $2 each a house as a 'tanda' and have promised to pay in full next year." The giving of tax was incorporated into *adat* and the rituals of peace-making:

> Native oaths to ensure peace were performed according to their customs in my presence by the killing of pigs. And after the tax had been paid in and they had expressed their wish to be loyal to the government (Hose 1898:121).

Giving taxes meant that the Kelabit were able to seek the assistance of government when they needed it. So when they went to Marudi in 1903 they paid tax and also reported their problems with attacks from the Krayan, and were in a position to solicit support for a counter-attack.[108]

[107] Tom Harrisson TH48/4 page 13. These were said have the same value as one dragon jar.
[108] It is important to note that for the purposes of enumeration for taxation, the hearth is considered a unit. The adopted notion of the household is based on the number of hearths; each hearth is considered a unit. This system is still used today for counting households in a settlement. Formerly, Kelabit longhouses were not divided into apartments, but each domestic

In addition, the Kelabit managed to sell rubber in Marudi. Hose "helped them sell their rubbers in the bazaar for the unusually high price of $105 a picul, which greatly surprised them when they found out what they could buy with the money" (Hose 1898:121). So the incentives to harvest wild rubber were not merely to secure the protection of government through giving tax, but also as a means of entering the cash economy. Thus, the government succeeded in aligning its own interests of increasing its rubber exports to meet the needs of the world economy with the interests of the upriver communities who needed practical objects such as cloth knives and axes and prestige ritual items such as jars, gongs and beads to maintain the standing or *doo'*-ness of their chiefs.

One of the objectives of requesting for the building a fort at Lio Mato was to make it easier for the up-river groups to pay their taxes. The return journey to Marudi from Pa Di'it would have taken at least two months, allowing for the sighting of omens and the vagaries of upriver rapids. Tai Iwan and Tingang are both on record as having asked for the fort[109]. A request to build a fort at Lio Matu was received in 1908 "from the Kalabit chiefs Tingang, Tuai Iwan and Galih Ballang in the head of the Bram, and the chiefs of the Leppu Asing and Saban tribes who live on the border line" (Douglas 1908b:156). The building of the fort is described in the next section.

6.4.8 The building of the fort at Lio Mato

According to the narrative, the making of the fort represented the beginning of "the life of government" on the Baram River. According to the official records, the making of the fort by

group gathered around a hearth. Today, the households are enumerated according to hearths rather than apartments or houses as a number of hearths can exist in one apartment or house

[109] Although Lian-Saging states that Tingang is the sole initiator of the request for the fort and the opening of the path Lio Mato (1976/77:185).

the people of the upper Baram and the Krayan was the consequence of a series of peace-making ceremonies between the tribes over the border and the Kelabit. Douglas receives a report in May 1908 that:

> …all Kalabits in Ulu Baram and the Leppu Asing and Saban tribes had held a meeting at the house of Tingang, the Kalabit chief and the Leppu Asing and the Sabans wished to tender allegiance to the Sarawak Government and they asked a fort to be built at Lio Mato (1908b:172).

This request had come about through delicate negotiations in the Krayan by a Ngurek chief, Sawa Lawi (also known as Aping Kuleh) and Wan Bayar, a Kayan chief (Clayre and Usat 1997:19).[110] In August of the same year, the Sa'ban and the Krayan leaders went down to Marudi where they were joined by some 3,000 Kayans and Kenyahs for major peace-making ceremonies (Douglas 1908c: 263).[111] What is significant and paradoxical is that Dun Kayan the man who shot Tama Kiyut, (see section 6.3.6 in the account told by Pendita Ramly) was in this group, and his descendants went on to have close ties with people in Long Peluan. It is said that the Krayan group and the Sa'ban continued to pay tax for two years and then when the Dutch came they paid their taxes to the Dutch (Clayre and Usat 1997: 19). In October of the same year, Douglas went to attend peace-makings in the highlands. He travelled first to Ballang Maran's village at Pun Mein, then to Tingang's village in Long Lemudoh. He collected tax and he met leaders from the Krayan who had been attacked in 1905 and then to Tai Iwan's house at

[110] Clayre and Usat (1997) do not attempt to link the transcription of their oral account within a time frame. I am estimating that their account relates to the 1908 peace-making in Marudi rather than the 1898 event. This is because the Sa'ban began paying their taxes for three years until the Dutch arrived because they thought they were part of Sarawak. This is in keeping with the narrative above and other sources (Topp and Eghenter 2005:77). The Dutch established a military post at Long Nawang 1911(Sellato 2002:26) and there was a Dutch military presence on the border under Captain Van Gusderen (Douglas 1912b: 101).

[111] According to entries in the Sarawak Gazette this took place on August 6, 1908, a month or so after the peacemaking held at Tingang's house.

Long Liit (Di'it) where he met representatives from Pa Ibang and Pa Assing.[112] However, he did not manage to meet all the enemy tribes. He had been warned at the outset of the expedition that the Brian[113] might attack (1909a: 30), and he noted that the people from Pa Bawan and the Uma Lim were absent.

According to Douglas, the reason why the Kelabit and the border tribes participated in peace-making was that they had witnessed the power of the government's forces in the 1905 expedition when "It was shown to the border tribes that they can no longer treat the Government's laws with impunity" (Douglas 1909a: 30). Such powerful attacks were used to force recalcitrant groups into submission (Deegan1973:130). An oral history describes what this meant for the Sa'ban who went to Marudi. Peace-making rituals involved the exchange of their war-cloaks, headdresses and scabbards with the Kenyah and Kayan. In return, they received gifts from their hosts and from the Brooke administration[114] (Clayre and Usat 1997:19).

Returning to the narrative, the actual building of the fort represents a collaborative effort of the Kelabit from the upper Kelapang, the Kenyah who had recently settled in the area, and the border tribes from Pa Tera, Pa Orang, Long Popong and Long Budong. They came together in networks of combined allegiance and kinship, which represented the beginning of the "life of government," with the physical making of the fort, which was the symbol of Brooke government, being recognized as the source of authority and power. Thus, the centre of power

[112] Douglas mentions his visit to the peace-making in his article of 1912, but omits to mention his visit to Tai Iwan's house and Long Di'it.
[113] Brian is a collective term for the Apad Wat people in Long Bawan and Lembudud in Dutch Borneo.
[114] The Sa'ban state that Tuan Adem was the representative of the British government (Clayre and Usat 1997: 19). This suggests that the Sa'ban may have gone to Marudi when C.H Adams was serving as a cadet officer in Marudi in 1909 (Batty-Smith 1999:24).

through the agency of Tai Iwan shifted from Marudi to Lio Mato, and this was where people went to give their taxes and to trade at the *tamu* (the market) .

The first forts were built by James Brooke and represented the first phase of government in the interior, with a view of controlling significant points of rivers. The first fort was initiated in 1849 at the junction of the Skrang and Batang Lupar rivers by the supporters of Sharif Matusain their leader in order to control the movement of war parties downriver and the movement of trade items such as salt going up river (Pringle 2010:86). So the idea of the construction of a fort together by people from neighbouring settlements was not a new one. What is of interest is that all the border tribes from the Krayan contributed to the building and gave taxes for the succeeding two years until the arrival of the Dutch (Clayre and Usat 1997:19). This testifies to the power of the Brooke administration and the manner by which it was reflected in leaders such as Tai Iwan and Tingang who were loyal to the Brookes.

The Sa'ban remember that it was at this time that they started to use iron axes for cutting wood, which would have made considerable difference to their efficiency in farming, cutting trees and their carpentry.[115] In fact, the fort was built under the supervision of Bua Hassan, a Brunei Malay trader, who was contracted to build it for $500 on the understanding that the Kayans and Kenyah would supply the timber (Douglas 1909c:89). In June 1909, all the able-bodied men were working on the fort (Douglas 1909d:158). The official date for the completion of the fort is gazetted as 1911.The fort was rebuilt in 1918, using much of the original building material (Leh and Datan 1997:4). Bua Hassan was the go-between for the Resident and the upriver tribes. He collected taxes and sent reports to Marudi. He finished his career with a year in jail for corruption (Adams 1919:223)**.**

[115] Personal communication with Paulus Balan.

The building of the fort was on condition that the Kelabit would move downriver and this marks the time that people moved to settle in Long Peluan. They "have promised to move downriver if the fort is built to within a day's walk from it and the Kenyahs in the Upper Baram have arranged to move out of the tributaries" (Douglas 1908a:156). The decision to move downriver was controversial. It is said that Tai Iwan as Wakil Penghulu[116] was supportive of the government proposal to move down to Lio Matu, but this was challenged by the defrocked Penghulu Tingang (Lian-Saging 1976/77:182), and Galih Balang who did not wish to leave his salt springs (ibid.:183). Galih Balang had many supporters because many Southern Kelabit were indebted to his payments of blood ransom to their former enemies. Thus, they did not follow Tai Iwan's relatives, who eventually went to Long Peluan (Talla 1979:116).

In the meantime, the first settlers, Araya Ajin who had married Araya Keao's sister, Seraya Aleang, and Seraya Aleang's sisters moved to Long Peluan. Araya Ajin went to Long Peluan, to be closer to the protection of the government because he had been involved in a head-hunting fight with Adang from over the border. That was reported to have taken place in 1911. (See oral accounts of his fight and the record of event in the *Sarawak Gazette* in Appendix 22). Eventually Araya Keao also moved to Long Peluan. He is considered the first chief of Long Peluan and his daughter Keling was the wife of So Tepun and the mother of Malian the narrator.

It is interesting to note that the narrator states that Tingang is made Penghulu by the *people* rather than by the government, reflecting an attitude of autonomy and self-government. This is perhaps why Tai Iwan, Tingang, Balang Maran are remembered as Penghulu by their communities even though there are no official records to support their appointment. The narrative states Tingang was Penghulu for a short time which is supported by the fact that

[116] As already argued, the designation of Tai Iwan was a Wakil Penghulu is problematic. See Appendix 1.

reports of Tingang's tenure as a chief does not go beyond 1912 when Owen visited him (Owen 1919a:107). As Talla notes, succession did not go straight to Raja Umong, as narrated above. Tingang handed over his leadership to his son Bato Tingang as late as 1931, which suggests a longer tenure than indicated in the above narrative. Bato Tingang died a year later and his older brother Paran Aling Tingang took over, but died in 1933. Penghulu Tingang's remaining young son Miri' was then selected for grooming for leadership and was installed and became known as Raja Umong (Talla 1979:119).

Malian Tepun's account states that Tai Iwan was Penghulu before Tingang. This differs from Lian-Saging (1976/77) and Talla's (1979) accounts. According to both Lian-Saging (1976/77:182) and Talla (1979:114) Tingang was made Penghulu in 1902 by Hose after the 1898 Peace Conference. Tingang was then defrocked because he made a head- hunting raid into Dutch Borneo. Talla also relates that Tai Iwan was made Wakil-Penghulu in Tingang's place and was unpopular because he did not have the support of the Pa Main people. This is because they were indebted to one of their community, Galih Balang, who had paid fines on their behalf. Tingang was later reinstated and in 1931 passed his title to his son Bato Tingang and it later went to another son, who also died young. Tingang's grandson, Raja Umong, who was also known as Penghulu Miri was installed in 1939 (ibid.:114-122).

All these variations in accounts demonstrate that different kin-groups had different versions of the stories of their leaders. In my view, it cannot be doubted that Tingang was a prominent chief, and it is recorded that he went to Marudi with Tai Iwan in 1899 (Douglas1900:19) and he later went to report to Hose about problems in the Krayan (Hose:1903a:107). Like Tai Iwan, he performed the function of a Penghulu in that he kept the Resident informed of any necessary incidents affecting his community. Like the other chiefs

Balang Maran and Tai Iwan he was present at the peace-making ceremonies in the highlands in 1908 and Owen visited him in 1912 before going on to visit Tai Iwan (Owen 1919a:107).

However, there is a problem regarding the claim of conferral of Penghulu status in 1902, as stated by Lian -Saging (1976/77:182). This comes from an oral source, Henry Jalla, but it is puzzling that an oral source indicates a date of 1902 with no concomitant events that commemorate the occasion. Lian-Saging (ibid.) has become hugely influential and this date is quoted by Talla (1979:114) and Bulan (2011:105). There is a lack of written official documentation to support such a claim. Resident Hose, who was based in Marudi until 1904, stated that the Baram Penghulus were two Kayans, one Kenyah and one Sebop (Hose and McDougall 1993: 272). There is no written evidence that Tingang, Tai Iwan or Balang Maran were made Penghulus as they are not referred to by this title in the *Sarawak Gazette* reports. Only two Kelabit chiefs in this period are referred to by their Penghulu title; Penghulu Ili Bawang from the Upper Tutoh River (Douglas 1906c:238) and Penghulu Libut from the Akah River (King 1908:40). Neither is there any official evidence that the Kelabit chief Tingang was defrocked at this time[117] and replaced by Tai Iwan as his deputy as suggested by Talla (1979:114) and Lian- Saging (1976/77:182). This is because the post of *wakil* (deputy) Penghulu was not established at that time. It was first created after the Japanese Occupation by the Colonial government at the request of Penghulu Lawai to establish himself as the dominant chief in the highlands and to diminish the status and power of the other Kelabit chiefs (Appendix 2). Finally, as argued in Section 6.4.6, there is a strong case to be made that the Kelabit Tingang has become confused with the Kenyah Penghulu Aban Tingang.

[117] As the *Kenyah* Penghulu Aban Tingang was demoted in 1907, there may be confusion between these accounts. There are reports of a Kelabit called Tingang being in trouble with the authorities in 1892 for the murder of 7 Kenyah, (Ewart 2009: 237), but there are no references to him being given the status of Penghulu at this time either.

The prominence of Tingang in previous accounts of Kelabit history mean that the presence of Tai Iwan has become sidelined as it is claimed that Tingang was the first Penghulu and led the attack on Pa Ibang. It is stated that Tingang is the host of peace making, opening a new route out of the highlands, asking the other groups to move onto the main river and leading the making of the fort at Lio Matu. However, there is no point in negating the collective memory of Tingang's achievements, as he was a prominent chief at the time of peacemaking and his name comes up with that of Tai Iwan in the Gazette reports requesting the fort.

Nonetheless, this narrative presents a further perspective from another source that attributes these achievements to Tai Iwan, who is also often mentioned alongside Tingang in the official accounts. Finally, there is a strong case for Tai Iwan as the first Penghulu of Long Di'it, which is supported by the oral traditions of So Tepun and Malian Tepun. They state that his father, Raja Ubong, was appointed a Raja (Appendix 21). Moreover, there is also a *benging* or cradle song, celebrating both Raja Ubong and his son Tai Iwan, as the first Penghulu, which would reinforce his position and power. This was sung by Pun Nibu, a great-nephew of Tai Iwan, whose ancestry can be traced back to Pa Di'it:

> …Those who initiated a better life installed Ta'i Ewan as the original Penghulu,
> the great Penghulu charged with keeping the law.
> As the great Penghulu charged with keeping the law, that is the origin of people not attacking each other with spears
> They laid down their spears, they didn't spear each other any more
> That was the beginning of people living in peace.
> People lived happily
> The people lived happily, the Krayan too lived in peace
> The Berian also came to live together with us
> They came to live together
> Everybody was happy
> That was the beginning of people living in peace.[118]

[118] Translated and transcribed by in 2007 by Monica Janowski and Jeffery Malang.(See Appendix 21) and for a 2008 performance of the song, see YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nEJIvCYzqM

This memory of the era of Tai Iwan as Penghulu as being associated with the era of peace-making is also supported by Ribuh Balang, an elder from the southern Kelabit longhouse of Pa Mada, interviewed in 2011. In his words:

> There was an appointment letter surat kanun given to Tai Iwan. All the longhouse chiefs nominated Tai Iwan and he became the Penghulu and they gave him one flag. They were told 'No more fighting now. Don't hit and punch people. Your long fighting swords are not to be used.'

So in the memory of some, Tai Iwan was the first Penghulu, the bearer of the flag, and is remembered as being responsible for bringing peace to the Kelabit.

6.4.9 Our people the founders of our longhouse

The theme of the alliance with the Ngurek returns to the narrative, linking Aping Nyipa with the Bilong Salo', father of Araya Ajin. This demonstrates how kinship provides further impetus for the migration to Long Peluan, which was on the route out of the highlands, and enabled closer relationships to develop between the Ngurek and the Kelabit. Eventually, Aping Nyipa's nephew, Ngau Langat married Bulan, grand-daughter of Araya Ajin and settled in Long Peluan. People at Long Peluan say that the Ngurek at Long Semiyang provided hospitality and boats for their Kelabit relatives bound for trading journeys to Marudi. They also came to Long Peluan to help at harvest time, particularly when their own supplies of rice were running short.

There is general agreement with the narrative among all Kelabit, Sa'ban and Penan sources that the first person to come to the area was Sat Laeng with two other men from the Bahau River (Araya Laweng and Araya Oyan) some time at the beginning of the twentieth century. He first came for a short while as if he were on an extended hunting trip. Before reviewing Egay's (2009) critique of Murang's outline of Sat Laeng's life (1989), it is useful to consider a reconstruction of his life, which has emerged from a range of different sources. A very useful

informant was Selon Bulieng, a Sa'ban who was born in 1928, according to her Malaysian identity card. She migrated from the Bahau to Long Puak as a very young girl, at the same time as Sat Laeng's second journey.

He was a Kelabit from Pa Di'it. He went to live with the Sa'ban, because his parents died early. He stayed with his relatives in Pa Atang, Pa Upun.[119] He was possibly with the group of Sa'ban who went to the Marudi peacemaking in 1908,[120] who on their return to the Bahau, saw the fertility of the upper Kelapang and thought it would be a good place to settle (see Clayre and Usat 1997:19).[121]He came to Long Peluan to get away from the complications of a love affair with the wife of Lang Tajit. Consequently, he had lost one of his ears in a fight.[122] He arrived in Long Peluan after breaking his journey at Long Di'it, with two elderly bachelors, Araya Oyan[123] and Araya Laweng. They did not settle and plant padi initially, but foraged and hunted in the area for about a year in the company of Penan. They eventually all returned to the Bahau. Sat Laeng married Hnan Lujok and brought her to Long Peluan.[124]He was welcomed by Araya Keao.[125] He had left the Bahau at the same time as Selong Buleng who was under seven years old at the time. They were part of a group from the Bahau who came to live in Long Peluan at the suggestion of Kiai, an early Long Peluan resident, who had visited his ancestral home in the Bahau to bring back the bones of his deceased son, Tingang, from Long Peluan for death rites and secondary burial in the Bahau.[126]

[119] This is supported by Pian Lemulun.
[120] This information sets his arrival later than suggested by Murang who estimated he came about 1900 (1989:187).
[121] He is said to have been with the group who went for the peacemaking in Marudi in1908 according to Paulus Balan, son of Balang Usat.
[122] Balang Usat (n.d.) and interview with Supang, mother of Tama Ken, Long Banga.
[123] An ancestor of Mengah Tepun of Long Peluan.
[124] Selon Bulieng.
[125] Selon Bulieng, Ose Murang (1989:187).
[126] Selon Bulieng. a Sa'ban from Long Puak.

According to sources, Sat Laeng stayed at Long Peluan for three years; others say it might be ten years. It is unlikely to be ten years because he had not cultivated any land for farms or left behind old farm sites (*amug*).[127]Sat Laeng went to live and farm from time to time in Long Pulong.[128] They had two sons, Jungan and Lo Jok, who left *amug* (fallow land) at Ra'an Banga next to Tama Tasan. Lo Jok married Sigang sister of Sina Puyang. They had no children and they lived at Long Puak.[129] When Sat Laeng found out that Lang Tajit had arrived with Labang's father, he was scared. So he left Long Peluan and returned to Pi Atang to stay with Araya Aya. He died in Pi Atang.[130] Other people say he died in Long Peluan and was buried at the cemetery at the Peluan river mouth.[131] Another person says Sat Laeng died around 1950 at Long Banga while their longhouse was located at Long Arol Ra'a, on the opposite bank downriver to the present site of the school.[132]

My purpose is to summarize Egay's arguments and set them against the wider view of this reconstruction of Sat Laeng's life. Firstly, As Egay rightly notes, Murang's account is confused as the latter indicates that Sat Laeng was the *first* person to come to the area yet *later* says that Sat Laeng was welcomed to settle in the area by Araya Keao, suggesting the latter had arrived earlier. Egay emphasizes that his informants denied that Araya Keao welcomed Sat Laeng to settle in Long Peluan, stating that there was no one else living in the area at the time of his arrival (Egay 2009:142). However, Egay's argument overlooks the fact that Sat Laeng moved around between places as indicated above. He came first on a short trip to the Long Peluan area with Araya Oyan and Araya Laweng and then he returned to the Bahau then came back to Long

[127] Sina Jau.
[128] Ose Murang (1989:187).
[128] Selon Bulieng.
[129] Selon Bulieng.
[130] Sina Jau.
[131] Malian Tepun, Selon Bulieng.
[132] Selon Bulieng.

Peluan at the time when Araya Keao was headman. This was testified by Selon Bulieng, who migrated as a very young girl, on Sat Laeng's second journey. Thus, Egay's informants, who did not recognize the authority of Araya Keao in Long Peluan (ibid.:143) are unlikely to be familiar with the early history of leadership in the area because the majority of Sa'ban are newcomers, having migrated into the area after the time of Araya Keao's leadership.

Secondly, Egay argues that Murang's "Kelabit" version of Sa'ban history is "not accidental" and a "distortion", and is biased towards Kelabit dominance in the area, as Araya Keao was a Kelabit founding headman and the ancestor of the leaders of Long Peluan, headman Malian Tepun and the late Penghulu Aran Tuan. This bias may be the case, but Murang acknowledges his sources by name, something that Egay fails to do and he states that Araya Keao's son-in-law, So Tepun is one of Murang's informants. Further to this, Murang recognizes the Sa'ban contestation of the regional leadership of the Kelabit in the area (Murang 1989:189).

Egay implies that Murang, as a Kelabit, is presenting a view of Sa'ban history that is a "distortion." His argument is setting Kelabit and Sa'ban narratives in opposition to one another, yet this view is not in accordance with local ideas of identity. Since the founding of Long Peluan, all its members in one way or another are related to Sa'ban, even its leaders. Indeed, in the 1980s many Sa'ban, on migrating to Miri or Kuching called themselves Kelabit. The question arises, whether Egay as a trained researcher, has superior authority of the subject using a Sa'ban focus group than Murang, who has lived in the area since childhood, close to his Sa'ban relatives, and who knows and cites his informants.

Thirdly, Egay misreads Murang's text when refuting that Sat Laeng went to Long Pulong as Murang states Sat Laeng *occasionally* moved to Long Pulong (Long Banga) where other Sa'bans had settled. Murang is highlighting the fluidity in Sat Laeng's residence arrangements as he farmed and resided in both places, according to where he and his wife's kin were at the

time. This is not an unusual practice. This notion of movement is evident in Malian's narrative as he suggests that Sat Laeng and his companions initially did not stay for long. This idea of fluidity of domicile is part of the bigger picture of the reconstruction of the life of Sat Laeng, which I put together above, through a number of sources as response to Egay's critique.

Returning to the narrative, the settlement was initially established by 24 people, a brother, Araya Ajin, and three sisters and their offspring.[133] It is not clear why the names of their husbands are not recited with this founding group. Perhaps they had to stay back and maintain farms single-handedly in their former settlement, at Pa Di'it. The transition of moving between settlements took time because the forest had to be cleared to plant padi in Long Peluan. The pioneering families relied on the relay of supplies from Pa Di'it by the younger group of strong young men who were assisting them. It was a three-day journey each way.

The headman-narrator's knowledge of genealogies and the early settlers is further related to his detailed knowledge of the landscape around the village and his authority and judgment in land matters relating to which areas were farmed by whose descendants and left fallow in which area. This knowledge is a key to solving the many land-disputes which the community faces as mentioned in Chapter 4, Section 4.3.

The narrator sets a time frame for the founding of Long Peluan, implying this is at the time of the transition from Brunei to Brooke rule, which would be around 1883 when the Baram was ceded by Brunei to Sarawak. At first glance, this seems like a major anomaly because the episodes of the narrative suggest the founding of Long Peluan took place during Brooke rule, after the 1908 peace-making in the highlands and in Marudi, and after the completion of the fort at Lio Mato in 1911. This would also be the correct time for the arrival of Araya Ajin and

[133] See Appendix 6.

his family, as his murder of Adang was reported in that year[134]. Looking at history from a Kelabit perspective, in terms of episodes, the Kelabit would remember markers of the transition to Brooke power, such as peace-making in the highlands, when Douglas, the first Brooke officer, visited, and the building of the fort which symbolized the presence of the government. Thus, the narrator states that the establishment of Long Peluan took place during the surrender of Brunei to the Brookes, the official date of which is 1883, yet from the sequence of episodes in the narrative, this is estimated to be 1911. This time gap becomes reduced if time is considered in terms of episodes and if the effects of Brooke rule were not felt until people began to engage with the government in peace-making and the establishment of the fort.

6.5 Discussion: the Meaning-Making of the Narrator

The messages that the narrator conveys throughout the narrative are expressed firstly through the actions of the hero Tai Iwan as an exemplary leader, who collaborates with government at every opportunity, reflecting positively back on Malian as his grandson and headman. Secondly, meanings are conveyed through the voice of the narrator.

Malian opens the narrative with a recital of a genealogy of leaders, establishing his powerful pedigree, his credentials as leader and narrator and the breadth of his social world. He recalls seven generations of leadership, something quite exceptional given that most Kelabit only can recall two and a very few might go up to five or six generations. He follows on with his own philosophy of leadership; to put the needs of the community first at all times, echoing the notion that the leader is responsible for those who are dependent on him in the same way as parents looks after their children (Deegan1973: 130, Janowski 1991:278). Such ideas are also influenced by a Christian value system, highlighting service to others, which is a contemporary

[134] See section 6.4.8 and Appendix 22 for details of the murder of Adang by Araya Ajin.

index of *doo'*-ness. Furthermore, the use of the Malay word *korban,* sacrifice, recalls the Christian values of the Kelabit audience, as the idea of sacrificing and denying the self for others recurs in church teaching, often delivered in Bahasa Malaysia. In addition, the values of humility and a lack of self-interest are inherent in the declaration of not being particularly wealthy, reinforcing indices of *doo'*-ness. He also complies with a convention in the presentation of the narrative that the narrator will engage in self-deprecation to protect himself.[135] He also conveys a notion of leadership that is protective of his followers, by expressing a duty of care, which is in keeping with models of leadership in Southeast Asia (Anderson1972:22, Andaya 1997:198).

The theme of Tai Iwan's journeys to meet government recurs as a motif in the narrative, in his quest for *ulun perintah* (the life of government). Tai Iwan was given the flag to take back as a potent symbol of his allegiance to *perintah* (government) which represents a further extension of his social world. The audience will be able to easily recall the presence of the flag outside Malian's section of the longhouse a symbol of his own authority and presence as a representative of government. This reflects the narrator's role as a headman to act as a link between his village and government. Travelling to the seat of power was important for elders who were leaders, and a significant means of maintaining their standing or *doo'*-ness. Elders who travelled to Marudi always banded around the phrase "*umak opis D.O."* meaning they had set foot in the District Office, and that they had dealings with the District Officer or his staff. The outcome of such contact was an increased association with the locus of power and access to knowledge, and to powerful people that others may not have. Malian, as a headman, is familiar with this practice as he makes a point of routinely seeking assistance and advice from

[135] Stephanie Morgan: personal communication.

those in power in government offices, such as the Resident's office and the Agriculture office when he goes to Miri.

There is a further purpose in the journeys to Marudi of the hero, Tai Iwan. He is seeking the value of *ulun perintah,* peace. The idea of peace recurs in the narrative; when Tai Iwan reports the problems of warfare from the tribe over the border to the Pengiran in Marudi, he is requested to tell everyone on his way back "to put an end to fighting and quarrelling." The use of the word "quarrelling" is suggestive of the experience of contemporary discord in the longhouse. In turn, the association with promoting peace enhances the reputation of Tai Iwan as leader and widens his social world, extending the breadth of *lun tauh* (our people) through blood-brotherhood. The Pengiran makes an exhortation for reconciliation, peace, or forgiveness (*pedoo'*), which is important to the Kelabit at two levels. *Pedoo'* is familiar to contemporary Christian Kelabit. As churchgoers, they seek forgiveness and reconciliation, as a means of healing and church leaders mediate to settle disputes. Another meaning of *pedoo',* reconciliation, is at the climax of the Kelabit traditional code of dispute resolution through the native court, which is presided over by the headmen and the Penghulu (Bulan 2005:105). The idea of becoming reconciled is in line with the elimination of conflict and the importance of living in consensus in the longhouse and as a value that predated Christianity.

At a later point, the narrator emphasizes the unquestioning whole-hearted compliance of the villagers in providing food for the expedition, something that he wishes his listeners to take note of. His message is that the community should respond to whatever the elders request them to do, rather than contest or question.

When he narrates that Aban Jau indicates a reluctance to move his longhouse at the request of the government, there is an underlying moral that Malian relays to his listeners; "they couldn't go against the government." This conveys the sense that the government is an ultimate

power that cannot be fought against. The assertion reflects Malian's own philosophy as headman in dealing with difficult situations. When logging companies entered their area in 1995, his strategy was not to oppose them, as he knew were sanctioned by government, but to negotiate for the logging road to reach the longhouse, and for a section of communal forest in the area to be preserved. In 1995, he and his brother, Penghulu Aran Tuan, walked for two days to Long Metapah to talk to the manager of the logging company. They eventually went on a longer journey to meet company staff in Sibu and Miri. The presence of logging initially caused conflict and mistrust between Malian, Aran Tuan and the people of the local communities. Aran Tuan remembered the argument he had with his Penan neighbours in Long Beruang:

> You can't fight them. If you go deep into a hole, they will still find you. You can't hide from them they will search for you, they use satellites, they will come in a helicopter, and they can catch you. How can you look after your children then?

They faced opposition not just from the Penan, but from their own relatives in Long Peluan and Long Banga. "It was very difficult, people criticized us for not asking for this and that and that people called me names behind my back," recalled Aran Tuan. Critics proposed alternative ways of dealing with the issue, such as confronting the logging companies with blockades. However, these proposed tactics failed to materialize. Opposition was eventually diffused when the logging road reached the area and cash flowed in through employment in road building and logging, and opportunities to sell food to the logging camp.

Thus, in the view of Malian, as a headman, the "life of government" is to be accepted rather than contested and this is a message that he wishes to convey to his audience in spite of the challenges faced by the community. Similarly, when Tai Iwan goes peace-making, he turns a deaf ear to laggards who criticize him. Such people are unable to do anything for themselves and they represent the opposite of everything Tai Iwan and Malian stand for. Malian is a government man. *Perintah* (government) is a powerful force to be collaborated with, rather than

contested, and this is further reflected by Malian's membership of the government political party PBB, together with many longhouse members.

6.6 Summary

So the message for his listeners is interwoven through the episodes of the narrative, in order to assert the value of *ulun perintah* (the life of government) in longhouse communities where decision-making and ultimate survival rely on consensus and the unity of *lun tauh* (our people). The opposite of consensus, disagreement, prevents people from working together and leads to them leaving the longhouse. Harmonious relations are needed to keep the society together in accordance with the customary law or *adet* (Bulan 2008:156). This ideal of harmony within the longhouse is a common goal within the hill-tribes of Southeast Asia. For example, both the Wana and the Luwu of Sulawesi encourage their communities to foster unity, and to get along with each other, "to follow together". This is because transgressions of the *adat,* which is the regulator of harmony and balance in the community, can bring about disaster (Errington 1989:294). The narrator's underlying message is for reconciliation and peace within the longhouse, as everyone is descended from the same founder and everyone is related to one another. To sum up, the concept of *lun tauh* (our people) is consolidated and maintained through the values that are generated through peace-making as the social world of Tai Iwan extends along the banks of the Baram and to the Krayan in Dutch Borneo.

CHAPTER 7

THE BEGINNING OF "THE LIFE OF PRAYER"

7.1 Introduction

The first two Long Peluan narratives trace warfare, and the making of alliances through *lun tauh,* (our people), and the end of warfare and head-hunting and the making of peace. These occurred in the era before the arrival of the Brooke regime. These developments reinforce the value system of the *lun tauh* and extend their social world. The fort was built by *lun tauh,* (our people) from across frontiers and symbolized the life of government and peace. They built the fort, which drew in people from across the border and symbolized the life of government and peace. As a consequence of peace, Tai Iwan and his allies established the longhouse of Long Peluan on a route that brought the Kelabit closer to the fort at Lio Mato. The third narrative continues with the theme of a new era of change with the seeking of Christianity in Dutch Borneo by Tai Iwan's son, So Tepun, which took place in the late 1930s. The second part of the narrative deals with the conversion of the longhouse and the neighbouring Penan. This era is called *ulun sembayang* (the life of prayer) and is discussed in terms of a positive change, a new life, (*ulun nuk beruh*) and a life "that is very, very, good" (*ulun suk leng leng doo'*). This is the focus for this chapter.

The chapter begins with a summary of the narrative. The translation of the narrative will be presented in section 7.3 of this chapter, and the analysis and commentary in 7.4. The transcription is in Appendix 23. The background to this era of change, the beginning of evangelical Christianity in Borneo will be dealt with at the introduction to the commentary in 7.4, which focusses on aspects of change that are mentioned by the narrator. The second part of the commentary reviews the literature on the transition of the Penan from a nomadic to a

settled life, highlighting the potential contribution of this narrative to the gap in understanding of the role of neighbours and of Christianity in the transition. Finally, Section 7.5 concentrates on the significance of *ulun sembayang*, (the life of prayer) in relation to a relevant wider literature related to Christian conversion and change. This leads to a discussion of continuities which persist, through the value system that reinforces the sociality of *lun tauh* (our people) and also reinforces a deeper sense of cultural identity and rootedness, despite claims of breaking with the past and rupture (Sahlins 2005, Robbins 2005).

7.2 Summary of the Narrative

Malian, as narrator, outlines how his father, So Tepun, went to seek out Christianity in the Krayan River area of Dutch Borneo and how he arranged for an Indonesian missionary to come and teach people about Christianity and prayer. He discusses how people gave up the chants and rituals of observing omen birds and animals and how they were asked to stop drinking *borak*, rice beer. He explains that not everyone converted at once and that he and others in turn evangelized to the Penan, and how they became settled neighbours at Long Beruang, helping the Kelabit to carry government officials' goods and letters from downriver into the highlands. He also includes details of places of settlement and boundaries between the two communities.

7.3 Translation of the Third Narrative

7.3.1 Opening of the narrative

This story is about two of our ancestors who were concerned about our livelihood on earth before there was peace in this land. First, there was Tai Iwan, who appreciated that the life of government is about peace; where people become reconciled to each other; and do not fight

against each other. This is the story of Tai Iwan. He had a son, So Tepun, also known as Bayo Iwan. So Tepun came to know about Christianity, in those days known as "the life of prayer."

In the beginning people said, "There is a life of prayer." People said, "It's to be found in Pa Krayan. If we become Christians, our lives will be full of happiness. We will no longer follow any omens. We will no longer quarrel; we will do away with all the bad practices that we used to observe such as charms, drinking rice beer, all those things that cause us to quarrel. Even smoking, it's of no use to us."

7.3.2 Life before Christianity: observing omens

Before, the spiderhunter was a part of peoples' lives. There is a bird called the spiderhunter. When you are walking and the spiderhunter flies in front of you from right to left, it is a good day to continue with your journey and it's not necessary to abandon your plan. However, if it flies to the right, you have to stop and abandon your plan for the day.

There are other animals associated with omens that when you see them they stop people from carrying out any activities, such as farming. Even at the time of harvesting, if you see a civet cat or any omen creatures you have to abandon the harvest. The same goes for your house. If a snake enters your house you will have to move and vacate your house. Another trusted omen is the eagle that flies high in the sky.

7.3.3 The new path to the Krayan

That is why So Tepun thought to himself, "How do we go about in search of this life, the life that people say is very, very good, *ulun suk leng leng doo'*?"

I was very young at that time, so was Araya Mengah.[136] I was young. I wasn't carrying a scabbard with a machete yet.

