

# BORNEO RESEARCH BULLETIN

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## NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

When the idea of holding a meeting of the Borneo Research Council was first mooted in Chicago in 1987, we were uncertain of the response such a meeting would receive. As recently as the Council's last Business Meeting in Washington in November 1989, there were lingering doubts about whether the number of participants would be enough to put a program together. As of this writing, the response to the First Extraordinary Session to be held in Kuching from August 4-9 has been extraordinary. We have received proposals from 50 persons who want to present papers, and communications from (or about) 25 other persons indicating that they would attend and participate as observers.

The number of local participants from Sarawak, Sabah, Brunei, Semenanjung and Indonesia is especially encouraging. Twenty-one are from Sarawak, five from Sabah, nine from Brunei, two from Semenanjung, and seven from Indonesia. Twenty six of the participants are from Australia, France, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States, and West Germany.

We are grateful to Dr. Peter Mulok Kedit, Government Ethologist, The Sarawak Museum, for proposing the session, to the Sarawak Government for approving it, and to Dr. Kedit and other members of the Local Committee who have worked to make the numerous arrangements necessary for such a meeting. A copy of the Program will be printed in the September issue of the Bulletin.

We want to express our thanks to the following persons who have contributed to the work of the Council during the past six months:

G. N. and Laura W. R. Appell, Martin Baier, Stanley Bedlington, Donald E. Brown, Otto C. Doering, Gale B. Dixon, Michael R. Dove, Richard A. and Doris Drake, Mohd. Y. H. Johari, Lars Kaskija, Paul H. Kratoska, Allen R. Maxwell, John Musgrave, Rodney Needham, H. Arlo Nimmo, Kazunori Oshima, J. R. and H. L. Palmer, Robert M. Pringle, A. J. N. and Daphne Richards, Anne Schiller, William Schneider, Bernard J. L. Sellato, C. H. Southwell, Jack Stuster, John O. Sutter, Peter Thomas, Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, Robert Winzeler.

(If we have omitted your name, please forgive our oversight and send us a note so we can make proper acknowledgement in the September issue of the Bulletin. And, in the meantime, please accept our sincere thanks.)

## RESEARCH NOTES

## SARAWAK

NOTES DURING A RESIDENCE  
IN THAT COUNTRY WITH  
H. H. THE RAJAH BROOKE

BY  
HUGH LOW

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY<sup>1</sup>  
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## INTRODUCTION\*

Hugh Low was the elder son of an enterprising Scots horticulturist of the same name who came to London in about 1823 and went to work for Mackay's nursery at Clapton, then an outlying village of the metropolis. By 1827 he was describing himself as 'Foreman and Propagator' and he appears to have taken over in 1831. Young Hugh was born at Clapton on 10 May 1824 and he and his brother Stuart and sister Alexandrina were educated privately, reflecting their father's burgeoning commercial success. The Clapton nursery had good relations with the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew and the earliest surviving letters of Hugh Low are to the Director, Sir William Hooker, in October 1842 and August 1843, thanking him on his father's behalf for seeds and cuttings.

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\*I would like to thank Mrs. Rosemary Valentine of Parkview Nursery, Enfield, for unpublished information on the Low family and Dr. Charles Nelson of the Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin, for his botanical guidance. I also wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Lt. Col. C. F. Cowan for his 1968 article on Low.

By this time the technology of glasshouse construction (to which Clapton certainly contributed), together with the development of the Wardian case (a portable miniature greenhouse for collecting), meant that orchid culture was more practicable than ever before, and the high prices which could be obtained acted as a strong incentive to introduce new species from other parts of the world, especially the tropics. It was the beginning of the great period of exotic horticulture in Britain when big nurseries such as Veitch and Low vied with each other to supply wealthy fanciers and professional collectors were despatched to most parts of the globe.

While there is no evidence that young Hugh had any formal botanical education, he was well versed in botanical knowledge and the practical work of the nursery where he spent two years as an assistant and it is not surprising that his father should have decided to send the nineteen-year-old on an expedition to a part of the world as yet unknown to collectors. On 27 June 1844 he wrote to Hooker:

I take the liberty of apprising you that I have determined on sending out my eldest [sic] son Hugh to collect plants seeds etc. in the various islands of the Indian Archipelago and in conformity to that resolution he will sail for Singapore on the 10th of the next month. I purpose that this should be his headquarters and that he should make excursions from thence to the adjacent islands, confining much of his attention to Borneo....

Stuart Low had earlier joined the merchant navy and it may be that this was partly for the purpose of collecting in China, which was his first voyage. Why Hugh senior was so interested in Borneo is not clear although he may well have read that James Brooke had recently established himself there and concluded that this would provide a good opportunity to explore its botanical resources. There appears to have been no communication with Brooke before young Hugh's departure although there was some connection with Singapore where he was well known. According to one account, Hugh joined the East Indian Company's service in 'about 1840' but on meeting James Brooke on the ship out, was persuaded by him to come to Sarawak as his secretary and companion. There is no evidence that he joined the Company and the story is probably apocryphal. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to know how Hugh obtained his prior knowledge of Brooke.

Low's journal records that he sailed on the Chieftain from Gravesend on 17 July 1844 and did not make land until late November when he went ashore at Kukup on the west coast of Johore to collect orchids. He disembarked at Singapore on 25 November with letters of introduction to the Governor, Colonel

William John Butterworth, and other dignitaries and spent the following weeks in a frenetic round of social visits and botanical and hunting forays into the island's plantations and jungles. His instant popularity with the small European population can be gathered from the fact that he received no less than five invitations for one evening. On 5 December Brooke's trading schooner, the Julia, arrived from Sarawak with a cargo of antimony ore and Low met its captain, Bloomfield Douglas, and the Rajah's elder nephew, John Brooke Johnson (later known as Brooke Brooke), recording that he was 'quite delighted with his behaviour'. Four days later he left Singapore in a small cutter with Douglas to explore the Riau islands to the south, making his first acquaintance with Malay society and the Dutch colonial administration. On his return, he prepared four large cases of Nepenthes or pitcher-plants, together with nutmegs and mangosteens, for despatch to Clapton. Amongst these was what he believed to be a new species of pitcher-plant which he described in his journal: 'The cups are small and green but most delicately and beautifully formed; this will be an acquisition.' When Stuart arrived on the Greyhound on 18 December for a short visit, the two brothers went out together and found yet another new species. Hugh also collected birdskins, butterflies, and other specimens for despatch to the British Museum, and made another despatch of six cases of plants to Clapton.

On 6 January, Hugh embarked on the Julia with Douglas and Johnson, reaching Kuching ten days later. Fascinated by the life observed along the Sarawak River, he wrote: 'Altogether I think appearances are very promising and I hope to find a rich harvest.' After some time on board, during which he dined with the Rajah and other Europeans every evening, he moved into the house which had originally been built for Brooke by Rajah Muda Hassim, the Brunei prince from whom he had acquired the government of Sarawak in 1841. Low's visit to Borneo was essentially commercial in intention and he was not employed by Brooke's government during his two-year stay. Nevertheless, he was intimately involved with Brooke and his officers, and enjoyed the Rajah's warm patronage as Alfred Russel Wallace was to do a few years later. Apart from Brooke's enormous charm and his wide-ranging scientific and literary interests, Hugh warmed to the older man's religious views which resembled his own Unitarian leanings. Perhaps because of its isolation, Sarawak was a great talking-shop for the small community of Europeans collected there and Low was an agreeable companion. Captain Rodney Mundy, RN, who visited Kuching in 1846, found him 'an unassuming, intelligent young man'.

One of the main topics of conversation during those long nights at the Rajah's house was the theory and practice of governing native peoples. James Brooke's enlightened views in this area were forcefully advanced and exerted a profound influence on the young botanist whose earlier attitude towards the non-European inhabitants of Singapore had been conventionally superior. Although

his principal concerns at this point were still those of a commercial collector, Low was imbibing a store of political wisdom which he would put to good use in his subsequent career as a colonial official. What particularly impressed Low was the Rajah's custom of receiving Malay and Dayak visitors in his house every evening after dinner. 'By his engaging manners and pleasing discourse', Low observed sagely, '[Mr. Brooke] cannot fail to render himself more beloved than he would be supposing they were debarred from his presence.' Amongst the visitors was a deputation of people from Skrang who had been devastated by the attacks made on them by Captain Henry Keppel, RN, in August 1844. Low was favourably impressed with the Dayaks and their adaptability, and paid an early visit to a nearby village in the company of the Rajah's cousin, Arthur Crookshank. At the end of January he made his first expedition into the interior with Brooke and Crookshank. Travelling by boat up the Sarawak River, the party then walked to the Nawang Valley and visited the Singhi Dayaks in their mountain fastness before returning to Kuching.

Continuing to collect orchids, Low refused an invitation from Captain Drinkwater Bethune, RN, to visit the island of Labuan (which Brooke had recommended as a British settlement), because of the need for his plants to arrive in England in the summer. Within a few weeks he was able to send off four large cases of orchids and a glass case of other species. Some of these had been obtained from the Suntah Valley, fourteen miles up the Sarawak River, where the Rajah had built himself a modest lodge. Captivated by the 'delightful solitude' of unspoilt nature, Low wrote that 'nothing would be more delightful than to live and die a hermit there'. He was determined to return.

Some of the excitement experienced in his early collecting in Borneo can be gained from Low's journal and from a letter of January 1846 describing Vanda lowii (now Dimorphorchis lowii), one of the most magnificent orchids that he found in Sarawak:

At the time I formerly sent it ... I remember having said that I expected something very magnificent in its flower, and sure I am that when it produces its spikes of flowers in England [it] will be the admiration of all cultivators, probably beyond any Orchid that has ever yet appeared. As I saw it nothing could exceed it in beauty; about 200 of its branches were hanging horizontally from the main stem of a large tree, from each of which depended two, three or four chains of flowers, each 10 feet in length, and sometimes 12 feet. The individual flowers are 3 inches in diameter.

Although his scientific and aesthetic responses are there, it is also clear that, as the son of a professional nurseryman, he was acutely aware of its commercial possibilities. Nor were his expectations disappointed: a Vanda lowii sold at auction in London in 1847 for £30, a very high price indeed, and the whole consignment of Bornean orchids brought about £400. The Botanical Register for 1846 also recorded the successful introduction of Hoya imperialis and its commercial availability at Clapton.

Apart from his botanizing and anthropologizing, Low was becoming increasingly involved in James Brooke's efforts to consolidate his fledgeling state. On 16 April 1845, Low left Kuching on a seventy-foot warboat with Brooke's Malacca Eurasian interpreter and emissary, Thomas Williamson, on a diplomatic mission to Datu Patinggi Abdul Rahman, the Sultan of Brunei's governor of the sago-producing coastal area which provided much of the sultanate's revenue. Williamson's mission was to deliver a letter to the Patinggi directing him to resist demands being made by Brunei pengiran in the name of the Sultan. After a call on the Tuan Melanau, who governed the coast under the Patinggi, and an encounter with Pengiran Illudin and Nakhoda Seraddin of Brunei, the party went on to Sarikei where they were given an enthusiastic reception. All this provided Low with plentiful opportunities to indulge his anthropological interests. One of his more interesting passages relates to the Melanau women, whose beauty was prized beyond Borneo. Low's conventional European notions of what constituted feminine beauty were undergoing a subtle process of acclimatization:

When I first came here I used to look upon the native women with disgust; now I can easily discriminate the degrees of beauty as one resident in a European country would there. Instead of saying degrees of beauty I ought perhaps to have said plainness or rather ugliness for certainly they are not a comely race, but as I said before my ideas from constantly seeing them have become so vitiated that what we call a pretty woman we look upon with as much pleasure or nearly so as we used at the divine forms at home.

It is clear from some references in the earlier part of his journal that Low had left his heart in England, the young woman's name only being revealed as 'A.D.'. However, he seems to have thought of her less as he became engrossed in the great adventure of Borneo because she is never mentioned again.

In early May, Low and Williamson accompanied Brooke and Captain Bethune on the Phlegethon to Brunei for two weeks to investigate the coal deposits there and it was during this time that Low gained his first knowledge of the Brunei court which was to stand him in good stead in later years. They

then went to the nearby island of Labuan to see if it was suitable for settlement. Low was favourably impressed with Labuan, where he was later to spend almost thirty years of his life, and, like Brooke, imagined it as another Singapore. It was on this visit that he had his first sight of Kinabalu, the highest peak in South-East Asia and the scene of some of his most spectacular botanical discoveries. Sir Edward Belcher, who was at that time surveying the Labuan coast in HMS Samarang, was himself an amateur naturalist and may well have encouraged Low to make an expedition to the mountain.

Now closely involved through his friendship with Williamson in state affairs, Low accompanied him in October on a military expedition against the Dayaks of the Skrang, who were said to be planning pirate raids under the direction of Malay leaders. They were under orders 'to kill the Sereibs and disperse the boats' and Low seems to have been no mere spectator. However, the fortuitous deaths of two Dayak chiefs, Apa Biagi and Gila, and the support of Gasing meant that there was no need for blood-letting.

Low made his two major collecting expeditions up the right- and left-hand branches of the Sarawak River in November and December 1845. As well as discovering a number of plants, including some magnificent specimens of Rhododendron brookeanum which he named after the Rajah, Low spent some time observing the customs of the Sauh and other Dayak groups and it was then that he recorded his most detailed ethnographic descriptions. Obviously, he would have liked more time in the interior and received pressing invitations from tuai rumah to stay, but his collection of plants still had first priority and he hurried back to Kuching to prepare them for despatch in glass cases.

The penultimate entry in Low's journal is for 30 January 1846, recording the drowning of Williamson, who had fallen overboard from his canoe when returning from dinner at the Rajah's house the previous evening. Low's tribute to him is a useful reminder of the extraordinary talent of this man, whose linguistic and diplomatic skills served Brooke so well that Henry Keppel referred to him as 'an excellent Prime Minister'.

This death has visited in an awful guise our small society and taken from it by far the most amiable (Mr. Brooke excepted) person of those composing it. From the beginning he has been Mr. Brooke's chief assistant and the esteem he has gained for himself in the discharge of his many duties is acknowledged no less by the natives than by superior and his friends. We all loved him and each lament him, indeed of all here he is probably the only one whom I had considered more than an acquaintance.

The final entry (28 March) reported developments which were a serious set-back for Brooke and Sarawak: the assassination of Brooke's principal ally in the Brunei court, Pengiran Bedruddin, together with Rajah Muda Hassim and the rest of the faction sympathetic to Brooke and the British. This marked the end of any manipulation of Brunei by Brooke and the beginning of a period of conflict between Sarawak and the sultanate, in which Low's own interests eventually diverged from those of the Brookes.

In the meantime, Low played a part in Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane's attack on Brunei in July and the subsequent signing of a treaty with Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin II in December which confirmed the cession of Labuan to the Crown. Indeed, he was present at Labuan on 24 December to witness its official possession at the hands of Captain Mundy. Low by this time had become fluent in the Malay language and Brooke used him at Brunei as interpreter and diplomatic assistant in Williamson's place. To this extent, then, he acted as the Rajah's 'secretary'.

In June 1847 Low sailed with the Rajah for England. On the way, Brooke received news of his appointment as Governor of Labuan and Consul-General for Borneo and he evidently promised Low the position of Colonial Secretary in the new administration. Brooke had by this time become a Byronic hero in England, thanks to the earlier publication of his carefully edited journals by Keppel which had already run to three editions, and Low no doubt enjoyed some of the glory reflected by his patron, who was feted on all sides. While the Rajah had his portrait painted by Sir Francis Grant of the Royal Academy (which did much to enhance his dashing popular image), Low himself was sketched by William Montaigne, who had been a contemporary of Millais at the Royal Academy. This reveals him as an attractive and sensitive young man of twenty-three with finely chiselled features crowned by a mass of dark, curly hair. He could easily have been mistaken for a Russian poet or a Polish composer.

