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SIRI MONOGRAF JABATAN

The Nascent Malaysian Society

developments, trends and problems

edited by

H.M. Dahlan

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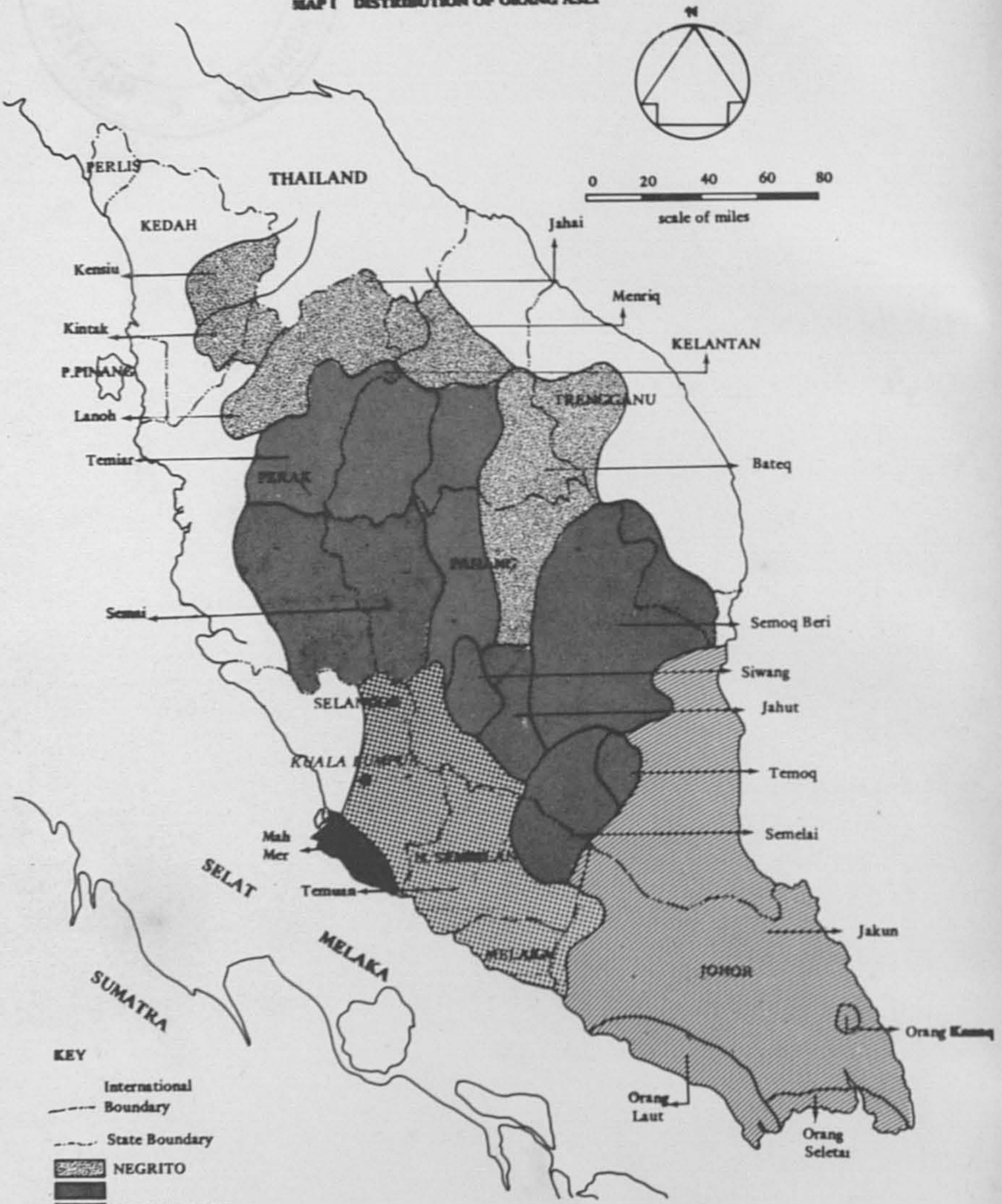

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THE NESCENT MALAYSIAN SOCIETY:

developments, trends and problems

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H.M. DAHLAN

Kuala Lumpur

Jabatan Antropologi dan Sosiologi
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dedicated to
the growth of the Department
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SOMETIME in 1975, an idea was born: that this Department of Anthropology and Sociology should review its role in documenting research. With this realization, a Publication Committee was set up. Since its inception in September 1975, this monograph has become its second project. The first one is the Department's journal, *Jurnal Antropologi dan Sosiologi*, Jilid IV, 1975/76.

We would like to thank especially the contributors who have responded to the call of date-line set for this publication; the readers – Dr. Hilde Groth, Hood Hj. Mohd. Salleh, Rustam A. Sani and Kamaruddin M. Said – who had to go through the manuscripts; the typists – Mohd. Sahir and Zaiyadi – who had given priority to this job in spite of the pressures of daily routine of office work in the Department; and others who have helped in the project in one way or another.

The imagination of the Publication Committee would not have materialized in the present form had there not been the cooperation from the University. We would like Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia to know our deepest appreciation for the financial grant it has given towards making this project possible.

Finally, this monograph is intended to arrest some movements in society on the move. In reference to present-day Malaysia, it is intended to surface some developments, trends and problems in the nascent national society. In this limited scope, it reflects some concerns about what has happened, is presently happening, and possibly will continue to happen. Some ideas herein contained are not new, but by no means are they obsolete. Needless to say, the flaws that exist in the presentation of issues are the burden of the respective contributors: the weaknesses relating to the final coherence of this monograph, however, are my own.

Department of Anthropology and Sociology
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
June, 1976.

H.M. Dahlan
Editor

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H.M. DAHLAN

AN OVERVIEW

I

IN all cases of decolonized societies, two things come out prominently with regard to nation-building: one, the problem of land, and two, the problem of peoples. The former is, in most part, solved through physical change-over of governments from the colonial masters to local elites. This process is either won through bloodshed or peaceful negotiations. The conclusion of independence of Malaysia was achieved through the latter means but its route to that end was not without bloodshed. The task of nation-building is, in fact, just begun the moment its physical sovereignity is restored. Thereafter, the problems of peoples loom large. The history of new nations all over the world today is characterized by revolutions or primordial conflicts which often force them to a frequent change of government styles. Indeed, this aspect of nation-building becomes ever more hazardous and critical in countries that have to rectify a historical imbalance in terms of political and socio-economic cleavages in the ethnic plurality of their populations.

This monograph is addressed to problems of peoples. In a broader sense, it is an attempt to look into some issues that have, one way or another, affected the emergence of present-day Malaysian society. More importantly, it is an attempt to understand why certain developments, trends, and problems relating to the problems of peoples in this country continue to affect its future. As its title indicates, the present undertaking is by no means complete: it is just a small and limited attempt to look at the wider perspective of Malaysia today from the idea and conception of a nation by peoples of the land; the problems of integration of minority groups into the wider society; the problems of adjustment in cultural and magical values in 'small communities' in Redfield's terms; the problems of integration of village communities into the economic and political mainstreams of the national system; and the problems of rural-urban drift.

Each essay in this monograph presents a case particular only to the problems it wants to bring out. Therefore, it is indefensible to lay any claim that here is a complete sociological picture of Malaysia. Nonetheless, every case has its merits and it is hoped, through these, it would help us to discern some developments, trends, and problems in the emerging Malaysian society.

There may be a possible inquiry into the use of the term 'nascent' and not any other epithet to describe the present Malaysian society. Does the term nascent describe the society that is emerging in Malaysia? Based on the two premises of nation-building discussed earlier, the Malaysian case is right in the midst of rectifying the historical imbalance under the general agenda of problems of peoples. At the present juncture of its development, it is undeniable it has achieved a physical sovereignity over its boundaries, but it shall have to go through many more rigorous experiments before the political, social, and economic, and even ethnic, boundaries of its peoples are truly solved to warrant its existence as a united, integrated Malaysian nation. At the most, therefore, the Malaysian society has approximated a critical level of integration, but it would need more to render its present level of integration viable and self-generating. It is in this light, therefore, that 'nascent' is considered more apt to describe present-day Malaysian society.

In no way does 'nascent' suggest political or governmental immaturity: however, it does strongly denote a mental immaturity on the part of some components of the society to participate fully in the process of producing the general will, considered so vital, in the democratic lifestyles of a nation. Lack of participation is not without causes. Therefore, if participation in the exercise of creating the general will of a nation is considered so vital, it is sheer commonsense that a new nation, for that matter any nation at all, that has reached the critical nascent stage should direct its energies in making that participation possible.

The study of Nation could be approached in two ways: one, it is done after the nation has been born, and two, it is done before it is born physically but is already well conceived in the minds of the political public of the country concerned. Rustam chooses the latter approach, in reappraising the idea and conception of Malay Nation by Malays themselves. One suspects Rustam's dislike for the former approach because it tends more to look at the phenomenon and reality of nation from historical events that had their roots outside the country concerned. In the context of Third World countries, where the colonial experience is the most important single event, it is understandable why rejection to the former approach is articulated especially by citizen scholars: the history of these countries is conceived from the colonial minds.

Rustam presents an alternative sociological microscope in understanding what it was in the minds of Peninsular Malays about their nation

of intent. In this light, he issues an interesting point: a nation that is born out of colonial necessity is not necessarily the nation of intent of the peoples of the land concerned. His rejection of views that Nusantara-based Malay politics being the result of influence from across the Straits of Malacca is relevant and interesting. An aspect which Rustam has not dealt with in great length is what was the extent and nature of the Malay political public during the colonial era in British Malaya. An indication of it, is however, seen in the division of two Malay elite groups involved in the propogation of Malay nationalism: one group was supported by traditional, aristocratic centers, whose symbols were effectively incorporated into the colonial regime, and the other group had to draw its strength and legitimacy in direct confrontation with colonial powers. The latter group, therefore, produced a strand in Malay politics that was the least associated with even Malay traditional centers of authority. Its support came from the Malay political public, very much lacking the apparatus of legitimacy from centers of authority. Therefore, the struggle for the nation of intent of the Peninsular Malays by Malay nationalists who fell out of the traditional aristocratic and colonial centers was categorically labelled as the Malay Left.

At the formulary stage of Malaysian nation, two issues have been overlooked namely the place of Nusantara-based ideological notion of Malay nation, and the place of primitive sense and national sense in the overall shaping of Malay-based nationalism. At this stage, the most immediate need of nationalist movements was to gain back territorial sovereignity from the colonial masters. Rustam's paper rightly implies that even at this stage of development for the birth of a nation, it is necessary to separate nationalist groups that fought within the colonial structure and those groups that brooked no compromise with any form of nation designed upon a colonial format.

The history of the carving out of Nusantara units into colonial political orbits, such as the British sphere of influence and Dutch sphere of influence, is not unrelated to movements among Nusantara Malays (in the later stages of European colonialism in this area) to explore possibilities whereby they would be able to reintegrate their primitive and national sense of being in one world, culturally, linguistically, and politically. This is indeed a lost battle even before it was launched, because in all colonialized communities, the colonial historical process has produced uniquely a quantum force which generated two significant events namely the dis-

continuity of local, indigenous historical processes, and the amputation of local cultures. This discontinuity had the effect of deculturizing the local population in their own cultural sense of history. As implied in Rustam's presentation of the Malay nation of intent, the Malay politics that gained currency from the wider Nusantara ideological base faced strong opposition from forces from the traditional centers of authority.

Perhaps here, Rustam offers a valid sociological perspective of evaluating the idea of nation. Though he does not even mention in his paper the forces of primitive and national sense as crucial in the formation of nation, these forces were implied. They become even more necessary and critical, when the nation is born but without any formulae whatsoever as regards to creating national personality-types among its peoples.

National personality-types are individuals who are well moulded with their cultural sense of history, and they are rare commodities in many decolonized societies. Integrative revolutions in new nations, in fact, are a symbolic reaffirmation of the need to go back to one's cultural history. This process involves type of neo-traditionalism, but often times, it fails to achieve its goals, or could it be that it misses out the objectives it sets out to achieve?

Properly speaking, the integrative revolution is doomed to failure if it fails to set its strategies along legitimate set-parameters. If its aim is to create a communicative sense of belonging to one nation, it must begin with a strong primitive sense that is subconsciously integrated with a national sense of belonging to a well-defined group of people. These two layers of senses are necessary ingredients towards making national, personality-types of any nation. To be able to set our minds on this end, it is worthwhile to understand the cultural basis in the conception of nation.

In the context of the nascent Malaysian society – a society that has, for the most part, solved the problem of land, and is currently engaged in solving the problem of peoples – it is worth noting that in order to solve these problems effectively, it requires a rethinking of what the nation was before it becomes what it is today. The continuity of its historical process, if it is to be preserved, must be reviewed in the light of events that existed in pre-colonial days. No nation, especially in the Third World, can afford anymore to deny of its peoples its own cultural sense of history.

III

AMONG contemporary new nations, the problems of primordialism are

serious items on the agenda of national integration among the ethnic components of the national society. These are urgent problems in all multi-ethnic societies. There are many theories on ethnic integration as there are many social scientists actively researching on this subject. In this respect, Ting Chew Peh's, "Some problems of Chinese Assimilation in Peninsular Malaysia", and Baharon's, "The Temuans and the wider society: Integration or assimilation," present us a perspective of looking at the problems of forging an integrated Malaysian society. Both writers dismiss assimilationist policy as unsuitable to the Malaysian case.

In dealing with ethnic primordialism, it is first of all necessary to look back into the country's history. The existence of ethnic blocks as obstacles to national integration is not unrelated to colonial history. In a very true sense, ethnic boundaries characterise newly emerging civil states, and these boundaries tend to generate communal politics, and therefore cultural separation becomes the basis for national political manoeuvring along ethnic lines. A situation of this kind will only warrant ceaseless ethnic conflicts as the national society moves ahead.

The uncertainties of ethnic integration are universally reckoned with. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile noting that history has proven that assimilationist policy is not only unsuitable, but more so it is racialist in its very nature. In the context of new nations, it will perpetuate a colonial mentality. Logically, a nation which was born from the wrecks of colonialism, should be the first to reject assimilationist policy altogether.

Baharon's Temuan case, in many ways, can represent the situation of Orang Asli community in the context of nascent Malaysian society. Two things need attention here: that this community is no longer isolated and that it has its own ethnic history. It cannot therefore be naively assumed that these people, being the minority in wider society can, and therefore should, accept what is physically imposed from without. Without their participation in the mainstream process of nation-building, the evolution of a national identity or consciousness is hard to come by. Participation presupposes general acceptance of their ethnic identity and honour, and through this process there is hope of getting the Orang Asli community into the nascent national society. Getting the Orang Asli to be fully acquainted with the over-riding symbols of the wider society seems to be the major task, but it is not also unfair to demand the wider society to give priorities in the former's political and socio-economic development without undue assimilationist restraint of their having to make adjustments into the wider society.

In the case of Chinese ethnic community in Malaysia, Ting Chew Peh suggests that ". . . mutual accomodation, rather than assimilation, should be emphasized as an important solution to Malaysia's ethnic problems." This principle is generally acceptable, but how it could be effectively implemented poses a problem. It is most unfortunate that Ting Chew Poh stops at where he should pursue more about the subject. Students and scholars of ethnic relations should find this subject worth deserving serious thoughts, especially the Chinese conception of being part of the wider society. There is, it seems, an urgent need to examine the perceptive minds of the Malaysian-born Chinese regarding their place and role in the wider society, and this must necessarily demand a semiological study of Chinese behaviour towards encroaching symbols into their sensory world. There is at the same time a need to verify some dominant stereotypic generalizations about problems of Chinese 'assimilation' in the wider society. Here again, the semiological approach to the problem is most urgent, otherwise connotative elements, which contain latent divisive effects, will continue to charge ethnic climate of the country with unfounded fears and distrusts.

IV

ETHNOCENTRICISM is a social vice in any multi-ethnic society. It breeds on ignorant minds. To say the least, where it involves two different racial groups or more, it generates racialist prejudice and discrimination. Terms like "primitive" and "backward" are some of the acceptable labels that portray the ethnocentric minds of the general public towards the socially degraded little-attended-to communities or peoples. The nascent Malaysian society is not devoid of this social problem.

Hood's "Morality and restraint among the Semelai of Malaysia" offers an ethnographic account on some aspects of morality and restraint among the Semelai, a Senoi-speaking Orang Asli community living largely on the banks of the Bera river and the swamp forest of Tasik Bera in Pahang and also Ayer Hitam in Negeri Sembilan. The main concern of this paper is to put this community into the proper perspective of its inter-connections with the outside order, which may be idenfitied as Malay. In this respect, Hoods warns of unjustifiable generalizations about Orang Asli community as being apart and peripheral to the wider society. Lack of understanding of this community has tended to push it far back into the most obscure minds of the outside world, so much so it only exists as a primitive and

backward community out there in the jungles. Ethocentricism breeds richly on this sort of intelligence!

What appears "primitive" and "backward" to the dominant local Malaysian population are but a figment of the popular imagination. In reality, the Semelai described so vividly here, physically distant as they are in geographical terms from the larger Malaysian population, have in fact been integrated into the wider society, thereby contributing to the emergence of nascent Malaysian society.

V

IN studies of change, two things have been emphasized: the changes that are taking place, and persistent survivals in the midst of changing environment. These two features characterize contemporary rural communities in Malaysia. Zainal's "Magical practices in a rural Malay community in Sarawak," illustrates this point.

Basically, Zainal poses a basic problem: how is man behaving in the context of accelerated change? He writes: "In the context of accelerated national development, deliberately planned and executed at all levels of administration and consciously transforming every aspect of traditional life style, magic may lose its meaning and function." Man fundamentally arranges his social life within the scheme of two dynamically related environments: the bio-cultural and the socio-cultural environments. Zainal directs his attention on the latter in trying to understand the behaviour of man in the context of greater penetrations of modern knowledge and technology. Will modern technology that has caused rural communities into an encounter with outside world-views and ethos, create a lag and conflict in rural folks, used as they are, to their tradition-bound cognitive systems of rural culture?

The idea of changing man so that he becomes compatible to the maxims of contemporary technology-based world order, is not a simple matter of merely providing the means without knowing first of all the highly integrated diverse elements of religion, magic and custom, that persist in man. This should be the first wing to be pulled in the whole mechanisms of bringing man into an otherwise unfamiliar, unintelligible, and risk-ridden world of change. Understanding preceeds change, but understanding of things will never take place if the innovators, such as idea-mongers and agents of change, and the recipients do not interact. It is important for agents of change to bear always in mind that change by

imposition risks the respect of the recipients. No meaningful change can really take place unless the recipients have internalized the essential values associated with the objects of change. There is no shortcut to socialising man to new values of whatever merits, but through the hard way of first knowing what his social world is, that is, the cognitive systems of his culture.

VI

RURAL development and urbanization are two major aspects of change that affect more than two-third of the Malaysian population. They appear as development projects which represent means of delivering the goods of modernization to the vast majority who have lagged far behind from the urban-middle and upper classes. Theoretically, these two programmes should have rectified structural inequalities that existed between urban centers and rural peripheries since the independent nation was born.

Micro-studies of village communities in Peninsular Malaysia, based on data collected up to the 1960's indicate a strong trend for the development of under-development at the village level, especially in the wake of greater and accelerated integration of these peripheries into the national orbit. Despite institutional changes that have been made, the breakthrough to rural change, in the sense that rural folk should gain an effective participation in the national system, has yet to come about. Mohd Dahlan's "Micro-analyses of village communities in Peninsular Malaysia," provides evidence that most rural folk are struggling to maintain their daily poverty-level subsistence.

Village studies in this country consistently reveal discrepancies between empirical realities and the anticipated goals of development projects. It has been publicly pronounced that failures of this type are the result of faulty implementation. It is claimed, somewhere along the process of implementation, the doers or the recipients, or both, have failed to perform their roles efficiently. The thinkers and policy-makers behind the scene of implementation seem to get the least blame, for these failures. When patterned failures are recorded, then it is only logical to expect thinkers and policy-makers to re-evaluate the thinking behind the policy. This of course demands in-depth theorising about issues involved. It should lead finally to a thorough rethinking about the epistemic paradigm upon which hypotheses are built. Deductive thinking wholly based upon outside experiences could only lead to cheap imitation of ideas.

IN the case of center-periphery integration, the most pursuasive theory is that of the integrative-diffusionist. It sees the peripheries as physically unconnected with the centers, and thereafter concludes that they are also sociologically separated from the mainstream forces of the over-all national system. This kind of thinking breeds a sociological-dualist classification between the so-called modern centers and the under-developed peripheries. It will never come any nearer to a dialectical, structural overview of the total historical reality. Consequently, it will fail to see the fundamental contradiction involved in the center-periphery integration, which is mainly a problem of systematic integration.

VII

HAIRI's paper on rural-urban migration, based on a case study in a town called Bandar Maharani in Johor, shows the nature of population movements from rural areas to urban centers in this country. It confirms the push-pull factors as causes of urbanization. There are certain indicators which should deserve the attention of planners regarding patterns of selective migration of rural manpower to urban orbits, the state of socio-economic compulsion now affecting rural social life, and the nature and type of mobility that urbanization generates. More importantly, Bandar Maharani's experience indicates in no small measure that urbanization is not unrelated to lack of occupational and training facilities in rural areas. While it is most consoling, on one hand, to know that there is a growing businesslike attitude, among rural folk, towards meeting the needs of contemporary survival but the needs of which are the least available in rural areas, it is also foreboding a trend that will in the final analysis bring rural problems into urban areas, unless of course adequate remedial steps are urgently taken to ameliorate the socio-economic conditions now prevailing in rural areas. The moral concern in greater rural-urban migration exists not in the need to check this flow of population movement, but rather at the level of how to help overcome the state of compulsion that makes this movement inevitable.

VIII

ABDUL MAULUD'S paper presents another aspect of urbanisation – that which highlights creeping urbanism in a Malay village situated at the immediate fringe of a growing city of Kuala Lumpur Should Emile Durkheim be alive today, he should be most amazed to see how social

solidarity is kept at a functional balance between two functionally incompatible forces: one pertaining to the penetrating middle-class (or is it working-class?) oriented values, and another pertaining to lingering, at time persistingly rigid, egalitarian rural rustic values. Of course Mangin (1970: xxvii) would describe the situation as one where urbanized peasants have successfully adapted themselves under pressures of two worldviews: the tradition-bound village-peasant's worldviews and the city-bound working class/middle-class worldviews. Abdul Maulud's account is rich with ethnographic data about a people who have to make adjustments and re-organizations as they become ever more exposed to the executive forces coming from the urban-oriented-outside world.

The incorporation of a peasant subculture into the mainstreams of a national system has been a subject of great interest to students of peasantry studies. The incorporation of Kampong Pencala is such a case. As the village gets deeper into the national mainstreams, the whole village system is brought to face a changing perception and utilization of time and space, thereby enforcing upon the "urbanised" village-folk a new sensory world in the making – a cultural extension that permits the two worldviews to operate simultaneously according to the best calculation of rewards with a given environment.

THE papers in this collection will not give a full picture of the developments, trends, and problems that characterize the problems of peoples in the nascent Malaysian society. This monograph does not pretend to cover that role. The scope of problems of peoples in new nations is large and complex, and what is here presented is just a glimpse of it. Anyway, as new nations move ahead into history there is a need to assess its experiences. In some ways, social scientists are just like situational cameramen who take snapshots according to the needs and crises of the moment, and the pictures taken will then become significant documents when they reach the minds of the scrutinizing reading public. It is hoped the present undertaking has not failed to fulfil this little role.

RUSTAM A. SANI

MELAYU RAYA AS A MALAY 'NATION OF INTENT'

Rustam has submitted an M.A. Thesis, entitled "The Origin of the Malay Left: An Analysis of the Social Roots" (Unpublished), to the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1975. This article is based on a chapter, "Melayu Raya: The Nation of Intent" pp. 73–91, with additional reflections.

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THE '*Melayu Raya*' concept may be one of the most important ideological forces in Malay politics and certainly a very interesting one. There is therefore a need to examine the concept thoroughly so as to place it in its proper perspective, since it may perhaps be one of the most neglected and misunderstood. Many studies on the political development of the Malays in Malaya* have identified a number of political organisations classified as 'the Malay leftwing movements' – organisation such as the pre-war *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (KMM), the post-war *Parti Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya* (PKMM) and other organisations affiliated to the PUTERA, and the post-independence *Partai Rakyat Malaya*. It has also been rightly pointed out that these organisations were strongly inclined towards the '*Melayu Raya*' concept. But, just as the 'Malay leftwing movements' themselves seem to have been considered unimportant and dismissed as 'failed' Indonesian-influenced political movements, so the 'Melayu Raya' concept propagated by these movements has also been dismissed as the wishful thinking of a group of Indonesian-influenced Malay politicians.

The present attempt to focus attention on the '*Melayu Raya*' concept is the outcome of the author's conviction that a study of 'Malay Left' politics is not only sociologically relevant, but also profitable in the sense that it would throw some perceptive lights on Malay nationalism and political development as a whole.[1] The main focus of this paper is on the

*'Malaya' here refers to Semenanjung Malaysia or Peninsula Malaysia. The term *Malaya* throughout this paper consistently refers to a historical situation before the inception of Malaysia in 1963. (Editor).

[1] My own thoughts on the subject have been set out in a very 'preliminary' manner in my MA dissertation *The Origin of the Malay Left: An Analysis of the Social Roots*, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1975.

early phase of modern Malay political development, specifically the manifestation of the '*Melayu Raya*' concept in the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda*. No attempt is made to suggest possible implication of this nationalistic ideology on later developments in Malay politics, although such an exercise would undoubtedly be worthwhile.

Basically, the '*Melayu Raya*' concept refers to a nationalistic notion of the Malay nation perceived in its cultural terms and territorially covering a wide area: the whole Malay Archipalego. This nationalistic ideology has also been referred to in works on Malay politics as 'Pan-Indonesianism' or 'Greater Indonesianism' – terms which we believe have partly contributed towards impeding a proper understanding of the significance of the '*Melayu Raya*' concept. Because of the use of such terms, the notion '*Melayu Raya*' has therefore been perceived in terms of Indonesia and Malaya as two distinct cohesive political units. Therefore, any manifestation of the ideology has been perceived as the struggle of political groups in Malaya to make the country a part of Indonesia – a phenomenon that has been often explained in terms of the function of the flow of an exogenous (Indonesian) influence on the Malay radicals in Malaya. The aims of this paper are twofold: firstly, to show that such a 'diffusionist' explanation of the '*Melayu Raya*' concept as a political phenomenon in Malaya is not a satisfactory one and secondly, to suggest an alternative explanation of the phenomenon as being an integral (or perhaps functional) element of Malay nationalism itself.