So Tepun said, "Let us go. Let us go to Krayan".

We went. We didn't follow the usual footpath. He took us towards the source of the Bale River. We didn't follow the footpath just like Tai Iwan. Tai Iwan when he searched for a new life, he didn't follow any footpath. He walked through the forest. That's how So Tepun took us.

Mengah asked himself, "Why did he take us through the forest and not along the footpath?"

We spent three nights along the way before we reached Batu Patong. When we arrived Batu Patong, as was the custom of that time, the village gave So Tepun a very warm welcome with a lot of rice beer. We stayed a night or two nights in each village. We stayed longer and took our time to continue on with our journey to the Krayan. We didn't know what they were doing because we were too young to understand. We were just accompanying him.

7.3.4 At the school at Long Budong

In those days, the school at Long Budong was the biggest school there. So Tepun had discussions with the teachers,[137] while the two of us, Mengah and myself, were playing with the children. The late Pun Isak and others such as Kalip studied at this school.

In the meantime, So Tepun asked the pastor to come to Long Peluan to teach the people to become Christians. After the discussions were over, we came home. So Tepun came to an

[136] Mengah Tepun was Malian Tepun's cousin. He went with him on the journey to Long Budong and would have been around 14 years old, as he was born in 1925 and died in 2011 at the age of 86.

[137] The teachers were also pastors.

understanding with the pastor regarding the month when he was expected to come to Long Peluan.

7.3.5 Guru Tunip and conversion in Long Peluan

A pastor at Long Budong at that time was Guru Tunip. He was the one invited to Long Peluan. As soon as we got back, So Tepun prepared rice beer for a big feast. Many jars of rice beer were seen arranged in the house. People from Batu Patong were among the guests invited to attend. Many relatives came for the feast of rice beer. While they were feasting, Guru Tunip arrived from Long Budong with other guests.

7.3.6 Getting rid of enemy skulls and charms

When Guru Tunip arrived, he started to teach the people about the life of prayer, teaching them how to pray to get rid of their charms. The things that people got rid of are old enemy skulls, charms like thunder teeth, *lipan pera'it*[138]. There were many things to throw away. They were thrown on to the bank on the other side of the river.

7.3.7 Ngalibun Tepun resists conversion

Guru Tunip got our people to join in the life of prayer.

The late Ngalibun Tepun,[139] the cousin of So Tepun objected, "Why do you choose to follow such customs that are not appropriate, you will lose the customs of our ancestors."

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[138] See Sellato (1996), Janowski and Barton (2012), Okushima and Akiyama (2014) for more on these stone adzes, know as thunder teeth.

[139] Also known as Anye' Loong. He was born in Batuh Patong where he lived in his youth, with his first wife Dayang Ibuh, of Remudu, who is also known as Bulan Sorai. The couple had no children and eventually separated. After this, he went to Pa Nar on the Bahau River in Dutch Borneo and married Song Aya, a Sa'ban. He went to live in Long Peluan in the 1930s to live close to his first cousins. He was eventually widowed and married his third wife, a widow from Long Banga, Seraya Bungan. He died in the 1970s. He is remembered as a tall man with a

But this elder, Ngalibun, was a nice old man, and over time people became Christians.

7.3.8 People became happy

After that, people knew the goodness of being Christians. People are happy. They no longer have any taboos; people no longer stop when they hear sounds or see certain animals. There are no longer any ritual prohibitions. People who become Christians are very happy with their life and their beliefs.

7.3.9 Processes of conversion

We were the first to follow God; people in Pa Dalih and Long Dano were later than us. We were the first to believe in God. Long Banga was also later. We were the first to believe in God because So Tepun is the one who went to search for the life of God. People in Indonesia were the first to know about God, people in Long Pupong, Long Budong, Pa Dalan and Pa Urang. In Long Budong there was a big school where people were taught about becoming Christian. That's the beginning of how people became Christians. That is why up to this day, the late Tai Iwan and So Tepun can be compared as examples in embracing new ways of life, (*ulun nuk beruh*), that we now follow. Now, many people become pastors, teachers and missionaries, because we believe in God. Like Pendita Lalong (Kenneth Nightingale), Pendita Maripa (Ian Belcher), Tuan Sapu, (Hudson Southwell) came later to preach to us. That's how we came to believe in God.

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strong loud presence in the longhouse, firmly grounded in the old traditions. He was the last man in Long Peluan to still wear a loincloth, and he used to relate stories of the past in the longhouse in the evenings. As the last survivor of the generation of headhunters, he had a fearsome reputation, which extended as far as the Krayan area over the Indonesian border and there is a widely circulated *lakuh* song about him, relating how his first wife Dayang left him because of his exuberant hospitality and his capacity for drinking *borak*.

It is from here that we went along the Baram to preach because we were the earlier believers in God. That's why I am telling the story of these two ancestors who wholeheartedly went out to search for a life where people can live happily and to the people; both the life of government and the life of God. The two of them were the first to go and search for this good life (*ulun nuk doo*'), that we now follow.

7.3.10 Encountering the Penan

After we had been Christian for a long time we had big prayer gatherings called *Irau Rayeh.* There were Penan who lived deep in the primary forest who shied away from us because they were scared. In the past, the Penan were different, they were not aware of a world beyond themselves. When they saw us they would move out of the way to avoid meeting us. If you want them to come and meet you then you call "*sigup sigup*" (meaning "we have tobacco here for you"). This is to win their confidence. Those who had the courage to meet us were Loi Juman and Belare Jabu. Over time, the big prayer meetings were very well attended. People would come from Lio Matu and from Bario. When the big prayer meetings were held elsewhere, we too would go there. That's how the Penan became familiar with us.

7.3.11 Tama Lawai Lahang preaches to the Penan

And so, So Tepun spoke to Loi and Balare, "If you want to believe in God, then I will send someone to teach you." And so Tama Lawai Lahang was asked to go and preach to them in the mountainous forest by the headwaters of the Ano River. Ma'ad Tepun from Long Peluan accompanied him. Gradually, the Penan came closer and closer to our village.

The late So asked them, "Are you ready to make a village and build houses like us? If you build houses, your life will be easier. If there are no wild boar, no shoots what are you going to live on? Spend your time farming, plant tapioca that will sustain you, come and learn!"

7.3.12 The Penan begin to settle at Giam Kasi

"Okay, that's good, we are keen," said the late Loi and Balare.

"Alright, since you are keen where do you want to be?" asked SoTepun.

Balare replied, "We are more familiar with the Balong River."

"If the Balong River is where you're familiar then that's where you should go. I will ask Tama Lawai Lahang to go there and teach you," said So Tepun.

Many Penan went and gathered there and Tama Lawai Lahang was sent to teach them. They lived in a village near the Giam Kasi rapids. Later, they built their houses at Long Lamai. That is the beginning of the Penan living as settled people. Araya So asked them to come together and he made them familiar with the word of the God. Through this, they are able to come together with us the settled people.

7.3.13 The Penan and the government

After they had been living for sometime at Long Lamai, the government got to know about their presence. Someone called Councilor Galang from Marudi sent a few Kayan to teach them how to build houses.

7.3.14 The Penan split up

Then my father So asked them to see who could be their village headman. Two people were identified, namely Balare Jabu and Balan Kade[140]. Balan Kade knew how to work as he used to live with the people in Pa Bao. He was very close to Penghulu Apui[141] so he knew how to saw planks.

[140] Murang (1993:92) calls Balan Kade, "Jegan Kadir."Gar (2012:94) calls him "Lajan Kade."
[141] Penghulu Apui was a Kenyah leader in the Bahau, (Urquart 1956:293).

Some people wanted him him to be their leader. However, there were many more Penan on this side of the border and Balare Jabu became their headman. Balan seemed unhappy for not being chosen as the village headman so he came to see my late father, So, asking for an area of land for him and his followers to live on.

"Where?" asked So.

"We would like to be in Ba' Lai" said Balan Kade. The Lai river is called the Sino river in Kelabit.

7.3.15 The Penan and the ways of government

"O, why are you asking to go so far away? If you're so far away, how am I going to teach you about the ways of government? How is the government going to get to you? And how are you going to know about the custom of government?

"O, it's alright. We will still be close by," replied Balan.

"You go to Long Moyo,"[142] suggested So.

"If we go there we live in the forest, on animals, on wild shoots. That's what we survive on. It's better we live further apart at Ba' Lai so that we can live a good life," said Balan.

"Alright, go as you please," replied So.

That's how they settled in Ba' Lai and how they separated from their relatives who live in Long Lamai.

[142] Long Moyo was on a main footpath and nearer to Long Peluan than Ba' Lai.

7.3.16 Araya Loi moves to Long Beruang

Not long after that, Tama Lawai Lahang was teaching Loi the skills of tying. However, Loi was not adept at the skills of tying. Being short tempered Tama Lawai Lahang cut down Araya Loi's hearth, which was not tied properly.

Loi was very disappointed, "I don't want to stay here," he said.

Thus, he came and told the late So to ask for an area of land to stay in Long Beruang.

The late So told him, "Why do you want to leave Long Lamai?"

"The reason I want to leave is I want to come to be with you," answered Loi.

And So responded, "If you want to come you go and settle upriver from the Beruang River. There is a flat area up there and the Beruang River will be our boundary. You go upriver."

They went to the flat area upriver. We call that area, Reberuh An Ngili, the scenic pool. The Penan refer to this place as Lamin Ka Matung, the flooded village. While the area was flat it was low-lying. When the river swelled after heavy rain, the flood brought down their village. That's the story of that area. That's how they started to live in Long Beruang, their history of settling there. The village was located very close to the river on good flat land[143].

7.3.17 Problems with letters and luggage

Long after that, my late father So had a good idea because we were very few in number at Long Peluan. In those days, when a school at Pa Main was newly opened, letters would be sent from downriver to the students. Letters of all kinds, including to parents of the students or from relatives, they had to be delivered. There was no option but to deliver them, as it was the beginning of communication by letter. It was very tough for us then. More so when people from

[143] The site of the village, Long Beruang is on a high bank not prone to flooding. It is at a different location to Lamin Ka Matung.

the government come and visit us. Each year they came two or three times. People from the health services such as the medical assistant needed the most number of porters.

That is why the late So wanted them to come to Long Beruang so they could help us. That is the history of the beginning of their coming to Long Beruang, in case people may want to know the history of how the Penan originally came to settle with us until now.

7.4 Commentary and Analysis of the Narrative: Introduction and Background

Ulun sembayang (the life of prayer) began as a consequence of the activities of Christian missionaries across Eastern Borneo, and it is important at this point to describe the background history of Christian missions in Borneo. This is because there were missionary initiatives coming from both sides of the border; from Dutch Borneo and Sarawak. The Dutch colonial government feared the power of Islam because of its power to unite Indonesians and foster nationalist movements. They foresaw that traditional belief systems could not withstand imminent change and consequently encouraged Christian missionaries to provide alternatives to Islam (Kipp and Rodgers 1987:16). Mission schools were encouraged and were seen as a means of training future administrators (Hoskins 1987:142). Missionary activity in Dutch Borneo was initiated by the American Christian Missionary Alliance (C.M.A.) who opened a Bible college on the island of Sulawesi around 1929 to 1930 and the first school for Dayaks in Tanjongselor in 1929. The C.M.A. went on to establish a number of schools in the interior of Borneo because they felt that literacy was the key to their mission of evangelization and the schools could produce local indigenous missionaries quickly. They ended up using Malay as the language of conversion as their missionaries came from other parts of Indonesia (Connolly 2009:179).

At the same time, the Brooke administration in Sarawak saw Christian missions, “as part of an overall civilizing process” as did the Dutch (Saunders1992: 5). They divided up the state

into separate geographical areas to be covered by separate Anglican, Catholic, Methodist and Seventh Day Adventist missions "to prevent the clashing and jumble of two religions in the same river area" (Pringle 2010:140). Hudson Southwell came to Sarawak with the Borneo Evangelical Mission (B.E.M.) in 1928 and was allocated the area around Limbang. His work and that of other evangelical missionaries was intermittent as certain areas became closed off to their work by the government because they were deemed dangerous and unsuitable (Bulan and Bulan-Dorai 2004:45). Nonetheless, Frank Davidson went to work with the Kelabits for three years in the Medihit River. He and Southwell visited Pa Terap in the Kelabit highlands in December 1939. This visit discouraged the missionaries as they found the people there reluctant "to make complete change from the old pagan ways." However, during the same expedition, at Kuba'an, Pun Abi was "the first Kelabit to take a stand of faith," in January 1940 (Southwell 1999:98). Eventually Tama Bulan, the headman from Pa Terap, gave up drinking and spirit worship, and in 1943 he invited Pastor Aris from Belawit in Dutch Borneo to come and teach his longhouse (ibid.:190).

It is interesting to note that there are a number of parallel narratives throughout the Kelabit highlands as to which was the first village to become Christian. Each story has a similar theme of a notable leader going to Dutch Borneo. Agan Atu of Batu Patong went to Long Pupong in around 1934. Galih Balang, Balang Riwat and Tama Ingan of Pa Terap went to school in Belawit in 1940 for a year or so and learnt to read and write in Malay (Lian-Saging 1976/77:279). These young men returned to evangelize to other villages, describing the benefits of converting to Christianity but they were met with a lukewarm response (Talla 1979:463). Such benefits included the practical changes that they saw in Dutch Borneo. Galih Balang was impressed by the cleanliness of the village and the new practices such as confining domestic pigs to an area away from the longhouse and the abolition of drinking (Amster 1998:39).

During the years of the Japanese Occupation, from 1942-1945, the missionaries were interred in prisoner of war camps and some eventually returned to work in 1946. In the meantime, there had been mass conversions over the border in Dutch Borneo and C.M.A. missionaries were invited to preach in the Kelabit highlands, a theme which is described in this third narrative (Bulan and Bulan-Dorai 2004:45). In the years after the war, the B.E.M. was responsible for setting up schools at Pa Main and Lio Mato and a bible college in Lawas that promoted literacy and education.

What is significant about the Kelabit experience of conversion is that it was "self-generated" rather than coerced (Bala 2009:179). In the same way this third narrative and each of the local narratives mentioned above indicate an agency on the part of leaders to seek out the new religion that was seen as bringing about momentous change in people's lives. This is something of a departure from the received postcolonial view of indigenous peoples as victims of imperial power and Christianity "as a reflex of imperialism" (Etherington 2005:1).

7.4.1 The opening of the narrative

This narrative is derived from So Tepun, father of Malian Tepun, the narrator, who was the *wakil* (deputy) of the Penghulu in the Punang Kelapang in the period after the Japanese Occupation in the late 1940s until the 1980s. As previously mentioned, So Tepun and Tai Iwan are direct ancestors of Malian Tepun and Tai Iwan is remembered again at the beginning of this narrative for his role in bringing about the life of government, *ulun perintah*, through reconciliation and peace (*pedoo'*). So Tepun, his son becomes located close to another source of power and standing (*doo'*-ness), that of Christianity and is instrumental in the conversion of the Penan. These two ancestors of Malian Tepun, the narrator are the authors of transformative change for the whole community and for their allies and kin beyond the highlands. Such change

brought about by their agency generates their *doo'*-ness. In addition to the narrative's function as a mission tale, a story of conversion, it explains in the words of the narrator "why things are the way they are" and outlines through the view of the Kelabit headman the history of the settlement of the Penan around them as well as the delineation of boundaries.

Despite the seeming isolation and remoteness of Long Peluan, people were aware that Christianity was present in the watershed of the Krayan River in Dutch Borneo. There was no sense of political boundary that divided people. People met at one another's longhouses, through their relatives, and news spread fast along the mountain tracks that were used by travellers and traders across the mountains separating Sarawak from Dutch Borneo.

In this narrative, Christianity is represented as the life of prayer (*ulun sembayang*) to the Christian God, *Tuhan*[144]. The life of prayer involves praying aloud spontaneously and singing hymns to the Christian God, *Tuhan*. Prayers are said in church at dawn and at night and are said on the spot for protection before journeys, for success in farming, or work, for thanksgiving before food and most significantly for recovery from illness. The saying of prayers is the first major behavioural change with becoming Christian. It replaces the evoking of omens using ritual chants, hence the reference to Christianity as characterized by the life of prayer, (*ulun sembayang*). As a period of time, it represents the era of the first phase of conversion, and to the narrator it represents a marked change, a discontinuity, representing a new life (*ulun nuk beruh*) and a good life (*ulun nuk doo'*)..The narrative also mentions the giving up of drinking rice beer (*borak*) and the discarding of trophy heads and charms. I discuss these aspects of conversion in detail, using eye-witness accounts that indicate that the passage to the new life was not as instant as is at first apparent. People were slow to reject aspects of the old life and

[144] It is pertinent to note the Malay word *Tuhan* which literally means Lord, is used for God, rather than the indigenous Kelabit word *Derayeh*, which was formerly used for the supreme spirit.

change was not immediate, but took time. Eventually, conversion to Christianity meant happiness, derived from the freedom from not following the omens, using charms, drinking rice beer (*borak*) and smoking which will be discussed more fully below.

Thus, the well-being (*ulun*) derived from conversion was initially based on practical and pragmatic considerations. The narrator also lists other practices that were eventually discarded during the process of conversion, such as the keeping of charms and smoking most of which they now consider bad (*da'at*).This is an example of the Christian missionaries setting ritual practices against Christianity and supports Robbins' notion of disparagement of traditional practices (Robbins 2005), as a stage in conversion, as will be discussed in Section 7.5.3 of this chapter. Although the missionaries told the Kelabit that drinking rice-beer (*borak*) was bad, the Kelabit initially found it something difficult to give up, which is glossed over by the narrator.

Why was drinking rice-beer (*borak*) considered bad? Malian Tepun remembered people drinking for weeks on end and the verandah would smell of vomit. Lian-Saging states that people became drunken, quarrelsome and boastful and this could lead to violence. For instance, Penghulu Lawai killed Sigar Barah from Long Bawan during such an event (Lian-Saging 1976/77:244). Another example of violence during a drinking session was Tamabo Inok murdering the man who drowned his slave in a jar of rice beer (*borak*) which triggered his migration to Pa Di'it with his followers (Chapter 6, Appendix 16). Some Kelabit interviewed indicated that people did become argumentative and quarrelsome while they drank and outbreaks of violence had to be contained by physically restraining potential adversaries. Men competed through boasting their achievements among themselves and demeaning others as they called with noisy demands of negotiation for debts to be paid. This was a time for one upmanship to prove *doo'*-ness and superiority to others. Such events were times when "almost anything can happen" (Harrisson 1949c:145). On the other hand, Banks, one of the Brooke

administrators, observes that although people drank frequently, quarrels were rare (Banks 1937:6). Moreover, it is suggested, by another outside obsever, that drinking reinforced social cohesion and fighting was censured (Janowski 2011:191). Thus, there are a range of views on whether drinking was the cause of divisiveness or cohesion, and it is possible that the disapproval of the Chrsitian missionaries influenced negative perceptions of drinking borak.

People did not stop drinking rice beer (*borak*) immediately upon conversion to Christianity in the Kelabit highlands, unlike the Lun Bawang and Lun Dayeh. The American missionaries reported they "threw away their intoxicating rice wine and even ceased the use of tobacco in any form."[145]The latter readily condemned rice beer (*borak*) drinking: "their wickedness and sin has greatly reduced their number in the past few years. In certain sections they are killing themselves off by their native rice wine."[146]

Another early missionary, Guru Paul, remembers how people had got rid of the paraphernalia associated with their former ritual practices, and prayed to the Christian God, yet continued to drink: "people burnt all their skulls but used to pray to God before they drank themselves happily drunk …I used to teach them in between drinking bouts while they were just about sober enough to listen" (Lees 1979:86).

Hudson Southwell, a founding missionary of the Borneo Evangelical Mission (B.E.M.) in Sarawak, seemed to show an understanding of the difficulties of stopping drinking. At the same time he took the position that it was incompatible with the teaching of the Bible:

> Giving up borak was a big issue for them, although they recognized how harmful it had become, both physically and morally. Some people questioned the need to give up borak when becoming Christians, but most acknowledged that drunken orgies which led to fighting and immorality could not be reconciled with the teaching of the Bible (Southwell 1999:196).

[145] Rev. Mickelson, *The Pioneer,* 1939.American Missionary Newsletter.
[146] Rev. Mickelson, *The Pioneer,* 1937.American Missionary Newsletter.

The difficulty with giving up drinking rice beer (*borak*) was that it was related to the underlying prestige system, which brought together *lun tauh*, (our people) through large-scale hospitality, kinship, generosity and kinship and this hampered its abolition. Women made *borak* with their surpluses of rice. In the years after peace-making during the 1920s and 1930s padi harvests gave good yields with abundant surpluses. People could make bigger swiddens, venturing further away from the protection of the longhouse and devoting more time to farming and the production of rice beer (*borak*), so that "people became increasingly alcoholic," (Harrisson 1949c: 146). The rice was partially dehusked by pounding in a wooden mortar. It was then cooked in water and left to cool on a mat. Dried yeast made from dried *lengkuas*[147] was added and the mixture was wrapped in leaves and left to ferment for a few days before being placed in a ceramic jar. The rice beer (*borak*) was ready within five days and could be made in advance of a group of visitors arriving, who inevitably would stay overnight. Rice beer (*borak*) was also provided for work parties for people who were working together reciprocally on one another's fields, particularly at harvest time. Drinking *borak* was an important aspect of sociality as it brought people together, particularly during the farming season, when people might otherwise spend extended periods of time at their farms away from the longhouse.

Moreover, rice beer (*borak*) was drunk during important ritual occasions and feasts such as the *borak lua* or *irau lua* for child initiation, and the *borak ate* or *irau ate* for the dead. People competed to provide abundant supplies of rice beer (*borak*) and rice to host very large feasts, involving large-scale hospitality and exchanges of labour and valuables, which created systems of control and indebtness (Crain and Pearson-Rounds 2011:3). Accordingly, growing rice was so significant to the Kelabit prestige system as discussed previously in Chapter 2. Lugun, an elder in Long Peluan, nostalgically reminisced on the social pleasures of rice beer (*borak*)

[147] A species of ginger; *Alpinia galangal.*

drinking: “There would be at least twenty jars of rice beer (*borak*) lined up on the verandah. Sometimes young women would bring you a cup made out of a gourd full of rice beer (*borak*). People who were quiet would become talkative. We had a lot of fun.” Further to this, according to eyewitnesses, all social barriers would disappear through the socialization that took place under the influence of alcohol (Harrisson 1949c:146). Thus, the manufacture and drinking of borak was embedded in the production of *doo’*-ness through the hard work of producing surpluses, through acts of hospitality and generosity, and at another level, though its provision at big feasts that brought together *lun tauh*, (our people).

To conclude, the narrator’s view expressed in the narratives that drinking borak was bad *(da’at*) is possibly influenced by the teaching of the missionaries who felt it led to practices that were irreconcilable with Christianity. Indeed, So Tepun, the narrator’s father, is recorded as admonishing villagers for keeping surpluses of rice for the preparation of rice beer, *borak,* at the expense of making generous donations of rice in church. According to a report in the *B.E.M. News Letter,* he was critical of the meager quantities of rice that were given by the longhouse members as Sunday offerings in church; “You throw away more rice than this when you clean out your beer jars. You can’t give like that to God.” The missionaries recognized him as a leader “stalwart in the faith and a rebuke to sin.” Eventually, his admonitions led to the establishment of local edicts that prevented anyone who was a drinker from being baptized in the church as reported in the *B.E.M. News Letter*, April 1964, page 2; “The church in the highlands saw drunkenness as its greatest hindrance to growth in grace. They therefore made their own church law that no drinker could be baptized.”

In time, the big prayer meetings and naming ceremonies began to replace the function of the ritual feasts and the drinking of rice beer (*borak*) as a means of the production of *doo’*-ness as will be discussed in a later section. To conclude, the condemnation of the drinking of *borak*

did not elicit an immediate response in the community at the first stage of conversion nor did the condemnation of smoking for much the same reasons linked to the importance of sociality. Tobacco was grown and traded as a major source of income right up until the 1970s and was used as a means of approaching people, of making friends, of extending the breadth of *lun tauh* and of peace-making. It also played a role, in making contact with the Penan.

Thus, there is an underlying tension not expressed through the narrative, of the lack of acceptance of the moral condemnation (*da'at*) of drinking rice beer and smoking. This indicates that change is something that takes place gradually over time. Further to this, the practice of drinking was linked to performance in a value system and time was needed for the indices of value to shift. The theme of change and the rejection of ritual practices used before Christianity considered as bad (*da'at)* is continued in the next section.

7.4.2 Life before Christianity: observing omens and ritual prohibitions

One of the major ritual practices that everyone found easier to give up or change was the observation of omen-birds and animals. The narrator touches on these without going into much detail apart from outlining the control these practices had on significant actions that people wanted to take, such as going to the farm, or on a trading expedition, or building a house.

Talla (1979:256) notes that it is difficult to reconstruct exactly what the omens meant to the Kelabit of the pre-Christian era as these practices are now obsolete and there are very few Kelabit who can offer any explanation. It is thought that the power of the supreme spirit, Derayeh, was revealed through omens birds and animals. Thus, before leaving the house, undertaking any journey, going to the farm, constructing a house, or going on a head-hunting expedition, people would call on a bird, the *ngaie'* (spiderhunter), as stated in the narrative.

They would leave the house and stop at a place close to the compound of the longhouse, in the direction of the planned journey, light a fire and call the bird with a chant (*tetang ngaie')*:

> Oh yes, sacred spiderhunter giving a shrill greeting,
> Sacred spiderhunter with a coarse bass note, where are you?
> …Please come in answer to my call" (ibid: 263-4)

If there was no sighting of the bird or if the bird came from the wrong direction, from the left, the journey had to be abandoned. If the bird came across from the right, it was a favourable omen and another special chant was used:

> Small though you are, spiderhunter, with sacred sweet greetings,
> You are the one I ask for, I call for, before I go to work, before and in all my movements,
> If I am feeling well, enjoying extreme good health, filled with vitality,
> In my…(particular work), in whatever I engage in later,
> Return, you go to the left (ibid:264).

If the spiderhunter returned from the left to the place where it was first sighted, it was a good omen and there would be a further chant that called for protection against adversity or pain (ibid.:263-264). Eagles represented a higher order of omen, described by the narrator as trusted *(percaya),* a Malay word often used in relation to the Christian God, *Tuhan*. There was a particular idiom *nawar kaniu* used for calling the eagles, by special chants sung by ritual specialists called *penawar kaniu*. Eagles were called whenever there was an important sacrificial ritual, *ngelua,* related to the initiation of a child or a headhunter, or for healing the sick or dealing with dreams, (Talla 1979:287). Pak Suyud, one of the elders I interviewed, explained that as well as chanting to call the eagle, the ritual specialists hold a plate, which they hit to guide its flight, when seeking to heal sickness.[148]

[148] See Amster (2008:82) for an example of a ritual chant to call the eagle and more details of related rites.

> The villagers will go down to the area outside the house to look out for the eagle flying high up in the sky. If it flies gracefully up in the sky the omen is good. If the eagle suddenly surges down and flies off again then the ill person will not survive.

Another informant remembered that pieces of meat were used to entice the eagles. Other examples of omens that prohibited certain activities are: if people building a longhouse heard a barking deer, they had to abandon all their work and start building somewhere else; if a pregnant woman saw a certain type of snake she had to bury the delivered child alive. Such beliefs demonstrate how daily life was prone to many potential hazards that had to be mitigated by responding to omens (Amster 2008:78). In particular, omens were strictly observed when embarking on journeys into the world beyond the longhouse. People lived in fear from the belief that disaster would fall if these practices were not followed (Lian-Saging 1976/1977: 239). There are repeated testimonies about the inconvenience and trouble that was caused in watching out for such omens at the time of harvesting, or when a couple had just married or moved house (Bala 2009:176).

It is also said that when Harrisson first engaged them as soldiers during the Japanese Occupation, the Kelabit were particularly inflexible because of their deference towards the sighting of omens, described as "an intellectual restriction which at times tended to be threateningly severe" (Harrisson 1984:251). This suggests that the Kelabit were particularly diligent in their observation of omens. An example recounted in Long Peluan emphasizes this point. Seman and his family wanted to go to their farm at Batu Patong, but as their journey started they caught sight of a civet cat. This meant they would have to stop their journey. They chased it and managed to catch it, yet they still had to observe the omen and stop their journey. In another examples from Long Peluan, elders reminisce how Tepo' Unid and her husband Jalong had to move away from Long Peluan for two years to live and farm at Long Banga because a cicada (*menuit*) entered their house. Informants today have no trouble recalling

different types of omen, but are less certain whether the omen birds could be deceived or mitigated as suggested in the case of the Iban (Pringle 2010: 35) or the Kenyah (Conley 1976: 49). However, Maran Talla recalls that people beat the gongs to stop unfavourable sounds being heard.

> The younger people were fast in becoming Christian, the older people were slow. They moved from Pa Mada to a new village at Long Geta'an, Tang Payang. As they left, they hit the gongs as hard as they could, in order to drown the unwanted sounds of birds like the spiderhunter and animals such as the barking deer.

Notwithstanding using mitigating methods such as the above, the life of following the omen birds is perceived by modern Kelabit, who are the audience for the narratives as onerous and difficult. They remember when their grandfathers went hungry because a padi-harvest had to be abandoned. Also there would be a hushed confession of infanticide. These events are recalled as being under the influence of *setan*:

> Indeed, former beliefs are now highly stigmatized, and discourses about headhunting and infanticide, in particular, are used as examples of how Kelabit have emerged from the time of darkness when they were under adet satan (Amster 2009: 309).

The perception of their former animist practices as being linked to the power of satan heightens the idea that in retrospect, conversion meant a complete break from the past. This was tied up to the idea that these practices, which were consistently followed, brought about consequences that caused fear, suffering, pain and inconvenience. The observation of omens impeded the journeys that people wanted to take to seek jungle produce in the forest, or to go to the farm, or to go downriver to trade; all activities that people wanted to do in the pursuit of value. In dramatic terms, the abandonment of animist practices provides a basis for change in the minds of the audience, which is why the narrator explains that So Tepun made a journey to the Krayan to search for a new life "that is very, very, good" (*ulun suk leng leng doo'*).

7.4.3 The new path to the Krayan

Malian has set the background to why people wanted to become Christian: that people wanted to change and move away from the inconvenience and fear caused by the custom of observing the omen birds. He describes his boyhood[149] journey to the Krayan to search for the good life in Dutch Borneo with his father So Tepun.

In the first narrative, the narrator describes a journey that features well-known landmarks with which the listeners can identify and visualize as they hear the story, but in this third narrative there is no familiar path to follow. It therefore works at a metaphorical level, in that like Tai Iwan, in the second narrative, a new path is taken where no person has been before. It follows a search for the good life (*ulun suk leng leng doo'*), contrasting with what is bad (*da'at*) as described in the previous section. At a literal level, So Tepun did not follow a familiar path because this was a time when people were free from the fear of enemies and could roam freely without worry. There was no established path to Batu Patong as there was not much movement along this route. The community in Long Peluan had only been established in the previous twenty to thirty years. Consequently, villagers were trying out different paths across the mountainous ridges to determine which was the best route right up to the 1970s, taking into consideration the steepness of the terrain, the challenges of river crossings, and the length of the journey. The journey was long, as they had to camp in the forest for three nights, rather than the usual two nights that became the norm once a major path was established.

[149] Age was often estimated by the skills children had acquired. This depended upon whether they could walk independently or they had to be carried, whether they could carry a small bag or a whole burden basket. Malian was around seven years old at the time, judging by the fact that he was still too young to carry a bush-knife. According to his identity card, he was born in 1932; this would suggest that the journey took place around 1939-1940.

The arrival of relatives from a distant but neighboring longhouse was a cause for getting together as *lun tauh* (our people), and drinking rice beer (*borak*), singing traditional songs, and epics (see Chapter 3). The longhouses at Batu Patong and Long Peluan were composed of people whose ancestors had originally come from Pa Di'it, and there was shared ancestry between the settlements. There were several villages in the Batu Patong area at this time, one at Long Kelit and two longhouses at Long Palamao.

7.4.4 At the school at Long Budong

Missionary activity started at the village of Long Pupong and eventually spread to Long Budong. People from Long Peluan and Batu Patong often travelled to this area of the Krayan to get salt from Long Pupong where some of them and their kin had ownership claims to salt springs. The school at Long Budong began sometime in 1940 (Sellato 1997:36). Missionary activity in Dutch Borneo contributed to a wide pan-ethnic Christian identity across the political borders of Borneo. This is evident today in the Kelabit and Lun Bawang highlands of Sarawak where people tune into Indonesian evangelical Christian TV channels that present singers in Dayak costume singing evangelical songs and dramatic serializations of Bible narratives. Moreover, Indonesian preachers continue to have a very strong influence as guest speakers at major Christian *irau* celebrations (Connolly 2009:176, Andaya 2009:21).

By evoking Christian identity across national borders, the narrative reinforces existing kinship links. Relatives such as Pun Isak and Kalip are mentioned because everyone in Long Peluan is familiar with them. Pun Isak, also known as Loyang, and Kalip who spoke Sa'ban and came from Pa Ibang, both came to Long Peluan in the 1950s to work on making the belian shingles for the roof and preparing the timber planks and posts of the new longhouse. This was skilled work using manual band saws, axes, and adzes. Kalip eventually followed his parents

downriver to Long Balong. Later, he went back to Tang La'an on the Krayan River to marry and settle there. He was the brother-in-law of Malian, the narrator, who married his sister[150]. Pun Isak eventually married Mbang of Long Peluan and later he, (Pun Isak), Malian's companion, Mengah, and Tama Bulan all became church deacons, *pelayan*, at Long Peluan.

7.4.5 Guru Tunip and conversion in Long Peluan

Sina Kuir of Batu Patong remarks that the arrival of Guru Tunip in the narrative was a very significant event, as it marked the beginning of Christianity for the people of Long Peluan and Batu Patong. So Tepun prepared a big welcome with the provision of abundant supplies of rice beer, *borak*, for his guests. He invited kin from the neighbouring longhouse of Batu Patong, thereby reciprocating the hospitality of his previous visit when he stopped off on his journey to the Krayan. It was a prestigious act both to host visitors and assemble visible wealth in the form of traded Chinese ceramic jars (*belanai*), as well as serving the rice-beer. People were competitive about displaying their wealth through the conspicuous presentation of jars, as one elder reminisces:

> Back in the past, when the people have not yet been called by Christ, the Kelabit used to have lavish drinking parties. Every family brought out their two to three jars, and people went around teasing each other: 'Where are your jars? How many do you have?'[151]

People recall up to twenty jars lined up ready for consumption. Rice beer was scooped out with a gourd, and offered to guests by women. If there were insufficient jars more could be borrowed or rented.

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[150] These kinship ties are still present in cross border interactions today as Kalip's children gave us a warm welcome in Tang La'an when we went to visit in 2013. We discovered we had common relatives through Rinai, whose niece, Evelyn has married Ose's first cousin Nicholas, and Gad who is the second cousin of Isaac Loyang, the son of Pun Isak.

[151] Borbala Nyiri, field notes 2015.

Memories of Guru Tunip are rather unclear.[152] Sina Kuir of Batu Patong recalls his arrival coming after that of Pastor Damos. She remembers the style of his preaching, which differs from the current narrative of giving up an old belief system of omens. She recalls themes that recur more strongly during the revival of the 1970s, such as the confession of sins and repentance:

> We became Christians from the Indonesians. Damos was the first to visit us. He shared his conversion with the people. So he went around spreading the word of God. People in Pa Mada and our village stood up to repent for their sins. Later he was followed by a pastor called Tunip. People confessed all kinds of sins; some saying they had been unfaithful to their spouses, some for stealing.

Sina Kuir's family was close to Guru Tunip, because he and his wife wanted to adopt her husband, Kuir Mangang, (also known as Tidin Labong @ Maran Lio), as a young boy. However, Kuir's parents refused because Tunip lived far away in Long Pupong on the Krayan River. Nonetheless, Tunip's influence continued, as when Kuir was married, his eldest born, a girl, was named Kalikam, after Tunip's wife, establishing a lasting tie between the families.

