

# **IBAN MIGRATION INTO SARAWAK**

Revised by

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# **PART I - MIGRATION TO THE KAPUAS VALLEY**

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## THE FIRST IBAN FAMILIES OF SARAWAK

The Iban people have been migrating across Borneo for many generations. Their migration to Sarawak and into the various rivers of the Second Division, where the Iban migrations to other parts of Sarawak took place at a later period will be describe up to the best knowledge whereby the history has been past down from generation to generation orally. There is little written evidence of this migration process.

According to the Iban legend, the ancestors of the people lived at a very remote place in the Middle East. This Middle Eastern origin was mentioned in the beginning of a few of the longest tusut<sup>1</sup>. The legend says that Bujang Ganggam lived in the large forest. Bujang Mereti lived in the wilderness and Bujang Biak takes his hat and explores the lands.

This Bujang lived in a fairyland guarded by Kumang, whose back was white scorched by the setting sun. It was also the land of Lulong, who carried her basket to look for snails below the river of the under world. According to the legend this land was situated opposite the present-day Holy Land of Mecca.

The Iban migrated from the Middle East to Sumatra and from there some of them continued to explore the island of Borneo where they lived in the Kapuas River valley for a long time. It is during this period that the most famous Iban gods including Singalang Burong are to be found in the genealogy. It was here that men mingled with gods and learned the customs, which still characterize the Iban way of life.

The Kapuas basin is the most important source of the various migrations mentioned in the tusut. There is also some indication that two other groups of non-Kapuas ancestors led by Sabatin and Drom landed at Tanjung Datu at the extreme western end of Sarawak territory. From this group, not only the Iban but also the Melanau and other people as well.

The second group of non-Kapuas ancestors came from Java and landed on the coast of Borneo near Merudu Hill not far from Brunei Darussalam. At least one famous descendant from this group later returned to Indonesian Borneo, where he met and inter-married with the forbears of pioneers whom later migrated back to Sarawak.

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<sup>1</sup> Tusut is the Iban term for tracing their family tree.

## MIGRATION TO UNDUP

The Undup River and the Kumpang<sup>2</sup> were among the very first areas to be populated by the Ibans who came from what is now Indonesian Borneo. This probably because both these rivers are easily accessible from the lower Kapuas.

Singalang Burong's grandson named Surong Gunting, who was living at Merakai<sup>3</sup> in the Kapuas drainage, held a historic conference to organize migration routes into the Undup and Batang Ai.

It was from Merakai that Kajup who was ordered by Surong Gunting to lead his followers to migrate and settle at the Undup River. The Undup River mouth is just above the modern town of Simanggang. However, not very much is said about Kujup who may have been a Maloh Dayak. He became the first person to be buried at Ruding Embawang<sup>4</sup>.

After the migration of Kujup, another ancestor named Jelian migrated<sup>5</sup> from Ketungau River, a tributary of Kapuas into Undup. Jelian lived at Wong Empangu who later married Tiong the daughter of the famous Kantu chief named Beti.

Another early pioneer in the Undup was Langkup. He was remembered more for a problem he had with his wife than for his role as a pioneer. His wife has the same name as he did - Langkup. Hence, she has to change her name to Lemok.

Migration into the Undup continues where another chief named Galungan came with his followers from Merakai and lived near Bukit Balau Ulu, which is located on the modern Sarawak-Indonesia frontier at the head of the Undup drainage. After many years later, Galungan moved again with his people to live at Bukit Balau not far below the present town of Simanggang. It is here that Galungan and his people called themselves as the Balau Dayaks because they have lived twice by hills of the same name. In the same manner those who inhabited the Undup River called themselves the Undup Dayaks.

While residing at Bukit Balau, Galungan married a woman named Sendi. Soon after their marriage, he left his original followers and moved to Sebuyau, a tributary of the Batang Lupar. Sebuyau is located at the mouth of the Batang Lupar. These people then became known as the Sebuyau Dayaks.

From Nanga Sebuyau, Galungan moved to the Sadong where he died. After his death, his followers gradually moved westward to Merdang Gayam, Merdang Limau, Merdang Lumut, Samarahan, Tabuan and Lundu.

Some of their descendants have lived for generations in the vicinity of modern Kuching, the capital city of Sarawak. All of these people have continued to call themselves the Sebuyau Dayaks. They often stress that they are quite unlike other Sea Dayaks—an assertion that is not true.

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<sup>2</sup> Kumpang is a tributary of the Batang Ai in the Lubok Ant District.

<sup>3</sup> Merakai is a tributary of the Kapuas River.

<sup>4</sup> Ruding Embawang is a Maloh cemetery situated below the mouth of the Undup in Batang Lajar.

<sup>5</sup> Jelian migrated into the Undup after the death of Surong Gunting at Bukit Tiang Laju.

## MIGRATION TO THE BATANG AI

At about the same time when Jelian migrated into the Undup, a chief named Pateh Ambau from Katingau led Surong Gunting's people into the Sarawak territory. At first they settled at the Upper Maruh near the present town of Engkilili. From there, Ambau married again and built his longhouse at Pengkalan Tabau in the Batang Ai above the present town of Lubok Antu. It is noted that all the pengap<sup>6</sup> of the various Gawai mention Ambau.

*Ambau has already come here*

*From Pengkalan Tabau, passing by the Tawang traders*

These traders were Tawang Malay traders from the area of Lugan Kuan and the Tawang River who used to call at Ambau's house at Pengkalan Tabau. While he was living there, one of his men named Belayau Lelang died. He was buried at a new cemetery called Pendam Keladi.

During the period of Ambau, other leaders were migrating into the Batang Ai. There was Lanong who came from the Kapuas to live in the Upper Kumpang River and later moved down the Kumpang River to live at Rantau Langkong in the Batang Ai. He is not mentioned in any *tusut* (genealogy) but he is well known as one of the early settlers. Then, there was Ratih who came from Bukit Kenyandang in the Katungan. He was the first Iban to explore the Kumpang River and settled at Rantau Langkong. While Ratih explored the Kumpang River, his father called Jenua continues to live at Bukit Kenyandang.

Another chief named Gunggu came with his people to settle at Meriyu near Singkarong below the present town of Engkilili. And soon after Gunggu migration, another famous chief named Kanyong whose nickname was Gendang Manyi led his people to settle at the bend of the Melarang River. Melarang River is located midway between Lubok Antu and Engkilili.

Kanyong is famous for his part in originating the Sea Dayak custom of *pati nyawa*<sup>7</sup>. The custom originated when Kanyong was living at Melarang on the Batang Ai. Another chief named Semalanjat came from Kapuas to live at Bungkap just above the Bungkap River mouth where it meets the Batang Ai. All the newly arrived migrant leaders in the area agreed to help one another if any of them were to be attacked by the common enemy<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> The Pengap is a long ritual poem sung by men. It is the principal part of a Gawai. The singers are a leader-pun, a timbal or nyaut or ngelambong. The leading lemambang and his followers sing most of the poem as they walk along the house, wearing their long ceremonial coats and beating upon the floor with their staves

<sup>7</sup> Pati Nyawa is whereby a man who killed another man whether by accident or intentionally must compensate the relatives of the victim.

<sup>8</sup> The common enemy at that time were the Punans, Bukitan and the Kantu of Merakai.



## THE PATI NYAWA CUSTOM

At that time a man from Semalanjat's longhouse accidentally killed a hunter from Kanyong longhouse while they were both out on a hunting trip. Kanyong and his people were very much annoyed by the incident. They summoned their friends and relatives to help them take vengeance on the people of Semalanjat's longhouse. Like wise Semalanjat summoned all his friends to help defend his longhouse at Bungkap. Just as it seemed that the quarrel would turn into a war, an important chief named Sulang directed his son named Rantai to visit the two parties and end the disagreement. Rantai met Semalanjat and Kanyong separately. He urged them not to prolong their dispute and suggested a peaceful settlement. Kanyong and Semalanjat agreed not to fight if a peaceful solution could be found. When Rantai came home his father asked him to summon such other migration leaders like Meringai, Manggi, Jelian, Ambau and Gunggu to help settle the dispute.

The meeting took place in the gravel bed of the river. Sulang told the other chiefs the cause of the quarrel. He explained that the small matter should not lead them to an open fight. Should we fight against one another, he said, we will become disunited and the Kantu, Bugau, Punan and Bukitan whom are our enemy shall defeat us.

He urged that some rule should be worked out for the settlement of such quarrel. The other chief agreed and asked him to suggest a solution. Sulang suggested the following:

1. If a hunter kills another man by mistake, the killer must be asked to compensate the deceased's relatives with *pati nyawa* compensation. The compensation comprises of two valuable old jars (*tajau*). Failing to pay would result the killer to be the slave (together with his descendant) of the deceased family.
2. If a warrior kills his fighting mate by mistake while on the warpath. He must pay a *pati nyawa* of two valuable old jars to the deceased family. Failing to pay, he would have to surrender himself to become their slave together with his descendants.
3. If a man kills another person when the latter stole his property, the death of the thief is not to be compensated. However, if the thief killed a person whose property he has stolen, then he must compensate the deceased with his own life.
4. If a man kills another man who has committed adultery with his wife, the deceased need not be compensated. However, if the adulterer kills his friend whose wife he has seduced, then he must compensate the deceased's family with two valuable old jars. If he fail to pay the penalty, he must surrender himself to the relatives of the deceased and to become their slave together with his descendants.

After the rest of the chiefs had heard Slang's suggestion, they all agreed that the man from Semalanjat's longhouse should be asked to compensate the relatives of the deceased from Kerning's longhouse. This marked the very important custom of compensation or

*pati nyawa* among the Sea Dayaks. It has saved thousands of lives that might have been taken in vengeance.

These men —Ambau, Lanong, Ratih, Gunggu and Kanyong were some of the most important early pioneers into the Batang Ai. However, they were not the lasts as new Iban leaders continued to arrive there. Some stayed others stopped for a short period before moving onto more distant areas of Sarawak.

## MIGRATION TO THE SKRANG, BANGAT AND ENTANAK

The first leader to settle in the Skrang River was Lau Moa whose name means withered face. He is a mysterious figure best known for his children. His daughter Lantong was the mother of Tindin, the famous leader of migration into the Paku. He also has six sons who were famous bards.

They became skilled bards because their father Lau Moa had once given a Gawai Burong in accordance with the Iban custom. He invited the ancestors and Gods from the spirit world including Singalang Burong. Singalang Burong was very critical of the *pengap*, which Lau Moa sang to summon the guest from the spirit world. To set matter right, he sent his own bard Sampang Gading to teach Loa Moa's son how to sing the *pengap* properly. The first son to learn from Sampang Gading was Sumbang and he later taught his five brothers. All the six of them became skillful bards.

Before the first Iban migration, a thin population of wandering Bukitans inhabited Skrang. Meringgai was one of the first more definite pioneers to live in Skrang. He lived in the middle reaches of the Skrang River. He is remembered in the *pengap* for his clever wife.

*...Meringgai has also come here*

*The husband of Randai the smartest woman of Skrang...*

The exact location of his house is not known but it was believed to be not far from Tanjong Lipat, the home of Chaong who was another pioneer to Skrang. Chaong is the father of the famous Tindin. He was also a great war leader in his own right and often led expeditions against the Kantu of Merakai. The Kantu has been their traditional enemy who inhabited the Kapuas water.

After the arrival of these chiefs, Manggi came from the Batang Ai and lived at the mouth of the Tisak River, on the right bank of the Batang Skrang. Like many of the migration leaders, Manggi was a pioneer in more than one place. Later, he moved to the middle reaches of the Tisak River and eventually moved to the Rimbas, a tributary of the Saribas where he died. He is remembered for his famous adventure with a medicine man or *manang* from Balau.

## THE LEGEND OF BATU JELAPI

While Manggi was living at the mouth of Tisak River, it happened that his daughter fell sick. He summoned Jelapi, a Balau medicine man from Stirau near Lingga to cure her. When Jelapi arrived, Manggi swore that if he cure his sick daughter, he would not hesitate to give consent for the marriage between his daughter and Jelapi's son.

Jelapi was pleased to hear that since Manggi was a famous leader. He began the curing ceremony and by the next morning she was cured. Before Jelapi depart for his home, he asked Manggi when he might return to discuss the proposed marriage. Manggi denied his former agreement. After a long argument Jelapi returned home ashamed and furious.

A week later Manggi daughter was taken ill again. Manggi immediately suspected that the angered Jelapi must have her under charm. Eventually the girl died. In his grief, Manggi sent two of his men to Stirau to persuade Jelapi to pay him another visit. If Jelapi refuses due to his recent dispute, Manggi told them to snatch away his *lupong*<sup>9</sup> by force. Then if he follow you, kill him in revenge for my daughter's death.

When Manggi's men reached Stirau, one of them went to Jelapi's house while the other waited at the landing stage. The first man told Jelapi that he had been sent to fetch him back because Manggi's daughter was ill again. Jelapi refused to go. Manggi deceived him once and that was enough.

At this point Manggi's messenger seized Jelapi's medicine bag and ran away towards the landing stage. Jelapi pursued him and he reached the landing stage where Manggi's envoy that was hiding there killed Jelapi. It was believed that the horizon began to turn dark and the wind started to blow fiercely. There was a great storm and Jelapi's body was turned into a huge boulder, which is still visible at Stirau in the lower Batang Lupar River. The boulder is known as Batu Jelapi.

## THE MERI ANAK MIT MANDI CUSTOM

It was after the death of his daughter that Manggi moved again to the middle Tisak. There were many *tapah* fish in the stream. Manggi and his people often caught them in a kind of fish trap called *abau*. One morning, Manggi found that one of his traps had caught two big fish. While cleaning the fish at home, he found in its belly three beautiful plates,

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<sup>9</sup> Lupong is a bag where the medicine man puts his traditional medicine.

which remain the prized possession of his descendants to this day. Since then, it has been a practice to give a male child his first bath from one of these sacred plates.

## **OTHER MIGRANTS TO THE SKRANG**

Other important early pioneers in the Skrang includes Busok who cleared all the forest in the lower and middle Pelasok tributary and his friend, Mariba who felled all the trees in Ulu Pelasok. Both these men originally lived in Batang Ai. Saba and Jelian, who lived in the lower and upper Enteban, a right-hand tributary of Skrang respectively followed them. Not much is known about any of these people. Gubar and Jelian were the first leaders to settle in the Tebat tributary of the Skrang.

There were many more famous war leaders who lived in the Skrang. There was Beti who was also known as Berauh Ngumbang, the wandering widower who married seven times and outlived each of his wives.

Mawar was the first to live in the land between the Skrang and Saribas, which is drained by the Bangat and Entanak streams. He came to Skrang and settled not far from Bangat —between that place and the Ulu Entanak. Many of the fruit trees that he has planted are still standing and his descendants have been leaders right down to the present day.

Begarak is always mentioned as the first Iban to clear the jungle in the lower Entanak. However, very little is known about him.

# **MIGRATION TO THE SARIBAS AND ITS TRIBUTARIES**

## **THE LAYAR**

The Layar was the first tributary of the Saribas to be settled by Ibans. Before they arrived, a chief of the Bukitans named Entigar lived in the upper Layar near Bukit Tabalu. He was a cousin of Entigu, the Bukitan chief who figures in the famous story of Tindin.

One of the very earliest leaders of Iban migration into the Layar was Tanggok who settled at Rian Batang in the middle Layar. Sampar came after Tanggok and settled in the Penebak, a right tributary of the Upper Layar above Nanga Tiga. During the same time, Talap led a migration, westward from Batang Ai and lived in the Pasa stream, a right tributary of the Layar. It was Talap who met Datu Patinggi Ngadan<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Datu Patinggi Ngadan is one of the most important pioneers in Saribas. There are many stories about him that have been passed down to the present generation.

## **THE LEGEND OF BATU API**

Some years after his arrival, while Talap was building a canoe at Nanga Ban, not far from his house on the left bank of the Layar, Datu Patinggi Ngadan and his friends came. They told Talap that they had just come from Sumatra and his father had originally lived at Kayong in Indonesian Borneo not far from Pontianak.

Patinggi Ngadan had left Kayong on a long quest for a bar of gold that had been stolen from his father named Patinggi Gurang while the later was fishing at sea.

Patinggi Ngadan had traveled up and down the Kapuas and from there he had gone to Sumatra in search of the stolen gold. He had traveled by sea to Sarawak and also has searched in the Sadong and the lower part of the Batang Lupar. From there he had come up the Saribas to Nanga Ban where he met Talap.

Patinggi Ngadan asked Talap how far be his land extended up the Layar. Talap has been working on his canoe and the scattering chips of wood have been carried up the river by the tide. He told Patinggi Ngadan that all the land up the river passed by the floating chips belong to him. Hearing this Patinggi Ngadan and his friends stopped paddling and simply let their boat drift up river following the tide. As they reached Bangai, the tide turned down and Patinggi Ngadan stopped at that place. Soon after he had put down his anchor, Patinggi Ngadan light up a fire from the flint stones which he was carrying with him. One of the stone fell into the water and according to legend; it turned into a huge rock. The rock is now known as Batu Api and is situated at Bangai in Layar.



## DATU PATINGGI NGADAN

Since the chips from Talap's boat had floated only as far as Bangai, he and his descendants could claim only the lands on the right bank of the Layar from Nanga Ban to that point.

After Patinggi Ngadan had lived at Bangai for some years, he decided to move further up the river to Batu Lintang. At that place he placed a *belian* tree to show the boundary between his land and those of Sampar of Penebak in Ulu Layar. The *belian* tree still stand as of today and is known as Tras Tangkal Patinggi, which means the *belian* tree notched by Patinggi. However, after Patinggi has placed the marker, he heard that Sampar was planning to migrate down river from Ulu Layar. He warned Sampar that if he were to move into the area below the boundary, it would mean war. To show his seriousness, Patinggi Ngadan hung a basket (*ringka*) at a tree at the mouth of the stream above his landing stage. It was meant to keep Sampar's head in it if the latter dared to ignore his warning. Today, the stream is known as Sungai Ringka.