THE INDONESIAN AND MALAYS: A LEGACY OF THE PAST

BEFORE we can attempt to resolve the question of the Indonesian 'influence' on the Malays in Malaya, it is important that a few words be said about the nature of the relationship between the Indonesians and the Malays. In this respect, one factor that needs to be emphasised at the outset is that both the concepts 'Indonesia' and 'Malaya' as distinct cohesive political units are very recent ones. Culturally, it is possible to talk of the Malays in Malaya as constituting a minor portion of a bigger entity often referred to as *Nusantara.* The term Nusantara seems to have been preferred in certain academic circles because of its non-geographical, non-political and non-ethnic connotation to indicate a very big area variously called the Malay Archipelago, the Indonesian Archipelago and in the field of comparative linguistics, the Western Malayo-Polynesia. Despite the continuous variations discernible in the culture of the Nusantara, it is

nevertheless possible to perceive it as a cultural entity. As Ismail Hussein has pointed out:

> ". . . underneath this eternal variety, there is a line of unity all along, due to similar ethnic characteristics and geographical conditionings, to the similar foreign cultural influence that it has undergone, and to the great mobility of the inhabitants. Thus there has always been constant interinsular and inter-dialect contacts."
>
> (Ismail Hussein, 1974:2)

However, this 'cultural entity' does not mean that the Nusantara constituted a large and cohesive political unit. Before the consolidation of colonial rules in the area, it is more accurate to describe the Nusantara, in political terms, as made up of a great number of small political units whose locations were influenced by communications channels such as rivers. The relationship of these units can be perceived in terms of intrinsically unstable ties, oscillating periodically from conflict to complementarity, between shifting centres of political control on both sides of the Malacca Strait.[2] The function of this system of 'international relations' of the Nusantara area on the Malays and the Indonesians is the existence of both a sense of unity and rivalry.

There is no doubt that there exists a sense of pride in the greatness of various ancient Malay-Indonesian Kingdoms – pride in Srivijaya and Majapahit, in the Sultanate of Malacca, Brunei, Atjeh, among others – on both sides of the Strait. But there are differences of emphasis from place to place: Malays are more likely to look to the Malacca Sultanate, Javanese to Majapahit or Mataram, Sumatrans to Srivijaya, Minangkabau or Atjeh. For the purpose of current political myth making, the past can therefore be interpreted differently by conflicting groups, whether to emphasize the unity or the disunity of Indonesia and Malaysia. This situation was most obvious during the Indonesia-Malaysia dispute of 1963–1966 (or 'Konfrontasi').[3]

[2] For an account of this pattern of relationship see COWAN, C.D., 'Continuity and Change in the International History of Southeast Asia', *J-SEAH*, Vol. IX no. 1, March 1968, p. 1–11.

[3] cf. MACKIE, J.A.C., *Konfrontasi – The Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute*, 1963–1966, Kuala Lumpur, 1974.

The fact remains, however, that what set the Malays in Malaya apart from the rest of the Nusantara socially and culturally is the outcome of recent colonial history, i.e. the consolidation of the Dutch and British colonial empires in the area during the last century. With the coming of western powers, the fragmentation of Nusantara into separate politico-geographical units became a fact, and the frontiers that bound them became as much as a reality as the oneness in their socio-cultural background. Following this, Malaya as also in the case of both Indonesia and the Philippines, began to develop into a distinct entity with an unprecedented degree of political cohesiveness.

Viewed against these realities and the social background of Malaya then, the Malays in Malaya of the 1920s and the 1930s can be considered as undergoing a period of transition from being a section of a grand cultural entity into membership of a cohesive political unit of their own. Therefore, as far as their sense of political identity was concerned, at least three sets of values existed among the Malays then: (a) With the establishment of a centralised colonial administration, the Malays ceased to be members of small, unstable political entities. (b) The process of bringing together these small states into a cohesive political unit or 'nation' in the modern sense, i.e. Malaya, was far from being complete.[4] (c) Culturally, there also existed an awareness of being members of a greater cultural entity (Nusantara).

THE NATURE OF INDONESIAN 'INFLUENCE'

AS mentioned earlier, the 'Melayu Raya' concept constitutes one of the most important defining characteristics of the political organisations that can be classified as the 'Malay Left' strand in the political development of the Malays in Malaya. The search for the 'ideological roots' of the strand which has its origin in the KMM, has brought a number of writers on the subject to the efforts of some Indonesian communists in Malaya in the 1920s and the influence of Indonesian nationalist leaders on a group of young radicals in Malaya. Therefore, just like the 'leftwing ideological orientations' of the KMM, the 'Pan-Indonesian nationalism' of the organi-

[4] For example, during the 1930s Malays were more inclined towards the decentralisation of the British administration of the Malay States. cf. SIDHU, J.S. 'Decentralisation of the Federated Malay States, 1930–34', *Peninjau Sejarah*, Vol. 1. no. 1 July 1974. pp. 17–28.

sation is also explained in terms of Indonesian influence. At a glance this explanation looks very plausible indeed, as both the distinguishing elements of the KMM and the Malay Left strand as a whole are attributed to the same source.

But if the 'Pan-Indonesian' or 'Melayu Raya' idea of nationalism is to be viewed as the function of Indonesian influence, then there is the need to point out that this was not the first instance of such an influence or more exactly 'the flow of ideas to and fro across the Strait of Malacca'.[5] Therefore, before we can attempt to determine whether Indonesian influence does in fact constitute an adequate explanation for this 'Pan-Indonesian' nationalism, it is necessary to look first at some of the instances in which this flow of influences across the Strait took place.

Even as early as the 'religious reformism phase'[6] of Malay nationalism, this flow of influences had already taken place. Newpapers published in Singapore, such as the *Al-Imam,* were read by religious retormers in Sumatra, such as Haji Abdullah Ahmad and Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah. The former even published a similar journal (*Al-Munir,* published in 1911) which was declared 'taboo' by the Sumatran religious establishment. In 1916, Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah travelled to Penang, Kedah, Perlis, Perak, Selangor, Pahang, Negri Sembilan, Johor and Singapore. Although he was able to win over a small number of Malays to his reformist ideas, the Malay religious establishments began to label him a religious leader who has been misled.[7]

Again, as early as 1922 a group of Indonesian and Malay students at Al-Azhar University in Cairo had already propagated the idea of Pan-Indonesianism. From that year, the number of Indonesian and Malay students there was large enough to enable them to organise themselves as an association. The magazine of the association, *Seruan Azhar*, made much

[5] YONG MUN CHEONG, 'Indonesian Influence on the Development of Malay Nationalism, 1922–38', *Journal of the Historical Society,* University of Singapore (Dec. 1973) p. 2.

[6] The period 1906–1926 has been designated 'the religious stage' of Malay Nationalism by SOENARNO. cf. 'Malay Nationalism, 1900–1941' *JSEAH*, Vol. 1, (Mar. 1960) p. 8.

[7] HAMKA, *Ajahku,* Djakarta 1958, pp. 77–88.

of the fact that the inhabitants of the two colonial territories of 'Dutch Indonesia' and 'British Malaya' possessed both a common language and religion (Islam).[8] It may be assumed that these were the bases upon which the unity of this people was postulated and therefore the establishment of one state by this people could be justified.

Even when the 'Pan-Indonesian' idea of nationalism was being propagated by the KMM group in the late 1930s, the Indonesian 'influence' was not confined only to the field of politics. It was felt also in other aspects of Malay social life, and was most marked in the field of literature.[9] This phenomenon is readily understandable when one considers the close affinity of the Malay and Indonesian languages and cultures. Indonesia has already been experiencing a literary renaissance since the 1920s.[10] With the lack of reading materials in Malay, the Malays in Malaya who already had the advantage of indigenous education had to 'make up for this deficiency by buying heavily from the Dutch East Indies, with the result that British Malaya is flooded with outside paper.'[11] In fact, it was with the aim of overcoming this lack of vernacular reading materials that in 1926 a Malay translation Bureau was set up, and among the activities was the translation of English works such as *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* into Malay.[12]

Other factors can also be cited as manifestation of the existence of the flow of ideas and influences across the Strait of Malacca: for example, the existence of Malay students in Indonesia and Indonesian immigrants in Malaya.[13] It is not the intention of this paper, however, to describe in

[8] cf. ROFF, W.R., 'Indonesian and Malay Students in Cairo in the 1920s'. *Indonesia.* 9 (April 1970).

[9] cf. LI CHUAN SIU *Ikhtisar Sejarah Kesusasteraan Melayu Baru,* 1930–45, K. Lumpur, 1972. p. 106.

[10] cf. TEEUW, A., *Modern Indonesian Literature*, The Hague, 1967.

[11] YAZID BIN AHMAD, 'The Work of The Translation Bureau', *Oversea Education* (London) Vol. 2, No. 3, April 1931. p. 136.

[12] For a fuller account of the work of the Burreau, cf. ABDULLAH SANUSI AHMAD, 'Pejabat Karang Mengarang', University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur 1960. (Unpublished dissertation).

[13] cf. TUNKU SHAMSUL BAHRIN, 'The Growth and Distribution of the Indonesian Population in Malaya', *Bidjragen* Vol. 11, 1967.

detail or to trace the history of Indonesian influence on the Malays in Malaya, but to show that the influence was not confined only to politics and was also discernible in the fields of religion, literature and education. The flow of influence seems to be primarily from Indonesia to Malaya, because in certain particular aspects new developments had taken place first in Indonesia. When events first occurred in Malaya, as in the case of the religious reformism, it can be assumed the flow was in the opposite direction.

From this description of the flow of ideas, it is obvious that there were actually two distinct phenomena involved in the process. First and foremost there was the mere flow of ideas or influences, a process that was caused by the need of one side to imitate prior developments that had taken place on the other side. Although the influence was often very strong, it led to distinct local conditions on the receiver's side. For example, the modern Malay literature developed along its own path, very distinct from the development of modern Indonesian literature. Although the *Sumpah Pemuda* (Youth Pledge) of 28 October 1928 in Jakarta[14] declared that the source of *Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian Language) is Malay, the language developed along slightly different lines from the Malay language that was later to develop into *Bahasa Malaysia* (Malaysian Language).[15]

Such exchanges of influence which led to distinct developments has therefore to be distinguished from the 'Pan-Indonesian' or 'Melayu Raya' sentiment. In the later case not mere influencing is involved; but it involved a sense of the cultural unity of the Malay 'race'. Expressed in nationalistic terms, it become therefore the conviction that this cultural entity constitutes a potential political entity as well. In the description of the flow of influences across the Strait, the existence of this conviction is most obvious in the case of the *Seruan Azhar* group and that of the KMM group. But Angus McIntyre has made a distinction between this aspect of the nationalist conviction of the *Seruan Azhar* group and that of the KMM group: while the 'Pan-Malaysian' notion of the Cairo students ascribed

[14] TAKDIR ALISJAHBANA, S., *Sedjarah Bahasa Indonesia*, Djakarta, 1956, p. 15–16.

[15] For a linguistic comparison of the two languages, see ASMAH HJ. OMAR, *Morfologi Sintaksis Bahasa Melayu (Malaya) dan Bahasa Indonesia: Satu Perbandingan Pola*, Kuala Lumpur, 1968.

equal status to the inhabitants of both colonial territories, the 'Pan-Indonesian' notion of the KMM group relegated the Malays to the position of inhabitants of the periphery of the planned state.[16]

It is the present author's contention that this distinction is based on a wrong premise. Such a notion undoubtedly presupposes the existence of two distinct cohesive political units — Malaya and Indonesia. Therefore any notion of the unity of these two political units into one area of effective political control can only take one of two forms: either the two political units form a federation of two states equal in status or one of them would have to be subservient to the other. Because the KMM group was historically placed in a position to take steps towards the implementation of the proposed state under the auspices of the Japanese who were sponsoring the independence of Malaya within Indonesia, it looks as if they had formulated a notion that represents a diminution of the status the Malays had enjoyed in the 'pan-Malaysian' nationalist concept formulated by the students in Cairo.

But there is no documentary evidence to support the contention that members of the KMM group perceived their 'Melayu Raya' idea of nationalism in such a territorial sense. McIntyre's description of the Cairo students' formulation of the 'Pan-Malaysian' conception would in fact describe adequately the KMM's notion. Given the advanced stage of Indonesian nationalism, as compared to that of the Malays, one would doubt if the Cairo students would have acted differently if they had been historically placed in the position to negotiate Malaya's independence together with Indonesia. The present author therefore maintains that McIntyre's comparison is not acceptable, on the ground that the ideology or nationalist idealism of one group is compared with the attempt at implementation of the same ideology by another group.

On the whole, McIntyre's explanation of the 'Pan-Indonesian' aspect of the KMM is also based on the notion of the flow of Indonesian influence on the vernacular educated Malays in Malaya. This flow of influence is perceived by him as the consequence of the expanded educational endeavours of the Sultan Idris (Teacher) Training College in Tanjung Malim to cover the teaching of Malay language, literature and history, causing its

[16] McINTYRE, A., 'The "Greater Indonesian" idea of nationalism in Malaysia and Indonesia', *Modern Asian Studies*, No. 7, Vol. I. (1973).

product to be greatly influenced by the Indonesian intellectual and political activities. Given the superior opportunities enjoyed by the English educated Malays of the privileged class and the challenges posed by the immigrant races, McIntyre relates the emergence of the 'Greater Indonesia' concept to 'the social predicament of Malays attending the Sultan Idris Training College in the 1920s and 30s'.[17] While there is a balance between endogenous and exogenous approaches in this explanation, we feel that its weakness is the overemphasis on the exclusive role of the SITC group. As was pointed out elsewhere, confining the formation of the KMM to the role of the college students and graduates alone does not constitute an adequate explanation.

Therefore, the present author's position so far on this matter is as follows: as nationalist movements had developed earlier in Indonesia, there is the possibility that the movements had their influence on the Malays in Malaya as in other aspects of social life. But such an influence may have led simply to the nationalists in Malaya adopting the styles of their Indonesian counterparts. It is certainly much more difficult to establish the link between such influence and the adoption of a 'Melayu Raya' idea of nationalism by the KMM group. Certainly the Indonesian nationalist movement cannot be the source of such an ideology, for McIntyre himself held that the ideology was adopted only later by the Indonesian nationalists i.e., the product of the dismantling of the Netherlands Indies colonial state and the active lobbying of the BPKI by the KMM in favour of including Malaya within the Indonesian state'.[18] One would therefore have to look for an endogenous explanation for the adoption of such a nationalist ideology by the KMM group.

THE KMM AND THE CONCEPT OF 'MELAYU RAYA'

IN order to understand the function of the 'pan-Indonesian' ideology among the KMM group, the discussion can begin with an examination of

[17] *Ibid.* p. 79.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 82. The question of whether Malaya and British Borneo colonies should be included in the national territory of Indonesia was debated in the Investigating Committee for Preparation of Indonesia's Independence (BPKI) on 11 July 1945. By a vote of 39 out of 66, the Committee accepted the arguments for their inclusion put forward by Mr. Mohamed Yamin and Ir. Soekarno.

the nature of pre-war Malay nationalism. By the term nationalism we mean 'an ideological movement, for the attainment and maintenance of self-government and independence on behalf of a group, some of whose members conceive it to constitute an actual or potential "nation" like others'.[19] From the descriptions found in existing studies on the subject, it appears that in pre-war Malay nationalism the 'group' was unmistakably the Malays, but in the perception of what constituted the group there existed confusion. Because of the uncertainty, during the 1930s it seems that the Malays were undergoing some sort of 'crisis of identity'. This led to a number of controversies on whether certain groups within the society were to be accepted as Malays. There was for example the opinion which propagated the exclusion of the DKA (*Darah Keturunan Arab* = of Arabic descent) and DKK (Darah Keturunan Keling = of Indian descent) from the definition of 'Malay'.[20] Then, in late 1932 there were discussions in the *Majlis* debating the pros and cons of the action taken by the committees of some Malay 'weekly markets' in Malacca that disallowed 'Indonesian Malays' from doing business in the markets and also on the merits and demerits of importing Javanese labour so as not to enlarge further the Chinese and Indian labour force in Malaya.[21]

If there is no clear definition for the notion 'Malay' in pre-war Malay nationalism, the notion of what constituted the Malay 'nation' was even more hazy. This is not surprising, for as Smith remarked, '. . . just as there are many nations without nationalisms, so there are many nationalisms without nations'.[22] We can therefore offer the pre-war Malay nationalism as an example of a nationalism without nation. And where a nationalism arises without a pre-existent nation, the 'nation' for which it strives is only an embryo, a project, a *nation of intent.*

[19] SMITH, A.D., *Theories of Nationalism*, London, 1971. p. 171.

[20] ROFF, W.R., *Origins of Malay Nationalism,* Kuala Lumpur 1967 p. 220. For accounts of the participation of the personalities of the KMM themselves in the controversies, see AHMAD BOESTAMAM, 'Memoir Ketiga', *Dewan Sastera,* Vol. II. No. 3, March 1972. p. 55 and ISHAK HJ MUHAMMAD, *Tiga Tahun di Singapura,* Petaling Jaya, 1975, pp. 32–36.

[21] For instance, ASMARA (pseud.), 'Melayu Semenanjung dengan Melayu Indonesia – Minangkabau tersisih', *Majlis* 17 Nov. 1932.

[22] SMITH *op. cit.*, (1971) p. 175.

The origins of Malay nationalism are found at a time when the Malays had not totally emerged from their premodial loyalty to the traditional state (*negeri*) rulers. As the early political leaders were mainly made up of a western educated elite recruited from the traditional ruling social stratum, the early nationalist movements were mainly *negeri* based, for example the *Persatuan Melayu Selangor*. But these traditional states were far from having the attributes of 'an actual or potential "nation" like others' in the modern sense of the word. Therefore, we see that towards the end of the 1930s, there were attempts by these state-based political organisations to forge some sort of pan-Malayan unity.[23] Because of the proximity of the state-based organisations to the *negeri* elite establishment,[24] the 'nation of intent' for their version of Malay nationalism took the form of a 'statist' notion of the nation.[25]

Faced by the challenges of the immigrant races, both the state-based political organisations and the KMM were committed to the same 'Malay preservation' type of nationalism. But it was in the notion of 'the nation of intent' for the Malays that the two strands of Malay nationalisms were set apart. While the state-based political organisations were more inclined towards a 'statist' concept of the nation, the KMM group was more inclined towards an 'ethnicist' notion of the nation. Because of the social distance of the leadership of this group from the 'establishment', they were less inclined towards a strong sense of loyalty to the traditional states or towards a union of these states under the colonial system. Instead they perceived their 'nation of intent' in its ethnicist sense, i.e. a nation perceived as a large, politicised ethnic group, defined by common culture and

[23] We refer here to the pan-Malayan Malay congresses, the first of which was held in Kuala Lumpur on 6 August 1939. (SOENARNO *op. cit.*, (1960) p. 19.)

[24] Members of this establishment were recruited mainly from members of the social strata designated 'the ruling class' of the supra-village level in traditional Malay society. In the context of British administration, the 'establishment' was comprised of the Sultan of the *negeri* (whose executive functions had been greatly reduced), members of the royal family and members of the Malay higher administrative elite.

[25] 'Roughly, *"Statists"* define the nation as a territorial-political unit. Nationalism becomes "the aspiration of the colonised population for self-government of the new political community whose boundaries were established by the coloniser". "*Ethnicists*", *per contra*, see the nation as a large, politicised ethnic group, defined by common culture and alleged descent.' (SMITH, *op. cit.* (1971): p. 176).

alleged descent. It is therefore in the light of this ethnicist conception of the nation of intent that their 'great Malay nation' or 'Melayu Raya' concept has to be viewed. An expression of the idea of Melayu Raya as an ethnicist concept of the Malay nation can be gleaned from the writings of Ibrahim Yaacob of the time. For instance in the 1st December 1932 issue of *Majlis*, in his contribution to the polemics on the exclusion of Indonesian Malays from the weekly markets discussed above, he wrote:

> ". . . it is obvious that the peninsular Malays have not yet understood the idea of nation and nationalism. Oh, my Malay people, the entire peninsular and the Indonesian archipelago is the possession of our common ancestors, the Malays. The names Minangkabau, Bugis, Jawa, Brunai, Atjeh, Lampung, Palembang, Rawa, Kampar, Kelantan, Perak etc are not the names of nations but of states. Our real ethnic identity is 'Malay'. The entire Indonesia possesses a custom similar to that of the Peninsular Malays. What is it then that sets us apart? It is simply the fate of our unity under the yokes of two colonial powers, i.e. the Dutch in the Indonesian Archipelago and the British in the Peninsula. But this should not alter the unity of our people, a unity that will not give way under the impact of rain nor crack under the impact of the sun."
>
> (Quoted from IBHY, 'Masih lagi tidur: ikan disangka batang', *Majlis, 1* December, 1932. (My translation)).

From this it is obvious that the distinction stressed by McIntyre between the 'Melayu Raya' concept of the KMM group and that of the Cairo students is not a convincing one.

If the later efforts of the KMM group at the implementation of this ideology appeared to be the diminution of the position of the Peninsular Malays as peripheral members of the Indonesian nation, then it is not because the Melayu Raya concept was perceived in such terms. This was caused by the eagerness to grab independence on behalf of the Malays within the context of a plan sponsored by the Japanese before the return of British rule to Malaya. This led, as has been mentioned earlier, to the prominent part played by members of this group in the establishment of KRIS. At a brief meeting in Taiping on 12 August 1945, where Soekarno and Hatta stopped on their homeward journey to Jakarta after discussing

Indonesia's immediate independence with the Japanese regional commander, Ibrahim Yaacob declared to the Indonesian leaders that KRIS was preparing to send a delegation to Jakarta for the independence ceremony and to take part in the formation of the Republic of Indonesia.[26] But the early defeat of the Japanese caused the plan to misfire.

CONCLUSION

THIS paper has made a case for viewing the 'pan-Indonesian' aspect of the KMM as an integral part of the organisation's nationalist ideology rather than as a function of Indonesian influence. This is not, however, to deny the existence of such an influence. Given the close cultural ties, Indonesian influence in other fields and the earlier development of Indonesian nationalism, the absence of Indonesian influence on political leaders in Malaya during the early phase of Malay nationalism was highly unlikely. But the influence itself is not an adequate explanation for the adoption of an 'ethnicist' notion of the Malay nation, for the idea was developed in Indonesia even later than in Malaya. It is a contention of this paper that because of the social distance of the leadership of the KMM from the 'establishment' and because of the challenges of the immigrant races in Malaya, they became more inclined to perceive their identity in terms of a past legacy of the cultural unity of the Nusantara, to a 'myth of common origin' as it were. 'Melayu Raya' therefore was one version of the Malay 'nation of intent' adopted by a group of Malays because they were more inclined towards a 'cultural' conception of the Malay nation rather than because they were 'pro-Indonesia' as claimed by some writers.[27] Therefore, a more perceptive understanding of the significance of the 'Melayu Raya' concept as a nationalistic political ideology held by a section of Malays could prove to be vital not only in understanding the early phase of Malay nationalism but the political development of the Malays as a whole.

It has always been implicit in studies on Malay nationalism that political awakening among the Malays began to take a more vigorous turn during the 1920's when they were faced with the problems of economic depression, retrenchment in government employment, administrative decentralisation and challenges from the immigrant population as

[26] MACKIE, *op. cit.* (1974) p. 20.

[27] For instance, MACKIE, *ibid.*, p. 19.

exemplified in the 1931 census. The Malays were naturally inclined to organise themselves into political, or at least quasi-political, organisations. Given the traditional 'political culture' of the Malays based on the submission of the subject class in political matters,[28] the tendency was naturally to look for political leadership from the aristocratic stratum. This leadership was provided by a newly emerging western-educated administrative elite which was a function of conscious efforts to create administrative personnel from among members of the traditional aristocracy.

However, due to further extension of educational facilities, the social problems have also awakened the interest of a non-traditional Malay 'intelligentsia' in political matters. With the deepening of the problem and their increasing dissatisfaction with the political leadership provided by the aristocratic elites – both outside and inside government institutions such as the State Councils – they themselves took steps to lead the mobilization of the Malays in political organisations. This was indeed a novel phenomenon in Malay society then, and it is in the light of this phenomenon that the formation of the KMM has to be seen. The present author's reading of the situation is in a sense similar to that of Soenarno who maintained that, with the formation of the KMM, Malay nationalism branched into two divisions – the left and the right.[29] In fact the present author would go further to suggest that this 'branching' led to the existence of two analytically distinct strands in the subsequent development of Malay politics – thereby creating possibilities of perceiving political organisations such as the KMM, PKMM, PUTERA and the Partai Rakyat Malaya not only as separate 'Malay leftwing organisations' but as landmarks in a distinct but continuous strand in Malay political development. The main distinctive characteristics of this strand are the social origin of the leaders and the propagation of the 'Melayu Raya' notion of the Malay nation.

The use of the term 'left' has led a number of writers to explain the formation of the KMM – the first political organisation of the Malay Left strand – in terms of the influence of Indonesian radicals on Malay politics.

[28] cf. GULLICK, J.M., *Indigenous Political Systems of Western Malaya*, London 1958 and MOKHZANI B.A.R., 'The Study of Social Stratification and Social Mobility in Malaya', *East Asia Cultural Studies*, Vol. 4 (Mar. 1965).

[29] cf. SOENARNO, *op. cit.* (1960).

The present author has argued against this explanation elsewhere.[30] What is certain is that just as the 'ideological roots' of the Malay Left strand is explained in terms of Indonesian influence, so was the 'Melayu Raya' concept. One danger of such an approach would be the blurring of the differences between the KMM and the 'outpost' political movements of the Indians and the Chinese in Malaya then. While the latter political movements were mere extensions of the parent movements in India and China, the former was the product of indigenous political processes.

[30] cf. my dissertation, *op. cit.* (1975)

TING CHEW PEH

SOME PROBLEMS OF CHINESE ASSIMILATION IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA

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I

ALMOST everywhere in Southeast Asia there are visible and viable Chinese communities, great and small, and everywhere where Chinese communities exist there is the problem of assimilation. In Indonesia, for example, there has been considerable amount of intermarriage between Chinese and the indigenous people, and the adoption of Indonesian language and Indonesian names by the Chinese is not uncommon. But Chinese – both *Totoks* and *Peranakans* – remain Chinese, almost 100% identifiable though they may have lost much of the Chinese culture.[1] In many cases the *Peranakans* were stuck half-way in the assimilation. They spoke the Indonesian language, brought Indonesian wives into the Chinese family system, and yet in all other aspects of life they remained Chinese. It is for this reason that Skinner has described the *Peranakan* society as an 'assimilation trap' (Skinner, 1958 & Hunter, 1966: 48).