From the time of his departure from England until early 1846, Low kept a detailed journal of his experiences and observations, and it was this, together with the knowledge gleaned from Brooke and Williamson in particular, which provided most of the material for his book, Sarawak: Its Inhabitants and Productions, which was published by Richard Bentley in London in January 1848, just after his departure for Singapore. Indeed, the last three chapters are edited sections of the journal relating to his visits to Sarikei and the upper reaches of the Sarawak River. Low wrote in his preface in December 1847 that on his arrival in England three months earlier, he had had no intention of writing the book, emphasizing the 'circumstances of haste under which it has been written.' Apart from seeing his family, he also made a visit to Leiden in Holland to examine scientific collections there, and it was a remarkable achievement that under these

conditions he produced a work of such diversity and erudition. For a young man whose formal education had been limited, he also wrote with considerable panache. Exactly why he was prompted to this extraordinary effort is not clear, although it may well be that he had encouragement from such scientific acquaintances as Dr. John Lindley, Professor of Botany at University College, London. The book is dedicated to James Brooke and although there is no indication that the Rajah bore any responsibility for it, there is no doubt that its favourable account of Sarawak's human and natural resources would have been seen by him as a timely advertisement to much-needed British investors.

A long and favourable review of the book appeared in the January 1848 issue of Gardeners' Chronicle, probably by Dr. Lindley who was its co-editor, and it was also mentioned by the President of the Royal Geographical Society of London in his May address. Altogether, 1848 was a bumper year for books on Borneo. Following Low's book came Frank Marryat's Borneo and the Indian Archipelago, Captain Mundy's Narrative of Events in Borneo and Celebes (which included sections of Brooke's journal omitted by Keppel), Captain Sir Edward Belcher's Narrative of the Voyage of H.M.S. Samarang, and Frederick Forbes' Five Years in China. All of these contained extensive references to Sarawak and Brunei and Belcher appended a long account of his Assistant Surgeon's naturalizing. It may be, then, that Low's book did not make the impact that it might otherwise have done. It was not reprinted, although the botanical sections were extracted by Hooker and published separately in the same year. Apart from its account of Bornean flora, Sarawak was also scientifically significant in that it constituted valid publication under the rules of botanical nomenclature for at least two new species discovered by Low.

Nevertheless, Sarawak was the first comprehensive and authoritative description of northern Borneo and served as a standard general reference for half a century. It was also the pioneer of an entire genre of writing about the indigenous peoples of Borneo, whose custom of head-hunting has excited the curiosity of European readers to this day. In subsequent years, books by Frederick Boyle, Noel Denison, and Carl Bock about life with the Dayaks consciously appealed to this somewhat voyeuristic appetite but Low maintained the sober tone of a scientific observer disinclined to exploit the exotic and the sensational. In addition to his other talents, Low was a highly competent artist and the lithograph entitled 'Mr. Brooke's Bungalow at Sarawak', which formed the frontispiece of Sarawak, was based on a drawing by him. He is also likely to have been responsible for the ethnographic illustrations which appear towards the end of the book. The botanical paintings which he sent at different times to Dr. Lindley ended up at Kew.

Low had taken back with him to England a large collection of orchids and other plants from Borneo and no doubt it was due to his careful supervision on the voyage that a number were successfully introduced, most notably Rhododendron brookeanum, Nepenthes x hookeriana, Clerodendrum bethuneanum, and the orchid Cypripedium lowii (now Paphiopedilum lowii).

However, his new appointment brought to an end his career as a collector for the Clapton nursery and no doubt it was a great disappointment to his father that his elder son declined to accept the responsibility of taking over the business. It is not clear if Hugh subsequently retained any financial interest in its operation, although this seems unlikely.

Colonel William Napier, better known as 'Royal Billy' due to certain idiosyncratic mannerisms, had been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Labuan at Brooke's suggestion. A wealthy land agent and founder of the Singapore Free Press, Napier was a popular figure. Before his marriage, he had a daughter by a Malacca woman of Malay origin, and thus it was that Low made the acquaintance of young Catherine Napier on board the 44-gun frigate Maeander, which Captain Keppel had been commanded to sail to Borneo for the express purpose of delivering the new government establishment to Labuan. Also on board were James Brooke's younger nephew, Charles Johnson (later Brooke), his new private secretary, Spenser St. John, and Charles Grant, who were all going out to Sarawak for the first time. On 5 May, Keppel recorded in his journal that there had been champagne and dancing to celebrate Catherine's nineteenth birthday and that there was 'something in the wind between her and Low!'. When they reached Singapore some days later, they had decided to marry, and Keppel attended the 'cheery' wedding at St. Andrew's Church on 12 August. Ten days later there was a grand ceremony to invest Brooke with the Order of the Garter and it fell to Low to read the warrant of authorization issued by Prince Albert. In the Governor's absence, Napier himself officiated as the Crown's representative and it was only Brooke's speech which prevented the proceedings from degenerating into pure burlesque after Napier had mistakenly occupied the throne reserved for the Crown.

On 29 August, Brooke and the Lows embarked on the Maeander for Kuching and Labuan, where they were to start their new life. This began inauspiciously with an epidemic of 'Labuan fever' (probably malaria) which killed eleven of Keppel's marines and devastated most of the Europeans in the colony by November. Brooke himself was quite delirious at times and Keppel feared for his life. 'Fever has struck us,' the Rajah wrote to a friend, 'the greater number are miserable weak shadows, and the worst of it is, that no sooner does one recover, than another is attacked, and so the wheel of anxiety and watching continually revolves.' Only Spenser St. John escaped the blight and acted as a general nurse.

From his attap-roofed wooden hut on the swampy shoreline, Low must have had plenty of time to reflect on his decision to abandon professional collecting for an official career. However, he was probably responsible for the relocation of the settlement on higher ground and this, together with the establishment under Governor John Scott of a garrison and permanent government buildings, did much to set the tiny colony on an even footing. In May 1849 Catherine gave birth to a son, Hugh (Hugo) Brooke Low, who was baptized by the Rajah, and a daughter, Catherine (Kitty) Elizabeth, in October 1840, but six months later she died of fever. There is very little information about the tragic period of Low's life, but in a story written by Sir Hugh Clifford in 1901 ('A Tale of Old Labuan'), which he said was based on fact, there is a chilling description of Low digging graves one night for his wife and fourteen other fever victims. Catherine's body was buried in the garden of the new house which Low had designed, possibly because of the fear that Dayaks from the mainland would be tempted to take the head as they had earlier done at the Christian cemetery. Young Hugh and Kitty were sent off to Clapton to be brought up by their grandfather and uncle and did not see their father again for ten years.

The history of Labuan's government from 1848 is a tragi-comedy of gross incompetence and bitter feuding amongst its handful of European inhabitants—a pattern best explained as a reaction to the stifling monotony and oppressive isolation of the disease-ridden island. James Brooke took little interest in his responsibilities as Governor and spent very little time there before he was relieved of the post and its useful salary in 1854. Napier, who had made a fortune as a land agent in Singapore, was an unfortunate choice at Lieutenant-Governor and exercised a disastrous land policy which ensured Labuan did not attract further population. He quarrelled with all his European officers and it was not long before he was not on talking terms with his son-in-law. In early 1850 he was dismissed by Brooke in connection with a young Eurasian from Singapore whom he had allowed to run the island's only dram-shop while occupying a government post.

Low's official duties at Labuan were not limited to those of Colonial Secretary. He also officiated as Treasurer and Police Magistrate, and during a number of long interregnums between governors, acted as Officer Administering the Government. However, his meager salary and his extraordinary personal generosity meant that he was always plagued by financial problems. His closest associates appear to have been Dr. John Treacher, the colony's kindly but incompetent medical officers who had been his neighbour in Kuching and shared his interest in ornithology, and Lt. J. F. A. McNair, with whom he worked on an important shell collection later given to the British Museum. He also collected more than 300 species of butterfly, twenty-nine of them new ones, which caused a great deal of interest in Britain.

It was during the governorship of George Edwardes that Low had his falling-out with the Brookes. In July 1860 he accompanied Edwardes to Mukah in an attempt to prevent the Rajah and his nephews from wresting control of the sago-producing coastal area from Brunei, whose interests Edwardes had been instructed to safe-guard.

In his racy account of the siege of Mukah in Ten years in Sarawak, Charles Brooke did not name Low as Edwardes' emissary, but as Robert Pringle has noted, there can be no doubt that he was the '... gentleman attached to the Governor's suite who brought a polite message to say, than [sic] no more fighting would be permitted on either side'. As part of his campaign to discredit the Brookes, Edwardes also forwarded to the Colonial Office, Low's translation of a statement made in Brunei earlier that year by Sharif Masahor which proclaimed his innocence of any connection with the killing of two Brooke officers, Charles Fox and Henry Steele, at Kanowit Fort in 1859. Masahor, whom Charles held responsible not only for the Mukah chief's refusal to allow in Kuching traders but a carefully laid conspiracy to bring down the Brooke raj, had barely escaped with his life in February when the Tuan Muda (as Charles was then called) sank his boat with cannon fire on the Sadong River. It is difficult to say whether Low was simply carrying out the instructions of his superior or whether he had some sympathy for Masahor and Brunei's continuing control of Mukah. Labuan was essentially in competition with Sarawak for the benefits of trade with Brunei, and although he had no very high opinion of the Brunei court, he must have been acutely aware of Labuan's interests. However, unlike Spenser St. John, whose early career so closely paralleled his own, he did not leave his version of these events.

Although Edwardes' intervention temporarily thwarted the Rajah's plans and probably gave encouragement to Masahor, the Colonial Office recalled him for his temerity, and in August 1861 Brooke was able to obtain the cession of the entire sago-producing area from Sultan Abdul Mumin. Low visited the Rajah at his retirement house in Devon, in February 1862 during a year's sick-leave from Labuan, and some form of reconciliation was reached between the two men. The Rajah and St. John certainly wrote to Brooke Brooke in Sarawak urging him to be friendly towards Low in spite of Mukah. However, the elder nephew did not respond favourably and Charles wrote from Malta in March that he hoped Low had departed from England by the time he arrived. Both identified Low as being pro-Brunei. Nor can their attitude to him have been improved by the Rajah's broad hint later that year that he might well install either Low or St. John as a step towards establishment as Governor of a Crown colony of Sarawak. When it transpired that, the British Government would do no more than appoint a Consul and was not interested in taking over Sarawak, the idea faded, but Charles Brooke in particular seems to have had nothing further to do with Low.

Nevertheless, subsequent official Brooke references to him, notably in Bampfylde and Gould's History of Sarawak under Its Two White Rajahs, acknowledged Law as an authority on Borneo.

After Catherine's death, Low had formed a permanent but necessarily unofficial relationship with a Malay woman by whom he had a daughter. He may have first met her in Kuching, where a number of European officers, including St. John and Treacher, had native mistresses or 'keeps'. As she was invariably referred to as 'Nona Tuan Low' or 'Nona Dayang Loya' ('Nona' being the customary title in the Straits Settlements for a woman associated with a European), there is no indication of her Malay name, but the title 'Dayang' indicates that she came from an upper-class family. She was a celebrated singer of pantun (Malay verse), which was one of the specialties of the wives and daughters of the Kuching datu or perabangan, and her sister, Nana Dayang Kamariah, was married to a prominent European merchant in Singapore.

When sixteen-year-old Kitty Low arrived at Labuan in December 1866, fresh from her Swiss school her father was administering the government pending the arrival of John Pope-Hennessy, a 'penniless, eloquent and horribly troublesome member for some remote Irish constituency', who had been appointed after Disraeli's representations to the Secretary of State for Colonies. Kitty went to live in Low's own house but in the meantime Low had been allowing Nona Dayang Loya to visit him at the Residency, something which was regarded as scandalously immoral by those few members of Labuan's tiny European male population who had not themselves taken native mistresses. One such person was a Mr. Morel, manager of the China Steamship and Labuan Coal Company's mines, which were the island's only real industry. He had not been on speaking terms with Low since an incident which was later described for the Colonial Office by Pope-Hennessy himself:

Mr. Morel said he came one day with his wife to pay his respects to the Administrator, and finding the Malay mistress of the gentleman in the house, he thought it an act of such grave indelicacy to Mrs. Morel that he broke off all acquaintance with the temporary head of government.

The 'grave indelicacy' was the implication that a Malay woman, and a mistress at that, could be seen to occupy the same level in society as a middle-class European woman of married respectability.

As if Low had not been sufficiently injured by the appointment over him of a young Irishman without the remotest knowledge of Eastern affairs, fate ordained that the new Governor would fall in love with and marry the

ravishingly beautiful but bored Kitty within a few months of his arrival. It was not long before the Governor and his unwilling father-in-law were not on speaking terms. Pope-Hennessy refused to increase his salary and Low published in a Singapore newspaper a trenchant criticism of the Governor's tax policies which were designed to make the government self-supporting. In his correspondence with the Colonial Office, whose volume was in absurd disproportion to the importance of the tiny colony, Pope-Hennessy made great play of Low's illicit relationship, citing the experience of the new Colonial Secretary's wife, Mrs. Frances Slade, who 'was unable to walk up to the Coal Point Road because she found there were high officials who did not scruple to salute her when they were in the company of their Malay mistresses'. The house where Low maintained Nona Dayang Loya, her mother, and their daughter, for what he properly described as reasons of 'honour and justice and duty', was situated at Sagumau on the Coal Point Road. Pope-Hennessy himself had two illegitimate daughters in England by this time.

One evening in September 1870 when he was out riding with Kitty, Low received a message that his other daughter was ill. He immediately rode to the Sagumau house and spoke to the girl on the verandah. Kitty did not dismount but her horse was within the house's compound, and this grave breach of protocol was immediately reported to the Governor by the Colonial Apothecary, James McClosky, who happened to be passing by at the time. In his characteristically exaggerated style, Pope-Hennessy informed the Colonial Office that the incident had given rise to 'a grave public scandal' and described Low as being 'totally blind to the inconvenience of the public scandal attaching to his conduct'. Even the Colonial Chaplain, the Revd. W. D. Beard, who detested Pope-Hennessy and believed that he was doing everything in his power to destroy Low, found the latter's action reprehensible and extracted a written promise from him that nothing like it would ever happen again.

Pope-Hennessy attempted to dispose of Low by linking him with the accusation that Nona Dayang Loya's house was being used for gambling and other illicit purposes, but a patient police watch on the house could only report that it was the scene of evening merriment, including the singing of pantun to musical accompaniment. In the following year the Governor finally managed to have Low indicted on a number of charges, including the accusation that he owned a house inhabited by persons 'known to the police'. A continued watch had eventually resulted in the arrest of a man for illegally selling no less than five cents' worth of tobacco outside or at Nona Dayang Loya's house. Low was suspended from office and complained bitterly to the Colonial Office of 'perjury and tyranny', charging Pope-Hennessy with conspiracy. He was eventually cleared of the charges and reinstated but the bitter war between the two men was only interrupted by Pope-Hennessy's transfer to the governorship of the Bahamas



in 1871. Perhaps the most spectacular episode of all had been the Governor's issue of a writ of habeas corpus against Low for illegally detaining his child by Kitty after she had returned with all her belongings to her father's house. This was her response to Pope-Hennessy's petulant refusal to allow her and Low to visit Kuching, where Hugo had just arrived to join the Rajah's service.

In spite of his range of official responsibilities and the vexing distractions described above, there was still time for Low to pursue his botanical and other scientific interests. He made a number of visits to Brunei, Lawas, and other neighbouring rivers where he discovered Dendrobium lowii and various pitcher-plants, including Nepenthes bicalcarata. And in 1851, accompanied by his Chinese servant and a Dusun guide called Lemaing, he climbed Mt. Kinabalu, discovering new species of orchid and rhododendron and the giant pitcher-plants unique to the area. At the bleak summit, which he could only reach barefooted, he 'finished a bottle of excellent madeira to Her Majesty's health and that of my far distant friends' and planted the upturned bottle in a conspicuous place to mark his achievement. Access to the mountain had only been possible because of Low's diplomacy with the hill Dusuns or Ida'an, who had never seen Europeans before, and it is interesting that Thomas Lobb, another collector employed by Veitch, was prevented by them from making an ascent in 1856. However, most of Low's carefully collected specimens were jettisoned by his other Dusun companions as they made their way down the mountain in monsoon rain and there was insufficient time to make a full investigation of the botanical resources of the area.