A few weeks later, after Patinggi learned that Sampar has dropped his plans to migrate, he went back down the river to live at Nanga Jaloh. He and his descendants still claimed all the land up to the *belian* boundary marker.

Shortly after Patinggi Ngadan moved to Nanga Jaloh, his son Labun left and built a new house at Nanga Lupa not very far down stream. Later the people at Labun and his father longhouses held a great cockfighting contest. The ghost of one of the birds killed in the contest was seen to fly skywards and disappear. Not long after that a large bird flew over the longhouse roof and kicked the end of its ridgepole. On the following night, Patinggi Ngadan had a dream. In his dream he met the spirit of the cock who told him that since many cocks had been cruelly killed during the contest, he and his son and all of their people would also suffer a cruel death.

Some days after that, a small pox epidemic struck both of the longhouses. Many people died that no one could bury all the bodies in the cemetery. Thus both of the longhouses themselves became the burial grounds, which is known today as Pendam Lupa and Pendam Jaloh. It was not known whether the virus infected Patinggi Ngadan and his son Labun.

## THE PADEH

It was mentioned earlier that before the arrival of the Ibans, there were Bukitans living in the Layar under the chief named Entiggar. There is no oral or written record of any conflict between Entiggar and the Iban pioneers. But the story of the migrations after this point is much concerned with contacts between the new arrivals and the older and more

thinly settled inhabitants. Even before the settlement of the Padeh (another tributary of the Saribas) there seems to have been conflict between Ibans and the Bukitans.

Before the Iban migrate to the Padeh, the Bukitans were living in and around the Ensanga range, at the source of the Padeh River and in Ulu Enteban of the Skrang. It was in this area that one of the Bukitan chief named Ginyum who lived at Bukit Asam was killed by the famous Iban warrior called Beti (Berauh Ngumbang).

In those days when the Dayaks had not populated the Saribas, it is the Bukitans who have lived there. However, the Bukitans did not like to hear or see the Dayaks. At height of this Dayak-Bukitan enmity Ginyum killed an Iban named Apai Remampak.

Remempak, the daughter of the deceased swore that she would marry any man who could avenge the death of her father by killing Ginyum. At this time, the mighty widower Berauh Ngumbang (who had already outlived several wives) was at Rantau Panjai in the Skrang. Upon hearing of Remempak's wish he went to call on Ginyum. The Bukitan chief was an excellent blacksmith and Berauh Ngumbang said that he would like Ginyum to forge a new knife for him. While Ginyum was busy with his task, Berauh Ngumbang asked young Bukitan who was there to get some cold water for him to drink. While the young man was away at the river, Berauh Ngumbang drew his spear and threw it with all his might into Ginyum's back and killed him.

He then chopped off Ginyum's head and started back to Skrang. When he arrived at Remampak's house, he called for her to come out and meet him. At first she refused since she was wearing only a very poor mourning dress. Berauh Ngumbang insisted by telling her that he had something very valuable in the bag. Finally she came out to see what it was and upon recognizing the head of Ginyum, she agreed to marry Berauh Ngumbang in accordance with her words.

It was after this had happened that the Sea Dayaks began to settle in the Padeh. One of the first and most important of the pioneers in this region was a mighty woman named Dayang Ridu who came from Skrang. She is remembered for the story of her marriage to Kulong (Alas) who was originally a man of low birth. In order to raise him to a higher social standing, more in accordance to her own, Dayang Ridu had to pay one very valuable *alas jar* to the chief of the community. Kulong was then accepted as a man of rank. From that point onwards, the people called him Kulong Alas. Two pioneers who followed Dayang Ridu were Kutok who settled in the middle Padeh and Gerijih who lived in the lower Padeh.

There is also a mention in the *pengap* as follows:

*...Gerijih has also come here*

*From Padeh where the water is low...*



## THE PAKU

Perhaps the best known account of the conflict between the Ibans and the Bukitans has somewhat a more peaceful ending than the story of Berauh Ngumbang and Ginyum. It is the story of Tindin who led his people to settle in the upper Paku, another tributary of the Saribas. Tindin, the son of Chaong who lived at Tanjong Lipat in the Skrang was brave and wise in handling the affairs of his people. It was due to these qualities that he was able to conclude a peaceful settlement with the Bukitans in the area where he migrated.

Soon after the death of his father Chaong, Tindin succeeded him as war leader. While he was still living at Tanjong Lipat, the Goddess Indai Kumang visited Tindin and gave him charms to make him successful in war. She also promised that seven of his descendants would be great war leaders.

Shortly after this, Tindin moved from Skrang up the Enteban stream where he and his followers cleared the virgin jungle. From the Enteban, Tindin moved again heading north into the Padeh and Layar regions of the Saribas District. These rivers had long been the home of the pre-Iban such as the nomadic Punans and the Bukitans under the leadership of Entiggar and Ginyum just as the Rimbass and Krian rivers were being inhabited by the Serus.

One day while at Ulu Enteban, Tindin met the Bukitan chief named Entinggi of Paku. Entinggi was a cousin of Entigu. They immediately began to fight with swords and spears. After long hours of fighting, Tindin asked Entinggi of his name. The Bukitan replied that he was Entinggi of Paku whose nickname (*ensumbar*) was Ketu Aur Tulang, which means a kind of strong bamboo tree rooting. Tindin then mentioned his own *ensumbar*, which was Pimpin Bragah Ngindang, which refers to a kind of bird hovering in flight.

“No doubt we cannot kill one another as we are both apparently being cared for by the goddess Kumang<sup>11</sup>,” said Entinggi. Hence, they stop fighting and went their separate way.

Shortly after this incident Tindin heard that Paku was a very fertile land but that it was also the home of the mighty Bukitans under Entinggi and Entigu. Entigu was another Bukitan chief. In order to drive them out of the Paku, Tindin declared war on the Bukitans. When Entinggi heard about this, he summoned his leaders including Entigu, Meragasing, Merajilan and Agan. He asked them whether it would be wise to defend themselves in their own land. After discussing among themselves, they agreed not to fight on their own ground for they fear that in the event of defeat, the lives of their women and children might be in danger. So Entinggi agreed to lead them and seek the Iban invaders in their territory.

Entinggi felt sure that Tindin would lead his troops from the Upper Enteban across the Padeh and down the Geraji stream towards the Layar River. So the Bukitan chief led his own warriors from Paku towards Enteban in order to attack Tindin and his men while they

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<sup>11</sup> Kumang is the goddess who is the patron of all powerful war leaders.

are on the way to Paku. At Tinting Kayu Ukir<sup>12</sup>, the two forces met and they fought hard with neither side showing any sign of surrender.

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<sup>12</sup> Tinting Kayu Ukir is one of the ridges of Mt. Ensanga.

## HOW THE SEA DAYAKS ARE CALLED IBAN

After some warriors had been killed and wounded, Entinggi called Tindin by the Bukitan word *isan*<sup>13</sup>.

Tindin was surprise and said, "Why do you address me as isan. Have you got any son?"

Entinggi answered, "Yes. I have a son named Demong. Now let us sit down and try to resolve our misunderstanding peacefully."

Tindin was glad to hear these gracious words from the headman of his enemy and he agreed to stop fighting and try to reason out their quarrel.

Tindin declared that it would be both wise and proper if Entinggi agreed to a marriage between his son and Tindin's own daughter in order to restore peace as soon as possible between the Bukitans and the Dayaks. However, Tindin insist that the marriage can be approved if Entinggi agrees to pay him compensation known as *drian palit mata* or a dowry. The dowry is for the purpose of abolishing racial enmity between the two tribes. Entinggi promptly agreed and said that he had no malice in his heart neither had he any territorial ambition other than to defend the life of his people against the invading Ibans. It was here that the Bukitans first called the Sea Dayaks Iban due to the fact that they were pushing other races out and taking all into their possession.

Entinggi was pleased and agreed to Tindin's suggestion. He assured him that before long he would pay the *drian palit mata* as claimed so that his son, Demong would marry Rinda, Tindin's daughter.

Tindin also felt it would be proper to demand of Entinggi a *padi bin* full of new heads plus a large brass gong in recognition of his rank as a chief extraordinary authority, who had the right to claim for dowry according to the tradition founded by Serapoh.

Entinggi agreed to all this. At the conclusion of the negotiation he invited Tindin to accompany him to the Paku to see for himself the beauty and fertility of that district. The eager Tindin at once consented and took some of his leading warriors with him. In Paku, Entinggi took Tindin to meet various Bukitan chieftains including Entigu. Tindin found that Entigu and his people were nomads who wandered in the forest while Entinggi and his people were settled down and planted crops for food.

After Tindin had seen the length and width and fertility of the land, he told Entinggi that he was attracted and would like to migrate there with his followers if Entinggi would

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<sup>13</sup> Isan is an Iban term of address used between parent of children who are married together.

permit them. The Bukitan chief had no objections so long as the proposed marriage took place.

Entinggi said, "Through this marriage, the future of this country will become the everlasting inheritance of our descendants."

When all the things including the dowry had been discussed, Tindin asked for further presents as a token of the first marriage between a Dayak and a Bukitan. These includes

1. One brass cannon
2. One blowpipe
3. One *tangui serawong* of the kind worn by high ranking Iban brides especially on the first day they live with their husbands.

Entinggi agreed with all this that a month later the marriage feast was celebrated in Skrang. Rinda was taken by Entinggi to Paku to live with Demong. Not long after this, Tindin migrated to Paku and settled at the Upper Pengar stream near Spaoh. He then moved again to Tanjong Melanyut where he died of old age, greatly mourned by both the Dayaks and the Bukitans. He was buried opposite Nanga Beduru.

A year after her marriage to Demong, Rinda gave birth to a male child. She later had four more children, three boys and one girl named Jawai. Unfortunately Jawai died when she was about fifteen years old. But because of her noble birth, her body was not buried in the normal Sea Dayak practices. Instead the corpse was placed in a coffin and put on a platform about six feet from the ground to await the decomposition of the flesh. This method of burial was known as *lumbong* and the site of Jawai's *lumbong* is still known although today the practice has disappeared along with the Bukitan people who originated it.

Rinda died shortly after the birth of her youngest child, Bakak. She was killed by a falling rafter during a hurricane and was buried with her father at Nanga Beduru.

After the death of Rinda, Demong remarried. This time he married a Bukitan named Lemia, by whom he had many children. These children afterwards married other Bukitans before they moved into Julau, a left tributary of the Kanowit River of the present Third Division.

## **BATU DEMONG**

As Demong grow older and knew that the time of his death was approaching, he made a plan to safeguard the interest of all his children —those of his Iban wife as well as those of his second Bukitan wife. He erected a stone at a place called Nanga Entaih not far from the mouth of the Awas River in Upper Krian as a landmark for his children. He ordered that the stone served as a boundary marker between the lands which would be inherited by the children of his first wife and those of his second wife. According to this settlement Rinda's children (who claimed themselves as Iban) would own the old land lying from Paku River and Upper Krian as far as the erected stone only. The children of Lemia (who was a pure Bukitan) would own the new land lying from the stone towards the Julau and Rejang Rivers.

However, while the first group (Iban) was allowed to pass beyond the stone, the second group (Bukitan) was not allowed to turn back towards the old lands.

This stone of Demong is still intact and the Demong's ruling on the division of land is still followed down to the present day. People from Paku and Krian have gone over to the Rejang but not one from the Rejang has ever returned to the former land.

It was in the early days of the sons of Demong that another pioneer came to Paku and made contact with the people of the coast who at this time were not yet Muslim but who later became the Malays of Saribas. The name of this pioneer was Rusak. He came from the Undup and was the grandson of the Undup chief, Jelian.



## THE MALAYS OF SARIBAS

Rusak came to settle at Nanga Sakundong in the Paku. Soon after his arrival he heard that there is a tribe of people living at the mouth of the Saribas. He was anxious to meet them and some days later he started down river in order to satisfy his curiosity. When he came to Nanga Luba, not far from the mouth of the Paku in the main Saribas River, he encountered a swift tidal current running upstream which force him to stop. He soon heard a man paddling along with the tide from down river. Rusak called to him. The man tied his boat to a nearby tree branch and they talked.

“Where are you from?” Rusak asked.

The man replied that he was from the *laut*, which meant down river or sea. He told Rusak that he was on his way to see the Dayaks who are living up river. Rusak then said that he was a Dayak and that he was on his way to see a tribe of people who loved at the mouth of the Saribas.

The man then asked Rusak, “If you are a Dayak, how far does your land extend down river?”

Rusak told him that since they were meeting at Nanga Luba, that place should become the boundary between the Laut and the Dayaks of Saribas. Ever since that day and down to the present time, the normal Dayak word for the Malay has been Laut, since the first Malay to meet a Dayak said that he came from the *laut*.

In fact, the man who met Rusak belonged to a tribe called Lugu, which was not yet converted to Islam. The Lugus did not become Moslems until after the arrival of Abang Gudam from Minangkabau and Temenggong Kadir from Brunei, both of who came to Saribas at a later date. But during that days most of the Malays of Saribas are descendants from the early Lugu people.

At about this time another early settler named Duau came from the Rimbas and settle in the Upper Samu. But after a short time there, the son of Demong expelled Duau and his followers from Samu. Duau had become involved in a dispute with Bakak the youngest son of Rinda and Demong. The dispute was caused by Duau’s daughter affair with Bakak. Duau and his followers came down the Paku until they reached the mouth of Sakundong stream where they encountered Rusak who was building a canoe.

After listening to Duau’s troubles, Rusak suggested that instead of migrating else where he might remain and lived on his land at Nanga Luba if he agree to pay a land fee (*tasih tanah*) of one *tajau rusa*. Duau consented and wanted to pay this to Rusak at once. But after further thinking Rusak would only agree to accept an *alas jar* whose value was half

that of a *tajau rusa*. Because of this his children could continue to claim this land as belonging partly to them.

At about this time, another famous leader named Temegoh migrated from Indonesian Borneo via the Batang Ai to Bangkit, a right tributary of the Paku whose mouth is near the present town of Spaoh. The *pengap* says of him:

*...Temegoh also has come here*

*With many followers including the slave...*

Not long ago after his arrival Temegoh died of old age and was buried at Ulu Ijok in the Upper Bangkit.

## THE RIMBAS

During the same period, roughly fifteen generations ago, the Rimbas, which is another tributary of Saribas, was also settled by Ibans. In ancient times two related tribes of people, the Bukitans and the Serus thinly populated this river. The former lived in the Bayor and Teru streams. Under their chief Gambang and Guling who are relatives of Entinggi of Paku. The later lived in the Lower Rimbas under a chief named Jenua.

Despite the presence of Seru in this area, the early Iban migrations into the Rimbas, which are, describe below apparently did not meet with much resistance from them. Conflict<sup>14</sup> between the Ibans and the Serus did not become serious until the migration of Ibans<sup>15</sup> to Krian, east of Rimbas.

In the days of Gambang and Guling and at about the same time when Tindin arrived in the Paku, a certain chief named Padang came from Sebaru in Indonesian Borneo to the Rimbas. While in Sebaru, Padang and his followers had killed a star, which was in the form of a man who had attended on of their feast. Angered by the incident, the planetoid had told Padang that he and his followers would not be able to grow any rice for seven generations. In an effort to escape this curse, Padang and his followers fled away.

He had left Sebaru followed by his chief warriors Ningkan, Pajih, Jarup and Medan. From Sebaru they had journeyed toward Ulu Strap. Then they had gone by boat down the Strap River until they came to Sungai Pinang Mirah, which is located between the Linga and Sebuyau River in the Batang Lupar. They had settled there but the planetoid curse was still effective and they had nothing to eat at all. At the height of this hardship, Padang had a dream one night. In his dream he met a woman who informed him that she had given him cuttings of yam and tapioca to plant for food.

When he woke in the morning he saw that these things were scattered on the verandah outside his room. On seeing them Padang had recognised them as gifts from the Swine Goddess, who had given him these things once before when he was still in Sebaru.

After Padang and his followers lived on yams and tapioca for a long time, he had another dream. In his dream he met the same woman who had order him to leave Sungai Pinang Mirah and travel to Rimbas. There, according to the dream Padang and his people would find the *kayu belubang puak* or a tree with a hollow trunk (that is sago palm) for food in addition to the yams and tapiocas.

In the morning after, Padang explained his dream to his friends and they all agreed to go with him. Before they go, the men cut down bamboo and built a raft on which they

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<sup>14</sup> There was also trouble in the Paku when the Serus killed Blaki.

<sup>15</sup> The migration of the Iban to Krian only took place in the early ninetieth century.

floated down the Batang Lupar and up into the Saribas. From the main Saribas River they had come into the Rimbas and settled at Tanjong Tagan, opposite of the mouth of Undai stream. After their arrival they started to look for food as the goddess has instructed. When they came to Tanjong Banan, they found many sago palms growing there. They cut some down and grated them to flour for food.

After they had lived some years at Tanjong Tagan, one of Padang's followers named Pajih and his son Gunggu went to visit some friends in the Skrang and Undup rivers. They first went to Skrang where their friends gave them padi seeds for planting. Then they paid a visit to Jelian, the pioneer of Undup at Wong Empagu. Jelian taught them how to plant their newly obtained padi seeds at the right time and season. Jelian also told them to follow strictly the movement of the Planetoid (Bintang Tujuh) and the three stars (Bintang Tiga) in accordance with the teaching of these stars to Sera Gunting when the later was on his way to visit his grandfather, Singalang Burong.

Jelian also advised them to plant cotton for clothes and blankets. He also taught them on the rules they should follow when erecting a longhouse according to the precepts given by Apai Puntang Raga to Jelian himself.