7.4.6 Getting rid of enemy skulls and charms

Guru Tunip initially came to teach people how to pray and how to get rid of the artifacts related to ritual practices, making a physical and symbolic break with the previous life (*ulun dulun nih malam*). This was a common practice that took place throughout Sarawak and Kalimantan at the first stage of conversion according to the accounts of contemporary missionaries (Conley1976:295, Lees 1979:92, Southwell 1999:264). Mengah, who had gone with So Tepun and Malian to the Krayan, was said to have been involved in the disposal of the enemy heads, which were thrown to the other side of the river from the longhouse at Long Peluan. This area

[152] Two informants from Batu Patong confused him with Guru Lucas, who was based in Pa Dalih in 1945 and put to death under the accusation of theft (see Lian-Saging1976/77:201).

was always associated with spirits as stones would fall down noisily from time to time from the high bank, (*toran*) as the bank eroded.

There is no explanation in the narrative as to why these ritual objects, which were very important to people, should have been destroyed. Trophy heads were kept on the outer verandah of the longhouse and were wrapped in palm leaves (*ilad, Licula sp.*) and suspended from the rafters. My informants did not seem to be able to recall which enemies the skulls belonged to, but they were reminders of the ancestors (*edtu tepun*) and also symbols of prestige (*edtu dulun lemulun nuk doo'*).

Analyzing reminiscences of the time, it seems that the presence of outside Christian authorities was needed to bring about their disposal. For example, Pastors Aris and Sakai told Kelabit in other areas that to possess such items was sinful: "Aris and Sakai visited all the longhouses north of Pa Main at Pa Lungan. All ritual paraphernalia and skulls were burnt. To keep these items was a deadly sin" (Talla 1979:464). Yahya Talla's father, Maran Talla remembers the feelings of fear experienced by his father, Negeri Besar, and the elders at Pa Main as the trophy heads were removed by the younger generation:

> The two pastors asked the young people to burn the skulls. I took down my father's skulls to be burnt. My father, Negeri Besar, was scared so he walked away to the end of the longhouse because he was scared of the spirits. They were carried in a padi-basket, bu'an onto the ground outside the longhouse and they burned very fast. After the skulls are burnt the pastors led the people in prayers – mainly the young people. The elders were worried.

So fear and the discomfort of the elders at the burning of the skulls, which must have been felt to hold some kind of power, as they evoked fear, provided an opportunity for the pastors to dissipate their anxiety by leading the younger generation in prayer (*sembayang*).

The two artifacts mentioned in the narrative, trophy heads and stone adzes, (*lipan pera'it*) represent two potent aspects of the prestige system, bravery and fertility, items of great value

that are connected to the enduring continuity of the community. It is useful to consider what these items meant to people in order to understand what they gave up when they adopted the life of prayer.

Although headhunting had been outlawed by the Brooke administration, with the final 1908 peacemaking in the Kelabit highlands and the 1924 peace-making ceremonies in Kapit and Simanggang, people continued to keep the enemy heads for ritual purposes. None of my informants could say whether the skulls or trophy heads were powerful objects in themselves nor could they say much regarding their place in the old belief system. Nonetheless, Janowski (2016:191) states that the trophy head was the repository of the spirit of person who had been killed and brought potency (*lalud*) to the community. Moreover, it is possible to reconstruct the place of trophy heads in the prestige system, which elevated the values of bravery, boldness and daring through war songs and narratives. These values were epitomized in the first narrative through Telen Sang, who as a brave invulnerable hero deflected the spears of the enemy. Such martial values were instilled in young children, during child initiation ceremonies, when trophy heads were thrown in the river for young children to retrieve (Lian Saging 1976/77:131, Talla 1979:200). Guna Ulun, a man in his seventies from Pa Mada recollects a distant memory of a child initiation ceremony: "One day, men from the village returned from Indonesia with a hunted head and the boys were encouraged to throw spears at it."[153] A further variation of the child initiation ritual was when a child was guided to strike a trophy head with a knife, (*tungul*) and was then given the trophy head to carry in a basket on his back. Another aspect of this ritual was when the trophy heads were smeared with blood from a pig that had been sacrificed. The main reason for these initiation rituals was to confer the power to be warriors upon young boys and the chants that were used had an exhortive power:

[153] Borbala Nyiri field notes 2015.

When you grow up you will be outstanding from everyone
Wherever you go you'll be prominent above everyone
Whatever you decide to do, to toil in the land, you will be well rewarded
Even in search of wild animals, these will come easily in your way.[154]

This chant promises the qualities of *doo'*-ness, prominence and success to the initiates. At another stage of the ceremonies a prominent elder would pass rice-beer from his own mouth into the mouth of the young boy, symbolizing the passing on of the qualities of *doo'*-ness.[155]

Trophy heads were also used at the end of the death feast in preparation for a headhunting expedition, when trophy heads were carried ceremoniously in procession to the accompaniment of singing the war-songs (*kuab*), (see Chapter 6). Additionally, trophy heads were hung from a ceremonial post laden with beads, (*ulung bao'*), so that "strangers see from afar" (Talla 1979:251-2). Trophy heads therefore represented the values of the achievement of endurance, overcoming difficulties, bravery and daring through headhunting. Headhunters returned as heroes and they changed names, which reflected the qualities of their warrior status, with each warrior competing for a name that was more high-ranking in its connotations of potent courage and martial talent. Such names carried reputations that generated respect and fear among allied and enemy settlements across valles and ridges and beyond mountain ranges.

Trophy heads were also put in padi barns to promote fertility, in much the same way as the charms otherwise known as thunderstones or stone adzes, (*lipan pera'it*) (Talla 1979:251). *Lipan pera'it* were stone conical adzes that were believed to fall to earth with thunder and lightening. They were found at the base of trees and were thought to be the molar tooth of the thunder spirit. According to Lugun Bala, they could be picked up in the padi-fields when they

[154] Chant sung at *ngelua anak* ceremony for Ose Murang in 1956. See Appendix 24.
[155] Children participated in initation ceremonies at different stages of their lives. Informants in Long Peluan say that girls participated, and that ceremonies were not exclusively male, but recollections are hazy about the details. The accounts cited above focus on memories of boys learning to be warriors and must have taken place, when the boys could use knives responsibly, at around 6-7 years old.

were clearing land or weeding and were believed to bring good augury, (*doo' derayeh*). They were kept in padi barns and were used in padi-rituals led by women and were passed on from mother to daughter. When properly practiced these rituals decided whether the year ahead would "be lean or plentiful" (Bulan and Labang 1979:44). These were discontinued when people became Christian. Both these items, trophy heads and stone adzes were selected for disposal following the introduction of Christianity yet represented powerful indices of value in the prestige system.

In the narrative, Christian prayer (*sembayang*), was used as a means of getting rid of skulls that were symbols of headhunting and the charms and rituals that promoted fertility, great indices of prestige and value. As argued earlier, the skulls evoked fear, which meant they must have been thought to be imbued with some kind of power, indicated as *lalud*, that was dissipated by Christian prayer, which replaced ritual chanting. So Christian prayer (*sembayang*) was linked to an alternative source of ultimate power, that replaced the power of the ritual objects that were discarded along with their ritual practices.

7.4.7 Ngalibun Tepun resists conversion

This narrative deals with conversion at an initial stage in terms of giving up ritual practices and turning to prayer. The narrator does not state how Guru Tunip got people to become Christian, nor are there any accounts of mass baptisms by the hundred that feature in the reports of missionaries working in Dutch Borneo.[156] However, as I argued in the earlier discussion regarding drinking rice-beer (*borak*), conversion did not always take place immediately and

[156] See details of baptisms by Presswood in the early 1930s and at Easter at Long Berang 1939 by Wilfinger (Presswood-Hutchins 2008:28,35). Contemporary informants say that baptisms in the Kelabit highlands took place with the presence of the Australian missionaries during the large prayer gatherings of the mid-1950s. Lian-Saging (1976/77:252) talks about Southwell's journeys and baptisms in longhouses between 1947 and 1950 in the highlands.

this is taken up by the narrator in his focus on Ngalibun Tepun. In the discussion that follows, I will place the emphasis on the reluctance of Ngalibun Tepun in the narrative in the context of other anecdotes of resistance to conversion, to highlight how the power of charms and the shamans was diminished by the power of prayer, something that was done collectively and socially.

People remember that Ngalibun Tepun was initially reluctant to become Christian with the rest of the longhouse, as he was attached to his collection of potent charms. The fact that he was reluctant to become Christian with the rest of the longhouse, indicates that conversion was not always an immediate or straight forward event, and there was some resistance between individuals and the rest of the community which is theme which recurs in narratives of conversion, as is stated by Buckser and Glazier (2003:xii): "Conversion highlights the interaction, and in many cases the tension between individual consciousness and the structural requirements of community life."

Some informants recalled that the first Kelabits who started telling people about Christianity were met with skepticism. Agan Atu who went to Long Pupong on trading journeys to get salt went back to his longhouse at Batu Patong and was laughed at by his peers, when he tried to tell them about Christianity. Maran Raja remembers people who brought "the good news" were scared and apprehensive to begin with as they did not know how the longhouse at Pa Mada would react. However, Kelabit memories of this period do not focus on any major dissent and there are no accounts of difficulties such as those experienced by new Kenyah converts in Dutch Borneo with the burning down of a Christian longhouse at Nahakeramo and with the movement of populations to new Christian villages on the Iwan and Kelinjau rivers in the 1950s (Conley 1974:304-5).

Resistance to conversion could be attributed to the widespread understanding that people whole-heartedly followed their leaders. So it was the leaders who led conversion, for example So Tepun in Long Peluan, Ngemong Sakai in Pa Main, Murud Tepun in Long Lellang, Galih Balang and Aran Tuan in Pa Trap, and Agan Atu in Batu Patong. Some Christian observers note the suddenness and immediacy of the Kelabit conversion: "It is quite amazing that despite their scattered existence, they made the significant switch to Christianity within only a few short years" (Bulan and Bulan-Dorai 2004:44). This contrast with the more gradual process noted for the Bidayuh (Chua 2012:515) and the Kenyah Badang (Tan 2016: 256). Yet, although villages converted to Christianity, some of the leaders were not too discerning regarding who had or had not converted and many people did not completely reject their previous way of life. Conversion at this stage was partial. The Kelabit adopted the routine observance of the Sabbath, the saying of prayers early morning and evening and grace at meal times, but were selective in the other customs they chose to discontinue choosing to adopt just the practices they wanted to follow, such as disregarding the omen birds and animals. Harrisson notes a lack of consistency in their beliefs despite their adoption of Christian prayer:

> In other ways including premarital promiscuity, a penchant for gargantuan rice-beer parties, and the persistence of megalithic interests, they have proved a source of dissatisfaction to their spiritual pastors and masters. They have taken as much of Christianity as suits them, little more (Harrisson 1954:115).

This evidence suggests that people became Christian over time and that the process was more more gradual than this narrative suggests. The argument in the narrative given by Ngalibun Tepun against conversion is the loss of the customs of the ancestors and the use of ritual charms. Maran Talla recalls how some of the last people to become Christian were the ritual practitioners (*dayung*) who had their own sources of spiritual power, using other languages for their chants. Each village had a ritual practitioner. They opposed Christianity and people still

watched and encouraged demonstrations of their power. There were differences in attitude between those who were still attracted to the *dayung*, and those who were steadfast to their Christian beliefs. Maran Talla recounts:

> The dayung opposed the new religion by saying God had no power. In the beginning, the new converts still encouraged the dayung by joining in cheering on his performances which displayed his power with ritual singing "ah ah aah" as he went into a trance, possessed by spirits. The younger people eagerly followed their Christian beliefs. When the bamboo gong was hit, they would go in large groups to church. The older people just watched them. Those who did not have strong faith looked to the dayung. The dayung did not go to church. However, in time the evil spirits left the dayung's body because they are scared of people praying. I asked the dayung in our longhouse, Matutun, "Why don't you quit being a dayung?" he replied. "The spirits (*ada'*) are still present but they are afraid of people praying." Initially, the spirits followed him but later they left him completely. Matutun was eventually happy to be a Christian.

Thus, there was a process of spiritual change which came about by the perceived power of converts praying, which drove out the spirits of the ritual specialists (*dayung*). It would seem that the people who initially resisted conversion, like Ngalibun Tepun, and the ritual specialists became Christian by the perceived power of converts praying over them. This is an example how praying is seen to be powerful and a catalyst for change demonstrating the significance of *"*the life of prayer" (*ulun sembayan*g).

7.4.8 People became happy

Christianity brought goodness (*doo'*). The ultimate value of *doo'*-ness, the good life, becomes transferred to Christianity. In the past, people organized their lives around ritual prohibitions, which had the power to instill fear and insecurity. Through the life of prayer, (*ulun sembayang*), they had freedom from restrictions and fear of observing omens, particularly when leaving the longhouse to journey to the farm or other villages. The mechanics of the change of state of mind from the fear evoked by observing omens to the happiness (*mawang niat*) through following

the life of prayer is not explained in the narrative. Happiness is the only clue of an inner change, which comes about through conversion.

7.4.9 Processes of conversion

The narrator states that thanks to his ancestor So Tepun, Long Peluan and Batu Patong became the first villages to become Christians. Other villages such as Pa Dalih and Long Dano converted later. It is emphasized that Christianity came from Indonesia, more specifically the villages of the Krayan in Dutch Borneo, where the people of Long Peluan had many relatives, whose ancestors from one or two generations previously had supported the building of the fort at Lio Mato. Thus, it can be surmised that kinship and the concept of *lun tauh* (our people), played an instrumental role in bringing people together for the large social prayer meetings that were part of the life of prayer (*ulun sembayang*). Christianity was very social, people prayed in groups and they travelled together to evangelize to other villages.

By referring to the number of Kelabit who went on to become pastors and deacons, the narrator is alluding to the huge changes that literacy and education brought about by the Borneo Evangelical Mission (B.E.M.) in Sarawak after the Japanese occupation in the late 1940s. Women as well as men went to the first Kelabit school at Pa Main in 1946, or attended the evening schools, which were run in villages to promote adult literacy, or Bible School in Lawas. In Long Peluan, the first adult literacy school was run by a Sa'ban, Tama Lawai Lahang, the product of the Lawas Bible College whose role in preaching to the Penan will be narrated in the second part of this chapter. Pastors came to serve in different villages and travel between settlements was made easier by the construction of airstrips and the availability of mission planes. This contribution by the missionaries to raising literacy standards in remote areas was well appreciated by outsiders such as anthropologist Rodney Needham in an unpublished report

(Needham 1959). The Kelabit came to value literacy and education in a very special way that is measured in the vast distances that parents travelled with their children to accompany them to school. Rodney Needham, who had initial reservations about the missionaries, supported them as they did not coerce people and he argued that people were ready for change (Southwell 1999:376).

This constitutes what the narrator refers to as the new life (*ulun nuk beruh*). It was at this time that they came into contact with the Australian and British missionaries such as Hudson Southwell, Ian Belcher and Kenneth Nightingale, who beame highly respected by the converts. It can be inferred that it was through these people that "we came to believe in God." The narrator then makes a leap in time and recalls that during the evangelical revival in the 1970s, the people of Long Peluan went on to evangelize downriver on the Baram, emulating the earlier missionaries. He reminisces, "It is from here that we went along the Baram to preach because we were the earlier believers in God." It was a time in the words of an astute elder "when the Baram flowed backward" (Metcalf 2010:296) and the influence and power came not from the coast, but in the form of spiritual messages from upriver and from the interior of Borneo.

7.4.10 Encountering the Penan

The second part of the narrative introduces the Penan[157] who at this time were living as nomads in the deep forest, and it describes the process of the Kelabit settling close to them and becoming Christian, thereby illustrating the role of conversion in the change of their way of life. The

[157] According to Needham, the Eastern Penan migrated from Dutch Borneo from the Pujungan through Lio Matu and went east of Baram River (Needham 2007:52). This is a similar route to the migration of the Ngurek discussed in Chapter 2. It is possible that the Penan had long standing relationships over generations with the Ngurek, Sa'ban and Kelabit. Penan elders from Long Beruang talk of their grandparents being very familiar with the basins of the Selungo, Jawi, and Moh Rivers that flow into the Baram river.

Penan are described as giving up their nomadic way of life, which led them to live in houses and to start making farms in order to become Christian. Undoubtedly, this was a major change for them, and has underlying implications for the Kelabit as the Penan began to settle within the domain of the Kelabit. These issues have been touched on in the discussion in Chapter 4.14 and Chapter 5.5.9.

The purpose of this section is to set the events in the narrative describing the conversion of the Penan by the Kelabit within the context of a wider literature. There is a gap in understanding how and why Penan settle (Bending 2006:4). Many scholars indicate that other settled groups played a crucial role in the processes of the Penan settling down, even though the Penan were diffident and suspicious of the settled people for fear of being cheated (Nicolaisen 1976a:45, Murang 1993:94. Langub 2003:13). This is substantiated by reports that noted that the economic relationships between the Penan and settled groups were exploitative with unfair exchanges being made for trading jungle produce (Brosius 2007:304). Moreover, Sellato suggests that farmers had no interest in encouraging the Penan to settle and cultivate padi because it would reduce their economic power as middlemen for the forest products that they obtained from them (Sellato 1994:171, Puri 2005:56).

The literature describing the processes of the Penan settling down does not cover the role of the Kelabit who live close to the Penan at Pa Tik, Long Lellang, Long Seridan, Long Napir and Long Peluan in the transition of the Penan to a settled life (Nicolaisen 1976, Sellato 1994, Langub 2003, Chan 2007, Sercombe and Sellato 2007, Zawawi Ibrahim and NoorShah M.S. 2012).[158] This narrative highlights a more nuanced and complex relationship between the

[158] Janowski (1997) discusses the Kelabit attitude to the Penan as "children" because they do not plant rice but hunt and gather, but fails to examine at first hand the interactions between the two groups. For the Kelabit response to Janowski (1997) see Bala (2002:4), who states that Janowski has misunderstood Kelabit discourse.

Kelabit and the Penan, as it presents the Kelabit and the Sa'ban encouraging, rather than preventing the Penan to settle, indicating a new angle on the role of settled neighbours and Christianity in the process of Penan sedentarization. This was first highlighted by Murang (1993), who breaks new ground in outlining the role of a Sa'ban pastor and a Kelabit headman, who started an adult literacy programme and Bible School *sekolah pelayan* for nomadic Penan.

Although "most" of the Eastern Penan have been in contact with Christianity since the early 1950s according to Needham (1959: 10) and virtually all Eastern Penan were Christian in 1985, (Davis et al 1995:115), Christianity has been underexplored by many scholars as a factor of transition to sedentary life (Sellato 1994, Brosius 1986, 1992, 1997, 2001, 2007, Sellato and Sercombe 2007). Other writers set the conversion of the hunter-gathers to Christianity in Borneo as taking place concurrent with other changes (Chan 2007:199, Klimut and Puri 2007:117, Kaskija 2007:149). However, Langub, a local researcher, presents an exception, as he details the movement of Christian conversion in Penan communities and he later describes how B.E.M adult literacy classes, provided support for Penan in transition, and this point will be returned to later in Section 7.5.6 (Langub 1974, 2013). To sum up the prevailing view of much of the literature cited above, "…conversion to Christianity is not very instrumental to the plot but fits in with other processes occurring at that time" (Bending 2006:70).

The analysis of the third narrative contributes further to both the understanding of the role of neighbours and of Christianity as instrumental factors in the Penan coming to settle. It describes how Christianity as experienced through contact with neighbouring groups, provided a means for change and a widening of perspectives (Hefner 1993:17), enabling the major change of nomads becoming farmers. It will be seen that in the narrative that such change comes about as a consequence of an open attitude on the part of the Kelabit as neighbours who embrace the Penan as *Penan tauh* "our Penan" through living close to one another for over five

generations and their very real desire for the Penan to become Christian "like us," like the Kelabit. Through the analysis of the narrative, it will be argued that conversion to Christianity by both the Kelabit and Penan came about through a realization of the inferiority of their own ritual customs (Sahlins 2005), but it also led to a greater valuation of their own identity and culture which exist as continuities. This will be further discussed in Section 7.5.6.

The narrative introduces the Penan as people who are shy and scared and who do not know of anything beyond their watersheds. They are not aware of a world beyond themselves. This fits in with an observation that, in general, the Penan found downriver areas as threatening and dangerous and they were very much afraid to travel to them (Brosius 2001:139). Consequently, they avoided meeting the Kelabit. The narrator emphasizes they were different (*bekan*) from the Kelabit and lived in their own world and were scared of outsiders.

It is worth considering how the Penan elders of Long Beruang remember nomadic life, living deep in the forest to account for the change in their life in becoming Christian and settled. Lake' Isak remembers the camps where he roamed as a child with his parents. They never camped by big rivers, but by small rivers, "because of the spirits." They did not use boats and they were not used to fishing with nets. They lived in small shelters raised a few feet off the ground. Each had its own hearth at the foot of the sleeping area and each family had its own shelter, carefully built to avoid the prevailing wind blowing smoke into the house. There were no walls to the shelters but generous roofs made of layers of wild ginger or palm leaves. The men would leave the camp to hunt for wild boar, deer and smaller animals. Some women might hunt for smaller animals and were proficient users of blowpipes. On longer hunting trips, the whole family would move together. The families harvested sago (*Eugissonia utilis*) together. Sago flour was most often consumed on the go, before it went mouldy and was stored in a basket above the fireplace at the camp.

Moving to a new camp was done carefully. Before people moved, they had to have enough processed flour to last them for a while and it was very important to watch for favourable signs (*amen*). Tebare, Lake' Isak's nephew explains:

> Some of the most able-bodied people go ahead to choose the next stopping place and make sure it is safe and there is enough food and they will wait until they have good signs (*amen*) …they have to survey the area to make sure no enemies are around. …They make sure there is nothing left for the enemy to see. It's a special mission. If they decide to stay for quite sometime they have to make sure it's a safe place. They have to be on alert. To be sure there are no enemies, human or animal, and they also need to observe the signs (*amen*) for spiritual protection.

This sense of being watchful goes back to the times of warfare, when the Penan had to be wary of headhunters. Tebare says the Penan never fought as they were peace loving. The fear of attack continued even after peace-making (Needham 2007:59) and the fear of outsiders, (*va'e*), existed until the late 1930s and 1940s.[159]The Long Peluan narratives describe a number of meetings with people of other ethnic groups, but it is only the Penan who are described as different. This sense of difference also is expressed by the Penan in their reminiscences. The following quotation from a contemporary elder, Lake' Isak, explains how the Penan see themselves as different from others: "Ever since I remember I was called Penan. There was no other name but Penan. Penan are people who depend on the resources of the forest – yes we call ourselves – *kelunan*, human beings. *Va'e* are other people, strangers." He defines his identity as a Penan in terms of his difference from others who are strangers, who do not share the same life as they do. This contrast is recalled with another expression: "That is their way of life, (*inah pengurip irah)*; this is our way of life (*iteu' pengurip amee')*" (Langub 1993:109).

[159] Lake' Tawan remembers that a relative, Belare's brother, Labong was abducted by Penghulu Apoi, who was a dominant chief on the Bahau river in the 1940s. The Penan did not mix with other people, so they were watchful and frightened when they came into contact with outsiders.

The narrator describes the way the Kelabit encounter the Penan. They gradually enticed the Penan to meet them in the forest using their homegrown tobacco, (which had been very useful during the earlier time of peace-making) as an incentive. The Penan had a reputation as smokers. Urquhart (1951:527) said the Penan craved for it and would go to great lengths to get some. He had never met "such people for open and unashamed cadging of a smoke." The people of Long Peluan were no strangers to the Penan as they occasionally came across one another, while hunting in the forest or at the market (*tamu*) in Lio Mato (Murang 1993:86). The Penan such as Loi Juman and Belare Jabu began to meet the Kelabit on the Bale River upriver from the present Long Peluan longhouse settlement, and traded items such as resin, wild rubber, wild meat and woven baskets and mats in exchange for tobacco, cloth, axes and bush knives. Loi Juman went on to be the first headman of Long Beruang and Belare Jabu the headman of Long Lamai. Belare Jabu is remembered as the first person to make a padi field at Long Lamai.

The prayer meetings, which were held in different locations became focal points for the Kelabit and Sa'ban to meet the Penan, and they came together in a new way. On one notable occasion on Christmas day 1956, some forty Penan came to Long Banga, bringing pet gibbons and monkeys to the church. Races were held between members of the congregation and the Penan won every time (Murang 1993:88). These prayer meetings took place during the first phase of conversion, creating new relationships through Christianity for both the Kelabit and the Penan. This is similar to the experience of the Dani, in highland Irian Jaya: "The first conversion introduced a transtribal, transcendent authority and new social structure among a previously disparate highland people. Traditional boundaries once supported by alliance and kinship patterns gave way to religiously based identities" (Farhadian 2003:63). Thus, with the first phase of conversion, the people of the dispersed longhouses of the Kelabit highlands came together with different Penan bands in a new way for major Christian festivals. All groups

reaffirmed their kinship ties within the new Christian festivals. The Penan became part of this Christian social world in the Long Peluan area, which eventually become formalized through the B.E.M. church as the district, *daerah*.

7.4.11 Tama Lawai Lahang preaches to the Penan

The narrator describes So Tepun and Tama Lawai Lahang's early meetings with the Penan in the forest.[160] He indicates that So, as Penghulu, was responsible for encouraging the Penan to settle, which ocurred gradually as the Penan took time to come nearer to the longhouse at Long Peluan. He asked the Penan if they were ready to live "like us", *ku' ayu' kamih nih*, having a settled life in a village with houses. As nomads, they had to cope with periods of privation when there were no wild boar in season and their source of shoots was exhausted and they had to move on. Once they settled, they needed to adapt to planning and farming for food, by cultivating tapioca, as a ready source of starch. The Penan saw how the Kelabit lived as settled people and following the logic of the narrative, this must have been a factor that encouraged them to settle; similar to a pattern experienced by other Eastern Penan at the time, when they emulated other settled groups (Bending 2006:67).

Tama Lawai Lahang (also known as Lahang Apoi) was a young educated Sa'ban who had received his schooling in the Bahau area of Dutch Borneo and migrated to Long Banga in 1946. In 1948, he was selected by a visiting missionary, Ken Nightingale, to go to Bible School in Lawas and returned to live in Long Peluan in 1951 where he started a literacy school for adults (Murang 1993:86). The area of headwaters of the Ano is on the old rhinoceros track and was close to an area of grassland, (*uduh alo,'*) which was a pasture for animals. The journey to this

[160] Bala Ulun and Ngalap Ayu of Long Peluan also have their own accounts of meeting Penan in the forest at this time and coaxing them to meet for prayer meetings.

area would take a full day on foot from Long Peluan and Tama Lawai Lahang and Ma'ad Tepun[161]would have to spend the night in the forest in order to engage with the Penan.

There was much discussion in the colonial administrative correspondence as to the best kind of village settlement for the Penan. Longhouses were discouraged as they required more building materials and needed more maintenance than single dwellings, which were advocated as the Penan were already used to living in single household units in their temporary nomadic shelters (Needham 1959:14, Galang 1959: 3). Contrary to the narrator's view, the transition to a settled life was not easy. The colonial government sought the advice of anthropologist Rodney Needham:

> It is too much to expect nomads to make a go of farming with the aid of sporadic instruction from neighbouring peoples. Nomads in the first few years of settlement are likely to be worse off for food than are nomads in the forest (Needham 1959:13).

Needham is hinting that more support was needed to enable the Penan to settle. Some of the memories of the Penan from Long Lamei expressed the reservations that Penan had about making the step to settle. The Penan themselves understood that they stood on the brink of survival; Lake' Uda of Long Lamai recalls Penghulu Laban's attitude to the Penan settling, as he said, "If you take a fish out of the water and get it to live by the bank of the river, it will not survive, nor will a land animal if you put it in the river, it will not swim. How long can these animals live?" It was a precarious time as a government report noted there had been a number of deaths due to malaria and pneumonia when people settled (Galang1959: 4).

[161] Ma'ad Tepun also known as (Tama Bulan Yii), is of mixed Sa'ban, Kelabit and Ngurek descent. He is a descendant of Telen Sang the warrior recalled in Chapter 6.

7.4.12 The Penan begin to settle at Giam Kasi

The narrator reports how So Tepun negotiates with the Penan for the best place for them to settle. It was his role to delineate the boundaries of land between communities. The Giam Kasi rapids indicate to his listeners the boundary between the Penan area above the rapids of Balong River and the Sa'ban territory for the inhabitants of Long Balong downriver (see Figure 4.2). The Balong area was important for the Penan as it was close to a rhinoceros track, which was one of the main trails. Lake' Uda of Long Lamei explained, "There was a salt spring at the Ba Balong. The rhinoceros used to drink there." According to the narrator, So Tepun is also said to have encouraged different Penan families, such as Loi's, Balare's and Balan Kade's, to come together in one place, which made it easier for Tama Lawai Lahang and others to preach the Christian life to them.

According to the narrative, the Kelabit wanted the Penan to settle in one place. Once they did so they began taking in the Christian message and came together with the Kelabit (*doo' peruyung rurum ngan tauh*). This is a significant change from the view of the Penan living in the forest when they were very different from the Kelabit. In the Kelabit view, this is how the Penan started to become "like us" but from the Penan perspective it was a difficult process.

Lake' Isak explains how the Penan were attracted to Christianity in much the same way as the Kelabit through the discarding of beliefs related to the power of observed omens. "The problem in the past, were the omens. An omen like a bird calling or a fallen tree would tell you that you couldn't go out and look for food. So you are hungry as you run out of food. Now we believe in God and have religion, it is much better than in the past."

It is likely that the missionaries told the Penan that their ritual practices were linked to *setan,* satan worship, as this happened elsewhere (Bending 2006:71, Klimut and Puri 2007:116), and that this encouraged them to abandon them. According to Lake' Isak,

Christianity gave the freedom to go out and search for food whenever they wanted, without heeding to omens. As a consequence, they could hunt and forage without any restrictions. The fact that they saw the Kelabit acting in a similar way must have been a major factor that motivated them. For Penan, like the Kelabit, conversion is also perceived as a major change, in before-and-after terms (Robbins 2007), as it meant a major change in their way of life. With Christianity, they buried their dead, eliminating the previous need, as nomads, to move on. Eventually, they lost their fear of the river spirits and began to build boats and make fishing nets. Fishing became a major occupation to the extent that they could sell fish to the residents of Long Peluan. Even though they had begun to settle and plant tapioca and banana trees, men would still go into the forest to hunt and gather forest products. The founders of Long Beruang initially settled at Long Belaka and later at Long Lamei. Lahang Apoi taught them to read Penan which was supplemented later by Kenyah teachers and Australian missionaries from the Borneo Evangelical Mission.

7.4.13 The Penan and the government

The narrator explains how the government supported the Penan's transition to a settled life. Roland Galang was in fact not a councilor as described in the narrative, but Sarawak Administrative Officer (S.A.O.) under the Baram District Office in Marudi. He visited Long Lamai a number of times. His report for 27 November 1959 page 2 stated that "22 doors and families have settled and built a temporary shed" and that "they are planting padi for the first time this year." His report also indicated that he was "impressed" with the outcome of Guru Lahang's work that the Penan had dug their own pit latrines and their compound was clean and there were good relationships with the "local civilized people." Galang was surprised to note that the some of the young Penan could read primers written in their own dialect. A year later,

he visited and noted that Tama Lawai Lahang had "little interest in teaching construction or agriculture." Despite the inadequacy of Tama Lawai Lahang's leadership, the Penan had managed to build themselves some homes:

> Although they are new to this sort of life, yet all are able to do their best. Some of them have built new homes in a Malay-style village without anyone directing the work so far (Galang 1960:5).

The two Kayan carpenters mentioned in the narrative, Uyo and Wan Ngo, were in their early twenties and were graduates of the Long Lama Community Development School, a project initiated by Hudson Southwell. They led the building of the teachers' accommodation and the school with the assistance of the Penan. A representative of the District Office, S.A.O. Stewart Ngau Ding supervised them (Ngau Ding 2007:250).

7.4.14 The Penan split up

It was important for So Tepun, who considered the Penan under his jurisdiction, to identify headmen as representatives of the Penan who were beginning to settle as they would go onto be a formal point of contact with other neighbouring groups and government officials. The potential leaders were identified by obtaining a consensus from the group. The Eastern Penan as nomads generally do not have a concept of formal leadership and look to a knowledgeable elder for leadership (Langub 2004: 192). Tebare, the son of a leader in Long Beruang explains:

> The head of the group, *penga ja'au*, leader is the person who starts living in a place. He is the leader, the guide for the group in the *tana' pengurip*, (that is the ancestral land area in which the nomadic Penan roam and use as their resource). In our language, a leader is called *penga ja'au* a big person – he brings life, *mehin pengurip,* he leads people how to live, like a father.

This is similar to a definition of a leader from Western Penan, as Jayl Langub explains: "The Penan describe their headman as *kelunan mengen adet* the person who holds the way of life."

This definition is taken further to relate to *adet,* which loosely covers "a way of life, basic values, culture, accepted code of conduct, manners and conventions" (Langub 2004:194).[162] The role of headman for the Penan similar to other native groups. He should know histories of migrations, genealogies and folklore. He is expected to be impartial in mediating disputes, he should know how to cool feelings, and if people's behaviour has violated certain boundaries, the headman should know what measures to take to put things right. He should be able to deal with outsiders, whether they be neighbouring groups or government officials (ibid.:198).

Differences in ideas of leadership are often reasons for groups of Penan splitting up (ibid.:209), and the narrative suggests that Balan Kade[163] was disappointed at not being selected as leader.[164] So Tepun suggests the site of Long Moyo, downriver on the Kelapang River, which is relatively close to Long Peluan. Balan Kade is negotiating for a location to settle surrounded with a greater area of forest for hunting and gathering which will not encroach on Long Lamai, Long Banga or Long Peluan. Settlement means keeping up hunting wild animals and foraging for forest shoots as a means of survival. So this is how Balang Kade and his followers moved to the settlement of Ba Lai, where his descendants still live today.

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[162] Langub (2004) observes that among the Western Penan a stratified concept of hereditary leadership has become adapted with usage of the term, *maran,* meaning aristocrat, following the influence of neighbouring stratified societies of the Kayan and Kenyah. However, this is not the case in the Upper Baram area, although headmen tend to be the sons of headmen or their nephews or close kin.

[163] Balan Kade went hunting in pursuit of the rhinoceros to the Bahau River (Pa Bao) in Dutch Borneo and stayed there for a while. He was among the group of Penan who returned to Sarawak without their possessions because of threatening behaviour by Penghulu Apoi of Long Pujunguan who had shot at them (Urquart 1956:293).

[164] There is another version of the story of why a group of Penan moved to Ba Lai. There was a difference of opinion within the community at Long Lamai in 1962 of how to deal with the corpse of a person who had died, as previously when a person died, the Penan would leave the body of the deceased in his shelter and they would move onto a new territory. Balan Kade left with a few of his relatives, Ghia, Jarai and Tama Mering to Ba Lai as he disagreed with the majority decision (Murang 1993:92).[164]

7.4.15 The Penan and the ways of government

What does Malian the narrator have in mind when he suggests that So Tepun needs to inform the Penan on the customs of government, or how government works? It must be remembered that the Penan lived in very remote areas in the headwaters of the rivers and lived "without the overarching discipline imposed by the state" (Lee and Daly 1999:1, quoted in Sellato and Sercombe 2007:5). Unlike the Kelabit, whose orientation was outward towards centres of trade and power, the Penan at this time "see themselves and the headwaters in which they live as at the center of the habitable world." (Brosius 2001:139).