In his account of the expedition which was published in the Journal of the Eastern Archipelago in 1852, Low made no mention of his encounter with a flotilla of Illanun raiders at the mouth of the Tuaran River. This is the description he gave of it in 1899, when he had had more time to reflect on his life in Borneo:

We were suddenly alarmed by hearing the sound of large gongs towards the mouth. We of course expected the sound to come from approaching enemies, as at that time, 1851, friends were rarely met with in those seas. We had not long to wait. Soon a fine two-masted vessel, with double banks of oars, pulled round the point of land, and was quickly followed by five others, all gaily decorated with flags and streamers, and having their decks covered with armed men. We recognized them at once as Llanun pirates, and I instructed my pilot to hail them and inquire who they were and what they wanted. A very handsome young man, of about twenty-eight, in a coat of armour formed from the plates of horn of the water buffalo, connected together by brass chain-work, standing in front of his companions, answered, "I am

the Sultan Si Mirantow, of Layer-layer, and having heard that Mr. Low is in the river, I have come to pay him a friendly visit." We were in my boat seventeen men in all, sixteen of them being Brunei Malays, and the relief of receiving this reply may be easily imagined. We immediately invited the chief to an entertainment, killed the fatted calf which had that morning been presented to us by the people of the village, and held high festival till the evening, when we parted on the best of terms with our interesting guests. I never had the opportunity of meeting this agreeable young corsair again, as he was killed shortly after in an action with a Spanish gunboat.

Low returned to the mountain with Spenser St. John in April 1858 but their small party was challenged by a large group of Dusuns, who claimed that they had had bad crops ever since Low's earlier ascent and demanded a slave in compensation. St. John's account of the incident makes it clear that for all his mild manners, Low possessed considerable courage:

As the Ida'an were shaking their spears and giving other hostile signs, we thought it time to bring the affair to a climax; so I ordered the men to load their muskets, and Mr. Low, stepping up to the chief with his five-barrelled pistol, told the interpreter to explain that we were peaceable travellers, most unwilling to enter into any contest; that we had obtained the permission of the Government of the country, and that we were determined to proceed; that if they carried out their threats of violence, he would shoot five with his revolver, and that I was prepared to do the same with mine; that they might, by superior numbers, overcome us at last, but in the meantime we would make a desperate fight of it.

Thus closed the scene...

St. John managed to make the summit, where he found Low's bottle undisturbed, but Low's feet caused him great trouble and he had to be carried back in a litter. Even then, he managed to hobble to St. John's assistance, brandishing his revolver, when there was another incident with the Dusuns. It was also revealing that, after seven years, Low recognized the voice of his original guide, Lemaing. Like James Brooke, Low had an extraordinary ability to remember names and voices and this, together with his mastery of idiomatic Malay and jawi script, must help to explain his influence.

The expedition had been a botanical disaster and in July of that year Low and St. John made another ascent, using Low's original route via the Tuaran River and Kiau. This time Low was able to make a large collection of plants, including the four great Nepenthes which were illustrated in St. John's Life in the Forests of the Far East, which he published at his own expense in London in 1862. St. John's entertaining account of the two expeditions was also based on Low's own journals, which do not appear to have survived. Always generous with information and collected material, Low subsequently gave Frederick Burbidge detailed instructions on the location of the pitcher-plants at Kinabalu when he was in Borneo in 1877 on a collecting expedition for the Veitchian Collection at Chelsea. Ironically, it was Burbidge rather than Low who succeeded in introducing the great Nepenthes to England.

In the more practical field of economic horticulture, Low had a number of significant successes and his garden at Labuan was famous for its pomeloes, mangoes, and mangosteens. He introduced the Balinese pomelo (limau Bali) and it is this fruit, well known throughout Malaysia, which is his most widely appreciated legacy. According to his great grandson, James Pope-Hennessy, who wrote a brilliant account of life on Labuan during those years, Low also had his own aquarium, aviary, and collections of shells, butterflies, moths, snake-skins and stuffed animals, and kept pet monkeys in his house. 'He seems to have preferred the company of Malays to that of Europeans, and of his pet animals to either. He once wrote to ... Kitty that he loved only two creatures in the world—his wah-wah monkey, Eblis, and herself.'

In 1876, when Low might well have come to believe that he would remain at Labuan forever, he was appointed British Resident in Perak. The first Resident, James Birch, had been assassinated in November 1875 and the security of the potentially rich state was essential to British interests in the Malay States. Low's task was a difficult and challenging one, and he rose to the occasion in his own quiet and measured way. Indeed, he is best known for his achievements in Perak, where he remained until 1889, and it is scarcely necessary to recount his official career, which has been discussed extensively by the historians of nineteenth-century Malaya. His Perak journal for two months of 1877 has also been published and this, together with Isabella Bird's vivid description of life at the Kuala Kangsar Residency, provides some useful insights into his modus operandi. During those busy years, he still managed to maintain a keen interest in economic horticulture, conducting experiments with coffee, cinchona, pepper, tea, sugar, rice, and rubber. In October 1877 Henry Murton of the Singapore Botanic Gardens brought to Kuala Kangsar ten Hevea brasiliensis plants which had been obtained from Ceylon, and nine of these were successfully planted in the Residency garden. Low subsequently made test plantings in different parts of the state and obviously envisaged the economic importance of his new crop.

Cattle-breeding was another interest and he was responsible for introducing Jerseys and Alderneys as well as Nellore cattle from India.

Before returning to England in 1889, Low was given a mission designed to exploit his close knowledge of Bornean affairs. The British Government had eventually decided to make formal treaties with Rajah Charles Brooke and the Sultan of Brunei which would regulate relations with the two Bornean states. Low had little difficulty in persuading the Sultan to sign the treaty of 'protection'. On an earlier visit he had obtained a copy of the Silsilah Brunei, the chronicle of descent of the rulers of Brunei, and his annotated translation of this important jawi manuscript had subsequently appeared in the Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society which he helped to establish.

At the end of his time in Perak, Low evidently expected to be appointed Governor of the Straits Settlements but his official reward was the CMG bestowed on him in 1879, followed by the KCMG in 1883 and the GCMG in 1889. In later years he maintained his links with the Colonial Office which frequently consulted him on Malayan and Bornean matters; and in 1891 he was approached by shareholders of the Peruvian Corporation for advice on the agricultural potential of land allocated to them by the Peruvian Government. He may even have visited South America in this connection.

Low's administrative achievements at Labuan are difficult to assess, since at no time did he exercise unfettered authority and responsibility. Although he was in charge for eight of the twenty-seven years that he spent on the island, it may have seemed pointless to him to initiate policies which a new Governor might well sweep away with his new broom. One sympathetic contemporary observed that 'Labuan never appeared to give him the scope necessary for his abilities', but it is more likely to have been a combination of official constraints and Low's own quiet and unassuming temperament. Certainly, when he was given full authority in Perak, his financial, political, and juridical achievements became almost legendary, providing a 'model of administration for the Malay States'. These are the words of his protégé and successor in Perak, Sir Frank Swettenham, who owed a good deal to him. Sir Richard Winstedt was more circumspect in his assessment of Low as an originator of policy, but he did not question his administrative abilities and his preference for persuasion rather than intimidation in his management of the Malays. His abolition of debt-slavery in Perak is a good example of Low's low-key methods.

In a warm testimony to his mentor shortly after his death, Swettenham wrote:

...the real value of Sir Hugh Low's work was to be found in the influence he exerted to prove to the Malays the meaning of justice, fair dealing, and consideration of their claims and their prejudices. That influence was not less firmly and wisely used to teach his officers a lesson of strict integrity, and to insist upon their treating the natives with the same courtesy and consideration which he showed himself. Sir Hugh Low understood what others in authority should never forget, that the only way to deal with a Malay people is through their recognized chiefs and headmen. To gain their co-operation it is necessary to show them at least as much consideration as if they were Europeans, and infinitely more patience. Moreover, they should be consulted before taking action, not after.

Between them, Low and Swettenham were the architects of the system of indirect rule in British Malaya and Low's own philosophy was best expressed in a letter to Sir William Robinson, Governor of the Straits Settlements, in 1878 in which he wrote of his Perak experience: '... we must first create the Government to be advised.' There was more than an echo here of James Brooke's own policy in Borneo, and it was a principle which was to make Low one of the great pro-consuls of nineteenth-century British imperialism.

Low married again in 1885, this time to Ann Douglas, daughter of General Sir Robert Douglas, fourth Baronet of Monkseaton in Northumberland, but they had no children. In July 1887 Low received the tragic news that Hugo had died of pneumonia while on leave in London, at the age of thirty-eight. Hugo had failed the examination for the Indian Civil Service, but after entering the Rajah's service, he became one of the most outstanding officers of the Brooke era. Like his father, Hugh won the confidence and affection of the people amongst whom he worked. However, one of his earliest postings was at Sibul Fort, where he helped to repel an attack by the Dayak leader, Lintong, and three thousand of his supporters. He served for a time at Simanggang but was later posted to the Rejang, where he became particularly interested in the Kayans and other smaller groups. An enthusiastic ethnographer and a skilled linguist, he assembled an unrivalled store of information about them and his collection of artefacts formed the basis of the Sarawak Museum's ethnographical exhibits. The ethnographical data which he took to England on his last visit was later edited by Henry Ling Roth and published in two volumes in 1896 as The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo.

During his retirement years in Kensington, Low maintained his links with the Royal Botanic Gardens at Ken, where he visited Sir Joseph Hooker and the new Director, W. Thiselton Dyer. It seems likely that he had earlier supplied

considerable information to Hooker for his work on economic botany, although this has not been acknowledged. He was elected Fellow of the Anthropological Society, the Zoological Society, and the Linnean Society in the early 1890s and served on the Council of the last-mentioned body in 1896. He assembled a unique collection of pamphlets on Borneo (subsequently acquired by Rhodes House Library, Oxford), but apart from his journals for 1844-6 and 1877 and his official correspondence with the Colonial Office from Labuan, his papers seem to have disappeared. This may be one of the reasons why his identity has been confused with that of Hugo by such authorities as the German bibliographer of Borneo, Karl Helbig.

Although he did not produce any scientific papers based on his own discoveries in Borneo and Malaya, Low kept abreast of botanical and horticultural developments and maintained a close connection with the family nursery, which had expanded from Clapton to Bush Hill near Enfield in 1881 owing to air pollution and the need for more space. Not surprisingly, orchids were a specialty of the nursery, which brother Stuart had managed since their father's death in 1863, and this tradition remained in the family until the death of Stuart's granddaughter, Eileen Low. The name was kept alive by Stuart Low (Enfield) Ltd., which continued to cultivate exotic plants and ferns.

A full account of Hugh Low's botanical and horticultural achievements is long overdue and will no doubt reveal him as one of the important nineteenth-century collectors and horticulturists. Apart from the many new species of Nepenthes which he discovered, the most noted of which (N. edwardsiana, N. rajah, N. villosa, and N. lowii) were described by Joseph Hooker (son of Sir William) in Icones Plantarum (1852) and Transactions of the Linnean Society (1859, 1860), he was also responsible for bringing to public knowledge many new species of orchid and rhododendron. Perhaps the most famous of the orchids, some of which were named after him, are Coelogyne pandurata, C. asperata, Dendrobium lowii, Paphiopedilum lowii, and Dimorphorchis lowii. As Burbidge wrote in an appreciative obituary in Gardeners' Chronicle, '... to have discovered such a regal orchid as Vanda ... lowii and the great mountain pitcher-plants of Borneo would alone suffice to give Sir Hugh Low worldwide fame as a botanist'. Collections of his botanical specimens were lodged with the Herbarium at Kew and at Cambridge, Leiden, and Vienna. Between them, Joseph Hooker and Otto Stapf were responsible for the scientific identification of most of his botanical discoveries and it is worth noting that in Borneo itself, Daun Lo and Bunga Lo became the vernacular names for the many indigenous orchids that he collected there. Low's name is also commemorated in at least one species of bird and numerous insects.

As for his work in horticulture, perhaps the best-informed appreciation was stated in 1911 by Henry Ridley, then Director of the Singapore Botanic Gardens, who wrote to a friend: 'Sir Hugh Low was indeed a great agriculturalist and must rank next to Raffles as the greatest man we have had here. If he had remained here, agriculture would have been a century ahead of its present day status but much of his work was destroyed after he left.'

Low died at Alassio in Italy on 18 April 1905, shortly before his eighty-first birthday, and the numerous obituaries paid tribute to his botanical and administrative achievements, emphasizing the almost self-effacing modesty which had always marked his demeanour. Lacking the flamboyant style of a James Brooke or a Frank Swettenham, Low was a quiet and efficient achiever who mastered the art of what subsequently became known as 'native administration'. 'Tuan II Low', as he was known in Borneo, was a brilliant practitioner of the principles which the White Rajah had promulgated without any sustained interest in applying. A gifted naturalist whose practical training had instilled habits of discipline and order unknown to Brooke, he eschewed the fame that botanical science could have brought him for the practical and democratic benefits of horticulture. It is poetic, then, that the highest peak of Kinabalu should bear aloft the name of this talented but unassuming man who always seemed surprised when people remarked on his achievements but never received the full recognition due to him.

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#### ASPECTS OF FINANCE IN BRUNEI DURING THE BRITISH RESIDENTIAL ERA 1906-1959

A. V. M. HORTON

The establishment of the British Residency in Brunei in 1905-1906 resulted in a re-organization of the fiscal regime.

Under the 1905-1906 settlement between Brunei and Britain it was agreed that the former system of administration, taxation and land tenure based on the ownership of *kerajaan* (crown), *kuripan* (ministerial) and *tulin* (private) lands and 'serfs' would cease to operate. In compensation for the surrender of their *kerajaan* and *kuripan* rights, the monarch accepted an annuity of \$12,000 (Straits), and the two existing wazirs (viziers) - the *Pengiran Bendahara* and *Pengiran Pemancha* - settled for \$6,000 each.<sup>1</sup> A promise was given by the British envoys that, should the revenue allow, these sums might "properly be raised" in the future.<sup>2</sup> In documents subsidiary to the 1905-1906 Brunei-UK Treaty it was laid down that the Sultan and wazirs would continue to receive any private cession

money payments from Sarawak and North Borneo (Sabah), but all other revenues would go to the State.<sup>3</sup> The new regime immediately launched a programme for investigating and buying up *tulin* rights, a complicated process which lasted several years.<sup>4</sup>

During the Residential Era the Sultans of Brunei were as follows:

1.	1885-1906	HH Sultan Hashim Jalil-ul-alam Akamudin
2.	1906-1924	HH Sultan Sir Mohamed Jemal-ul-alam KCMG
3.	1924-1950	HH Sultan Sir Ahmad Tajuddin Akazul Khairi Wadin KBE CMG
4.	1950-1967	HH Sultan Jeneral Haji Sir Omar Ali Saifuddien III DKMB DK GCVO KCMG PSSUB PHBS PBLI

On the eve of the Residential Era the penury of Brunei in general and the royal family in particular was lamentable. In 1904 Mr. MSH McArthur (1872-1934), who would go on to become the first British Resident in Brunei (1906-1908) and is regarded as being comparatively sympathetic towards that country, reported on HH Sultan Hashim that "his Astana is a mere collection of ruinous hovels, his clothes are always poor and threadbare, and the furniture of his house is sordid and mean".<sup>5</sup> His Highness was "hopelessly poor" although he had "just obtained a loan from the Rajah of Sarawak...which ought to keep him in funds for a month or so, unless his creditors compel him to disgorge it immediately in payment of their claims. ...Lately he has been dismissing uluns because of his inability to feed them."<sup>6</sup> In addition, His Highness had already hypothecated much of his future income for many years ahead.<sup>7</sup>

The entire annual State revenue for Brunei in 1907 was \$43,539 (Straits). The Straits' dollar (renamed the Malayan dollar after the Second World War) being fixed in value at 2s 4d throughout the Residential Era, \$43,539 represented slightly more than £5,000.<sup>8</sup>

Brunei's yearly receipts reached a pre-oil peak of \$440,870 in 1927 and a pre-Japanese Occupation high of \$1,556,354 in 1940.