After Jelian had taught them many things, Pajih and Gunggu returned to the Rimbas and relate this knowledge to the people. Later the community at Rimbas was divided into three groups. Padang led his followers to build their longhouse at Letong Beluok in the Undai stream. His son Gunggu built his longhouse in the Sebaru stream, while Pajih's longhouse was at Skaup.

While at Skaup, Pajih held the Gawai Batu feast. He invited many people from Padang and Gunggu's longhouses to the feast. During the celebration they foolishly laughed at a dog. As a result the hosts, guests and the longhouse were petrified. Now the large stone is known as Batu Kudi Skaup.

Shortly after this disaster Padang and those of his people who had not been turned to stone at Pajih's feast were fishing at Letong Beluok using the poisonous derris root. On seeing a huge *tapah* fish or carp defecating in the river, Padang speared it with a spear, which was tied to his wrist. Wounded, the *tapah* fish sprang away and dragged Padang into the river and drown him. The fish drew his body down the Undai stream to the Rimbas and then down to the main Saribas River. The fish continued up the Saribas to Lubok Sedebu and finally down the river again to the end of Tanjung Lilin near Beladin. It was because of this strange event that the Dayaks and Malays of Rimbas claim that all land on both banks of the Saribas from Tanjung Lilin to Lubok Sedebu is the inheritance of the Rimbas people.

After the death of Padang, his son Gunggu became chief and led his people to live at Nanga Jerai where he died. Gunggu's son, Garai continued to lead the Rimbas people followed by his son Jana. Jana and his descendants, all of whom are remembered, led further movement and migrations.

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## **PART II - THE MIGRATION TO TANJUNG DATU**

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## INTRODUCTION

Part I of this transcript has relate the history of those Iban ancestors who came from what is now the Indonesian Borneo and who were the first of their people to clear the jungle and farm along the rivers of what is today the Second Division of Sarawak.

The second part of this transcript will describe those ancestors who did not come from by the way of the Kapuas Valley. As indicated in the earlier section of Part I, there were at least two such groups —the offspring of Sabatin and his son, Drom who landed at Tanjung Datu and another group who came to the coast of Sarawak near Bukit Merudu, not far from Brunei.

## THE ARRIVAL AT TANJUNG DATU

Long before the migration of the Dayaks to the Batang Ai and its tributaries and beyond the fifteenth generation mark, Sabatin and his son Drom landed at Tanjung Datu. Tanjung Datu is situated at the southwestern boundary between Sarawak and Indonesian Borneo. According to the Iban genealogies, members of the seven different races in Sarawak have traced their descent back to these ancestors.

## MIGRATION TO BUKIT MERUDU

The third group of ancestor also remote and pre-fifteenth generation, from whom some Iban claimed descent, arrived in Sarawak at Bukit Merudu near Brunei. The leader was Pateh Simpong, who once cut down a breadfruit tree (*tekalong*) and turned it into a cobra.

He was said to be the offspring of a Javanese trader named Abang Musa whose forebears had come long ago from the Middle East.

Pateh Simpong eventually settled at Pulau Semakau near Brunei Bay. His son, Pateh Pejap was a tax collector probably for the Sultan of Brunei, although this is not certain. Pateh Pejap was stationed in Bintulu.

It was Pateh Pejap's son named Rajah Rendah that moved southward and settled near the mouth of the Mukah River. But from this place he migrated back to the Kapuas River valley in Indonesian Borneo. And one of Rajah Rendah great-great grandsons named Pateh Ambau<sup>16</sup> was the Iban leader who led the Iban migration back into Sarawak. He was mentioned in Part I of this transcript.

Today as results of generations of intermarriage, many Ibans are descended from all three of these migration stream into Sarawak, namely the Kapuas stream, the Cape Datu stream and the Bukit Merudu stream. Among the three, the Kapuas stream was the most important.

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<sup>16</sup> Pateh Ambau led the Iban migration to Sarawak and built his house at Pengkalan Tabau in the Batang Ai.

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## **PART III – CLEARING OLD JUNGLE**

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## INTRODUCTION

According to the *tusut*<sup>17</sup>, the migrations discussed in Part I and II took place between the eleventh and sixteenth generations ago. On the basis of calculations made regarding later ancestors (for whom we have definite dates) it appears that one Iban generation is estimated to be of a twenty-five years period. Therefore, it means the estimated period of the Iban pioneer settlement in the major rivers of the Second Division is 275 years ago. This is roughly at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

We can assumed that there were some Ibans living at various places in the Batang Lupar, the Saribas and all of their major tributaries. Undoubtedly large areas of the region remained empty from habitants or were thinly inhabited. The constant movement of the Iban people in search of fresh land makes it likely that once settled areas were frequently deserted in the course of time.

If these suggestions are correct, there is a 150 years elapsed between the end of the pioneer settlement period and the arrival of the semi-European regime of James Brooke in 1841. This lapse did not legally extend to the Sea Dayak country until 1853.

The source of this period is not uniform because much of the traditional oral material has already been lost. I have collected a great deal of such material concerning the Saribas River and its tributaries of Layar, Paku, Padeh, Rimbis and Entanak. This partly because I am from that area myself and it is also due to the fact that the Saribas people have tended to retain more of their own history than other groups of Iban. For some areas such as the Skrang, very little is remembered partly due to the migration of leading families to other rivers which is mostly in the Third Division. In any case the following narrative will inevitably seem to have a Saribas flavor. It is not meant to suggest that other areas were less important or interesting, it is just that we know less about them.

In this part several themes will recur which were mentioned previously in Part II and I on the story of the pioneer Iban migration into Sarawak. There are the themes of continuing migration and movement of the clearing of new farmlands, contacts and conflicts with the thinly settled pre-Iban inhabitants such as the Bukitans and the Serus and of the importance of the first families' political leadership.

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<sup>17</sup> Tusut is a form of the Iban genealogy.

## THE PAKU AND ANYUT

A wealth of material has survived concerning the history of the Paku, a tributary of the Saribas, which joins that river below the modern town of Betong. In fact, it may well be that the Paku is the best-documented river in Sarawak. From the days of Tindin right down to the present, the major events, leaders and migrations of the Paku people are all known to some degree. Even though many of the details are missing, this record is unique for its continuity and relative completeness. It will be recalled that the initial pioneer settlers in the Paku were Tindin who made a peaceful agreement with the Bukitans and Rusak, who at a later date was the first Iban to make contact with the Lugas – the not yet Malay people of the Saribas coast. Both Tindin and Rusak settled in Lower Paku at no great distance from each other. The descendants of Rusak although wealthy and influential people never had many political influences beyond their own longhouses. But the heirs of Tindin and his grandsons remained important in the political affairs of Paku for generations to come.

For about five generations after the death of Tindin, they ruled the entire district. Later, as will be recounted, they shared control of Paku and its tributaries with another great family and they themselves continued to rule only the Upper Paku.

## THE STORY OF RADIN

After the death of Rusak, his son Radin moved from Nanga Sakundong to live at Batu Anchau. It happened that while he and his people were building their houses, swarm of bees clustered on both ends of the ridge of the roof. Radin naturally regarded this as an omen. He inquired the older people of what it meant. They could not give him any definite answer but they assured him that it did not mean trouble for the people of the house.

Some months after Radin and his people lived in the new house, they held a house warming festival (Gawai Pangkong Tiang). A short time after the feast was over; a Maloh silversmith arrived at the house. This stranger whose name was Nyerubong was welcomed by all because of his skill *bensama*<sup>18</sup>. Meanwhile, Radin was still worried about the bee-swarm omen and he asked Nyerubong about it. The silversmith said according to the Maloh belief it meant that Radin would be a successful war leader but he and his people would have to leave the house after some years or suffer from serious sickness.

After three years, Nyerubong left to return to his own people in what is now Indonesian Borneo. He planned to lead a force back to raid Radin's house. Before Nyerubong left, the Dayaks due to their skill in silver works welcome most Maloh. Before he left, Nyerubong also asked an old lady from Radin's house to draw some blood from his head by means of suction cups<sup>19</sup>.

While Nyerubong was returning home, he met the Maloh chief named Apai Kejuang at Upper Padeh. Apai Kejuang was just leading his warriors to fight Radin. Nyerubong then told him about Radin's omen and willingly accepted the invitation of the Maloh chief to guide the war party to Radin's house. However, the surrounding Padeh Dayaks who were relatives and neighbours of Radin soon realized of the plot and they sent a messenger to warn Radin of the Maloh attack.

Radin instantly summoned all his warriors in the Paku, including Bakak (Asu Rangka) and the other sons of Demong and Rinda to help him to defend his house. Instead of waiting for the Maloh attack, Radin and the other warriors took the offensive method and met the Maloh at Wong Gerugu. Most of the Maloh were killed while some ran away into the jungle.

Among the heads of the slain, Radin and his people easily identified that of Nyerubong by the wound on his head as yet to heal which was left by the medical treatment he had undergone at Radin's house.

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<sup>18</sup> Bensama is the Maloh tribe silver craftwork.

<sup>19</sup> This is a kind of Iban traditional medical treatment known as betandok rintai.

Two days later some Dayaks from the Padeh went down the Padeh River to purchase *nipah* salt<sup>20</sup> from the Malays. Near Wong Garan, they noticed reflections in the water and looking up they saw three men scaling the branches of a fig tree over head. Recognizing the men as Maloh, they climbed the tree and killed these half-starved survivors of the battle with Radin.

In honour of his successful counter attack against the Maloh, Radin decided to hold a Gawai Burong of the variety known as Gawai Gerasi Papa, the highest and the most sacred feast of its kind. To this feast, Radin invited all the war leaders and other influential and high-ranking people. As they were feasting some of the older guest said to him that the image of Gerasi papa must be removed from the longhouse three days after the feast is over and that the house must be vacated on that day. This is in accordance to the tradition founded by Singalang Burong.

As soon as the three days ends, Radin removed the image and place it on the playground opposite the longhouse (*mandong rumah*). However, he did not vacate the house and not long after that the house suffered from a deadly smallpox epidemic. Radin did not know that disease was infectious so he did not order his people to flee. Instead he told them that no one should leave the house for fear of evil spirits.

One night as he was lying sleepless worried by the constant deaths in his longhouse, Radin heard the music of a lovely song, which seemed to be coming from a man paddling a boat in the Paku River below his house.

*...Jera asai sida di Nanga Matop Raya diempa*

*Bujang Sekilili Ambun...*

The song literally means that it serves them right, those living at the mouth of Matop Raya to be eaten by Bujang Sekilili Ambun.

Radin heard this song on three successive nights. On the third evening after the song had awakened him, he heard a voice calling and then a person walking to and from on the dark verandah of the longhouse. The next day as Radin considered these mysterious events, he made plans to hide himself and attack whatever was threatening his people.

That night Radin took his *nyabur*<sup>21</sup> and hid himself inside a roll of matting not far from the end of the longhouse. As he was hiding the ghost which had been the cause of the disturbances came walking along the verandah as like the previous nights. Prowling and hunting about the house, he gradually approached Radin uttering the word *legak legu* – special words used by hungry ghost to describe the sweet smell of a human flesh, which they crave.

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<sup>20</sup> You can still buy nipah salt in towns like Saratok and Kabong.

<sup>21</sup> Nyabur is the sword used by the Iban during war.

When he drew near Radin jumped from his hiding place and cut down the invisible spirit. He heard something fall to the floor but of course he could not see it.

The next morning when Radin investigated the spot he could find no trace of bloodshed or struggle. Puzzled, he went to the playground where the giant Gerasi Papa image had been placed following the feast. He found that the image had been slashed as if by a *nyabur* sword and thrown to the ground.

Radin could not understand why this image has tortured his people in such a cruel way. Hence, he summoned all the other chiefs of Paku to seek their advice. They told him that he had been cursed for placing such a powerful and sacred image facing the longhouse. They advised him to vacate the longhouse and live elsewhere.

Radin and his people agreed to build a temporary house known as *dampa* as they have to move without any delay. And since Radin had buried many of his people in the ground of the longhouse, it became a burial ground, which is still used to the present day.

Radin's descendants have not been rulers but they are honoured as members of his family and have often married into the families of chiefs.

During the time of Radin, the grandsons of Tindin were the leaders in Paku. Despite the fact they were the children of the marriage between Rinda and Demong<sup>22</sup> the peace which this marriage had achieved did not last long. The Ibans in the Paku multiplied rapidly while the Bukitans who suffered from constant Iban attacks gradually moved away to the Krian and Julau rivers.

Bakak the youngest son of Rinda and Demong married a woman of Batang Ai and went to live at her house. It was after this that Kelanang is was one of the leaders in Paku, and his followers started to clear the jungle in Middle Paku and Upper Samu for planting padi. It is also at this time that the Ibans began to suffer from attacks made by the closely related tribes of the Belions and the Serus. However these attacks were not yet serious. Even under the leadership of Tuah who succeeded his father Kelanang, the Ibans could still continue to work their newly cleared farmlands in the comparative place.

His son Seing who was followed in turn by his son Busu succeeded Tuah. While Busu was living at Nanga Beduru, a powerful chief named Sang came from the Layar to live on the left bank of the Paku River at Emperan Medang not far from Busu's house. The arrival of Sang marked the beginning of an important division of authority in the Paku region.

This division did not become apparent until another generation because at the time of Sang's arrival there was still plenty of land for all. Because the region is still thinly populated, there was very little need to recognize the division of land rights. However at a

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<sup>22</sup> Demong was the son of the Bukitan chief named Entinggi. Refer Part I of the transcript.

later period, the heirs and descendants of Sang came to hold authority and land rights in a recognized area consisting of the Anyut and the Lower Paku. This division persisted until the time of Linggir (Mali Lebu) who after the arrival of the English Rajah, ruled over the land in the Paku watershed.

Not long after his arrival, Sang held a great festival at his house at Emperan Medang near Nanga Beduru. Sang invited many brave men and famous leaders including Busu, Mawar Biak, Meling, Gerijih (Ai Marang) and his brother Bangkam. The entire guests enjoyed themselves thoroughly until the time came for the grand *berayah* dance. The upriver girls laughed at the dance of young Gerijih and his brother Bangkam and said that their dance was like that of the Malays.

Shamed by the taunts of the girls the two young brothers slipped away to bath in the river. When they have finished bathing, Gerijih discovered petrified bamboo shoot lying on his loincloth. On the following night he dreamed that the goddess Kumang appeared and told him that this stone which had been carefully saved was a charm that would make him a great war leader.

When Sang's feast was over Busu's only son Uyt (Bedilang Besi) did not return to his father's house. Instead he stayed behind and married Nangku, a daughter of Sang.

When Busu heard about this, he became angry and immediately set off for Sang's house in order to claim back his son. When he arrived, Busu told him that he had lost his dog and had come back to fetch it back. Sang pointed out that he had already agreed to let Uyt marry his daughter. However, Busu replied that Uyt is his only son and a very brave man and that he could not afford to lose him.

Sang agreed that although he had only one son, he had many followers who are capable of defending themselves against the Belions and Serus. While Sang's own case was just the opposite. He had many children but not enough followers. After a long conversation, Busu finally saw the logic of this argument. He finally agreed to the marriage of his son on condition that Sang would name Uyt to succeed him as chief rather than his own sons, Changgai and Lanchang. Sang promptly accepted as he greatly admired the bravery, intelligence and diplomatic skills of Uyt.

It was after the marriage of Uyt and Nangku that both Sang and Busu and their followers began to clear the jungle along the Paku and its tributaries. Busu and his people worked on the right bank while Sang and his followers worked on the left bank.

Just before Sang started to work, he directed his two sisters, Nasa and Inchoh and their husbands to clear trees along the Sakundong and on the Upper Serudit streams, while he and his followers worked along the left bank of the Paku and up both banks of the Anyut.

When Sang's workers had gone up the Anyut (as far as Jitu), they entered this stream and in the Upper Jitu they met Nasa and Inchoh who had crossed from Serudit. While he was felling trees in Ulu Jitu, Sang held a Gawai Diri feast near the Buot tributary. That stream was called Sungai Bediri. It is here that Sang made a hornbill statue during the feast.

After the feast, Sang returned to the main Anyut River and lived at Lubok Belabak where his wife Salaka died of old age. After the death of his wife, he moved again up the river to Nanga Pagalong where he held a Gawai Antu feast in honour of his deceased wife.

Before such a big feast, it was the custom of the ancient Dayaks to obtain the necessary supply of fish by using *tubai* fishing. Sang did his fishing in Lower Anyut. After the poisonous derris milk had been thrown into the river, a man named Apai Galong went to sleep on a dead tree trunk to wait for the stunned fish to float to the surface of the water. As he was lying there, a Seru suddenly shot him with a poison dart which struck him in the testicle and he died from this wound. Because of his death, the small stream where the incident occurred is still known as Sungai Pegalong.

After the death of this man, war with the Serus and Belions became much more serious. The lives of the Ibans in the Anyut and Paku were constantly threatened by wandering bands of enemy. At the height of this trouble, the Serus succeeded in killing a great chief, which cause them to become even more troublesome.

The victim was Blaki, the son-in-law and successor of Busu. Busu's only son, Uyut had moved away to marry the daughter of Sang which was mentioned earlier. Since Uyut moved away, Blaki inherited Busu's position as leader in the Upper Paku.

The Serus came by way of the Asam and down the tributary of the Rimbas towards Sungai Ulai, a tributary of the Bayor. From here they crossed over to the Paku drainage and went down that river till they came to Blaki's padi farm where he lived with his wife Bremas. Bremas was the daughter of Busu. The Serus killed both of them and took their heads.

On hearing of this tragedy, Blaki's brother named Jimbai went to catch up with the Serus. It was believed that Jimbai was a strong man, so strong that he could jump over the stream.