In Buddhist Thailand where religion does not pose so much a barrier to assimilation as in Indonesia, assimilation occurs to an even greater extent. The fact, however, still remains that the assimilation in question is only partial in that there is still no sign of the whole Chinese community being absorbed in the general mass of "natives". As one writer has put it:

> "Judged by any material standard, the Chinese have made an unusually successful economic adjustment. . . . Yet the Chinese in Bangkok have not been assimilated. The Chinese population remains by and large distinct from the Thai people in occupations, in the formation of voluntary associations, in the use of educational facilities, and in political interests and activities." (Coughlin, 1955: 312).

[1] *Totoks* refer to China-born Chinese while *Peranakans* are local born Chinese with (almost invariably) some Indonesian blood and speak the Indonesian Language.

> "Culturally and socially, this minority (the Chinese) in Thailand has learned to accept Thai ways without, however, losing its attachment to Things Chinese".
>
> (Coughlin, 1960:11)

The situation in the rest of Southeast Asia is not very dissimilar to that of Thailand and Indonesia, where intermarriage and even the adoption of the native language have not led to full assimilation. The Chinese in the Philippines, Cambodia and Burma have all intermarried considerably with local people, and most of them can speak the local lingua franca. Nevertheless they remain an easily identifiable group not infrequently in danger of attracting political suspicion as well as nationalist persecution (Hunter, 1966: 49).

Peninsular Malaysia is a special case. Its racial composition makes its racial problem a unique one. Of a total population of over eight million, the Chinese account for over a third, the Malays half and the rest Indians and other minorities.[2] The powerful numerical strength of the Chinese makes them well situated to compete with the indigenous people more than any other overseas Chinese minorities – an exception is Singapore, where Chinese constitute 75% of a total population of two million.

We are only concerned here with some problems of assimilation in Malaysia. Assimilation is here defined as a social process whereby individuals and groups of one society are incorporated culturally and socially into another society with which they come into contact. For the Chinese community, its progress is defined by increasing social interaction with members of the indigenous group, the Malays; and by self-identification in an ever larger proportion of social situations as Malaysian rather than as Chinese. Assimilation is only considered complete when the Chinese identifies himself in almost every social situation as a Malaysian, and speaks Bahasa Malaysia (Malay Language) habitually and with native fluency (Skinner, 1956: 237).

The exceptionally strong numerical strength of the Chinese in Malaysia makes assimilation a problem of the first magnitude. Indeed, in view of the numerical balance between the Malays and the Chinese, 'assimilation' becomes scarcely a relevant word to use. It is no exaggeration to say that in

[2] According to the 1970 Population and Housing census of Malaysia, the population of Peninsular Malaysia was 8,810,348, of which 53.2% were Malays, 35.4% Chinese, 10.6% Indians and 0.8% others.

the main the Chinese in Malaysia still remain Chinese to all intents and purposes, and live quite apart from the Malays both emotionally and socially. On the individual level, however, there is a certain degree of assimilation. A case in point is the *babas* – the Straits Chinese – in Malacca and Penang. They are a small minority – many of whom having some native blood in them – who have been 'Malayized'. Their language is a somewhat 'Sinified' Malay dialect and their culture a mixture of both Chinese and Malay cultures. Strictly speaking, they are by no means fully assimilated, for they often identify themselves with the Chinese rather than with the Malays, both socially and politically. They furnish a good illustration of the interesting relationship between Chinese ethnic consciousness and Chinese culture. Both rarely march hand in hand. Many Chinese in Southeast Asia, such as the Malaysian *babas*, have remained Chinese despite the fact that they know not a scrap of the high Chinese culture (Freedman, 1972).

Many factors have been affecting assimilation in Malaysia. Only four major ones are singled out for examination: these are, religion, education, nationalism, and physical segregation. These four factors, individually or in combination, tend to weigh against assimilation rather than pro-assimilation.

II

RELIGION

THE Chinese in Malaysia are noted for their eclecticism and tolerance in religious practice. They practice a variety of faiths. The majority believe in the Chinese system of supernatural belief, which is in fact a combination of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and ancestor worship; some Chinese are Protestants while others belong to Catholicism. There is also a small minority of Muslims. Apart from the above groups, with increasing modernization and secularization, a growing number of educated Chinese become secular to the point of professing no religious beliefs at all.

Another characteristics of the Chinese in matters of religion is that there is a lack of religious dogmatism and fanaticism, with a resultant lack of proselytizing force. The Chinese are thus more willing to accept people from other religious faiths without exhibiting attitude of contempt or scorn (Means, 1970:30). As a result, their religious beliefs have little to do with the assimilation process, in the sense of hindering assimilation.

By contrast, the Islamic religion of the Malays has always been con-

sidered a crucial factor hindering Chinese assimilation. As one writer has observed, "In Indonesia and Malaysia, Islam was a severe barrier to intermarriage and full assimilation through acculturation to native and western ways was characteristic of Indonesia's *peranakan* and the Straits Chinese" (Murray, 1964:68). In this connection, Skinner's (1960:86–100) comparative study of Chinese assimilation in Java and Thailand is perhaps still one of the best discussions on the subject. He attributed the differential rates of assimilation in Java and Thailand before the Second World War to the contrasting features in the social structures of both countries and to religion, which he regarded as 'one of the most important variables of all' (Skinner, 1960:96). In Thailand, Skinner argued, the Theravada Buddhism is tolerant and permissive whereas the Islam religion of Java is relatively intolerant and exclusivist. Thai Buddhism requires of converts only a sincere desire to seek the truth, whereas Islam requires formal conversion and the renunciation of false gods. Moreover, the Mahayana Buddhism that is popular among the Chinese have more similarities with Theravada Buddhism than with Islam (Skinner, 1960:96 & The Siauw Giap, 1965:68). Conversion to Buddhism is thus an easier step than conversion to Islam. The net result of these differences is that whereas Islam hinders assimilation in Java, Buddhism is no barrier to Chinese assimilation in Thailand.

The same can be said of the situation in Malaysia with regards to Islam. Islam certainly makes Chinese assimilation difficult. Apart from its nature of being less tolerant than Buddhism, Islam also demands physical sacrifices from the converts, namely circumcision and prohibition of eating pork, which is a favourite Chinese dish. Moreover, the convert has to adopt a Muslim name in most cases.

Closely related to religion is the question of intermarriage, frequently regarded as an index of assimilation. Several factors are considered to adversely affect the rate of intermarriage between the Chinese and Malays, the most prominent of which being the Islamic religion, the balanced sex ratio of the Chinese and the generally unfavourable attitude of the Chinese towards miscegenation.

The unique position of the Malays in matters of religion should not be overlooked. Unlike Indonesia, where indigenous Indonesians have the freedom of choosing their religion, in Malaysia all Malays must be Muslims. A non-Malay must embrace the Islamic religion before he or she intermarries with a Malay. This religious barrier to a large extent effectively prevents

assimilation by way of intermarriage. Assimilation through intermarriage, if ever occurs, can only be a one-way process, namely the adoption of Islam by the non-Malay partner. The problem of assimilation is further excerbated by cultural differences and language barrier.

In the early days of Chinese settlement in Malaysia, particularly before the end of the 19th century, the sex ratio of the Chinese was totally out of balance – about 10 women to 100 men. This ill-balanced sex ratio tended to encourage miscegenation in those days in the Straits Settlements, especially in Malacca, creating a *baba* community. Islam was then as it is now a strong impeding factor. Many of the early Chinese settlers tended to marry only non-Muslims such as the Batak slaves and the aboriginal women.

Since the 1930's with the influx of Chinese women from China, the sex ratio began to improve (Ratnam, 1965:8). By 1957, as the table below shows, the sex ratio became almost balanced. The consequence of this is that intermarriage with natives fell sharply since then.

Chinese sex ratio

Year	*Females per thousand males*
1911	215
1921	317
1931	486
1947	815
1957	926

(Ratnam, 1965:8)

In passing, it is interesting to speculate on what might have happened to the Chinese community in Malaysia if the ill-balanced sex ratio had not been corrected. It is possible that the community might then have failed to strike any permanent roots in Malaysia or miscegenation might have occurred on a large scale, resulting in the creation of a community with a more local outlook (Purcell, 1967:86).

The question of Chinese attitude towards intermarriage has something to do with the individual's status and prestige. In the first place before marrying a Malay, the Chinese concerned has to accept the Muslim faith, viz. '*masuk Melayu*' (literally to enter Malay-dom or to enter the Malay community. It is a common term used to denote conversion to Islam). This act of '*masuk Melayu*' needs a lot of courage on the part of the

individual concerned because it virtually means an acceptance of Malay customs over those of the Chinese and is often frowned upon by friends and relatives. '*Masuk Melayu*' brings no status gain in the eyes of the Chinese. It only reflects the inability of the individual involved in finding a suitable mate within the bounds of his own community. Moreover, the enthnocentrism of the Chinese makes them feel that the Malays are culturally, socially, economically and intellectually inferior, and intermarriage with them will bring no material or status rewards whatever. Of more importance to the Chinese, intermarriage produces children who are half Chinese and half Malay. A half-caste is not well accepted by the community. The off-spring of mixed unions, the *babas*, are often regarded by the Chinese as 'less than Chinese', so much so that the very word *baba* has nowadays degenerated into a political epithet tinged with mockery.

III

EDUCATION

THE importance of Chinese education – Chinese education through the medium of Chinese – to assimilation can hardly be overstressed. Throughout Southeast Asia, Chinese education has generally been regarded as a vital force in developing and perpetuating Chinese identity which means the indefinite postponement of any major move towards assimilation. Purcell, for instance, has suggested that:

> "... the partiality of so many overseas Chinese for education through the medium of the Chinese language can be said to be the greatest barrier to the assimilation of the overseas Chinese into the communities of the Southeast Asian countries, and has been the occasion of political action among the local nationalist parties to check and offset it."
>
> (Purcell, 1965:37)

In Thailand, Skinner has also noted the important role played by Chinese education in preserving 'Chineseness' among the Chinese immigrants. He has suggested that

> "... without a Chinese education grandchildren of Chinese immigrants at the present time become Thai."
>
> (Skinner, 1957:381)

In Malaysia, the role of Chinese education in preserving and perpetuating Chinese identity is beyond any shadow of doubt. In fact the prevalence of Chinese schools, coupled with the exceptionally strong

numerical strength of the Chinese, makes integration a problem of the first magnitude. The term 'assimilation' becomes hardly relevant. More importantly, in Malaysia, more than elsewhere in Southeast Asia, Chinese education has sparked off controversies and has become politically salient for years.

The Chinese have always shown great enthusiasm for education for their children, be it in the medium of English or Chinese. The phenomenal growth of Chinese education in Malaysia began about the turn of the twentieth century. The growth was accelerated by the Chinese Revolution and the *Kuo Yu* movement in China in 1911 and 1917 respectively. Both events led to an upsurge of enthusiasm for Chinese education. Chinese schools were rapidly set up throughout Malaysia. By 1937 there were already about 933 Chinese schools with a total enrolment of 79,993 (Mills, 1942:366). Since then, there had been a steady increase of Chinese schools and enrolment reaching its peak, in the case of secondary schools, in 1961, and in the case of primary schools, in 1959. In 1961, there were a total of 132 Chinese secondary schools and 1,274 Chinese primary schools. Since 1962, the number of Chinese schools has begun to decline, particularly secondary schools, partly due to the government's conversion policy,[3] and partly due to the non-recognition of Chinese school certificates. By 1971, there were only 40 Chinese secondary schools with a total enrolment of 17,574 as compared to 55,741 in 1961. On the primary level, the number of schools was 1,021 – 291 less as compared to the 1959 figure.[4] Nevertheless, the enrolment in Chinese primary schools has slightly increased over the years, due largely to an increase in children of school-going age.

It is not intended here to trace the development of Chinese education. Suffice it to say that throughout the educational history of Malaysia. Chinese schools have coexisted with other vernacular schools, and a substantial number of Chinese children attended and are still attending Chinese schools. Before Malaya achieved its independence in 1957, Chinese education paid little attention to local conditions. It was China-oriented, both in its contents and methods. The bulk of the teachers were

[3]Beginning 1962, many Chinese Secondary Schools accepted government's terms and became fully-assisted national-type schools where the medium of instruction was changed from Chinese to English.

[4]Figures taken from monthly statistical Bulletin of West Malaysia, August 1972, p. 219.

recruited from China. The whole purpose of education seems to have been directed at instilling in the pupils a sense of Chinese nationalism by arousing their awareness of the great Chinese cultural heritage. This type of China-oriented education tended to produce a group of boys and girls who regarded themselves 'purely and simply as Chinese' in contrast with the more 'Malayan outlook' of the Chinese who attended English-medium schools (Purcell, 1967:222). Independence and the consequent Malayanization programme have not swept aside Chinese education but have considerably modified the curriculum of the Chinese schools in the direction towards a Malayan (now Malaysian) orientation and outlook.

The present trend in Malaysian education is the increasing emphasis on the use of Malay Language. English, which had always been the main tool of communication, is now relegated to secondary importance. The position of the Chinese language is worse still, partly due to the fact that it is no longer an important subject in public examinations and partly because it is not useful as a qualification to obtain jobs.

The ultimate aim of the Malaysian government is to make Malay the sole medium of instruction in all government-assisted schools. This will be achieved by 1982 and by 1983 all except language courses for new admission to universities will be expected to be conducted in the Malay language (Second Malaysia Plan:236). English and Chinese will however still be taught as language subjects. The whole purpose of this national system of education is to produce in the long run students with a genuine Malaysian outlook rather than an ethnic outlook. But it is doubtful whether full integration or assimilation will take place. In all probability the Chinese will still remain Chinese to all intents and purposes. One reason for this is that when these Chinese children return home after school, they continue to use their respective Chinese dialects, which have no relation whatever to the Malay language.

In the near future, therefore, it seems unlikely for the Chinese to become 'Malayized' or 'Malaysianized' to the extent of being fully assimilated. In so far as assimilation is concerned, the continued existence of Chinese schools and education presents a great obstacle. A proportion of the Chinese would insist that their children be educated in the Chinese language. This would result in a group of Chinese with a different orientation and outlook from those who come through the national education system. There would be little interaction and understanding between the Chinese educated and the rest of the student community, preventing the process of social integration from taking place.

IV

NATIONALISM

THE issue of Chinese nationalism is to a large extent intertwined with that of Chinese education. In pre-war Malaya, Chinese nationalism – or to be more precise China-oriented nationalism – was the only one considered to have any important influence in the local scene. Sun Yat Sen's revolutionary movement in China in 1911 aroused the interest of Chinese in Malaya as in other parts of Nanyang where Chinese were to be found. Some wealthy Chinese contributed their share toward helping the revolution, mostly by way of financial contributions. The bulk of the Chinese in Malaysia, however, were apathetic about politics at this time. But the revolution led to an upsurge of enthusiasm for Chinese education (Silcock & Aziz, 1950:9). Chinese schools were rapidly developed into centres of nationalist propaganda. This is not surprising in view of the fact that most Chinese school teachers came from China who tended to be members of the revolutionary intelligentsia. Added to this were two other factors. First, the curriculum in Chinese schools was so China-oriented that it tended to instil a sense of Chinese nationalism in the pupils through their awareness of the Chinese cultural heritage.[5] The second factor is that the Kuomintang, fully aware of the economic importance of the Chinese community in the Nanyang, took great effort to spread nationalist ideas through the national culture. (Silcock & Aziz, 1950:9).

All this tended to produce a group of people who looked more towards China rather than towards Malaysia. This China-oriented nationalism with a new sense of national identity drew the Chinese community not closer to, but further away from other communities in Malaysia.

Communist influence among the Chinese was much weaker before the war than nationalist influence. The communists, like the nationalists, made use of Chinese schools to spread their propaganda. But they differed from the nationalists in that, instead of bringing in communist teachers, they tended to organize political activity among the students, undermining school discipline, using school children to disseminate propaganda and organizing school strikes (Silcock & Aziz, 1950: 11).

[5] Language is an important factor in nationalism. The children learn Mandarin in Chinese schools. They are often told that Chinese is the greatest language in the world both in terms of the size of its speech community and in terms of the number of characters. It is thus not unusual to come across in the Chinese textbooks used during pre-war days such sentences as: I am Chinese. I live in Nanyang. I love China.

In terms of Chinese assimilation, communism has affected the Chinese community in at least two ways. First, the communist insurrection of 1948, which resulted in a state of Emergency in Malaysia lasting for more than a decade, was organized by a communist group consisting largely of Chinese. This is a fact no one can deny. Unfortunately it has led to an over-generalization, though an illogical one, that all Chinese are communists or their sympathizers. This over-generalization has been reinforced by the historical fact that the Chinese community as a whole did not actively support the Malaysian government in its effort to suppress communism.

Secondly, the emergence of a powerful Communist regime in China in 1949 has put the Malaysian Chinese into an embarrassing position. Not infrequently, they are regarded by other ethnic groups as enemies within the gates, especially in the wake of a rising local nationalism (Freedman & Willmott, 1961:162).

Today, while there is little evidence that there are any political ties between Malaysian Chinese and China, it is certainly true that their sentimental ties with China still remain. Moreover, a vast majority of the Chinese no doubt have some pride in China's reappearance on the international scene and her diplomatic achievements, though few Chinese businessmen would ever wish to return to communist China. This sort of sentimental attachment with homeland among the overseas Chinese is true everywhere in Southeast Asia, and it is difficult to assess its significance in the assimilation process. What is clear, however, is that it often creates resentment on the part of the indigenous people, giving them the excuse to accuse the Chinese of possessing dual loyalty.

V

PHYSICAL SEGREGATION

ASSIMILATION has also been hindered by a certain amount of physical separation between the various communities. Several studies have revealed that there is little social interaction between Chinese and Malays, and that social separation is rather pronounced. One reason for this probably lies in the fact that the two communities are physically segregated. Broadly speaking, the Chinese are concentrated on the west coast of the peninsula and in urban areas while the Malays are found largely on the east coast and in the north. The creation of Chinese "new villages" in the first few years of the Emergency also served to divide the two communities into separate residential compartments (Dobby, 1952: 163–179).

The lack of social contact, is, however, not due entirely to residential separation. In a study of Chinese rural community, Newell finds that there is very little contact between Chinese and Malays even though both communities live in the same village (Newell, 1962:39). Nyce also notes that

> ". . . fellowship between the Chinese and people of other ethnic groups living nearby is . . . occasional and casual. Cross-cultural friendships are rare, though contacts between individuals of different groups are superficially pleasant and little open antagonism has been witnessed".
>
> (Nyce, 1973:157)

Wilson in his study of a Malay village also observes that relations between urban Chinese and village Malays are highly selective and confined to economic relations only, and that there is little or no contact of any personal nature, and a lack of opportunity to develop such personal relationships (Wilson, 1967: 24 & 29).

The question of contact and its relationship with assimilation or integration needs some elaboration here. While it is generally true that there is little contact between the two communities at village levels (particularly true of people of lower socio-economic status) apart from their economic relationship at market place, it is also true that students who come through English schools and the University of Malaya tend to mix more regularly in social gatherings. At the top level, social interaction would seem to increase. And the integrated national system of education will also ultimately produce students with more common interests to interact with one another. This is important because without interaction or contact, integration can hardly occur. Interaction may lead to conflict and friction rather than integration and assimilation. But a certain amount of racial friction may well be a worthwhile price for progress towards an integrated society.

CONCLUSION

THESE, then, are some of the main obstacles to assimilation. The situation of the Chinese in Malaysia in fact furnishes a good illustration to the generalization that a functioning minority culture and society is in a strong position to resist assimilation. This situation can also be found in Thailand, Indonesia, and other industrially underdeveloped, predominantly agricultural societies where the indigenous peoples lack a tradition for trade

and commerce (Coughlin, 1953:316). The near-equality in numbers between the Chinese and Malays in Malaysia makes assimilation more difficult. In point of fact, it seems doubtful if assimilation in the sense as defined will ever occur in Malaysia in view of this numerical balance. Nevertheless, to say this is not the same as saying that the Chinese cannot be acculturated. To be sure, there has always been acculturation – a process whereby an individual or a group acquires the cultural characteristics of another – among both Chinese and Malays. As a result Chinese culture has certainly changed. It has become less Chinese and more something else – perhaps in the direction of a 'Malaysian outlook', a concept which is still in the process of making.

The numerical strength of the Chinese, together with their powerful economic position and distinct cultural heritage, has created a situation in Malaysia in which racial problems cannot be solved by way of assimilation. The only possible and practical solution seems to be a *modus vivendi* between the two major communities. As things stand now, cultural and social pluralism seems not merely the basis of Malaysia's history, but also its destiny. Within a foreseeable future, even with local nationality, Chinese are likely to continue identifying themselves as Chinese and that the Malaysian citizenship will not carry with it a uniform set of values and a standard style of life (Freedman, 1969:439). But it is a feature which can be lived with. After all, with immigration and modern communication facilities, few societies are truly homogeneous these days. It is not impossible to foster unity in diversity.

It is in this light that mutual accommodation, rather than assimilation, should be emphasized as an important solution to Malaysia's ethnic problems. If a high degree of mutual tolerance is exercised, there is no reason to believe that Malaysia cannot become an integrated nation. History has seen many plural societies which were and still are unstable and riven with conflict. Yet it has also shown that, through accommodation, people with diverse religions, languages and customs can live together harmoniously.

BAHARON AZHAR RAFFIE'I

THE TEMUANS AND THE WIDER SOCIETY: INTEGRATION AND ASSIMILATION.

This article is extracted from the author's Ph.D thesis, "PARIT GONG: AN ORANG ASLI COMMUNITY IN TRANSITION" Unpublished, Submitted to the University of Cambridge, Cambridge, December 1973. pp. 261–283.

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LIKE many other Orang Asli and non-Orang Asli communities in Malaysia today, the Parit Gong community is in a transition process which for some years now has been accelerated by the programmed actions of the government. The problem to be discussed here is to what extent has this transition process enabled the Orang Asli in general and the Temuans in particular to integrate with the wider society.

In a fairly recent appraisal of the problems of the indigenous minority peoples in Malaysia in the light of the government's efforts at national integration or nation-building,Kunstadter made the following observation regarding the administration of the Orang Asli population: "... the official policy is that they (the Orang Asli population) should be integrated with the Malay population. However, relatively few attempts have been made to integrate them into the national economy and society." (1967, Vol. 1: 308)[1]. This observation is both spurious and misleading, and it is outdated.

Ever since the policy was first instituted in 1961, considerable efforts (under the general and popular rubric of socio-economic development) have been made by the government (mainly but not exclusively, through the Department of Orang Asli Affairs) to integrate the Orang Asli into the national economy, and the nascent national or Malaysian society. My general impression (and I may of course be biased) is that these efforts are not only qualitatively different from but also quantitatively more than what the colonial government had ever done for the Orang Asli

[1] It should be noted that in the "INTRODUCTION" to the policy statement it is also stated that the Orang Asli population "should ultimately be integrated with the rest of the national community."

population,[2] and in all probability they are also relatively more than what the governments of some other countries are doing for their indigenous minority peoples.

The crux of the problem here seems to be what is meant by "integration" as an objective of government policy. In most societies which are recognised as polyethnic, the notion of integration as a public policy seems to have some rather inherent ambiguities. Nevertheless there are usually three rather broad long term possibilities, namely (a) "the melting pot" solution, (b) the "federation of ethnic group" or "cultural pluralism" solution, and (c) the "separate existence" solution.[3]

In the first solution – "the melting pot" – the objective is that ultimately cultural differences will eventually disappear and everyone ends up speaking the same language attending more or less the same religious rituals and intermarrying right across the board so to speak. Until quite recently this was felt to be the goal of nation building in U.S.A. However the recognition that the American Negro has no tendency or inclination to become a W.A.S.P. (White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant) has led to some drastic rethinking.

This brings us to the second solution – "the federation of ethnic groups" or "cultural pluralism". Thus in U.S.A. the emphasis now, in multi-cultural communities such as Chicago, is on the maintenance of community identities (i.e. Poles, Mexicans, Germans, Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Scandinavians etc.) and the ultimate goal seems to be thought of as a kind of federation of separate ethnic groups rather than an amalgamation or merging of ethnic groups. One of the difficulties in this solution is that

[2] Admittedly the colonial government could not do much to improve the living conditions of the Orang Asli population because of the Emergency. However the Department was not greatly involved in the Emergency activities until 1955. Prior to that the financial allocation for the Department (including the Museum) was never more than M$600,0000.00 which probably was hardly adequate for even its purely "welfare" activities. In contrast, from a slightly over M$1 Million in 1961 (when the Department first launched its Development programme) the allocation has been increased to well over M$4 Million in 1973. Some of the tangible results of this increased annual expenditure will be indicated later.

[3] For discussions on (a) and (b), see Gordon, M.A. *Assimilation In American Life*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1964, and Weiner, M. "Political Integration And Political Development" in *Annals of the American Academy of Political And Social Science*, Vol. 358, pp. 52–64.

in practice one group is usually politically dominant so that if the less influential groups maintain their cultural indentity there is likelihood that they will not be given parity of esteem by the "majority."

The third solution – "the separate existence" – is simply a repudiation of the integration ideal. In theory, a case could perhaps be made for the thesis that the individual members of so-called primitive communities, despite their low standard of living in purely economic terms are socially better of when they are living in a self-conscious local community than when they are simply an appendage to a larger, more affluent, society. Perhaps this was the premise for action or rather lack-of-action during the colonial era among so-called "primitive communities". Nowadays, in practice, this is hardly possible, certainly not with the present tempo and trend of change which is spreading even with the least amount of "directed" efforts. Few communities in the world are really isolated now.

In any case which ever of the three broad solutions is chosen it must be recognised that when different peoples (individuals and groups) interact (and they usually do; not unless thay are physically separated) a certain degree of what is often referred to as "assimilation" is bound to take place. In that sense, the first and second solutions may also be categorized as "assimilationist" *per se*, and "partial assimilation" respectively.