During the first decades of this century the Sultanate remained very heavily indebted, because large sums of money had to be spent to buy out the previous revenue holders. By 1914 no less than \$439,750 had been borrowed from the Federated Malay States, partly for this reason and partly for more general purposes. A further \$20,000 was obtained from the Straits Settlements in 1922; and, at the end of that year, the National Debt still represented the equivalent of more than two years' annual State revenue. Repayment of the principal began in 1920, albeit on a minor scale.<sup>9</sup>

With regard to commerce, annual exports from Brunei, comprising mainly coal, catch and (from 1914) rubber, stood at \$543,707 in 1915. At the height of the rubber boom, in 1925, this figure had reached \$1,825,736, before falling back to only \$501,494 in 1931 (i.e. below even the 1915 level). Fortunately, the country was rescued by the providential coming on stream during the following year (1932) of the Seria oilfield. Petroleum had actually been struck there as far back as April 1929;<sup>10</sup> but exploitation had been delayed because of the world slump consequent upon the Wall Street Crash of that year (1929) and a glut in the world oil market.

In 1904 the capital of Brunei and the surrounding district reportedly produced "practically nothing" and the inhabitants were "dependent on the shops for their food and clothing." There was also "a considerable import trade in planks, timber, hardware, nails, cutlery and crockery - the latter chiefly of German manufacture".<sup>11</sup> The letting and sub-letting of monopoly rights to import this or that article meant, however, that "all goods are of inferior quality and cost more than double what better kinds would fetch in Singapore".<sup>12</sup> The large population of Kampong Ayer was "dependent on outside sources for all the necessities of life, except a certain amount of rice supplied by Kadayan and Bisaya labour".<sup>13</sup>

It should be pointed out here that, at the time of the first census taken in 1911, Brunei Town (Kampong Ayer) and surrounding area comprised almost three-quarters of the country's total population of 21,718.

The total annual value of goods brought into the whole of Brunei State rose from \$234,004 in 1915 to a temporary peak of \$2.5 million in 1930 (when the British Malayan Petroleum Company was shipping in large quantities of expensive machinery for use in the oil field). Imports reached an unprecedented level of \$3.78 million (when prices were inflated by the world conflagration, soon to spread to Brunei itself).

The petroleum industry had a tremendous impact upon Brunei's finances, as indicated in the following table:

BRUNEI: REVENUE PER HEAD OF POPULATION 1911-1959  
(\$Straits/Malayan)

Year	Census of Population	Revenue Total	Revenue Per Head in \$ Straits/ Malayan	National Debt:	
				Total	Per Head
1911	21,718	109,430	5.04	400,000	18.42
1921	25,454	165,890	6.49	427,317	16.79
1931	30,135	342,011	11.35	395,000	13.11
1947	40,670	4,389,974	107.94	nil	nil
1959	83,877a	129,568,762	1,544.75	nil	nil

NOTE: a = 1960 census figure of population

SOURCE: Compiled by the author from Brunei Annual Reports.

Not only had Brunei eliminated its National Debt as early as 1936, but by 1959 the amount held on "long term investments" stood at more than \$600 million, a figure which was increasing rapidly.<sup>14</sup>

The improvement of the State's overall financial position naturally led to an amelioration of the monarchy's plight in this regard. In 1934 HH Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin's allowance was raised by \$500 (Straits) per month, and four years later a similar increase took place, bringing the monthly payment up to \$2,000 (or £233.33). His Highness received extra allowances for the cost of services; and, in 1939, a further sum was voted by the Government to enable His Highness to purchase a motor car. The Sultan may also have had private sources of income, such as cession monies (the payment for Trusan alone was \$4,500 per annum), and maybe even some agricultural income (e.g. from rubber). No precise statistics are available; but it seems not very likely that such private income exceeded the amount His Highness was receiving from the Government. His Highness's marriage in 1934 to a princess from Selangor may have brought him a dowry.

After the Japanese period (1941-1945), His Highness remained dissatisfied about many matters in his country;<sup>15</sup> and one of them was his monthly allowance, which was still only \$3,000 (Malayan) as late as 1949. In a letter to Whitehall during that summer, His Highness appealed for an increase in his stipend and requested that a suitable additional grant should be made in order to help His Highness meet the expenditure upon his forthcoming Silver Jubilee celebrations.<sup>16</sup> In reply, Whitehall suggested that His Highness might consult the Resident.<sup>17</sup> In a second letter, His Highness explained that he had already done so; but with no result. He repeated his two original requests, and added a third, to the effect that his claim for war damage compensation should be processed as quickly as possible. His Highness added that he had no savings of his own. His Highness also hoped that he could be provided by the Government with a proper modern palace, because he was becoming the poor relation among Malayan Sultans, and this was causing him to lose face.<sup>18</sup> Once again Whitehall sent a discouraging reply.<sup>19</sup>

After Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III succeeded to the throne in the following year (1950), however, matters changed. By 1955 Civil List expenditure had rocketed to \$300,000 (Malayan) - or £35,000 (annually) - and by 1961 it was almost double that figure again.<sup>20</sup> At last the Brunei royal family was beginning to share in the prosperity brought to their country through the exploitation of petroleum from 1932 onwards.

#### CONCLUSION

During the Residential Era the pivotal date for Brunei's finances was 1932. Before that time the country was indebted and comparatively poor (though not so poor, in fact, as a Malayan State such as Trengganu);<sup>21</sup> after that time, however, there was a massive expansion in Government revenue and, instead of being a debtor nation, the Sultanate was able to invest its huge surpluses overseas. During the 1930s and 1940s the then monarch's allowance had trebled to \$3,000 (Straits) per month (£350), but during the 1950s Civil List expenditure grew at a much faster rate.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The original research drawn upon in this article was financed by the British SSRC (later ESRC) and supervised by the late Dr. DK Bassett (University of Hull), to both of whom I remain particularly grateful, although neither is responsible for any shortcomings in the present paper.

#### NOTES

1. CO 273/312 (item 691 1905/06), Enclosure 'B', DG Campbell and MSH McArthur to HH the Sultan of Brunei, n.d. (c3 December 1905), paragraph iii.
2. *Ibid.*, paragraph iv; and *loc. cit.*, Campbell and McArthur to Sir John Anderson (Governor of the Straits Settlements 1904-1911), 6 December 1905, paragraph 10.
3. As note (1), above, paragraphs i-ii.
4. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1910, pp. 11-12; and Brunei Annual Report 1911, p. 13  
 With regard to cession money payments for tulin districts ceded to Sarawak and Sabah, some of these remained in private hands for many years. See, for example, CO 531/17 (item 15309), Brunei estimates for 1923, pp. 18-19.
5. FO 572/39 McArthur, Report on Brunei in 1904 (dated Singapore, 5 December 1904), paragraph 64.  
 This report was published by Ohio University Press in August 1987.
6. *Ibid.*; paragraph 65. Professor DE Brown translates ulun as "a low form of slavery; domestic slaves" (DE Brown, The Structure and History of a Bornean Malay Sultanate, Special Monograph of the Brunei Museum Journal, Vol. 2, No. 2, page 210). See also *ibid.*, pp. 17-20.
7. McArthur, Report, paragraphs 41 and 94; and Appendices I and III.
8. All dollar values in this paper, unless otherwise stated, refer to Straits/Malayan dollars.  
 From 1906 until 1919 and again from 1925 until 1931 the pound sterling was tied to the gold standard, its value fixed at 4.86 American dollars. In 1949 the pound was devalued from \$US 4.03 to only \$US2.80. (AJP Taylor, English History 1914-1945 - Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1975 reprint, pp. 29n, 188, 285-7, and 372). This remained the position until 1967 when a further devaluation (£1.00 = \$US2.40) took place.
9. A repayment of \$9,750 of the principal was made in 1920 (CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1920, p. 1). Further small repayments were made every year until 1934; and the last two, every large, repayments were made in 1935 and 1936.



10. CO 824/1 Brunei Annual Report 1929, p. 8.

It is true that in 1903 "a free flow of oil resulted from the chance blow of a pick"; but this occurred on HH Rajah Sir Charles Brooke's coal mine on Berembang Island, at the opposite end of the State from Seria (which did not exist at that time in any case). Furthermore, the oil flow on Berembang was not only slow and without commercial possibilities, but it also interfered with the working of the existing colliery (McArthur, Report, paragraph 89). As late as 1923 the Colonial Office was pessimistic about the chances of discovering payable petroleum in the Abode of Peace (CO 531/17 item 10477 - marginal comment by Mr. H. Beckett (1891-1952), March 1923).

Some people believe that the British Government's decision to install a Resident in 1905-1906 may have been influenced by the possibility of discovering oil. In the present writer's opinion, this is dubious.

11. McArthur, Report, paragraph 44.
12. Ibid., paragraph 50.
13. Ibid., paragraph 52.
14. Brunei Annual Report 1961-1962 (sic), p. 25.
15. RHW Reece, The Name of Brooke (OUP, KL, 1982), pp. 270 and 279.
16. CO 943/1 (File 20, item 1) HH Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin to the Right Honourable Mr. A. Creech Jones (1891-1964), 23 May 1949.
17. Ibid., item 2, Jones to Sultan, 3 June 1949.
18. Ibid., item 4, Sultan to Jones, 11 July 1949.
19. Ibid., Draft B, Jones to Sultan, 5 August 1949.
20. Brunei Annual Report 1961-1962 (sic), p. 21.
21. That is, in terms of per capita Government revenue. See Sarawak Gazette, December 1988, p. 16.

NOTE The documentary references cited above may be consulted at the Public Record Office, Kew, Richmond, Surrey (United Kingdom).

A VISIT TO KAMPUNG GUMBANG AND  
SOME THOUGHTS ON THE CULTURE HISTORY OF  
DAYAK BIDAYUH JAGOI

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On July 19 and 20, 1989 I visited Kampung Gumbang, a Jagoi village in Bau District. I had been informed that it was the most isolated and traditional of the Bidayuh villages in Bau. It is located on Gunung Gumbang, just on the Sarawak side of the Indonesian-Malaysian frontier. From Bau bazaar the village is reached through Kampung Bogag on the Sirikin road. A foot path runs from Bogag to Kampung Padangpan and from there to Gumbang. Padangpan is slightly more than an hour's walk from Bogag, and Gumbang is another hour and a half beyond this. In very dry weather a motorbike can be used as far as Padangpan but from there to Gumbang it is only possible to walk on foot. The trail goes up and down through secondary forest and fields, with a long final climb up to the village.

Kampung Gumbang is located on a rocky shoulder on the lower part of the mountain. The village numbers a hundred and twelve doors. The houses are all presently detached and clustered on two sides of a ravine. The villagers note that in the past some houses had been joined into longhouses but that these had consisted of only a few doors each. Some of the houses are built in a way that suggests that they were a section of a longhouse but most of them are not. The villagers claim that Gumbang is an old village, founded before the Chinese rebellion in 1857. Its protected mountain-side location does suggest that it was established while headhunting was still active. The very large size of the durian and other fruit trees which grow around the village also indicate that people have lived in the vicinity for a long period of time.

Gumbang is of special interest in that it has one of the few remaining baruk (headhouses) in Bau District or, for that matter, in the Bidayuh region in general. The baruk sits on the highest point in the village, closely surrounded by houses. It is raised above the ground about one meter on one side and about three meters on the opposite where the hill slopes away. In size it is considerably smaller than the better known one at Kampung Opar. It is also square rather than circular in shape and presently has corrugated metal rather than a thatched roof. Further, it also lacks the bird effigy pinnacle (rangkai) which can be seen on the baruk at Opar. Otherwise the baruk is traditional in character. The floor is made of flattened bamboo, there is a raised platform which extends around the

inside perimeter and there is a central hearth surrounded by four pillars. The baruk contains four skulls which hang from the akat guna, along with two deer skulls. Nearby, on the raised platform, is a bundle of old spears and a shield. Three of the skulls are said to have been purchased from people in Indonesia in times of sickness.

The baruk is presently in poor condition. A section of the corrugated metal roof, which was put on in 1963, is missing and the roof probably leaks elsewhere. The wooden framework inside appears to be in good shape but the posts underneath do not. The entire structure could collapse before long if it is not repaired.

The ritual use of the baruk also appears to have declined. The villagers report that the skulls are still periodically cleaned and given offerings but the gawai mukah (the main skull festival) has not been held for many years. I asked how frequently the mukah was now held and was told that it was every ten years. But then I was also told that the last mukah was held in 1958, more than thirty years ago. When I inquired if there were any plans to have the mukah festival, the villagers replied that the old man who would have been in charge of the festival had recently died, though there were others who still know the procedures. None of this sounded very hopeful from the perspective of the survival of the rituals of the baruk. Further, if the entire village were to convert to Christianity the abandonment of the rituals relating to the skulls and the aruk would probably be total. Although Christianity has been introduced it has not yet really been established. However, the inhabitants of the daughter village of Padangpan have become Roman Catholic. In Gumbang, where there are currently four Christian families, Christianity was introduced by several school teachers who were born in the village but who were partly educated and first employed elsewhere. It thus seems likely that conversion to Christianity, which is associated with progress, will thus continue.

It is true that in Kampung Opar, where about a third of the families are Christian, the rituals of the baruk continue to be held. Here, it was explained to me that the Christians support the baruk as an important village institution and will participate in the social activities held there to the extent that these are not opposed to their own beliefs. However, in this case the Christian acceptance or support of the continuation of the adat lama in relation to the baruk is probably in part an expression of village pride. Here the baruk serves as a showplace and emblem of traditional Bidayuh culture, the village having become famous for having it. It is visited by foreigners and important local Malaysians and it is supported by the Sarawak Museum. Like the uninhabited model longhouse which has recently been constructed in another part of the village, it is intended also to be a tourist attraction.

Perhaps more than lowland Bidayuh settlements like Opar, ancestral mountain villages such as Gumbang are important repositories of information about the history of the Jagoi and other Bidayuh peoples--history which is poorly understood. For one thing there is the common assumption (Leach 1950:65-66, 80), that the various Bidayuh groups, like other Dayak peoples in Sarawak traditionally lived in longhouses which, moreover, were generally rebuilt in new locations fairly frequently as local farm lands were exhausted. If Gumbang and some of the other older mountain Jagoi villages (such as Gunung Jagoi) were the traditional homelands of the Jagoi and if they consisted of mainly detached single family dwellings, then the notion that the longhouse was a necessary feature of Bidayuh culture is incorrect. It is known for a fact that in the past at least some Bidayuh lived in mountain villages which consisted of clustered single family dwellings rather than longhouses. In 1841 James Brooke recorded a visit to the Dayaks of Singgé mountain in which he noted that

The village is built on a shoulder of the mountain, not half way up, and is only accessible by a ladder-like path on either side. It consists of about 200 miserable huts, and is as dirty and filthy as any place I was ever in, with numerous half starved pigs and dogs running about it. The houses are small and mean, and detached from each other, contrary to the usage of the other Dyaks, who inhabit large longhouses containing numerous partitions for families; here, however, they have one or two public halls or council houses, which are built and thatched in circular form, and in which the young men and bachelors sleep; here likewise are deposited the heads, of which they have more than enow, as above one hundred ghastly remnants of mortality ornamented the abode in which we slept (Keppel [1846(1):231] quoting Brooke's journal of August 5, 1841).