At Penkaru, Jimbai met the Serus who had stopped to collect fruits from the wild *engkeranji* trees. Two Serus who had been posted as lookouts and were guarding the heads of Blaki and Bremas were killed and the others fled into the jungle.

Jimbai and his companions buried the heads of Blaki and Bremas at the foot of a large *tapang* tree at Ulu Sungai Randau, on the sides of Bukit Tampak Panas. Bukit Tampak Panas lies at the watershed between the Rimbas and the Paku rivers. They declared this

*tapang* tree should forever remain the property of the descendants of Blaki and of the men who had recovered his head and that of his wife.

After the death of Blaki, enmity between the Ibans, the Serus and the Belions naturally became worse. By this time the Bukitans had been dominated by the Ibans and were now utilized by them in their struggle against the Serus. The Bukitans were not always willing helpers but they were extremely useful due to their skills in jungle warfare and knowledge of the country.

Although Sang and Uyut could order the Bukitans of Paku to help them, they felt that there were not enough. For this reason, Sang directed Uyut to request an Iban chief of Skrang named Apai Ranggau to lead the Paku people. Apai Ranggau agreed but demanded that in the event of death to his men, he must be compensated by the gift of two Paku Bukitans to be sent to him in Skrang.

Uyut agreed to the condition and after his meeting with Apai Ranggau he made plans to return to Paku with his new reinforcement of Skrang Bukitans. Unfortunately the Bukitans who were the subject of his transaction did not cooperate. They were afraid that Uyut might cheat and kill them. Hence, they told Uyut that they would come by themselves and meet him at Bukit Sapindah, opposite the mouth of the Penom River in Ulu Paku during the coming full moon. Uyut then returned alone to Paku. On the appointed day, Uyut took some of his followers to meet the Skrang Bukitans at Bukit Sapindah as had been arranged. After they arrived, Uyut ordered one of his men named Rasai to call out to the Bukitans in their own language. Rasai apparently did not speak the Bukitan language well. In any case the Bukitan understood him to say the following words.

*Wan jempelik, wau manomik*

*Makan putut, makan penyambut*

The words literally means:

*Come out, come quickly*

*So that you are killed by our spears*

*So that you are kill by our swords*

Naturally on hearing these words the Bukitan leader, Peluin directed his followers to hide themselves. So Uyut again called for them to come out and this time he used the Iban language. And this time the Bukitans emerged from the jungle. When they explained what Rasai had said, Uyut realized that his words had been unsuitable.

The Bukitans were still fearful of Iban treachery. They would not agree to accompany Uyut in his boats. Instead Peluin again insisted on travelling alone to Anyut where he arranged to meet Uyut at Tebiang Sangkoh, above the mouth of the Udau stream.



It was during this conversation that the Iban realized that the Bukitans knew the names of all the streams, hills ridges and other features of this country.

Not long after the arrival of these Bukitans in the Anyut, Sang died of old age at Rantau Pulor and was succeeded by Uyut who led his followers to clear the jungle along the Anyut River. When they reached the place where the Udau stream enters the Anyut, Uyut ordered Garan (who had been one of Sang's trusted warrior) to lead a party to clear the land along the Udau stream. Garan agreed to do this on condition that he is to be accompanied by another brave man. Uyut then ordered his brother-in-law, Changgai to join the party. Changgai remained at work with Garan in the Udau for three years before returning to rejoin Uyut at the Anyut stream.

Because of that, Changgai and his descendants have owned only three pieces of land at Udau below Wong Tabulan – those that Changgai cleared during his three years there.

Uyut have two brave warriors who always dared to farm far from other people. The two warriors are Nyanggun and his brother Ganing who are sons of Ingging.

Uyut moved his house two more times before he died, each time going further up the Anyut stream. His first stop was Nanga Birau and then to Nanga Linggit. It was at Nanga Linggit that Uyut eldest son, Linggir decided to hold a Gawai Diri feast.

According to the Sea Dayak custom, this feast, only an experienced war leader should hold the fifth of the nine stages of the Gawai Burong.

Linggir was undoubtedly a very brave man, but he was young and certainly far less experienced than Uyut who was his father. Linggir already made a statue of a hornbill in preparation for his feast when the older people of the house warned him that it would be presumptuous for him to hold a feast while Uyut still lived. They said that such an action might anger Singalang Burong.

Linggir did not want to ignore the curse of Singalang Burong so he agreed that the feast should be Uyut's celebration.

According to the Iban tradition, before the Gawai Diri may be held, the patron of the feast must lead his warriors for a war expedition. Hence, Uyut and his men set off to raid the Kantu Dayaks of Merakai in what is now the Indonesian Borneo, in order to get fresh heads. But before they came back all the things that they had gathered for the feast including *tuak* wine and many delicacies began to go bad. So the brother-in-law of Uyut named Malang (Pengarah) decided to go ahead with the feast without Uyut and his warriors.

When Uyut and his men returned a victorious expedition, they were naturally outraged by what Malang had done. Uyut and his followers made a decision to expel Pengarah from the Anyut. Malang then retreated down the Anyut to live in the Serudit stream.

After the expulsion of Malang, Uyut went on to clear more jungle in the Bujut stream. His final home was at Temawai Tinting where he died at an old age. After his death, his brother-in-law Changgai and Lanchang lived at Temawai Tingkah. From there they moved up the Anyut and lived at Temawai Pasir. It was at Temawai Pasir that they declared all the jungle in the Anyut watershed should be the heritage of their descendants.

After the death of Uyut, his son-in-law Renggi succeeded him as the leader partly due to the fact that none of Uyut's own son was capable.

Renggi was the grandson of the chief named Jantin (Moa Ari) of Padeh. His marriage to Pala who was the eldest daughter of Uyut is always being remembered due to the dowry that Uyut demanded.

Uyut demanded one valuable jar covered with a *gong* as the dowry from Renggi. Such a "bride price" is now referred to as the *simbak kelambu* and *muka pintu* – meaning that it serves to open the mosquito curtain and the door of his wife's room.

While the descendants of Sang and Uyut continued to rule the Anyut, the Paku people were left without a leader when the Serus murdered Blaki. His sons, Bayang and Ugap and a daughter named Lada were still very young.

When Lada reached the age of thirteen, a war leader named Awan came from the Padeh to Nanga Meluang in the Samu to seek her hand in marriage. Awan who was about forty years old said that he was concerned about the safety of the leaderless Paku people who were surrounded by the Serus and other enemies. He modestly offered to take the responsibilities of leading them if they would consent to his marriage to Lada.

Uyut, Lada and other relatives agreed to Awan's proposal. So he married the daughter of Blaki and became the Ulu Paku Ibans at Nanga Meluang. They continued to clear the jungle in the midst of the enemy in that area.

By the time of Awan, the division of the Paku between the heirs of Sang and those of Busu had become quite clear. The authority of Sang, who was still alive when Awan arrived extended over the Anyut and Lower Paku River, and it was this political heritage which he passed to his descendants like Uyut, Renggi and so on.

The Upper Paku remained under a separate authority of Awan who was the political heir of Busu and Blaki. As noted earlier, this division lasted until the days of Linggir (Mali Lebu) who ruled the entire Paku.

After several years of marriage, Awan and Lada still had no children. One night Awan had a dream where a spirit told him to look for a female child named Sawai whom he should adopt. Awan was troubled since he did not know any child by that name within the Paku region. After some weeks, he decided to visit the Rimbas to see if such a child could be found there. While he was walking along the verandah of a longhouse at Rapong, where he was spending a night, Awan heard a woman calling to her child.

*“Don’t weep Sawai or the stranger will catch you.”*

Awan immediately realized that his search was over and that his visit to the Rimbas was going to be successful. The next morning Awan told the child’s mother that he would like to adopt Sawai. The parent of the child readily agreed for they knew of Awan reputation as a brave and successful war leader. Awan then took his new daughter back to Paku. On his arrival at the landing place of his house, while he was bathing Sawai, Awan heard a *bejampong* bird omen on his right hand<sup>23</sup> side. Upon hearing the omen, he knew that her descendants would be great and wealthy people.

Some years after he had adopted Sawai, Awan’s wife gave birth to a daughter named Jering. After this Awan moved from Nanga Meluang to live at Sungai Lelabi. Then he moved again successfully to Temawai Engkabang and Nanga Jukun, which were only his temporary houses. He moved again to Temawai Nunggi, Lubok Lauk and finally to Nanga Praak. At Nanga Praak, Awan divided up all the lands along the Buong and Buong Rambang among his followers as well as the land in the Praak and Banyang streams. These three streams are all the tributaries of Upper Paku. After he had completed his division, Awan died of old age. His son-in-law named Kaya who was the son of Kanang (Libau Dara) and the husband of Sawai succeeded him.

Kaya directed his warrior relative Bayang, the brother of Lada to live in a different longhouse from him in order to lessen the chance of a devastating surprise attack by the enemies. He named his brother Masing and his cousin Angga to settle all domestic disputes among the people and to direct farming activities. Kaya led his followers to live in a series of temporary settlements at Nanga Sungai Raya, Sungai Kasai and Sungai Burak in that order as they felled trees along the Upper Paku.

While they were at Upper Paku, they heard that their relatives from Ulu Anyut under the leadership of Renggi were about to cross over to Penom River in Ulu Paku in order to clear that area ahead of them. On receiving this news, Kaya quickly led his people from Sungai Burak up to Ulu Paku through a portion of the river, which had not been cleared yet in order to participate with the Anyut people under Renggi.

The two groups worked together while Kaya and his followers lived at Nanga Jikang. After all the land in Upper Paku, Penom and Paun had been fairly divided between the two parties without any quarrel, Kaya and his people returned down river to live at Nanga Kedup.

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<sup>23</sup> The Iban are very significant of the direction from where the *bejampong* bird omen is heard. It defines a different meaning to the person who hears it.

At Nanga Kedup they began to clear the untouched land along the Paku which they have leapfrogged in order to meet Renggi and his Anyut people.

Meanwhile, Renggi and his followers also returned to their homes in the Lower Paku. After his death, his sons Klanang and Sang and his grandson Uyut and Adir often led their people back to farm the lands in Ulu Paku, which they had cleared in cooperation with Kaya.

At one occasion, when they returned home, they were dismayed to discover that Ibans from the Bangkit tributary of Paku, under the leadership of Kanda and Irak had taken advantage of their absence to occupy lands of Ulu Katunsong, a branch of the Pelawa stream.

When land disputes arise among the ancient Ibans, it was the custom to settle them by having a fight in which the two sides were to use wooden clubs only. It was nevertheless often lead to a serious fighting. If a man were killed in one of those fights, the leader of the dead man's party had to pay compensation to the family of the deceased. This was one reason why a successful leader had to be a wealthy man. If it appeared that he might not be able to pay such compensation, people would be reluctant to follow him.

In the case of Uyut and Adir against the Bangkit people, the dispute was settled without resorting to clubs. Uyut and Adir sent a minor leader named Kerbau who persuaded the Bangkit intruders to live in peace. For his success in making this settlement, the community gave Kerbau one dragon jar (*menaga*).

During this period, Kaya's chief warrior named Bayang continued to live below Nanga Kedup while another man named Punoh lived at Tebing Bindang. These two men, Bayang and Punoh, became involved in a quarrel which led to what may have been one of the earliest Iban migrations to the Rejang River watershed – especially to the Kanowit tributary of the Rejang. The story of their quarrel also illustrates the relationship between the remaining Bukitans and Ibans at this time.

## THE MIGRATION TO ENTABAI, KANOWIT

The dispute began when one of Punoh's men named Gra had an affair with a girl named Garuda of Bayang's longhouse. Gra had married Garuda against the wishes of Punoh and went to live in his bride's house.

Punoh was incensed by Gra's action. He and his followers came to Bayang's house and seized Gra and carried him off trussed to a pole. Bayang went to Kaya and complained of Punoh's behaviour pointing out that it was hardly courteous. If he respects any house said Bayang; Punoh should not carry Gra that way being tied up like a pig. Kaya agreed and judged that Punoh should pay a fine of one *alas* jar. Bayang then sent a messenger to Punoh demanding payment of the fine, which of course would have gone to Bayang the injured party.

But when the messenger reached Punoh, he received only a stout refusal.

"Not a cock's feather would I give him," said Punoh.

When Kaya and Bayang heard of his refusal they jointly determined to raid Punoh's house. On hearing of this drastic decision, a follower of Bayang named Kandau who had married one of Punoh's relatives tried to act as peacemaker. He said he would see Punoh and try to persuade him to pay the fine.

But when Kandau ascended the ladder of Punoh's house on his mission of mediation, a man struck him on the head with a piece of *manding* wood killing him instantly. His friends came to reclaim the body. Kaya and Bayang now swore that they would attack Punoh's house as soon as Kandau was buried.

However even before the burial took place, Punoh led his people away from Paku with the help of some local Bukitans. These Bukitans of the Paku at that time were quite subservient to numerous Ibans. For example, Kaya was in a habit to give a piece of iron to the Bukitans and demanded a certain amount of padi in return. If the luckless Bukitan could not pay the price, their children became the slaves of Kaya. They will remain as valuable guides and as scouts in warfare.

Meanwhile, when the fugitive Punoh reached Nanga Panyoh on the Penom stream, he and his men treacherously killed all their Bukitan guides. The reason was probably to prevent them from carrying word of their whereabouts back to Kaya, Bayang and their warriors.

After that, Punoh and his followers continued with their journey towards the Layar on their way to Entabai in Kanowit. Punoh may in fact have been the first Iban pioneer in this region however nothing much is known of his career or of his descendants, if he had any.

When Kaya and Bayang came to raid Punoh's house they found it was deserted. They ruled that all the fruit trees which had belonged to Punoh and his people should be the common property of all the Paku people from that day onwards.

After Punoh had murdered his Bukitan guides, the remaining Bukitans became frightened of the Ibans and they all moved away to Krian and Julau rivers.

Kaya died of old age at Nanga Kedup. He was succeeded as chief by his son, Jantan whose brother-in-law Jiram (Rentap) acted as war leader. Meanwhile, in the Anyut and Lower Paku, Renggi's eldest son Klanang inherited the leadership of the people.

By this time nearly all the Paku and Anyut lands had been cleared for cultivation. The leaders and their various followers returned down river and began to separate into various settlements. Jantan and his people lived at Samu and ruled all the lands from Nanga Samu and up the Paku River to the top of the watershed. It was during the time of Jantan and Klanang probably not long after the beginning of the nineteenth century, that the first great Iban raids along the coast took place.

## THE ENTANAK AND LOWER LAYAR

It will be remembered that Mawar Tuai (the elder Mawar based on the Iban *tusut*) was the first pioneer to live in the Entanak and that he had settled not far from Bangat.

After Mawar Tuai's death his son Bangga who led his people to clear the land in Ulu Entanak succeeded him. Bangga's son named Gendup in turn succeeded him. Gendup was a brave and famous war leader who lived in several places not far from the modern town of Betong on the Lower Layar as well as the Entanak stream.

He led his warriors to fight against the Bukitans and also against the Bugau and Kantu Dayaks in the Merakai and Ketungau stream in what is now the Indonesian Borneo.

Gendup successor as chief and war leader was Mawar Biak (younger Mawar based on the Iban *tusut*) who also obtained many heads from the Kantu and Bugau enemies. His son Galau was one of his best and bravest warriors.

While Mawar Biak was living at Temawai Dudok, opposite the present village of Tansang, he fought one of the last battles between the Bukitans and Ibans in the area of what is today the Second Division. These Bukitans were living at Bukit Bangat located between the headwaters of the Entanak and the Bangat tributary of the Tisak in the Skrang drainage. There were two main causes for this clash; the Bukitans still occupied a large area of valuable land and the young Iban warriors were anxious to prove themselves in battle. After he had defeated these Bukitans at Bukit Bangat, Mawar Biak moved to Temawai Ijok Pumpang where he held the feast called *ijok pumpang* (which literally means beheaded palm tree) in order to thank Singalang Burong for his victory. This feast is the fifth of the nine stages of Gawai Burong.

Not long after this, Mawar sent one of his slaves named Sembar to visit some friends and relatives in the Lemanak. Sembar was instructed to urge these people to join Mawar in a raid on the Kantu Dayaks of the Kapuas River drainage. But instead of conveying this message, Sembar merely remained in the longhouse of Mawar's relatives. He even married a girl there.

Mawar became worried after several months had passed without any sign of his slave's return. He directed his son Galau to go and look for Sembar at once. After a long trip, Galau arrived in the Lemanak and located Sembar who suggested that Galau might also be more interested in marriage than warfare.

"If you want to marry a pretty girl who is also the daughter of a war leader of this place, I am sure that I can recommend you to her and to her family," he told his master's son.

Galau thought that this was a good idea provided that the girl was willing. So Sembar said that he would go to Seremat which was about one day's journey distant to meet a Batang Ai war leader named Bau. Bau had a fair-skinned daughter named Chandu.

“I must get that girl for you as she also belongs to a mighty family like ours,” said Sembar.

So Sembar went overland from Lemanak to Seremat where Bau politely received him. When Sembar told Bau he had come to try to arrange a marriage between Galau of Entanak and Chandu, Bau was very pleased. He had heard much about Mawar Biak’s family and his authority. He said that he would agree to the marriage if Mawar Biak and Galau would pay a magnificent *drian* (dowry) which was as follows:

1. One carrying basket (*lanji*) of fresh enemy heads,
2. A brass cannon which is big enough to serve as a bridge across the Lemanak and Skrang rivers on Chandu’s wedding trip to the Layar,
3. A hundred heads of chickens,
4. A sow, and
5. A gong called *sanda kaki* upon which Chandu might step.

These items were collectively known as *drian tanam* (fixed dowry). It was the first time that such a bride price had been demanded.