The Malaysian Government has rejected the third solution altogether and its choice lies perhaps somewhere between the first two which admittedly is no easy task. In Malaysia, nation-building or national integration means, amongst other things, the creation or the evolution of a national identity or consciousness, transcending (but not necessarily eliminating) all the polyethnic identities or consciousness among the citizenry, the concomitance of the nascent national or Malaysian society.[4] The Malaysian identity or consciousness and society envisaged by the present political leadership are to evolve partly on the basis of the citizens' positive accept-

[4]The population that make up the nascent Malaysian society could also be described as "plural". For a brief examination of the implication of the plurality of the society in the Peninsula (i.e. prior to the formation of Malaysia), see Freedman, M. "The Growth of A Plural Society In Malaya" in *Pacific Affairs* Vol. XXXIII, Part 2: pp. 158–168.

Many observers would probably agree with the view that in Malaysia, "any expectation of an integrative identity" among her peoples "in the foreseeable future is pure rhetoric or fancy" (Esman 1972: 23). However that is nothing more than stating the obvious – that the evolution of a national identity and the promotion of national

ance of certain national symbols which culturally are Malay (particularly the *Yang Dipertuan Agong* – the King – and the Rulers of the respective states, Islam, and the Malay language)[5] . In other words the policy and the process of national integration in Malaysia is essentially Malay in orientation, and this implies a degree of assimilation of certain elements of Malay culture on the part of the non-Malays. However, since the government also subscribes to the principles of "unity in diversity" and "diversity can also be a source of strength", the Malaysian policy of national integration is not assimilationist per se.

How does this overall national integration policy relate to our understanding of the policy and process of integration of the Orang Asli population in general and the Temuans in particular into the nascent national integration is kot assimilationist *per se*.

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integration is, as in most cases, a very long and slow process – a fact which the Malaysian government is fully aware, particularly so after the "13 May Tragedy" (the "communal" or "racial" riots of 1969). Some of the immediate and most visible signs of this awareness of the complexity and enormity of the problems involved in the promotion of national integration are (apart from the creation of the *Rukunegara*) the institution of the New Economic Policy (with the emphasis on rectifying the economic imbalance and the elimination of the identification of "race" with economy), and the establishment of the Ministry of National Unity. Another sign is the government's increasing interest in the applied aspects of the Social Sciences and the establishment of special departments in the local universities for the teaching of these subjects.

[5] The Malaysian King is, in a sense, an extension of the traditional Malay Sultan; the Rulers of the Malay states decide among themselves who among them will be the King for one or more terms (each being five years).

Though Islam is the official religion, everyone is allowed freedom of worship. However no non-Islamic proselytizing is allowed among the Muslims (Malays). Some of the symbolic expressions of the official status of Islam are the cresent-star of the national flag, the government-built national mosque, and the rendering of Islamic prayers (verses from the Koran) during certain government functions and ceremonial occasions.

The government's ultimate objective is that *Bahasa Malaysia* will one day be the only language for official purposes, and *the* medium of instruction in all government schools and institutions of higher learning. The government-owned Radio and TV networks cater also for languages other than *Bahasa Malaysia*, and Radio broadcasting times also cater for Temiar and Semai, two of the presently unwritten languages in Peninsular Malaysia.

Historically, interactions between the indigenous animist peoples in the Peninsular and the wider world have been confined mainly to those with the Malays. The greatest degree of Orang Asli-Malay interactions appears to have been that between Temuans (and for that matter, most of the Proto Malays) and the local Malay communities (hence, for example, the "legitimacy" of the Minangkabau-descent Malay claim to "ownership" of the territories of present-day Negri Sembilan is partly based on their "kinship" relation with their indigenous animist neighbours: see Swift 1965: 9). These centuries-old relations and interactions have resulted in various degrees of assimilation of elements of Malay culture on the part of the Orang Asli groups concerned.[6]

One of the most significant elements of Malay culture that the Orang Asli population by and large have assimilated is spoken Malay. Irrespective of their own distinct languages and dialects most Orang Asli speak Malay (or at least the dialects of the local Malays) and use it for communication not only with Malays, but also with Chinese, Indians, and other Orang Asli ethnic groups. In other words, Malay (or its dialect forms) has, for a long time, been a sort of *lingua franca* among the Orang Asli population. It is therefore hardly surprising that even the Temiar (whose language is not in the Malay family) for instance ". . . tend to view the outside world through the screen of Malay culture", and ". . . those closest to Malay communities have adopted features of Malay culture . . ." (Benjamin 1966: 51).

As regards the Malay (dialect)-speaking Temuans (and other Proto Malays generally) the degree of their assimilation of the elements of Malay culture is even greater. Even though the Temuans have not completely abandoned jungle-living (hunting, gathering, and swidden agriculture, which are also practised to a certain extent by upland Malays), they have tended to adapt their culture to fit in with that of the lowland Malays. This tendency for adaptation or the process of assimilation must have been going on for a very long time so that today it is clearly shown up (as in the case of Parit Gong) particularly in the following features of Temuan life,

[6]The degree of assimilation depends to a considerable extent on the geographical proximity or otherwise of the Orang Asli groups and the Malays. For a classification of the Orang Asli communities according to the degree of change they have undergone and their proximity with the wider society, see Carey, I "The Orang Asli And Social Change" in *Federation Muzeums Journal,* Vol. XII New Series, pp. 57–64.

namely (a) the increasing reliance on *sawah*-rice cultivation, (b) the tendency to matriliny, and (c) the title system with its emphasis on the graded (according to the rank hierarchy) *Adat* payments (as in marriage).

In view of this obvious "Malayness"[7] of the Temuans, they may in a sense be regarded as "marginal Malays".

In summary therefore it is clear that the Orang Asli communities are sub-nuclear societies whose "cultural orientation" or "reference group" (Kunstadter 1967, Vol. I: 45) have for centuries been the surrounding Malay society. In other words there has already been a historical or "natural" tendency for the Orang Asli communities in general to assimilate at least some elements of Malay culture and in that sense to integrate with the Malay society; and it is this that prompted the policy formulators to state that the Orang Asli should be integrated with the Malay section of the national community.

In the eyes of Malays and Temuans (and other Orang Asli) "complete' assimilation of elements of Malay culture can only occur when the latter have *masuk Melayu* (literally: to enter the Malay way of life or "become Malay") meaning embracing Islam.[8] Today there are close to 1,900 Muslim

[7] One significant element of the "Malayness" of the Temuans (and indeed the members of many other Orang Asli groups) is their general physical likeness to Malays and when outside their own immediate localities many Orang Asli (who would wear clothes no different from most Malays) would be mistaken for Malays by Malays themselves and by other Malaysians. This "ethnic" likeness can sometimes be a source of embarassment and even danger for these Orang Asli individuals. There have been instances when Orang Asli individuals, eating/drinking/smoking in public during the *Ramadzan* (Muslim's fasting month) have been mistaken for Malays breaking the fast and have accordingly been "caught" by the Police! During the "13th May Tragedy" a Temuan man found himself in a potentially dangerous situation in the town of Kuala Pilah when a Malay woman (assuming that he was a Malay) ran up to him for protection from possible Chinese attack; caught in such "a tight corner" he had to accept the Malay "ethnic" role and the possible consequences!

[8] Even if the Temuans (or other Orang Asli for that matter) one day embrace Islam *en masse* and thus become legally Malays it need not necessarily mean that they will have completely lost their ethnic identity. It should be realized that the notion of Malays or Malay culture is very wide and it includes a considerable degree of heterogenous elements. In the states of Perak, Selangor and Negri Sembilan for example, the Malays are a mixture of Minangkabau, Batak, Rawa, Korinchi, Mandahiling and

Orang Asli. However the majority of them are actually the Orang Laut/ Kuala (People of the Sea/River-mouth) whose ancestors embraced Islam probably a century ago.[9] Very few Temuans (or members of other Orang Asli groups) have recently embraced Islam and in Parit Gong itself, although one of the community's founding *Batins* was a Malay, none of the members as far as I know has become a Muslim since.

There may be several reasons for this apparently small number of recent conversions to Islam. While it is true that Orang Asli generally show little, if any, inclination to the idea of embracing Islam (a fact noted often enough by observers; see for instance Dentan 1968: 103), perhaps a more significant reason is the fact that there had been no comprehensive and positive policy or programme for proselytizing Islam among the Orang Asli population on the part of the government, and whatever proselytizing that had been done so far by the state-run Religious (Islam) Departments has been both sporadic and relatively ineffective. Some reasons for this

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Achenese from Sumatra, Bugis from Celebes and Javanese whose ancestors came to these areas in the late 1800 s. They all share a common cultural heritage, but significant differences are apparent and these are recognized by the people themselves. See Gullick, J.M. *Indigenous Political Systems of Western Malaya*, Althone Press, London 1958 p. 25; Freedman M & Swift, M.G. "Rural Sociology In Malaya" in *Current Sociology*, Vol. VII, No. 1, pp. 1–15.

[9] It is probable that there had been more Orang Asli who had become Muslims but have identified themselves and have therefore been categorized as Malays. Writing about Sungei Ujong, Gullick noted that "The Sakai" (Temuans) themselves were attracted by the higher material culture of the Malays, and there is a tradition that many of them were converted to Islam and absorbed into the Malay community and way of life. In parts of Sungei Ujong this process is still going on chiefly through the establishment of Malay schools for "Sakai". See Gullick, J.M. "Sungei Ujong" in *JMBRAS*, Vol. XXI, p. 2.

The Orang Laut/Kuala actually requested (undoubtedly with the hope of getting immediate economic aids) to be administered by the Department. They claim to have come from Sumatra quite recently. Though they also claim to have a dialect of their own called *Desin Dolac*, (see Williams-Hunt 1952: 11) superficially they are hardly distinguishable from Malays in similar economic circumstances in the localities. For an excellent introduction (based on literary evidence) to these "Sea Nomads" in general, see Sopher. D.E., *"The Sea Nomads: A Study Based on Literature of the Maritime Boat People of Southeast Asia*, Government Printer, Singapore, 1965.

ineffectiveness are mentioned by Carey (1970: 156–157).[10]

Islam is of course not the only world-religion that has gained converts among the indigenous animist peoples in the Peninsula. Today there are close to 1,700 Orang Asli who claim to be Christians (mainly Methodists, Lutherans, and some Catholics) and about 1,000 or so who claim to be Bahai. The bulk of the Christian and Bahai Orang Asli are among the Semai (Senoi) people in the state of Perak. The Catholic Orang Asli (numbering less than thirty now) are actually Temuans of Kampong Tekir, a community of more than 200 individuals.[11]

European colonial powers adopted rather different attitudes toward Christian missions. From the middle of the 19th century onwards the British fairly consistently steered the missionaries away from religious communities which they recognized as higher religions such as Islam and Buddhism. Their motives were mainly political. The indigenous leaders of colonial territories (where communities of the "higher religions" existed) were likely to be themselves members of this "higher" faith. The

[10] This is particularly so in comparison to the recent boost and success of Islamization in the East Malaysian state of Sabah where it is reported that 75,000 (or slightly over 10% of the total population in the state) individuals have been coverted within the last three years alone. See *Newsweek*, October 1, 1973: 20–21. If this trend continues (given finance and efficient organization there is no reason why it should not) Kunstadter's statements that "the more isolated Borneo natives. . . resist, as they have resisted for hundred of years, attempts to convert them to Islam," needs considerable revision. See Kunstadter, P. (ed.) *Southeast Asian Tribes, Minorities And Nations*, Vol. 1, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1967 p. 32.

[11] The proselytizing of the Catholic faith among the Temuans began near Rumbia in Melaka, with the work of Father Borie. See Borie, H. "An Account of the Mantras, A Savage Tribe In The Malay Peninsula" in *Miscellaneous Papers Relating to Indo-China and the Indian Archipelago*, Second series, Vol. 1, pp. 286–307.

In Kampong Tekir a small church had been built in 1953. Apparently before the Japanese Occupation there were well over 300 converts among the Temuans in and around the area. The activities of the Church seem to be limited to prayers and providing sponsorship to those few who would be persuaded to attend schools or institutions chosen or run by the Catholic Church organisation.

The Orang Asli who have been converted to Christianity are given Christian/European names (such as John, Joseph etc.) on being baptized and are referred to by the priests and nuns as *Orang Serani* or *Serani* (? from Nazarene). However, the category *Serani* is usually given to people of mixed European – Asian descent (i.e. physical Eurasians).

prohibition (explicit or tacit) against active Christian proselytisation among such higher religious communities had the purpose of avoiding political dissension. Contrarywise, the tendency to encourage Christian missionaries to work among so-called primitive or Pagan communities was an economy measure; the missions provided (up to a point) the educational and health services which Colonial Government ought to have provided itself.

The fact that there are relatively large numbers of Christian converts among the Orang Asli population, reflects, to a certain extent, long term colonial policy.

This large number of Christian converts need not however be taken as an indication that the Orang Asli population had been in any sense predisposed towards Christianity as some early missionaries were understandably inclined to believe or imagine.[12] For instance, inspite of the hopeful beginning in the spread of the Catholic faith in the middle of the last century among the Mantras (Temuans) the number of converts had actually greatly fallen down, and there appears to be a growing disenchantment with the promised heavenly salvation among some of the dwindling

[12] Favre noted optimistically that "The Jakuns by their nature and peculiar qualities, offer the most encouraging hopes to the Missionaries. . .. Few. . . present such good dispositions to embrace the Gospel." See Favre, P. *An Account of the Wild Tribes Inhabiting The Malayan Peninsula, Sumatra, And A Few Neighbouring Islands,* Imperial Printing Press, Paris, 1865.

Bourien went so far as to conclude that Mantras (Temuans) "not only .,. . had an idea of Divinity, but that, at the moment when a man passes from this life to eternity, they invoke God, and called upon our Lord Jesus Christ. . . ." because they made references to *Tuan Isa.* While it is true that *Isa* is the Malay/Arabic name for Jesus, a more plauseable interpretation is that the Mantras were merely referring to *Tuhan Esa* or *Tuhan Yang Esa,* the Malay term for "The One God" which is not unknown among the Temuans (*Esa* or *sa* is short for *satu,* the Malay word for one, and the word *Tuhan* is often used by Temuans and indeed other Orang Asli exposed long enough to Malay influence, to refer vaguely to "god"). See Bourien, P. "On the Wild Tribes of The Interior of The Malay Peninsula" in *Transactions of Ethnological Society of London,* New Series, Vol. 3 pp. 77--83.

In his missionary zeal, Bourien even suggested that the Catholic faith was introduced among the Mantras as early as the seventh or thirteenth century – in a most curious fashion: ". . . climbing over the mountains of the peninsula, (the Mantras) had obtained a knowledge of our holy religion from the missionaries Rome had sent from time to time to the Mongol and Tartary princes . . .."

number of present converts so that one of my informants (a Catholic priest responsible for the Kampong Tekir "flock") remarked with a trace of despondency that "these people are born free . . . They do not like their life to be uplifted . . this is one problem we do not know how to solve . . . . ."[13]

In a way, the above remark of the priest mirrors the doubtful function of such missionary activities, for, inspite of the "fringe/secular benefits" (usually in the way of aids in furthering the missionary-orientated education of selected converted youths) that accrue, the conversions of Orang Asli individuals or groups as such will not necessarily help them to come to term with the wider Malaysian society.[14]

In any case there seems to be little that these missionary bodies can do in the way of secular upliftment of the Orang Asli communities that is not being taken care of by the Government through its current socio-economic development programmes to help achieve the ultimate policy objective of integration.

For over a decade now the Department has concentrated its resources on the implementation of a continuous development programme (a series of Five-Year Plans) which broadly speaking includes the establishment of basic social services and facilities (medical, education and housing), and land development and other economic projects.

When the Department launched its First Five-Year Plan: 1961–66,

[13]The Department had largely eliminated the gross exploitation of the *pajak sampai bila-bila* system in Kampong Tekir and a few years ago provided the people with new dwelling houses, a community hall, and various agricultural aids for the cultivation of rubber and *sawah*-rice. A considerable number of the children in the community attend the nearby government school along with non-Orang Asli children.

Thus on the whole, though the community may not have a strong desire for religious upliftment it has certainly responded as well as may be expected (within such a short time) to the government attempt to improve their living conditions.

[14]Noone went so far as to advocate that "the only hope of survival of small isolated aboriginal groups is absorption into the Malay community: the introduction of another faith in these instances would be actually subversive." See Noone, H.D. "Report of the Settlements And Welfare of the Ple-Temiar Senoi of the Perak-Kelantan Watershed" in *Journal of the Federated Malay States Museums*, 19, pp. 1–85; also Carey, 1. "The Religious Problem Among the Orang Asli" in *JMBRAS* vol. 43, Part 1, pp. 155–160.

priority was given to the establishment of basic social services or what was then known as the "Extension of Government Services"[15] particularly to those Orang Asli communities in the deep jungle areas (whose members form about 60% of the total Orang Asli population) and those in the jungle-fringe and rural areas, that are far from the usual government social service. The primary aim of the Department then was to establish an administrative network which would serve as a sort of infrastructure for further programmed changes to be affected among the Orang Asli population generally.

To complement the development programme in the First Five-Year Plan, the Department, in its Second Five-Year Plan: 1966–70, gave priority to land development and other economic projects (particularly to those 40% or so of the Orang Asli population in the jungle and rural areas), the provision of dwelling-houses and other amenities to selected communities, the establishment of more primary schools, and the improvement and consolidation (rather than expansion *per se*) of existing medical-health facilities. More or less similar priorities and emphases (particularly in improvement of the present educational facilities) are made in the current and Third Five-Year Malaysia Plan.[16]

In what way and to what extent can it be said that the development programme for the Orang Asli population help to integrate them into the nascent national society and the national economy?

[15] The "Extension of Government Services" to the deep-jungle communities actually began a few years before the Emergency was officially over as part of the Government moves to "win the hearts and minds" particularly of those who had been or were under the influence or control of the Communist-Terrorists.

[16] Thus for example by the end of the First Five-Year Plan alone the Department had already established 57 Administrative-cum-Medical (AM) Posts, 59 Evacuation-Emergency-Aid (EEA) Post, expanded the hospital (from 12 to 400-bed capacity) and administrative facilities in Gombak., 61 primary schools (with over 2,500 Orang Asli children attending, and about 2,000 adult in Adult Education Classes), and 11 selected communities were transformed into what were then known as Pattern Settlements.

Each AM Post is provided with dispensary facilities, accomodation for two patients and two Department personnels, a wireless transmitter-receiver set for immediate and constant communication with the base-station in Gombak, and a helicopter landing-pad. 13 of these posts are bigger than the rest and were actually established

Kunstadter (1967, Vol. 1:43) suggests that the provision of governmental services to "tribal societies" is one of the ways of promoting and achieving their integration into the wider society. If this be so then the Department has certainly gone a considerable way to achieving its ultimate objective. One of the most obvious results of the development programme is the establishment of a network of administrative and social services covering areas that were once almost completely neglected and out of the concerns of the government and the wider society.[17] Even the remotest of Orang Asli communities are now only a few hours walk to the nearest government presence and service, and this means that members of such

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initially as Police (and other Security Forces) Jungle Forts between 1953–55 (? the prototype of the Strategic Hamlets in the American-Vietnamese War) and each had a landing-strip for single and twin-engine aircrafts, and more buildings and other amenities. At the end of the Emergency the 13 posts were taken over by the Department for civilian use and they all have primary schools.

An EEA Post (very much smaller than an AM Post) is only provided with a helicopter landing-pad, emergency drugs, accomodation for one visiting Department personnel, and is manned by a paid local Orang Asli who has had training in First-Aid. EEA Posts serve as branches for AM Posts.

All the AM and EEA Posts are visited regularly by the Department's Flying-Doctors and other personnel. Air transport (helicopters for the doctors and patients particularly, planes for air-drops of rations etc.) is provided by our Royal Malaysian Air Force. However most visits by Department personnel are made on foot, by motor-boats or by land-rovers.

The Department only establishes primary schools. For secondary education Orang Asli children attend the usual government schools along with non-Orang Asli children.

The initial Pattern Settlements are in rural (and hence accessible at least by land-rovers) areas and in general they were originally in the worst conditions of rural poverty. They were provided with dwelling-houses, and other living amenities (water supply, usually from concrete wells, and sanitation facilities). Apart from this "face-lifting" they were also given various agricultural aids (tools, seeds and seedlings, fertilizers, and a few communities in the state of Perak, a tractor was provided for the clearing of lands) for the cultivation of food and cash-crops.

Apart from these 11 communities, a number of others participated in minor pilot economic projects (rearing of goats, buffaloes, and fresh-water fish).

[17] It is not often realized that in a number of these remote areas there are also a considerable number of non-Orang Asli (mainly Malays) who also benefit from the services provided by the Department.

communities are now able to communicate with the government and vice-versa.[18]

As I have indicated, there is in the Department's development programme, a continuous emphasis on providing the Orang Asli children with more and better schools and other facilities. The reason for this emphasis is obviously the belief in what might be called the modernizing role of education. But what is even more pertinent in the present discussion is that, the schools (many of which after having been pioneered by the Department have been handed over to the charge of the local state Education Departments)[19] as socializing institutions are fulfilling the function of promoting a national outlook and consciousness among the children. Unlike some government schools,[20] those that have been established and pioneered by the Department have always used Malay (or now Bahasa Malaysia) as the medium of instruction. And, it is while the children are in school that they are taught to recognize and respect the national symbols, and the proper patterns of behaviour expected of them as citizens of a nation-state.[21]

Even though economically the Orang Asli population in general are still the most backward sector of the West Malaysian population, a consider-

[18] Communications between the government (and the wider society) and remote Orang Asli communities are also maintained by the efforts of the Ministry of Information (particularly the Orang Asli Radio Programmes directed specially to the deep-jungle Senoi – Temiar and Semai, and the regular "Civics courses" held by the Departments of Information of respective states in conjunction with the Department for Orang Asli local community leaders.

[19] The primary school in Kampong Putra (catering not only for the children there but also from Parit Gong and other surrounding communities) for instance was established at the beginning of the Second Five-Year Plan but is now staffed and partly run by the Negri Sembilan State Department of Education.

[20] Even though the ultimate objective of the government is to make Bahasa Malaysia *the* medium of instruction in all government schools and institutions of higher learning, there are still a number of government (called National-Type rather than National) schools where the medium of instruction is either English, Mandarin or Tamil.

[21] This is mainly covered in the teaching of "Civics" which has been given greater emphasis particularly after the "13th May Tragedy". The essence of "Civics" teaching may be summed up as the transmission of values and norms embodied in the national ideology, the *Rukunegara*.

able proportion of them are now increasingly involved in and dependent upon the cultivation and sale of cash-crops and other produce, and consequently they are being gradually drawn into the money-market economy of the country. The transition from an almost completely self-sufficient (based on swidden and gathering-hunting mainly) economy to one increasingly dependent upon exchanges of produce for cash and manufactured goods with the wider society began long before the Government took an active interest in the agricultural development of Orang Asli lands. As I have already shown, the people of Parit Gong for example, took to large-scale cultivation of banana for sale initially without any specific suggestion from the Department, and those in and around Chelogeh (and in all probability in many other Orang Asli communities as well) began the cultivation of rubber even before the Japanese Occupation. What the land development programme of the Department has been doing is to accelerate this economic transition process. Thus like Parit Gong (where the Department has helped to increase the previous acreage of cash-crops) many of the Orang Asli communities in the rural and jungle-fringe areas (whose members form about 40% of the total Orang Asli population) are almost as dependent upon the market-economy of the country as any of their neighbouring peasant Malay communities so that in a sense these communities could be said to be integrating into the national economy.

Admittedly there is still a great deal of efforts needed on the part of the Department on the one hand and the Orang Asli population on the other before each and every Orang Asli community can be fully integrated into the national economy. However let us not forget also that agricultural (or economic) development takes time.

H.M.S. HOOD

MORALITY AND RESTRAINT AMONG THE SEMELAI OF MALAYSIA

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A SOCIAL HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Studies on the Orang Asli societies of the Malay Peninsular have seldom in the past been oriented to suggest the close and extensive involvement of the latter with the social and cultural systems of the outside world.[1] If anything, such studies have concerned themselves with descriptions pertraining to their relative isolation and their cultural distinctiveness, suggestive of the underlying conception that they have played hardly any part in the social history of populations outside the limits of their traditional geographical universe. Thus it seems to be the fashion to look at the Orang Asli peoples as populations apart and peripheral to the outside order. Many factors have been responsible for imposing this perspective into the popular imagination to its less-than-liberal conclusions. A general but primary factor has been anthropology's own preoccupation with the concept of "the primitive," which unconsciously perpetuates an order that clearly promotes the study of the primitive "other" as no more than an attractive and romantic proposition. The effect of this is to retain the study of these so-called primitives as largely academic, even as eccentric preoccupations of a few. Recognition of the necessity of research into these groups had begun more than a century ago; yet even until today there has not been enough research into such critical aspects as the oral traditions, history, and communication problems which might help change this view.

[1] Only Benjamin of recent ethnographers has positively suggested the close association between the Temiar worldview and the local Malay culture, when he states: "Even today Temiar with little urban experience tend to view the outside world through the screen of Malay culture". (1966:5).

In this paper, my concern is to give a description of Semelai society in its inter-connections with the outside order which may be identified as Malay.[2] I have argued elswhere that there are several continuities between Malay society and Orang Asli societies in terms of their traditional world-views and that these tendencies have been revealed even more so within the contemporary situation of change.[3]

The Semelai look at the outside world through the social traditions handed down to them by the *ninek muyang*. These traditions lend a sense of perspective to their social experiences with outsiders and from this emanates the sense of identity and permanence that they possess as a living group. These social traditions are 'recorded' and embodied in what may be conveniently termed a 'social-historical memory'. A social-historical memory by its nature is also characterised by its own sense of importance in the universal scheme of things and lays down the foundations from which to judge and assess political experiences. It provides guide-lines and working principles to judge peoples and events. It decides where certain categories of beings belong to and where they don't. In its tightly-observed ramifications, Semelai refer to it as their *sura* and as day-to-day guide-lines to their behaviour, they act as guiding principles of social organization.

The social historical memory may also be regarded as an implicity-believed table of rules which in some respects corresponds to Malinowski's notion of the *charter* in primitive society. If the morality of a group is a reflection of all the principles with which to organise the life of the group along socially approved lines, then the social-historical memory provides the ideological and epistemological context within which events of significance are considered to have happened.

A POLITICAL MORALITY

Semelai believe that in historical times, before the division of the world

[2]The Semelai are an Austroasiatic people (numbering about 2,300) who live mainly along the banks of the Bera river, the Tasik Bera region in Pahang and the Serting (near Ayer Hitam) in Negri Sembilan.