More recently (in 1946) when Malcolm McDonald visited Singgé mountain he also found the Bidayuh inhabitants living in a series of villages composed of individual houses grouped around head houses. McDonald went on to explain, however, that such a pattern was not traditional:

Land Dayaks used to be longhouse dwellers, but many have abandoned that form of residence. They did this from necessity, not from choice. Land Dayaks are not vigorous types like most other pagan peoples; they are easy going, pacific and even timid...(they) became convenient prey for their aggressive neighbors...Harassed, bullied and despairing, the Dayaks abandoned their homes, retreated up the rivers, and in some cases left low-lying country altogether and fled to the higher,

more defensible ground. Ultimately many built their homes near mountain tops. (McDonald)

This stereotyped description of the character and history of the Bidayuh seems misleading or mistaken in the case of the Jagoi, if not also in that of other Bidayuh groups. In regard to character it needs to be kept in mind regarding the Jagoi and other Bidayuh that written history about them really begins only with the arrival of Brooke. This was a period in which the Iban were undoubtedly expanding at the expense of the Bidayuh and other Bornean groups. Evidently (the evidence, however, being that provided by Brooke and other Englishmen) most Bidayuh welcomed Brooke's intervention and readily struck a bargain with him whereby they reduced or gave up headhunting in return for protection against the more numerous and powerful Iban. But this does not necessarily mean that the Bidayuh were by nature timid or passive. McDonald's characterization is inconsistent with Brooke's observations about the Singgé who, in addition to having many heads, were bent to his will reluctantly and only after the use of force. Nor does the construction of highland "fortress villages" necessarily prove a purely defensive posture in the case of the Jagoi or other Bidayuh any more than would fortified towns and castles in medieval Europe or Japan.

In regard to the history of mountain villages, McDonald's assertion that the Bidayuh moved out of lowland longhouses and into highland fortress villages after Iban raiding began appears to be pure speculation. In the absence of archaeological investigation, answers to when such villages were first occupied are likely to remain uncertain. However, it may be noted that if the Jagoi and other inhabitants of mountain villages were traditionally lowland longhouse dwellers then it seems likely that once Iban predation was effectively checked by Brooke in the First Division they would have moved back down. One wonders why McDonald thought that the Singgé villagers were still living high up on the mountain where he found them in 1946, a century after Brooke arrived, if this had not been their traditional home land. It is true that Brooke found the Singgé mountain villages which he visited to be uncommonly filthy and dirty and filled with half-starved pigs and dogs. This might suggest that such villages were not the normal place of habitation. But it is also possible that the conditions he found were the immediate consequence of Iban raids which kept people from farming very far from the village, thereby adversely affecting the supply of food and other materials.

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## A NOTE ON THE PENAN OF BRUNEI

Bernard J. L. Sellato

I had the opportunity to visit Rumah Panjang Penan, on the upper Belait River, in December 1989, but was able to spend only two hours there, sitting on the veranda of the Penan longhouse with headman Luya (aged about 50-55). The data below rest only on my interview with Luya and are given for what they are worth.

This longhouse is located on the left bank, across the river from the Dusun village of Sukang. Two Iban settlements (including Melilas) are located farther upstream on the Belait. The Penan longhouse has eight apartments and houses about 50 people. It is of good craftsmanship, with sawn timber and zinc roofing. It appears that it was built by a Chinese *tokay*, on government's order and with the Penan participating as labor, but it is not clear who paid for the building materials and the *tokay's* fees. The longhouse has a power generator, and several households have privately-owned radio and television sets. The

Dusun village of Sukang has a primary school, which all the Penan children attend, to later continue in secondary school in Kuala Belait.

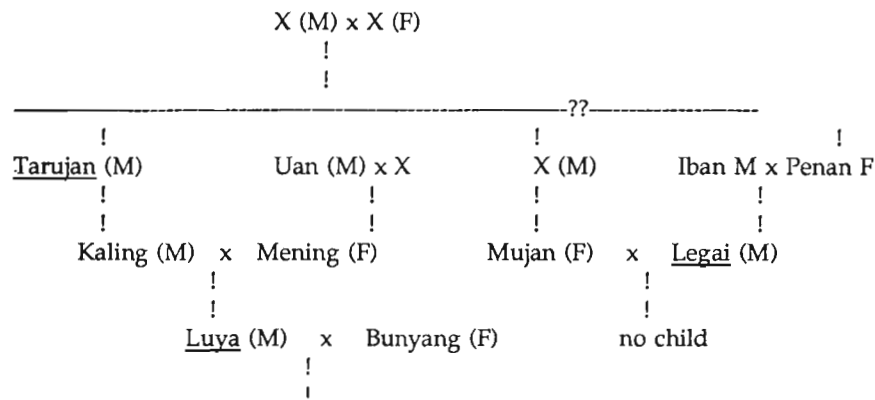
The Penan grow swidden paddy, each household planting about ten *gantang* of seed, Luya said, and harvesting anything between 100 and 200 *gantang*. One or two households, however, do not grow rice at all, while a few other hardly ever take care of their fields. About nine men of Rumah Panjang Penan have salaried jobs with the local *pejabat* (government offices) as construction or public works labor, and Luya said that they have enough money to buy rice from Kuala Belait. They also have sago flour (Penan *apo*), which they like very much. As they have full-time jobs, however, they do not any more have time to look for and process wild sago (Penan *jaka'*, Eugeissona) in the upstream area, and can only hunt during week-ends. A blowpipe was being manufactured in the longhouse front yard when I visited.

Luya stated that, in his younger years, the group's traditional territory extended from the Ingai (an upper tributary of the Belait) to the upper Tutong, and was restricted into Bruneian territory. He said that no member of the current Penan community has ever traveled outside Brunei, and that he does not know of any kin relationship with other Penan groups in either the Baram or the Tutoh. The group, as far as he can remember, did not travel to the nearby Baram and Marudi. However, in a more remote past, he said, the group probably traveled to the upper Tutoh (presumably the Melinau basin) and was in contact with the Penan there. In any case, he said, the Penan in the last two or three generations have mostly intermarried with the neighboring Iban and Dusun (indeed, some Iban live now at Sukang).

The Penan settled down in 1962, said Luya, and built a small longhouse of six doors (presumably with the help of the Dusun), about 100 meters downstream from the current one. The then Penan headman, Legai, was convinced to settle by Datuk Dian, the Dusun chief of Sukang and Penghulu of the Belait Dusun (whom Luya referred to as Dusun Sungai, as opposed to Dusun Hutan). On this episode, see Seita (1981:302), who mentions that the Dusun chief met with the Penan in the 1930s, went on trading with them on a regular basis, and finally settled them down in the 1960s. According to Luya, Dian was the father of Sipuk, the current Penghulu, who mostly lives in Kuala Belait but maintains a big house in Sukang. Penghulu Dian is said to have given the Penan numerous presents, including television sets for each household. Around 1984 or 1985, after Luya replaced Legai as headman, the Penan moved to the current longhouse.

## Genealogy

Luya can remember his grandfather's name, but no further up in his own genealogy. Underlined are the names of the group's successive leaders. There may be a case of first cousin marriage in the genealogy below.



### Kinship terminology

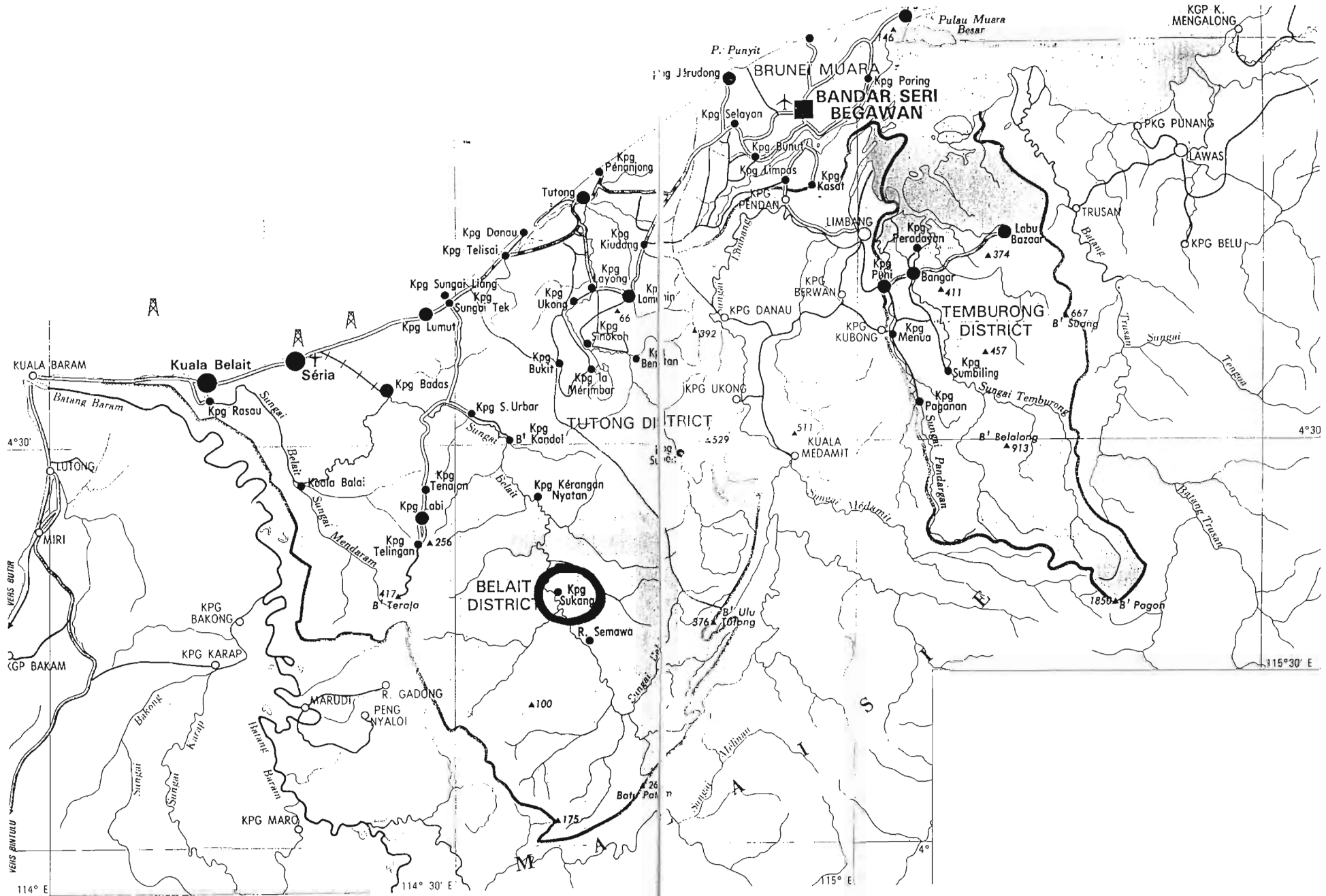
#### Kin:

F	tamôn		
M	tinôn		
PP	opo:'	PF	opo:' lakéi'
		PM	opo:' redo:

PSb	wé		
PPP	tepun lôp		
Sb	padé	eSb	padé tukôn
		ySb	padé hi'ik
Co	padé pata:		

#### Affine:

W	do:		
H	banôn		
SpSb/SbSp	M-M	sabai	(male-male reciprocal term)
	M-F	lango	(male-female reciprocal term)
	F-F	lango	(female-female reciprocal term)
SpP	kivan	SpF	kivan lakéi'
		SpM	kivan redo:
SpSbSp	duai		(reciprocal verb, peruai)
CSpP	isan		(Iban term)



## Phonetic transcription

ô	=	/ø̃/
è	=	/ə/
é	=	/e/
'	=	/ʔ/
w	=	/ɸ/
V:	=	long vowel
éi, ai	=	diphthongs /e <sup>i</sup> /, /a <sup>i</sup> /

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## BRIEF COMMUNICATIONS

## FORESTRY AND LAND USE IN SARAWAK

J. R. Palmer

I am somewhat perplexed by Cramb's paper in BRB 21(1) April 1989. I realize that it is often difficult to re-write papers from much longer and relatively inaccessible theses. I felt that his criticisms of the extravagant and unsupported claims by Sarawak Government officers were often justified, but he himself seemed to be quite partial in his use of evidence.

In any study of shifting cultivation, Sarawak has (or had) one enormous advantage compared with many other countries: the abundance of coverage by aerial photography. Certainly during the late 1960s/early 1970s the repeated coverage permitted statistically valid estimates of farming areas on land cleared

from primary forest, compared with areas on land cleared from young secondary forest. Perhaps during the 3 1/2 years that I was in Sarawak there was an unusually high proportion of farming on land from primary forest. Certainly there was deliberately excessive clearing by Iban, sometimes with borrowed chain saws, of forest within proposed or designated land development areas, with a view to staking claims for later cash compensation by Government. They were not in the slightest concerned about their ability to weed these large clearings; production of crops was not the object of the exercise.

During the same period, there were studies by the Department of Agriculture on erosion, on shifting agriculture and on alternative farming systems. Bench terraces were not the only system tested. Unfortunately, I have no detailed records. I am surprised that Cramb did not find information on these trials during his obviously prolonged burrowing in the archives. The data presented in Cramb on erosion under different types of vegetation cover present a ranking different from any other studies which I can recall. I feel that he should have commented on this peculiarity.

Cramb criticized your 1978 remark about 'green deserts'. I cannot see how anybody who has travelled by road between Sibü and Simanggang, or who has flown over the first three Divisions, could come to a different conclusion. The fact that this land is frequently burned does not mean that it is being farmed. Much of it really is 'tanah kusi'. This is nothing new. Dr. Rob Anderson, formerly forest research officer, recalled vividly the unpleasant walking from the Oya River drainage across into the Rejang, through thick grass and low scrub, in the 1950s, abandoned years before. Cramb seems not to have appreciated that repeated firing of this vegetation, combined with the short dispersal distance of propagules from forest trees, means that decades or centuries are required to restore the ability of land now in this condition to produce forest biomass. Ecological plots established by the Forest Research Institute in Malaya demonstrated this point in a number of publications by Wyatt-Smith and, later, by Kochummen in The Malayan Forester from 1949 onwards.

It is so long since I worked in Sarawak that I feel I cannot participate in the discussion which I feel ought to arise from Cramb's paper. I do hope that some Sarawak nationals will contribute. It saddens me that the articles and quotations are still largely headed by European/American names, over twenty-five years since independence. I hope that the Extraordinary Session of the Borneo Research Council planned for Kuching in July 1990 will help to break this barrier.

## REPLY TO JOHN PALMER

Robert Cramb

I am grateful for John Palmer's contribution to the debate about shifting cultivation in Sarawak and for the invitation to respond. There are two main issues which he raises. The first concerns the degree to which shifting cultivators are clearing primary forest. Estimates of this are difficult to make, even using aerial photography and satellite imagery. In my view these sources of data must be combined with village-level surveys if a realistic assessment is to be made. In my article I cited survey reports which showed that, in "pioneer" areas, no more than 10 to 20 percent of the annual area cultivated is cleared from primary forest. Other studies which I neglected to cite (Chin 1985, Lian 1987) confirm this view. When allowance is made for the many shifting cultivation areas where little or no primary forest is cleared (e.g., in southwest Sarawak), a rough but reasonable state-wide estimate of the area of primary forest cleared each year for shifting cultivation is about 5,000 ha (see Table). This represents an annual increase in the total area used for shifting cultivation of about 0.2 percent. (It can be noted that logging companies get through this much primary forest in a week.)

I have no doubt there have been cases such as Mr. Palmer describes, in which land is wastefully cleared in anticipation of compensation due to a land development scheme, but I think this says more about land development policy than about shifting cultivation as such. The point I was making in the article was that shifting cultivators are largely dependent on the continual reutilization of secondary forest and are not somehow "addicted" to felling primary forest.

This brings me to the second issue, namely, that of the viability or sustainability of "established" shifting cultivation (perhaps more accurately described as forest-fallow cultivation). That Mr. Palmer sees "green deserts" along the road from Simanggang to Sibul, or when flying over southwest Sarawak, illustrates the point that differing perceptions of the same phenomenon play an important role in the assessment of shifting cultivation. Socio-economic farm surveys in this region (cited in my article) make it clear that such land is being cultivated regularly and systematically on a forest-fallow basis for the production of rice and other food crops, by farmers who also plant rubber, pepper and cocoa as cash crops and who know how to manage their limited resources to maximum advantage. It is difficult to see why they would repeatedly clear and burn this land without farming it, as Mr. Palmer suggests.