Mawar Biak was happy to accept this agreement. He had been looking for a wife for Galau but had not been able to find any woman with enough skill in weaving mats and baskets or with sufficient high character to be the wife of a noble hereditary chief.

He immediately set off on a successful expedition to the Bugau country to procure the necessary heads.

Meanwhile, Mawar’s younger brother named Ranti who had remained at home happened to kill a python snake while feeding his pigs just as the absent war party was going into battle. It happened that the python was Mawar’s guardian spirit ( *tua*). Thus according to stories told, Mawar was killed at the same instant Ranti killed the python.

Nevertheless, Mawar’s warriors won a victory and returned home in triumph led by Mawar’s younger brothers, Meling and Eddie.

After the war party had returned with many heads, the feast of welcome for new heads called *enchaboh arong* was held. During this feast, Mawar’s younger brother named Ranti (who had killed the python) demanded to be allowed to join the brave warriors who were going to dance around the shelf where the heads were kept, even though he has never in his life killed an enemy.

Naturally the warriors refused to allow this. Ranti spitefully smashed a valuable old jar in protest. Due to that, Meling and Eddie expelled him from Paku for his foolishness. Ranti ran away to the Rimbas and lived at Lakis, where he and his children and their descendants have been *manang* (traditional doctor) down to the present day.



After Ranti's expulsion, Meling and Eddie separated but continued to live not far from each other in the Lower Paku. All the fruit trees that they have planted are still seen in that area today.

## CHAGIK'S DISASTROUS COCKFIGHTING

It was in the days of Mawar that a man named Chagik, who lived at Saka in Upper Entanak, held a huge cockfighting session, which resulted in disaster. His love for cockfighting was far from usual; indeed cockfighting has always been a favourite Dayak sport. But on that occasion, Chagik was still not satisfied after a full day of cockfighting in the ordinary manner between the pair of birds.

Chagik and his people still have plenty of birds, so they built a huge ring with strong fence. They then released all the birds armed with sharp spurs into the ring. The birds fought together among themselves in a kind of free-for-all until nearly all of them were killed or seriously injured.

That night many Saka's people heard a voice calling.

*"What a pity for the Saka people who will be killed tomorrow night by the tiger who baths in the dew,"* the voice said.

The following evening a *geruda* (huge eagle) swooped low over the roof of the longhouse. Shortly after this all the inhabitants of Saka's longhouse fell sick and died. The house was vacated and the site became a graveyard, which is still used until today.

## THE STORY OF CHERENGGGA

Some decade after the Saka tragedy, a woman named Cherengga, who lived in the Entanak, and her friends planted some cotton for making clothes and blankets. One afternoon as the women were working and singing the love song called *memandai* in their garden, they heard the sound of a tree trunk breaking. Startled the women called out to know who had made this loud noise. The voices of two men replied them saying that they were Simpurai and Pungga (Puntang Medang) of Panggau Libau (the world of extraordinary Iban heroes). They said that they were over joy and filled to hear the girls singing their love songs.

Finally, after some conversation the two heroes told the girls to go home as night was drawing near. They agreed but before they left Cherengga asked for a charm, which would prevent any grass from growing in her garden. This request made Simpurai very angry.

“Even your vulva is full of hair. Why shouldn’t grass grow on the ground?” he said.

Then he kicked Cherengga on her vulva, which caused her to become sick, and eventually died. She was buried at that place which became a cemetery known as Pendam Sungei to this day.

## RAMBOK AND HIS IBOL SPEAR

During the same period a man named Rambok was living with his wife Beda at Ibol in the Bangat. Rambok was a very famous warrior who had originally lived in the Skrang. It was mentioned that Simpurai of Panggau Libau had given him a strong spear, the handle of which was made of the Ibol palm. He kept this very valuable weapon on a shelf above his seat at the outer verandah of the longhouse. One morning Rambok and his friend decided to go boar hunting and although Rambok decided not to take this weapon with him, he warned all his people not to touch it.

After the hunters had left, Beda was drying padi on the drying platform of her own family. Soon after the chickens started to eat her padi grain. Without thinking much, she reached for the sacred spear in order to frighten the chickens. The weapon felled down from the shelf and pierced the penis of a slave killing him instantly.

It fell again from his body and landed on the ground below the house. Here the handle of the spear took root and eventually a whole grove of *ibol* palm grew at the place. Many years later the people of the house suffered from an epidemic where hundreds of them died and the house was deserted. It became the burial place still known as Pendam Ibol. In the past many warriors collected *ibol* palms from this place to make handles for their spears and knives.

After wars between the Bukitans and Ibans in the eastern areas of Saribas had stopped almost entirely (and the Bukitans had been reduced to the status of near-slave) a man named Kutok migrated into the Padeh from Skrang. His son Ligap led some of his father's followers to fell all the jungle in the Upper Baan stream below the Entanak region on the left bank of the Layar. These people and their offspring have continued to live in the Baan right down to the present day.

After the death of Galau, the son of Mawar Biak, leadership in the Entanak was passed to Galau's son-in-law named Bunyau who was only an ordinary warrior. However his son named Unggang (Lebur Menua) was a very famous war leader and is well remembered for his role in the beginning of Iban piracy.

## THE PADEH AND UPPER LAYAR

Just as leaders of Entanak (including Mawar Tuai and his political heirs) always governed the Lower Layar, the Upper Layar has always been ruled by the chiefs of Padeh.

In the Padeh, after the death of Dayang Ridu and her husband Kulong (Alas), their son Jawi became leader of the area. His son-in-law named Empaga succeeded him. When Empaga died in the battle, his wife Empayong mourned and wept for him over seven successive nights on the roof of their longhouse. As she wept, she covered herself with a woven blanket and sat upon seven wooden mortars one on top of the other. In her dirge she called upon a cobra to bite the man who had killed her husband.

Suddenly on the seventh night, all the wooden mortars flew skywards. Some days later an eagle swooped low over the longhouse and kicked the end of its ridgepole. As a result the inhabitants felled sick and died. The longhouse became a cemetery known as Pendam Terusu located near Buloh Antu in the Padeh.

After the death of Empaga, his sons Nyangkom and Bunyin separated with both men leading a group of followers to clear the jungle of Padeh for cultivation. After the death of Nyangkom, his son Benang became Chief of the Padeh. He was a great warrior who defended his territory against attack from the Bukitans and Punans who often tried to kill workers in the lonely padi fields.

His famous son named Janting (Moa Ari) who was one of the mightiest war leaders of his day succeeded Benang. In addition to defending Padeh from the angered Bukitans and Punans, Janting frequently led expeditions against the enemy in Indonesian Borneo as well as against the Bukitans and Serus of the Paku, Rimbas and Krian. These tribes used to attack the early Iban settlers as mentioned earlier in this Part.

When Janting was old he proposed that one of his grandson named Renggi should marry Pala, the daughter of Uyut (Bedilang Besi) of Paku. With the marriage, Renggi became the leader in the Anyut and Lower Paku after the death of his father-in-law, Uyut.

After the death of Janting (Moa Ari), leadership in the Padeh was passed to Tom (pronounced as Tum) who was the father of Orang Kaya Beti and the grandfather of Orang Kaya Pemancha Dana (Bayang). Tom was closely related to his predecessor Janting but apparently none of the later sons was sufficiently capable to assume the leadership.

It was during the days of Orang Kaya Beti that the Padeh people joined with Luta and his brothers in Entanak to fight against the Bajau and Illanun pirates whom constantly tried to enter the mouth of the Saribas after the death of Unggang (Lebur Menua).

## THE RIMBAS

After the strange death of Padang, his descendants continued to rule in the Rimbas. For three generations they continued to move up the Rimbas River clearing new jungles. Then they migrated into the Melupa, a tributary of the Krian.

Padang's son named Gunggu led his people to live at Nanga Jerai not far from the present town of Debak. Then Gunggu's son named Garai moved up the Rimbas to Nanga Tawai where he died. After the death of Garai, his son named Jana led his followers further up river and lived successively at Temawai Sandong inside the Babu tributary, then on the bank of the Metong tributary and finally at Nanga Gayau which is further up the Metong. It was at Nanga Gayau that Jana died of old age.

Jana was succeeded jointly by his two grandsons named Munan and Utong – although in fact Munan seems to be the real leader while his brother acted as the leading warrior. Munan lived at five different locations within the Rimbas before finally leading his people eastward into the Melupa tributary.

Starting from Nanga Gayau (where his father, Jana died), Munan moved first to Seragau, which is further up the Rimbas. Then he moved to Nanga Luop and then to Nanga Tuang below Nanga Bayur. After farming in these areas, he returned back to the Babu where his late father had lived. At Babu, Munan and his followers cleared the jungles towards the headwaters of the Babu stream.

After living in Babu, he finally led his people into the Melupa. Long before the arrival of Ibans, the Melupa had been populated by other tribes including the Serus who inhabited the Melupa, Awik, Sebetan and Seblak rivers, and the Bukitans who lived in the Middle and Upper Krian.

The Bukitans includes some that had been driven away from the Paku by earlier Iban migrations. They were probably not a very great hindrance to the Ibans. However, the Serus were of a different story. They were thickly clustered around Bukit Tabujang in Ulu Awik under their chief named Tangai. There was another bigger Seru settlement under Seguat at Bukit Tengalat not far below the mouth of the Melupa on the left bank of the Krian. It was not until after the death of Orang Kaya Temenggong Tandok who was the grandson of Munan, that the Ibans were able to overcome the Serus opposition. This happened after the arrival of the Brooke Rajahs and the story of this final and climatic conflict between the Serus and the Ibans will be accounted for in latter parts.

During the days when the sons of Padang were moving gradually up the Rimbas, migrants from the Paku settled the extreme upper portion of the river. Another group of Ibans from Skrang moved into one of its most important tributaries, the Bayur.

At the time when Busu was living at Nanga Beduru in the Paku, his brother Sangkan lived in the Upper Samu, near the present Paku-Rimbas border. After the death of Sangkan, his son Teruyu and his followers migrated to the upper areas of the Rimbas, felling all the trees in that region. During this period the lower part of the Rimbas was still

governed by Padang's descendants, but after Munan and his people migrated to the Krian, Teruyu's family became the leaders of the entire Rimbas River and remained so down to the present day.

The first of this generation to succeed Teruyu was his son-in-law named Gadoh, and who was also the grandson of Eddie (the brother of Mawar Biak).

Meanwhile, during the days when Teruyu was governing the Upper Rimbas, two powerful men named Radin and Akin came from the Bangat tributary of the Skrang and settled in the Teru, which is a tributary of the Rimbas. They proceeded to clear all the lands from Ulu Teru down to where the Metong enters that stream, including lands along Sungai Janggut. They also farmed on the land up to Bukit Maa and to Bukit Kuta situated between Rimbas and the Paku rivers.

From the Middle and Upper Teru, they went northward into the Bayur watershed descending the Ulu stream into Bayur itself. Although Radin and Akin cleared all the land along the Bayur, they never dared to do any work in the main Rimbas River, as they could not control Teruyu and his men, who were already occupying the entire Rimbas following the departure of Munan.

It was due to this division of land that the Bayur has never belonged to the people of Rimbas. The Bayur people, who are sometimes said to be more diligent than those of Rimbas itself, still have their own distinct customs and traditions.

After Radin and Akin had cultivated the land in the Bayur another powerful leader named Betuah came to the Rimbas district from Bangat. He came to Rimbas after quarrelling with a friend over a sago plantation. He lived in the lower part of the Ulu and owned that land.

Neither Betuah nor Radin and Akin ever claimed any kind of land in Sungai Randau, a tributary of the Ulu. This area was always claimed by the Paku Dayaks for it was at the headwaters of this stream that the heads of Blaki and Beremas, who were killed by the Serus, had been buried. Much later however, the Paku people lost their rights in this region under a famous principle laid down by Rajah Charles Brooke, according to which no person could maintain a claim to land in any river drainage other than the one in which he lived.

## **THE SKRANG AND THE BATANG AI**

For the Paku and Rimbas areas and the Saribas in general, there is a relatively complete record of the most important leaders, the land they cleared and the major enemies they fought. This record extend from the beginning with the initial pioneer Iban migrants and going right down to the period when James Brooke arrived in Sarawak.

Unfortunately there is a comparative scarcity of historical materials including genealogies for many areas where they must have been many Sea Dayaks living. This is particularly true of the Batang Ai and of Skrang, where record tends to become very unclear after the period of initial migration. However, in the Saribas, it is possible to identify all of the leading chiefs, who are mentioned in the early European literature. It is also possible to locate them in Iban genealogies. The same is not true of many famous Skrang leaders including Gasing, Jelani (Bulan), Libau (Rentap) and Kedu (Lang Endang) all of whom were important figures in the Skrang during the nineteenth century.

In the Batang Ai, there is even less for this area remained relatively unknown to Europeans until well after the beginning of the Brooke rule.

Among the first Ibans who lived in the Skrang were Meriba and Busok who between them cleared all the trees in the Upper, Middle and Lower Pelasok. Chupong who frequently led Skrang Dayaks to battle with their traditional enemies – the Bungkap Dayaks of the Batang Ai, succeeded them. The Bungkap people were mainly bead traders.

The Skrang Dayaks managed to defeat the Bungkap enemies. At a later stage, the Bungkap took revenge and successfully attacked and defeated the Skrang Dayaks. As a result, the Bungkap demanded from all the Skrang chiefs, one *irun* jar each as a token of their defeat.

A few years later the Bungkap traders planned another war against Chupong but they unwisely revealed their plan to Beriak, whose house was in the Lower Skrang. Beriak immediately warned Chupong who refused to believe that anyone would dare to attack his well-fortified longhouse. When the Bungkap people did attack, he was caught completely unprepared. He and his people fled to Bangat. One of Chupong's men had managed to bring with him his dragon jar (*menaga*) but as he was crossing a bridge, it collapsed under him and the jar was broken. The place where this accident happened is still called Titi Menaga, which means the Dragon Jar Bridge.

At Bangat, Chupong assembled his warriors and planned to meet the Bungkap Dayaks at the mouth of the Enteban River. But upon reaching the Enteban, Chupong found that the enemy had already destroyed his house there, which he had planned to defend. He immediately led his people in an attack on the Bungkap and managed to defeat them after a tough fought battle. Two Bungkap named Unju and Kuut were captured and in his anger, Chupong commanded that they be headed, first Unju and then Kuut. The place where they were slain is still known as Lubang Unju and Lempa Kuut meaning Unju's grave of trees and Kuut's pool.

Another chief named Nunong came to Skrang and lived at Tanjong Lipat. Nunong was the father of Chaong and the grandfather of Tindin (the famous pioneer of Paku). After Tindin had migrated from Skrang to the Paku, a famous chief named Maling (Bunga Menyala) lived in the Skrang with his three daughters. The youngest of them was Riti who was famous for her beauty. She became the seventh wife of the mighty widower Beti (Brauh Ngumbang). Beti's sixth wife was Beredai of Lemanak who had recently died.



In accordance with the Dayak customs, no widow or widower should marry for at least six months following the death of his or her spouse. But Beti had heard of the famous beauty of Riti and he proceeded to court her anyway.

On the night of his arrival at Malang's house, Beti secretly met with Riti and proposed to marriage to which she readily agreed. Malang was happy to approved of the match between his daughter and the most renowned of Iban warriors.

A short time after his marriage, Riti and Beti went to Lemanak to visit his children by his late wife (Bredai). On their way, he met a young Sebuyau warrior named Chagik who was about to lead a war party to attack Malang's house. Malang had once refused to permit Chagik to marry Riti and the young man was bent on revenge. On learning of his mission, Beti told Chagik he would join the party and Chagik enjoyed obtaining the assistance of such a famous fighter and agreed to wait while Beti prepared himself for battle. Beti then hastened overland to tell his father-in-law of Chagik's pending attack but Malang did not believe him. He joked and accused Beti of being the greatest liar that ever lived. Shamed by Malang's words, Beti took Riti to stay in a hut in their padi field. Two days later as Beti and his wife were taking their midday meal; a messenger came to tell him that a force had arrived to attack his father-in-law's house. Beti ignored the message and continued to eat his lunch.

Another messenger came telling him that his father-in-law and his men were fighting hard to defense their house. By now, Riti was most anxious and urged her husband to go as soon as possible to help her father. However, Beti still joked and said to the messenger that he is one of the greatest liars and they are also liars.

"You must go now or all my family will die," urged Riti.

After further deliberate delays and having finished his meal, Beti finally took his war knife and sharpen it. After dressing up he went in haste to the house of his father-in-law. On the way he cut the supports underneath every bridge and then beneath every bridge he set various *tukak* (bamboo spikes).

As he approached the longhouse of Malang and amid the war cries of both attackers and defenders, Beti took the root of the *kelindang* fern. While lifting it up he began to shout and pretended that he had killed a man and that the head of the slain was in his hand. The enemy fled in fear and Beti began to chase them. Whenever they attempted to cross a bridge it collapsed and they were either killed or seriously injured by the spikes set beneath. Beti killed them all but instead of beheading them; he slashed the forehead of each of his victims. When the battle was over, he commanded his warriors to collect all the enemy heads. When they were brought to him he counted all those which he had marked and found that he had killed thirty of the enemy where as the remaining few were killed by his comrades. Beti then commanded that those later heads should all be kept as trophies while the heads of his own victims should be buried at a certain place in the Enteban, which is now known as Tanjung Lanting Berauh. This place remains the property of his descendants and is situated not far from the present landing place of the Enteban longhouse.

Little is known about the history of Skrang after the time of Beti down to the time of the Saribas leader named Orang Kaya Pemancha Dana (Bayang) who was lived during the days of James Brooke. By then the Skrang people are close allies of the Saribas in their battle with the Rajah.

Likewise, little is said concerning the Batang Ai until the days of Temenggong Simpi Pala and Unggang (Gerasi) not long before the arrival of the first white Rajah. The Dayaks were then became involved in intertribal warfare.