[3]Hood Mohamad Salleh, "The Semelai sura and oral history: myth and ideology in an Orang Asli worldview" *Akademika*, Vol. 7 1976 pp. 1–16; and "Ethno-historical perspectives and social change among the Orang Asli: a brief overview" *Jernal Antropology dan Sosiologi*, Jilid IV, 1975/76, pp. 1–11.

into jungle and the outside the Batin or Headman holds the right to rule all mankind. There was no separation of man between jungle-folk and non-jungle folk, and the Batin then was subordinate only to Tok Adam ('the father of all mankind'). Now he rules only half of the universe, and the King his younger sibling reigns supreme in the other. This condition has now fallen into the order of things and the Batin and his followers have accepted it, no doubt constituting this as part of the present *sura.* Thus a portion of the domain of Man goes to the *Rajak* (King) and his chiefs, the other remains under the sovereignty of the Batin. The matter is aptly put by the oldest Semelai *batin* living today, thus:

Alam berajak,
Luak berpenghuluk,
Bukit bukau Batin nan punyak.[4]

The saying, brief though it is, underlines an important feature in the Semelai political-cosmological system; but it also places Semelai social history in its proper historical context. Before the coming of the outsiders, there was no King, the Batin was unquestioned lord and authority of all territories under his sway. There were no physical boundaries, the pre-eminence of the Batin was complete.

Bukit bukau Batin nan punyak,
Pinang berjejer,
Nyior meliok,
Rumah berderek,
Sawah berlupak,
Permatang menalik,
Ayer tersawok,
Ranting terpatah,
Siamang membayu,
Ungkor menjawek,
Lurah nan dalam,
Batin nan dulik[5]

[4] For some yet undiscovered reason all sayings and poetic utterances follow the Malay 'perbilangan' (sayings) and *pantun*. The saying here, literally translated means, 'The King rules the World, The chief his clan, But the hills and swamps all belong to the Batin.

[5] 'The hills and swamps belong to the Batin, the areca-nut palm, the coconut; houses all in a row; the rice plots and vegetable mounds: water that is channelled and the

The last line in the above sayings fully describes the condition before the time Semelai (and incidentally, the neighbouring Temuan too) refer to as *pelanggaran,*[6] a period of political chaos brought about by marauding outsiders when they seized the power and lands belonging to them. This constituted no part of the sura, although it was a landmark in the social memory. Authority became divided as their territories shrunk under the greed and superior powers of the outsiders. At the same time, the Batin uttered the sayings above in nostalgic recall of a once-ideal state of affairs, before he and his people had taken to the hills. It emphasised the peace and serenity prevailing then.

While the sayings mentioned recall an almost mythical-sounding state at a point in time, it is not entirely devoid of historical relevance. Evidently, the problem here concerns Semelai of the Serting more than it does those on the other side of the border in Paḥang; nonetheless, it is important to realize the dissimilarities in terms of their historical experiences.[7] It is interesting to note that experiences of Semelai at Serting may well be connected with the vicissitudes of Negri Sembilan history, specifically that period which Wilkinson calls the early 'Sakai' period (Wilkinson 1911:5). Wilkinson, working mainly on the basis of Malay traditions, divides Negri Sembilan history into three principal periods: (1) an early period when the country was split up into four Sakai States (Sungai Ujong, Klang, Jelebu and Jempol); (2) an intermediate period during which the four Sakai States were replaced by nine Minangkabau States under the suzerainty Johor; and (3) a modern period during which four out of the nine Minangkabau States formed themselves into an independent constitutional monarchy under a Yam Tuan or ruler of their own. As far as the Semelai are connected here at all they occupy territory just next to Jelebu and have had connections of an informal nature with Ulu Klang, one of the four mentioned 'Sakai' states. Wilkinson mentioned the circumstances of a Sakai immigration (though sources on this point are variable, according to

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twigs that are broken; the hanging *siamang* and the *ungkor* and the deep valleys; the Batin reigns supreme'

[6]The 'pelanggaran', a loan word, used to encompass the historical period when the political system of the states on the Peninsular changed hands from the first settlers into those of the group conveniently grouped 'Malays'.

[7]In this sense, we can speak of the western Semelai in Negeri Sembilan as opposed to the eastern ones in Pahang and, on certain counts, the distinction remains valid.

him) which led to 'a blending by intermarriage of the aboriginal hill peoples with the Sumatran immigrants from the other side of the Malacca Straits' (Wilkinson 1911:6). This blending involved the three main 'Sakai' groups thought to make up the aboriginal population in Negri Sembilan then – the Besisi, the Jakun and the Biduanda. On the strength of the inaccurate classification employed at the time that Wilkinson wrote, Semelai could have been mistaken to belong to any of these three groups, possibly the Biduanda. Wilkinson further states that it is possible that the old Malacca penghulus (who were in positions of power together with the Johor counterparts during this period) succeeded in imposing their language upon these Biduanda, although he adds that it is difficult to see why they failed to convert the latter to Mohammedanism and why they did not impose their language on the Besisi and Jakun (Wilkinson, 1911:6). Another version of folk lore coming from the Negri Sembilan district of Rembau (but also current today in Kuala Pilah, hence close to Semelai traditional territory) tells in figurative language of 'the black crows (the Sakai)' walking down from the hills while the white egrets (the Sumatran immigrants) flew over the sea' (Wilkinson, 1911:6–7). Then there also came the Bendahara (Batin) Sekudai who married a daughter of an aboriginal chief, Batin Sa-ribu Jaya, and had three children, who became in their turn the ancestresses of the ruling houses of Rembau, Sungai Ujong and Pahang.

Furthermore, when we compare the folk-traditions of aboriginal tribes in Negri Sembilan with Semelai versions relating to creation myths, the resemblance is too great to be dismissed as mere coincidence. The Biduanda tribe, who it may be recalled, have intimate historical connections with the Negri Sembilan polity, began their account of the creation of mankind in a style similar to the Semelai sura myths. It ascribes the origin of the Biduanda tribe to a certain Batin Sri Alam, who met a walking tree-trunk near the waters of the river Langat. He captured it and kept it in captivity till it laid eggs, forty-four in number. He buried the eggs till they were hatched, when there emerged forty-four children, the ancestors of the Biduanda. Batin Sri Alam brought up these children till they came to maturity and had to be supplied with garments of bark-cloth to cover their nakedness. He then sent twenty-two over to Sumatra, where they colonised the coast as far as the borders of the Batak country, while he kept the remaining twenty-two in the Peninsular, where they became Biduanda or Rayat (a term which today means aborigine (derogatory).

Wilkinson also mentions another legend which is exactly the same as that Semelai gave me in terms of details. This concerns the division between Rajak and Batin again: every man who falls on his feet, he is the Rajak: if he falls on his face, he becomes a slave (Wilkinson 1911:8). It appears that Batin Sri Alam rose up from his seat and travelled round the world ruling the slaves.

There are other versions of these legends which are directly relevant to the Semelai cosmological beliefs. One explains the circumstances which says why Semelai have never been converted to Islam. Batin Sri Alam, the same person mentioned before, was said to have led an expedition into Jelebu, an area around the Triang adjacent to the Serting, where he found trays of food waiting for him, served up and ready for him to eat, but with no man present to explain the source from which they came. Batin Sri Alam ate the food and named the place Kuala Dulang, the place of trays, as an everlasting memorial of his gratitude. He, however, showed less thankfulness in his next adventure. The Muhamadans of Jelebu did their best to bring him into the fold of Islam. He accepted their ministrations at first with great placidity and consented to repeat the Confession of Faith; but when the *mudin* (circumcision expert) went on to explain the need of circumcision Batin Sri Alam incontinently vanished. One rumour has it that he reappeared on Mount Siguntang Mahameru, another that he is still in hiding among the caves of Kota Gelanggi in Pahang (Wilkinson 1911:8). There are indications that these legends point to the early period when the sura was known by everybody and its teachings related to historical events. Wilkinson conjectured, and I believe with good evidence, that the events actually took place, that the 'Sakai' period represented a stage in aboriginal history, 'a golden age' before the Minangkabau colonists filled up Negri Sembilan and drove the aborigines to the hills.

The Semelai pseudo-historical perspective as it is revealed through the sura presents an ideological as well as a religious framework with which to view the contemporary situation. It marks a synthesis between fact and fiction and gives credibility to the traditions handed down to them from generation to generation. At certain stages, the promulgations of the sura smack all too obviously of a type of cynicism that can only be generated by an ideological commitment to an established faith. The institution of batinhood for instance, can only disappear with a total. The abandoment of the sura, and Semelai sentiments concerning its imperative necessity go hand in hand with the ideological view reserved

for the sloth and rapacity of the society outside. They have nothing but disdain for the peoples who have opted to forget their common history and traditions. The cynicism contained in the following lines tells the whole story very pointedly:

Cemperai kayu Petani
Sanau kayu Kelat,
Sekarang terbuang rupanya kami,
Bagai ikan di luar belat.[8]

In a word, the new-found riches of Malays have completely led them to discard their former associations with their aboriginal brothers. This attitude is taken by Semelai who look upon their society with any seriousness, but the sentiments derived from it appear to be strongest in the Serting region which has, by far, the longest tradition of economic exchange with the Malays. The wider political system in its turn 'knows' their connections with the people of the forest, but they prefer to underplay such themes although lip service is paid to them as the *waris di Bukit* ('kin in the hills').

The notion of territoriality is directly involved with the in-out classification between Semelai and the outside world. It is always a remarkable theme in Semelai thinking that their cynicism is also accompanied by a contradictory facet of their own conception of things. They belong to the outside world – at least they imply having a share in that world – but then they also identify the boundaries of their society with certain 'traditional' territories which link them with the *ninek muyang* who are no part of the peoples outside. In such a framework, cosmology and political sentiments are not differentiated; that is, beliefs about their proper place in the natural universe are not consistent with identifications with attitudes that result from such beliefs. In this sense an ambivalence prevails in their conceptions of the outside world, and it is here that the dimension of moral restraint embodied within the sura is most evident. The restraint is enforced by the symbolic authority of the Batin and thus provides the impetus for the preservation of the moral Semelai community.

[8]'Cemperai' is the wood from Petani (?Patani), Sanau belongs to the Kelat (Eugenia) species, now it looks like we're abandoned, like fish outside the trap (?).

RESTRAINT AND RITUAL BOUNDARIES

Dissimilarities arising from the different symbolic meanings associated with the separate *ninek muyang* find their complete expression in the idea of ritual boundries between Semelai and the 'others'. A popular version relating to the process of ritual separation is to be found in the story about the two primeval brothers who were destined to part ways. As expected one was Malay, the other Semelai.

'Once there were two brothers, both created by Tok Adam from earth, from which all mankind was made. When Tok Adam created, he created only one person. But soon there were two brothers. The elder one said, let us have a feast. So they agreed, and invited everyone to come. The elder brother sat inside the feast house, the younger outside in the day room.

And they ate. Soon the elder brother asked: Do the people outside have enough to eat? The younger brother shouted: there is not enough meat. So the elder brother threw some meat to the younger brother outside. But the meat fell. The elder brother threw another piece. That fell also. And another. In his anger, the younger brother uttered: This meat is the meat of pigs. It cannot be eaten. And the people outside understood and never asked anymore.

Soon the younger brother met his elder brother again. He said: Brother, I want to travel. His brother said, you are free to travel because you are people from outside. So the younger brother began to walk and descended to the river bank to board his boat. The elder brother followed him to the boat, and his brother said: Please give me a letter (*surat*). I need a letter. And his brother handed him the letter. And so he rowed and rowed and disappeared into the distance. That is how we are left inside *(ka'kekec)* and our brother outside *(rual)*. And he has the *surat* with him until now'.

The story is the most popular version known by adult Semelai. Broadly, it provides the rationalisation for the situation existing between their society and the Islamic peoples of the villages. The first obvious theme which makes the literal reference to pork as the forbidden food of the outsiders underlies the general prohibition of certain ranges of food consumed by them and considered as taboo to others. At this level, it provides a naive cultural premise for separation has nothing whatsoever to do with the conception that the meat of pigs *(jalu)* is conceived to be ritually 'unclean'. The emphasis stems from the distinction that pigs, unlike other

animals, are essentially creatures of the jungle *(beri)* and has always been identified as such and distinguished from domestic animals. A more consequential emphasis, I think, lies in the reference made to the central meta-physical article of faith in the sura: that at some point in time the two brothers had to part ways, of whom the younger by a twist of fate, had the *surat* with him, and in so possessing the document, gained access to a different world outside of the Semelai moral order. Whereas in not possessing such a document, the elder brother remained as he was. Seen in this light, the *surat* becomes a resource of ritual power, the key to new knowledge *(kepanayan areh)*, the benefit of which is given only to the younger sibling. It is no wonder that the elder Semelai brother thinks he still exists as the head of a group in the forest in which his position is never to change.

This viewpoint appears essentially determinist, but Semelai rationalise this at the level of ethnological formulation. It has therefore some value which merits ethnographical attention. Semelai place the explanations mentioned cryptically within the context of power relationships (*kuasak*) between them and the outsiders. Their interpretation involves the application of the category 'natural' (*pertitahan Tuhan*, 'the will of God') as opposed to the 'historical' (*yang loich menjoi*, everyday events, 'politics'). Here, the 'natural' and the 'historical' both 'occurred' within the context of an omniscient power, God. It was conceived as *natural* that the two brothers were created by Adam and inevitable too that by the course of events the younger of them came to have a more privileged station. In a more abstract sense, the 'structure' of historical relationships perceived by Semelai lies at the confluence of Divine Will (?) and the injuctions emanating from the sura. In this way, the complex interrelationship involved here are, and need only be, elaborated at the level of the possession of the Semelai sura as opposed to the adherence to the new *surat* of the outsiders.

An even more popular legend relates to the spatial-temporal dimension, the territory into which outsiders are ritually forbidden. The account mainly refers to the founding of the Tasik Bera The story is familiar to all Semelai, young and old and it explains why the Tasik Bera swampland had always been regarded as the 'real' home of the Semelai, where the sura traditions are actively obeyed, representing in a temporal continuum the

furthest point to which Semelai can speak of their cultural-historical origins in terms of physical setting.[9]

> At first the name Tasik Bera was *Telok Dalam*, but because there were many large swamps it came to be called the Bera river. When we first came there was much land and one swamp. We wanted to settle there and make our *duoh*, to grow rice. So we called all our folks together. Now there was a young dog which kept barking at the foot of the *Kerumg* tree. Then somebody came to have a look at what it was; he was followed by all the others until no one was left in the houses. They fetched an axe and cut a hole in the tree and so they all tasted it and liked it too. Everybody wanted to try. So they took the oil in baskets (*rok*) to their homes and ate it. While they were eating an old man came. He was a stranger. Nobody knew him. He carried a staff which he stuck at the foot of the house ladder and went into the house. The people invited him to eat. He refused to eat, and also declined to taste anything (*menjamak*). The people were talking and eating. When they had finished, the old man went out and called the people together. He asked them to pull out the staff he had stuck in the ground. The men tried to do so, first one man, then two, then three, then four and then until everyone in the house had tried; they could not pull the staff out. Then the old man called out, 'You are so stupid, there are so many of you, yet you cannot pull it out'. He then pulled it out with his left hand. Thereupon he went off, and water gushed out of the hole, at first slowly like the flow of pus, and then quickly, quickly. The people tried to plug up the hole but it was bigger than a rice dibble. They got a basket to plug it, but the hole was bigger than the basket. Then they took the pots from their house and the water still came out. The water rose up to their waists. People were running in all directions and now they had to swim. Wherever each person who had eaten the oil went, there a little stream flowed out, until everyone was dead. Only a grandchild and a grandmother lived. The water flowed and formed the river Temangau (*Tembangau*), the place has ghosts and is named Berehpun. There is always a sound around the place, a particular noise

[9] First recorded by Collings (1949: 87–87) and later reproduced by Williams-Hunt (1952: 26–27). I have collected the version independently before being aware of its existence in print. I take the opportunity to record the assistance given me by Cik

where the Terap tree fell. So until now the place is guarded by spirits (*berpuakak*). When there are ripples in Lubok Keruing today it signifies doom (*naas*).

Sometimes Lubok Keruin (*kuin*) is also referred to Lubok Setela where the water is supposed to be clean and clear. This is the home of the legendary *nagak* (monster). The monster has horns and is said to come above the surface when it defecates. Periodically it has to be fed with food, such as poultry and in most cases, the general belief is that the *nagak* does not harm anyone unless its wishes are not met with, or when someone transgresses the sacred rule attached to the mention of place-names and certain living things around that area. The sacredness of the Tasik lies at its middle in Tasik Kuin which is said to be the source of all the life in that area.

The Tasik Bera is obviously a place that Semelai will always associate all his social traditions with. The tale establishes the legitimacy of their claims to a common origin on the Peninsula, especially for those living farther away from this centre in the Serting and Triang. The true Semelai is thought today to come from the Tasik, the region is the symbolic centre of their cultural unity and the other outlying villages may be conceived to be degenerate, even 'peripheral' in their ways. The sentiments attached to the sense of cultural identity felt by Semelai is strongest in the Tasik Bera, and expression of these can be very obvious. One is assured that there is no other 'real' Semelai society apart from the ones who originally settled at the Tasik; such a group would identify itself not only with the legend associated with it but also the terrain (thus, they call themselves the *Semak bak Tasik*, 'people of the lake').

These differences play some part in social interaction between Semelai of different valleys, especially in the larger areas – the Tasek, the Bera (Bukit Rok) and Ayer Hitam. In a real sense, these have experienced different life-styles both in the field of livelihood as well the exposure to cultures and societies of the outside. Even in the question of interaction with other Aboriginal groups, the patter of experience have differed. Intermarriage does not occur on any significant scale between Semelai and Temuan, Chinese or Jakun in the villages in the

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Mat Lilah, now retired, of the Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli who helped me with the collection of this account at Pos Iskander. Collings' version lacks certain details which I have therefore included in my own account.

'peripheral' villages. Some beliefs have been forgotten to some extent in the latter areas too. Employment with organisations from the outside is also more frequent and on a larger scale in Tasik Bera. So that economic expectations have changed a great deal. Education opportunities for children too are better for Ayer Hitam Semelai than is the case in Bera.

The dimension of restraint finds greatest expression more evidently in the Bera region. This comes out more openly in the employment of a sacred ritual language by the inhabitants of the Bera (specifically around the Tasik). The usage relates to the idea of regarding the central portion of the swampland around Lubok Kuin as the 'spiritual' centre of the Semelai homeland. For example, no words commonly used in every speech to refer to certain elements within the physical environment can ever be uttered in Lubok Kuin except by their sacred-ritual equivalents. The prohibition is made to apply to a specific territorial context. As a sacred language these ritual prohibitions can be understood at three different but related levels: space, time, and event. The underlying structure is the belief that there are *alternative* terms suitable for each object at a specific time and place. The injunction follows as a logical corollary of the belief, and hence the respect, for the life (or soul, 'roh') present in all things, dead or alive. At the level of action, it is to be observed during hunting, fishing, and gathering – indeed at all times when one is likely to come in contact with unfamiliar spirits guarding the universe. Any transgression of these prohibitions would result in bad death. As a function of space, it applies very strictly in places at the boundaries of the primeval area beginning with Lubok Kuin to Kuala Temangau (Tembangau) on the west, down to Tasik Dampar in the south and to all extremities of the Tasik Bera. In these areas, no mention can be made of any significant feature of the environment except in terms which are considered suitable substitute words for them. Thus death is believed to follow after two days if one wilfully mentions *bertam* (a species of fern) in the bertam region while fishing is going on there. Fishing at Sungei Tembangau carries its own language hazards as among other things, one is prohibited to mention snakes, resin, rice or cucumber.

Associated with such prohibitions is what Semelai have consistently referred to as the existence of the penungguk *(or sekok)* in all things.[10] The *penungguk* as far as I can ascertain, are not dissimilar to the Malay

[10] I personally recall – and sometimes unconsciously practise – such prohibitions

spirit-guardians, are perhaps regarded as some of the guardians of the four corners of the world (Skeat and Blagden 1906). Boundaries are marked on all sides usually by rivers. Thus the region of greatest danger for Semelai are those in Ulu Tembangau on the west, to the Sungei Pertang area in the northwest and the southern end of the Tasik at the headwaters of the Palong. The areas in the middle are supposed to be harmless.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT: THE SOURCES OF AUTHORITY

One of the most remarkable features of Semelai society (which perhaps stands in great contrast to other aboriginal Malayan groups) is the existence of a well-developed "code" of moral law. We will touch briefly here on situations and cases involving wrong-doing, and later proceed to cultural beliefs in their relation to the maintenance of the social structure. This will give an idea of the good and the bad as seen by Semelai and altogether will show more graphically the function and the form of their sura as a pervasive influence which preserves Semelai social institutions.

The investigator involved in Semelai village life will soon realize the very broad distinction made by Semelai themselves between events that relate to Light *(engkarak teraung)* and those that relate to the Dark *(engkarak bersenget)*. This distinction finds some expression in the division made between the separate positions of headman (batin) and that of medicine-man (*puyang*). Its primary importance inheres in the premise of Universal Order in the world created by God, which is instrumentally brought about at the level of social interaction by the concept of *beriluk* ('to make for good relationships'). In the most general terms, *beriluk* involves the dynamic interplay of the twin forces of Light and Dark as analogous expressions of the Good and the Bad. As an abstract category, *beriluk* underlines the essential unity and the harmony of all creation since it existed in the time of Tok Adam before man and into the present. In the empirical elaboration of this concept is then to be found those rationalisations that Semelai make to justify the rightness or the wrongness of their deeds and actions, one of the many 'meanings' attached to the

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upon me by my grandmother wherever we go fishing on the fringes of the jungle, although only one comprehensive term is used in respect for the spirit-guardians, i.e. *datok*. Frequently, after having wondered in the forest and fallen sick, my illness was explained to me as *Kena colek hantu penunggu* (literally 'touched by the spirit-guardian').

invocation of the ninek muyang. Thus *beriluk* ia a pervasive category. Semelai say that the transgression of the principles of *beriluk* involves self-destruction (*binasak berbai*) and as a logical extension, the destruction of society too.

Thus *beriluk* is the Semelai concept of social justice *par excellence*. However, we cannot begin to understand Semelai moral law as a system apart from an initial examination of the various categories of crime recognised by the society.[11] Two important points may be touched on at the outset. The first attaches to the definition of the Semelai 'moral-legal community', that is to say, who executes the law, puts down the sentence, enforces the punishment and upon whom. Secondly, whether Semelai law makes the distinction between private wrongs as distinct from social wrongs. It is also legitimate to ask where the line of demarcation lies in this matter.

To deal with the first point: the moral community refers to all the inhabitants of a particular area designated by the name *kampong*. There is therefore a local 'legal' community as well as the wider Semelai legal community. Any kampong which is of a reasonable size (from about half a dozen houses or families) generally has its own headman who is at the same time the representative of the Batin for the whole valley. In this way he represents, and is, the legal machinery. An individual who commits a crime is answerable to him and will pay recompense to him unless the crime is of such a magnitude that it can only be handled by the Batin, as in the case of murder. Strictly speaking, there are four classes of individuals who have the authority to punish crime, viz. the Batin, the Menteri, the Jukerah and anyone elected as the 'leader' for a particular kampong. The latter is merely a representative and unlike the first three, holds no 'traditional' authority (hereditarily passed down). He is generally above thirty years of age and his position is elected or appointed by the Batin. Thus it will be clear that in an area with more than three villages or kampongs or constellation of kampongs, there will be two types of authority structures, one overlapping the other. The first type is the structure occupied by the hereditary leaders the Batin, the Menteri and the Jukerah, whose legal authority is employed in proportion to the

[11] The definition of 'law' adopted here is that given by the Oxford English Dictionary: law is 'a body of enacted or customary rules recognised by a community

seriousness of the crimes that they are allowed to handle. For instance, murder and homicide can only be tried and punished by the Batin.[12] So also are certain classes of adultery. Theft and lesser crimes may be dealt by the Menteri and the minor offences by the Jukerah. The elected headman is merely a figure-head and can be more accurately described as an organiser who stands in for the Batin. The latter office is generally designated as that of *Tok Empat* ('the fourth in authority') perhaps in literal reference to his position on the authority hierarchy. This representative and any person that becomes his representative in turn (when he is forced to be away for any length of time) constitutes the second type of authority structure. As the structure of authority is built on the legitimate claim to office through heredity in the case of the Batin, Menteri and the Jukerah there is no question of any conflict arising between one legal community and another. Strictly speaking, there is just one large Semelai legal community which is headed by the Batin and his retinue.