Following the Japanese Occupation, the Sarawak colonial government had little money or baseline information and a dearth of trained personnel. There was no infrastructure such as roads and electricity and the perception of informants in Long Peluan was "that the government then had little to offer." The main focus was education, health and food production (Morrison 1988). District Officers were required to travel throughout their districts, in line with the standard set by the Brookes of making government widely accessible (Talib1999: 110). They travelled at least twice a year to each village, often with a team of agriculture, health or education staff, to discover peoples' problems, conduct surveys, and to update the household information for the so-called "tin" filing system that was carried in waterproof metal boxes from village to village (Ngau Ding 2007: 227). The colonial officers met the Penan through periodic trade meetings called *tamu* at Lio Matu where Penan met traders to sell forest products or barter in exchange for shop-bought goods. Officers from the district office monitored prices and attempted to protect the Penan from exploitation by other groups. They also controlled the sale of guns and ammunition, gave out medicines and bandages and informed people about policies and issues of concern (Langub 2013). In this manner, the colonial government was

committed to assisting the Penan through this period of change, which anthropologist Rodney Needham saw as unavoidable:

> It is the beginning of an inevitable and general change to another type of culture with which they are to face the larger social world into which they are being drawn. It is practically inevitable that eventually all the Penan will be settled …it will in the long run be better for them in most ways if they do (Needham 1959:11).

With this background, the government administration closely monitored the situation in the upper Kelapang River area. S.A.O. Roland Galang emphasized the need for government assistance in setting up the Long Lamai School, training in hygiene and agriculture, and for eradicating malaria that had caused a number of deaths (Galang 1959, 1960). He requested the purchase of axes, saws, fish-hooks, mosquito nets, matches, cloth and soap that would help the Penan adjust to settled life.

By 1961, Long Lamai had a chapel and fifteen families living in houses. Following Galang's recommendations, S.A.O. Stewart Ngau Ding visited for six weeks to supervise the construction of a school and assist in planting food crops. He led the clearing and burning of four acres of land to make a community farm on which seeds, tapioca stems, maize and vegetables were planted, having obtained them from Long Banga (Ngau Ding 2007:250).

The district officers and their representatives met the Penan when they came to visit their settlements. For the Penan, registering births and obtaining identity cards like the rest of the population meant entering the machinery of the state. The government encouraged names to be listed under a simplified system of using personal name and a father's name, ignoring death-names and teknonyms (Needham 1959:11). They began sending their children to the Long Lamai School, and complying with guidelines for village hygiene that were set by the health department for the purposes of malaria eradication. Parents were encouraged to visit the clinic to get their children inoculated.

7.4.16 Araya Loi moves to Long Beruang

The narrator refers to Araya Loi by a respected Kelabit title, *araya*, to counterbalance the loss of dignity described when he becomes the subject of Tama Lawai Lahang's anger. This occurs when Loi makes a mistake in tying the joints to make a hearth which Tama Lawai Lahang cuts down in a fit of impatience. The incident causes Loi to want to leave Long Lamai, and according to the narrator he goes to So Tepun for advice on where to settle.

At this point it is useful to assess the role of Tama Lawai Lahang in the transition of the Penan to a settled life at Long Lamai. A little background first. He was the first person in the area to go to Bible school in Lawas and he taught adults Long Peluan how to read the Bible. He was in Long Peluan for two years but had to leave because people in the longhouse blamed him for a fatal accident involving a child falling out of a tree. He was meant to be supervising the children while the longhouse people were away at their farms. He went to Long Banga where he began adult education and bible reading classes. He met Lenjau Jabu and his family in the forest. In an interview, Tama Lawai Lahang talked about how he initially encouraged the Penan to meet him by sharing food; "I gave them food, bananas and papayas to eat. I gave them all I had." (Murang 1993:87). He began meeting them more frequently and in 1958, Kenneth Nightingale encouraged him to set up a school as a full-time missionary. After discussions with the Sa'ban church elders, he decided first to start a farm with the assistance of the Sa'ban community. The Penan were encouraged to build temporary huts close by to begin with on the pretext that if they joined the school it would be easier for them to buy cartridges and clothing (ibid:89).

In the first eight months Tama Lawai Lahang struggled with attendance at the school. Many times nobody showed up. Eventually it was decided that the children of the Penan attend rather than the parents. Tama Lawai Lahang emphasized that he could not insist that they attend

school every day. He also conveyed the idea that the Penan were very different, but he behaved towards them in an equable manner:

> I did not treat them any differently from our own people. Of course they did behave in a very strange manner, but that was their way of life, their customs and traditions. I never told them off nor to do this or that; otherwise they would not want to come again. I made sure that they felt comfortable.

In 1960, D.O. McSporran visited and commended the school; "I have never seen a group of young Penan looking so fit and clean, settled or nomadic."[165] However he also indicated that he felt unhappy about the way Tama Lawai Lahang interacted with the Penan as he was using Penan volunteer labour "for his personal benefit."[166] S.A.O. Galang also reported "if the Guru is allowed to stay with them in the longer period the Penan would become more or less like slaves … He seemed to be their lordship." (1959:3). He was eventually replaced by someone more qualified when the government took over the school. There are also Penan memories that they cleared land for Tama Lawai Lahang to settle on with other Sa'ban families and he proclaimed himself the headman. They were also very frightened of his short-temper (Egay 2009:144).

Before judging Tama Lawai Lahang, it is important to remember that he was endeavouring to find a place for himself as a new migrant in a nascent community at Long Banga which was struggling with factionalism among different groups of migrants. He had been asked to become a permanent missionary by the B.E.M. and it was the host community's responsibility to support his livelihood as their pastor; a position considered prestigious, given the struggle for leadership in the Long Banga community at that time (Murang 1989:190). He established a farm at Long Belaka with the intention of training the settled Penan to take over the provision of farm

[165] Baram District Office (1961:2).
[166] Baram District Office (1961:1).

produce. He was moving at a pace that was probably too fast for the Penan and was only able to lead in a manner that is remembered as domineering and harsh. Some young Penan now actively deny that he played any part in their coming to settle as will be discussed in the last part of this chapter, although elders such as Lake Jalong Ba'e' acknowledge his role; "Tama Lawai brought the good news (*mihin urip maring*). He worked with the Penan in Long Lamai. He taught us to farm, plant tapioca. That's how we learnt." Kakim also stated that it was a difficult situation as their parents were still semi-nomadic and they did not stay long enough to benefit from schooling; "He was a good teacher, very patient. We didn't do well in school because our parents took us away from school by going to Lio Matu, to Long Sait, Long Kerong and to Long Lellang. We moved around where there is food, *uvud* (shoots), wild boar."

In early 1961, a group of five families under the leadership of Loi moved to Long Beruang, even though the district officer had disapproved. This seems to indicate that the colonial administration had less power than local leaders:

> I firmly refused a request by 5 families under Loy to move to Long Beruang. They complained that game and jungle produce was becoming increasingly difficult in Long Lamai, but they must accept this and rely more on their own production. They cannot have the best of both worlds.[167]

The narrative clearly indicates the boundary above the confluence of the Bale and Beruang rivers between the settlements of Long Peluan and Long Beruang. At that time, the Kelabit at Long Peluan were farming in the Long Beruang area and they suggested they stay upriver from Reberuh An Ngili. Eventually, the Penan started to build huts and establish their settlement on the flat land at Long Beruang, where they live today. This agreement about the boundary did not hold though, as a number of Penan newcomers started to farm downriver on Long Peluan territory, causing underlying tensions between the communities.

[167] Baram District Office (1961:2)

7.4.17 Problems with letters and luggage

The narrator explains the difficulties of the people at Long Peluan when there were a lot of people travelling on the route out of the highlands from Pa Main, one of the larger long houses of the highlands.[168] It was the beginning of communication by letter *pu'un pu'un surat.* The first Kelabit school at Pa Main opened in 1946 with mainly a young adult population and by 1952 some of its pupils had already completed teacher training and had returned to serve as teachers in the highlands (Talla 1979:430). Thus began the era of communication by letter *pu'un pu'un surat.* Datin Mariam Balan-Seling, an early student at the Pa Main School who went on to study with Southwell's community development programme in Long Lama described how it was. She was in demand as one the first people who knew how to write and soon the residents began to write their first letters. She reminisces in an interview:

> We first started with writing Malay and then Kelabit. I worked hard writing letters, *rajin nulis surat.* We wrote lots of letters to parents and grandparents… and eventually boyfriends (giggles). When we stayed with Tuan Sapu in Long Lama, many of our people came down and deliver the letters back in the kampong. There was no telephone then.

At this time was the beginning of an era when young Kelabit began leaving the highlands to live and take up paid work in the outside world. By 1953 there were about 71 inhabitants and 14 households in Long Peluan[169] meaning there was not a very large pool of labour to support the numerous government visits and the task of sending letters to and from the highlands. Therefore, the Penan were asked to come and work as porters for the government expeditions to support the people of Long Peluan.

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[168] In 1953 it consisted of 27 doors and a population of 143 (Morrison note books at Cornell).
[169] There were 14 households and 71 inhabitants in Long Peluan in 1953 (Morrison notebooks, Cornell). This fits roughly with the records given to me of 15 households at the belian-roofed longhouse in Long Peluan, which was completed in 1957.

Thus, another reason why Loi came to Long Beruang was that he and his family would help the Long Peluan people by working as porters for the journeys of the government servants. This story is supported by Lake' Jalong:

> They were invited by Tama Tuloi (So Tepun) to stay at Long Beruang. Loi came from Long Lamai and asked Tama Tuloi how can I look for a living? So by staying at Long Beruang, the Penan could help with carrying of the colonial officers' luggage to Ramudu.

People also remember that D.O. McSporran asked Loi and his kin to clear the footpath between Long Beruang and Ramudu, and he was paid a shotgun. The headman-narrator closes the narrative giving the purpose of the narrative, explaining the history of why the Penan came to live at Long Beruang.

7.4.18 Christianity, change and Penan *Tauh*

According to the narrator, So Tepun also plays a crucial role in the conversion of the Penan to Christianity. By teaching Penan about the life of prayer, they are able to come together with and live like the settled Kelabit. So Tepun advises on places to settle. Pragmatically, places are mentioned and boundaries are named such as the Reberuh An Ngili, so that the territory of Long Peluan is clearly set in relation to its neighbours. The Penan help the people of Long Peluan as porters. This explains how the Penan came to settle close to the Kelabit and "why things are the way they are."

7.5 Discussion: A Mission-Tale: Conversion and Continuity

At this point it is useful to discuss this narrative in the context of the literature on conversion to evangelical Christianity and change. This narrative about the life of prayer has much in common with Crain and Pearson-Rounds' (2011: 5) description of the "the mission tale." The genre is said to have come about as a consequence of a change "in the moral imagination," which is an

effect of missionary activity. The "mission tale" tells of local missionaries working to convert other tribes. At a wider level, this genre is common for whole groups who convert to Christianity as "the structure of the individual conversion narrative often comes to shape people's accounts of their collective history. In such cases, collective history too is told … in episodic, before-and-after terms" (Robbins 2007:11).

The individual narrative of So Tepun seeking Christianity in Dutch Borneo becomes an account of the history of Long Peluan. In fact, the telling of collective history in terms of episodes through three different narratives, as proposed in Chapter 2, captures the essence of this dissertation. This episodic view of time is exemplified through the era of warfare of the first narrative (Chapter 6) and the life of government, defined in terms of *ulun perintah* (Chapter 7), and for the third and final narrative, the life of prayer, (*ulun sembayang*). *Ulun sembayang* or the life of prayer refers to "the time after" when they became Christian according to Robbins' identification of time in Christian narratives in "before-and-after terms." This is similar to Robbins' example of the Urapmin in Papua New Guinea, who say, "We no longer follow the ways of the ancestors, and everything has changed." "Before was before," Urapmin say, "and now is now." This mode of historical thinking has become pervasive and "people not only narrate it over and over but also use it to reason with" (ibid.).

Like the Uraprim people of Papua New Guinea, the Kelabit talk about "breaking with the past" (Talla 1979:406) a social transformation and a new life (Bala 2009:177). This accords with the narrator's view of *ulun sembayang,* the life of prayer, indicating a new life, (*ulun nuk beruh*), and is in keeping with the idea of "rupture" that is used to describe evangelical Christian conversion, a complete turning away from a former life. The notion of "rupture" for the Kelabit indicates how they comprehend the sudden change of conversion to Christianity and how they previously regarded themselves to be "under Satan's influence" (Amster 1998: 278).

Robbins suggests many scholars regard this episodic way of looking at time in terms of before and after as inaccurate and anachronistic (Robbins 2007). Anthropologists, he argues, often consider themselves possessing a superior comprehension of time "to the knowledge of those we study. It thus makes the claims that Christians make about the force of messianic, episodic time in their personal and collective lives and histories appear patently false" (ibid:13). In other words, anthropologists and other scholars see time in terms of the continuity of the clock-and-calendar time (Postill 2008:152)[170] and tend to stress continuity rather than discontinuity. Robbins points out that this leads to a theoretical problem in dealing with Christianity, as the anthropologist adopting what is thought to be a superior time frame uses it to debunk claims of change; "The conviction of superiority in this case leads to an anthropological hermeneutics of suspicion by means of which people's claims to discontinuity are shown to be incorrect and to mask more fundamental continuities…" (Robbins 2007:13). With this, Robbins argues, comes a dismissive approach to looking at radical change and Christianity in the culture being studied and "anthropologists become suspicious and often explain away the Christian elements of their cultures" (2007:6). An additional problem is a reluctance to accept Christian converts' claims that their former beliefs, such as the keeping of trophy heads, were related to Satan worship or that the use of charms was black magic. Consequently, anthropologists do not take their Christian informants seriously, resulting in a conflict between analysis and native exegesis. Continuity thinking on the part of anthropologists is "both an analytical and a methodological problem." (Chua 2012:512).

Taking my lead from Chua (2012:513) and Robbins (2007:17) I will focus on "cultural discontinuity" as a means of understanding the model of change portrayed in the narrative through conversion to Christianity. This explains why people converted to Christianity and

[170] See Postill (2008:152) and Hobart (1997) for a review of anthropological theories of time.

abandoned their ritual practices. But first of all, I examine arguments that suggest the end of headhunting was a time of discontinuity. The following analysis of the significance of the end of headhunting provides a means of dealing with continuity and discontinuity in the third narrative in the context of what went before. This introduces "a more strongly historical perspective, seeing the period of contact …as a recent episode in a turbulent history, rather than as a unique breaking in of history" (Jenkins 2012:470).

7.5.1 Discontinuities: the gap left by the head-hunting era

The period of this narrative is *ulun sembayang* (the life of prayer) and is associated with So Tepun, the son of Tai Iwan. The transition between the two eras; the end of headhunting and the conversion to Christianity, is dealt with through the episodes of peace-making during the life of government (*ulun perintah*) in Chapter 6. I argued in the latter chapter that the rites of peace-making extended the values of sociality that are articulated through the notion of *lun tauh* (our people) introduced in the first narrative in Chapter 5, that revealed an underlying continuity of values. This crucial point will be returned to in the discussion of continuities in the next section, which is somewhat different to how scholars consistently describe the ending of headhunting as creating a gap or a void. Such a dramatic change provided the reason for conversion to Christianity as will be revealed below. It is widely suggested that the promotion of peace at the beginning of the twentieth century throughout Borneo brought about a huge disruption in the value system as headhunting stopped:

> Its rapid cessation would produce serious social and emotional disequilibrium, and in turn must have had an important bearing on the receptivity of the people to Christianity –if for no other reason than that the loss of such a powerful institution must have left a great void in their lives (Conley 1974:314).

This interpretation of the end of headhunting suggests that the void came about through the loss of a source of ritual power, as Deegan notes: "the logos or meaning attached to head-hunting was negated and nothing filled its place, which would have been distressing to many" (Deegan 1973:289). These hypotheses by anthropologists, Conley and Deegan, suggest that the end of headhunting brought about distress and loss through an absence of a locus of ritual power. More specifically, the ending of headhunting brought to an end rituals and feasts that affirmed child initiation, village loyalty and solidarity, and male leadership. The practices had provided opportunities for the demonstration and practice of *doo'*-ness. The change was also experienced in political terms with the waning of the influence of Brunei and the creation of the Brooke and colonial regimes. Metcalf hints that the new political order of the Brooke administration and the colonial government is what created disruption as people became cut off from the patronage of Brunei and the transcendent power of the goods and titles that boosted the ancestor rituals, gift exchanges and the prestige system which fuelled leaders' competition for power:

> What changed to allow the spread of Christianity did not constitute a presence but an absence. Brunei control of its hinterland had been minimal, but that did not prevent Brunei from being a crucial point of reference in Upriver life for centuries…When that order was without warning swept away, it came as a complete shock – incomprehensible and traumatic. The result was a loss of confidence in old certainties, including the protection of the ancestors. Upriver People turned to a religion of global reach and influence (Metcalf 2010: 29).

Thus, Metcalf suggests, Christianity with its global spread replaced the transcendent and transnational influence of the Brunei Sultanate[171]. Unfortunately, there is no insight into the nature of the trauma, the distress, the lack of equilibrium, or the gap cited by the writers above, through the use of local memory. At another level, it is said that a force of transcendence that had been lost, had to be replaced by another:

[171] See Section 6.4.4.

> Christianity can be seen, from this perspective, as an ideological replacement. It provided a *logos*, a sense of meaning that was lost when the Lun Bawang were forced to abandon headhunting. A moral basis for society and the individual was reestablished (Deegan 1973:288).

The second Long Peluan narrative, discussed in Chapter 6, indicates that for the narrator, this moral basis for society and the individual is logically founded on the *adet* and values of peace-making and reconciliation. This is because safety and security were clearly valued and people were glad to do away with the fear and anxiety of attack.

Thus, the break in time between the end of headhunting and the beginning of Christianity indicates a gap, a discontinuity that created a motivation for Christianity. A further insight is given by an informant, Sina Kuir, who further outlines the moral order established by the era of Christianity in terms of repentance and forgiveness and juxtaposes this against the horror of fighting and death between relatives and villages during warfare:

> Pastor Tunip brought a photo of Jesus with him to illustrate his message that Christ came to forgive our sins. Before this, there was warfare among the villages. Lupong Bala's grandfather Marion was killed by Raja Sewa's grandfather. People from Bario came to fight people in Pa Dalih. People could not go out around the village for fear that the enemies might be coming. Fighting stopped, and people also stopped smoking. Now it's very good.

The discussion of the gap in ritual life caused by the end of headhunting raises the need to fill it. Thus, the phase of discontinuity prepares the stage for Christianity as a new era of change, which for the Kelabit, is a rupture from the past.

7.5.2 Continuities

Scholars of the Kelabit and Lun Bawang argue for the existence of a number of continuities that underly the dramatic transition from the pre-Christian to the Christian era: they include the persistence of beliefs regarding animism, potency and the supernatural and natural world. The arguments are in accordance with what Robbins identifies as "a deep structure of

anthropological theorizing" in which scholars seek "some enduring cultural structure that persists underneath all the surface changes" (Robbins 2007:9,10, Chua 2012:512). For example, Amster details how interaction with the spirit world was fraught with anxiety and fear before conversion to Christianity. At the time, the Kelabit engaged in dialogic relationships with animals and the natural world that transmitted messages through omens from the spirit world. These relationships changed through the superior power of Christianity building on new ways of harnessing spiritual power and through new relationships with the natural world and the environment, at the same time that fears of the old spirits remained (Amster 2008, 2009). Janowski also traces parallels in both the Christian and pre-Christian eras with relationships with the supernatural and other "potent entities" through prayer. According to her, Christianity provides the Kelabit with the ability to manipulate the cosmos and to harness the life force (*lalud*). She posits further continuities in that she says the Kelabit see the life force (*lalud*) as coming from "a parallel part of the cosmos, associated with both spirits (*ada'*) and God – and Jesus" (2012:147). However, such continuities, which she says are the outcome of philosophical discussions with the Kelabit, are less apparent in everyday life and worship in the longhouse. Indeed, Victor King cautions against reifying power in terms of "a primordial essence," as Janowski does with *lalud*, given the complexity in addressing the nature of such power (King 2012b: xi). Further examples among the Lun Bawang of continuities in attitudes to the supernatural and the spirit world are given in the work of Crain and Pearson-Rounds (2011:7). They observe that under the surface of the change to Christianity there is something older that is continually reproduced as *habitus*:

> While on the surface what appears to be a shift from a "pagan" belief system guiding Lun Dayeh/Lun Bawang practice to an imported "western" model of Christianity, upon closer examination an enduring system is revealed, reproduced rather than produced anew (Bourdieu 1995:36), the productions, themselves products of history,

> the individuals, and collective practices (Bourdieu 1995: 82). (Crain and Pearson-Rounds 2011:7).

Poline Bala also presents another example of continuity thinking related to the idea of "the enduring system" touched upon in the quotation above. This is of relevance to this discussion as she notes that for the Kelabit, Christianity is "indigenized and that it is about maintaining highly valued traditional values and attitudes" (2009:175). An example from Indonesia provides a useful comparison for elucidating the nature of conversion. On the island of Nias, the missionaries condemned rituals, magic and sorcery but failed to understand that "religion was embedded in kinship, bridewealth, hunting, and exchange. By leaving these domains untouched, they allowed them to persist as havens of the old values" (Beatty 2012:303). For the Kelabit, the values that remain consistent before and after conversion relate to living in close proximity to others, such as self discipline, patience, tact, diplomacy, or values that contribute to success such as strength, endurance, hard work, education and knowledge, or demonstrate the influential power of a person in a wider arena, such as the ability to host large feasts, generosity, being hospitable, or being well-connected. All these qualities of value are important for mobility, the attainment of *doo'*-ness and the conferral of leadership.

As argued in Chapter 6, the active role played by Tai Iwan during peace-making is indicative of the importance of the values of generosity, sociality and being well connected, as peace-making extends his fame in new arenas. In grappling with the problems of continuity and discontinuity, Robbins advises against measuring new Christian ideas versus old traditional ideas in determining notions of Christianity in a culture but rather to identify, "which values are organizing the relations between ideas" (Robbins 2007:16). Bala comes to similar solution in her analysis of the role of Christianity and how it is a strategy for obtaining movement, mobility (*iyuk*) and standing (*doo'*-ness) (2009:172). Bala emphasizes the need to understand Kelabit conversion to Christianity from the point of view of how it is experienced at the local

level rather than through the prism of modernity with its tropes of postcolonial discourse and the triumph of capitalism, modernity and the markets. As a consequence, she notes that conversion to Christianity has marked a rupture and change, yet there is also a consistency in values and motivating forces. This is a useful position to work from as it gives credence to the local narrative of rupture and simultaneously absorbs the persistence of indigenous values.

7.5.3 Discontinuity, change and inferiority

Among the Kelabit, *doo'*-ness is related to the good life, conferring prestige and motivating change at several levels The opposite, *da'at,* is applied to smoking, the use of charms, the drinking of rice beer (*borak*) and the practice of observing the omen birds, all of which are aspects of the former belief system that are highlighted in the narrative. Missionaries such as Ernest Presswood taught that animist rituals and related practices were superstitions:

> For many long centuries these people have been under the bondage and fear of Satan. The fruits he has produced greatly resemble himself: ignorance, superstition, witchcraft, corruption of the mind, filth, disease and suffering.[172]

The demonizing of animist beliefs by missionaries highlights the difference that Christianity made in the lives of their subjects creating an opposition between animism and Christianity: "Christian missionaries were, of course, careful to satanise traditional practice so as to open the temporal chasm between past and present that modernity demands" (Boulanger 2008:236). This idea of satanising earlier beliefs leads the discussion to Sahlins' notion of disparagement and "humiliation." He examines change in the Pacific arising from contact with Westerners and notes:

[172] Rev. E. Presswood. *The Pioneer* August 1932

> …to 'modernize', the people must first learn to hate what they already have, what they have always considered their well-being. Beyond that, they have to despise what they are, to hold their own existence in contempt and want, then, to be someone else (Sahlins 2005:38).

This realization of self-contempt comes about not just with global capitalism, but also "the complementary means of cultural debasement such as the propagation of Christianity," (ibid.). Robbins develops this idea further by explaining that people will not stop seeing the world that confronts them through their own "received categories" that is their world views, and (they) will not stop bending the world to their own values until they come to see their own culture and values as "something shameful and debased" (Robbins 2005a:4). Thus, following Sahlins' argument, the Kelabit became receptive to Christianity because they were made to think that their (existing) belief systems were worthless. To understand this more fully in a wider context, it is useful to take a step back and consider how in 1945, it was observed that the Kelabit had a "definite inferiority complex," in relation to their downriver neighbours whom they saw as more sophisticated (Harrisson 1949c:146). In the Pacific, this sense of inferiority has been identified as a stage in the process of economic change, which Sahlins identifies as "humiliation" as a prerequisite for change, motivated because "they hate what they have." (Sahlins 2005 :38). Thus, disparagement of what had been previously practised and a sense of inferiority became drivers of change. This is evident in the third narrative by the references to the previous practices as bad, (*da'at*). Sahlins would argue that in the face of "humiliation", the Kelabit came to accept Christianity - "the life of prayer".

The Kelabit, however, would never buy into the idea of being "humiliated" into becoming Christian. They would argue that they themselves identified the practices of their former belief system in terms of their own values, in their own language as worthless (*da'at*). However, this might be a further case of habitus; that there is something larger happening under the surface of which the Kelabit are unaware (Bourdieu 1995). It is sufficient to understand that

there was an inner process of rejection of former practices, as observed by Ernest Presswood; "Many of the Dyaks are dissatisfied with their animist religion, being conscious of its insufficiency."[173] Such dissatisfaction is born out by the by Lake' Isak in Section 7.3.12, who describes how inconvenient it was to observe the omens as they often went hungry and how much better life was when they lived as Christians.

7.5.4 "Humiliation is double-edged": culture, values and continuities

Thus, disparagement of what had been practised previously and a sense of inferiority were contributory factors that motivated change. But something more complex is taking place, Sahlins warns: "humiliation is double-edged" (2005:39). The reaction of "local people is not to become just like us, but more like themselves" (ibid.:23). Despite the changes wrought by Christianity the values of indigenous culture persist through sociality and the prestige system as "embedded in relationships of kith and kin as they are self-consciously social beings" (ibid.). So kinship and sociality are reinforced in new ways. For example, the Kelabit diaspora take advantage of improved transport systems, air-strips and education to facilitate new flows of wealth, that reinforce culture and new practices. Rice mediates between the symbolic economies of the Kelabit highlands and Miri town by upholding prestige in new and modern ways (Janowski 2005b:245). Newly fashioned name-changing festivals fill a gap left by the discontinuation of the old ritual practices (Amster 1999:185). Churches hold Easter festivals and the Rurum Kelabit organizes an annual food festival. All these events provide avenues for being together, for sociality, for cooking rice and sharing food and wearing cultural dress, exchanging, buying and selling beads, all of which proclaim prestige and identity. Like Sahlins' Pacific Islanders, Kelabit culture has been celebrated since the 1950s in a more extravagant

[173] Rev. E. Presswood. *The Pioneer*, August 1932.American Missionary Newsletter.

way than ever before, "on a bigger and better scale than they ever had it" (Sahlins 2005:24). Through work groups and church organizations, Christianity provides a new means of being a community fueling *doo*'-ness as the opportunity to nurture kinship and social relationships (Bala 2009). More exploration is needed to better understand how the mechanics of this sociality work among the Kelabit between households and families and outside groupings (see Helliwell 2001). Nonetheless, the value of *doo'*-ness is always measured on the social stage, and through performances of sociality. The social world of Long Peluan is extended to include the Ngurek and other allies and the longhouses on the Baram River as a consequence of peacemaking, as argued in Chapter 6 and 7. In this third narrative, this value is reinforced through an extension of sociality through sharing beliefs, networking with kin over borders, meeting new groups in the Baram and with the evangelization of the Penan on the Kelapang and the Bahau watersheds, who, over the generations, were quietly and unobtrusively part of the network of allies.

7.5.5 Christianity and Penan *tauh*

Within this mission tale of the seeking of *ulun sembayang* (the life of prayer) is a further narrative of evangelization to the Penan. This accords with general theories of conversion that suggest it involves reaching out to others, extending boundaries, making new identities and a widening of perspectives; "conversion implies the acceptance of a new locus of self-definition…it always involves commitment to a new kind of moral authority and a new or conceptualized social identity" (Hefner 1993:17). For the Kelabit, conversion meant accepting the Penan as neighbours with a new identity as settled people. The Penan belonging to the neighbouring village of Long Beruang become *Penan tauh*, (our Penan) reflecting acceptance (Murang 1993:96). Such acceptance is often used in an inclusive context that conveys openness

and affection. The people of Long Peluan would deny that it has the connotations of possession, or monopoly, that Brosius identifies when he describes how "longhouse aristocrats were proprietary about 'their' Penan" (2007:303). In turn, the Penan used the word *pade'* brother, when talking to their counterparts in Long Peluan, which conveys deep acquaintance, familiarity and an informal sense of adopted brotherhood (ibid.).

Such close ties recall the inclusive nature of social relationships and political alliances of the Kelabit with the Ngurek and Sa'ban and the fluid identity of *lun tauh* (our people) as revealed through the first narrative and as discussed in Chapter 6. A similar process of changing identities from established political alliances to new Christian social relationships through conversion took place among the Dani in Irian Jaya: "The first conversion introduced a transtribal, transcendent authority and new social structure among a previously disparate highland people. Traditional boundaries once supported by alliance and kinship patterns gave way to religiously based identities" (Farhadian 2003:63). Thus, with the first phase of conversion, the dispersed longhouses of the highlands came together for major Christian festivals in a new way, and the Penan became part of this social world in the Long Peluan area that would eventually become the B.E.M. Long Peluan *Daerah* (district). However, it is important to stress that these new religious identities were based on the continuity of an inclusive outlook of the community, as observed by Deegan (1973:289) who lived with the Lun Bawang, neighbours of the Kelabit, who had a similar experience of conversion to evangelical Chrsitianity:

> The social structure of the community was re-emphasized. Lun Bawang concepts of the relations between the neighboring *kapung* were closely parallel to the new Christian congregation …Further, Lun Bawang communities no matter what size or level of inclusiveness had never seen themselves as totally closed or exclusive ... The church expanded on the underlying openness of Lun Bawang social relations.

Having an open inclusive identity as *lun tauh* (our people), the elders of Long Peluan set out to

evangelize. So Tepun and Tama Lawai Lahang and others[174] reach out to the Penan living as nomads in the forest, with the intention of bringing them to live closer to themselves.

7.5.6 Penan become… more like themselves

This narrative does not merely assert Kelabit precedence in the district, as described by the Wakil Penghulu So Tepun. It is the story of how the Penan and Kelabit became more familiar and close to one another. Loi wants to settle to be with So. He says, "The reason I want to leave is I want to come to be with you." The Kelabit of Long Peluan talk about the Penan as *Penan tauh,* (our Penan) and their presence is an integral part of their own history of settlement in the area. Their stories reflect the encouragement and support they say they gave to the Penan at the time of change when they started to settle and become farmers (Murang 1993).

The period during which the Penan were reluctant to meet the Kelabit, as they were outsiders (*va'e*), and Kelabit children screamed with fear at the sight of a Penan has now ended. When elders from Long Beruang and Long Peluan come together and reflect on their shared history, they acknowledge their common experiences, as farmers and as Christians who have created strong bonds between them akin to brotherhood. In the words of Lake' Tawan:

> Our parents worked together to start life here. They (the Kelabit) gave us clothes and bush knives … Malian (Tepun) said we are brothers, we have the same soul, the same mind, the same understanding (*kua' kenin kua seruh kua jam*). That's what our parents did to start life here.

So at one level there is the story being told of a huge change; that the Penan completely changed their nomadic way of life to become settled farmers. Some of the Penan elders such as Laki' Tawan tell narratives of how they emulated the Kelabit as they began to settle, and how they

[174] Others who are remembered as evangelizing to the Penan are Tama Bulan Yii and Pasang Murang (Murang 1993).

became as close as brothers. However, such assertions do not mean that Needham's prediction is being fulfilled; that the Penan would become assimilated and would "merge with the people to whom they are nearest." (Needham 1959:17).

Despite material and spiritual change, the younger generation still asserts their autonomy and identity with Penan-ness, affirming the value of being Penan (see Bending 2006:169). Their doing so accords with Robbin's assertion, discussed in section at 7.5.4., that with conversion, culture becomes asserted in a new way. Thus "one's traditional culture becomes something that one does, not has, and moreover something one does consciously." Things are no longer done as they were done before, or in the manner of the ancestors, "when confronted by Christianity, culture becomes a choice and one that has to be justified" (Robbins 2005b:47).

The contemporary valuation of Penan-ness runs counter to their merging with other ethnic groups and predictions of cultural extinction, and can only be examined briefly here. Christianity reinforces Penan-ness in new ways and has become an important component of Penan identity through the Penan church, the use of the written Penan language for scripture reading and the social networks created by church meetings and shared worship. An example of the reflexivity that comes with conversion can be found in the experience of the early graduates of adult literacy classes who say "that seeing words like "love," "respect," and "equality" in print, in their own language and in the Bible, had a permanent impact on their consciousness," bestowing them a moral confidence that eventually led them to become community leaders, assertive negotiators and spokesmen in the anti-logging campaign (Langub 2013:189). It could be said that their values were affirmed through seeing the words in the Bible written in Penan, which is further demonstrated by Tim Bending's observation that Christian moral authority is invested in the political discourse of the Penan who justify their actions of

protest at the blockades on logging roads by aligning the Christian idea of God as creator with the moral issue of the forest's destruction (Bending 2006:106).

Although the Penan community in Long Beruang has not been directly involved in the anti-logging movement, interchurch meetings and social media networks that use the Penan language provide the social ground for fostering a pan-Penan awareness. Over last thirty years, particularly in Long Beruang, a new and significant valorization of Penan-ness and Penan knowledge has emerged through meetings with international archaeologists, journalists and filmmakers.[175] This has meant a return to the notion of Penan-ness related to living in the forest as recounted earlier by Lake Isak in Section 7.3.10 that is interpreted, demonstrated and performed for these foreign audiences who pay for the images, notes and recordings that they take away. In Long Beruang there are a few elders left who are able to give demonstrations of semi-nomadic activities, such as hunting, foraging, processing sago and collecting rattan that are part of everyday life in pockets of communal forest (Mashman 2011b). Articulating Penan-ness to an international audience has become an industry with variable economic returns and understated impacts.

Thus, while some of the Penan elders such as Laki' Tawan tell narratives of emulatiing the Kelabit as they began to settle, the younger generation asserts their autonomy, their own identity with Penan-ness, affirming the value of being Penan (see Bending 2006:169). An example of Penan contestation of previous Kelabit narratives occurred in a briefing on local history held in Long Beruang in 2012 for archaeologists from the UK researching the history of sago. Younger Penan put forward their history of the area, that their ancestors, Jaleng and

[175] These images are reinforced through subsequent manifestations on the internet such as *Making sago in Long Beruang*, by Huw Barton.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VomE4GN9Z6I

Muai, were in the area as nomads before the first settlers, Sat Laeng and his companions, and that the whole area where the Kelabit farm, hunt and forage is also their *tana' pengurip*, (land of livelihood or customary forest). They only came to identify the area as their *tana' pengurip* some eighty years ago after they no longer wandered to hunt rhinoceros. The *tana' pengurip* is an area where Penan roamed as nomads to harvest sago and collect resins that were traded and is now used by settled Penan to hunt, fish, and to extract timber and forest products.

Tana' pengurip means the same as the Iban term for customary forest *pemakai menoa* that has been recognized as customary rights land in a court judgment (Langub 2011a:106).[176] Because the state administration is reluctant to deal with the Penan claim to their land, other local community leaders have problems in dealing with Penan claims, as these overlap with farmland or customary forest of settled people. To the neighbouring Kelabit, the notion of *tana' pengurip* is a recent articulation of Penan land-use. The Kelabit have the same concept of customary forest called *tana' tauh* or *tana' bawang* and use the same area as the Penan for hunting and extracting timber and other resources. Thus, the Penan come to articulate an identity with the area of forest around where they have settled.

Another example of contestation of previous Kelabit narratives occurred in the briefing of archaeologists on local history. The Penan challenged Kelabit narratives regarding Tama Lawai Lahang. Some young Penan were uncomfortable when his name was mentioned and actively denied that he played any part in their coming to settle, or their becoming Christian.[177] "My uncle is not correct. We didn't learn from Tama Lawai. There were two young men Kayan from

[176]The Penan claim customary rights to their *tana pengurip* as land that they use under the 1958 Sarawak Land code section 5 2 as under section f, "land used under any other lawful method" (Langub 2011b:4).