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## **PART IV - TURMOIL ALONG THE COAST**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Ibans have recorded all the interesting changes in the political behavioral pattern of the Iban migration which dated back to the seven to nine generations from the present time or two to four generations before the arrival of James Brooke in Sarawak.

Prior to this period the heroes who were mentioned in the Iban genealogies, *pengap* and other sources are mainly concerned with their migration patterns and the opening of new farm lands for farming in the various rivers of the Second Division.

When the Ibans came into contact with the smaller and weaker aboriginal inhabitants such as the Bukitans and the Serus, they were progressively displaced, absorbed into the community or both. The story of the settlement of the Paku in Part II is a typical of the kind of material found in the oral Iban literature. It is one of the progressive land settlements, which began at large in the lower reaches of rivers (*menua ili*), and gradually working up towards the headwaters (*menua ulu*). The oral literature emphasizes mostly on the local affairs or contacts between close neighbours.

At about seven to nine generation's back, the genealogies begin to mention the kind of Iban leaders, which are familiar to readers of some early European literature on Sarawak. The emphases switches from pioneer agricultural activities to a pattern of raiding and retaliatory inter-Iban warfare which were carried on along the coastlines of what are now the Second and Third Divisions and beyond.

There are some mentions in the *tusut* of Iban leaders who defied the tax collectors for the Sultan of Brunei. Most of these tax collectors were local Malays who were the defector independent rulers of river mouth settlements along the coast.

A complex pattern of involvement between the Ibans, the Malays and the distant but still prestigious sultanate now becomes apparent. The *tusut* frequently record the names of Iban leaders who were known by their Malay titles such as Temenggong and Orang Kaya.

The new pattern was probably the result of the growing Iban population and the increasing contacts between the coastal societies whom most but not all are Moslem.

In the following pages, I have divided the activities into three sections.

1. The tradition involving friction with the Brunei taxes collectors.
2. The beginning of inter-Iban warfare.
3. The commencement of large-scale expeditions along the coast, a phenomenon which the Brookes called piracy.

Meanwhile, the older behavior of Iban migration did not fade out. The Iban continued to migrate in search of new lands and the process of conflict and absorption already exemplified by the case of the Bukitans continued. Relationship between the Ibans and the Serus in the area of modern Kalaka (Krian) District revealed some interesting variations, which is more significant in the total picture of the Iban history. This period also feature the beginning of the Iban migration into the Rejang watershed.

Part III deals largely with events which preceded the Brooke rule although the story of the migrations into the Krian and into the Rejang tributaries is carried forward to a later date. I have not attempted to discuss the Rajah's conflicts with the Ibans pirates of the Second Division in the 1840's nor have I included any material on the Brooke campaigns against Libau (Rentap) who was the famous Iban rebel leader on Bukit Sadok. These matters have been discussed at length and published by various English authors. However, there will be some inclusion on stories on the Iban side, which has not been fully told yet by the English authors. This stories which has up to now have never been written or published anywhere.

## THE SARIBAS REBELLION AGAINST BRUNEI AND THE BEGINNING OF IBAN PIRACY

When the Orang Kaya Beti was still the chief at Padeh, Kelanang and Jantau were leaders in the Paku. Two brothers, Orang Kaya Antau and Orang Kaya Gun ruled in the Rimbas.

The Malay chiefs in the lower Saribas were appointed by the Sultan of Brunei to collect a yearly door tax to be paid in rice from the Dayaks.

These Malay chiefs traced their descent back to Abang Gudam who had migrated to the area from Minangkabau some generations after the arrival of the first Iban in the Saribas.

The tax was known as *pupu taun*, which was collected by the Malay chiefs from both the Malays and Iban Dayaks. The former had little choice but to obey their leaders unlike the Ibans. For their part, the Malay abangs frequently cheated the Brunei princes by whose authority they claimed to be collecting the taxes. They sent to Brunei on so much of the taxes as it pleased them to part with.

The sultanate possessed no armed force capable of enforcing obedience and relied entirely on prestige.

Datu Patinggi Kedit and Datu Patinggi Udin were among the Saribas Malays who were appointed to collect this padi tax from the Ibans. They made use of a special rattan basket known as *mungut*, which could hold one *pasu*<sup>24</sup> of padi. The Ibans are to pay one *pasu* annually to the sultanate. However, the baskets were cleverly constructed in such a way it will hold double the amount. Angered by this attempt to cheat them, the Dayak leaders frequently slashed the basket with their swords. Among those remembered to have done this were Luta of Entanak and Ugat of Paku. The Saribas Malays naturally reported this misconduct to the Brunei authorities, while the Dayaks felt justified in plundering many Malay settlements at various places along the coast.

At this time, the Malays who claimed to be of Arab descendants of the Prophet and were using the title of Sharif and Tunku were active in several rivers in the modern Second Division area especially in Sadong, Sebuyau and Lingga. The names of many of these men are mentioned in accounts of the life of James Brooke who in his years in Sarawak launched constant warfare against them. They include men like Indra Lela, Sharif Sahap, Mullah, Japar and many others.

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<sup>24</sup> Pasu is the traditional unit of measurement used in Sarawak.

It should be noted that none of these Arabs were ever important in the affairs of the Saribas. The Saribas Malays who had lived there for many generations continued to rule the Malay settlements in the lower river. The Ibans murdered at least one Arab by the name of Sharif Ahmid in the Saribas. He was buried at the junction of the Padeh and Layar rivers.

About forty years ago an Indian trader who came from the nearby town of Betong repaired his tomb. It was said that the Indian trader went to the tomb and prayed and promised to repair his tomb if the prayer brought him luck. He subsequently won lottery and kept his promise.

## CONTACTS WITH THE SEA RAIDERS

During this period or perhaps slightly earlier, the Ibans made their first contact with the Bajau and Illanun sea raiders. They operated from their bases in the southern part of Philippines. The Illanuns were in the habit of plundering far and wide throughout the archipelago. One of the famous Iban who fought these pirates was Unggang (*Lebur Menua*). He was the father of Luta who also defied the Brunei tax collectors.

Unggang came from the Entanak, which is a small stream frequently, mentioned earlier in Part I and II. When he was a young warrior, he dreamed that he would travel in a boat from the mouth of the Saribas westward towards Mt. Santubong, which is located on the coast near the modern city of Kuching.

In his dream after he landed onshore, he climbed the mountain and halfway up he met two very pretty maidens who had just finished bathing. One of them handed him the *batu perunsut*<sup>25</sup>, which she had used to rub her skin while bathing. She told him that it was the most valuable charm that he could use whenever he led his people to war. She also told him that none of the people who lived in the country between Santubong Delta and the mouth of the Saribas River could possibly beat him in battle. But she warn him that if he lead his war party beyond Santubong south-eastward, then the stone she had given him would not guarantee his success. The two maidens then told Unggang that they were Kumang and Lulong who were the divine patrons of successful warriors.

Shortly after he had that dream, Unggang built a large war boat whose interior was big enough for him to spread the *idas* mat. He used this boat to lead his warriors to guard the mouth of the Saribas River to prevent the Illanun and other pirates from entering and attack other strangers who sail in that part of the South China Sea.

After he had done this successfully, he led his warriors further overseas to look for trading ships. He did not like to be accompanied by other Iban boats as his own could easily carry over 100 warriors. At this time no one dare to attack any boat commanded by Unggang.

On one of his visit to Sarawak, a band of Chinese traders negotiated with him. They seek permission to trade in the Saribas. Unggang agreed provided that these traders would always fly a white flag on the mast of their trading vessels. After this many Chinese traders came in boats to the Saribas River to sell their cooking pots (*priok temaga*), brass cooking pans (*kali*), earthen bowls (*pinggai*) and earthen pots (*priok petani*). The traders also brought shell armllets (*rangki*), red oval *pelaga* beads, cowry shells (*buri*), bells of various sizes (*geri* and *gerunong*) and shell made into armllets or bracelets (*tuchong*). The Dayaks paid for this item with padi. One *pelaga* bead would cost them a *pasu* of padi. At this time the Chinese traders did not want to buy resins or other jungle product. They remained in

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<sup>25</sup> Batu perunsut is a stone, which is used by a woman to clean her skin by rubbing.



their boats and would not risk building houses in the Saribas River for another two generations. This was until the arrival of James Brooke did the Chinese started to build houses at the Saribas.

On the contrary, Unggang killed all the people who did not fly a white flag on their boats and took their heads. The only people to whom he showed mercy were the Saribas Malays who could prove that they were truly descendants of Abang Gudam and Temenggong Kadir. He did not kill them because in spite of the friction over the collection of taxes mentioned in connection with his own son Luta. Relationship between the Saribas Malays and the Dayaks has been generally good. There has always been a spirit of give and take between them through the generations.

## **THE BEGINNING OF IBAN INTER-TRIBAL WARFARE**

By the time of the first white Rajah that is James Brooke, a clearer pattern of intertribal warfare existed among the Ibans. It was because of this condition that certain groups of Ibans were willing to fight with Brooke against the persistently hostile Ibans of Saribas and Skrang. Those who normally fought with the Rajah included the Ibans of Lingga, the Undup Ibans and the various Sebuyau Ibans.

The story of the Sebuyau migrations has already been told in Part I of this transcript. As reconstructed based from oral Iban materials, it contradicted the notion set forth by such authors like Hugh Low and Spenser St. John that the scattered location of the various Sebuyau people in the Samarahan, Lundu and other rivers were the result of warfare with the Saribas and Skrang Ibans. As we have seen the migrations to these areas long predated serious intertribal hostility.

The outbreak of intertribal warfare coincided roughly with the beginnings of friction with Brunei and contacts with the Illanuns and other sea raiders. But even prior to this there had been fighting on several occasion, one of which has already been mentioned that is the story of Beti (Brah Ngumbang) of Skrang and his quarrel with the Sebuyau warrior named Chagik who had unsuccessfully courted Riti, Beti's seventh wife.

On at least two occasion after this but still long before the events which are the major subject in this Part, men from the Saribas who had become involved in quarrels in their own home rivers fled to the Sebuyau settlements. They subsequently involved the Sebuyau people in the dispute with the Saribas Ibans.

## THE CASE OF BRAYUN AND JANANG

The first such occasion occurred when two friends living in the Ulu Samu<sup>26</sup> quarreled over a girl named Bremas in the days when Seing the son of Tuah was a leader in this area. The trouble began one night when Brayun decided to pay a visit to Bremas and discovered that his friend Janang was already there. Brayun slashed one of Janang's ears with a knife. As a result the angered Janang took his followers and migrated to Sebuyau near the mouth of the Batang Lupar. From there he led his warriors, plus some of the Sebuyau people back to raid Brayun's home in Ulu Samu.

The raid took place at night but Brayun was forewarned and escaped with Bremas into the jungle leaving Janang only the satisfaction of burning his house. The site later became a cemetery known as Senuan Abis. Brayun and Bremas later had four children, three girls named Endia, and Entira and Cheremie and a boy named Ugap.

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<sup>26</sup> Ulu Samu is a tributary of the Paku in Saribas.

## THE CASE OF SENABONG OF BANGKIT

Another similar incident of the Saribas-Sebuyau hostility took place as a result of a quarrel over a *tapang* tree. It occurred in the days at a small stream called Bangkit, which lies between the Paku and Rimbas rivers in Saribas. There were two longhouses, one under the leadership of Anal and Sana and the other under Senabong. In those days when sugar was unheard of among the Dayaks, honey was extremely valuable and *tapang* trees were often the subjects of dispute.

In this case, Sana and Anal had ordered their people to collect honey from a *tapang* tree located between the two longhouses without the consulting Senabong, who claimed to own the same tree. Senabong took revenge by clearing away the jungle at the edge of the farmland belonging to Sana and Anal. This practice is specifically forbidden by the Iban custom. The *tapang* tree itself remained the subject of more serious dispute. Finally both sides agreed to settle the matter through a diving (*kelam ai*) contest – a kind of order in which the contestant who stays under water the longest wins the case for his party.

Senabong was champion for his side but unfortunately he submerged too close to the bank of the river than his opponent whose name has been forgotten. At this point the water level for some reason began to recede. Senabong's nose showed above the water and the onlookers from Anal and Sana's house immediately and loudly claimed that their man who was still completely under water had won the contest.

Needless to say, Senabong's people did not agree and the dispute only worsened. As a result, Senabong decided to leave the Bangkit convinced that he had been badly treated by his relatives and neighbours. Eventually Senabong's people settle in the Sebuyau but not before living for some time at Telong Semarang, from which they first sent a war party back to their old home to fight against Sana and Anal.

When they had migrated to Sebuyau, Senabong's men again raid Bangkit but this time with the assistance of the Sebuyau people. By now Sana and Anal were so worried by these attacks that they humbly invited Gerijih (Ai Marang) of Paku to come and live with them in Bangkit.

As the price of his assistance, Gerijih demanded that they should share all their lands and fruit trees with his family. When this request were met he came with his followers from Paku. After many more adventures, Gerijih finally defeated Senabong and took his head. After this victory, he advised the followers of Senabong that if they wished to revenge their dead leader they have to live peacefully with the Sebuyau Ibans and marry women of good and powerful families so that they would have the means to seek revenge.

## THE CASE OF LUTA AND THE SEBUYAU DAYAKS

Another clash between the Sebuyau and the people of Saribas took place in the time of Luta who was the son of Unggang (Lebur Menua) of Entanak. According to Saribas oral history, the Sebuyau Dayaks themselves murdered Luta's brother named Ngadan. It should be remembered that more Sebuyau Dayaks lived at other areas in Sarawak including Lundu and Samarahan. In retaliation for this incident, Luta led the Saribas people to raid Sebuyau where he killed many of the enemies. It was not long after this that Luta and his brothers Mulok and Ketit set off in a trading expedition to Biliton Island (an island located at the northern part of Java), which lies between Borneo and Java in search of a shell, named *tuchong*. *Tuchong* is a valuable armband worn by the Ibans. The party disappeared in the vicinity of Sungai Ubah just beyond Tanjong Datu. Their fate remained a mystery; only fragments from their boat were found. It was after Luta's death that the leadership in the Saribas was passed from his family at Entanak to that of Orang Kaya Pemancha Dana (Bayang) of the Padeh tributary.

## INDRA LELA

Despite these cases of hostility between the Saribas and the Sebuyau Dayaks the Iban tradition was maintained. It was the Malay chief Indra Lela who not long before the arrival of James Brooke, stirred up serious warfare between the Ibans of the Saribas and Skrang on one hand and those of the Undup, Lingga and various Sebuyau settlements on the other.

Indra Lela, the brother of Lela Pelawan and Lela Wangsa of Lingga played a double game among the Ibans. Whenever he was in Saribas, he told the Saribas Ibans that the Balau and Sebuyau Dayaks hated them and vice-versa. By keeping the Iban people in a constant state of warfare, he was able to control them for his own end.

The leader of the Saribas people during this time was Orang Kaya Pemancha Dana (Bayang) of the Padeh. He was assisted by Bunyau of Entanak, Unal (Bulan) of Ulu Layar and Linggir (Mali Lebu) of Paku. All these men were still leaders when James Brooke arrived. The leaders in the Skrang were Libau (Rentap) who was famous for his later exploits on Bukit Sadok, Orang Kaya Rabong and Orang Kaya Gasing.

In about 1834, Orang Kaya Rabong of Skrang attacked Banting in the Lingga tributary of the Batang Lupar with the help of the Saribas Ibans under the leadership of Orang Kaya Pemancha Dana (Bayang). In those days both the Balau Dayaks and Malays populated Bukit Banting. In the midst of the fighting, the voice of a Balau *shawan*<sup>27</sup> (medicine man) named Langgong was clearly heard by the attackers.

*“Why are we fighting? We have no quarrel with each other. It is all the fault of Indra Lela who has been playing a double game!”* shouted Langgong.

When Indra Lela heard this, he jumped into the Lingga River to escape being beheaded by the Dayaks. According to a story, he turned into a crocodile, which for years afterwards caught unwary people swimming and bathing in the region.

The battle continued and the Banting Malays and Balau Dayaks were badly defeated. It was during this attack that Chulo (Tarang) a leading warrior of Linggir (Mali Lebu) received his nickname or *ensumbar*. He was said to have jumped from the high open platform (*tanju*) of one of the Banting longhouses carrying two valuable jars, which he carried, using one arm and the same time holding a head which he had just taken in his mouth. Then he called out the following words.

*“Aku tu meh Chulo ka berensumbar ka Tarang mandang Banting, Tarang mandang Lingga, Tarang mandang langit, Tarang mandang dunya,”* uttered Chulo (Tarang).

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<sup>27</sup> Shawan is the Balau term for medicine man.

## THE GREAT BALA – U NDUP EXPEDITION

About three years later, Orang Kaya Pemancha Dana (Bayang) led a large force against the Undup Ibans who had killed his brother named Angkum. The expedition, which was known as the Great Bala completely, defeated the Undup Ibans. Many of them were killed or taken captive. The survivors fled to Lingga and the Kapuas valley and settled in the Salimbau area. They did not return to Undup until the time of Mr. Brereton<sup>28</sup>, the First Officer of James Brooke who served in the Batang Lupar. The First Officer also found out that the Skrang Ibans had occupied many of the lands and fruit trees. Likewise, the Ibans from the Kumpang tributary of the Batang Ai had settled the Ulu Undup.

During the Undup Expedition, Orang Kaya Pemancha Dana (Bayang) looted a famous *guchi*<sup>29</sup> jar believed to have miraculous powers. Years later in about 1900 his great grandson, Geraman took this *guchi* jar with him to Baram<sup>30</sup> where he had migrated inspite of the protest from other members of his family. His family believed that the *guchi* jar should remain in the Padeh.