The position of the Batin needs some elaboration here. His office represents the final court of appeal since he stands as the chief executive of the sura of the ninek muyang. He is the prosecutor, the judge and the jury all in one. There is no question of his authority being subject to challenge as no other office is equal in status and authority. He does not make the law, but, stated in modern terms, he *is* the law. Hence the position of the Batin as an institutionalised authority is unassailable. The authority of the rest of the ranked individuals enjoy a status over and above all others within the legal community of the kampong, but only by virtue of the fact that they represent the Batinhood in a juridical capacity. The chain of authority beginning with the Tok Empat, through to the Jukerah, to the Menteri, and culminating finally with the Batin is at once also the channel through which a proper "process of law" may run. Just as a Semelai individual is a member of his legal community defined by the boundaries of a particular kampong under the headmanship of a particular representative of the Batinhood, he is also a member of the wider community and is always answerable to the Batin at all times. In other words, the fact that there is an apparent overlap of legal authority at the level of the kampong

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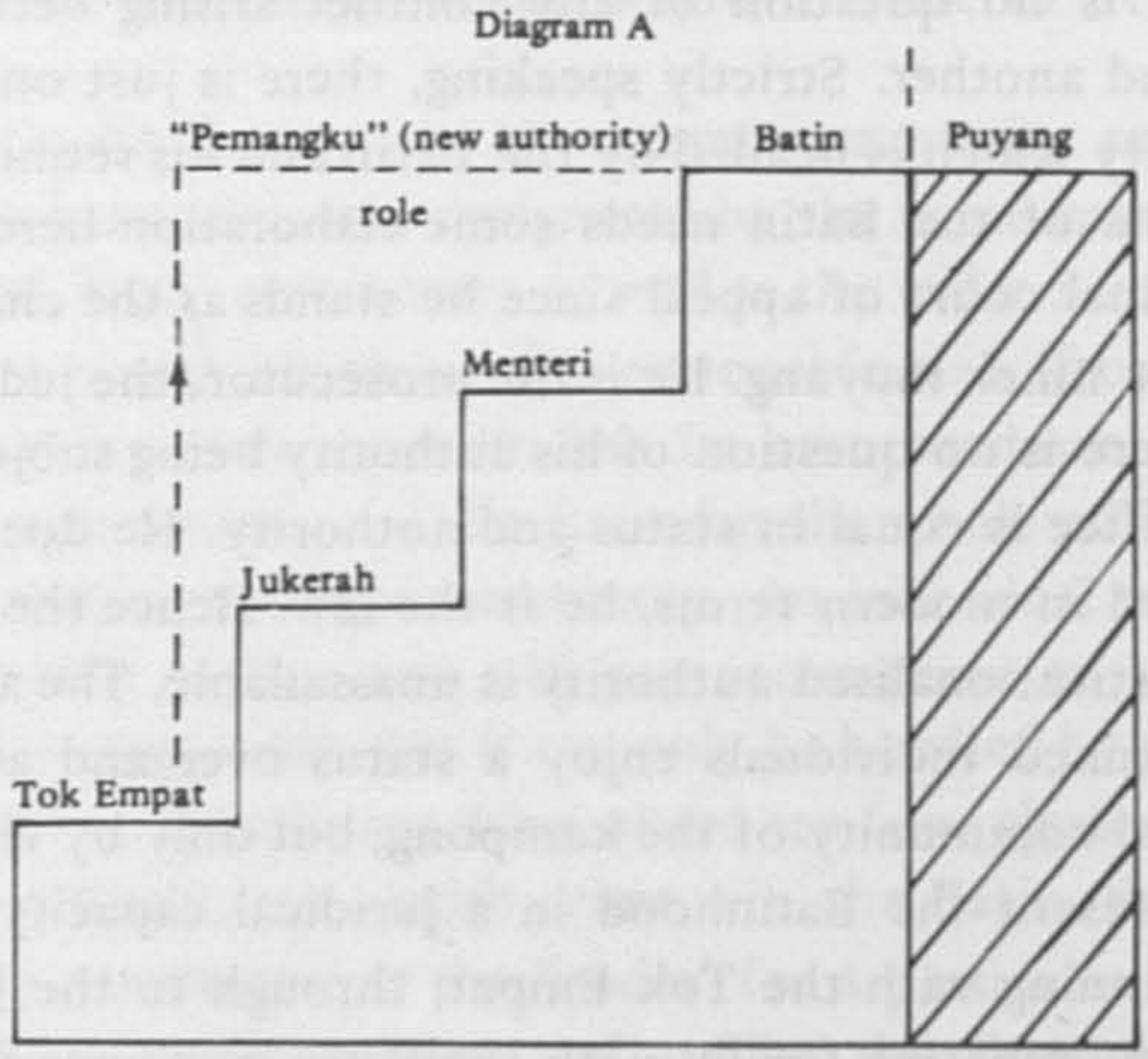
as binding'. The definition is sufficient to encompass the 'legal aspects of the Sura as they are passed down by the oral tradition.

[12] A full examination is not attempted here.

and the wider social community is merely a function of the distances of each kampong from the others. That is to say, the necessity of the division of authority is due to the geographical distribution of Semelai kampongs.

But there is another sense in which the Semelai legal community – whether at the level of the kampong or at the level of the wider society – is divided. The source of the division hinges on yet another dimension which, though it does not fall into the category of traditionally-inherited authority, is nonetheless as important as that played by the Batin and his retinue. This is the authority derived from the role of the medicine-man and ritual expert – the *puyang*. It must be emphasised here again that the position of the puyang had always been an ambiguous one, although his authority is not. (See diagrams A & B p. 25) The position of the puyang-

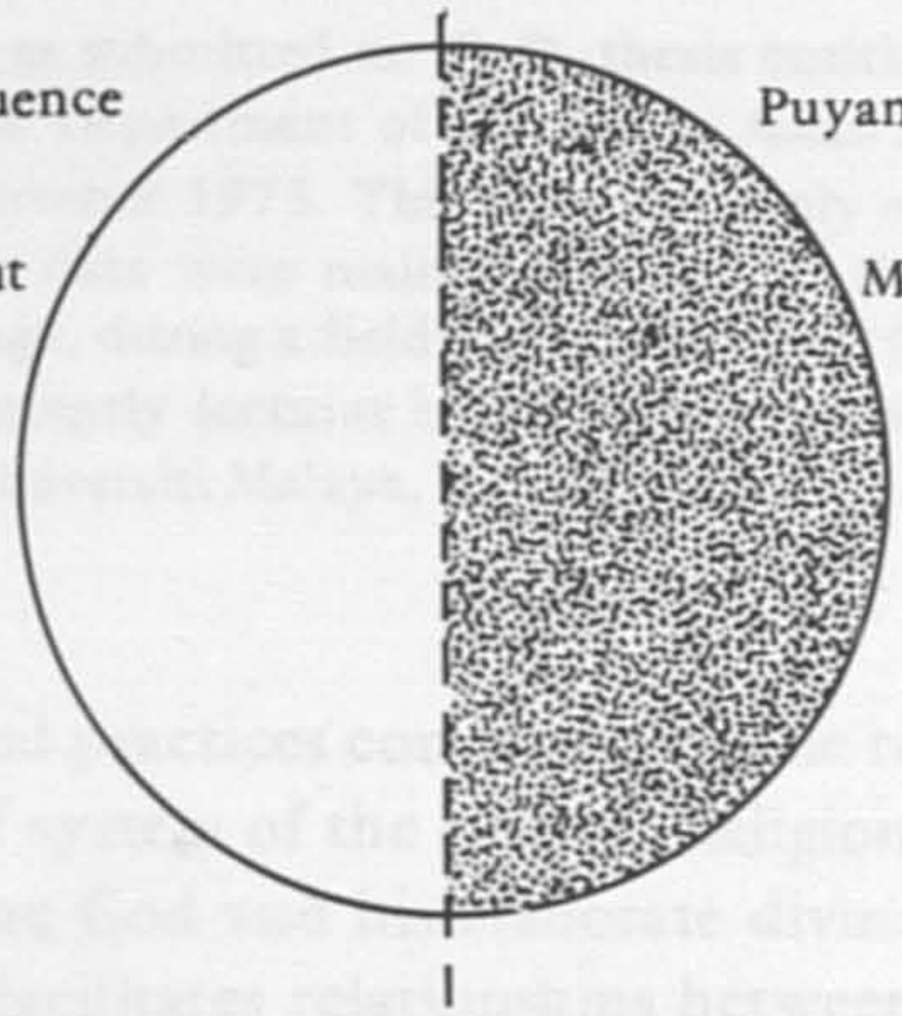
Diagram A



Representation of authority in terms of hierarchy

hood has always remained ambiguous because he is outside the traditional hierarchy of authority. I venture to say that the very ambiguity of the puyang's position underlines a basic feature of Semelai social life and the cosmological confusion which derives from the syncretic tendencies that it is prone to within the last few centuries. The theme is perceivable at many levels and will remain one of the key problems in the understanding of their classifications as a whole. Suffice it to say that the authority of the puyang and that of the Batin concern different types of crime. Thus their powers derive from the fact that their fields of authority are mutually exclusive.

Diagram B.



Representation of spheres of influence

For further understanding of this question we have to refer to the observation made earlier which states that Semelai distinguish between events that relate to the dark and those that relate to light. This analogy is extended in the field of crimes. There is no Semelai equivalent for the English term *crime* but Semelai generally refer to prohibited acts in this category as *pantangs*, which seems to suggest a much weaker connotation. Pantang is at once a more encompassing term which not only includes the mores of society, taboos and folkways, but also the infringment of rules of a more serious nature.[13] A certain continuum along which the progressive seriousness of crimes are placed accords very well with the structure of the authority system as it exist within the Semelai legal community. Thus pantangs can be small and inconsequential (*pantang rakket*) or socially dangerous (*pantang raktuy*). The first category can be dealt with by the Tok Empat at the local level of the small kampong, and the second are usually taken care of by the Jukerah, the Menteri or the Batin. A fuller discussion regarding the dimensions of authority requires a deeper analysis of the classification of crimes and punishments among the Semelai. This, however, is not attempted here.

[13] Often the term *salah* is used but the sense is not specific and hence has little definitive value.

MAGICAL PRACTICES IN A RURAL MALAY COMMUNITY IN SARAWAK

ZAINAL KLING has submitted an Ph.D. thesis entitled, "The Saribas Malays of Sarawak," to the Department of South-East Asian Sociology, University of Hull, England, December 1973. This essay is mainly extracted from a chapter of that thesis. The data were mainly collected in the Saribas District particularly in Pusa village, during a fieldwork from June 1971 till August 1972.

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I

MAGICAL belief and practices constitute, beside religion, another facet of the composite belief system of the Malays. Religion provides the means for a belief in a supreme God and his elaborate divine laws, instructions and injunctions. Magic facilitates relationships between the human world and the invisible and symbolic world of the spirit-beings and with its cosmological hierarchies. Magic accounts too for the existence of seemingly independent superhuman powers which man manipulates to affect certain results. The Malay magical system, then, provides further techniques to deal with the spirit-beings in the symbolic hierarchy. This knowledge is relevant insofar as it affects interpersonal and intergroup relationships and has an implication of sanction in the network of social relations and the general social order.

In the context of accelerated national development, deliberately planned and executed at all levels of administration and consciously transforming every aspect of traditional life style, magic may lose its meaning and function. The application of empirical knowledge and modern technology to every possible detail of human action replaces a great deal of non-scientific and non-empirical knowledge accumulated collectively but informally through generations of living together in a common culture. Human actions are then, largely directed and regulated by a pool of readily understood knowledge of techniques and causes occuring within the world of immediate experience. It must, however, be said that no single human society has been able to enculture completely all its members to the extent that they are able to commonly participate in every conceivable activity in society. There is always a partial process of enculturation or an incomplete dissemination of knowledge depending very much on the channel of socialization or enculturation.

Obviously the same may be said of modern development whereby the attendant processes of change and transformation occur at varying degrees of intensity and effectiveness, leaving a large area of knowledge and tradition unaffected and untouched. It is within this context that the data in the essay are presented. While further penetrations of modern knowledge and technology surely and certainly will diminish the significance of symbolic and esoteric knowledge, yet the cognitive system of Malay culture, constituted of a highly integrated diverse elements of religion, magic and custom, may persist for sometime yet in its present form. Perhaps, it is in this sense too that the concept nascent may be appropriately applied.

SPIRIT-BEINGS AND MYSTICAL POWERS

FUNDAMENTAL to the Malay magical system of belief are two distinct but closely related personalized and impersonalized powers. The personalized powers emanate from the existence and activities of superhuman spirit-beings which are of two classes: (a) spirits originally created as such, and (b) disembodied human souls transformed by accidental death. The impersonalized powers are independent powers that are part of the omnipotent and immanent attributes of the Supreme God.

I have here distinguished between a purely magical power as being personalized in spirit-beings, and a mystical power as being impersonalized and independent. Malay magical practitioners employ both spirit-beings and impersonalized power, singly or in conjunction, depending very much on individual knowledge and magical technique. However practitioners who are spirit-mediums or keepers of spirit familiars are usually discredited by pious group in the community as being non-Islamic or even apostates. On the other hand, those practitioners who manipulate God's alleged omnipotent attributes though performing magical acts are, in practice, still identified as Islamic and thus condonable within the Islamic conception.

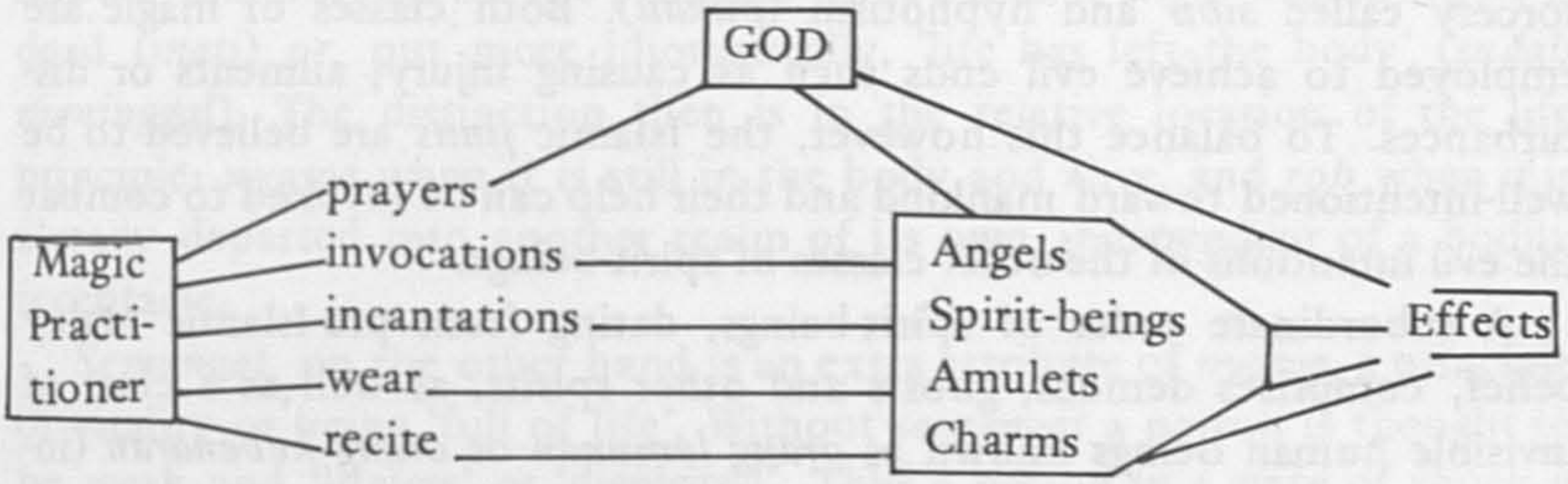
Objective observation shows that both realms of magic, personalized and impersonalized, are so intimately related that even the manipulation of an impersonalized power usually needs intermediary personnel to obtain the intended effect. Formulae which are recited as pleas to God normally contain further appeals to other saintly persons or heroes, dead or alive, to pray for the efficacy of the magical rite being conducted. Thus, while the so-called non-Islamic magic employs non-Islamic spirit-being (that is, spirit-beings from pre-Islamic Malay beliefs) and Islamic mystical

practices invoke Islamic saints and heroes, they all form an integrated hierarchy in the Malay cosmological system.

COSMOLOGICAL ORDERS

THE Malay cosmological hierarchy, basically Islamic but augmented by traditional Malay spirit-beings, conceives God as its apical point. All others under him are subservient and merely his creatures. Well-known in the Islamic conception of God is his absolute unity and immanence. Among other attributes are his eternity and ultimate reality. The universe and its contents according to mystical conception, are merely the reflection of his existence. Thus his power and will permeate the whole universe; magical practitioners may appeal to them through prayers, worship and praise.

The Malay magical pertormance basically invokes God s power and assumes that he also permits (*izin*) other creatures in the lower cosmological orders to exercise power.



The Paths of Magical Power

The second order in the Malay cosmological hierarchy comprises Angels who constitute the second of Islam's 'Six Pillars of Faith'. They figure prominently in many incantations and invocations (*jampi* and *serapah*). Angels are believed to be created from light (*cahaya* or *nur*); being incorporeal they can transform themselves into human figures.

Islamic tradition also endowed Malays with another order of spirit-beings known as *syaitan* (satan) who is led by *Iblis* (the Devil). They are supposed to be a class of rebellious angels, dedicated to leading man astray from his religious path. They are able, it is believed, to eavesdrop on God's secrets at 'the foot of the sky' and betray them to their human disciples or

collaborators. From these secrets, it is said, diviners and astrologers are able to foretell the future and make predictions. They are said to be created out of fire and invisibly fill the universe, waiting constantly to cause havoc to mankind. Pious Malays have often accused magical practitioners of dealing with satans and the Devil in order to cause injury to others. In sociological terms, such accusations can be interpreted as a reflection of covert tension and conflicts in interpersonal and intergroup relations, characterised by mistrust, envy, jealousy, fear and anxiety.

Included in the class of malevolent spirit-beings are the genies or jinns (*jin*). However, jinns are conceived in terms of the human social order and are divided into infidel jinns (*jin kafir*) and believer jinns (*jin Islam*). The substance out of which they were created is only vaguely known, but they are believed to be the original inhabitants of the universe before the fall of Adam and Eve from paradise. The collaboration of the *jin kafir* and satans enables 'black magic' practitioners and sorcerers to operate the classes of sorcery called *sihir* and hypnotism (*pukau*). Both classes of magic are employed to achieve evil ends such as causing injury, ailments or disturbances. To balance this however, the Islamic *jinns* are believed to be well-intentioned toward mankind and their help can be invoked to combat the evil intentions of the other classes of spirit-beings.

A subordinate order of spirit-beings, dating from pre-Islamic Malay belief, comprises demons, ghosts and other spirits, as well as a class of invisible human beings known as *orang lemunan* or *orang kebenaran* (invisible people or righteous people). Ghosts and demons (*antu*) are generally malignant spirits and they originate in various ways from different sources but mainly from disembodied or departed human souls *(rob, semangat).*

Malays conceive of man as composed of two separable parts: a material body or receptacle *(jasad, badan)* and an immaterial soul *(roh, semangat).*[1] The life principle is called *nyawa,* and breath is *nafas.* Having life *(ber-nyawa)* or being alive *(hidup)* is almost synonymous with having a soul,

[1] Malays believe in the dichotomy of human existence, a) *lahir*, an existence of a material body, readily verified by the five senses *(pancaindera)* b) *batin*, an existence of invisible and immaterial spirit, ever present within the material body while it is alive. The relationship between the two is given in the analogy of a body and the shadow it casts on the ground. This conception is significant in the ritual of asking forgiveness on such occasion as *hariraya* festival.

and this is evidenced by the presence of breath. This conception also includes the order of animals and plants, even though plants are not actually thought of as breathing. Nonetheless, the fundamental conception of the vital life principle as almost synonymous with the soul is important in Malay magical beliefs and practices, and in the definition of ghost and demon.

Endicott (1970: 48ff) thinks that the three terms, *roh*, *semangat* and *nyawa* are basically different aspects of the same life principles and therefore only refinements in conception. On further reflection however, I consider that there are fine differences between each conception. *Nyawa* is the detachable life principle 'breathed' by God into the lifeless bodily receptacle. It may be taken away (*ambil*) or it may leave the body (*meninggal*). It becomes *roh* after leaving the body and resides in the middle world or realm of the soul (*alam roh* or *alam barzakh*) awaiting the Day of Judgement when human souls are resurrected (*dibangkit semula*). *Nyawa,* therefore, is the life principle while a man is alive. Without it, he is dead (*mati*) or, put more idiomatically, 'life has left the body' (*sudah meninggal*). The distinction then is in the relative location of the life principle: *nyawa* when it is still in the body and alive, and *roh* when it is already departed into another realm of its own, independent of a bodily receptacle.

Semangat, on the other hand is an extra attribute of *nyawa*, a principle of vitality or being 'full of life'. Without *semangat* a person is thought to be weak and 'lifeless' or 'dispirited'. Thus a person in a state of shock is called *hilang semangat* (he has lost the vital spirit). In a case of shock, this 'spirit' accidentally leaves the body and is entreated to return to the body by the formula: *kur semangat*! (oh spirit). *Semangat* therefore should not be equated with soul or the life principle but with vitality: an extra power attribute of the life principle. This concept is extended to the idea of plants having a soul, especially the staple food cereals like padi (*semangat padi).* A good harvest of padi is looked upon as padi having a great spirit and the padi must have been very 'happy' to be in such a state. On the other hand, when there is a poor harvest, it signifies that the *semangat* of padi has gone away, leaving many empty ears of rice. It has been offended (*merajuk*) through human mistreatment. Magical technique may be required to appease the 'soul' of the padi and cause it to return, or strict observance of taboos (*pantang*) related to padi cultivation may have to be imposed to avoid further offending of the *semangat.*

Besides *semangat*, another attribute of the body is a malignant power called *badi*, akin to Evans-Pritchard's conception of witchcraft. It is an innate power of the body which can strongly affect a weak spirited person so as to weaken him and drive away his *semangat*. A strong concentration of *badi* in a human or animal corpse may have a harmful effect on the living. Many people do not attend a funeral service for fear of being affected by *badi*. A hunter, a farmer or indeed anyone else may be affected by the *badi* of animals, dead or alive, or earth, especially an ant-hill. Since the human soul can be transformed into an *antu*, and many places are the abodes of *antu*, *badi* are sometimes, regarded as the evil power of the spirit-beings and *antu*.

Badi and *semangat* are therefore two different 'body' and 'soul' attributes. *Badi* is an extra malignant quality of the material, bodily receptacle of the *nyawa*, and *semangat* is the vital quality of the *nyawa*. Thus a *badi* continues to exist even if the body is dead, but *semangat* vanishes once a living body is deprived of its life principle. *Badi* therefore has the quality of a *mana*, but certainly a malignant one.[2]

Returning to the conception of ghost and demon, Malays attribute the origin of ghosts and demons to the departed human soul (*roh*). Through accidental death such as still birth (*mati beranak*), a fatal accident, or being murdered (*mati dibunuh*) the soul leaves the body unnaturally, and goes astray while on its way to the realm of the souls. En route it finds another home: the trees, the jungle, the sea. Or it becomes a spirit familiar in another form, and is kept by magician or sorcerer.

This class of maligant spirits *(antu)* is identified by Malays according to their abode and ethnic origin. There are therefore *antu laut* (sea demons), *antu utan* (forest demons), *antu tanah* (earth demons) or *antu Dayak* (Dayak spirits), *antu Cina* (Chinese spirits), etc. These are demons normally exorcised by Malay exorcists, or spirits invoked by the spirit-mediums.

The class of invisible human beings (*orang lemunan*)[3] is considered to

[2] W.W. Skeat interprets all the three elements – *roh*, *semangat*, *badi* – differently. See W.W. Skeat, *Malay Magic* Dover Publications, Inc. New York, 1900 repr. 1960 p. 427 ff.

[3] *lemunan* means 'invisible'. cf. R. Nyandoh, "The Lemunan People," *SMJ*, Vol. VII, 1956, pp. 323–325.

be organised, like human communities, in villages along the river banks and the coastal plain. They are believed to be Muslims, with their own mosque, and benevolent to human beings. Their women are very beautiful and stories of human intermarriage with them are common. Yet recent accidents occurring along the Saribas river are attributed to their activities. A *lemunan* community is a symbolic parallel of the human societal order.

A Pusa village midwife is said to have attended, one evening, the birth of a *lemunan* child It seems that the midwife was urgently summoned by a man whom she had never previously met in the village. His urgency made her disregard the fact that she did not know him. She remembered being taken to a house in the direction of the village mosque, and after delivering the baby she was shown home. The next day the midwife was very puzzled for, to her knowledge, there was no such family and no such house in the village. There was however no injurous effect on her.

A Malay chief in the past is said to have married a *lemunan* woman by whom he had several children. But they too are invisible, and have joined their own community at Spinang, a place near the mouth of the Saribas River. This belief in the existence of *orang Lemunan* is still strong, as is shown by a recent event in Pusa.

Turki, a fisherman, lost his four-year-old son from his small trawler while fishing near Spinang. That day he and others on the boat were either at the stern or the bow while the boy was playing above the engine compartment. Nobody saw how the boy was lost: perhaps he fell into the river. They discovered after a while that he was gone and immediately turned the boat around, hoping that they could use the net to scoop the body from the river. Other passing boats were called to help recover the body. After several frustrating hours, hopes of finding the body faded and the search was abandoned. The man returned to Pusa to inform his family of the loss and everyone was shocked. They could not believe it. Turki's father was enraged and deeply grieved the loss. Several further attempts were made to recover the body during the following days.

Not believing that the boy was actually lost, the family consulted several *dukun* and others known to possess knowledge (*ilmu*) of spirits. They asked: "Is the boy lost? If he is still alive somewhere, can we get him back?" At this point, mention was made of the possibility of his being taken away by the *lemunan* community at Spinang. The magical practitioners were divided in their views. Some said that the boy could be brought back, while others believed he was dead. After a couple of days he

was indeed assumed to be dead, and the funeral service was performed. The seven-day *ringgo* (mortuary rite) was carried out.

A week later the family was still plunged in overwhelming grief and still refused to accept the reality of their loss. They approached a teacher at the village school, a well-known Qur'an reader known to possess a good knowledge of spirits; he agreed to conduct a rite of recovery. Though doubtful of success he felt obliged to do something to please the family He went to Spinang to consult another practitioner about the correct procedure and preparation.

There he was advised to prepare a set of articles in exchange for the boy. These articles were to be left at the river bank near Spinang. A small hut of about two feet high and one foot wide was built with a roof of yellow cloth and a wall of white calico. At the centre of its floor, also of white calico, several boiled eggs were placed, a medium-sized white chicken and several fruits. This offering was taken to Spinang and they waited to see if there was any further development. A member of the family would receive a sign through a dream if the *lemunan* community agreed to the exchange. But nothing happened and the family concluded that the *lemunan* had refused the exchange. Greatly disappointed, they dropped the matter, but it was not forgotten.

On the fourteenth day after the boy's disappearance, further mortuary rite was conducted. Gradually the family settled down and accepted the loss. But on the fortieth day, when another mortuary feast was about to be held, news was suddenly brought to them by an upriver man that a boy had been found at a coastal village further north in the Rajang delta.

It seemed the boy was all by himself at the village wharf. No one knew where he came from and the description seemed to fit Turki's son. Anxiously, the family went to the village, only to find that the boy (who actually came from another village upriver) had been accidentally left behind by his mother when she returned home by the river launch. In deep frustration and mourning the fortieth day funeral feast was held and a goat slaughtered.

This incident clearly verifies the Malay belief in the reality of existence of the invisible community. Unlike the belief in *antu*, the existence of *orang lemunan* does not evoke fear or anxiety, but provides an explanation for the occurrence of certain types of misfortunes and accidents. This theory of causation is also attributed to the other classes of spirit-beings constituting the several cosmological orders. It enables Malays to explain,

even if only partially, the origin and causes of events about which they do not have any real empirical knowledge. At the same time, in the case of the boy and the *orang lemunan*, the fact that these spirits were considered to be well disposed towards human beings gave the bereaved family some comfort.

MAGICAL CAUSATION

THE employment of spirit-beings, especially *antu*, the manipulation of independent mystical powers and the activation of hidden power lodged in an object or talisman by chanting certain invocations and incantations, constitute the major part of Malay belief in magical causation. The spirit-beings and magical powers may magically affect the soul or vitality of a person *(intai semangat)* through spirit possession *(serongek)*[4] or the magical technique of calling or summoning (*seru*) and the making of an image (*puja*).