TABLE  
ESTIMATED ANNUAL AREA CLEARED FROM  
PRIMARY FOREST FOR SHIFTING CULTIVATION

Division	Area cleared for hill rice in 1986 (ha) <sup>1</sup>	Estimated proportion of hill rice area cleared from primary forest (%)		Estimated annual area cleared from primary forest (ha)
		Individual villages <sup>2</sup>	Division as a whole	
Kuching	6,874	0-2	1	69
Samarahan	5,121	0-2	1	51
Sri Aman	9,857	0-2	1	99
Sarikei	11,480	0-15	5	574
Sibu	10,577	0-20	5	529
Kapit	14,882	0-20	10	1,488
Bintulu	9,522	0-20	10	952
Miri	8,443	0-20	10	844
Limbang	3,265	0-10	5	163
Sarawak	80,021	0-20	6	4,769

Source:

<sup>1</sup>Agricultural Statistics of Sarawak, 1987.<sup>2</sup>Socio-economic survey in each division.

There is no question that, in structure and composition, young secondary forest is very different from primary forest, and that it may take "many decades or centuries" for the original forest-type to be restored. But this is quite different from the production of forest biomass. My understanding is that, in conditions such as found in Sarawak, secondary forest attains about 90 percent of its maximum total biomass in less than a decade. It is this capacity of secondary growth to accumulate biomass rapidly, particularly in the form of branches and leaves, which permits the forest-fallow cycle to continue, decade after decade.

I can accept that my article is obscure and perplexing, though it was not extracted from an even more obscure thesis; it is obscure in its own right! I can also accept that I may have missed important reports and sources of data. However, I have not intentionally omitted any evidence simply to strengthen my case, as Mr. Palmer implies. I would welcome any further contributions to the analysis of this important issue and I share Mr. Palmer's hope that more Sarawakians (and other Malaysians) will become involved.

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#### PENAN TEXTS: AN ELUCIDATORY COMMENT

Rodney Needham

In "Research Notes" of BRB 21 (September 1989), Carol Rubenstein alludes to me in connection with her Penan texts and translations. While readily paying due tribute to her initiative and diligence, I think it may be helpful if I offer some personal comment by way of elucidation. I do so with hesitation since I kept no copies of my letters to her, and I can rely only on my recollection of what was said and done quite some years ago.

Ms. Rubenstein writes that all the Penan songs that she recorded were brief and complete, and then: "They were checked by Rodney Needham..." (p. 89). Later she concludes that critical remarks concerning her work with Penan are baseless (p. 92). The implication is, in this particular context, that I am guarantor of the authenticity of her transcriptions and of the accuracy of her translations.

The facts, so far as I can be at all sure, are as follow: In November 1973, Ms. Rubenstein wrote to me about her translation work with Penan at L. Beku on the Akah and L. Jigitan on the Silat, enclosing with her letter "a brief section" for my perusal. I read these materials and had much difficulty, because of the orthography in the first place, in construing the texts; naturally, this made for more difficulty in the assessment of the translations. I returned the drafts without, so far as I recall, making any comments on them.

Evidently I did not see "all" of the Penan songs but only a brief section of them. I did not read the complete texts until they had been printed in the Sarawak Museum Journal (1973), so I could not have checked these. It is true that in one sense I checked the short drafts that I was sent, meaning by this merely that I read them with a view to assessing their accuracy. But it is not correct that I checked these materials in the sense of guaranteeing the accuracy of what was to be published. It is possible that I wrote to Ms. Rubenstein some civil phrase of appreciation of her labours, and that she took this as expressing a general approval of her translation work with western Penan. The fact of such pertinence, at any rate, is that I do not vouch for the authenticity of Ms. Rubenstein's Penan texts or for the accuracy of their rendition into English. (16 February, 1990)



NATIVE CUSTOMARY LAND  
(Excerpted from The Newsletter of  
The Society for Christian Service)

Land issue in Sarawak is an important issue. If it is not properly dealt with by the relevant authorities, it can become a volatile issue when the nation enters the last decade of the twentieth century. It can and will decide the nature of the political map of Sarawak in the year 2000. In the light of this, this article relates the history of the native customary land and its potential conflict with other existing land laws.

As far as land is concerned, there are two kinds of laws in existence:

1. Adat Law
2. Statute Law

The Adat Law is native, traditional and by its nature is intertwined with the social and cultural fabric of the people who practise it. The Statute Law is "imported" and imposed on the people during the 120 years of colonial history in Sarawak. This law was introduced to regulate, restrict and control the traditional practices of the people especially in their use of their land.

The two differ sharply especially with respect to the question of ownership of land. Adherents of Adat Law say that the land belongs to the gods and that the people only use it as loan. This is in accordance to the cultural customs laid down by the gods. To them, land has also its cultural value and not merely an economic commodity. However, according to the Statute Law, land is owned by the State.

Long before the rule of the white Rajah over Sarawak from 1841, the natives had been practising the Adat Law. To them, temuda lands were owned by them. They did not have to apply to any sovereign to create these temuda lands because there is no requirement to apply. They were the lords and masters of the jungle. This was their belief and customary laws relating to land were built around it.

The natives also felt that they had certain rights over uncleared jungle areas which were at the fringe of their **temuda land** (**payong temuda** or **rimba**), although they did not 'own' them. It was a customary practice for an individual who wanted to clear (berimba) virgin jungle at the fringe of **temuda** lands belonging to a neighbour must first discuss the matter with that neighbour.

Should there be a strong objection from the neighbour, this individual will have to find out the extent of this neighbour's reserve (**payong temuda** or **kampong galau**). Any virgin jungle beyond the neighbour's **payong temuda** would be free for him to clear (**berimba kampong puang**).

In term of the size at the community level, the '**kampong galau**' might be large. This is to cater for future expansion. Other types of reserves (**kampong galau**) such as **pulau buah**, **pulau nyatu** or **pulau teras** include **pulau ulit** and **pulau saka**. These areas of virgin jungle identified by a community as a memory of certain local heroes and are recognized under customary law.

Later with the arrival of the Brooke's regime (and later the British Colonial Administration) the situation worsened, the arrival means the imposition of power and might to which the natives had to submit themselves. For the next one century (1841-1941), with better ammunitions and the policy of 'divide and rule' the Brookes subdued the natives resistance. Brookes invasion of Sarawak and its 'expeditions' can be likened to how the white man destroyed the red Indians in America. But partly to pacify the natives the Brooke regime had to recognize their customs, their way of life in the tropical rainforest environment. However in the eyes of the British Colonial Administrators, shifting cultivation was seen as destructive and hence moves to curb it were contemplated. Various land and forest ordinances were introduced. Finally, in 1955, the LAND CODE AMENDMENT was introduced and became operational three years later. Today this Statute Law empowers the Minister to extinguish the temuda land. Since 1958, many amendments were made to the Land Code. It has come to an extent that it is difficult for the natives to win a court case should there be a land dispute between the authorities and the people.

#### Chronology of Native Customary Land Tenure

<u>Year</u>	<u>Land Laws</u>	
Prior to 1842	Native Customary Law:	Native can claim over land on the basis of usage.
1842	Code of Laws:	There is no-interference of NCR and immigrant races were allowed to settle on land occupied by native.

- 1863 Land Regulations: Natives could no longer claim rights to land outside their existing domain with the government. Access to land and the freedom to use it are restricted. At the same time Brooke regime leased out land for private ownership. Its rights and proprietorship to land was established. Any unoccupied and wastelands belongs to the government.
- 1875 Land Order: First attempt to restrict shifting cultivation and customary land tenure. A fine was imposed on land cleared and abandoned.
- 1899 Fruit Trees/Order 1: The power of natives to establish or dispose of their rights in community were curtailed. This is one way of controlling the movement of natives. The natives could not claim, sell and transfer their land when they moved away.
- 1920 Land Order No. VII: All land that was leased or granted or forfeited belong to the government. There was a free occupation of land for agriculture. With the coming of rubber, agricultural land had to be registered. All lands had to classified into:-Town and Suburban, country land and native holdings.
- Land Order No. IX: Issued to make land policy uniform for commercial agriculture and to categorize native land reserves for natives and registered land for non-natives.

- 1931 Land Order (1-2): New category of land created.  
 a. Native areas - for natives under Customary Law.  
 b. Stateland - all land without title, all lands forfeited. The Superintendent of Land and Survey could declare any area as town, village, suburban, etc. The native land reserves only for natives, it could not be divided and had no individual title.
- 1933 Land Settlement Order: This Order gave the State firmer control and ownership over lands. Boundaries were drawn around longhouse communities and rights to land use and their movement being restricted. The State could exercise compulsory acquisition of Native Customary land and Native Customary Rights (NCR) could be extinguished.  
 A settlement system was introduced where the settlement officers determine all rights within the gazetted settlement area.
- 1939 Secretariat Circular: No. 12/1939  
 On Native Customary Tenure  
 The position of Native Customary Law was formalized. In each community, the village councils was appointed to act on native land tenure and inheritance only. Village boundaries were defined and demarcated and thus became the NATIVE COMMUNAL RESERVES. Addition were not allowed without the permission from the District Officer. The intention of the Circular was to eliminate shifting cultivation.
- 1946 Sarawak ceded to British and became a British Crown Colony.

- 1948 Land Classification Ordinance )LCO
- All lands were classified as follows:
- a. Mixed Zone Land
  - b. Native Area Land
  - c. Native Customary Land (NCL)
  - d. Reserved Land
  - e. Interior Area Land (IAL)
- 1953 Forest Ordinance 53:
- Two types of Forest:
- i) Permanent Forest (PF)
  - ii) Stateland Forest
- i) Permanent Forest (34%): This is under full control of the Forest Department. The Ordinance was directed against shifting cultivation and prevent large areas from being claimed by natives. Logging was allowed under permit.
  - ii) Stateland Forest (66%): Can be constituted as PF and takes forest away from NCL. Logging was allowed under license but no control by the Forest Department.
- 1955 Amendment to 1948 LCO: Total prohibition of creating new NCL.
- 1958 Land Code: Repealed all land regulations of 1931, 1933, 1948, and 1952. Status of NCL:
- created before 1.1.1958
  - created only with permit on IAL
  - can be gazetted or de-gazetted by Minister
  - can be created through 6 methods

- 1974 Land Code (Amendment): Part II section 5(3)
- Minister can extinguish NCR on any stateland.
- Amendment Sect. 94(1) and Sec. 94(2)
- The settlement Officer can extinguish NCR by paying compensation, issuing lease. He can over-rule Native Court. While the natives can appeal to the magistrate against the decision of the Settlement Officer, the Native Court has no power (no force of Law). Hence the Native Customary Law lost out to the western judicial process.

## NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS<sup>1</sup>

Duncan Poore

The year 1988-9 has been one of great activity on the tropical forest front. An account is given in this chapter of some of the more important recent developments.

### ITTO: SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS

In the last year ITTO has made substantial progress in developing its very special role, although its activities are still severely curtailed by the failure of many members to make their statutory contributions to the administrative account. The situation may shortly be eased by a large contribution from the government of Japan towards the finances of the organization. Panama has now acceded to the agreement, the nineteenth producer country to become a member.

The most exciting and potentially influential decision of the council was, however, unanticipated - and unprecedented. A generous, courageous and imaginative invitation was issued by the government of Malaysia and the Chief Minister of Sarawak to enable a mission to visit Sarawak to examine the status of natural forest management. This invitation was accepted by the council. Because of its importance, the Resolution adopted is quoted in full.

Resolution 1(VI)  
The Promotion of Sustainable Forest Management:  
a case study in Sarawak, Malaysia

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Reaffirming the obligation and commitment of all Members to the objectives of the ITTO, 1983,

Bearing in mind Article 19(a) of the ITTA, "to provide an effective framework for co-operation and consultation between tropical timber producing and consuming Members with regard to all relevant aspects of the tropical timber economy", and Article 1(h) of the ITTA, "to encourage the development of national policies aimed at sustainable utilization and conservation of tropical forests and their genetic resources, and at maintaining the ecological balance in the regions concerned",

Recalling the Statement made by the Representative of Malaysia at the Fifth Session of the International Tropical Timber Council informing the Council of the serious efforts to promote sustainable forest management in Malaysia and inviting international assistance to support the implementation of these policies,

Taking note of the Statement made by the representative of Malaysia at its current Session of the ITTC,

Expressing its appreciation to the Government of Malaysia for its readiness to welcome a Mission to visit Sarawak, Malaysia at a date to be decided by mutual agreement.

1. Establishes a Mission with the following terms of reference:
  - a) To assess the sustainable utilization and conservation of tropical forests and their genetic resources as well as the maintenance of the ecological balance in Sarawak, Malaysia, taking fully into account the need for proper and effective conservation and development of tropical timber forests with a view to ensuring their optimum utilization while maintaining the ecological balance, in the light of recent ITTO studies on forest management for sustainable timber production in Member countries and relevant reports by other organizations;
  - b) Based on its findings, to make recommendations for further strengthening of sustainable forest management policies and practices, including area of international co-operation and assistance.
2. Authorizes financing not exceeding \$300,000 from the Pre-Project Sub-Account for the work of the Mission.
3. Appreciates the readiness of the Government of Malaysia to fully co-operate in facilitating the work of the Mission and to allow it to visit any part of Sarawak, to meet any persons and also to make available information relevant to the work of the Mission.

4. Invites all Members and relevant international organizations and international institutions to lend their fullest support for the success of the Mission.
5. Appeals to all Members, bearing in mind Article 30 of the ITTA, to use their best endeavours to co-operate to promote the attainment of the objectives of the ITTA and avoid any action contrary thereto.
6. Requests the Executive Director to take all necessary measures for the implementation of this Resolution and to prepare the necessary documentation for this purpose.
7. Requests the Executive Director to communicate this Resolution to all international organizations and others interested in the work of the ITTO.
8. Further requests the Mission to present, on a confidential basis, a Progress Report at the Seventh Session and its final Report at the Eighth Session.

This remarkable international initiative demonstrates the special ways in which ITTO can draw together consumer and producer nations in the interests of sustainable management in a way which has hitherto proved impossible outside the framework of this agreement.

NOTE

1. From Duncan Poore, Peter Burgess, John Palmer, Simon Rietbergen and Timothy Synnott, 1989, No Timber Without Trees, A Study for ITTO, London, Earthscan Publications, Ltd.

PROFESSOR Les Peake of the University of Victoria is seeking information on various cultural games among the people of Sabah and Sarawak. Readers who know of such games which may or may not be played at the present time are requested to write giving enough details for understanding on how the game is played. Any accompanying diagrams to help explain the game would be appreciated. These games will be added to a collection of cultural games being made on South-East Asia. The reason for seeking such help is the present lack of such information for Sabah or Sarawak. Recognition will be duly given to anyone who makes any submissions. Write to: Professor Les Peake, School of Physical Education, University of Victoria, P.O. Box 1700, Victoria, B.C. CANADA V8W 2Y2.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY'S SOUTH-EAST ASIAN  
RAIN FOREST RESEARCH PROGRAMME

It is very satisfactory to announce that this programme, in which staff and students at Aberdeen have played a significant role, has been given support for a further five years. Progress during the first five years (1985-9) and plans for 1990 onwards were reviewed by a research committee of the Royal Society in late 1989 and met with their full approval. Thus the Council of the Royal Society agreed to provide further core funding which includes a post-doctoral fellowship, travel funds and some funds for equipment and training. The programme's Newsletter no. 5 reviews past research and future plans, and copies are readily available. The results of the Programme to date will be a prominent feature of the International Conference on Forest Biology and Conservation in Borneo to be held in Sabah, Malaysia, on 30 July - 3 August 1990. A meeting on the Programme will also be held in London in 1991. If anyone requires further information on the Programme, please contact Dr. A. G. Marshall in the Department of Zoology (AB2 2TN).