[177] Both these issues, the earlier presence of the Penan in the area, and the rejection of the role of Tama Lawai Lahang in their history, have been also recounted by Egay (2009), a further example of the articulation of Penan-ness for an academic audience.

Long Bedian, Oyok and Wan who came to teach volunteers – they planted tapioca and there was a lady Tinen Dayang from Lio Mato- not missionaries." In fact, Uyo and Wan Ngo were Kayan carpenters in their early twenties and graduates of the Christian B.E.M. Long Lama community development school who were in Long Lamai in the early 1960s, later than Tama Lawai Lahang's pioneering work in 1957 (Ngau Ding 2007:250).[178]

It is remarkable that Penan in general have showed little interest in the past in their own history, which they find difficult to remember due to the mobility of their ancestors (Sellato 1994:208). So these examples can be understood as part of a general process of reconsidering and reevaluating historical traditions and ideas regarding history as a consequence of the Penan experience of conflict over logging and land (Sellato and Sercombe 2007:43). This relates to the earlier idea about the way in which culture becomes reevaluated through the experience of conversion. Underlying the change brought about by conversion, the Penan, like local people elsewhere, "become…more like themselves" rather than becoming like others (Sahlins 2005 :23).

7.6 Summary

The third Long Peluan narrative describes the early contact with the Penan and emphasizes their difference and Penan-ness, how they were encouraged to settle in one place to learn about Christianity and how they eventually began to become like the Kelabit. Christianity provided a motivating factor for the Kelabit to approach the Penan, and for the Penan to settle like the

[178] Other stories from Long Lamai say that Raja Maran from Long Lellang and Penan from the Silat and Long Seniai told them about Christianity and it was through them that they went to Lio Mato. Another source says a white missionary, led the conversion at Long Dati, (possibly Ken Nightingale) and helped to clear the land for settlement at Long Lamai. Other Penan say they only really became Christian at the time of the Kelabit revival. It is inevitable that there are multiple narratives about the coming of Christianity as different Penan came to Long Lamai from different areas and different centres be they Lio Mato, Long San, or Long Lellang.

Kelabit. These stories of emulation and change are also accepted and repeated by elder Penan. However, the third Long Peluan narrative also reinforces the understanding of the ancestors of the Kelabit as the first settlers in the area and asserts the political dominance of their leaders. Nonetheless, through conversion to Christianity, the Penan have found that confidence and moral interactions with the international community have led to a new valuation of Penan-ness, and a focus for their identity with their *tana pengurip*, and the reconstruction of history, which has led to a tacit contestation of Kelabit narratives of precedence. This sums up the assessment of the meaning of change and conversion to the Penan through the second part of narrative. What did it mean to the Kelabit?

For the Kelabit, like the Penan, the narrator represents conversion as the dramatic experience of change described in before-and-after terms (Robbins 2007:11) where the change is identified as a new life (*ulun nuk beruh*) and a good life (*ulun nuk doo'*). Despite this portrayal of change, the transformation is not necessarily sudden or immediate, and as Robbins notes (ibid.: 9) there is the underlying continuity of an "enduring cultural structure." In the Kelabit case, this is linked to the enactment of *doo'*-ness in the prestige system, ritual feasts and values related to sociality, surpluses of rice and the reinforcement of kinship and alliances. A shift takes place for these values to be performed through Christian prayer which takes place in informal groups and through the big prayer feasts that rotated around the highlands during the first phase of conversion in which the values of sociality and kinship were generated. Large groups of people would gather in much the same way as they did for the pre-Christian feasts (*irau*) travelling over borders, mountain ranges and ridge paths for five days from Bario and three days from Lio Mato.

Early converts remember that these were occasions for meeting the BEM missionaries, and for receiving baptisms and the blessings of marriages. Christian hymns were sung,

replacing the former practices of singing epics that extolled warfare and head-hunting. Action songs and sports competitions provided for greater sociality. As with the pre-Christian *irau*, or death feasts, love matches and engagements were made across the highlands during the prayer-feasts. Moreover, everyone remembers that the singing was very enjoyable, and this must have been a major factor in bringing people together. This brings to mind the significance of song in bringing the Vula'a together as Christians in Papua New Guinea:

> They bring people together in more than a social way. They promote the modes of being that are most highly valued by the Vula'a. When people gather socially they begin to sing. They sing themselves together in the sense that the union of their voices announces a collective presence (Van Heerkan 2011:55).

It was a time when travel between villages throughout the highlands was easier as headhunting and warfare were long over, and people came together in new and possibly larger social groupings as *lun tauh* (our people), and as Christians in a way that would not have been possible in a previous era because of the petty feuding and warfare described in Chapter 6. This point is made in a testimony by a convert in Dutch Borneo: "Formerly it would have been impossible for us to gather like this because of tribal hatred, head-hunting, jealousy and sin."[179] Thus, although Christianity meant a change, a new life, a rejection of former animist practices and head-hunting, people came together in very big groups, for big prayer meetings, replacing initiation and death feasts. Thus, the continuities of the underlying values of sociality, and kinship, which generate *lun tauh* (our people), prevail in the face of major change (Sahlins 2005:23, Beatty 2012:303).

Lastly, as an answer to the question "what is the meaning of 'the life of prayer' (*ulun sembayang*), it conveys a stage of first conversion based on actions motivated by practical

[179] *The Pioneer*, July 1941.

considerations with no focus on dogma or belief (Hoskins 1987:158). It represents “the good life,” or in the words of the narrator, “a life that is very, very good.”

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

Firstly, I outline the theory and methods I have used and then draw together the salient points from each of the three narratives, emphasizing the significance given to journeys and migrations and the bringing together and consolidation of *lun tauh* (our people) in each narrative. I highlight the major themes that are discussed in the concluding section.

8.2 Methods and Setting for the "Stories of History"

I began by approaching the Long Peluan historical narratives as a genre of oral narratives, accounts of episodes, that were told several generations before the narrator was born, representing "memory of memories" (Morrison 1998:2). This is close to the notion of *cerita sejarah* (stories of history) that the narrator uses. I argued that the analysis of the oral narratives as *cerita sejarah* (stories of history), lies within the discipline of anthropology, as it provides the tools for analyzing the narrator's "stories of history," and for examining the meanings that underlie his purpose.

I went on to focus on the use of place and genealogies as features that are common to the genre of historical oral narratives. The partiality of the narrator is evident from how he recites a prestige genealogy of leaders, who are his ancestors. As "exemplars of tradition" (Sather 2012:136), they represent through blood descent, his prestige or *doo'*-ness, even though he excludes a significant leader not in his descent line. At the same time, the genealogy reinforces the web of political and kinship connections from and within the longhouse to the world beyond the longhouse of *lun tauh*, (our people). The extent of these connections reflects the prestige of

the narrator, which is simultaneously carried over to the audience, the longhouse people, who are part of this web of connectivity by their association through kinship to him.

Another feature of the genre of historical oral narratives that supports the notions of connectivity and locality between *lun tauh*, (our people) are the allusions to place through journeys. These recur in references to places within the territory of the longhouse and beyond. For example, where trees were planted by ancestors while harvesting on farms below the Ramudu river, the stone grave monuments that testify to ancestors living in the river system, and the rocky outcrop where a pair of ill fated lovers committed suicide. These two elements - the recalling of genealogies and the evoking of places are deeply political. The former relates to the position of the headman-narrator as leader, with a wide web of kin and allies to create *lun tauh* (our people). The latter reinforces the status of the territory of the longhouse at a time when there was encroachment from more recently settled neighbours. The transmission of this genealogical and geographical knowledge is also crucial to the identity of the longhouse population and their extended networks of connections beyond the longhouse, which cannot be over-estimated as a factor that holds people together.

I also argued that another characteristic of the narratives is the use of episodic time. Each narrative in its own way is about change. The first narrative is about warfare and migrations to seek a better life where there is fertile land away from enemies. The second and third narratives are about more specific eras of change, which is actively sought by the ancestor-heroes; *ulun perintah*, (the life of government) and *ulun sembayang*, (the life of prayer). The notion of change points to a major theme in this dissertation; although the narratives portray eras that changed the lives of the people of the longhouse, these changes are sought-after and the ancestor-heroes become the agents of change.

The system of value of the narrator and his audience underlies the three narratives. Movement (*iyuk*) and agency,"what value does," (Miller 2008:1123) are the driving forces to generate *doo'*-ness, the prestige associated with power, a theme that underlies all three narratives. It provides a fundamental continuity through the unstated quest of value; through migrations to search for protection and fertile land, and journeys to find the life of government and "the new life of prayer." A further continuity is provided by the headman-narrator who conveys *meanings* for his audience in the present, directly and indirectly through the narratives, which is a function common to the genre of the historical narrative. (Nicolaisen 1976:91, Fox 1979:18, Wadley 2004:610).

The narratives are rich and textured accounts of "thick description" which lend themselves to Geertz' interpretative approach that uses ethnography to establish *meaning* (Geertz 2000:6). Thus, the act of interpretation has to come from the "thick description," rather than be forced upon it (ibid.:27). This is combined with Maxwell's method of interpretation, which takes in the "traditional values" of the narrator and the audience (Maxwell 1989b). Such a method of interpretation goes beyond the narrator's parochial agenda to looking at the strategies he uses to maintain (*iyuk*) his status *doo'*-ness and power. The analysis of these strategies led to the revealing of a generic tool that motivates action by applying Graeber's theory of value (Graeber 2001, 2013). The tool is applied to Kelabit concepts of prestige, standing and goodness that embody power and value, *doo'*-ness, which are generated by movement (*iyuk*), which stimulates action, and agency; in Miller's words "what value does" (2008:1123). I then argued that the recital of the narratives creates an instrument of movement (*iyuk*), reinforcing and regenerating the prestige or *doo'*-ness of the narrator as he recreates the genealogies, the places, the kinship and social worlds of *lun tauh*, (our people). This process is articulated by Graeber, "For those in pursuit of a form of value their audience is society which is assessing and

evaluating the measure of attainment," (Graeber 2013:227). The creation of the notion of *lun tauh* (our people) in the narrative reciprocally recreates and extends the narratives' audience, who assess and give value to the standing, *doo'*-ness, of the narrator.

Building on the argument for the use of a theory of value as a tool for analysis, I proposed in Chapter 3 that an anthropological approach is the key to dealing with the subjectivity and partiality of oral historical narratives. It requires an in-depth study of language, culture and the uses of alternative oral and written sources to cross-reference the narratives, revealing a history molded by values and culture. Additionally, I considered the position of the headman-narrator on the margins of the state, on the borders, both physically and figuratively, which creates a means for understanding discrepancies and inconsistencies through the point of view of distance from established centres of power. I also considered various techniques of analysing the narratives; utilizing multiple viewpoints, documenting the chain of transmission, looking at concepts of time, transcribing and translating. Subsequently, methods of fieldwork and participant observation were discussed, highlighting the importance of reflexivity, the awareness of ethical issues and the position of the anthropologist. The final discussion focused on a consideration of the breadth of social landscapes that emerge from a multi-sited approach to fieldwork, tying in with a major theme that emerging from the narratives, that of the making of social worlds, through the continual creation of *lun tauh* (our people).

Chapter 4 looked at some of the problems that presently affect Long Peluan through the description of the village and its setting. These are caused by the introduction of a cash economy, which means that surplus food is sold rather than shared and remittances from families in town have created heightened disparity between households. In addition, land adjacent to the logging roads is cleared and claimed without reference to the community elders,

creating sources of conflict, discord and anxiety for the headman-narrator, which is reflected through his voice in the narratives.

The second part of this chapter outlined the historical relationships between the Kelabit, Sa'ban and Ngurek as *lun tauh* (our people) through migrations and linguistic and territorial affiliations. These are further related to the wider and deeper history of people on the Bahau and Krayan river systems and the Apad Wat peoples, who shared common cultural practices such as secondary burial, associated with huge competitive feasts that became indices of prestige for chiefs. Traces of this culture are to be found in the extensive sites of stone slab graves, standing stones and dolmen in the Di'it and Upper Kelapang river systems, where recent archaeological research provides evidence for the antiquity of settlement in this area. It is emphasized that there has been a change in recent times in the way the local population refer to these standing stones and stone slabs as Kelabit, rather than Ngurek, and this is highlighted further by the omniscient narrator in Chapter 5.

8.3 The First Narrative: the Meaning of *Lun Tauh*

Chapter 5 described the migrations of *lun tauh*, (our people) with the Ngurek in the Bahau river basin at a time before the political border was established. From there, under the leadership of a charismatic leader, Telen Sang, they eventually moved, to Long Moyo' in the upper Kelapang where they left signs of their sojourn in the form of stone graves, menhirs and dolmen along the river system. They fought together to ward off an attack by the Lepo Tepu. This incident reinforced the identity of *lun tauh* (our people) but they had to separate to flee their enemies with the Kelabit going upriver into the headwaters and the Ngurek moving downriver. The Kelabit group splits again across a watershed with the majority going to the Bahau River, while some stayed at Long Di'it. This explains how *lun tauh* (our people) separated and are now

scattered across the tributaries of the Bahau and Krayan rivers in Kalimantan, and in the Kelapang in the upper Baram River of Sarawak.

The migrations of *lun tauh* (our people) that are described in the narrative were fuelled by the desire for enhancement of well-being and the quest for a better life. People sought land that would yield better surpluses of padi, which was needed for the big feasts that sustained the social life of *lun tauh* (our people) and to live in a place that offered protection from enemies. At a certain time, when groups separated, potential leaders competed against each other for followers using a piece of rattan, as indicated in the episode of the separation story in the narrative. People would have followed the leaders with better standing, *doo'*-ness, who could protect their followers. Chiefs such as Telen Sang represented the charismatic martial qualities (*inan lalud*) that were necessary to lead followers into battle and to survive in warfare. At the same time, as discussed in Chapter 2, leaders needed to represent moral values that enhanced social relationships such as loyalty (*doo' baya'*), generosity and kindness, (*doo' rema'*), good manners, tact (*doo' ngai karuh*), and diligence (*doo' mait senikal*). Their power or *doo'*-ness depended on attracting followers who would provide support in battle, and who could sustain communities in viable numbers as shifting cultivators. The standing of a chief was further boosted by the possession of prestige objects such as salt, gongs, and jars that could be used in child initiation and death rituals and to pay fines and settle debts on behalf of others. Even when groups separated, they were bound to those with whom they had lived and they would be able to seek those kin and allies as *lun tauh* (our people) when needed; for shelter, food or protection. Thus, the unarticulated purpose behind maintaining, creating and increasing *doo'*-ness is to create bigger social groupings as *lun tauh* (our people), which were crucial for the prestige system and survival. This is because *doo'*-ness or value comes into actuality "as part of some larger social whole" (Graeber 2001:70).

The first narrative conveys two versions of identity. One version is inherent in the history of *lun tauh* (our people), which evokes the alliances and migrations of a heterogeneous people, who are a "consciousness of kind," and who stand for the value of the potential relationships and the social world of the headman-narrator. Moreover, this fluid identity is used today to embrace inclusive groupings, be it at kinship, longhouse, or wider multi-ethnic levels. It is a relational concept and part of the 'everyday-defined' reality of daily life, enabling day-to-day transactions to take place. The other version is the "authority-defined" ethnic identity of being Kelabit related to the stone culture on the river system and the land that, in the words of the headman-narrator, "belongs to the Kelabit people." This is despite the narration of a corresponding history of living with the Ngurek and the fact that the Ngurek had a stone culture. This reified notion of Kelabit ethnicity can be comprehended as a reaction to claims on land by different parties, such as trans-national logging corporations for logging and road building, recent migrants and the Penan, which have created a need to validate rights to land. This issue is underlying and is not openly discussed, due to its potential to arouse conflict within the community. The process of becoming Kelabit has meant overlooking other narratives in their history, which leads to the view that no one else may have lived in the highlands before them. It overlooks the possibility that their ancestors in a previous era may have assimilated an earlier people. This is part of a process of exclusion that is recognized in mainland Southeast Asia by Scott who states that once a people make claims to resources they take on their new identity as a form of power, and prevent access by others to these resources. Consequently, stateless peoples form new identities for themselves and exclude others (Scott 2009: 263). In the same way, the narrative suggests that the Kelabit have begun to claim their land and their history to the exclusion of their former allies and neighbours. This process has led to the establishment of the niche of the Kelabit highlands whose physical and metaphorical borders are and maintained

by the Kelabit. This creation of 'the Kelabit' has been embraced with great enthusiasm out of a desire for recognition, which creates a position for themselves as a minority group within the Malaysian State.

On the one hand, *lun tauh* (our people) reflects a complex history of relationships with other ethnic groups tracing back to migrations across pre-colonial Borneo. On the other hand, the formation of the ethnic label 'Kelabit' dates back to interactions with the Brooke government, the precursor to the modern Sarawak state. Each view also reflects a longer history of interaction with various parties. Nonetheless, this may have inspired both of the two divergent views of ethnicity and identity evoked in the narrative, as different ways of working out relationships with the state, neighbours, and fellow community members of multiethnic descent. From this, it is possible to argue that the idea of *lun tauh* serves a significant role in mitigating conflict and discord within the community and with their neighbours, a recurring theme in the messages of the narrator in the next narrative.

8.4 The Second Narrative: the Quest for *Ulun Perintah*- "The Life of Government"

In the second narrative, the grandfather of the headman-narrator, Tai Iwan emerges as the ancestor-hero accompanied by Aping Nyipa, the Ngurek chief, a significant ally as they make a journey symbolically taking a new route on foot across the headwaters and by boat downriver to seek *ulun perintah* (the life of government) with the representatives of the Brunei government. This journey marks the beginning of a new era and is the first of several visits made to the centre of power as they engage with ending warfare and the processes of the formation of the Brooke state. *Ulun perintah* was a period that was characterised by peace-making, not by the colonial authorities, but by the ancestor-hero of the narrative, reflecting his autonomy and agency. *Ulun* carries a wider connotation than just "life;" it conveys provision, protection, well-being and peace and is only created and built upon by humans.

Tai Iwan is given the flag by the representative of the Brunei government to take back as a potent symbol of his allegiance to *perintah.* He is portrayed as the local big man or "man of prowess" through his distinctive actions which demonstrate "what value does," and these reflect back positively on the persona of the narrator through his role as a leader and a descendant of the ancestor-hero (Wolters 1999:18). He arranges with the centre of power in Marudi for an expedition to attack Pa Ibang, where their enemies are causing a lot of trouble, and although his role is that of a coordinator rather than an actual war-leader it boosts his standing in a time-honoured manner. After a successful expedition, he returns to the fort in Marudi to give voluntarily rather than to pay taxes in the form of wild rubber, continuing the practice of the giving of tax (*wang asin*) in the form of jungle produce or rice as an act of fealty to the officials of the Brunei sultanate. He goes about peace-making by distributing tobacco, making blood brothers and encouraging groups to settle on the main Baram river, all of which enhance his reputation and extend his social world.

At the same time the ancestor-hero Tai Iwan does not depend on the government in the administrative centre in Marudi. He moves to build a fort at Lio Mato, the furthest navigable point of the Baram River, together with his allies and kin, *lun tauh* (our people) from upriver and Dutch Borneo, exemplifying local agency at the periphery of the state, and a mobility of power (*iyuk*), which consolidates his prestige. His power is boosted by active support of those identified as "border tribes," by the Brooke administrators. The building of the fort symbolizes the agency of Tai Iwan and up-river peoples in bringing a centre into their own domain.

The narrator's message is that the "life of government" should be accepted rather than challenged. Thus, the narrator asserts the value of *ulun perintah* (the life of government) in longhouse communities where survival relies on consensus and unity. *Perintah* (government) is a powerful force to be partnered rather than contested. The opposite of consensus,

disagreement and discord, prevents people from working together and leads to people leaving the longhouse. The ultimate goal of peace means maintaining "the social unity of the community" (Bulan 2008:157).

8.5 The Beginning of "a New Life that is Very Very Good"

The final chapter of this dissertation begins with the search for *ulun sembayang* (the life of prayer) represented as a time of dramatic change to "a new life that is very, very good," (*ulun suk leng leng doo'*). This search takes So Tepun, the father of the narrator and the young narrator and his cousin to Long Budong in Dutch Borneo. Christian prayer, which takes place in large social groups, has the potency to replace the ritual observance of omen birds, the use of charms and trophy heads and the power of the shaman. Although this brought about radical changes, I argued drawing on Sahlins' work (2005), that the values of sociality and kinship remained as continuities, together with new indices of *doo'*-ness relating to how people live as Christians. The new sociality of Christianity brought people together in large groups for prayer gatherings, replacing child-initiation and death feasts and prompting the evangelization of the Penan. Being occasionally described as Penan *tauh* (our Penan) includes them in the social world of the community. Yet, despite Penan and Kelabit elders' testimonies of coming together as brothers, the young Penan assert their Penan-ness with their own versions of history and land-use. This resonates with Sahlins' assertion that with conversion to Christianity comes a greater awareness of indigenous culture (Sahlins 2005).

8.6 Closing Remarks

The three narratives express a common theme through migrations for new fertile land through journeys to the centre of government in Marudi and to the centre of Christianity in Long Budong in order to search for the good life (*ulun nuk doo'*). In the first narrative, it is found at Long Di'it where "our people" (*lun tauh*) can live together in a place that is protected from enemies

and where the soil is fertile for growing rice in abundance. In the next narrative, it is identified as living the life of government, in consensus, together with the values of harmony and peace. In the final narrative, it is the life of prayer that is free from omens, a time of change, yet a time for extended sociality and living close to the Penan. In addition, the term *ulun* "life" conveys the *living* of the "life of government" and *living* "the life of prayer" through agency and participation, rather than succumbing to the imposition of colonial rule or missionary influence.

The narratives represent history that is garnered through the value that indigenous people assign to their experiences, which is different from national and post-colonial histories that portray people on the margins of society as helpless victims of colonial power. Such an approach to history can only be realized by using oral histories that show how indigenous peoples manage their lives through their value system and how their own perceptions account for their actions (Walker 2002). Most significantly, this reinforces "why the Kelabit have been active agents and subjects of their own history" (Bala 2008:83) and the wider view that "that people may be able to affect the course of history in some sort of way" (Graeber 2001:xii). This also represents what is meaningful to the narrator and his audience, and this is how he creates his world through the narratives.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Household Survey Form

1. Resident household members

Relationship to Head	Sex	Age	Ed	Marital status	Activity	Employment Rela etc	Languages	Business /van / sewing / shop

2. Absent members

Relationship to Head	Sex	Age	Ed	Marital status	Residence	Occupation	Languages	Temp/permanent

2. Farms

Field No hill	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
How acquired								
Type wet dry								
Time from house								
Transport								
Years cultivated								
Quantity harvested								
Pesticide								
Fertilizer								
Maize								
Shortage of fields?								
Labour input								
Livestock	Pigs	Chicken	Duck	Fishpond	Fruittrees			

Nos owned								
Food								
Cost of food								

3. Labour input: hired labour 2013

Hired Labour	No	Venue	Wage rate RM per day	No of days
Male				
Female				

4. Crops and forest product sold

Tapioca				
Maize				
Vegetables				
Fruit				
Chicken				
Pond Fish				
Wood				
Wild meat				
River fish				
Rattan				
Craft				

5. Ownership of goods

Generator			
tv			
Boat engine			
Boat			
Chain saw			
Sprayer			
Rice mill			
Gas stove			
Freezer			
Washing machine			
Motor bike			
Car			

6. Remittances –from family members in town

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Clothes			
Food			
Tools			
Household items			
Money received			

7. Remittances to kin in town

	Never	Sometimes , what kind	Often , what kind
Food			
Money			

8. Items needed with cash

Gas			
Groceries			
School uniform			
Petrol			
Sugar			

Appendix 2: How Lawai became the Sole Penghulu by So Tepun (also known as Bayo Iwan)

Raja Umong was removed as Penghulu. Tom Harrison replaced him with Aan Keripin. After that, Tama Lating from Pa Dalih replaced him. They presented him with a flag. There was no one to replace him, so Raja Umong was re-appointed again as Penghulu. The local community had a lot of complaints against Raja Umong so they removed him as Penghulu.

Mr. Griffith came down from the highlands. He brought people with him. Penghulu Lawai was already appointed and he was also present. Datu Abang Galau, Tama Uding Saging, D.O Hashim came up the Baram to meet them at Lio Matu.

They talked, "You (Lawai Bisara), you will be the Penghulu to replace Raja Umong."

They must have planned it among themselves.

They said, "He (Bayo Iwan) cannot be a Penghulu. There will only be one Penghulu."

The blame is on our elders. They didn't want to come down here. They didn't want to come and listen to what is to be said. If they had come and said, "We used to have a Penghulu. He (Bayo) is the right person to take over. That would have been the nice thing for them to say."

Then, the D.O began to talk to us. Raja Umong was present with us. The D.O asked Tama Uding Saging, the Berawan Penghulu, to talk.

He said, "My dear gentleman Raja Umong, your time is now due, you will cease to be working with the government. It's akin to or life as farmers, when the cycle is over, you stop and take a rest."

Then Datu Galau spoke, "My dear Raja Umong, you've been a Penghulu for quite awhile. The government has decided and that you will retire. It's just like our life as farmers. We clear the farm, then fell the trees, after that we burn it, stack and re-burn it, then dibbling the field; then the padi seeds will grow; we weed it; when the field is ripe then we harvest. Then we store the padi in the barn. That's the way it is. You will retire."

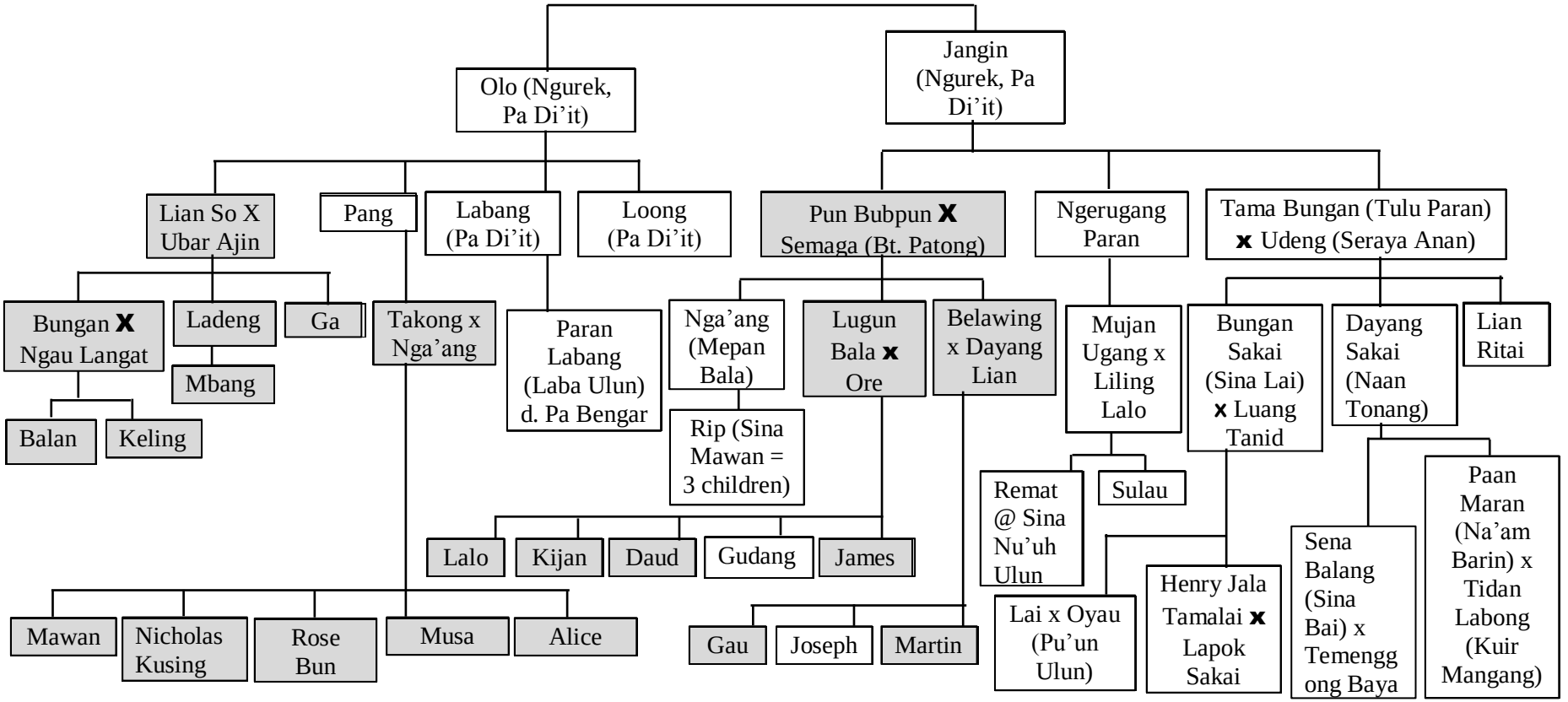
So Raja Umong replied, "That's fine, it's the government that decides."

Everyone spoke including Griffith, DO Hashim…Then it was my turn. They talked to me….

D.O Hashim said to me. "You will take over from Raja Umong. You will carry on. You will have an allowance."

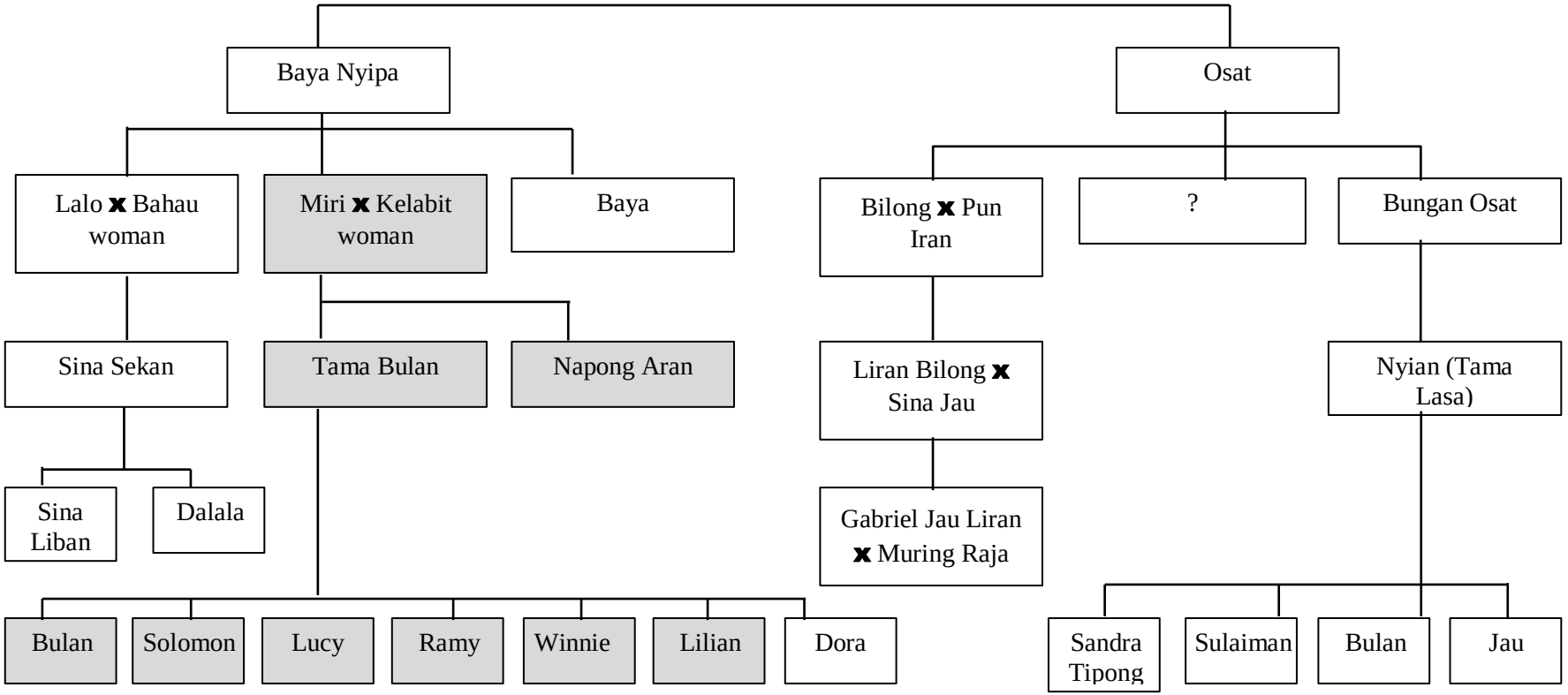
And so I wanted to talk, but Penghulu Lawai said, "No need for you to talk."