Spirit possession may result from the malevolent activities of independent spirits, or from the deliberate deployment of spirit familiars in order to cause injury to a person. Malays believe independent spirits inhabit all kinds of places. If a man accidentally tresspasses on or disturbs their abode he may provoke such spirits to harm him. This unintentional provocation or disturbance may occur through an unwitting treading on their home, an indiscriminate act of urination or defecation, or simply by crossing their path. Thus Malays will softly address the invisible inhabitants of a creek, jungle path or river source by saying: "Salutation, oh Grandfather.[5] Allow your grandchildren to pass through."

The spirit might injure a person by 'stabbing with its kris' and inevitably the victim suffers from internal pain, especially in the abdomen. Again, a spirit can cause feverishness in a man or woman who has crossed its path *(limpasan)*. In a more serious case, a spirit might enter the body of a man and possess him, so that the victim's soul and vitality are temporarily displaced, and he ceases to have any control over his mental faculties. A

[4] cf. H.S. Morris, "Shaminism Among the Oya Melanau," in M. Freedman, ed., *Social Organization*, Frank Cass & Co. Ltd. London, 1967, pp. 198.

[5] The use of 'grandfather' is a mark of respect and a recognition of power. This is a kinship idiom to objectify the symbolic world of invisible social orders.

symptom of this type of spirit possession is the extra strength the victim has over others who try to overpower him.

The deployment of spirit familiars is believed to be motivated either by the need to feed the spirit with human blood, or to fulfil the demand of a client. It is commonly believed that a spirit is occasionally fed on the blood of an animal or a human-being. The spirit's keeper, his 'mother', or 'father' as he or she is called, therefore, has to find a means of securing it. Failing this the keeper's own blood may be sucked by the spirit. The most usual place to find blood is in the house of a woman about to give birth. Thus, if a person is known to keep spirit familiars, he or she is barred from coming near such a house. Further protection may be ensured by placing a sharp metallic instrument near the mother and her new born baby. Sometimes a midwife may be accused of feeding her spirit familiar with the blood of the placenta. When such an accusation occurs, the midwife finds it very difficult to get clients in the future.

A spirit keeper may also be hired to deploy his 'child' (spirit familiar) to harm a specified victim. Such a case arises perhaps from envy, jealousy or the desire of the client for revenge against the victim. What usually is supposed to happen is that when everyone is asleep in the middle of the night, the spirit familiar is sent to suck the victim's blood and kill him.

A great deal of mistrust may be found in a Malay community which holds such beliefs about magic. Each person is fearful of the other, so that everyone arms himself with some sort of protective magic, or places near his house a kind of protective object. The commonest device is to hang a piece of old fishing net, or a bees' or hornet's nest outside the house. It is believed that if a spirit visits the house, it has first to count all the holes in the net, or in the bees' or hornet's nest before it can enter. Every time it loses count, it has to start again from the beginning. Finally, when daylight appears, it has to leave the house.

Seru means to summon, and *puja* means to adore or idolize. Both are magical techniques directed to the manipulation of the victim's *semangat* from a distance. The technique of *seru* employs incantation in which the name, the soul and spirit of the victim are summoned to come at the command of the magical manipulator. While *puja* also employs the technique of *seru*, but the magical manipulation is intensified by making either an image or a picture of the victim or using a piece of his or her clothing. During the magical rite the victim is called and passionately adored. His or her soul and spirit are enticed to emerge and to follow the command of the manipulator.

Both *seru* and *puja* techniques aim to persuade or influence the *semangat* to leave the body, thus weakening the victim and making him easier to control. A love charm *(pengasih)* for instance conjures the *semangat* to submit to the burning passion of the spell-caster. A charm to reduce a foe to submission (*penunduk*) calls upon the *semangat* to obey his enemy's orders and commands. And a charm to sow dissension (*pembenci*) between two people, especially between lovers, commands the spirit of one party to dislike the character, look, sight, smell and even the thought of the other.

The utterance of a command or the manipulation of the *semangat* is done in a magical rite where chants are recited over burning incense, while the victim's clothing or a discarded part of his or her body (finger nails, hair clippings) is burned or held in the incense smoke. It is believed that the whole human body is permeated with the same amount of vital power, so that any of its parts such as finger-nails or hair, can be utilised for the magical manipulation of the *semangat*. At the same time, anything which has been in contact recently with the body, such as a shirt, head dress, or sarong may be used for the same end. It is due to this fear that most Malay women do not leave their fallen hair or finger-nail clippings indiscriminately in the house, but bury them somewhere. Clothing which is wet with sweat is carefully hidden in the living-room before it is washed.

A photographic image is also believed to be susceptible to magical manipulation. But among the younger generation of villagers, photographs are commonly exchanged, and no fear of magic is attached to such friendly relationships. However, there are cases where a silent admirer or a rejected lover may resort to magical technique to win or regain the loved one. Thus a photograph will be held over burning incense while a love charm is chanted and the rite may only end after a three days' fast.

Manipulation of the image may also be carried out through sorcery. Here, the image may be pierced with a pin to cause injury to the victim. This is similar to the technique of *tuju* (pointing). While *seru* and *puja* may be employed both for good or bad intentions to get the victim to submit to the command of the manipulator, the technique of *tuju* is essentially that of sorcery, intended to harm or kill the victim. The manipulation is also carried out at a distance, in a place other than the victim's house. Like *puja*, *tuju* employs an image or a photograph of the victim, and a sharp pointed instrument. When the name of the victim is called, the image is

held in the smoke of burning incense, an incantation is recited and the image is pierced with the sharp instrument. The manipulator recites: "I am not killing this image but the body of so and so." The charm or spell is chanted to intensify the hope-for effect.

One important element in Malay magical technique is the employment of incense to intensify the magical power. Earth and fire, wind and water are the four common media in magical manipulation as in Galenic medicine, through which magical forces may travel to the intended victim. I shall elaborate on the actual techniques used in certain specific magical practices in the final section.

MAGICAL PRACTITIONERS

THE role of a Malay magical practitioner may be generally classified as that of mediator, keeper, manipulator and activator of spirit-beings and magical forces. However, mainly as a mediator possessing knowledge and technique of spirit-beings and magical forces, that he can be regarded as the intermediary link between the supernatural world and its inhabitants, and the social order of living human beings. He (or she) is in a position to deal with supernatural realms and is therefore the fulcrum upon which the delicate relationships between the two realms, supernatural and social, balance. In this role he appeases, exhorts, and exorcises the spirit-beings for the welfare of his community. Or, he controls and subjugates spirit-beings as his familiars. It is in this position that he derives his status and high esteem in the community, and inevitably he makes a living by it.

In the Malay communities of Saribas, particularly Pusa, several categories of people are regarded as practitioners of magic. The best known is the category of *dukun.*[6] A dukun, either a man or a woman, is at once a herbalist, a magician, a shaman and a folk healer. Other practitioners are the *pandai ilmu* (mystical magicians) and other individual persons who are neither *dukun* nor *pandai ilmu.* The dukun being the most

[6] *dukun* seems to be the only institutionalized magical role in Saribas. There is no *bomoh* or *pawang* as found in other Malay communities in South-West Sarawak (Harrison, *The Malays of South-West Sarawak Before Malaysia*, Macmillan, London, 1970) and Peninsular Malaysia. For a consideration of the position of *bomoh* as a traditional institution in Peninsular Malaysia, see Mohd. Taib bin Osman, "Patterns of Supernatural Premises Underlying the Institution of the Bomoh in Malay Culture," *BKI*, 128, 1972 pp. 219–234.

important among them, has a large repertoire of knowledge and magical practices in his possession.

In most Saribas villages, there are at least one or two practising *dukun*, and in Pusa there are three, two women and a man. Recently, however, two of them 'retired' due mainly to the constant ridicule of their practices by some of the more influential group of pious people, mainly from Kampung Ulu.

The verbal conflict created factions along kinship lines, because several members of the *dukun* kinsmen are also pious and influential members of their village ward and some are leaders in the local branch of one of the national political parties. The two Local Councillors in the village are in fact members of the opposing factions and also leaders of the local branches of opposed political parties. Thus the social stage is set for a slanging match which occasionally erupts in the village.

Despite the ridicule, one lady *dukun* of 70 years, a *hajjah* afflicted with elephantiasis, continues to practise, although on a much reduced scale. She has even discontinued certain major magical rites and procedures. Her career as a *dukun* began at the age of thirty when she was living in the coastal village of Meludam. It seemed that when she was bearing her fifth child, she dreamt of an ancestral *antu* called Bujang Penguyat from Brunei, who gave her knowledge of how to cure the sick, and also a rite for invoking the help of other *antu*. By conducting a certain rite and chanting a certain invocation, she can go into a trance. In her trance she utters the prescription for the cure of whatever kind of illness she is dealing with.

As a *dukun* she conducted, until recently, an annual rite of body cleansing (*mandi ulang tahun*) to 'wash', and thus protect, herself from the ill-effects of curing other people. This was one of the major rites she conducted to appease the spirits and demons and renew her relationships with them. Symbolically the rite reenacted a story of war and fighting between a group of seven sisters and a malevolent spirit in the shape of a crocodile. After a battle, stylised in dances and singing, the crocodile was defeated and killed. This was followed by another battle between two groups, one evil and one good, ending in the defeat of the evil. The rite, performed for about three days and nights, ended with the *dukun* (the leading performer) taking a ritual bath of lime (*limau nipis*) and scented water.

The *dukun's* magical rites and techniques vary from simple incantation, the application of herbs and massage, to the performance of a major shamanistic seance, the *berantu, bersogak (berunan)* and *berjong* ceremonies. The ceremonies form an elaborate set of rites almost complementary to each other and constitute the 'final knowledge' of shamanistic ritual. I shall deal with them briefly at the end of this essay.

Other than the *dukun*, the Malays recognize a loose category of magical practitioners as *pandai ilmu.* This comprises various individuals who are known to be in possession of esoteric techniques and knowledge. Unlike the *dukun*, who deal with spirit-beings both as opponents and collaborators, the *pandai ilmu* mainly utilize mystical powers, manipulating them and exorcising malevolent spirits. While the *dukun* employ chants uttered in the Malay language, they usually employ herbs for curing purposes, but in combination with Qur'anic chants. Thus the knowledge of the *pandai ilmu* is more formal and derived mainly from Islamic influence. It can be learned and practised by anyone, and is not 'naturally' endowed in a dream as in the case of the *dukun*. Furthermore many of the practitioners are pious individuals who are closely identified with the Orthodox Muslim group. Thus they claim that their knowledge is religiously condonable and is practised in opposition to satans instead of collaborating with them or with other *antu.*

Many incantations of the *pandai ilmu* are mystical formulae invoking the help and assistance of the angels, Prophets, Companions of the Prophets, Islamic saints and heroes. These are pious intermediaries whose mortal souls in heaven are invoked to help achieve the required state of affairs. Thus many such magical practitioners are consulted by others for what they believe to be good purposes, for example in matching two people in love or sowing dissension between two people whose parents do not like such a union, or divining the whereabouts of a lost article. A *lebai* whom I know personally — and is, incidentally a good masseur — taught me a protective charm merely by chanting a certain formula:

Bismillahhirrahmannirrahim.
Alif berdiri dengan sendiri,
Alif berdiri dengan sendiri.
Aku berdiri di dalam kandungan Nur Allah.
In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate.
I stand within alif,
Alif stands by itself,
I stand within the protection of God's Light.

In fact the group of pious individuals called *lebai* make up the majority of the *pandai ilmu*, and I am inclined to categorise them as "pious magicians". Many of them are deeply learned in mystical matters but are not formally regarded as mystics or *sufis*. For this reason they form an opponent group to the *dukun*.

Other practitioners are individuals whose works – such as logging, fishing and the like – involve danger. They believe that demons and spirits may be very malevolent in these risky surroundings, and this motivates them into learning some form of protective magic. This applies particularly to fishing-boat skippers or logging-camp leaders. There are occasions, they say, when they have to face the predicament of spirits attacking them at the work site. Thus they 'arm' themselves with what seems to be the most logical weapon: magical power.

Loggers very often relate stories of forest demons attacking them on certain rainy and misty days when colourful rainbows may appear to add (in their minds) to the awesome setting of the jungle. At such times they either stay in the camp or return home for a few days until the weather improves. It is in such a situation of fear that a knowledge of magical incantations is very useful in the jungle camp so as to maintain personal and group confidence.

Once in a while a logger is killed by a falling tree. This is attributed to the anger of forest demons. The logging-leader has to conduct or have an expert conduct a propitiation ceremony *(semah)* to appease the spirit. This propitiation expert is called a *tukang semah*. During the ceremony a goat or chicken is slaughtered and the blood is collected in a hole in the ground and offered to the spirits. They are then requested not to disturb *(anok)* the loggers any more. The meat of the animals is cooked and consumed by those attending the ceremony at the site of the accident.

Fishermen too often tell stories of sea demons trying to mislead them into fishing in isolated areas. Especially at night when fisherman use oil lamps they say the demon may appear as a small ball of fire similar to the oil lamp. Fishermen are alert to this and occasionally keep a look out to make sure that no fireball grow to an especially large size, because this signifies a sea demon. If one is seen, someone with the right knowledge will have to destroy the fireball before it gets larger. This of course needs the correct incantations and magical technique.

Hunters have a similar belief that forest demons can mislead them into shooting the buttress-like base of a tree thinking it to be a sitting animal.

Also common are farmers who think they have to combat pests sent by earth demons. Once I visited a group of pioneer farmers who had just opened up a piece of jungle land for padi cultivation. They complained that their padi was often attacked by birds and insects, despite the insecticides and pesticides they used. Moreover they could not believe that field rats could climb padi plants and cut off several ripe padi stalks. They were so disturbed by this that they asked me if I knew any magical technique to protect their crop. As they reasoned: we have to combat unseen enemies with unseen remedies (*kamik lawan musuh sik nampak 'ngan ubat sik nampak jua*).

To deal with the many forms of spirit-beings and magical power, the Malays in general, and their magical practitioners in particular, make use of different magical techniques and practices.

MAGICAL PRACTICES

THEORETICALLY, the whole complex of magical practices and techniques forms an intricate system. It begins with discovering the cause of a state of affairs, perhaps by divinatory diagnosis. Knowledge of the cause logically presupposes some prior employment of offensive or 'black' magic and this calls for curative magic to effect a remedy. It also motivates the use of protective magic and personal magic as a kind of precaution against further magical 'offensive' by others.

Such magical system is variously known in different societies, and with varying complexity and elaboration. I shall deal with the Malay magical system as illustration of this complex cognitive structure which lies between the empirical social world and the non-empirical symbolic or supernatural world.

Diagnostic magic (*nilit* or *tilik*) examines and determines the possible supernatural causes of a malady or disturbance. In the case of illness, a *dukun* may diagnose by means of a lighted candle placed by the sick-bed. By chanting a specific formula and invoking the help of a certain *antu.* the dukun determines the cause of the illness and its remedy. If it is due to the evil activity or vengeful anger of the spirits, the light of the candle will indicate the relative power and strength of the spirits in opposition to the power of the *dukun.* A continously flickering candle indicates a possibility of cure by the *dukun,* but a dying candle indicates the need for help from other spirits and other *dukun* to combat or exorcise nefarious spirit who is in command.

Divination (*nenung* or *tenung*) is a form of diagnosis, and among the Malays it is mainly employed to determine whether a lost article can be recovered or not. Occasionally, a diviner may indicate, but not specify, the thief or the circumstances in which the article was lost. Divination is distinguished from the folk-medical diagnosis (*nilit*) by the mechanical technique *nenung* employs. Two methods of *nenung* are employed at Pusa.

First, a pendulum of black stone is swayed along two intersecting lines which indicate the compass points of north/south and east/west, aligned to the general location of the village. A rotating bob at a point on the line indicates the general location of the lost article, and that its recovery is possible. On the other hand a swinging bob along any of the lines indicates that the article has been taken away, and can never be recovered.

The second method, called *tengok* (look into), employs the 'Twelve Constellations' (*Bintang Duabelas*) which in effect is the zodiac. Malays' use of zodiacal signs is derived mainly from Arabic astrology (*falakiah*) and therefore thought to be valid. But the utilization of many numerological calculations of alphabetical values especially in Arabic numbers limits its general use among literate Malays only. Moreover only very few people can read the formal instructions and become skillful in its use as diagnostic magic.

The actual method of determination is purely a mechanical interpolation of the moment of occurrence (week, day, approximate time) into the matched column and instruction in the book. For each column within a constellation, instructions are given as to the circumstance of loss and the possibility of recovery. Once such determination is completed, resort is made to magical procedure of recovery.

There are also other methods for this type of magical recovery of lost articles. All consist in magical inducements for the 'thief' to return the stolen article, or an indication of the place where the article may be found. It is believed that the thief can be magically manipulated to return the stolen article or replace it somewhere near the owner's house. If the article is not returned the thief will experience great discomfort and an increase in body temperature. To achieve such an effect, heat is used in the spell, through boiling water and heating a black stone. To intensify the magical effect, prayer is offered to God and the Prophet that the thief obey the instructions of the magician.

Before describing the actual method, two points of interest should be noted. First, there is an obvious psychological explanation of the

emipirical procedure of recovery. In a village situation, where primary contact is maximal, an accused or suspected person will experience a great deal of uneasiness from the gaze of his or her neighbours. This constitutes a great social pressure to return the stolen article, if the suspected person is actually guilty of the theft. At the same time, the magician may enhance his position by discovering the truth of the matter, i.e. determining the identity of the guilty person. Second, the fundamental principle of magic involved here is the classic Frazerian principle of sympathetic magic: like produces like. The heating of stone and metal is believed to be effective in producing the same effect in the victim. But unlike an empirical scientific experiment, the activation of possible effect is carried out through prayers and rites.

The diviner inscribes a piece of black stone (about two inches thick and three inches long), or a piece of copper plate (about two by three inches in size), depending on his magical knowledge, with a human figure (see diagram) on the obverse, and the 'Bismillah. . .' formula together with some other characters of the Arabic alphabet on the reverse. For three evenings, at *maghrib* time, the diviner performs the liturgy of hope (*sembahyang hajat*) appealing to God to help in the recovery. Simultaneously the client (the person whose article is stolen) performs the following rites for three consecutive evenings:

(a) A piece of paper inscribed by the diviner with a certain formula, folded into four and pierced with an iron nail is placed where the lost article originally stood.

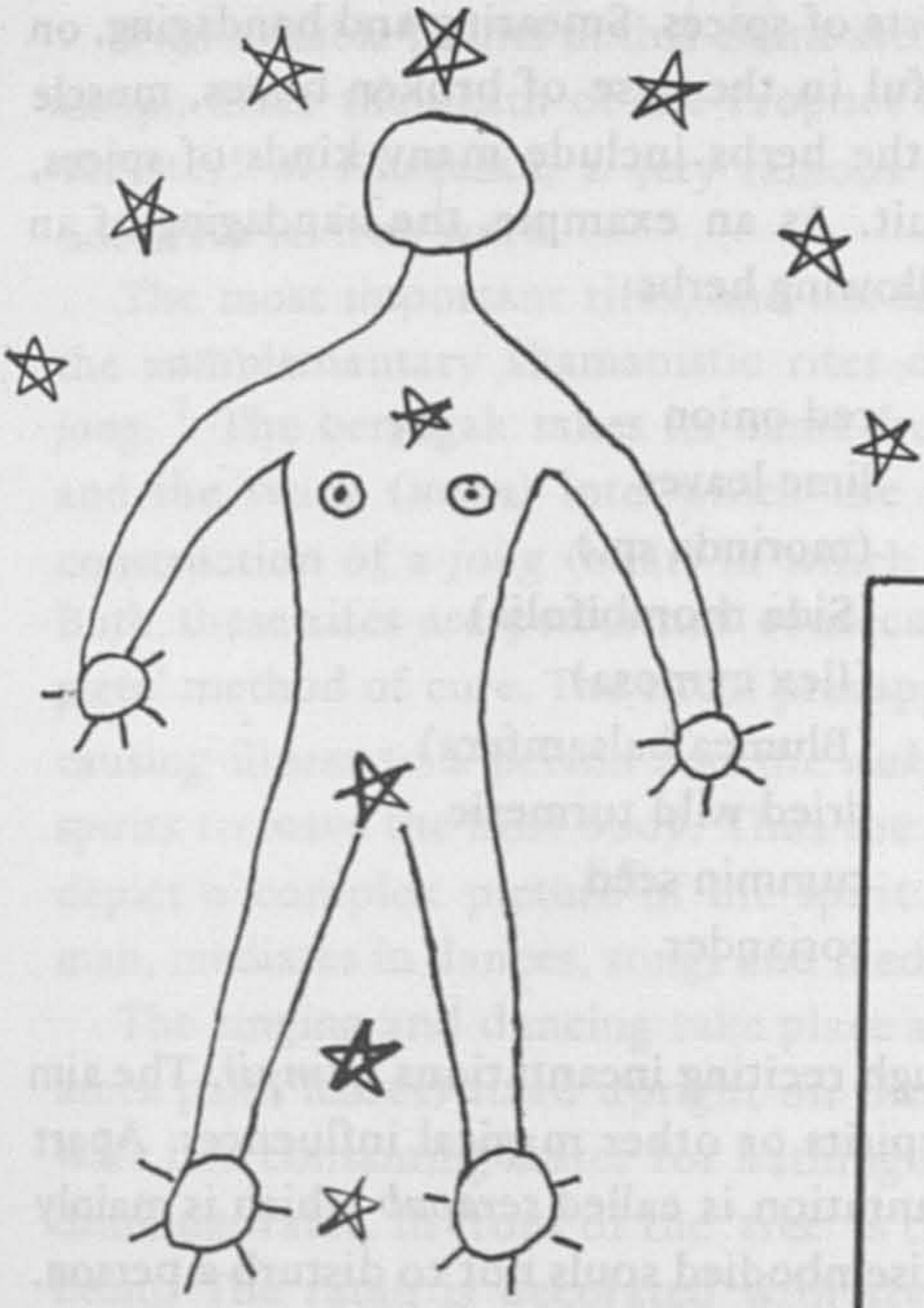
(b) A little incense in a *perasapan* – an incense-burner – is burned.

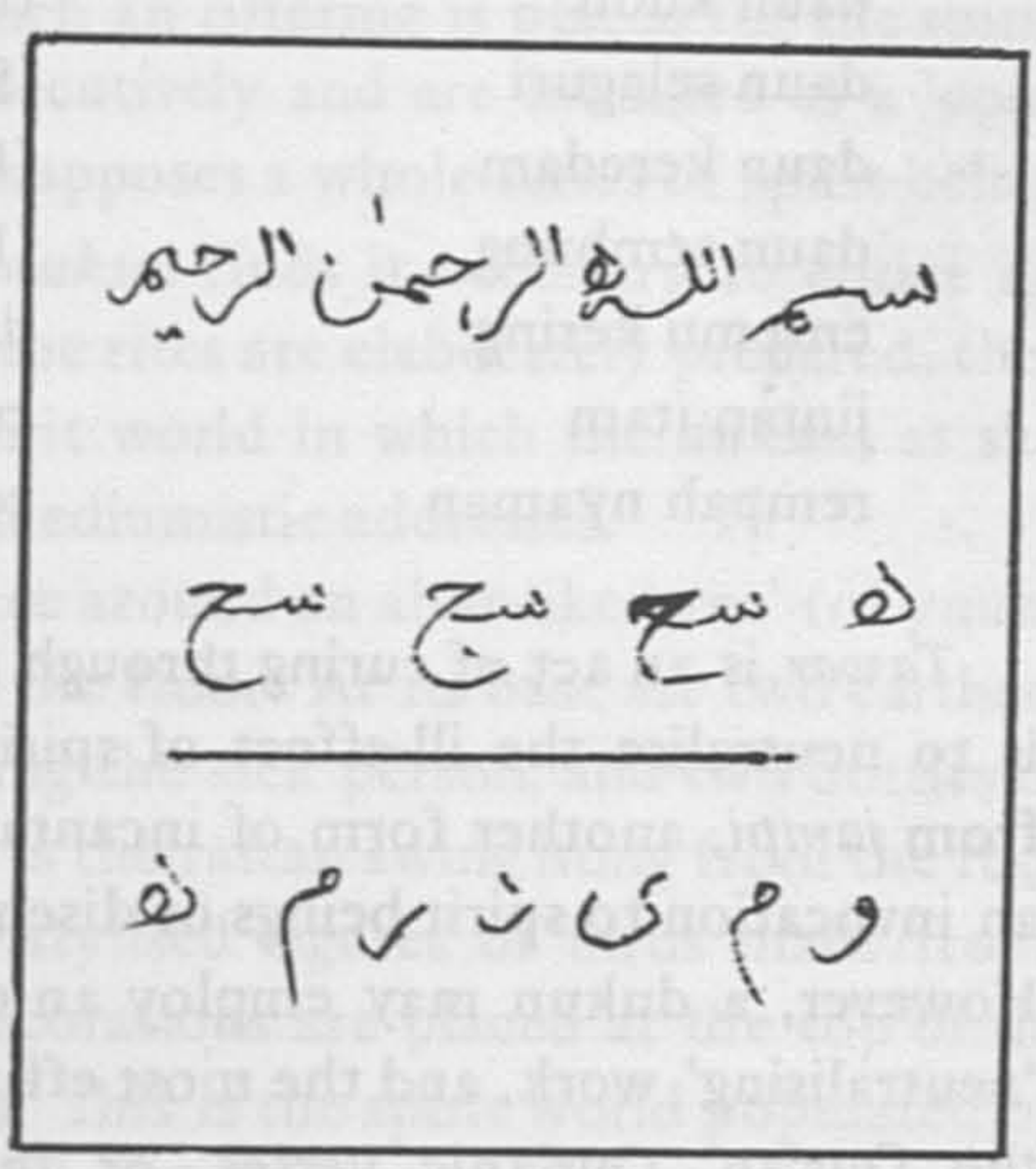
(c) The black stone is heated over a stove (with the inscribed face nearest the fire) while the intention *(niat)* is softly chanted: "I am not burning the stone but the body of the thief. May the heat torment him as it does the stone".

(d) The chapter 'Ya Sin' (the most potent of all the Qur'anic chapters) is read three times. While reading, the stone is turned once or twice.

(e) This procedure is repeated on the morning of the fourth day. Early every morning, before the neighbours wake up, the house compound and all possible places where the article may have been hidden or replaced are searched.