B O R N E O   N E W S

REGIONAL NEWS

The West German government has banned the import of all pitcher plants, Nepenthes spp., from wild populations as of 1 January 1987, except when they are for scientific research, and if the species is not rare. Nepenthes rajah, only known from the Kinabalu, is specifically mentioned, but as custom officers cannot be expected to distinguish it from other species, all have been banned. May other countries follow soon!

**CITES.** The still increasing high exploitation levels and volumes of international trade in wild animals and plants, this in addition to the increasing loss of suitable habitats, may reduce populations of individual species to such a level that they risk to become extinct.

Many of the interesting species of orchids and cacti are, in part, safeguarded in National Parks and Nature Reserves. However, unscrupulous traders do not hesitate to smuggle these out of their sanctuaries and trade them on the European and American markets for high prices.

It is obvious that it is physically impossible for any country to control the taking and exporting of every animal and plant, irrespective of the quality of its wildlife regulations.

In 1972 21 parties signed the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of flora and fauna (CITES), which entered into force after the tenth ratification in July 1975. Now 102 nations are party to CITES.

CITES forms the legal international network for the control of the trade in endangered species and for an effective regulation of the trade in other, less endangered ones. The control system is based on export inspection by the producing (exporting) country and import inspection by the consuming (importing) country.

There are different degrees of regulation, based on the listing of species in any of three Appendices.

**Appendix I** includes those species that are threatened with extinction and for which trade must be subject to particularly strict regulations and is only authorized in exceptional circumstances.

**Appendix II** species are not necessarily now threatened with extinction, but may become so, unless trade is strictly regulated. This appendix also contains the so-called look-alike species, which must be controlled because of their similarity to more endangered species. Commonly traded plants such as orchids, cacti, and carnivorous plants are listed here.

Species in these two Appendices are regulated by all parties. Changes are made with majority decisions during the biannual Convention of Parties.

**Appendix III** includes species that are subject to regulation within a particular country and for which the cooperation of other parties is requested.

The Convention further provides a number of conditional exemptions. Among these are artificially propagated plants. For these, trade regulations are more lenient and inspection is only needed when it is suspected that wild plants are traded falsely documented as artificially propagated.

This is only a brief summary of the mechanisms of CITES. A detailed outline can be found in WIJNSTEKERS, W. (1988), The Evolution of CITES, a reference to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild flora and fauna. 277 pp. CITES Secretariat, 6 Rue de Maupas, Lausanne, Switzerland.

Illegal trade in rare, valuable plant species, particularly orchids and cacti, still continues, as well be clear from the article below on the recent conviction in the U.K. of an orchid smuggler. CITES is one of the tools in the protection of flora (and fauna) which still remains with us. See Also VLIET, G. J.C.M. VAN (in press), Cites, plant trade and botanic gardens. 2nd International Botanic Gardens Congress, Réunion. -- G.J.C.M. VAN VLIET.

**ENDAU-ROMPIN: a Malaysian Heritage** is the 'coffee table' book of the expedition (see Chapter XI). In over 200 pages and more than 400 photographs it documents in full colour the beauty of the rain forest, the findings of the expedition (including rare and new species), and why the area should be conserved for Malaysians and the World. Price including postage and packing US\$30.00 or £16.00.

**European Newsletter of Southeast Asian Studies (ENSEAS)** aims to facilitate communication between European scholars working in the field of Southeast Asian studies and presents an opportunity to keep one another informed on recent, on-going, and future activities. Brief reports may be reported as well as changes in staff. A bibliography will be included. It is intended to appear twice a year. The first two issues [vol. 1(1) of November 1988] will be distributed free of charge. The fields covered in the first issue are mainly concerned with languages, culture, politics, history, ethnography, religion, archeology, architecture, etc. Hardly any biology. Information may be obtained from ENSEAS, c/o KITLV, POB 9515, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands.

#### Borneo News

K. A. ADELAAR, a student of Austronesian linguistics, with a special interest in West-Indonesian languages and Malagasy, graduated from Leiden University (Netherlands) and is currently attached to the Australian National University as a research fellow. His Ph.D. dissertation (1985) is a reconstruction of Proto-Malayic on the basis of Standard Malay, Minangkabau, Banjarese, Middle

Malay (South Sumatra), Iban and Jakartanese. In it he proposes West Borneo as the Proto-Malayic homeland (cf. Chapter 8; cf. also Adelaar 1988). Over the last years he wrote a number of articles about the history of Malagasy. Acknowledging Dahl's theory that it is originally a Southeast Barito language, he believes that it underwent a strong Malay and Javanese influence before as well as after the immigration to East Africa (Adelaar 1989 and Adelaar in press a and b). The early Malagasy migrants - rather than having organized the journey to East Africa by themselves - might have been brought there as slaves or crew by Malays (Adelaar in press c). He is currently working on the description of Salako, a Malayic-Dayak language of Sambas and Sarawak (a Salako phonology is going to be published in 1990, cf. Adelaar in press d). He collected wordlists (of some 400 lexical items) on Land Dayak, Tamanic and Malayic-Dayak isolects in West Kalimantan (unpublished). Finally, he also did fieldwork among the Embaloh in the Kapuas Hulu area of West Kalimantan: he concludes that this language (and the Tamanic isolects in general) is not Malayic (cf. Blust 1981 and Nothofer 1988) but that it is more closely related to the languages of South Sulawesi. A close relationship between Tamanic and South Sulawesi languages was suggested earlier by von Kessel (1850) and by Hudson (1978); in Adelaar (in press e), however, he presents a substantial body of phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical data to support this at first sight rather far fetched supposition.

In the next two years he would like to publish his Salako and Embaloh materials, and to start field research on the Barito languages of South Kalimantan in order to find more evidence for their genetic relationship with Malagasy.

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MR. H. A. JUMAAT is studying Nepenthes for Borneo. Mr. J. R. TURNBULL (OTT) will revise the family for the Flora Malesiana.

MR. J. J. VERMEULEN (L) finished a manuscript for a part of the Orchid flora of Borneo. Descriptions and plates of 100 species of Bulbophyllum, divided over 12 sections, were prepared, and also a critical list of all (c. 200) species occurring in Borneo. For the next part c. 70 drawings in pencil have already been done. He is now studying the genus at the sectional level. Especially the New Guinea species turned out to pose great difficulties.

#### Brunei News

DRS. S. and J. DRANSFIELD searched for bamboos and palms between 3 September and 6 October, 1988.

The Forestry Department, Brunei (BRUN) has abandoned the BRUN-series, which is replaced by individual collector's series.

#### Kalimantan News

In February, 1990, a multidisciplinary group of researchers from the Universitas Tanjungpura, the Institute of Economic Botany of the New York Botanical Garden, and the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies will begin a research project in West Kalimantan. The group will examine the forest management practices of villagers in several communities in Pontianak, Sanggau, and Ketapang districts, appraise the economic value of the resources (especially forest fruits) produced or collected, and evaluate the ecological impact of these practices on forest structure and the regeneration and productivity of selected, economically important forest resources. Field work will be conducted in more and less disturbed forest formations and will include research on the forest use practices of a variety of indigenous and immigrant groups. Based on the ethnological, economic, and ecological data collected, we hope to develop management guidelines appropriate for communities differing in market participation, forest access, and patterns of resource use. The present research team consists of Syamsuni Arman (Tanjungpura), Christine Padoch and Charles M. Peters (NYBG), and Elysa Hammond (Yale). We hope to eventually include other scientists as well. Funding for the project comes from the U.S. Man

and Biosphere Committee and from USAID. Official sponsorship has been given by the Indonesian Academy of Science (LIPI) and Tanjungpura University.

DR. G. MICHON has joined BIOTROP in January 1989 on an appointment of the French Government to assist the team that will be mapping Kalimantan.

In 1988 J. J. AFRIASTINI, ISMAEL, U. W. MAHYAR, T. PARTOMIHARDJO, A. RUSKANDI, and M. SIREGAR and DR. J. BURLEY visited Kuala Kurun, Harowu, and Tumbang Miri in the Upper Miri River, S. Kalimantan, and returned with c. 600 vouchers, and 300 bulk specimens of medicinal plants for chemical analysis.

Between 16 March and 4 May, 1988, H. SOEDJITO visited Apokayan and Lempake, E. Kalimantan, to gather ecological data. Together with Dr. D. J. LEMANN he visited Apokayan again between 12 and 26 August for ethnobotanical research.

Between 6 and 12 November, 1988, DR. M. A. RIFAI visited the Mandor, Mt. Niut, and Mt. Poteng Nature Reserves, W. Kalimantan, and between 5 and 21 October S. Kalimantan for a study of the institutional aspects of Nature Reserves.

#### Sabah News

An Australian war hero, Leslie Thomas Starcevic V. C., died in late 1989 at the age of seventy-one. Mr. Starcevic had been awarded the Victoria Cross, Britain's highest decoration for valour, following his bravery at the liberation of Beaufort in June 1945. In civilian life he was a farmer in Western Australia. (The Daily Telegraph, London, 20 November 1989, page 19; and The Borneo Bulletin, Kuala Belait, 2 December 1989, page 12).

MR. N. D. BROWN completed nearly two years at Danum Valley (Sabah) and returned to Oxford in November 1988 to start writing up his study of dipterocarp seedling behaviour and microclimate in a range of 10 artificial canopy gaps.

MR. JAMILI NAIS has been appointed as botanist in the Kinabalu National Park replacing MS. A. PHILLIPPS.

MS. S. ANDREWS and B. PARRIS spent 6 weeks from 18 April 1988 on a collecting trip concentrating especially on Ilex and ferns, respectively. MS. PARRIS compared the fern flora of the Kinabalu with that of the Crocker Range, and collected 149 numbers on the slopes of G. Alab, the Kimanis Road, and the Kallang Waterfall area. On Mt. Kinabalu she got 202 numbers.

MESSRS. L. G. SAW and A. ZUHAI, together with members of other Institutes in Malaysia, made an expedition to G. Lutong (1745 m) in April and May 1988. This is an interesting basin primarily formed by the circular rim of a sandstone mountain range draining into the Maliau River in the South Centre.

Between 27 September and 2 October, 1988 MR. A. Z. IBRAHIM, DR. A. M. LATIFF and MR. K. M. SALLEH collected c. 112 numbers in the Tabin Wildlife Reserve, Dent Peninsula.

**Conservation of Rafflesia in Sabah.** DR. ISMAEL (UKMS) reports in *Trends in Ecology & Evolution* 3 (1988) 316-317, that in early 1988 a state-level Committee was set up to look into the conservation. It is composed of representatives of various government agencies, universities, and NGO's. The Committee will be responsible for:

- identification of priority areas for Rafflesia conservation (due to earnest searching 11 new localities have turned up),
  - stimulating action to gazette these identified areas as Rafflesia sanctuaries,
  - raising public consciousness on Rafflesia conservation,
  - proposing ways to overcome apathy or resistance to conservation actions.
- ISMAEL points out that the Committee will run into some problems, as there is the generally held belief among policy makers that conservation is an obstacle to development, and at the government level issues are not being dealt with as a matter of policy.

More power to the Committee!

**More on Rafflesia.** According to the Daily Express (12 April 1988) new moves are afoot to protect Rafflesia. Discussions with the Sabah Foundation have begun by the UKMS to create Sanctuaries at known sites, and to relocate specimens to more accessible places.



On the same page an article describes how the type locality in the Trusmadi Range of Rafflesia tengku-adlinii, discovered in December 1987, was destroyed by logging activities. Fortunately another locality has been discovered, otherwise the species would have become extinct before it was even described (cf. SALLEH & LATIFF, 1989)! This is merely an example of the fate that will befall so many others we won't ever know about at all with the ongoing destruction of the tropical rain forest.

#### Sarawak News

The Earl of Cranbrook, *inter alia* Honorary Curator of Mammals at the Sarawak Museum, has accepted the invitation to become the first Chairman of the Nature Conservancy Council for England. (The Times, Tuesday 16 January 1990, page 10. Also in The Financial Times and The Daily Telegraph).

MR. B. L. M. HOCK has moved to the Section Forest Office, Bintulu, in December 1988.

MS. M. D. A. A. LINGKEU has become a tutor at the Agriculture University of Malaysia, Bintulu in July 1988.

DR. J. DRANSFIELD has finished a manuscript of a rattan manual for Sarwak to be printed there using camera-ready copy generated in K.

Three major expeditions were made by staff of SAR: Ulu Sadong, Serian (March 1988), Apad Ruman, Kelabit Highland, Bario (April/May), Ulu Mengiong, Kapit (October); 113 specimens were collected and 205 live ones for the Botanical Centre, Semengoh.

Six shorter trips were made to a few areas around Bako, Kuching, Lindu, Samunsam, Sematan, Serian, and Tebakang; 887 numbers and 432 live plants were collected.

Members of FRIM collected between the Kuching area and the Rejang River for the project on the conservation of fruit trees in Malaysia.

## BOOK REVIEWS, ABSTRACTS, AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

### BOOK REVIEWS

ANTHONY BURGESS, Little Wilson and Big God: Being the First Part of the Confessions of Anthony Burgess (Heinemann, London, 1987) ix + 460 pp. ISBN 0 434 09819 1. Index. UK Price: £12.95.

Reviewed by  
A. V. M. Horton

Little Wilson and Big God is the first of two planned volumes of Anthony Burgess's memoirs, a project upon which he embarked in 1985 in order to forestall two would-be biographers (p. 4). As far as students of South-East Asian history are concerned, the principal interest of this tome lies in Section Six (pp. 377-448), which covers Mr. Burgess's time in Malaya (1954-1957) and Brunei (1958-1959).

For our present purposes, the essential point to note is the confirmation, on page 431, that his novel Devil of a State - published in 1961 but actually completed two or three years beforehand - is indeed about Brunei. The author had been stationed in the Abode of Peace as an 'education officer' (teacher) at the Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin College in the capital. "Little invention was necessary", Mr. Burgess recalls, "to contrive a large cast of unbelievable characters and a number of interwoven plots" (*ibid.*). In late 1958 Mr. Burgess found himself the target of a libel suit (which eventually failed - p. 436) in respect of an earlier book; his cautious publisher insisted, therefore, that in Devil of a State Brunei should be disguised as "Dunia, an imaginary caliphate in East Africa".<sup>1</sup>

Both Little Wilson and Devil of a State offer vivid, earthy, frank portraits of Brunei at the conclusion of the Residential Era - portraits which contrast sharply, moreover, with the blandness of official publications, such as the Annual Report.

That said, some caution needs to be exercised if it is desired to use Mr. Burgess's publications as sources for history.

Little Wilson, for example, is based upon "pure memories" (page vii), with the result that the Brunei section is sprinkled with minor factual errors; and, in one or two places, the chronology appears to have been confused. The reviewer noted fourteen such instances in nineteen pages (pp. 422-440). This is all the more surprising given Mr. Burgess's earlier strictures about "amateurishness" and "distrust of professionalism" (p. 384). The reviewer submits that it is not very "professional" on Mr. Burgess's part to fail accurately to remember even the pseudonym which he gave to Brunei in his own novel (p. 432).

Devil of a State, for its part, remains a work of fiction (albeit one requiring "little invention"); and it should be treated as such. That book was written, moreover, at a time of mounting crisis in the novelist's life (pp. 428, 437, 440). It is possible that in happier circumstances a less acerbic tone might have been adopted towards the Sultanate. At any rate, not everyone would share his jaundiced vision of Brunei itself as "a kind of prison walled in by sea and jungle" (p. 429).