Appendix 3: Genealogy of Olo and Jangin[180]



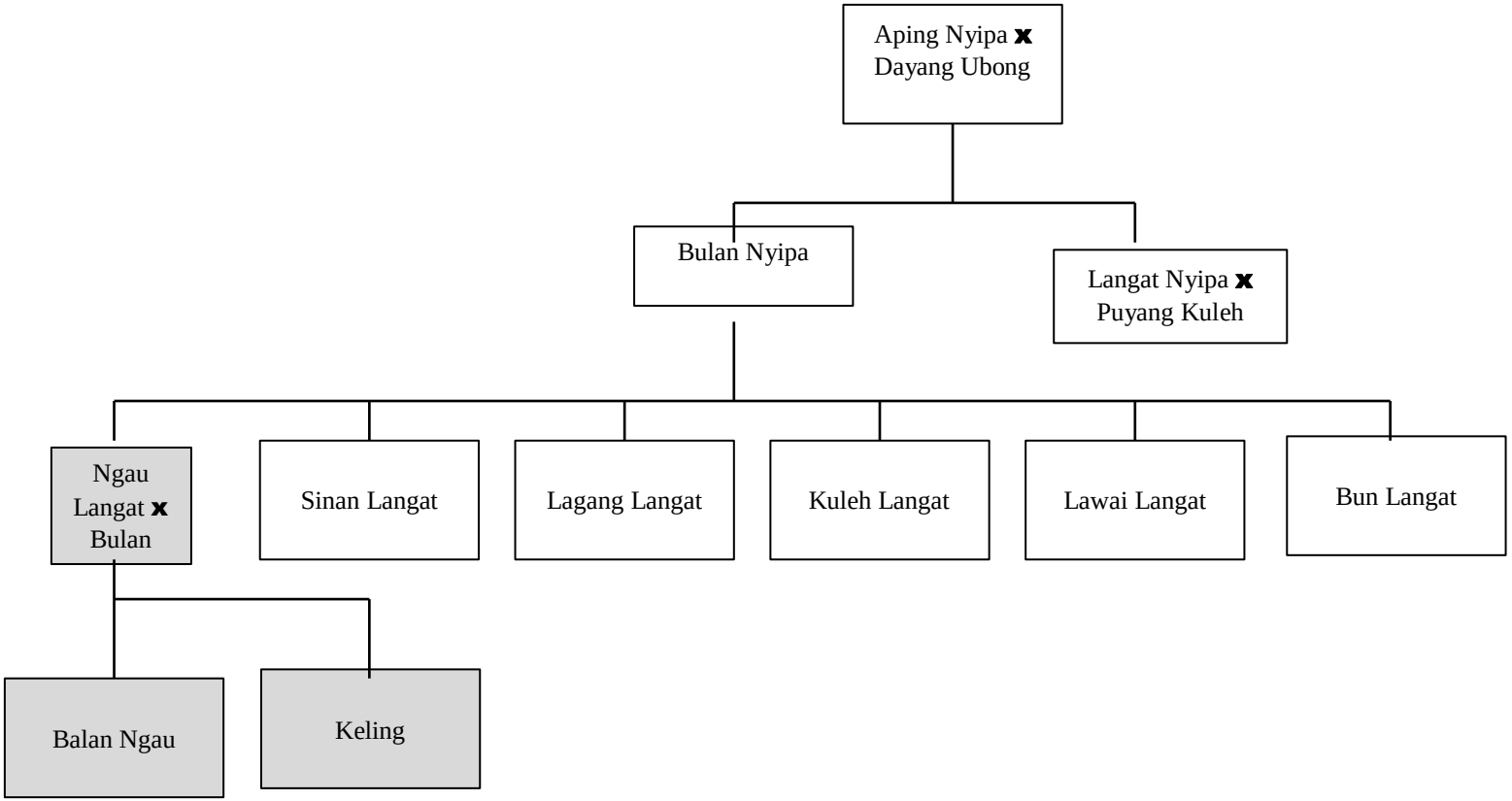
[180] Names in shaded boxes indicate residence in Long Peluan

Appendix 4 Genealogy of Penghulu Baya Nyipa[181]



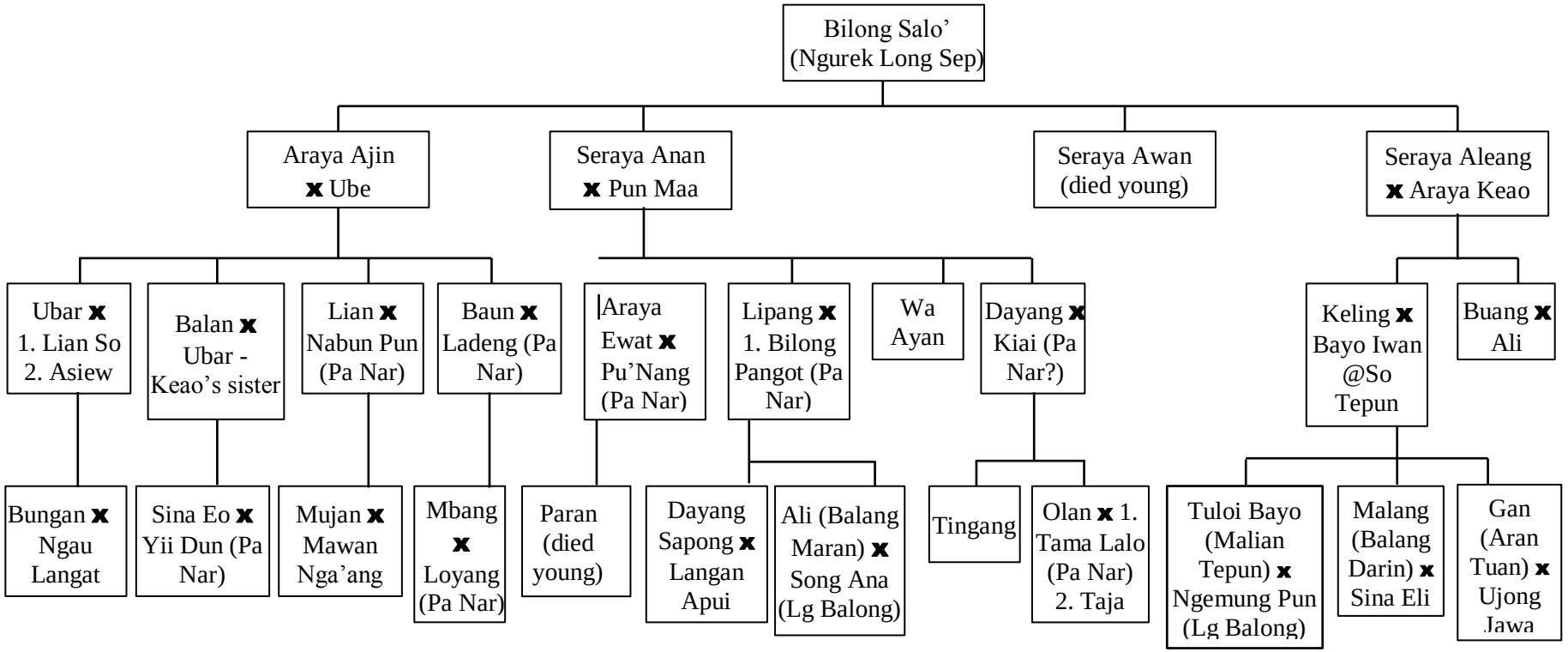
[181] 1. He was born in Pa Di'it. He lived on the Bangau River, Bahau.
2. People in the shaded boxes are known to have lived in the Kelabit highlands. Those in the white boxes lived in the Bahau, or Long Banga

Appendix 5: Genealogy of Aping Nyipa and Dayang Ubong[182]



[182] Dayang Ubong's Kelabit descendants include Penghulu Robinson Bala and Walter Wak Paran
Shaded area includes residence in Long Peluan.

Appendix 6: Genealogy of Araya Ajin and Siblings Founders of Long Peluan[183]



[183] Place of birth indicated in brackets. Pa Nar is a tributary of the Bahau River.

Appendix 7: Transcription of the First Narrative

1. Tauh la' keli' idih atur tauh, sejarah tauh, peruyung ngan Ngurek.

2. Kadi' nah, pu'un Ngurek nih malam ideh mulun ngi Bawang Ipong, suk alim Pa Bao ngi lah, 'su' pah iah la'ut nangey lah. Mulun lem Bawang Ipong 'deh.

Buro n'ideh lat Bawang Ipong, maak lem Pa Bao nah 'deh. Mey n'ideh mulun su' lem budut nah, Pu'un Aie, kedeh ngan idih. Budut inah, aie, kedeh Long Upun. Mulun n'ideh Long Upun. Mulun deh Long Upun nah, raden deh nginah terun, peruyung n'ideh ngan Sa'ban nah lah, lun tauh Lun Pa Nar nah lah.

Buro n'ideh lat nginah, maya' Pa Bao, maya' dalan suk Pa Belarong ngi, pedayeh Pa Puak. Maya' Pa Puak nah 'deh, mey n'ideh Long Balong nah. Peruyung n'ideh ngan lun tauh, mudang nginah ayu' nah ideh. Telen Sang, idih suk mu'uh lun tauh nuk lem inih nih lah, bangsa' tauh Kelabit eh. Telen Sang suk rayeh dedih.

Lun rayeh lun Ngurek eh, Linga Paran seh, Linga Lange seh, Linga Lawe. Nih deteluh denganak paad-paad idih mu'uh ideh Ngurek nih. Nih nah ideh Ngurek nih peruyung ngan lun tauh lem Pa Bale, Long Peluan, Long Puak nih.
Seh nah tempat nuk inan deh peruyung iah inah ngi Long Moyo. Ngi Long Moyo inan deh peruyung. Tu'an Ngurek mala, Lulao Terong, kedeh ngan su' inah.

3. Lat ngan inah, radan n'ideh peruyung terun lah. Mirat seh masa ideh muno' lun Lepo' Tepu marih merada' deh mey tungey. Na'am narih keli' su' pah Lepo' Tepu nah, na'am narih keli'. Kinah pebunu' deh malam terun kadi' nah ideh marih maya' deh tungey terun.

Paran Lepo' Tepu nah, tu'an deh ngatang deh. Seh aweyh barenging suk buda' yur dih lah; tu'an deh metanor aweyh beranging nah, tu'an deh ngenap iah, tu'an deh muput yur buluh upat. Buluh upat nah tu'an deh luun tapong paran dedih lah. Tu'an deh ngatang tah paran dedih nah.

Mesing deh ngi ripar Long Moyo nah, dih n'ideh nawar dulun lat ripar nah, royong lun tauh Kelabit eh royong ideh lun Ngurek eh. "Marih muyuh mageta kamih. Pageta kamih na'an nah, mesing kamih ripar nangey na'an nah, dih teh tauh pepatey," kedeh lah.

"Mo" kedeh. Mey n'ideh mageta deh. Guta seh alud tu'an deh ngatey, guta seh alud tu'an deh ngatey. "Peh tah lun ruyung kamih nuk nuwit muyuh mey ripar nangey, ngudeh tah idah na'am mawan-mawan?" kedeh.

“Nangey deh mirup ruma’ nangey”, kedeh. “Oh, ‘am, natey muyuh t’ideh terun kadi’ deh na’am mawan -mawan. Utak kinah, mey nah kamih muli’”.
“Mo, ‘an muyuh meman anak muyuh doo’ doo’. Nekap luang muyuh kenan anak muyuh, desur muyuh tu’an meman doo’ doo’. La’ak beruh marih nah kamih pikak muyuh”.
Mo, tated n’ideh miney muli’, pekaruh n’ideh lah.

4. “Pekaruh tauh, kapah linuh tauh ngabi. Kan kapah nah lawey tauh. Utak tauh mudang nginih, uih ngalinuh marih deh. Mayu tauh kareb otong deh lah. Na’am man ideh la’ si’it si’it la’ marih. Ayu tauh kerib la’ ko’ otong deh”, kedeh lah. Na n’ideh pekaroh ko’ ayu’ ineh eh.
Kan karuh ideh Ngurek eh, “mey la’ut tauh din”, kan karideh.
“‘Am kamih kerib mey la’ut, ‘am kamih milah ngan alut. Mey dayeh tauh”, kan karideh lun Kelabit.
Na’am n’ideh paad linuh terun lah, la’ mey la’ut ayu’ teh ideh Ngurek.
“Nga’ kinah, petad neh tauh”, kedeh. Kadi’ n’ideh petad su’inah lah. Ngurek mey la’ut, lun tauh mey dayeh. Kadi’ neh inan pokok tauh nih ngan Ngurek nah.

Tetamey Araya Ajin dedih neh, Seraya Aleang deh nah, Seraya Awan, Seraya Anan dedih nah, Ngurek tah tetamey dedih nah. Ngadan arayah sinah, iah inah Bilong Salo’. Adi’ nah tauh inih dengeruyung ngan Ngurek. Kapah tauh kerib peruyung, kerib inan pokok ngan Lun Ngurek. Kadi’ nah tauh inih pokok Ngurek seh uPa lah.

Kadi’ nah lun tauh nih mey dayeh. Seh mentah la’ih seh mu’it lun tauh nah, Telen Sang. Kail mentah la’ih sinah. Inan lalud mentah iah i’it- i’it terun. Bisa’ mentah iah terun. Lemasuk iah, tutu’ t’iah ripar ebPa ngi kedeh. ‘Am iah gutea-gutea Pa adi’ adi’ eh kedeh. Lemasuk iah, mesing t’iah ripar Pa. Kail arayah sinah. Tad iah ne nah lun nuk makat otong lemolon lah.
Kadi’ nideh maya’ Pa nah mey dayeh. Kadi’ nah Ngurek nih mey laut.

5. Kan keli’ muyuh dueh lun dueh anak adi’ beruh lah. Ara’ lunuan diweh merey diweh dengaruma’ lah. Utak kitah na’am dengaruma’ kapah nah? Ayu nah narih na’am kerib peruyung. Pabuluh nah diweh terun, ta’on diweh lah. Doo’ teh kitah matey kan diwah lah. Kadi’ nah diweh mey luun seh batuh Long Lingap nah. Parak tisu’ diwah terun kaleyh; uput diweh mey tana’, mey liang batuh ngi. Kadi’ nah seh lungun kayuh liang inah. Ketang idih teh iah, na’am repok tu’uh malam. Nah seni’ar kamih malam, na-nah tada’ karideh mey la’ut nange.

6. K'ayu' lun tauh, nah n'ideh mey dayeh ngi. Nah perupun nuk sinaro' deh maya' Pa nah, batuh senu'i deh maya' Pa nah, tanam tanam nuk sinaru' deh ngi Long Nonar nah. Nah tu karideh.

Seh teh beruh, bua' atur kedeh ngan idih, pela'ut Pa Ramudu nah. Nah bua' atur kan deteluh risu' inah nangey. Ranih deh, nah atur deh maya' inan deh tudo, su' inah inan deh nibu bua' su'inah lah.

7. Mey n'ideh mey Pa Ramudu nah. Mudeng inah n'ideh. "Mey teh muyuh pikak deh la'ut ngi. 'Am keli' narih, nilip kan lun merar malam lah. Mey nilip deh. 'Am keli' marih deh merada' tauh na'an nah. Na'am tauh keli'" kedeh. Mey n'ideh nilip deh la'ut ngi lah.

Seh nah tempat nuk di'at, su' pah nok inan perak-perak su'inah, di'at inan ma'ih mey bekan lah. Nah deh ngabang deh nginah. Mirat ayu' teh ideh maya' usih deh. Nah n'ideh petaro' ngedeh su' inah.

Nah man Telen Sang nah, upun iah mey lu'un seh batuh. Nah niah sewek su' inah. Tu'an deh nela' busu dedih, tu'an nah migir. Nela' nuk mey nange tu'an nah migir. Mabi nah busu dedih saru' nah nela' mey lem Pa ngi lah.

"Oh, na'am inih inan pepatey. Ada' inih. Mey nah tauh muli'", kedeh. Baluut n'ideh muli' lat su' inah. Lat su' inah n'ideh muut lah. Kinah lem ayu' deh ngabang deh su' inah. Mula' teh ideh matey terun lah, kadi' deh ngatang deh.

8. Mey deh muli' ruma' ngi, kadi' n'ideh mala ngan anak adi'. "Mey muyuh ni'ar peringi puun ko'. Otak beto' doo' su' inah, pura' mey nangey nah tauh", kedeh. "Tu'an muyuh ni'ar kayuh, kan kayuh nun su' inah. Tu'ar atau pun kayuh nuk molon-molon lem tana' doo' eh; tana' doo' ninah. Boro mey nangey tauh", kedeh.

Mey n'ideh su' Long Di'it nah, idih n'ideh keli' tana' su' inah doo' lah. Muli' deh mala ngan lun nuk mula' lun merar eh.

"Oh, nangey teh tana' nuk doo' eh", kedeh. Kadi' n'ideh pura' mey Long Di'it nah.

9. Radan n'ideh nginah terun lah, bekan man olon lun merar malam. Na'am deh radan-radan lem seh kanan. Kail nah, 10 la'ak 5 la'ak deh seh kanan, boro deh mey bekan. Bekan ruma' dedih doo' ko' tauh kinih nih. Tu'an deh kerib inan deh mudang inah lah. Kadi' ngudah? Ara' merey munu' keli' de-deh. Ta'ut ngan munu' mey nganah deh deh. Kadi' n'ideh pura'-pura' kenap-kenap la'ak dih lah.

Kadi' n'ideh ngalinuh beruh. "Kapah n'inih, kan na'am tauh kerib mey muli' Pa Bao ngi", kedeh? Pekaruh n'ideh terun lah. Kadi' na'am man ibal pian, la' ayu' nah ibal mey. Nah, "doo' tauh mey" kedeh.

Seh men nabang. Su' pah nabang nah nangey. Mesing deh su' inah, "bagi' tauh" kedeh. Taro' deh seh wey. Iih nuk la' mey Pa Bao mey n'ideh peruyung ngimat mey piPa nangey. Iih nuk pian la' mudang patungey, mey piPa sinah n'ideh.

Kina taro' deh ngatur deh lah. Doo' nah ayu ideh nok mey Pa Bao, Pa Atar eh. Si'it kamih tungey kedeh, berey deh ibal. Yuk-yuk, mey mula' n'ideh nok mey nangey eh, nah mabi nah wey dedih.

Mula' to'oh n'ideh teron, "net'ak nah wey eh", kedeh. Sit'ak deh nah wey eh. "Iih nok mey nangey eh nalan n'ideh mey nangey. Iih nuk modang tungey eh, mey tungey n'ideh". Inah nah pu'un tauh nih paki' inan lah. Mey Pa Bao n'ibal, tungey n'ibal. Mula' n'ideh nok mey Pa Bao tabi', di'at ulun deh nok nangey kedeh. Kadi' nah lemulun na'am mula' ketesan lah. Kinah lem ayu' ulun lun merar malam.

10. Ulun lun merar malam na'am deh tetap-tetap seh kanan lah. Kadi' nah inan tauh nih meput-meput lem punang ebPa nih; Punang Kelapang nah, kinah teh Pa Bao nah. Pah-pah inan tauh Lun Kelabit nih, su' inah inan tauh naru' batuh senu'i, batuh inan dulun ngererang tulang dulun lah. Kadi' na'am men tempat inan dulun kadi' dah pura'-pura'.

Nih sejarah ulun tauh Lun Kelabit eh. Tauh ayu' teh wan tana' nih. Inan lun nuk mala batuh-batuh nih. Kayu' Kenyah-Kenyah neh, na'am kadideh wan sejarah batuh, suma' kadideh wan kayuh teh kadideh; kayuh nok dita'-dita' teh diah ideh longon eh – tiang belian, kedeh. Tu'an deh ngarit diah ideh longon eh dita' ngi. Nih tu karideh. Tapi na'am man kayuh nih radan ku' ayu' batuh nih, idan idan pun idih teh sejarah tauh nih. Kadi' nah ideh nok turis (tourists) eh mala, ngepah-ngepah na'am teh batuh ku ayu inih nih. Su' inan muyuh Lun Kelabit tupu teh ku' ayu' inih dih. Muyuh ayu' teh wan tana' lem Punang Kelapang nih, kedeh. Nah tupuh teh tu'an tauh ngalinuh, sejarah lem ayu' ulun lun merar tauh mesing lem so sinih. Inih sejarah tauh ngan ideh Ngurek eh.

Uih, lat ngan iih keduih kerib doo' keli', kan moyoh? Seh Serayah Balu Bun, sesina Balu Bun dih. Modang kamih meso ngi Long Semeyang nah malam, mey naro' alut kamih. Adi' teh narih renga' idih, la'ih beruh teh narih. Nah iah ninut ideh peroyong ngan lun merar tauh n'iah.

Nah n'ideh mey mulun Lem Budut Pu'un Aei nah n'iah. Mala ideh boro lat lem Bawang Ipong ngi n'iah. Kadi' karu'ih doo' keli' lem su' inah.

Nih, kadi' Ngurek nih pu'un marih lem Telang Usan neh. Pu'un-pu'un Ngurek keli' Pa Telang Usan neh, "Pa non teh Pa sinih nih" kedeh. Kadi' am man lemulun mulun lem idih koh. "Inih Pa udan" kedeh. "Doo' teh tauh naru' iah Pa udan". Kadi' n'ideh naru' ia Telang Usan. Kadi' nah ngadan Telang Usan nih Telang Usan.

Tauh dayeh nangey, tauh Lun Kelabit nih, Pa Kelapang kan tauh. Kadi' deh mala tauh Lun Lapang. Kinah sejarah lem ayu' tauh ngan Ngurek nih lah.

Appendix 8: Ngurek Accounts of Their Migrations

Jalong describes the Ngurek as intermarrying with the Berap, who are related to the Lepo Ke, on the Bahau River (1989:158). He goes on to state that groups of Ngurek were the first inhabitants of Bawang Ipong, a fertile area on the Lurah River where they were joined by the Sa'ban and the Kayan Uma Po. Sellato dates this at around 1750 (1995:7).

This date corresponds with the migration sequence outlined in Tua Kampong Matthew Uchat Kajan's witness statement, which suggests that by 1780 the Ngurek had already left this area (Claimants' Documents 2005: Section 5).

Jalong outlines a similar migration into Sarawak under the leadership of Eju Jalong, mentioning places such as Long Puak, Long Balong, Lulao Terong, (Long Moyo) (1989:160-161). This is also supported by Sellato who indicated that the Sa'ban stayed back on the Ma'u, (a tributary of the Puak river located to the present Sarawak-Indonesia border) when the Ngurek went into the Baram River (1995:28).

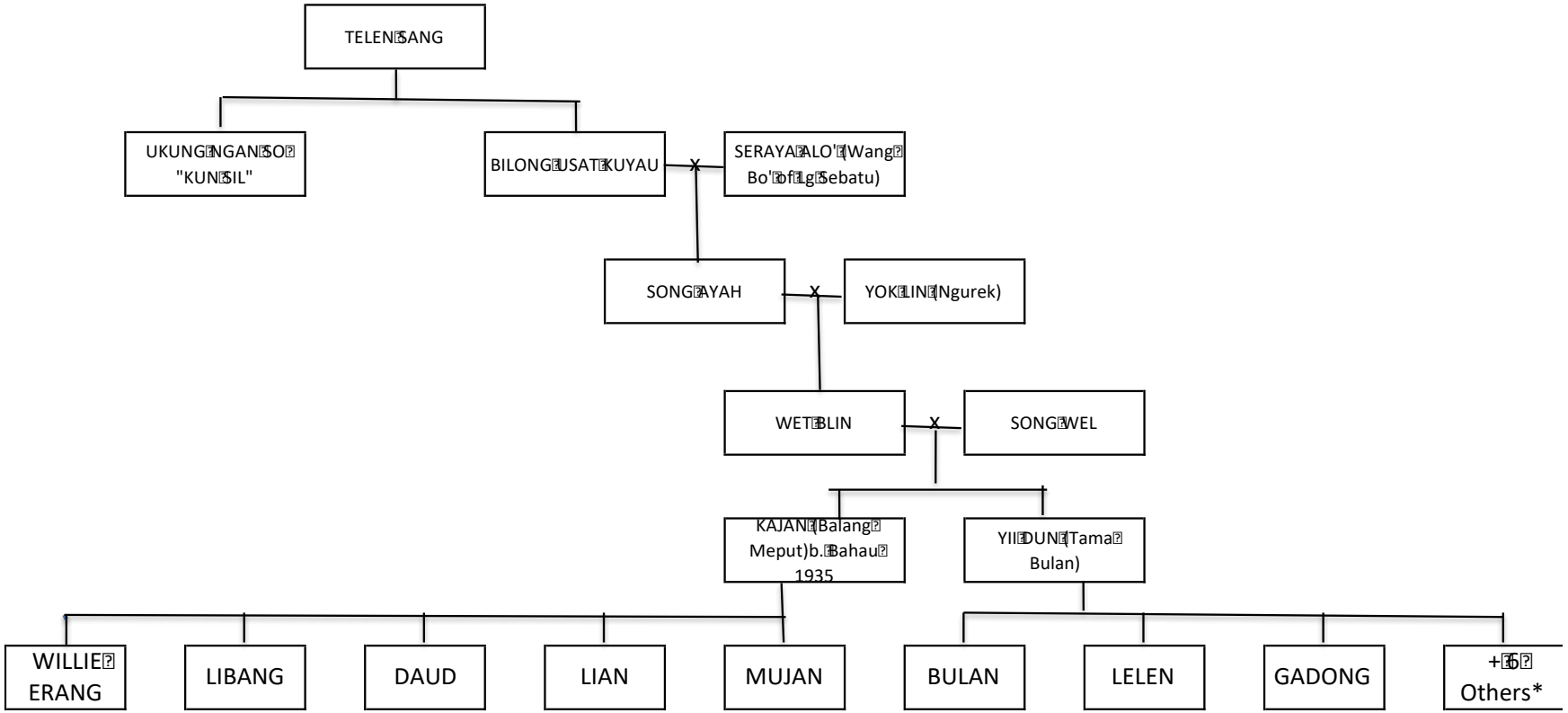
The move to Long Upun, a tributary of the Bahau River, mentioned by Malian is not documented either by Sellato or Philip Ngau Jalong, although a number of Sa'ban informants claim ancestry from this place, which they call Pi Pun.

Danny Lawai Kajan and Matthew Uchat Kajan (Claimants' Documents 2005:Section1) only mention Linggan Lawei as the first leader of the Ngurek at Long Balong and Long Banga.

Engan Ngau (2012) also mentions three Ngurek brothers at Long Balong, like Malian, at Long Moyo: Ula Tepileh, Ula Kelihin and Ula Amain Ulu. Jalong mentions only two cousins as leaders, Ula Tepileh and Ula Kelihin (1989:161). For further details on Ngurek migration see Chapter 3.

Appendix 9: Genealogy of Telen Sang

Appendix 9: Genealogy of Telen Sang



*Footnote: Bulan has 8 other siblings - Lelen, Gadong, Seli, Abell, Dolly, Baun, Rinai and Lagang.

Appendix 10: Philip Jalong's Account of the Attack by the Lepo Tepu (Jalong1989)

"…The raiding force was under a Kayan chief by the name of Jau Luhong .The chief Jau Luhong was carried on a decorated *padong* (sedan chair) all the way from across the Apau Kayan. Unfortunately for him, the Ngurek were well prepared for the attack. They had been informed earlier by an advance party of their Sa'ban ally. Just before the enemy arrived, most of the warriors hid in the *lepau parei* the rice barns. Jau Luhong and his men set up camp across river from the longhouse. The Baram River was high. Jau Luhong noticed that there were not many of his men around. He had earlier been misinformed that most of the men had gone on a long trip to hunt and build boats .He planned to take the children and women as slaves, and tried to trick them by pretending he was on a friendly trip on the way to somewhere else. He requested for his men to be taken to the longhouse for a feast. The Ngurek agreed, but on the condition that Jau Luhong and his men left their weapons and war dresses behind. So confident was Jau Luhong of his plan that he agreed to that condition.

Two cousins, Ula Langihin and Ula Tapileh, ferried across Jau Luhong's army to the longhouse. Those Ngurek warriors hiding in the rice barns were waiting for the last boatload to reach the bank when they all suddenly all burst out and attacked the defenceless visitors. There was a great slaughter. The bank of the Baram River was littered with dead bodies and its water turned red with blood. The two cousins in the boat prevented those who attempted to swim back. Their boat was half filled with the fingers of those who vainly clung to the boat. Jau Luhong's men were almost entirely wiped put by mid-morning, except Jau Luhong himself and a few of his followers. He cried loudly and begged for his life, and for assistance to guide him across the border. A few Ngurek leaders volunteered to send them across. At the border Jau Luhong told the Ngurek that they better fatten their pigs, because he would come back to look for the *ulen* maggots of his dead men. He meant that one day he would return to avenge the defeat.

No one knew why Jau Luhong and his handful of men were spared their lives. Was this act of kindness an unwritten code of headhunting raids or simply a gentleman's gesture of forgiveness? It was most likely that the elders wanted Jau Luhong to report back and to warn others not to disturb the Ngurek again (1989:161).

Appendix 11: Engan Ngau's Account of the Attack by the Lepo Tepu[184]

We fought the Lepo Tepu in Long Balong. We had been living there quite a while. At that time, we had supernatural power *tareng manok*. The war started because our enemies wanted to get it.

Jau Lohong was a Kayan leader who came with the Lepo Tepu leader to capture the *tareng manok* from them. They thought he was trying to take the *tareng manok* from them. Mawat Ngau kept the *tareng manok* and he was my ancestor. There were three Ngurek brothers Ula Tepileh, Ula Kelihin and Ula Amain Ulu living in Long Balong. When Jau Lohong and his men reached the opposite river bank, in order for them to come across, the three brothers picked them up each one by one. Jau Lohong was on one side of the river with his men. Mawat Ngau was on the other side where the longhouse was built, so the brothers ferried the people over the river. Jau Lohong's men were taken across the river and they kept disappearing. Jau Lohong suspected something was wrong.

He shouted to Mawat Ngau, "Brother, stop taking my people, let them get across!"
"No," came the reply "let them ferry some more men over the river!"
Jau Lohong's people started to cross the river on foot and when they were in the middle our people started to attack.
Jau Lohong said, "That's enough!"

His people were wading across the river on foot. While they were in the middle of the river, the Ngurek came to attack the enemy and at the same time the Kelabit from Long Moyo surrounded and fenced them in. The three brothers were in a simple longboat made out of a dug out trunk. Ula Kelihin steered the boat across the river, Ula Tepileh used the blowpipe and spear to deflect attack, and Ula Umain Ulu would cut the fingers off anyone who wanted to enter the boat, and the boat was overflowing with fingers. The enemy were almost all killed, but there were some left on the other bank on the river with Jau Lohong.
Jau Lohong accepted defeat but warned, "All right Mawat Ngau, I lose the battle. You'd better train your warriors. I'm going back to the Batang Kayan. I'll collect as many rice grains to make a counter attack."

When he left the Ngurek crossed the river and they went to see the place where he had been carried and they saw the *manok ebuh* feathers that were used to decorate Chief Jau

[184] I'm grateful to Peter Jalong for translating this.

Lohong's sedan chair. It was decorated with the feathers of this bird to indicate his status. That bird in our community has special power *manok ebuh*. It was an omen, which we used to decide the future.

When they heard that Jau Lohong had threatened to come back, knowing he would collect a large force from Apo Kayan and Ulu Bahau, Mawat Ngau said "when this Jau Lohong returns, I believe we will not be able to withstand his attack. We had better retreat to find better land."

They then moved to first place at Long Tijan, then Apau Alim on the opposite side of the river opposite the Kubu in Lio Mato. They shifted again to Sungei SeruPa to Long Selungo and then came to Long Semiyang.

Appendix 12: The Story of the Lovers of Batu Long Lingap by Engan Ngau[185]

There was once a young aristocratic (*ketua)* man who loved a young woman who was a commoner (*panyin).* The elders did not want them to marry because their families were of different backgrounds. However power of love was strong. The couple climbed up Batu Lingap. They cleared away all the roots and creepers that gave them support in climbing the rock so no one could reach them from there they climbed up onto a *tanyit* tree (*tapang, Kompassia excelsa).* Nonetheless, their families tried to convince them to come down and left food for them and even told them that if they came down they could get married. However, the couple refused food and they went hungry. They made a basket in the *tanyit* tree and settled there and they swung all day and all night starving them to death. The young woman died after six days and the young man two days later. Their families climbed to the top of Batu Lingap using bamboo to rescue their remains and put them in position of embrace into a wooden coffin[186] and buried them under the rocks at Batu Lingap.

[185] I'm grateful to Peter Jalong who has assisted in translating this.
[186] The coffin was made of *adau* or *arau* in Bahasa Malaysia.

Appendix 13: The Separation of the Community

According to legends, the Kelabits and the Sa'bans lived together in the Kelabit highlands proper until the population became so dense that some decided to move into the Pa Bao valley in the Batang Kayan area. Before they departed, they ceremoniously made *nabang* ditches on the ridge at Long Arur Kalio on the border. They then divided into two sides, the Kelabits who remained on the ridge who could be seen, while those that went stood in the valley and were thus obstructed from view. The group responsible for dividing them saw that those on the ridge were more numerous, so they asked some of them to join those in the valley. Therefore the number of those in the valley was greater. It was only when they have departed that the Kelabits who stayed realized that they were less in number and had been tricked. This explains why there are more Kelabit related people like the Sa'ban in Kalimantan. The story tells us that the Kelabits who moved into the Pa Bao area came to be called Pa Nar people better known as Sa'bans (Lian Saging 1976/7:27).

Appendix 14: The Identity of Telen Sang

Telen Sang displays the same supernatural strength of the Kelabit heroes such as Agan Tadun, Tuked Rini and Balang Lipang who featured in Kelabit epic songs. For example, Balang Lipang can leap over a valley in just one step, escapes defeat by swimming along the bottom of a river, is reduced to skin and bones by his ordeals and is put back together as an invincible warrior with an iron body through the ministering of Pun Anan, the blacksmith, (Rubenstein 1973:823).

Even though Telen Sang's feats defy belief that he was a real historical person, it is important to bear in mind that invincibility was a quality that was both inherent and also sharpened with rigorous training. Kelabit were known have exceptional strength and physique:

Kelabit men were schooled in being courageous from childhood. As young boys they were challenged to accomplish challenges as overcoming their fear of the dark, by running alone to the river to collect a wet stone, or withstanding the pain of burning objects on the skin.[187] Further to this, men celebrated their strength by participating in competitive activities that involved throwing boulders, pushing stones up hill, running up mountains and climbing slippery poles.[188] So although the strength and physique of Telen Sang seems exaggerated this does not exclude the possibility that he was a real person.

Little is known about Telen Sang today. However, he is the subject of a recording made during my first visit to Long Peluan in December 1984. From this account it is said that he was an ancestor of Balang Meput (Appendix 9). The main storytellers were So Tepun and Balang Meput.[189] The following story has been constructed from this 1984 recording, which is very close to Malian's narrative and supports the location of the attack with the Lepo Tepu at Long Moyo. It is quoted below in full, as it endorses Malian's story, and presents a unique account of the migration to Long Di'it. This 1984 narrative also provides a conclusion to the account of the fighting against the Lepo Tepu with the conquest of their leader.

> They moved upriver from Long Moyo, one month after the Lepo Tepu attack had taken place there. Telen Sang had to score the skin of his two sons with a knife and

[187] For more examples see Bala (2008:65).
[188] Lawerence Blair describes meeting in Indonesia a mystic healer who emits energy from his body that has the power to repel any approach to his unprotected body (2010: 236). It is likely that warriors in the past trained themelves to have these powers.
[189] Other voices in the recording are Malian's brother, Aran Tuan and two other elders, Lugun Bala and Petuan Tepun.

they bleed to determine if they had the qualities of invulnerability. And they bled.[190] So Telen Sang said, "If you are so feeble, when the enemies come, the two of you will be accountable for the death of all our people.

They fled, stopping first at Pa Okan, before Pa Nonar. Then they stayed at the flat land (patar) in Pa Nonar for a while. Today you can see there their stone slab graves and standing stones. By then, Telen Sang was very old and had white hair. They moved to Long Di'an is above Long Kerama'an in the Pa Di'it area.[191] They asked young men to go and look for good place for building a settlement. They climbed up a hill to Remudu and saw the river flowing in a different direction. This was a good place to trick the enemy. They moved from there to Pa Di'it. They did not plant rice but carried their tapioca cuttings along with them.

Early one morning Telen Sang went out with his men and waited for the enemies at a shallow crossing point, getaan by Reberuh Uyut.The Lepo Tepu arrived came and crossed the getaan all in single file. Telen Sang commanded his men to attack the enemy while he commanded from the riverbank. Telen Sang's men attacked the enemies with spears. Many Lepo Tepu died but they couldn't attack the leaders paran of the Lepo Tepu. The leaders of the Lepo Tepu shouted to Telen Sang "Why are you ordering your men to fight and you yourself are not coming down?" So Telen Sang jumped down into the river to fight together with his men. He retaliated by throwing knives. Then their leaders shouted and said "Let us retreat now." The chief was carried by his men high up on their shoulders using the support of poles for his seat (*ngatang*) after that they were chased and fighting continued. They went after the leader and his carriers were forced to throw him down with his seat. At that point Telen Sang slashed him with his knife and killed him. Telen Sang died in Long Di'it.

This story recorded at a time when there was much less pressure on land than there is today, reinforces the events in Malian's migration sequence and associates the cemetery at Long Nonar with Telen Sang's migration there. This strengthens Malian's claim to these sites as part of the domain of Long Peluan. Although Telen Sang from the beginning of the narrative is said to be the leader of the Kelabit his identity is ambiguous, at a time when whole communities were heterogeneous. However, when asked, Malian says he was Kelabit, and Long Di'it today is considered a Kelabit settlement. Telen Sang and his followers made a *perupun*, burial mound, at Pa Nonar according to his descendant Balang Meput and some people say that cemetery at Long Nonar was the burial site of the ancestors of Araya Ajin, one of the founders of Long Peluan. His father Bilong Salo is said to have been Ngurek. There is likely to be a genealogical link between Telen Sang, Bilong Salo and Araya Ajin, but this has yet to be established.

[190] This indicated they were not invulnerable.
[191] See Chapter 3 for more on Pa Di'it.

Appendix 15: Transcription of the Second Narrative

1. Inih nuk binala Araya Kapan Tepun lat Long Di'it. Pu'un pu'un tauh Long Di'it, inih seh bawang nuk terkenal lem bawang tauh Lun Kelabit nih malam. Pu'un pu'un nuk idih jaga' lun lemulun munu' iah inah Tamabu' Inok. Suk kedueh, iah inah Raja Ubung, suk keteluh Tai Iwan, suk kepat Araya Keao, suk kelimah Bayo Iwan. Lat ngan inah Aran Tuan, pengah Aran Tuan, nih nah uih inih lah, nuk ngimat ulun lun lat ma'on. Tamabu' Inok, iah inah ngimat lem ulun munu'. Raja Ubung ngimat dulun munu'. Tai Iwan iah inah seketib iah ngimat ulun muno', seketib iah ngimat ulun perintah.

Nih pu'un pu'un lun tauh lah, tauh nuk ngimat ulun lemulun lat ma'on. Tapi na'am tauh nih lemulun doo' mula' nuk midih. Tauh korban idih mu'uh lemulun, jaga' rayat nih nah tauh lat malam malam lah. Walaupun susah, walaupun da'at, tauh idih iah kerja jaga' lemulun.