The enmity among the Ibans continued to worsen. At about this time Orang Kaya Temenggong Jugah of Lundu who was the leader of one group of Sebuyau Dayaks came up the Saribas to attack the Paku. He raided Adir's house at Matop but as most of the inhabitants had fled only a few defenders was killed in the raid together with some of the invaders.

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<sup>28</sup> Brereton visited Sarawak as midshipman on HMS Samarang; later in Labuan service; then from 1850 worked for James Brooke as Governor of Skrang.

<sup>29</sup> Guchi is the Iban term for miniature jar.

<sup>30</sup> This *guchi* jar is still in possession by his descendant in Lubok Nibong near the present town of Marudi in Baram.

## REVENGE OF THE BALAU DAYAKS

In about 1833 the Balau Dayaks of Banting decided to raid the Saribas and the Kalaka (Krian) which is to the east of Saribas. Immigrants from the Saribas who were still engaged in sporadic conflicts with the Serus there already populated the Melupa tributary of the Kalaka. The raid by the Balau Dayaks led by Ijau (Lang) and his son-in-law Orang Kaya Janting were in retaliation for the Saribas attack on Banting in which Indra Lela had been killed. They decided that they would split their force in two with Ijau leading his men against the Saribas while Janting continued on to attack Kalaka.

Unfortunately for Ijau's contingent, his arrival coincided with the departure of a powerful Saribas war party, which was on the way to attack none other than Ijau's own settlement in Banting. While Ijau was advancing up the Saribas undercover of darkness, his men heard the voice of bards (*lemambang*) chanting in a small boat in the Plasan stream. Aware that these bards were the Saribas Ibans, Ijau's men attacked them with spears failing to notice a far larger war boat located not far away. The startled singers hurled themselves into the river to escape Ijau's spears. Meanwhile, the people in the war boat who were Anal's (Bulan) men discovered their enemy close at hand. In the battle that followed, the Balau Dayaks were badly defeated. Engkudu and Uyu Apai Ikum were remembered as two of Anal's warriors who distinguished themselves in the fighting. Ijau himself was killed and altogether the Balau Dayaks lost 132 men.

Meanwhile the other Balau Dayaks who were led by Janting fared better in the Kalaka. Janting and his warriors entered the Melupa stream where they attacked a large longhouse, which belonged to Orang Kaya Temenggong Tandok.

Orang Kaya Temenggong Tandok and his people fought bravely and it was mentioned that one of his men named Jilap killed a whole boatload of the Balau Dayaks. However, it was Janting who won the battle and his force killed 130 of the Melupa Ibans including Orang Kaya Temenggong Tandok himself.

Janting was enlightened by his triumph at Melupa but most disheartening by his father-in-law defeat in the Saribas. He swore that he would revenge the loss.

Early in 1839, Janting and all his bravest warriors of Banting set out to fight the Saribas. They had decided to attack both the Paku and Rimbas tributaries in the Saribas. When the Rimbas people heard that Janting was coming on his mission of revenge, they were much disturbed. The Rimbas leaders under Orang Kaya Gun (Mangku Bumi) sent messengers to Linggir (Mali Lebu) of Paku urging that they should join forces and prepare to meet the enemy in the same place. Linggir agreed and further suggested that the combined Paku-Rimbas defenders should make their stand in the Rimbas tributary at Nanga Undai rather than in the main river. He feared that the Saribas boats, in open waters would be of no match compared to the Balau boats, which were the largest and heaviest of any used by the Ibans at that time.



Linggir consoled the Paku and Rimbas warriors to assemble at Nanga Undai on the night of the next full moon and he told all the Rimbas people who lived in temporary farm<sup>31</sup> huts (*langkau umai*) along the Lower Rimbas to withdraw well inland in order to be safe.

On the appointed day the Rimbas Dayaks went down to the mouth of the Undai River while two bards sang their songs calling on the God of War for help. When they reached Nanga Undai, they saw the lights on the water and assumed that Linggir and his party must have made these from Paku. Their assumption was proven wrong and it cost them dearly. The lights were actually made by the Balau Dayaks who suddenly attacked them and capsized their boats. Many of the Rimbas Ibans were killed including the sons of Orang Kaya Antau and Gun who had come with the war party.

The battles mentioned above were all between various groups of Ibans who lived at the mouths of different rivers. This intermittent struggle continued after 1839. It was because of these that the newly arrived James Brooke found that he could easily get the support of the Sebuyau, Undup and Balau Dayaks in his warfare against the Saribas and Skrang.

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<sup>31</sup> The people had then planted wet padi along the Lower Rimbas.

## COASTAL RAIDING

In the mean time, however, an older quarrel with various peoples living in what is now the Indonesian Borneo also continued as it was to continue for generations after the arrival of the Brooke Rajah. These enemies included the Kantu, Bugau and Mualang Dayaks of the Kantu and Katungau tributaries of the Kapuas River.

### ATTACK ON THE BUGAU DAYAKS

A short while after the Great Bala had driven the original habitants of the Undup across into the Kapuas drainage, the people of the Kumpang tributary of the Batang Ai appealed to Linggir (Mali Lebu) of Paku for help. The Bugau Dayaks of the Kapuas were frequently attacking them.

Linggir came with many warriors headed by Enchana (Letan) and his brothers to attack the Bugau Dayaks. When they reached Ulu Undup, the people there told them that the Bugaus had fortified themselves at the Tiang Laju range. This range divides the Batang Lujar and Kapuas River systems. It is also the present modern international frontiers.

Linggir agreed to lead them on the condition that he must first consult his guardian spirit (*tua*) and obtain favorable omens indicating that he would be victorious. These omens were not obtained until a fortnight.

On the eve of the expedition, Linggir went with a warrior named Janang to the top of the Tiang Laju range. As they came to the foot of the last steep stretch before the summit, the exhausted Janang fainted from his exertions. Linggir continued and as he reached the mountaintop, he saw an old woman with her back towards him stopping by a pool of water washing her hair. When she saw Linggir, she told him that she was Indai Abang a goddess who would help him against his enemies.

The woman said, “ *In your fight tomorrow, no Bugau will be able to prevail against you. You will have an easy victory.*”

She then handed him a piece of stone, which she had used to clean her skin. She told him that it was a charm, which would deflect the weapon of the enemy.

After he had received the charm, Linggir returned and found that Janang had revived. When they reached the main war party, Linggir whispered to his men not to be afraid of the enemy as the goddess had assured him of their safety.

At dawn the next morning he commanded Enchana and his brothers to lead the way with Birai (Jawa Jambai) and Briak (Bintang Beguang) heading the other groups of warriors. The battle started but Enchana and his brothers' participation were limited owing to the fact that the bamboo spikes (tukak) that were planted on the ground by the enemy to prevent their advancement immobilized them. However, the warriors under Jimbai Nyelang and Briak were able to avoid these obstacles. They fought very hard and killed ninety-one enemies. They also took a number of captives, whose descendants still live in the Saribas today.

Not long after this battle, a combined force from the Saribas and Skrang led by Libau (Rentap) of Skrang fought once more against the Mualang, Chengkang and Bugau inhabitants of the Ulu Kapuas in the Kapuas drainage.

Beside Libau (Rentap), Orang Kaya Gasing of Skrang also led raids against the Bugaus during this period.

The majority of the people of the Kapuas against whom such raid were launched were either Ibans or the Kantus and Bugaus who speak a language quite similar to the Ibans. The Ibans recognized these people as close relatives.

## **RAIDS ON THE LAND DAYAKS AND KANAWIT MELANAU**

During the same period, the people of Saribas and Skrang also began to organize raid against the Land Dayaks who inhabited areas along the coast which is located southeast of the Iban territory. They also organized raids to the Melanau settlements located towards the northeastern coast of what is today the Third Division of Sarawak. It is noted that the language and customs of both the Land Dayaks and Melanau are different from the Ibans (Sea Dayak).

It is interesting to note that the first of such expedition recorded in Iban tradition ended in disaster in the part of the attacking force. In the days when Kelanang and Jantan were leaders in the Lower and Upper Paku respectively, Jiram (Rentap) who was the brother-in-law of Jantan led the Paku warriors to attack the Kanawit Melanau in the Rejang. It was mentioned that as the expedition boats entered the Kanowit River, many were upset due to a clever strategy employed by the Kanawit people. The Kanawit people,

aware of the attacking force, stretched ropes made of rattan across the river. They have placed the ropes just below the surface of the water. In addition to that, trees on both side of the river were half cut.

When one of Jiram's boats passed over one of the ropes, the Kanawit people quickly felled the trees on either side. The trees were earlier cut so that they would fall away from the river and pull the rope out of the water, upsetting the war boats and spilling the warriors into the water.

The Kanawits who were waiting on the banks of the river killed some of the surprised Ibans. Others managed to flee into the jungle. Most of the fugitives including Jiram himself died of starvation as they tried to get back through the jungles to the Saribas.

Jiram was mentioned to have spoken his last words to his brother-in-law, Jantan at a place known as Emperan Labah in the Kanowit River. Jantan and a few survivors managed to reach Bukit Tengalat in the Krian where they could see their home country. Those who did not return were memorized according to the Iban custom known as *rapoh*. According to the *rapoh* tradition, the family of a man who has died away from home, places a small jar containing some of his less valuable heirloom in the local cemetery.

Some of these jars, placed for the Ibans who died on his expedition can still be seen at Danau in Ulu Paku.

## THE MELANAU OF ILAS AND MATU

Sometimes after the defeat of the Rimbas Ibans by the Balaus, Linggir (Mali Lebu) of Paku led a large number of his warriors to attack the Melanau of Ilas and Matu on the coast of the present day Third Division. During those days, the Melanaus lived in extremely large longhouses with very high posts. On this occasion, Linggir attacked one of the highest Melanau longhouse. The longhouse was strongly defended. Linggir and his men then made a big fire underneath the longhouse in order to smoked out the Melanaus who were then killed when they emerged. While they were making the fire, the Ibans protected themselves from the raining spears by using their boat as a shield. They carried the canoes on their heads in such a way that each canoe would serve as a shield for several men. Linggir and his men finally won the battle.

More than a decade later, Linggir led similar attacks on Matu and Paku, both were Melanau settlements. This happened immediately before the Beting Maru<sup>32</sup> in 1849.

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<sup>32</sup> Beting Maru was a famous battle of James Brooke's career led by Heics Nemesis. The battle happened on July 1 1849.

## OTHER SMALLER EXPEDITIONS – KAYAU ANAK

The Ibans also lunched smaller expeditions (*kayau anak*) against the coastal Melanau settlements throughout this period. The leaders of this attack include Igoh Apai Lamban who raids the Melanaus after his migration to Sarikei. Others were the brothers of Orang Kaya Antau and Orang Kaya Gun in the Rimbas and Patan (Bulan) of Ulu Layar.

The Saribas and Skrang Ibans also began to make attacks on the Land Dayaks and Chinese who lived along the coast in the vicinities of Pontianak and Sambas.

At the same time when Jiram's unsuccessful attack on the Kanawit Melanaus, Orang Kaya Pemancha Dana (Bayang) started to raid the Chinese settlers and others in the Sambas territory. It was on one of these expeditions that he captured the famous iron cannon known as Bujang Timpang Berang, which can still be seen in the old fort at Betong.

When going for this raids, it was a habit of the Ibans to organize as large as 100 war boats participation used in attacking the Land Dayak and Malay settlements along the intervening coasts between Saribas and Sambas.

About one year before the arrival of the White Rajah, Libau (Rentap) of Skrang led his warriors against settlements in the vicinity of Pontianak. It was mentioned that before he reaches the battlefield, he attacked the boat of a Malay trader, capturing a cannon, ammunition and a *kris* with a golden handle.

Not long after this, Linggir Apai Belabut of Bangkit, Saribas led a large force of warriors to fight against the Land Dayaks of Tinting Braang and the people of Duri in the Sambas. At the latter, they found much gold, which owing to their ignorance they threw it into the sea!

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**PART V - FURTHER CONFLICT WITH  
THE SERUS AND MIGRATIONS TO THE  
KRIAN**

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## INTRODUCTION

It was mentioned in Part II that after the days of Munan, who led the first Ibans from Rimbas to settle in the Krian. Further Sea Dayaks migrations were blocked by the persistent hostility of the Serus living at Bukit Tabujang and Bukit Tengalat as well as in the Awik and Seblak tributaries.

Before the arrival of the Rajah, the Ibans had only succeeded in populating the Melupa tributary. In addition to the house of the Orang Kaya Temenggong Tandok, there were several other Iban longhouses in that river. I have already told how the Balau Iban raiders killed Orang Kaya Temenggong Tandok in 1838.



## HOW THE IBAN GOT THEIR MALAY TITLE

The story how Orang Kaya Temenggong Tandok got his title Orang Kaya Temenggong illustrates the kind of relationship, which existed between the Malays, Ibans and Serus at that time.

The Ibans had continued to raid the Serus since the days of Munan and it was indeed the ambition of every young Iban warriors in the Saribas as well as those who have already lived in the Krian to get one or more of the Serus heads. Chulo (Tarang), the leading warrior of Linggir (Mali Lebu) with Ugat of Paku were among those who were remembered for their success in conducting minor raids (*kayau anak*) against these pre-Iban people who are now extinct.

At this time there was a well-known Malay named Imam Molana who lived at the mouth of the Kalaka and who had claimed to rule that area. It was his policy to encourage the Iban of Saribas in their wars with the Serus, in order that the Serus might gather around him for protection. He bought the Seru captives as well as those of other groups, which the Iban leaders sold to him. And he gave titles to the Iban leaders who defeated the Serus.

Orang Kaya Temenggong Tandok was one of the Ibans who received his title from Imam Molana in this fashion. Others were Orang Kaya Beti of Padeh and Orang Kaya Antau (Linggang Nengri) and Gun (Mangku Busu) of Rimbas.

Imam Molana succeeded in converting to Islam many of the Serus who were subdued by the Ibans and many of the Krian Malays of today are descended from these converts. It is there fore not strictly true to say that the Serus are extinct although the Serus culture undoubtedly is.

The Saribas Malays acting as the agents of the Brunei Sultanate ennobled other Iban leaders such as Orang Kaya Pemancha Dana (Bayang) of Padeh. Later of course, the Brooke Government conferred similar titles on many Ibans.

The Serus were not displaced from most of the Krian until well after the arrival of the English Rajah. At this time, the Ibans were already migrating into the lower tributaries of the Rejang. They were also fighting with the Bukitans in that area. Many of these Bukitans had moved from the present day Second Division to the southern and western part of Sarawak, following the earlier Iban migrations.

At about 1854, Linggir (Mali Lebu) of Paku led a highly successful raid against the Bukitans of Sungai Sugai, a branch of the Julau tributary of the Rejang. Linggir led his war party from the Paku to the house of Apai Siba, who was the leader of the Sugai Bukitans.

The Sugai Bukitans have been friendly to the Paku Ibans in the past. However, it was Linggir's intention to attack another Bukitan house located further up the Sugai stream.

However, when the Iban warriors arrived at this place after visiting Apai Siba, they found out that their intended victims had fled leaving only an empty house. The Ibans concluded that Apai Siba must have warned them and they returned down river and attacked his house instead. Apai Siba himself was killed together with many other Bukitans and that their heads covered one of the variety of Iban mats (*sedaun idas*).

Many captives were also taken and those retained by Linggir alone numbered thirty. As war leader, he was entitled to half the captives and plunders taken by any of his warriors according to the Iban custom.

Soon after these captives had been taken back to Paku, some of them tried to escape but all of them were recaptured. The place where one woman named Indai Jungki tried to escape is framed by a steep slope on one bank is still known as Tebiang Indai Jungki. It was after this that the Ibans sold many of these Bukitans to Laksamana Amir, chief of the Paku Malays. All these Bukitans then converted to Islam.

Not long after this a Paku and a Rimbas man named Sa and Entri respectively went to explore the Awik, a right hand tributary of the Krian. They reported it to be very fertile but soon after their return both men died and the intended migration had to be postponed until the period of mourning was over. Finally three years later, one of Sa's sons named Enchana (Letan) led the migration overland. The migration took place in 1854. Upon arriving at Krian River, the migrants built a number of boats in order to proceed up the Awik tributary. Just as they were about to enter the Awik, they heard an omen bird (*jalah kanan*) striking from their right hand side. It indicates as believed that they would be successful in farming as well as in war. The future men of their people would always be lucky in their various undertakings but their lives would be shorter than those of their women would. The place where these people first settled was at Lubok Gamba.

Minggat, the brother of Enchana and later a well-known ally of the Rajah in the Krian, followed his brother to the Awik. Two years after the migration, Manggang with his brothers, Tengkuang, Unggang Luna (Panggau) and Mudit of Nanga Anyut in Paku decided to migrate to the Seblak which is another right tributary of the Krian which meet the Krian River near the sea. They first went to Gerenjang in Ulu Krian to make preparation for this migration.

While they were at Gerenjang, the remaining Seru of Sebetan and Seblak became very violent with the Saribas Sea Dayaks under the leadership of Linggir and Aji who had been in the habit of raiding them in company with Chulo (Tarang) then living in the Rimbas. Because of this trouble, the Paku migrants were forbidden by the Saribas chief to risk the move to Seblak. They returned to their old village in the Paku. After the Serus had been quiet, they once again began to move to Seblak and this time they succeeded. Many people followed them from the Bangkit and Lower Paku.

On their arrival in Seblak, they first built a temporary longhouse (*dampa*) at Nanga Beratong. Here they made a sacrifice known as *babi kena ngenselan menua*<sup>33</sup>. It was also mentioned that there was some quarrel amongst these pioneers. One man named Dullah (Gila) did not agree with the rest and went to live for some years on the main Krian River at Sanjangay. After some years he returned and joins the rest.