A state of mutual antipathy existed between the eccentric Mr. Burgess and the staid colonial authorities in Sarawak and Brunei. It was a relief all round,<sup>2</sup> perhaps, when he had to be repatriated on medical grounds in 1959. Fortunately, Mr. Burgess made a full recovery and has since gone on to establish himself as one of the United Kingdom's foremost novelists, not to mention his prodigious talents in many other fields. Recognition of his immense stature came in 1982, when he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Letters by Manchester University, whence he had graduated some forty years earlier.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Burgess indeed is himself a Mancunian, having been born in 1917 of predominantly Roman Catholic and Irish background. The main body of Little Wilson (Sections 1-5) deals with the thirty seven years of his life prior to arriving in Malaya. The highly respected Oxford literary critic, Professor John Carey, argues that this volume is Dr. Burgess's

most enjoyable book ever. It reads like a picaresque novel - the chaotic adventures of a cross-grained near-genius who surely cannot realise what an impossible figure he cuts, but who keeps you on his side by the stubborn innocence with which he spills it all out.<sup>4</sup>

## NOTES

All the page numbers in the text above refer to Little Wilson and Big God.

1. Devil of a State (Heinemann, London, 1961), dustjacket, inside front cover.
2. Except in the case of the Malay Menteri Besar, who offered Dr. Burgess a contract after the end of the Residential Era (p. 445).
3. Who's Who 1988 (A and C Black, London, 140th Annual Edition 1988), p. 250.
4. The Sunday Times (London), n.d., probably 22 February 1987, p. 55.

Rubeli, K. Tropical rain forest in South-East Asia - a pictorial journey. 1986. xiii + 234 pp., many col. pl. Tropical Press Sdn. Bhd., 29 Jalan Riong, 59100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. ISBN 967-73-0013-X. \$32.00 (incl. surface mail).

In this chapter I have reviewed the Earl of Cranbrook's 'Malaysia (Key environments)'. This pictorial survey should be placed beside this, as it shows the beauty of the richnesses of the tropical rain forests, which may soon be lost forever. Ken Rubeli is a superb photographer and with his lens has caught the essence of the rain forest. Here, in the remote Netherlands, I have shown it to various visitors at my home, who stared in wonder at its marvels, the huge trees beyond their experience, the beauty of foliage, flowers, animals, rivulets, and rivers. In these pictures the experience of a virgin forest with its richness and multitude of forms has been vividly caught in its shades and lights. It may be regarded as a 'coffee table book' by those who have never experienced the wonders of the forest, but for those who have ventured into its humid shades it is a book to leaf through again and again, as it has immortalized the beauty of the place. On expeditions one often carries a camera to document the scientific exploration, but one never has the time, patience, and eye to take pictures like these. To all 'insiders' I recommend this pictorial expedition to Northern Sumatra, Peninsular Malaysia, Sarawak, and Sabah, as it depicts the things we have seen, and would like to have brought home to show the laggards behind where we were and what we saw. --- J. F. Veldkamp.

D. J. M. TATE (compiler), Rajah Brooke's Borneo. The Nineteenth Century World of Pirates and Head-hunters, Orang Utan and Hornbills and other such rarities as seen through THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS and other contemporary sources (John Nicholson, Hong Kong, 1988; second impression 1989). vi + 130 pp. ISBN 962 328 001 7. Illustrations. Colour Plates. No bibliography. No Index. UK Price £12.95.

Reviewed by  
A. V. M. Horton

This volume comprises a selection of original articles about Borneo (and related matters) culled from the Illustrated London News (ILN). These extracts, drawn from the Victorian Era, are linked together by D. J. M. Tate's informative commentary.

Rajah Brooke's Borneo certainly furnishes an interesting supplementary source book; but, as its compiler recognizes, the materials are too fragmentary to provide much more than that. It was deemed necessary, indeed, to include passages from certain additional contemporary publications (such as the well-known books by, among others, Keppel, Marryat and Mundy) in order to flesh out the story.

D. J. M. Tate's diligence certainly merits approbation: unless an index of the ILN is available, many fruitless hours must have been spent ploughing through particular back-issues of the ILN carrying no reports at all about the island of the hornbill. A further point in D. J. M. Tate's favour is that, instead of limiting the selection to a fairly well-worn path - James Brooke, 'piracy', the proboscis monkey, and the orang utan (mawas) - there are also fascinating pieces here about ships and shipwrecks; the laying of telegraphy cables; ViceAdmiral Sir Nowell Salmo's visit to Brunei in 1888 (including an illustration of the Brunei monarch, presumably HH Sultan Hashim, receiving his visitor in Audience, pp. 83-84); and the silvery gibbon, gutta percha and the mangosteen.

A highlight of the collection is undoubtedly the reprinting of original book reviews, especially the initial reaction to Alfred Russel Wallace's The Malay Archipelago (p. 104).

There are further compelling items about (i) Labuan and (ii) the Mat Salleh uprising in the 1890s directed against the British occupation of Sabah. Also worthy of attention is a series of seven plates (apparently designed to be cut out and framed) between pages 58 and 59. These include a delightful view of "Bruni" (now Bandar Seri Begawan) in 1848.

Even on "the fairly well-work path", D. J. M. Tate manages to retain the reader's attention. On the question of headhunting, for example, there is a supplement (pp. 127-130) illustrating different shapes of skull and how they were cured, engraved, decorated and preserved.

With regard to whether the Ibans and Malays of northern Borneo were "defending their heritage against the marauding European who had reduced them to beggary by monopolizing the trade of the region" (p. 25), readers might care to consult a discussion of this very issue by the late Dr. D. K. Bassett (British attitudes to indigenous States in South-East Asia in the nineteenth century - CSEAS, University of Hull, 1980 - pp. 22-31.

Rajah Brooke's Borneo must certainly be selling very well because it is already into its second impression. Perhaps D. J. M. Tate will now consider letting us see the flip side of the coin: namely, contemporary Bornean opinion of the Europeans who intruded into their homeland, particularly after 1839. That would make an obvious companion volume.

DONALD E. BROWN, JAMES W. EDWARDS and RUTH P. MOORE, The Penis Inserts of Southeast Asia: An Annotated Bibliography with an Overview and Comparative Perspectives. Pp. 60, 21 pp. text, 7 pp. illustrations, 32 pp. bibliography, Table of Contents).

This slim volume covers extensive ground. The 11-page "Overview" introduces the reader to the practice in many parts of Southeast Asia of surgically inserting devices into the penis, reportedly to enhance sexual pleasure for women. Various types of devices and procedures are described and a number of alternative explanations summarized.

Although focused on a specialized topic the authors' discussion should be of interest to scholars in a wide range of fields, including traditional Southeast Asian and pre-Aryan Indian cultures, human sexuality, and gender relations. Of particular note are speculations regarding the origin of such practices in pre-Aryan India, and the course of their diffusion; the ambiguity of evidence regarding the actual effect of the practice on sexual pleasure; and alternative suggestions that its real intent was to curb forbidden sexual practices. The authors' own thesis is that, while evidence for women gaining greater sexual pleasure from the inserts is scanty and suspect, the practice is nonetheless the result of women having relatively high status and autonomy in these cultures. This is developed in a 9-page section on "Comparative Perspectives" which shows

that where seemingly similar practices exist in more male-dominated cultures they arise from different causes or involve far less discomfort for the men.

The bibliographic section contains over 140 entries dating from the 15th century to the present. In addition to a large number of descriptions of the practice in various parts of Southeast Asia, sources are provided on recent research on human sexuality, and on comparable practices in cultures ranging from ancient India and China through Mayan central America, to contemporary Western Europe and North America. The seven pages of illustrations include examples of the devices.

Order from: Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies, 260 Stephens Hall, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 94720. Prepayment required on orders under \$50.00, and checks should be made payable to: Regents of University of California.

PETER METCALF, Where Are YOU/SPIRITS: Style and Theme in Berawan Prayer, xv, 345 pp., maps, photos, glossary (1989, Washington, D.C. Smithsonian Institution). ISBN 0-87474-620-5. \$39.95

While many anthropologists write about prayers as part of rituals, few include texts and their analyses for the readers. In this skillfully composed and handsomely produced volume, Metcalf provides rich fare for students of Borneo societies, folklore, and religion. Following an introductory chapter which includes a brief summary of anthropological studies of prayers, the author offers "an integrated approach to prayer" and the distinctive character of Berawan prayer. The introduction is followed by chapters presenting the style and themes of prayer, the topics or functions of prayers: of the house, for a sick child, at a funeral, at the graveyard, to call the major omen bird, and for the festival of Bungan. For each type of prayer an example of Berawan text and translation is included.

The significance of this volume is eloquently expressed by Dell Hymes who writes:

What [Metcalf] has done with the generative properties of Berawan prayer is wholly new, and important news. It shows a community-wide genre, competence in which is widespread ranging from a minimal mastery required of family heads to the aesthetic and social display by others; a community genre which someone cannot be prevented from abusing, and which someone

can employ in a proudly practiced divinatory craft. . . Altogether, a crisp, acute depiction of a kind of prayer that comes to seem as unremarkably a normal part of Berawan life as it is striking for its absence from anthropological theory.

## ABSTRACTS

Bishops and Brookes: The Anglican Mission and the Brooke Raj in Sarawak 1848-1941.

Graham Edward Saunders, M.A., B.A. (Hons), Dip. Ed. (Adelaide), the University of Hull.

## Preface

This thesis is concerned with the relationship that existed between the Anglican Mission in Sarawak and the Brooke regime which governed the country until 1946. The first Anglican missionaries reached Sarawak in June 1848, almost seven years after James Brooke had become Rajah. Knighted in 1847, Sir James Brooke was succeeded in 1868 by his nephew, Sir Charles Brooke, who was succeeded in 1917 by his son, Charles Vyner Brooke. The third Rajah's reign effectively ended when the Japanese occupied Sarawak in December 1941. When the war ended in August 1945, negotiations were already under way for the transfer of Sarawak to the British Crown, which was accomplished the following year. The Anglican Church was not party to the troubled negotiations leading to Cession, and the arrival of the Japanese really marked the end of the official relationship between the Mission and the Rajah's Government. This study ends, therefore, in December 1941.

Because of the personal nature of Brooke rule, the study falls naturally into three parts, each representing a reign. This division is reinforced by changes within the Mission. The first Rajah died in 1868: the first Bishop of the Diocese of Labuan and Sarawak, Bishop McDougall, resigned in the same year. His successor, Bishop Chambers, was consecrated in 1869, at which time the Diocese was enlarged by the addition to it of the Straits Settlements of Singapore, Penang and Malacca. Chambers was succeeded in 1881 by Bishop Hose, whose responsibilities were extended to British North Borneo in that year. On Hose's retirement in 1907, the Diocese was reduced by having the Straits Settlements separated from it. The new Bishop, Mounsey, had a troubled episcopate, which

is a subject in itself. The third convenient division began when the third Rajah and Bishop Danson took up their tenures of office in 1917. A more formal, less personalised relationship was established which continued through the episcopates of Danson, Hudson and Hollis until the arrival of the Japanese in 1941. The administration of both Mission and Raj became more bureaucratised and personal communication between the Rajah and the Bishop became less frequent. On the other hand, an increase in personnel in both the Mission and the Government increased the contacts between Government officers and missionaries and at this level personalities still mattered. In the rural outstations, in particular, government officials and missionaries worked in close liaison in those fields of economic and social development in which both the Mission and the Government had an interest, particularly in education and public health. The third Rajah's reign was thus distinctive in style from that of his father, not only because of the differences in personalities, but also because of the different demands placed upon a government in the interwar years. The same can be said of the Mission.

Of the three periods, half the thesis is devoted to the pre-1869 phase. This is largely because Rajah James Brooke and Bishop McDougall were both strong-willed, proud, self-righteous and contentious men with a propensity to publish their views. Also, in this period the foundations of the Mission were laid and its relationship with the Government shaped. Both institutions were autocratic and the personal attitudes of their heads dominated the relationship. In the first chapter, we consider the background to the establishment of the Mission, in particular the role and motives of the Rajah. The second chapter considers the early years of the Mission in Kuching, its attempt to work among the Malays, its early contacts with the Chinese, its lack of men and resources. The third chapter looks at the expansion of the Mission into the Dayak areas, the expectations of the Rajah and of McDougall as to what this expansion would achieve and the limited achievement up to 1857. In 1855, McDougall was consecrated Bishop of Labuan and Sarawak in order that he might command a larger missionary effort. The fourth chapter is concerned with the Mission in Kuching, particularly with the work amongst the Chinese, until the beginning of 1857. In February 1857 occurred the so-called Chinese Rising, an attack upon Kuching by Chinese gold miners from Bau. This had a traumatic effect upon those in the Government and the Mission who experienced it and is dealt with in some detail, for the behaviour of the Rajah and the Bishop, and what each thought of the behaviour of the other, affected their relationship and that of the Mission and the Government thereafter. There followed a troubled time of political uncertainty and simmering revolt against the Rajah's Government. The Mission was involved in that McDougall's assessment of the situation and his desire to obtain protection and security for his Mission did not conform to the views of the Rajah or to his policies so that Rajah and Bishop were in public

contention. Chapter VI looks at the widening rift between the Bishop and the Rajah and thus between the Mission and the Government. In 1862 matters came to a head with the publication of material critical of the Mission in a book by Spenser St. John, who had been the Rajah's private secretary before becoming, in 1856, the British Consul at Brunei. In the controversy which ensued, the Rajah took St. John's part. At the same time, the Bishop's sanguinary involvement in a clash with Lanun pirates gave his critics further ammunition. Caught in the middle was John Brooke Brooke, the Rajah's designated heir, whose ambiguous role satisfied neither party and was a factor leading to his break with the Rajah. These events are the subject of Chapter VII. The eighth chapter views events after the removal of Brooke Brooke from the succession and the partial reconciliation of McDougall and Rajah James.

Chapter IX looks at the episcopate of Bishop Chambers during which Rajah Charles maintained cordial relations with the Mission, partly out of deference to his wife, the Raneé Margaret, who showed an active interest in Church affairs, partly out of respect for Chambers with whom he had been friends since 1851. Rajah Charles had no liking for Chamber's wife, however, who was responsible for a coolness between Church and State. The Rajah was disappointed, too, in the failure of the mission to expand its operations and on Chambers' retirement in 1881 allowed the Roman Catholic Mission into Sarawak. The tenth chapter, therefore, considers the long episcopate of Bishop Hose, who with his broad responsibilities outside Sarawak was unable to challenge the dominance of the Rajah in the country. Nor did the disappointing achievement of the Mission gratify the Rajah, who valued the Mission mainly for its contributions to education and medical services and tended to regard the majority of its personnel as pretty poor specimens of manhood. Only towards the end of Hose's episcopate in 1907 did Archdeacon Sharp begin a new initiative by which the Mission moved towards the creation of a genuinely Asian Church. Sharp's methods earned the disapproval of the Rajah, who denied him the Bishopric. Sharp provided continuity, however, into the episcopate of Bishop Mounsey, who had only Borneo as his diocese. Mounsey's episcopate is the subject of Chapter XI. Initiatives were taken during his time, but his personality was unsuited to the task and less was achieved than might have been under a different man. Moreover, he did not get on with the Rajah.

Chapter XII begins with Rajah Charles attempting to influence the appointment of a Bishop for the last time. After this upheaval in Church-State relations, all becomes calm under the more detached and easy-going Rajah Vyner. No less the autocrat, Vyner left much of the day-to-day administration to his officers. The Government's attitude to the Mission was benign and the post-First World War Bishops were sensible men prepared to work within the parameters set by the Government and by the constraints imposed by shortages of men and

money. Under their direction an Asian Church emerged, able to survive the rigours of the Japanese Occupation without European priests and missionaries. This was the real achievement of Bishops Danson, Hudson and Hollis, building on the work of those who had preceded them.

I had thought at first that there might have been room for a study of why the Mission did not achieve more in its almost 100 years of effort from the point of view of those whom it wished to convert. It is clear that there were constraints imposed by the failure of support from the home Church in the form of men and money to make possible either a more extensive or more intensive effort. There were constraints imposed, too, by the Sarawak Government. Nevertheless, given the length of contact, the general support of the Government and the lack of overt opposition to the missionaries from those they worked amongst, it might be expected that a larger Christian community would have been established. There is scope for a study of those constraints imposed by traditional society, its social structures, religious beliefs and practices, customs or adat, its economic base. Why did some convert and not others? Unfortunately, the problem can only be raised and some generalities expressed in Chapter XIII.

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