2. Kinih lem ayu' ulun sejarah tauh lat ma'on mesing lem so sinih. Kinih uih la' mala kapah tauh keli' ulun perintah nih. Seh nah tetepuh tauh inih iah inah Tai Iwan. Keli' na-nah burung perintah Brunei la' naru' damai luun tana' nih, ara' merey dulun pepatey, ara' merey dulun kedaluh.

"Eh, su' pah teh inan ulun sinah nah, ulun pah teh perintah inah, keli' dulun ngabi din, na'am nah narih tusah mulun," kenah. Kadi' n'iah nekap dalan mey papu' perintah.

3. Mey n'iah, nu'it nah tuda' burur dulun lah. Apui Nalan, kedeh ngan seh. Mula' dulun, 'am narih keli' ngadan dulun nuk nu'it nah dih. Maya' inah deh, maya' lem pulung, maya' lem Punang Nonar nah deh kedeh lah, mey tutu' Punang Pa Sela'an nah. Nah n'ideh mey ngi Long Semiyang nah. Long Semiyang nah su' inah teh pu'un pu'un dulun maya' Pa nih, Lun Ngurek Long Semiyang nah.

Mey iah nginah, Long Serap (Long Sep) kedeh nginah, mey n'ideh mey matun Araya Maping Nyipa. Nyipa inah kira lun ruyung tauh t'iah. Ngeruyung deh kedeh.

Nah n'iah muit Maping Nyipa mey papu' perintah. Nah n'ideh mey, maya' lem pulung t'ideh. Maya' inah deh, maya' Punang Akah nah deh, mey nideh mirat Long Lutin, kedeh, ngan Pa suk la'ut Naa' dih lah. Lat nginah mey Long Temala. Mesing deh Long Temala nangey, maya' alut n'ideh lat nginah terun, bawang Long Temala, Long Ikang seh bawang pela'ut nah, Long Banio, nah n'ideh mey Marudi nah. Kobo' Marudi nah lem inah, apo kajang ruma' eh. Bulu' tu'an deh ko' tesak alim ngi.

4. Mey n'ideh papu' ngan tuan sinah lah, Pengiran kan kadideh Melayo' ngenah. Mey n'ideh papu' Pengiran sinah, "Nih marih kamih marih ngitun ulun perintah kamih. Kan kapah tabi' ulun perintah nuk tu'an muyuh ngatur nih?"

"Oh mo, nih perintah Sultan Brunei la' nuru' tamat, nuru' dulun na'am papatey; paad luun tana' inah na'am dulun kedaluh, pepatey. Tauh dengeruyung, Paad tauh dengepanan na'am da'at seburur ngan seburur", kenah lah.

"Mo" kenah, "doo' kan marih ko. Nih kamih la' nekap lemulun nuk pian idih ngitun ulun eh. Mo, utak 'ko mey muli', mey n'iko mada' lemulun abi-abi, muyuh nuk lem punang Pa nah. 'Am merey dulun kedaluh, kadi' nih ulun nuk pian tu'an luun tana' nih" kan Pengiran sinah ngedeh lah.

"Mo, mey ko muli, mey kuh mada' lemulun" kenah.

Birey nah seh barera' ngenah. Nah niah muli', nah n'iah mey mada' lemulun lah.

"Pedoo' na'am kedaluh", kan karuh perintah ngenah.

"Dih bawang suk la belawan eh, ara' ningar karuh nuk belaan muh ngedeh, idih ulud nuk belaan muh ngedeh, ngelawan", kenah.

"Uih nuru' soldadu ataupun polis mey papatey bawang sinah," kenah.

5. Kadi n'iah muli'. Nah n'iah mada' dulun lah. Lem inah dulun doo' pian lah, doo' kera'an ningar burung nuk ku' ayu' inah, ara' nuru' dulun na'am kedaluh.

Lem masa inah malam, tusah dulun malam. Lemulun nuk adi-adi', nuk beruh-beruh nih, nangey deh lem pulung nangey mey nilip kan lun merar eh; litah bawang, litah idih detsur mey lema'ud, tusah teh.

Abi-abi dulun doo' senang pian ngan ulun sinah. Kadi' nah dulun palap denganak; pirit, paad paad kuman dara'. 'An deh ngirit seh, an deh ngirit seh, paad paad diweh kuman dara', ara' merey dulun kedaluh beruh. Kinah lem ayu pedamai sinaru' dulun lem risu' inah malam.

Nah, pangah dadan nah pingan inah, seh nah lemulun lat Pa Ibang, iah inah marih mu'it deh marih munu' ngi Long Di'it nah. Kadi' iah inah na'am iah keli' ajar terun, lun marih ngiban lat la'ut nangey iah kedeh.

Miney n'ideh pu'un pu'un, nekap dulun lema'ud terun lah. Papu' n'ideh ngan Sina Ubar, natey deh n'iah, nalap deh n'iah.

'Am teh radan, "Tu'an tauh pekaruh teh inih" kan tepu' Tai Iwan malam eh. "Ngudeh la'ih sinih marih ngeruma ngeruma dawi nuk tu'an tauh eh" kenah.

Na’am radan, mirat n’ideh. Natey deh Tama Arong.

“Pangah nah tauh kinih kinih, na’am tauh litah, na’am tauh jaga’, nih nah bawang eh na’am la’ kedaluh, na’am la’ papatey, kan tauh; ngudeh lun nuk inih marih ngulam ngulam tauh? Marih ngatey tauh?” kenah. “Doo’ mey mada’ ngan perintah la’ut ngi”.

Kadi’ n’iah mey beruh ngan perintah nangey. Kadi’ n’iah mala ngan perintah, Nih karuh nuk binala kuh malam eh, pelaba tabi’ doo’ senang dulun tabi’, doo’ pian ngan ulun nuk tu’an perintah nih. Nih etseh bawang, dueh kulang deh marih ngatey kamih; dueh lemulun natey deh. Kapah kan lun perintah ngan deh?”

“Mo, doo’” kenah. “Uih nuru’ dulun marih pepatey ngedeh.”

6. Muli’ n’iah. Imung perintah nah bawang Kenyah, Kayan mey Iban ngi Marudi nah.

Kan karuh perintah, “Mey muyuh ngan Tai Iwan, su’ pah bawang suk ngelawan eh,” kenah, “tu’an merey dueh selapang ngan muyuh, dueh lemulun nuk ngaban eh”

Birey nah seh selapang ngan Tama Kiut, birey nah seh ngan Tamuing Ludan. Tamuing Ludan nih lun Ngorek. Tama Kiut mudang Pa Tutoh, lat bawang matey Temenggong Malang malam dih iah.

Marih n’ideh lat la’ut nange, mula’ tungan tungan t’ideh. Na’am kerib deh meman deh. Mesing deh berey tu’un teh nuba’ ngedeh na’am deh sukup kenan lemulun mula’. ‘Nun tupu keli’ deh ngalap tupu teh baweh nih. Na’am pitung, kerubau, tapi’, berak, ngatey tupu. Na’am dulun mala ‘nun ngedeh lah. Kadi’ nah lun merar pengah mada’ deh marih.

Seh nah lun merar, Aban Jau; “Bagi’ tauh, Kenyah mey Pa Ibang, muyuh lun Iban mey Da Alid, Da Toar, Da Kabir kedeh muyuh nangey.”

Mey n’ideh Pa Ibang nah. Kadi’ Tai Iwan nah, seh men teh Tai Iwan ngi nangey nah. Mey iah, sipid nah barera’ nedih luun baret Tai Iwan suk nangey eh.

“Na’am muyuh lawan ruma’ sinih kadi’ inan lun ruyung kamih nginih.”

Sinih teh tu’an muyuh kalibut kenah, selibut deh nah ruma’ la’ih suk marih ngatey deh inah.

Senutud deh n’iah. ‘Tak sidih mey mupur apui eh, tu’an deh madil, menkeru’ deh tutu’. Iyuk iyuk mabi n’ideh sinaru’ deh ngatey.

Pepid inah, Tama Kiut inah madil deh terun. Mabi’ nah materum nedih, keli’ munu’ eh nah materum nedih mabi’ terun lah. Upun Araya Tai Iwan suk ud’ang nangey eh, binayung nah iah, matey nah kediah (Tama Kiut) lah.

Alak nah selapang nedih, putul man selapang nedih. Putul iah kedah, sila' deh n'iah. Na'am dulun keli' selapang ku' ayu' inah malam.

Doo' mey men ideh Kenyah ngalap iah muli'.

Muli' nah Iban karideh; naru' tu'uh tu'uh teh ideh. Muli' deh panid bu'an deh oloh. Nah lem ayu' ulun munu' malam mesing lem ulun perintah.

7. Mesing nah ulun perintah miney nah Tai Iwan ngi la'ut. Pekaruh n'iah ngan perintah.

"Mado dalan nih. Kapah nah uih kerib marih kulang kulang maya' ebPa nih" kenah. "Doo' perintah nih nurun abi abi Kenyah, Kayan mey iring ebPa supaya ideh kerib ngalud uih mey lem erang deh," kenah.

"Mo, tu'uh karuh muh inah. Tated 'ko mey muli' ano' nah tu'an kuh nuru' nah dulun mey mulun iring Pa inah," kenah.

Tated iah muli', sinaru' nah nah Kenyah, Kayan mey iring Pa nah. Kadi' nah Aban Jau malam eh, tetepuh Temengong (Oyong Lawai Jau) dedih lah, Long San nah, "Oo, narih man lun pelaba maren lem Usun Apau nih, Kelabit di'at nuk inah nuru' kamih mey iring Pa nah, mulun lem tana' di'at nih."

'Am deh kerib ngelawan perintah, mey ayu' t'deh. Ideh nah nah pu'un pu'un mey mulun Long San nah terun lah, mey Long Akah nah.

Kadi' nah perintah mepad mepad deh maya' ebPa nah. Nah nah pu'un Kenyah, Kayan eh mey iring ebPa nah.

Muli n'iah ruka sinah keli' nah nah lemulun turun mey iring ebPa nah sinaru' perintah.

"Am narih mey tunuk ngedeh ano' nah, mey pedawi ngedeh, am teh narih doo' senang nalan," kenah lah.

Nu'it nah nah tuda' burur maya' iah maya' Pa nah. Nu'it nah ibal siguk ipid maya' deh maya' Pa nah.

"Nah iah mey pedawi ngan Kenyah," kedeh.

Kadi' inan nah lemulun nuk muwau nuk 'am pekenah ngenah lah; "Eh, Tai Iwan ngedawi Kenyah nih ngan siguk, ri'ak nah tu'an kamih ngeel upat nedih", kan lemulun nuk na'am pekenah ngenah eh.

Marih n'iah turun maya' Baram nih nangey, nah n'iah sebela' ngan dulun nuk merar merar maya' nuk maya' Pa nih lah, ku' ayu' Pengolo' Arang dedih malam.

Mey n'iah mesing Marudi. Nih nah ulun sinaru' perintah nih nah nah lemulun temurun mey Marudi nih.

Kinih kan perintah ngenah, "Ulun doo' sinaru' muh, sinaru' muh damai, doo' muyuh merey wang asin dapor; seh 'bang ruma', muyuh ngalap para', para' war kalang. Inan kamih nuru' muyuh ngalap ini supaya kamih kekeli' kapah tuda' kekula' muyuh nuk lem Telang Usan nih, tuda' kekula' tetak ruma' muyuh kadi' la' kekeli' lem su' inah."

"Mo" kenah ngenah. "Mo", kenah, "kapah kapah linuh perintah, kapah nah kamih marih mated mado-mado tungey. Tulu kerib kenah, tu'an naru' seh opis ataupun kobo' ngi Long Lama, naru' seh ngi Long San Long Akah, naru' seh ngi Long Lio. 'Su' inah inan kamih kerib mey mated wang asin kamih dih ngan peritah di teh senang."

8 "Mo, tulu karuh mudih nah," kenah. "Mey ko muli' mey 'ko mada' lemulun net'ak ruma' suk ngi Long Lio nah. Muyuh Lun Dayeh Lun Kelabit, doo' muyuh mey net'ak kayuh eh. Kenyah tu'an koh mey naru' kepang, Kenyah tu'an koh naru' bengar," kenah.

"Mey 'ko muli' mey 'ko mada' lemulun mey net'ak kayuh eh," kenah. Muli' iah, nah n'iah mey mala inah. Mey mada' mesing Pa Krayan nangey iah, mesing Pa Tera, Pa Orang, mesing lem Pupung nah, Long Budong nah lemulun marih ngan nah net'ak kayuh Long Lio nah.

Nah pu'un pu'un ulun perintah nah mesing lem Baram nah.

Mo, pingan inah pengah nidih sinaru' dulun lah. Kaya' n'iah terun lah, na'am n'iah kerib idi marih la'ut tungey lah. Nah n'ideh la' nekap seh dulun siwa iah lah.

Etseh tepun tauh tu'an tau Araya Keao. Tetepuh kamih nih. Nah n'ideh la' naru' iah ko' Pengolo'. Lem masa sinah nah men teh ideh dengeruyung, ideh denganak, k'ayu' Araya Ajin, Araya Ewat nah la' boro' mey Long Peluan nih lah. Ara' n'ideh merey kadiah (Araya Keao) marih abin deh la' naro' iah ko' Pengolo. Kapah terun, 'am nah nuk ituk ituk, ngerid n'iah. Ee neto, nah na Araya Keao naeh, nah n'iah tebaya' ngan awan nadih marih Long Peluan nah.

Nah n'ideh naru' atey Araya Tingang, mudang Ramudu la'ih rayeh sinah nah; tatamey matey Raja Umong malam dih. Nah n'ideh naru' matey Araya Tingang malam siwa nah. Kadi' nah tugas Pengolo' sinah mey ngan Araya Tingang. Pengah kari'it Tingang ngimat ko' Pengolo' matey n'iah ta'on nah lah. Kadi' n'ideh mura' idih mey ngan matey Raja Umong malam eh.

Iah pah, la'ih i'it t'iah renga' idih. Na'am wan awan, la'ih beruh. Nah n'iah sinaru' ko' Pengolo' tauh lah.

Paad mesing lem so sinih kadi' n'iah menjadi ko' Pengolo' tauh Kelabit nih; iah ngimat tugas Pengolo' tau keradan inih lah, ko' siwa Tai Iwan.

9. Mo, nutul karuh suk na'ah eh; Araya Keao idih iah, inan nah lun dinganak nuk idih lah; Araya Ajin, Seraya Awan, Seraya Aleang, Seraya Anan, pat nih deh denganak. Nah n'ideh sadangan deh la' marih Long Peluan.

Kadi' tauh nih ngeroyong tauh adi'-adi' ngan Ngurek lah. Tatamey Araya Ajin ideh nah lun Ngurek seh tetamah ideh nah. Bilong Salo' kedeh ngenah. Kadi' nah Maping Nyipa na'eh la' ngan ideh mey munang ngan dalan su' ini lah. Kadi' n'iah mada' mada' ideh marih maya' dalan sinah lah, kadi' inah dalan rayeh ri'ak nah kedeh. Kadi' n'ideh denganak namarih tungey (Long Peluan). Kaya' Araya Keao, nah n'ideh ngeta keriah ara' naro' iah marih lah. Awan nedih Seraya Aleang, dueh anak nah, Buang seh, Seraya Idang seh. Nah anak nah. Iwit Seraya Aleang deteluh denganak, deteluh ngasinah marih maya' deh tungey Long Peluan.

Pu'un pu'un ideh marih tungey, dueh teluh burur lun merar, ngadan deh Sat Laeng, Araya Laweng, Araya Oyan. Nah lun teluh 'rar nuk inah marih nepu'un Long Peluan nih. Kadi' deteluh inih lemulun 'am wan awan deteluh ta'on deteluh. Lemulun kaya' lah. Deteluh itung marih temalam deteluh marih tungey. Pengah deteluh tungey lem seh laak, dih deteluh mulun ngan Penan eh, 'am deteluh kerib naro' ira', 'am deteluh kerib naru' lati', kadi' deteluh kaya'. Kira-kira deteluh la' muli' deteluh. Itung la' marih temalam ayu' teh deteluh.

Pengah inah mesing lun teluh nuk denganak nuk idih lah, doo' nah kail Anak Paran (Araya Iwat), mey Wa' Ayan; nah tu'un teh atey Nibu (Lian Ajin) diweh Balan, anak atey Araya Ajin malam, la'ih beruh deh, adi' deh, 'am teh ideh kerib na'. Pat man teh diah anak; pat man teh diah Seraya Buang anak lah. Seraya Aleang teh dueh anak. Mey sinah tepuh Mengah dih (Seraya Ipong).

Nih deh denganak:

Araya Ajin, Seraya Awan, Seraya Anan Alo, Seraya Aleang.

Pat anak Seraya Awan;

Pat anak Seraya Ajin;

Dueh anak Sera Anan Alo;

Dueh anak Seraya Alaeng.

Nih n'ideh denganak. Mo, ideh marih tunge lem su' inah, doo' man kail Araya Iwat malam, Anak Paran kedeh ngenah; diweh denganak Wa' Ayan. Diweh nih nah doo' mey mey ngalap bera (lat Long Di'it) 'an deh ko' berepur lah; nikal nikal lem seh laak.

Mo, pengah inah, penak nah laak eh sinaru' deh, inan nah ubih deh terun, inan nah padey deh kedi'it lah; doo' nah kedi'it, 'am n'dideh susah tu-uh lah. Nangey teh Seraya Aleng kadiah mudang dayah ngi lam masa sinah, lem la'ak ideh suk marih nah. Mey lem la'ak suk kedueh nah dih teh Seraya Aleang nah marih, deteluh ngasinah marih merada' deh.Dih sinaru' atey Araya Ajin nah patar suk Long Peluan nah, sinaru'deh 'sing deteluh.Mo', lem inah tepupur n'ideh terun, laak suk keduah eh nah Araya Keao eh, nekaruh n'ideh.'An tauh ngeru'ut iah udang tungey (Pa Diit) kapah n'iah, awan nedih. Pengah nah awan nedih ngi Long Peluan. Doo' t'iah mey maya' ideh nangey ngudeh nah.

Kadi' n'iah marih lem la'ak suk keteluh eh. Mesing iah tungey (Long Peluan), iah nah ngimat deh lah, ngimat ku' Tua Kapung deh. Iah nah ngatur ulun ruma' kuma' kindadan ideh mudang inih. Kadi' na-am nah Sultan Brunei kerib ngimat Sarawak nah lah, kadi' nah iah namerey inih itan Raja Brooke kedeh, British. Kadi' nah itin British nah tauh risu' inah nah, kloni British. Ideh nah ngimat su' inah nah. Nah-nah pu'un ulun tauh ngi Long Peluan inih.

Tauh teh keli', nuk mupun Araya Ajin, mupun Seraya Aleang, abi-abi tauh nuk mupun ideh eh lah, milah-milah tauh. Tutul Araya Iwat dedih nuk 'am tutul eh, ta'on kerideh, kapah na taru'. Nasib, 'am ngan Balang Maran 'nih nah tutul karideh.

Nah ayu' ulun tauh namulun Long Peluan 'nih lat ma'on mesing lem so sinih. Kadi' nah tauh na'am mala tauh inih nah tauh seh tauh seh, kadi' tauh inih seh teh pu'un tauh nih. Seh teh lunuan tauh nih. Kadi' tana' nuk nuwit deh tauh nibu tauh su' inih dih, ku' ayu ilung bua' eh. Kinah teh tauh nuk mudang inih eh. Milah-milah tauh idi iah lem rang tauh denganak, rang tauh dengkanid, tauh dengeruyung. 'Adi man teh lunuan tauh muit tauh marih tungey malam. Mey lem udung, pekadaluh, da'at singu' nah tauh denganak, dengeruyung. Inah tupu teh nuk inan narih mala lem ayu' ulun tauh nuwit tepun tauh marih Long Peluan

Appendix 16: Stories of Tamabo Inok

The story of Tamabo' Inok by So Tepun

There was a time in Arur Dalan where Tamabo' Inok lived. He had a slave. During an irau where a lot of borak drinking took place, the ancestor of Rajah Umong drowned the slave in a jar of borak.

Tamabo' Inok confronted him and asked him, " Why did you drown him? What does he want to do to you that makes you kill him?"

He took his spear and speared the ancestor of Rajah Umong and he died on the spot. Then he took his scabbard and parang and cut down a dead tree. He took it back to the fireplace on the verandah of the longhouse and started the fire.

And he said, "Let us all flee now." So he and all his relatives left, apprehensive of reprisals.

They went to the next village and the next but they were not accepted there; and they went to Pa Mada and they were welcomed to stay there. His fruit trees are still to be found in Pa Mada. After staying there quite a while they migrated to Long Di'it. After a long while, they moved on to Pa Nar.

In those days, it was common to move from place to place. *Lun tauh*, our Kelabit people lived in Pa Nar before. In those times, the Sa'ban people were our allies in Pa Nar. We are called Lun Kelabit very recently. The Tring, now called Belawan, were the people originally referred to as Lun Kelabit, as they lived in the headwaters of the Tutoh River around Long Labid.

The story of Tamabo' Inok by Pian Lemulun

Tamabo Inok was in Arur Dalan. Balang Radu's great grandfather, Retip Balang was mocking the servant of Tamabo Inok and pushed his head in the jar of rice beer (*borak)*. The next day Tamabo Inok pierced his chest with a spear in retaliation, and left Arur Dalan with his relatives. That's why we have relatives in all the villages and that's why the late Penghulu Lawai and the late Ngarawe Ulun have fruit trees there. They moved from Pa Baong to Pa Main to Pa Mada to Pa Di'it. After some time, they were building a new house in Pa Di'it and moved in quite

early in the day to avoid omens but in came the cicada – so they went back to Arur Dalan, Bario. This was during the time of Balang Budong.

Appendix 17: On leaders in the Baram by So Tepun

In those days there were only four Rajas in the Baram. There was a Kayan Raja called Tama Usung. Raja Ubong was appointed by Tuan Aus (Resident Hose). At this time Raja Ubong was involved in peace-making. *(Raja Ubong mey dawi)* The Raja for the Kenyah was Tama Bulan Wang, grandfather of Muing Tingang. For the Berawan was Orang Kaya Tamagong; in those days they were living in the Patah. And then the Kelabit, Tai Iwan, was appointed Penghulu. After Tai Iwan was Tingang, then Raja Umong; then Penghulu Lawai Bisara.

Appendix 18: The Life of Aping Nyipa

Aping Nyipa was a leader of some stature whose leadership brought about the unity of the Ngurek, and consolidated the settlement at Long Tamala, as he was made the Ngurek Penghulu despite being a latecomer to Long Temala. However, there is no official record of this. He is remembered by his descendants as being a worthy host to Hose and Haddon at Long Temala by the sheer force of his followers. He married a Kelabit called Dayang Ubong who was also known as Oko Kiung. While it is possible to trace her descendants through the Ngurek line, it has been so far less easy to do this through the Kelabit line due to the decease of key informants.

However according to Ngau Jalong (1989: 164), who based his research on testimonies from Long Banyok, Aping Nyipa was weak and unpopular from the perspective of that community. This was because he wanted everyone to return to Long Semiyang to claim his ancestors' land and fruit trees as new groups of Kenyah were coming to the area. Such a move would have created considerable hardship and danger in the eyes of the Long Banyok community. He also did not want to support Charles Brookes' raid on the peoples of Limbang and this decision divided the community and he was eventually stripped of his flag penghuluship, and went back to Long Semiyang. Those who supported the Brooke administration and the expedition to Limbang stayed back in Temala, which was probably Long Banyok at this time (Ngau Jalong 1989:164). Another reason given for this divison between the upriver Ngurek in Long Semiyang and downriver Ngurek in Long Banyok, according to Ingang Ngau was that the Ngurek were all encouraged by the Brooke administration to go back upriver to Long Semiyang to form a strategic community supporting the fort. The Rajah fined those who resisted by staying in Long Banyok. People wanted to stay back because life was easier down river than Long Semiang. Aping Nyipa failed to get support to get more people to come with him:

> The Rajah asked them to go back to Long Semiyang again because at that time the Perintah had built the fort at Lio Matu and wanted him to take the lead. But at that time a lot of them were reluctant to go up to Long Semiyang. They preferred to stay at Long Temala because of the hardship. Aping Nyipa is the nephew to the late Oko Ngo. The majority did not want to go back to Long Semiyang. Those who stayed back in Long Banyok had to pay three ringgit per head because they didn't want to comply with the order of the Rajah to return home to Long Semiyang. Only Aping Nyipa and their closest relatives went back to Long Semiyang. Tama Jalong Tingang, the chief of Long Banyok he paid the fine because he didn't want to move (Ingang Ngau 2012).

However, moving to Long Semiyang was a shrewd move for Aping Nyipa, as the Kelabit, being less used to using boats, required his support in liaising with the Brooke administration in Marudi. In his later years Aping Nyipas role as a meditator based at the highest point of the upper Baram appears to commend him to the pages of the reports of the Sarawak Gazette:

> On the 6th (February) Murik chief Tama Aping NgiPa returned from upper Baram where he had been to inform the Kalabits living there of terms which His Highness the Rajah was willing to allow the Baram Kayans and Kenyahs to assist them in retaliating on Krayan people for the murders that they have committed during the past two years (Douglas 1905a: 130).

He continues in this role for some fifteen years as it is reported when the Kelabit have been all struck down with an epidemic:

> No Kalabits came to meet me sick –Tama Aping Nipar Murik chief is to be in charge of the Kalabits and settle their disputes and report these to Hassan (Sarawak Gazette February 2 1920: 39).

In the narratives discussed in later chapters, I indicate how according to local informants he played a crucial part in the establishment of the fort and the resettlement of other communities in the Upper Baram. Similar roles are attributed to Kelabit leader Tai Iwan in Malian Tepun's narratives and Pun Nibu's *benging* and to Kelabit leader Tingang (Talla 1979: Lian Saging 1977-8

Appendix 19: Table of Comparison of Oral and Written Accounts of the Expedition to Pa Ibang

Source	**Malian Tepun** Long Peluan	**Pian Lemulun** Batu Patong	**Sarawak Gazette** Baram Report Douglas (1905b)	**Lian Saging** (1976/77:186-187) and **Talla** 1979:108-11)	**Penghulu Herbert** Berawan	**Pa Suyud** Long Popong Krayan	**Pendita Ramly** (Pa Ibang, Tang La'an Krayan)
Leader of group	Tai Iwan	Tai Iwan	Penghulu Laki Batang, Penghulu Aban Tingang (Oct 3 1905 p231)	Ballang Maran, requested expedition from the authorities (Talla 1979:107) and led group to Bawan Lian Saging (1976/77:192) Tingang initiated and led expedition Lian Saging (1976/77:187)	Kiyut		Kiyut
With	Aban Jau with Tai Iwan Tama Kiyut, Berawan ancestor of the recent Tmg.Baya Malang; Tamuing Ludan, Ngurek	Tama Kiyut, Muing Ludjang	"Formed a body 3000 strong." (Oct 3 1905 p231)	Tama Uding Saging, Tama Laing ancestor of Temengong Baya Malang (Talla 1979:108).			
Prelude	Murder of Sina Ubar and Tama Arong	The Pa Ibang people took the head of Sina Ubar and her daughter while she was winnowing at her farm at Raan Palid. Later the murder of Tama Arong	The Kalabits of Long Lut report 3 killed by Pitso Poong a Murut from Long Banagang, Upper Trusan (May 2 1903p107).	Deerskin, bladder bag sent as challenge to Kayan chief Tama Aping Nyipa, saying this is from Krayan chief Pacho Pong, to provoke Kayan action. (Lian Saging 1976/77:187 Talla 118).	Sharpening stone, piece of bearskin was received challenging to fight. Many joined in this warfare.	Araya Ratu from Ba Siok took the skin of a barking deer and sent a challenge to the Kayan.	
Details			Delay in expedition caused by "dilatoriness" Kalabits. (Oct 3 1905 p231)		During warfare people travelled slowly because of observance of bird omens.		

Events			Tok Tubong, chief of Pa Dalan Long Padui and Long Orang surrendered . (Oct 3 1905 p231)	Tok Tubong ran into the jungles. (Lian Saging 1976/77:188).			
Events	"…people arrived from everywhere at Pa Di'it, from upriver and downriver…so many people that there was not enough food to feed everyone." Aban Jau suggest the group splits.		At the Kelabit villages of the ulu Baram a meeting was held and "under the advice of the Kalabits the 'bala' was divided in two." (Oct 3 1905 p231).	Kayans recruited 35 Iban. When the got to highlands they were offered rice wine salt and tobacco as gifts (Lian Saging 1976/77:187 Talla 117).			
Events				Expedition targets Bawan valley where there was more wealth than the Muruts. (Talla1979: 108) (Lian Saging 1976/77:193).			
Action	At Pa Ibang Aban Jau and his men attacked the second longhouse, the dwelling of the murderer of Sina Ubar, surrounded it and burned it to the ground. The villagers desperate to save the longhouse threw water on the fire and were simultaneously massacred.	Tai Iwan gathered an army. Some Iban went to Long Bawang, and Kayan and Kenyah went with Tai Iwan to Pa Ibang. At Long Ren they overpowered the guard then Tai Iwan arrived with his group at Pa Ibang. The whole village was eating wild boar. So Tai Iwan's group set fire to wood shaving decorations and the roof .	Two groups 1. Penghulus Laki Batang Kayan Dayaks and Lirongs to Long Bangang (Pitso Pong.) Attacked and burnt Long Bangang, Pa Puak, Pa Kubor, and Pa Padih . 2.Aban Tingang's party attacked Pa Ibang – "…7 longhouses which they burnt after a stiff fight killing 27 of the enemy including the chief Lang Mering and taking 2 captives but they sustained a loss of 6 killed."		At Pa Ibang, our people went to attack from underneath the longhouse. The enemies defended from above and my grandfather was injured on the head. He died outside the longhouse. Balang Mering enemy chief, wanted to cut off my grandfather's head but Gurung his son fought and killed Balang Mering. Gurung later buried his father in a secret place .	Kayan to split into 2 groups to Kurid ad Pa Ibang.At Pa Ibang our Tai Iwan killed their Kayan paran leader . Many Kayans were killed so they fled.Our houses were spared from burning. Kayans decimated the Kurids . They slaughtered their pigs for food. Kayan stayed in their houses.	

Details	In the end, Tama Kiyut, the Berawan continued to attack the people who were in hiding. When the enemies knew he was out of cartridges, the second Tai Iwan ran and speared him to death. They took his gun, and realized it was broken. So they threw it away. They had never seen a gun like this before. Later, the Kenyah went to collect the remains of Tama Kiyut.	When the Pa Ibang went to put the fire out Tama Kiyut and Muing Ludjang were shot. Tai Iwan's metal leg rings deflected the parang blows attack him.	Number of men were wounded by bamboo stakes		Tama Kiyut Wan from Batu Belah also died.		Kiyut fought Adeh. Kiyut got injured on the groin. Adeh wrested with him on the ground. Then our Tai Iwan, (uncle of Rinai) attacked Kiyut .Dun Kayan of Pa Ibang shot at them and Kiyut died. Kayan walked into the bamboo trap. Many died.
Iban took heads			Aban Tingang is required to deposit a surety of 200$ in the fort for misconduct Sarawak Gazette (Nov2 1905: 254).He also loses his Penghuluship because of charges against him by Aw Atong from Long Pata (May 4 1906:127)	Iban took heads; Kelabit took jars and beads "in consideration of future diplomatic dealings" (Lian-Saging 1976/77:188).	The court case regarding who killed the Pa Ibang people was during Brooke era. Everyone claimed to be the person who had killed the enemies.		

Appendix 20: Accounts of the Punitive Expedition to Pa Ibang

Baram Report dated August 9 1905, published October 1905 (Douglas 1905b: 231)

Rajah Muda,

I have the honor to make the following report to your Highness with regard to the Expedition, which took place in this district against certain tribes living in the Karayan R. who had during the last 4 years consistently raided and killed the people living in the headwaters of the Baram R.

The down-river portion of the 'bala' numbering over 700 (100 in original report) men left Claudetown on May 16th under the command of Tuanku Hamid, Native Officer. They were joined at Long Akar by the Kayan and Kenyah from upriver and formed a body 3000 strong. A meeting was held here and Tuanku Hamid after giving them final instructions and warning them not to attack any tribes other than those specified handed over command to the Penghulus Laki Batang and Aban Tingang.

When the 'bala' reached the Kelabit villages in the 'ulu' Baram another meeting was held and at the advice of the Kalabits the 'bala' was divided in two, one party consisting of the Kayans, Dayaks and Lirong under the headship of Laki Batang, and the other of all the Kenyah tribes under Aban Tingang. It was decided that Laki Batang's party should go on up the Baram R to Long Lemudoh, and from there strike across country to the large hostile village of Long Bangan and then work down the Karayan R to Long Bangan where they would meet Aban Tingang's party which had worked upriver from Pa Ibang.

Laki Batang's party carried out their part of the programme most successfully and attacked and burnt the villages of Long Banagan (whose chief Pitso Pong was the leader of the raids on the Baram) Pa Brauk, Pa Buak (Puak), Pa Kabor and Pa Paddih. This party alone burnt 28 longhouses, killed 179 and captured 23 of the enemy and only sustained a loss of two men. During the march the following villages flew the white flag and asked for mercy, which was granted them, as they were not concerned in the Baram raids. Long Padalan, Long Padui and Long Orang and their chief Tok Tubong sent down a token of submission. Whilst they were waiting at Long Orang for Aban Tingang's party, Laki Batang despatched a small party to see if there were any signs of his approach, but as none were visible they concluded that he had returned, as the whole force returned to the Kalabit villages and from thence downriver to

Claudeetown. The small party referred to also burnt the hostile villages of Lang Kabar, the enemy having fled at their approach.

Aban Tingang's party attacked the large village of Pa Ibang consisting of 7 longhouses which they burnt after a stiff fight killing 27 of the enemy including the chief Lang Mereng ,and taking 2 captives but they sustained a loss of 6 killed.After this serious dissentions arose amonst the various tribes and it was decided it was best to return and not to proceed to Long Orang as arranged by the 'bala.' The total loss therefore inflicted on the enemy amounted to 206 killed, 25 captured and 35 houses burnt.They also burnt all the crops and killed a large number of buffaloes.Great credit is due to Laki Batang for having brought this expedition to such a successful issue, as he had a far larger number of men and of different tribes to keep in hand than Aban Tingang. That he did keep them in hand is shown by the fact of his being able to stop them attacking those villages mentioned above which were not hostile, although they were situated right in the midst of hostile country.

The whole of the 'bala' has now returned from the 'ulu' Baram and aftrer reporting themselves at Claudetown the various tribes have returned to their homes. The conduct of the 'bala', with the exception of Aban Tingang's party has been extremely good and the perseverance shown wonderful considering that they were travelling for 3 months. Several men were severely wounded by bamboo 'suda' and 'jerunkang' but they have now all recovered from their wounds.

I have received a letter from Tok Tubong the Long Orang chief, stating that he wishes to paya visit to Claudetown next year. The spear he sent Your Highness I am forwarding by next opportunity.

Trusting that Your Highness will be pleased at the result achieved by this Expedition.

I have the honor to be
Rajah Muda,
Your Highness' obedient servant,

R.S.DOUGLAS
Resident

Account by Penghulu Herbert Lawai, Marudi, Sarawak (August 2014).

About the battle of Pa Ibang from the Berawan perspective as told by his father Tama Kasip. "My grandfather was called Belulok Madang. People called him Tama Gurung when he had his eldest child, Gurung. His eldest son is the brother of my father. He was one of those who died together with Tama Kiyut Wan from Batu Belah.

During the time of warfare, *masa ngayau*, they traveled for months from here to Bario. They travelled very slowly and had to stop on the way if there was a bad bird omen. They had to obey the ritual prohibitions until the bird omen was favourable.

The story goes that when they reached Pa Ibang the enemies didn't want to come down from their longhouse and fight, our people went to attack from underneath the longhouse. But the longhouse people defended from above and my grandfather was injured on the head. He ran out and died outside the longhouse. The leader of the Pa Ibang longhouse, who was called Balang Mering wanted to cut off my grandfather's head from his body but his eldest son Gurung was with him and he fought and killed Balang Mering before he could chop off his father's head. Gurung later buried his father in a secret place to avoid people to go and get his head.