Another man named Ngadi Apai Iding, formerly of Samu never reached the Seblak with the main party. He stopped on his way there and lived with his cousin Enchana in the Awik. Three years later he moved up to the Seblak but his descendants retained their claim on the three pieces of land; one for each year of his stay while at Awik.

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<sup>33</sup> It means a pig is killed in order to worship the God of Land named Simpulang Gana.

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**PART VI - MOVEMENT TO THE REJANG  
DRAINAGE MIGRATION TO SARIKEI  
AND JULAU**

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## INTRODUCTION

According to tradition in the Saribas, the first migration of Ibans into the Rejang drainage (what is today the Third Division of Sarawak) took place before the migrations to Krian as described in Part IV. The migration to the Rejang took place at the time of the arrival of James Brooke in 1839.

Igoh Apai Lamban came from Ulu Layar to the Sarikei River in search of new land. He had been a leading warrior together with Unal (Bulan) the slayer of the Balau chief named Ijau (Lang). There was no quarrel in the Layar, which forced him to migrate. He wanted to be a pioneer and to seek new lands.

During the same time, Mujah (Buah Raya) led the first migration into Ulu Julau, a branch of the Kanowit tributary of the Rejang. Mujah was a brave war leader who had originally migrated from the Skrang and had lived temporarily in the Upper Penom and Anyut rivers of Ulu Paku. Since these areas were already well settled, Mujah kept on looking for new land and thus came to Julau. Upon his arrival, he and his followers fought against the Rejang's Tanjongs, Kanawits, Ukits and Lugats in many parts of the Rejang. Due to his success in driving these aborigines from the lower rivers, Sharif Manshor of Sarikei gave him the title Panglima.

In later years when the people of Upper Sarikei were at war with the Brooke Government, Mujah (Buah Raya) helped them. As a result the Government sent expeditions against him into the Julau in 1856 and 1858. After Mujah had migrated into the Julau many Ibans from the Lemanak migrated into the Sarikei, Bintangor, Poi and Ngemah tributaries of the Rejang.

Megong Apai Bansa, Pelima and Saka led these movements. The Lemanaks came by way of Kelampu and Bunu in the Skrang. From these places, they crossed Bukit Ringka between the Skrang and Kanowit and reached Penebak in Ulu Layar. But as in the case of Mujah, they discovered that these lands were already completely occupied and the Layar Ibans would not accept them.

From Penebak, Pelima went down the Kanowit and finally settled in the Machan River, a left tributary of the Rejang. Megong Apai Bansa went on from Penebak down the Sarikei and lived at Pakan. Gradually almost all parts of the lower Sarikei and Bintangor rivers were populated by the Lemanak Ibans as were the Poi and Ngemah tributaries further upstream.

Much later, another quite different group of Lemanaks settled in the Roban, branch of the Seblak tributary of the Krian. When the second Rajah erected Fort Charles at Kabong in lower Krian, he engaged these men under their leaders Angki Degom and Ambak to guard the fort. They served as fort officials (known as the Sarawak Rangers after 1862). After they had retired, they requested and received permission to settle in Roban. Later,

although they had already retired these men died while fighting at Bukit Seligi on one of the Rajah's expeditions against the famous Ulu Ai rebel named Ngumbang.

Ibans from Skrang River also migrated to the Rejang tributaries in considerable numbers during this period. Unfortunately these movements cannot be traced in much detail. However, we do know that after the Third Sadok Expedition in 1861, Libau (Rentap) and those who were still loyal to him moved to the headwaters of the Kanowit, settling first in the Entabai stream. The pattern was repeated when the Government in 1881 finally defeated another famous Skrang rebel, Kedu (Lang Endang). Kedu also moved into the Kanowit River area. Throughout the middle years of the nineteenth century, the headwaters of this stream remained attractive not only to those who wished to live far from the white Rajah's officers, but also to migrate in search of new lands.

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**PART VII - ENMITY IN THE BATANG AI  
MIGRATION TO BATANG REJANG VIA  
KAPUAS AND KATIBAS**

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## INTRODUCTION

During the period of James Brooke's arrival into Sarawak, a series of dispute broke out among the Batang Ai Ibans. Partly as a result of these disputes, some of the inhabitants migrated into Indonesian Borneo and then returned back to Sarawak and became the first Ibans to populate the Katibas tributary of the Rejang. They eventually moved into the main river.

The disputes in the Batang Ai began in the days of Unggang (Gerasi) and Temenggong Simpi Pala. It started with a woman named Enche of the Kumpang tributary of the Batang Ai who was married to a man named Dunggat from the Ulu Ai. At one time, Dunggat had promised to marry a woman named Chulo who quite naturally had come to hate Enche for marrying her former sweetheart.

One day Chulo sent quid of arecca nut to Dunggat who had moved down river to lived with his wife's family by means of a woman named Indai Lemenye. Without questioning the source of the gift, Enche immediately chewed her quid but found out that it contained a mixture of drugs and cat's hairs. She then became suspicious and questioned Indai Lemenye and discovered that Chulo had sent the peculiar gift. Enche became worried and urged her husband to summon Chulo and question her.

When Chulo came, she admitted sending the quid but claimed that they were not poisonous. However, she admitted that they contained a divorce charm known as *pemenchi*, which is made from the hairs of dogs and cats and the feathers of chickens and hawks placed one upon another according to the ritual. The theory of course is that just as these creatures could never live with each other peacefully hence any husband and wife who took the charm will also came to hate each other and so separate. This charm is still known among the Sea Dayaks.

Enche did not believe this story and said that if she died as a result of chewing the charm, Chulo must pay compensation to her husband of one valuable old jar and a large gong. As far as my husband is concerned, she said angrily, it is not necessary for you to divorce us in such a manner. If you want him, you can have him right away! A few weeks later, Enche fell ill and died. Her brothers Lajang and Tugang hearing of her death led a party of men to seize a jar and a gong from Chulo as demanded by their sister. In retaliation, Chulo's father, Mandau took to Kumpang some of the bravest warriors of the Ulu Ai including Sumping, Beraro, Naga and Temenggong Apai Rusoh. These warriors killed two of Lajang's men. Not long after this, Lajang's retaliated against Mandau killing some of his followers while they were on their way to Nanga Skrang. In those days the Government fort had not been built at Nanga Skrang but there was a small Malay community living there. The Ibans came to exchange bamboo, for salt and salted fish from the Malays.

The disputes became tenser and two chiefs for some time remained neutral between the warring parties. There were Unggam (Gerasi) of Nanga Delok and Temenggong Simpi



Pala of Rantau Panjai, both in the Batang Ai. Unfortunately, they also became involved in the disputes.

Two chiefs of Kumpang; the party of the aggrieved Enche who had died from eating the *pemenchi* charm, jointly led a strong war party against the Ulu Ai Ibans at Lubang Baya (the home of Chulo, who had sent the charm). The Kumpang chiefs were Apai Ramba and Apai Jega. As they passed by the home of Temenggong Simpi Pala, on their way to Lubang Baya, they met his wife named Jeburi who was also their cousin. She was standing by the landing place at her house in Rantau Panjai. She asked them their destination but they only replied by telling her that they must follow the marks of the boars' hooves meaning that they must follow the tracks left by the enemy.

Jeburi was naturally well aware that they were in fact on their way to attack their enemies in the Ulu Ai, as the whole country knew about the feud. She however suggested that it would not be necessary for them to go up so many rapids to reach the foe.

She told them that a man named Jengkilan whose house lay not far away at a place called Musing had recently joined forces with their enemy. Apai Jega and Apai Ramba then decided to attack Musing instead of going on to the distant Lubang Baya. Before they proceeded, Jeburi called on them to spare her cousin who was married to Jengkilan and who could be identified by a *lebur api* blanket in which she would be carrying her child.

Before departing overland to Musing, Apai Ramba ordered that no one should precede him at Jengkilan's landing place for he wanted badly to kill Jengkilan and Tegar, the two leading men of the house. He and his picked warriors then continued their way by boat. When they reached Jengkilan's landing place, they asked a woman who was bathing there to send for Jengkilan and Tegar to come down to the landing place. The two men did so, unarmed and unsuspecting and Apai Ramba drew his sword and killed them on the spot. Then his warriors attacked the longhouse and killed almost all the inmates. They were mostly women as the men were away fishing at Luga Majang in the present day Indonesian Borneo.

In the excitement, no one bothered to remember about Jeburi's cousin. While collecting the heads of the slain, her head could not be identified among them. Fortunately she had been able to escape with her child but she left behind another daughter named Simpo who was captured by Apai Ramba.

On their way home as they passed the house of Unggang (Gerasi), Apai Ramba and his men sent a message to inform him of their victory over Jengkilan. But Unggang was hardly pleased and demanded to know why Apai Ramba had attacked a peaceful and friendly neighbor. When Apai Ramba explained that he had heard a different story from Jeburi, Unggang (Gerasi) responded by drawing his sword and pointing it to the sky, challenging Apai Ramba to a single combat. The later refused the challenge and continued on his way back home.

On reaching the house of Temenggong Simpi Pala at Rantau Panjai, Apai Ramba told him of his victory over Jengkilan and as a joke, he invited him to plant tobacco in the ashes of the house. But Simpi Pala still apparently ignorant of the fact that it was his own wife, who had instigated the whole affair, was just as outraged as Unggang (Gerasi) had been. He bitterly approached Apai Ramba for his crime. In his anger, he slashed at the fence of his open platform (tanju) with his war knife (nyabur) and challenged any of Apai Ramba's men to fight him alone. Apai Ramba now thoroughly distressed declined to talk any longer with Temenggong Simpi Pala, and together with his men continued to travel down the Batang Ai.

They reached Untu's house at Bui late that evening. When Untu heard of their victory and saw their captives, he recognized Simpo, the daughter of Jengkilan (who was his cousin) among them. He asked Apai Ramba to release her for the price of one old jar and a gong, and remained to live at Bui with Untu.

A month later Unggang (Gerasi) who was still furious over the whole affair ordered his warriors, Sumping, Naga, Ujan and Mandau to attack Apai Ramba in revenge for the unwarranted attack on Musing. He told his warriors that they should persuade Temenggong Simpi Pala at Rantau Panjai to join them.

If he refuses to go you must kill him, ordered Unggang (Gerasi), for it was due to his wife's false story that Apai Ramba raided Musing.

Temenggong Simpi Pala was first reluctant for he was closely related through his wife to most of the people at Kumpang where Apai Ramba lived. But threatened with death and fear that he be accused of secretly aiding Apai Ramba's attack on Musing, he finally agreed to help. He demanded that in return for his help, Unggang (Gerasi) should help him to fortify his own house first. A stockade was duly erected; traces of which are still visible today. Most of the work was actually done by the Bukitans who were still subservient to the Ibans in the Batang Ai region. Then the combined forces of Unggang (Gerasi) and Temenggong Simpi Pala prepared to attack the Kumpang Ibans.

Meanwhile, Apai Ramba and Apai Jega were on the lookout for the expected attack. From Kumpang they sent scouts across to Nanga Seremat on the Batang Ai to report back if they see the forces of Temenggong Simpi Pala, Unggang (Gerasi) and their allies coming. The scouts returned and reported that they had seen a small light far up in the river, which they believed to be the approaching enemy. But the two leaders refused to credit this report and accused the scouts of cowardice.

A second group of scouts went out and returned saying that they had seen nothing. However, the first scout had been correct. While they had been reporting, the attacking force had been able to move down river past Nanga Seremat, without attracting any more attention.

At dawn this force successfully attacked the house of Galau and Kamarau, allies of the Kumpang people at Stuga. Apai Ramba who by now was lying in wait at Nanga Seremat was completely surprised when he saw from far, the black smoke from Galau" burning house.

Apai Ramba attempted to retaliate on the forces from up river, as they were withdrawing after that victory. One of Simpi Pala warriors led a small party back overland, which passed, not far from where Apai Ramba and his men were waiting at Nanga Seremat. Apai Ramba saw and recognized some of these men as from Simpi Pala's house.

As the main troop retreated, Simpi Pala, still uneasy about his participation in the affair, walked in the rear of the party, fearful that Apai Ramba men would kill him in their anger. Apai Ramba's warriors followed the main Ulu Ai forces as far as Nanga Pat, where they made an attack from the rear. It was not a success. Earlier in the conflict, the Ulu Ai warriors named Taboh and Enturan (Besi) who each killed an enemy thus greatly encouraged the entire Ulu Ai force. While pursuing a fugitive, they discovered that all the wounded fighters of Apai Ramba had been sent to Upper Pat. They tracked them down and killed them also.

Apai Ramba realizing that he was ousted fled away. A few months later he returned with his warriors and fight against the Ulu Ai Ibans and this time he almost completely wiped out the people of Likup's longhouse at Entago, above Nanga Mujan.

## **THE MIGRATION TO BALLEH**

As the fighting and conflict continues, some people were growing weary of the happenings. At about this time, a leader named Sumping from the Ulu Ai urged Temenggong Simpi Pala to migrate elsewhere to avoid the continuous conflict. However, Temenggong Simpi Pala was reluctant for he did not wish his guardian spirit (tua) which lived on a hill named Bukit Tungal, near Nanga Kaung would be left behind.

Despite Temenggong Simpi Pala refusal, Sumping himself migrated with his followers to Batang Jeketan, a tributary of the Kapuas. Naga who then lived in one of the branches of the Kayan, another Kapuas tributary, followed him.

From these places, Naga moved again to Nyawang (also in the Kapuas) while Sumping migrated to Bukit Chundong between the headwaters of the Jekelan and Katibas River in Sarawak where he died at a great age.

Sumping who was childless was succeeded jointly by Gerinang and his brother Unggat. They migrated to the Kapuas drainage joining Naga at Nyawang.

After Naga's death, they moved to Rantau Likau in the Katibas. When Apai Ramba heard of their arrival, he again attacked them reviving the old feud. Due to the attacks by Apai Ramba, they were forced to move down the Katibas to live temporarily at Nanga Musah, before finally reaching the Rejang River and settling at Menuan. Here the Kayan, Rejang and Tanjong tribes who lived on the banks of the Rejang, constantly attacked them.

While Gerinang and Unggat continues to live at Nyawang and when they died, their heirs named Mata Hari and Keling succeeded them respectively. Both of the latter were sons of Unggat and his uncle Gerinang who had no son had adopted Mata Hari. Later, both Mata Hari and Keling established themselves in the Balleh, where they were joined by Jubang, the father of the late Temenggong Koh.

## TEMENGGONG KOH

The story of Temenggong Koh, one of the most famous Ibans of modern Sarawak, illustrate the path of migration from Batang Ai to the present day Third Division via the Kapuas drainage. To further understand this path, we must return to Koh's great great grandfather, who was none other than the Temenggong Simpi Pala.

Temenggong Simpi Pala's disputes with Apai Ramba and Apai Jega of Kumpang continued after the events described earlier. Finally he overcame his reluctant to leave his guardian spirit and migrated to live at Nanga Badau, now in Indonesian Borneo, but now far from the Sarawak frontier station at Lubok Antu. At Nanga Badau, he was engaged in ceaseless conflict with the Malays of Tawang and the Dayaks of Salimbau and Kantu. He won many victories and ended by ruling much of the territory between the Sarawak frontier and the Seriang Lake District.

It was during this period that one of Temenggong Simpi Pala's sons named Temenggong Runglah had five children including Temenggong Buah, Temenggong Guntur and Ba. Ba married a woman named Bejau and later gave birth to Begat Garong who was the mother of Temenggong Koh.

Ba lived at Kanyau and it was from there that he led another Iban migration into the Katibas where he first lived at Pengkalan Ridan. Here migrants from the Delok tributary of the Batang Ai including a man named Malintang joined him. From the Katibas, Ba led his people to dwell in the main Rejang River in the vicinity of the present day Song and established his longhouse at Nanga Ngelai.

Shortly after he arrived in this area, Ba swore friendship with Sawing, a Tanjong tribal chief who at this time was still a man of great influence in the middle Rejang. Ba and Sawing exchanged gift to seal their friendship with the Iban leader giving the Tanjong chief a slave named Atok. In return he received a valuable menaga type jar. Today this jar is in the possession of ex-Penghulu Garinang of Gaat whose wife was Temenggong Koh's niece.

Three years after Ba had arrived at Song; he led his people to live further down river at Nanga Dap in Kanowit. At this time Balang and his people had settled at Nanga Ngemah, while many other Ibans were living along the banks of the Rejang from Nanga Poi to Nanga Song.

Balang was arrested by the Government in 1868 for plotting to kill J.B. Cruickshank, then the Resident of Rejang. Balang was executed at Pulau Selalau near Sibiu. Because of Balang's death, the Katibas Ibans led by his brother named Unjup rebelled against the Government. The Government then launched a series of expedition against these rebels.

As a result of the revolution, Ba returned to Kanyau River in what was then Dutch Borneo. It was while he was there that Koh himself was born at Pulau Ensulit. Although Ba and his warriors were not living in Katibas but they frequently helped Unjup in his struggle against the Rajah.

Eventually after a few expeditions peace was restored in the Katibas. At about this time, Ba died at Labuan and his son named Jubang (the father of Temenggong Koh) led Ba's followers to migrate back to Sarawak. When Jubang returned to the Katibas, he found that practically no Ibans in the Rejang from Nanga Kanowit upwards had paid door tax to the Government. Some years after the Katibas troubles, the Dayaks had begun to pay their door tax with pigs, chickens, rice or bananas to the Government.

Jubang later joined forces with Mata Hari and Keling in their struggles against the Kayan, Bukitan, Tanjong, Rejang and Lugat tribes which had broken out not long before the Great Kayan Expedition of 1863. The struggle continued until late in the time of Munan who was the great Penghulu Dalam of Sibiu. Munan died in 1914.

Eventually after more conflict with the Government, the Ibans of Rejang started to migrate into the Balled tributary. Today, it is one of the most important Iban-inhabited rivers in Sarawak.

The End.