Later, there was a court case between the Kenyah and Kayan in Marudi fort regarding the heads taken by other people. My uncle Gurung killed the enemies and other people took the heads.

The story in the village (likely Long Buang then but now at Long Terawan. Long Buang is now lived by Penan) was that the reason Balang Mering met his death in Pa Ibang because people who are in his longhouse did not observe the rituals when men are going to war. Someone in the village asked for eggs and the egg was cracked opened. That is why he was pierced on the head leading to his death.

Why did the Berawans go to fight the Pa Ibang? The story was told that a sharpening stone and piece of bearskin was received challenging the people "If you are as numerous as the hairs on this bearskin then you will have a chance to come and fight us". Many others joined in this warfare including the Kelabit. We too have relatives with the Kelabits through Balang Leminan, as related by the late Pemanca Ngimat and Napong Aran. That is why my late brother Kebing was married to Winnie Bulan, the niece of Napong Aran.

The Kelabit and the Berawans were allies. What I heard was that the leader was from Long Terawan. Could be my late father or his uncle. Nobody won or lost. But there were death on both sides. The Pa Ibang longhouse was burnt down. Not sure when it happened in the Brooke

or the Brunei rule. But I know the court case regarding who killed the Pa Ibang people was during the Brooke time. Gurung who actually killed the people wanted to take the heads from those who took the heads back from some people in the middle Baram. Everyone claimed to be the person who had killed the enemies. “

Account by Pun Nibu, Pa Mada, Sarawak (August 2012).

Krayan came to fight our people. So Tai Iwan also brought the force (*bawah*) to the Krayan. Then the Krayan came and killed 60 people of Pa Bengar. Hose negotiated peace and told everyone to stop fighting.

“If you fight the Kelabits than the government of Sarawak will send armies to fight you. The same with the Kelabits, they must not go and fight the Krayan.”

Then the Krayan came and fought the Kelabit. So the Kelabits asked permission to fight the Krayans. The people asked Tai Iwan to put a force of 3,000. But that was a time when people were short of rice during the drought.

So he said, “We take 2,000 people. The 2,000 came and met in Lio Matu. 2 persons from Pa Di’it came to guide them. When they arrived, some of the force were sent to be fed by the people of Ramudu, Pa Di’it, Pa Dalih, Pa Mada, Pa Bengar, Pa Main.

“Let’s not stay for too long, otherwise the enemy escape from their villages.”

After 7 days, they sent a thousand to the Krayan, a thousand to the Kurid.

Those who went to Krayan went to fight at Pa Ibang. 64 Pa Ibang people were killed. They didn’t fight the Krayan nearby. They went down to Pa Padih. The river was wide and they turned back to Pa Kurid. They killed many. They had many baskets (*bu’an wey*) full of heads.

Account by Pak Suyud, Long Layu, Kalimantan (August 2014).

The Kayan wanted to set fire to the village. Usually *kelulong* were made (sticks with wood shaved finely) these were set alight forming torches to burn the leaf roof of the longhouse.

A story in Pa Ibang is that a Kelabit man wanted to marry a Kelabit girl. But the girl said “If you want to marry me, go and get a head from Pa Ibang.” Probably, a relative of this girl was previously murdered by a person from Pa Ibang so she wanted to seek revenge.

There is an elder called Araya Ratu who stayed at Ba Siok (grandfather of Ayan .

He took the skin of a barking deer and sent a challenge Kayan, "Even if there are many hairs on this skin as there are Kayan, don't bother to attack us."

The Kayan were challenged and they came.

When they arrived at Ba Siok they said "Don't go to Pa Ibang they are fierce."

They asked the Kayan to split into 2 groups, one went to the Kurid and one went to Pa Ibang. When they got to Pa Ibang the local Tai Iwan killed their Kayan leader. Many Kayans were killed so they fled. Their houses were spared from being burnt.

In the Kurid the Kayans decimated the Kurids. They slaughtered their pigs for food. The Kayan stayed in their longhouse. The Kurid abandoned their village and stayed around outside the village. The Kayans went off to their own country.

Account by Pendita Ramly, Tang La'an, Kalimantan (August 2014).

They called it the Kayan war *Buno' Kayan*. They went to Pa Sing then to Pa Ibang. Their leader was Kiyut. They came to a mountain called Kot Langan. The people built a bamboo trap around the village (*telisnah repi'*) around the village. When the Kayan came they walked into the bamboo trap. Many were trapped and died. The Kayan fled with their leader Kiyut. He met one of our elders called Adeh who was recently widowed.He met Kiyut and fought him. Although Kiyut had a shield he was not well protected and he was injured on the groin. Kiyut fell down and Adah wrested with him on the ground. Then another elder called Tai Iwan, (uncle of Rinai) thought Kiyut was dead, and as he approached him, Kiyut got up and attacked Tai Iwan with his parang. Tai Iwan was hurt on the knee partiarlly protected by the *pakel* (metal knee bangle). The mark of the wound could be seen on his leg. Dun Kayan of Pa Ibang shot at them and Kiyut died. The Kayans fled. When they arrived at the mountain of Kot Langan, the people of Pa Sing heard them mourning. Kiyut was beheaded and his head was put on a wooden pole in Pa Ibang. We had a grand uncle called Weng he was captured as a child and brought to Marudi. His son is called Tama Laing. He invited his uncle Tama Damos to come and visit him but he was not able to come. My late father Tong Sakai told this story. The late Tai Iwan of Pa Ibang also related story of the Kayan warfare. The Kayans went to fight from as far as the Kurid.

Appendix 21: Raja Obong's cradle song (*benging*)

Sung by Pun Nibu of Pa Mada Transcribed and translated by Jeffrey Malang and Moncia Janowski (Janowski 2008)

Raja Obong want to make this benging – am I not the tall tree living high on the hill?
Tu'an ku tse benging ueh Raja Ubong kan kayuh raye ueh mulun luun puun.
Living on the high mountain
Mulun luun apad deta' nok mulun.
Full of honeybees up there at the top
Penu' bua' tikan nange lam udung.
To make honey for people to eat
Ken naro' duru' kenan lemulun.
The call of the rhinoceros hornbill can be heard up there in the canopy
Sarak menengang nange lam udung.
And the helmeted hornbill is also up there in the leaves
Kidih te manudun nange lam da'un.
(line untranslated *)*
Ooi tu'an deh ngitar ineh.
Oh, the helmeted hornill is up there in the leaves
Ee' idih te menudun nange lam da'un
There are plenty of wild pigs at the base of the tree
Nange neh baka penu' ngan puun.
The sambhur deer with many antlers come to eat fruit falling from the tree
Raging nga'ah payo, nga'ah segelung me kuman bua' toto' ngan puun.
The barking deer gather at the same place to eat fruit falling from the tree
Kuman bua' toto' ngan puun kidih te tela'o me te ideh ngenung.
All of the wild animals come to eat fruit there at the base of the tree
Abi abi poong nange tida kuman bua' ngen puun. Ooi tu'an deh ngitar ineh.
My father built a house on the ridge at the confluence
Te rumah penudut tama' lem sipen long.
Where the Terotong river meets the Diit river
Penudut lam sipen Long Terotong.
He built a big house to live in at Long Terotong
Penudut lam sipen Long Terotong ruma' raye inan neh mulun.
My father Maren Katu was the first to live there
Tama' Maren Katu tsok puun mulun.
As a descendant of his I live there
Tutul iah te ueh nih mulun. Ooi…
This benging was recited at twilight
Benging binala kuh detsim ayun ayun
This is a lullaby for my first grandchild Lian and for Ronan and Belun.
Mataso mupun kudih Lian tsok puun mataso Ronan diweh Belun.
This is a lullaby for Ronan and Belun
Mataso Ronan diweh Belun.
There were vague rumours
Tse nakaro' lam ayun ayun.
That Raja Sarawak who initiated a better life

Mala Raja Sarawak puun naro' ulun
Asked the Tuan Resident as his representative to come up the river confluences to Lio Mato to gather the people together
Naro' neh tuan Reseden a'up maak lem long mesing iah Lio Ratu muit dulun pemong.
Ooi…
He brought people together
Muit dulun pemung
He built a big house for people to gather together and settle their disagreements, he initiated a better life
Tse ruma' rayeh senaro' neh naro' ruma' inan dulun pemung, inan dulun besera' puun naro' ulun.
He installed those who reached Lio Rato as his representatives
Tu'an a'up nok inan mesing Lio Ratu.
Those who initiated a better life installed Ta'i Ewan as the original Penghulu, the great Penghulu charged with keeping the law
Puun lun naro' ulun sinaro' deh Ta'i Ewan Penghulu ma'on, Penghulu rayeh ngimat surat kanun
As the great Penghulu charged with keeping the law, that is the origin of people not attacking each other with spears
Penghulu rayeh ngimat surat kanun ineh neh puun dulun na'am pebayong.
They laid down their spears, they didn't spear each other any more
Meleu boso, na'am pebayong.
That was the beginning of people living in peace.
Inan nah puun dulun doo sinong.
People lived happily
Doo liat dulun mulun
The people lived happily, the Krayan too lived in peace
Doo liat dulun mulun, kidih teh Krayan doo teh sinong.
The Berian also came to live together with us
Lun Berian mare tidah peroyong.
They came to live together
Mare teh idah peroyong.
Everybody was happy
Doo abi abi neh lemulun.
That was the beginning of people living in peace
Nih puun dulun doo sinong.
Benging binala iah Raja Ubong.
I, Raja Ubong, have recited this benging
Kayu raya mulun luun puun.
The tall tree living on the hill
Mulun luun apad deta' nok mulun.
Living on the mountain, so high.

Appendix 22: Araya Ajin's escape

Araya Ajin's escape to the Upper Kelapang area, Version 1. (Source: Tama Matthew grandson of Araya Ajin Feb 2011).

Araya Ajin went to the Krayan during a long dry season to fetch some rice. When he arrived there was a young man who wanted to marry a young girl. She didn't want to marry him until he had got a head: "Only when you get the head of person from the Kelapang (an orang Kelapang) can we get married." she said.

My grandfather went to get some rice from the longhouse when he reached a stopping place he could see a man following him from behind, called Adang. When they went forward on the track Ajin asked Adang to go in front of him, but he wanted to go behind, but as they started off on the track Adang speared Ajin from behind. The tip pierced Ajin but the impact was lessened by the rattan back-pack (*bekang*) on his shoulder. He felt the pain and took off his *bekang* and caught hold of Adang. Adang overpowered Ajin and was about to stab him but Ajin caught hold of the knife and pushed it back into his heart and he died.

After that Ajin didn't use that track. He arrived at Long Di'it one week later and the wound was already very bad with flies laying their eggs in the infection. Ajin kept reflecting that he felt afraid of reprisals. He wanted to protect himself that's why he went to live with his son, Lian in Long Peluan

Araya Ajin's escape to the Upper Kelapang area, **Version 2.** Source: Selon Bulieng, Long Puak 5/02/13. (Selon Bulieng's sister was married to Ajin's son Lian).

Araya Ajin lived in Long Kelit. He went on a hunting expedition *temalam* to the Bahau and on to Pa Ibang. He went hunting one day caught a wild boar. He smoked the meat and he cooked the bones in bamboo. He went back to Pa Ibang. He had wanted to return to Long Kelit but it was late. So he stayed the night. That night one lady died, the wife of Bong Leeu. Ajin wanted to leave but then the mourning procedure had already started with the "layang" where the corpse was placed in the coffin. Then Araya Ajin left. When the widower Bong Leeu noticed Araya Ajin had left, despite being discouraged by the villagers, he quickly got up from mourning, picked up his scabbard from the hook on the wall, put it on and left to chase after Araya Ajin. He climbed the mountain and caught up with Araya Ajin on the ridge. He threw down his backpack, pulled out his parang, and attacked Araya Ajin from the behind. He chopped Araya

Ajin on the shoulder with the intention of chopping off his neck but the wood back to Ajin's backpack *bekang* protected him. Ajin turned back, wrestled and threw him to the ground; he then pulled his small knife out from his scabbard and stabbed the widower to death. Araya Ajin left the area.

As the widower didn't return to village, the villages went to look for him and the saw his body lying on the ground. They brought it back and put it side by side with his late wife. They buried them. After that, they wanted to take revenge, so Ajin left for Pa Bale (in the Long Peluan area). Ajin left with his sisters, Sera Aleang, Sera Awan and Sera Anan.

They left because people were looking to take revenge on them. When they first arrived they settled on the peninsula at the mouth of Peluan River. That year they started a farm. They went to get the padi seeds from Long Kelit.

Corresponding entry from the *Sarawak Gazette*

I received a letter from Lio Matu. Rahan Kalang from Long Lihit, Kalabit on way back from Leppu Asengs to buy rice had been speared by Adang, a Leppu Aseng. Adang was killed in the fight. Later dispute between Leppu Aseng and Long Lit amicably settled by Leppu Asengs giving a buffalo and the Long Lots giving a pig and a gong. Sergeant Seman sent to investigate and settle the affair Johnson 1911:196).

Appendix 23: Transcription of the Third Narrative

1.Inih sejarah lem ayu dueh tepun atau taman tauh nuk ngalinuh ulun luun tana' inih sebelum teh damai lun tana' nih. Ma'on-ma'on iah inah Tai Iwan idih ngalinuh ulun perintah ini 'se ulun nuk idi inan mawang niat, pedoo' 'se burur ngan 'se burur na'am kedaluh 'se burur ngan 'se burur. Inih sejarah Tai Iwan.

2. Etse anak iah ineh, So Tepun, tu'an tauh Bayo Iwan. So Tepun, ini kadi' iah kekeli' kabar ayu lun Kristian, ulun sembayang kan dulun renga' idih malam lah.

3. Pu'un ulun seh ulun sembayang kan dulun.
Nangey iah Pa Krayan ngi kedeh. Utak tauh lun masuk Kristian, ulun sinah ulun ngan mawang niat. Na'am nah tauh idi ngeran ngeran. Na'am nah tau idi kedaluh; na'am nah tauh anun-anun nuk da'at nuk itin tauh; borak, 'nun-'nun nuk inan tauh kedaluh eh, nu'ut pah na'am teh tauh gunah idih.

4. Malam, ulun dulun nih malam, ngaie' nih nah ko' ulun dulun. 'Seh manuk iah ineh ngaie'. Utak iah temulud nga' iko nalan, temulud iah mey senu'ah, doo' nah lawey moh, na'am n'iko usu'. Utak iah temulud mey pekabing usu' n'iko, na'am n'iko kerib mey lama'ud. Inan teh puung nuk inan tauh ngeran, nuk na'am tauh kerib 'nun-'nun pah keli' muh, itung k'ayu' naru' lati' dih; tu'uh Pa k'ayu' idih la' ranih iko keli' seh rabuan atau pun 'nun-'nun nuk inan tauh ngeran, 'an muh ngelik teh lati' mudih dih.
Kinah teh ruma' nih. Ruma' neh, tulu 'se selangui umak ruma' muyuh, 'nun-'nun nuk inan dulun na' eh, boro teh iko lat ruma' eh, nesan teh ruma' eh. Kinah nah, 'seh nuk tu'an dulun percaya, ia inah kaniew suk temulud liang langit ngi.

5. Kadi' nah So Tepun nangalinuh, "Kapah teh saru' narih mey nekap ulun sinih, ulun suk leng-leng doo' tu'an dulun eh, kenah.

6. I'it teh uih renga' idi malam, mey Araya Mengah nah. I'it teh uih lah. Na'am teh narih ngulung binan renga' idi lah. Mey teluh ngi kenah, mey teluh ngi Krayan kenah. Mey nah keteluh lah. Na'am keteluh maya' dalan eh nuwit nah. Nangey keteluh maya' Punang Bale ngi. 'Am keteluh maya' dalan k'ayu' Tai Iwan eh.

7. Tai Iwan pu'un pu'un nah nekap ulun malam, 'am iah maya' dalan. Iah mey maya' lem pulung. Kinah tu'uh-tu'uh nah So Tepun muwit keteluh Mengah. "Ngudeh iah 'am muwit keteluh maya' lem pulung 'am maya' dalan?" Teluh alam keteluh ngan dalan eh dih teh keteluh mesing Batu Patong lah.

8. Mesing keteluh Batu Patong, mirup man dulun renga' idih malam. Ramai man dulun ngenah. 'Seh alam, dua alam keteluh ngan 'se bawang. Nangeso ra'ey ra'ey n'iah muwit keteluh mey nangey lah. Na'am narih keli' 'nun teh tu'an nah lah; 'am narih keli' renga' narih adi'. Mey ngelao' iah teh narih terun lah.

9. Lem inah, sekolah Long Budong, sekolah rayeh su' inah. Nah n'iah mey pekaruh terun lah. Mey nah kedeh narih mey raut-raut ruyung anak adi' eh. Matey Pun Isak, mey Kalip dedih dih, ideh pu'un-pu'un mey sekolah 'su' inah nah.
Nah n'iah mey pekaruh ngan guru' e n'iah terunlah, ngan gembala e n'iah, mada' deh marih nuru' tauh masuk sembayang lah. Pengah n'inah, pengah nah karuh dedih terun, la' mey nah teluh muli', kenah. Muli' nah keteluh lah. Janji' n'iah ngan dah lah; kapah janji' nah ngan deh, kinah mala lem bulan sinih, marih n'iko kenah ngan guru' eh.

10. Seh gembala su' inah, iah inah Guru' Tunip, iah binada' nah. Marih iah tungey, muli' iah mey tungey naru' nah ia burak lah. Taru' nah 'se burak rayeh keli' kuh renga' idih malam. Mula' borak belanai atur-atur lem ruma' keli' kuh malam lah. Binada' nah dulun marih, lun Batu Patong nah marih lah. Lun ruyung nedih marih lah, lem burak sineh. Lem inah tangal dulun marih mirat, mesing nah Guru' Tunip.

11. Mesing n'iah nah n'iah mada' dulun ngan ulun sembayang nih n'iah lah; ngatur dulun sembayang nuru' dulun memuk nuk midih. Nun pimuk dulun, uluh munu' inan teh malam lah, lipan pera'it, mula' tungan nuk tu'an memuk. Sila' dulun mey lu'un pipir suk ripar ngi n'idah lah.

12. Masuk nah lun tauh dih nuwit nah sembayang. Daluh nah matey Ngalibun Tepun malam, suk kanid So Tepun nah. Mey ngudah narih naru' maya' adat nuk na'am patur-patur eh,

ngeraruh adat tepun narih malam, kenah. Doo' man Araya sinah, doo'man iah ngan dulun, masuk nah dulun Kristian.

13. Pingan inah keli' dulun nah doo' Kristian inah. Mawang nah niat dulun lah. 'Am nah dulun ngeran ngeran, 'am nah dulun usu' ngan abi-abi nuk munih ataupun nuk keli'-keli' dulun k'ayu' puung eh. 'Am nah dulun ngeran. Pelaba mawang niat dulun nuk keli' ulun Kristian nuk tu'an tauh maya' nih, suk inan tauh menu nih.

14. Tauh nih nuk ma'un-ma'un maya' Tuhan e lah, musih t'ideh Pa Dalih nah, musih t'ideh Long Dano, musih t'ideh nuk dayeh nah. Tauh nih pu'un-pu'un menu ngan Tuhan. Long Banga nah musih t'ideh. Tauh nih pu'un pu'un menu ngan Tuhan kadi' lat ngan Araya So Tepun suk mey nekap ulun Tuhan. Lun Indonesia nah, ideh nangey ayu' nah pu'un ulun sineh nah, lem Pupung nah, Pa Dalan nah, Long Budong nah, ideh nuk Pa Urang nah, Long Budong nah sekolah rayeh deh malam lah; inan dulun ngajar ideh nuk mey Kristian nah lah.

15. Nah pu'un-pu'un dulun nuk mey Kristian ini lah. Kadi' nah mesing lem so sinih, inih seh sontoh nuk kareb tu'an tauh ma'ad ngan sinaru' matey Tepum Tai Iwan mey So Tepun, diwah nih, seh lemulun nuk wan leng-leng doo' linuh ngalinuh ulun nuk beruh nuk tu'an tauh pakai lem so sinih. Lem so sinih mula' lemulun mey ku' gembala, mey ku' guru' mey ku' pendita, kadi' inan tauh menu ngan Tuhan di teh inah.

16. K'ayu Pendita' Lalung, Tuan MeriPa, Tuan Sapu; pengah tauh menu dih teh ideh nah marih mada' tauh. Inah nah pu'un tauh inah, lem tempat inih menu lat ngan Tuhan. Lat ngan tauh inih dih teh tauh mey mada' dulun maya' Baram inih; kadi' tauh pu'un menu ngan Tuhan.

17. Kadi' nah uih mala sejarah tepun tauh, taman tauh dueh inih paad-paad nekap ulun nuk inan lemulun mulun ngan senang; doo' lem ulun perintah doo' lem ulun Tuhan. Diweh inih dueh dulun nuk pu'un-pu'un nekap ulun nuk doo' tu'an tauh maya'.

18. Lat ngan inah radan nah tauh lun Kristian radan nah tauh lun menu ngan Tuhan, inan nah irau kedeh, inan nah tebubpun nuk merar merar.

Inan nah ku' ayu' Penan nuk mudang lem pulung, nuk mado-mado lah; nuk ta'ut-ta'ut ngan tauh nih. Bekan Penan nih malam, lemulun nuk na'am keli'. Keli' deh tauh na'an, boro deh mey pedingi naliwa tauh ara' deh papu' ngan tauh.

19. Utak narih la' papu' ngedeh ano' nah "sigup sigup" kan narih nawar deh lah. Ngubuk deh lah. Lun nuk makat marih petulu ngan narih malam iah inah Lui (Juman) mey nah Balare (Jabu). Iyuk iyuk nah ulun tauh nginih malam naru' irau rayeh, penu' dulun lem ruma' inih. Bekan teh kinih. Mesing pah lun dayeh, marih tungey. Lio Matu pah marih, lun Bario marih. Tauh pah mey nangey ngan tebubpun rayeh. Lat nginah nah Penan doo' pekaley ngan tauh.

20. Kadi' nah Araya So nah nakaruh ngan Lui diweh Balare Jabu, "Kan kapah kan pian muyuh menu ngan Tuhan? Tulu muyuh pian tu'an kuh nuru' seh dulun marih mada' muyuh ngan Tuhan." Kadi' n'iah nuru' Tama Lawai Lahang mey mada' deh lem pulung ngi Punang Arur Ano. Mey Ma'ad Tepun nah ngan nah ngajar-ngajar deh menu ngan Tuhan.

21.Iyuk iyuk marih munang-munang n'ideh ngan ruma' nih. Kadi' nah matey So nah mala, "Kan kapah, kan la' muyuh naru' bawang atau naru' ruma' ku' ayu' kamih ni? Naru' ruma' muyuh senang muyuh mulun. Lem pulung muyuh tusah muyuh mulun. Na'am baka na'am ubuut 'nun nah kenan muyuh? Mulun muyuh naru' ira, ubih tu'an muyuh nibu, kerib mulun teh muyuh ngan ubih nih, belajar", kenah.

22. "Mo, doo', la' kamih" kan 'atey Lui diweh Balare.
"Mo, la' beto' muyuh 'pah inan muyuh doo' pian?" kan So Tepun ngitun diweh.
Kinih kan Balare, "Nuk inan kamih pekaley, Pa Balong."
"Utak beto' muyuh pekaley lem Pa Balong nginah nah muyuh. 'An mada' Penan nuk bekan marih peruyung ngan muyuh. Tu'an kuh mada' Tama Lawai Lahang mey mada' muyuh," kan So Tepun.

23. Mula' n'ideh pemung nginah, sinaru' nah Tama Lawai Lahang mey mada' 'deh; mudang ngi bawang suk ngi Giam Kasi nah. Nah n'ideh mey naru' rurum ruma' dedih ngi Long Lamai nah.

‘Nah-nah pu’un ulun Penan nah. Araya So malam nah nuru’ ‘deh peruyung kadi’ n’ideh doo’ peruyung. Iah naru’ ‘deh pekaley lat ngan bada’ Tuhan. Lat ngan inah n’ideh doo’ peruyung rurum ngan tauh nuk lem bawang.

24. Radan n’ideh mudang Long Lamai nah keli’ perintah n’ideh. “Seh nah “*kusil*” Galang, iah nah nuru’ tuda’ Kayan marih mada’ ‘deh naru’ ruma’ su’ inah.

25. Kadi’ nah Tama’ So malam nuru’ ‘deh nekap ‘se lun rayeh ‘deh ku’ Tua’ Kapung. Dueh burur binili’ ‘deh, Balare Jabu mey Balan Kade. Kadi’ Balan Kade nih doo’ ilah nah kerja kadi’ iah mudang ngan lun Pa Bao’ nangey iah malam.

26. Munang iah ngan Pengolo’ Apui nangey doo’ nah ilah nah kerja naru’ bengar, kadi’ n’deh la’ ngan nah ku’ rayeh ‘deh tabi’. Kadi’ mula’ man Penan nuk patungey kadi’ n’deh mili’ Balare Jabu. Kadi’ nah Balare Jabu jadi’ ku’ Tua’ Kapung 'deh.
Terun, na’am nah senang Balan na’am kenah pili’ ku’ Tua’ Kapung kadi’ n’iah marih ngan matey Tama So malam; ngitun, kapah kan na’am iko merey seh tana’ inan kuh mulun.
“Ngepah?” kan So.
“La’ mulun ngi Ba’ Lai,” kan Balan Kade.
Ba’ Lai kan Penan, kan tauh Kelabit ngan Pa sinah, Pa Sino.

27. O, ngudeh ‘ko mutuh mey mado? Utak ‘ko mado kapah n’uih mada’ iko lem ayu’ perintah? Mey ‘ko mado kapah n’iko la’ papu’ ngan perintah? Kapah niko la’ keli’ adat?” kan So ngenah.

28. “O, doo’ teh. Munang rang tauh nih,” kan Balan. “Mey Long Moyo ‘ko,” kan So.
“Utak kamih mey ‘su’ inah mulun lem pulung man kamih nih, mulun ngan puung, mulun ngan ubuut, nah kenan kamih nih. Doo’ teh tauh mado’ rang doo’ teh ulun tauh” kan Balan.

29. “Mo, mey, pian muyuh,” kan So ngenah.
Nah-nah pu’un ‘deh mulun ngi Ba’ Lai. Inah nah pu’un deh petad ngan lun ruyung dedih nuk mulun ngi Long Lamai.

30. Na’am teh radan pingan inah, seh na masa, seh nah karib Tama Lawai Lahang ngajar Lui ngabit. Kapah terun, tu’an mala ngan Loi na’am teh iah milah ngabit. Kemu’ man i’at arayah sinah terun, sitak nah tetal Araya Lui eh.
I’at nah pian nah, “‘Am uih pian udang inih,” kan Loi.
Marih n’iah mala ngan atey So malam, mutuh nekap seh tana’ mey ngi Long Beruang.

31. Kan atey So malam, “Ngudeh ‘ko la’ boro lat Long Lamai.”
“Inih ayu’ hal nuk inan kuh la’ boro’. La’ marih ruyung iko uih,” kan Lui
Kadi’ nah So na’ur iah. “La’ marih beto’ iko mey pedayeh Long Beruang nah n’iko. ‘Seh patar pedayeh Long Beruang nah, Pa Long Beruang nah rang titah. Mey pedayeh ‘ko.”

32. Kadi’ ‘n’deh mey ngan patar suk pedayeh nah. Reberuh An Ngili, kan tauh, Lamin Ka Matung, kan kadideh. Nah sala’ nah. Benah man patar sinah, rayeh Pa manud man n’ideh ‘su’ inah. Renib man nah ruma’ dedih. ‘Nah-nah mey lem ‘su inah.
Nah pu’un ulun ‘deh mey mulun Long Beruang nah. Nah sejarah ideh Long Beruang.

33. Radan n’ideh Long Beruang nah, seh man teh awang niat atey Tama’ So malam, si’it man kamih nuk inah. Bekan man pu’un ulun malam, mesing seh surat lat la’ut , surat anak sekolah; nih pu’un-pu’un sekolah buka’ ngi Pa Main nangey malam. Surat na’am belatu’-belatu’ surat berey ngan lunuan anak, lun ruyung, mey ayu’ teh narih matid. Tated seh surat binatid ‘ano mesing ‘se. Mey ayu’ teh narih matid. ‘Am narih kareb ‘am mey matid surat dih kan dulun, dih pu’un-pu’un surat eh.

34. Kadi’ neh leng leng susah eh na kamih nginih malam. Lebih lagi ngan perintah mesing eh, marih melawat kenap la’ak, dueh teluh kulang perintah marih melawat kamih nih malam. Lemulun nuk marih nabat, deresa nuk leng-leng mula’ kuli mabah barang dedih.
Kadi’ nah matey Tama’ So la’ ngan ideh mey Long Beruang ataupun nulung tauh lem abi inah.

35. Inah nah pu’un sejarah keridah nah mey Long Beruang. ‘Nah pu’un sejarah Penan inih peruyung ngan tauh nginih lah, awey muyuh la’ kekeli’ sejarah ideh namarih peruyung ngan tauh kuma’ kindadan inih.

Appendix 24: Irau Ngelua Anak (Account by Ose Murang)

On 20th October 1983, my uncle Lian Apan @ Gatuman Raja was in Kuching to see his son, Marcus Raja. He was a very lovely man ever ready with a smile. After dinner, I had a long chat with him. Then he came up with a story, unbeknown to me.

On a visit to Long Peluan sometime in 1957, he participated in a ritual ceremony for children called the *Irau Ngelua Anak*. My parents held this ceremony in my honour when I was just about two years old. The ceremony started with the folks raising up an 80 ft wooden pole with a symbolic hornbill perched on the top. It was then decorated with *kelulong* (wood shavings). A raised platform was constructed at the base. This took about a day or two to complete and they were feasting with *boorak* (rice beer) and hearty meals with pork.

The day of the ceremony started with a fully-grown pig tied upside down from a small pole above the raised platform. Then someone slashed its neck with a sharp parang. As blood spurted out from the cut throat, my father carried me on his back and walked to and fro underneath the pig so that I was drenched in blood. When this was over the pig was then brought down and its abdomen was split open to examine the shape of its liver, particularly the location and size of the gall bladder. According to stories, a large and symmetrical gall bladder was preferred. If these were not seen in the liver, another pig was slaughtered until the desired characteristics were seen. My uncle was not able to say how the liver at this ceremony fared for my future, as he did not remember.

In the evening, sitting underneath the *ikab* window opening in the roof above the longhouse verandah, the oldest and most endowed with good health held me in their arms. In my case, it was a lady, the mother of the headman of the longhouse (maybe Po' Alaeng). To her left sat another healthy grand person. Then they recited a chant to give me good fortune for the future, for my daily provisions in life and future career.
It goes like this:

Daun puang pun daun puang tadun
Inih inan kuh nuwat lem palad tisu', palad layu'
Mulun beto' iko riak nah, lupung tah iko mulun lat lem rang lemulun eh
Mey pah tu'uh Pa iko riak nah, mawan tah iko lem rang lemulun eh
Mey nekap 'nun tuuh pah iko, mey nekap padey pah iko, palap tah ngan idih

Mey nekap puung pah iko, meley tah idah ap'an muh…

The leaf from a mature stem, the leaf that's majestic.
This is what I'm going to pierce your palm with, your soft palm.
When you grow up you will be outstanding from all others.
Wherever you go you'll be prominent above all others.
Whatever you decide to do, even to toil in the land, you will be well rewarded
Even in search of wild animals, these will come easily to you.

Appendix 25: Kelabit-English glossary

Other languages are indicated as follows: m. Malay; ib. Iban; p. Penan; n. Ngurek b. Berawan

ada’	spirit
adat m.	customary law; tradition.
anak katu	commoner
adet	customary law
alo’ n.	a Malay person
amen p.	omen; sign
apad	mountain range
ayau n.	enemies
aweyh berenging	Asian paradise flycatcher bird
baa’	wet
ba’o	beads
batuh narit	carved stone
batuh senuped, batuh senuie	standing stone
baya’	system of reciprocal labour
bejalai ib.	to go on an extended trading journey
bekan	different
birar	yellow
borak	rice beer
borak lua	child initiation feast
borak ate	death feast
buda’	white
bulan	moon
bumiputera m.	sons of the soil
cerita m.	story
da’at	bad
daerah m.	district
dayung	ritual specialist
daun isip	*Phacelophrynium maximum*; leaf used for wrapping cooked rice, and for temporary roofing.
doo’	good; honourable; of value
doo’ derayeh	good augury; good luck
doo’ baya’	loyal
doo’ gai	industrious
doo’ galih	cheerful
doo’ kenail	hardworking
doo’ mukul	diligent
doo’niat	kind hearted
doo’ngai karuh	soft spoken; well mannered
doo’ rema’	kind
doo’-ness	a hybrid term to convey a state of being *doo’*; prestige; standing

edtu	sign
gunong m.	mountain
ilad	fan palm (*Licula* sp.)
inan	has
irau	feast; Christian celebration
irau ate	death feast
irau lua	child initiation feast
irau rayah	Easter
iyuk	movement
kaban ib.	kindred
kawang	a clearing made on a hill-top to commemorate a deceased parent or ancestor
kaniu	eagle
kerja peroyong	a system of labour whereby the host family donate cash to the church, and the workers work for free.
kerja sama m.	a system of labour whereby the host family donate cash to the church, and the workers work for free.
kelunan p.	human beings
kenangan	sago; *Eugeissonia utilis*
ketua daerah	the church leader for the district
ketua sidang	the lay leader of a parish
lawatan m.	visit
lengkuas m.	A species of ginger;*Alpinia galanga*
lio’ n.	island in a river
lipan parait	thunder teeth; a stone adze used as a charm
lobang ruma’	household
luang	fish
luang pelian (semah ib.)	*Tor douronensis*
luang geraga (empurau ib.)	*Tor tambroides*
lun	people
lun doo’	the good people: people of quality
lun doo’ to’oh	very good or honourable people
lun merar	elders
lun ruyong	kin
lun paren	nobles
lun upa, pupa	people in between
mawang niat	happiness
menatoh	cemetery
menatoh belanai	jar cemetery
menuit	cicada
merey	to give
miyuk	to move
muno’	headhunting

nabang	a commemorative trench dug to mark a deceased parent or ancestor
nawar keniu	call the eagles (for auspicious omens)
ngaie’	spiderhunter
ngatang	to carry a person or an animal on the shoulders
ngerang	To go on a trading journey
ngulua	a sacrificial ritual related the initiation of a child; or a headhunter; or for healing
nuba’	cooked rice
nuba laya	soft cooked rice mashed into a paste
nulang b.	to prepare bones of the deceased for secondary burial
	to go on a trading journey
ngatang	to carry a person or an animal on the shoulders
oloh	head; indicates a location upriver
pa	river
pade’p.	brother
pade	unprocessed rice
palap dinganak	blood brotherhood
paran	noble
pedoo’	reconciliation; forgiveness
pelayan	deacon
pemakai menoa ib.	customary forest
penawar kaniu	a ritual specialist who calls for eagles to discern auspicious omens
percaya m.	trusted
perintah m.	government
perupun	stone mound
plamud	mixed
pu’un	beginning
rang tanah	village boundary
sapemakai ib.	of people who eat together;food-sharing
sapengabang ib.	brotherhood
sawah m.	wet-padi field
sekolah m.	school
sejarah m.	history
setan m.	satan
sibila’	blood-brother
sidang m	parish
sigup	tobacco
surat m.	letter
taka	lake
tamu m.	market
tana’ pengurip p.	customary forest

tana’ bawang	customary forest
tana’ tauh	customary forest
tauh	our
tepun	grandparents
tetal	hearth
toran	high bank of a river
tuhan m.	God (Christian)
tungul	knife
turis	a (white) visitor; a researcher; a tourist
ulun	life; well-being; provision
ulun dulun nih malam	the way of life before
na’am doo’ ulun,	a way of life that is not good
ulun suk leng leng doo’	a very good life indeed
ulun nuk beruh,	a new life
ulun nuk doo’,	a good life
ulung	ceremonial pole
umak opis d.o.	visit the district office
va’e p.	outsider
wat	root
wang asin	tax