The following diagrams were inscribed on both sides of a copper plate used in an actual performance.





Obverse side *Reverse side*

Most informants agree that several successful recoveries have been achieved by village diviners, especially by Anjang Nas and Nek Uki of Kampung Ulu. The case cited above, however, was unsuccessful and the article had not been found by the time I left the village.

Healing techniques and rites vary from the common use of herbs, or incantation (*tawar*), to the more complex seance and exorcism of the *dukun*. They may be employed individually, or in combination, to intensify the healing effect. Herbs are used in three basic ways:

a. drinking the juice of boiled herbs *(pinum)*.
b. smearing with the paste of pulverised herbs *(pilis)*.
c. bandaging with leaves of powdered herbs *(tapal)*.

Among the ailments which respond to drinking the juice of herbs, are intestinal pain or stomach ache, heart-burn and muscle weakness. The herbs include the leaves and fruits of lime (*daun* and *buah limau nipis*),

apong salt and many different sorts of spices. Smearing and bandaging, on the other hand, are thought useful in the case of broken bones, muscle pains, colic and flatulences and the herbs include many kinds of spices, lime *(kapur)*, onion and lime fruit. As an example, the bandaging of an abdominal injury will need the following herbs:

bawang merah	red onion
daun limau	lime leaves
daun kudu	(morinda sp.)
daun selaguri	(Sida rhombifolia)
daun keredam	(Ilex cymosa)
daun sembung	(Blumea balsamfera)
entemu kering	dried wild turmeric
jintan itam	cummin seed
rempah nyaman	coriander

Tawar is an act of curing through reciting incantations *(jampi)*. The aim is to neutralise the ill-effect of spirits or other magical influences. Apart from *jampi*, another form of incantation is called *serapah* which is mainly an invocation to spirit-beings or disembodied souls not to disturb a person. However, a dukun may employ an elaborate series of incantations in his 'neutralising' work, and the most efficacious incantation is an extract from the Qur'an. Qur'anic verses, or their corruption, are employed in all kinds of cures. They are used for burns or scalds, muscle ache, in massage, and also in major healing rites. Certain sentences are believed to be particularly efficacious due to their use as revealed in the Qur'an. For instance when the Prophet Abraham was burned for insulting the king, he was saved by God when he recited a certain formula recorded in the Qur'an. The Malay magician uses this sentnence as a chant for preventing scalds.

Besides Qur'anic verses, other forms of incantations, chants, invocations, power words, charms and spells are either in Malay verse form or a corruption of the language that renders it unintelligible. A cure for lumbago or rheumatic pain, for instance, consists of a simple exercise and the simultaneous recitation of the following formula – a mixture of Malay and Arabic words:

> "Ya culi Ali lilitkan pinggangku, ya besi kharsani, kun serta Allah"
> (Oh, the belt of Ali coils my waist, oh the steel of Khorasan, be it, says God).

Two notable points in this chant are the use of the name Ali, the fourth Caliph after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, and the invocation of the steel of Khorasan, a very famous Islamic city in the north of Persia, noted for its iron work.

The most important rites, and the last of all the healing techniques, are the complementary shamanistic rites of *bersogak* (or *berunan*), and *berjong*.[7] The bersogak takes its name from the rattan it uses *(rotan sogak)* and the swing *(unan)* into which the rattan is made. The second is the construction of a *jong* (boat) in which an offering is placed for the spirit. Both these rites are performed consecutively and are intended as a 'complete' method of cure. The ritual presupposes a whole series of spirit-beings causing illness to a person and the *dukun* finds it necessary to entice the spirits to leave the host body. Thus the rites are elaborately prepared; they depict a complex picture of the spirit world in which the *dukun*, as shaman, mediates in dances, songs and mediumistic addresses.

The singing and dancing take place around an altar-like 'tree' (of young areca palm leaves) fixed upright on the floor. At its base are two earthenware jars containing water for bathing the sick person, and two bottles of drinking water. In front of the 'tree' is the rattan swing hung from the roof beam. The ratan is decorated with stylised figures of birds made from nipah palm shoots. More of such decorations are placed at the top of the swing, underneath a 'sky' of curtain. This is the spirit world populated by the numerous stylised figures. In front of the swing is a box covered with a good batek or woven Brunei cloth where the sick person sits while the spirits are being exorcised.

The whole rite begins when drums, gongs and cymbals are sounded. The *dukun* (often female) sits on the swing and the patient on the box. After chanting and singing the *dukun* suddenly possessed by a spirit, goes into a trance. She speaks in different voices and languages, Malay, Iban and Malanau. She dances around the 'tree' and is followed by the patient who remains silent. The *dukun* changes into three personalities, and speaks in three different voices: as a child called Bujang, a princess *(puteri)* and a

[7]There seems to be a great deal of similarity in the *bersogak* and *berjong* of the Malays with the *aiyun* of the Melanau described by H.S. Morris, "Shamanism Among the Oya Melanau," in M. Freedman, ed., *Social Organization*, Frank Cass & Co. Ltd. London. 1967, pp. 189–216. Both rites employ a swing as the major instrument of calling upon a spirit while the spirit-medium is in a trance (*nurun*).

grandmother *(nenek)*. She talks to the crowd, asking them questions and answering their queries. Thus the rite continues for a couple of hours with the *dukun* dancing *(tandak)*, singing *(pantun)* or swaying in the swing. When she returns to her normal self, she immediately changes clothing, taking off the special black jecket she had put on for the occasion. The patient then sits in a corner of the house, probably feeling a little tired.

This healing rite continues for three days, morning and evening, until finally the patient is bathed with the water in the jars. To end the whole healing ritual, the *berjong* ceremony is carried out. A small raft of nipah frond (about 75 x 45 cm. in size) is constructed. At each corner, and at the middle of the longer sides a human figure, also of palm frond, is fixed, with an oar in its hand. In the middle of the raft several kinds of food are placed including parched rice, a couple of boiled eggs, fruits and areca nut flowers, as an offering to the spirits. The raft is then set adrift in the river, or left somewhere in the jungle, depending on where the spirit to be placated is thought to live. As the *dukun* makes the offering she whispers: here is your food, do not disturb (*anok*) our daughter anymore.

With the offering *(jamu)* the spirits are appeased and the *dukun* completes the curing ceremony. Noteworthy in this case is the mediating role the *dukun* plays, as well as her mediumship. It illustrates the important position of the *dukun* in the relationship between the symbolic order of the supernatural world, and the social order. While a conflict of magical and religious conceptions tends to obstruct *dukuns* practising their art, it is nevertheless evident that their knowledge is necessary in the maintenance of the social order. Until this aspect of the belief is undermined by religion or modern medicine *dukuns* will remain an important category of medical practitioners among the Malays. And again since their knowledge of the supernatural is closely linked to the total environment of Malay life they are not easily supplanted.

Besides being folk-healers, the *dukun* and other magical practitioners are also involved in other types of magic. I have earlier called this 'offensive' or black magic. This is in fact sorcery and employs charms, spells and incantation. Occasionally familiar spirits are used in combination with poison.

Evans-Pritchard (1937) defined witchcraft as a quality innate to the witch, and stated that all manifestations of witchcraft are intrinsically supernatural. On the other hand sorcery is distinguished from witchcraft as the conscious performance of a theoretically possible act which has the

imaginary consequence of bringing evil upon a victim. Sorcery is thus a craft of evil magic: it can be mastered by anyone.

The employment of formulae, charms and spells by Malays for evil ends can therefore properly be classed as sorcery. A sorcerer may be hired, for instance, to cast a spell upon a person in vengeance for being disgraced. Evil acts are normally expected to occur in a situation of mistrust, envy or jealousy. A successful trader may fear the envy and jealousy of a rival trader, while a successful leader is often suspicious of others and wary of the conduct of his rival.

Again, a girl may object to her parents' choice of her marriage partner, and show disgust at the possibility of such a marriage. The parents who may be committed to fulfil a promise, may hire a sorcerer to cast a love spell on their daughter. Her dress may be fumigated with incense as a form of charm, or her food may be mixed with a love potion or philtre to weaken her resistence to the proposed marriage. On the other hand, a happily married couple may face the predicament of a disagreeable mother-in-law who wishes to separate them. The older woman may hire a sorcerer to cast a spell of dissension between the couple so that, it is believed, they become repugnant to each other.

Perhaps the most dangerous sorcery of all is the combination of an evil spirit with an organic poison, which may be made from poisonous roots, leaves or vines. Among the Malays there is a widespread belief in the poison of the Iban (*sangkong* Dayak). Some are regarded as dangerous keepers of spirit-poison (*ibu racun*) where an evil spirit is believed to be kept in oil and closely guarded by its owner. One District Local Councillor deliberately befriended an Iban who was afflicted with elephantiasis but who knew a great deal about poison. The Councillor was taking precautions against any of his rivals employing the Iban against him.

Spirit poisoning is said to be particularly dangerous, due to its effect of slowly making the victim anaemic, resulting in a slow death due to loss of appetite and loss of weight. It is believed that the spirit slowly sucks the victim's blood, the symptom of which is a sudden abnormal reaction when the tips of the fingers are pressed. Another sorcerer may be asked to cure or combat the evil effect. Normally he will massage and bathe the victim with charmed water. The victim is then forbidden to eat any left-overs of food and drinking water. He is only allowed to drink charmed water prepared by the sorcerer. The massage and bathing are carried out for three consecutive days until, finally, he is bathed in lime water.

Since the employment of evil spirit and sorcery invólves the accusation of others, social tension and disharmony can easily be created in a community. This is one of the sources of conflict and division in the Malay communities of Saribas. I found that one of the richest and most hard-working communities – Kampung Beladin – is so afflicted with accusations and counter-accusations that cleavages run deeply through the different wards of the village. The people cannot even cooperate in prayers at the single village mosque. The village head (Tua Kampung) took his own personal precaution in matters magical. I visited him once when he was copying out a series of Qur'anic verses as a charm against the evil intentions of others. In recent years this social situation has been complicated by the changing allegiance to political parties, with each group accusing the other of being untrustworthy and fork-tongued.

Part of the general precaution against 'black' magic or sorcery is to possess a suitable antidote, i.e. protective magic. Protective magic may be defined as a magical device employed to secure oneself against the evil intention of others. It consists mainly of charms or amulets. A formula is usually recited when leaving the house to ward off evils or misfortune. Alternatively, the charm can be written on a piece of paper, folded and wrapped in thin tin foil and then worn as an amulet, necklace, arm band or round the waist. This is thought to be particularly useful when visiting another village where there may be people who are disposed to test the magical capability of others (*cuba pemande orang*). Once I was told by a villager not to say that I had come to a place alone, but always to say: "I have come with God". This will deter a person from casting an evil spell – for fear of God.

The well-known 'magic squares'[8] is very popular as a charm among the Malays of Saribas. A village Councillor I knew constantly wore his magic square amulet at his waist. It seems that the amulet was sold by an Indonesian from the Island of Natuna who occasionally visited Saribas. Together with such an amulet, an Arabic formula is recited:

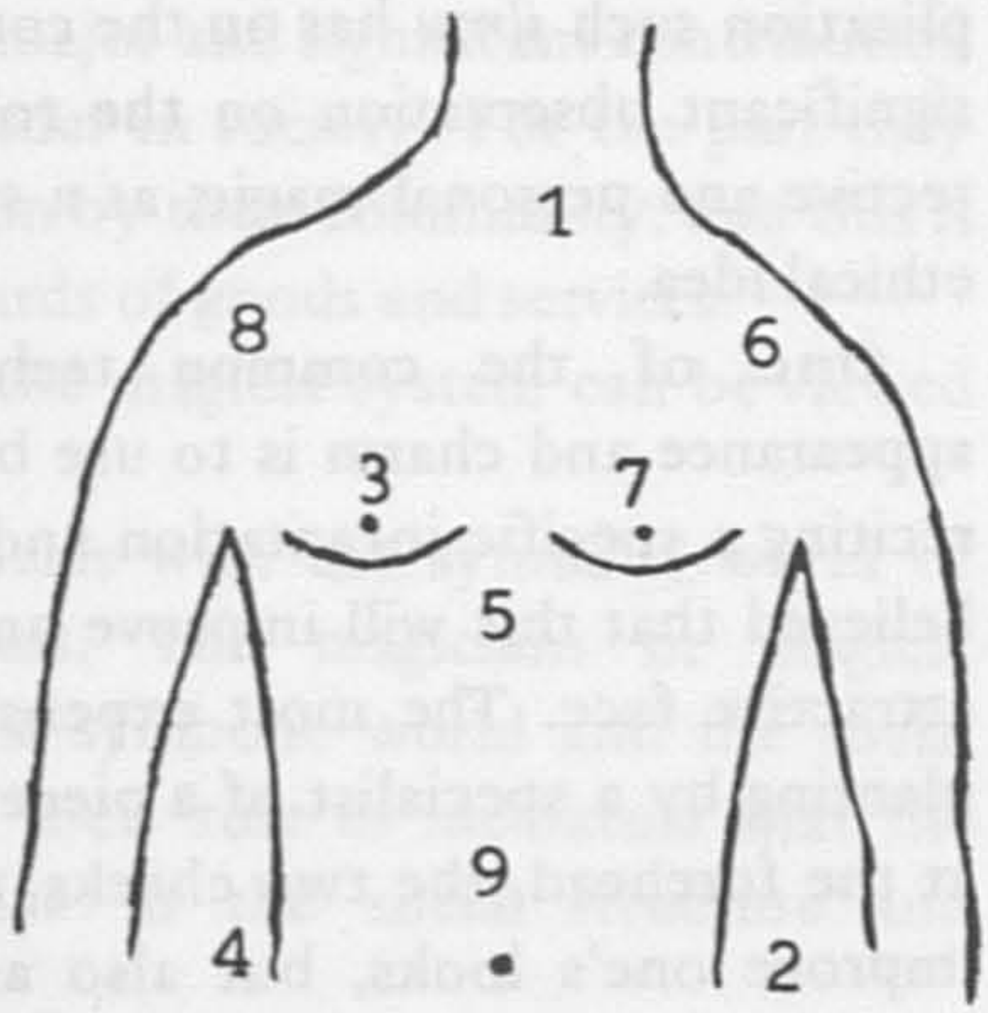
"waamman hafama ka marrab bihu wanahan nafsu 'anil hawa."

[8] cf. W.W. Skeat, *Malay Magic,* Dover Publications, Inc, New York, 1900, repr. 1960. p. 555 for the use of magic squares in Peninsular Malaysia. Among Malays the use of magic squares was derived from Islamic magic. cf. Idries Shah, *Oriental Magic,* Paldadin, Herts., England, 1973, p. 97. for a similar example.

This formula must be recited in such a way that each word correspond to a notional point on the abdomen. It begins at the throat and goes down to the left hip, than up to the right nipple and down to the right hip. This is continued to the middle of the chest (at the base of the sternum) and up to the left shoulder. Lastly it goes to the left nipple up to the right shoulder and down again, to the navel. This charm is called *rumah sembilan huruf limabelas* obviously due to the nine *(sembilan)* spaces and the total of fifteen *(limabelas)* which is achieved by adding in any direction.

٨ (8)	١ (1)	٦ (6)
٣ (3)	٥ (5)	٧ (7)
٤ (4)	٩ (9)	٢ (2)

Magic Squares



Abdominal Points

Closely related to protective charms are the series of personal charms which in one way are protective and in another enhance personal qualities such as an attractive countenance (*pemanis*), a witty tongue or a bright mind (*terang hati*) and, possibly, invulnerability (*kebal*).

In a short report in the *Sarawak Gazette* (August 31, 1961) a young Malay Civil Servant wrote a caption: "Kebalism hit Saratok by Storm". Kebalism is of course an anglicised form of the Malay work 'kebal'. He reported that a craze had suddenly hit Saratok (the district centre of the Kalaka District). A teacher suddenly found himself rich when he came into possession of a jar of charmed water believed to produce invulnerability. Hundreds of people from the surrounding areas came for some of the water and paid generously for it. The writer sardonically concluded that since Saratok is a drought-prone area, it was a relief to hear about an unlimited supply of water from one small jar at hand.

This craze was recorded by the Second Division Resident in his 1961 Annual Report (*Sarawak Gazette*, October 31, 1962: 232):

> "Considerable interest has been shown in the invulnerability rites at Binatang (sic). A large proportion of Malay men in the District have made their pilgrimage to Binatang and now consider themselves invulnerable. However, as this invulnerability is believed to be effective so long as the behaviour of the person is humble and decent, little damage has been caused."

Remarkable in the report of the Resident is the moral or ethical implication such *ilmu* has on the conduct of the Malays. This is in fact a very significant observation on the role of magical knowledge, especially protective and personal magic, as a system of social control, and a moral and ethical idea.

One of the common techniques for improving one's personal appearance and charm is to use betel leaves, areca nut, lime and gambier, reciting a specific incantation and chewing the charmed betel leaves. It is believed that this will improve one's looks, and give a 'sweet' (*manis*) and attractive face. The most expensive personal charm, however, is the implanting by a specialist of a piece of gold or diamond under the facial skin at the forehead, the two cheeks, the neck and the back. This will not only improve one's looks, but also acts as a protective charm against being controlled by others – especially a wife or a mother-in-law. With such a charm it is believed one is always liked by others and through it one's *rezeki* (livelihood) can be greatly improved. A personal charm also keeps the skin and the appearance young.

'Ideal knowledge' for the young people means how to acquire a charming face, a bright mind or a witty tongue (*terang hati*). While an attractive and charming appearance is good for girls, a witty tongue is ideal for boys. An *ilmu* which may lead to this end is the so-called *ilmu Abu Nawas*. Abu Nawas is a historical character at the court of Sultan Harun Aal-Rasyid, but he appears in classical Malay literature as a sharp-witted vizier. This *ilmu* seems to enable its possessor to combat arguments and answer tricky questions in an easy manner, an ability highly valued by Malays. It is a sign of intelligence and learning. On the other hand, other *ilmu* can help promote a merchant's sales. This is the *pelaris* (sale charm). A Pusa retail shop-keeper tried to make me promise to find him an *ilmu* called *La duni* to improve his sales ability in competition with the nurmerous shopkeepers in the village.

CONCLUSION

THE system of magic, comprising mainly causation and technique, provides a partial explanation of, and also some of the empirical methods to deal with non-empirical supernatural occurrences. In the absence of empirical knowledge about an event, magic provides an adequate explanation for the community concerned. This is of course a partial knowledge of an objective reality. Nonetheless the magicians, mainly the *dukun*, are able to apply their expertise and knowledge to the satisfaction of those around them and lessen their anxiety and fear of the unknown and invisible. The magicians thus have a major and significant contribution to make to the total constitution of order in society. For the part they play, they are accorded status and esteem by their community, and this is enhanced by monetary and physical rewards of goods and services.

In general it may be concluded that the magical system can be viewed in three perspectives.

(a) As a body of knowledge which deals with the symbolic world of superhuman beings and powers. The magicians or magical practitioners mediate between this symbolic world and the social world of human beings. It is in their role as mediators that the magicians have a significant place in the social structure and organization of society.

(b) Based on the nature and use of magic, its widespread and common existence in the society is symptomatic of tensions and conflicts which underlie on-going social system. Conflict situations may arise both internally or from changing external situations which generate internal tensions. Tension is also generated when there is a discrepancy in norms and values. In the bid to find new harmony in social arrangements, further tension may be generated, so that individuals resort to magic for protection or achieving the intended objective.

(c) Closely related to the above is the constraint a magic system would exercise on the behaviour of individuals or groups. The possibility that other people may retaliate with magic restrains others from provocative action. Magic is therefore a normative system with inherent sanction as a kind of self-correcting system to maintain social equilibrium, perpetuate harmony and manage tension and conflict. It is a social system with a feed-back mechanism.

H.M. DAHLAN

MICRO-ANALYSES OF VILLAGE COMMUNITIES IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA: A STUDY OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT

This article is based on a chapter entitled, "The Development of Underdevelopment At Village level" pp. 116–154 in the author's M.A. thesis, "Theories And Policies of Modernisation: An Application of A.G. Frank's Critique With Particular Reference to Malaysia (West Malaysia)", (Unpublished) Submitted to The Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Monash University, Australia, 1973.

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I

A QUESTION OF METHODOLOGY

ANTHROPOLOGISTS of the past generation confined themselves to the local communities, tribes, or urban neighbourhoods they studied, and tried to understand and 'explain' these entities as self-sufficient units manifesting a society and culture.

The shift of interest from primitive studies to peasantry studies, for instance, has brought about two levels of problems: firstly within the discipline itself and secondly in the new field of studies. As for the former, it entails problems relating to definitions of new areas of research. Anthropology as a discipline has undergone a tremendous outgrowth so much so there seems to exist a germ of unrest within it, especially when its outgrowth has to be resolved by anthropologists themselves. This presents a most problematic area in its development. At the present juncture in the development of anthropology, it seems clear that anthropology is not merely limited to primitive studies, but this limitation may become a fact of anthropology unless anthropologists are capable enough to cope with changes within the discipline as well as with its subject matter itself. Kaplan & Manners (1971) view this crisis in anthropology in a perspective of old themes and new directions. They see this crisis arising from the virtual disappearance of the primitive world and a growing demand that anthropology should become more relevant and activist, mainly that anthropologists should play an important role in promoting social change. Redfield (1962) has warned about this impending unrest when anthro-

pologists began to venture into peasantry studies. What is clear from available literature on development of anthropology and of its new fields of studies is that the question of methodology and relevance becomes a constant harassment to anthropologists. This problem will for long remain a pertinent feature in anthropology as it moves into new areas and, more importantly, as it is applied by citizen anthropologists studying their own developing countries.[1]

Nonetheless, these past anthropologists had done a good job in the sense that at least now we have records in the form of monographs about the facts of primitive societies which have become an integrated part of the global, social system in political, economic and social dimensions. They have, in fact, produced historiographies[2] of these fast changing and vanishing societies.

Some critics[3] have deplored the professional ethics of these detached ethnographers[4] who did not study their subjects in the context of the

[1] These problems have been discussed in the following: Kaplan, D & Manners. R.A. "Anthropology: Some old Themes and New Directions" in *South Western Journal of Anthropology,* Vol. 27., No. 1, Spring 1971; Redfield, R. "Anthropology and the Primitive Community" in *Peasant Society and Culture,* The University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 1969, and Mohd Dahlan HjAman "Peranan dan Orientasi Antropologi dan Ahli-Ahli Antropologi di Malaysia" in *Peranan & Orientasi Sains Sosial dan Ahli-Ahli Sains Sosial di Malaysia* monogeraf Jabatan Antropologi & Sosiologi, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, 1974.

[2] In fact this is a view taken by Evans-Pritchard, E.E. "Social Anthropology: Past and Present" in Manners, R.A. and Kaplan, D. (eds) *Theory in Anthropology* Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. London, 1968. pp. 46–54. Redfield also believes that though anthropology is not solely confined to primitive studies, available literature on these studies has contributed, and will continue to contribute, to an anthropological search for meaningful systems in human society and culture. See Redfield, R. *Peasant Society and Culture*, 1969.

[3] See GOUGH, K. "Anthropology And Imperialism" in *Manusia & Masyarakat* Bil. 1, 1972. pp. 1–14; Jairus Banaji "The Crisis of British Anthropology" in *New Left Review*, Dec. 1970.

[4] In fact, they were "detached" as regards the welfare of their "people" they studied, but they were fully committed to their state-national ideology. It is not hard to see that these anthropologists have served their countries well by rendering their discipline at the service of western colonialism. For a detailed discussion on this matter, see the following: Mohd Dahlan HjAman, "Peranan dan Orientasi Antropologi dan ahli Antropologi di Malaysia", pp. 6–15; A. Kuper *Anthropologists And Anthropology,* London, 1973.

brute facts of colonial domination then, and some criticized them for being too "particularising" without giving further thought to their monographs.[5] While I sympathize with these critics, I do believe that the 'end of anthropology' has not yet come, and available anthropological monographs are still of value if they are re-examined as historiographical documents beyond their local limits. This is, of course, a problem of methodology.[6]

Anthropologists studying social change or modernization would find such monographs to be valuable documents because in one aspect, they would enable them to trace the development of on-going changes in these communities for a particular period of time.[7] These micro-analyses of communities would help students to see how these communities exist, but when anthropologists wish to explain the existence of conditions as obtained in these communities then they also have to take into account an over-view of the historical situation in which exist these communities and which relates them to the total social whole. In other words, anthropologists have to observe the fundamental changes at the micro-level in order to examine and explain fully the reality of change at the macro-level.

In this sense, anthropological monographs, say of village communities, would give a more complete understanding of change if the total historical

[5]See Worsley, P. "The End of Anthropology", A paper presented for Sociology And Social Anthropology Working Group (6th World Congress of Sociology) May 1966.

[6]British anthropologists of the structural-functional school have been criticized because of their methodology. It is quite possible to detect the choice of methodology as being determined by one's commitment in national ideology. Ideally speaking, methodology should not be pre-determined by one's commitment but should constitute a means to solve particular problems. But, in the case of studies of social change or modernization, structural-functional methodology has its limitations and for this reason, I believe a historical, holistic and structural methodology is most appropriate. For my views on this subject, see "Peranan & Orientasi Antropologi dan Ahli-Ahli Antropologi di Malaysia" 1974. pp. 11–18.

[7]Beattie has in fact put it mildly that anthropologists are not historians but for particular purposes and within particular contexts, they play the role of historians. To my mind, an ethnographic monograph is a function of a historical documentation by anthropologists, for that particular community within a given set of period. See Beattie, J. *Other Cultures* cf. "Social Change" pp. 241–264. The Free Press, New York, 1964.

situation which relates these communities to one another or to the total society, is fully taken into consideration.[8]

The present study attempts to survey the trends and consistent features of underdevelopment among the rural peasantry[9] by examining some available monographs of village communities in Peninsular Malaysia. In terms of methodology, these monographs will illustrate the conditions of underdevelopment as they exist at the village level, with major emphasis on understanding and explaining the existence of these conditions of underdevelopment within the total historical setting to which these communities have been adapting.

[8]Kroeber (1948), in his very brief space allocated for his reflections on peasantry, was insightful enough to emphasize the "partwholeness" of peasant communities. Redfield devoted a lot of his academic reflections on this matter, and finally warned social anthropologists to accept limitations in the classical *primitive isolate* model, especially when they move out of the studies of the primitive world. Shanin asserts rightly that unless a totalising perspective is employed, one will always fail to see the underdog position of peasantry as a result of its being an integral part of the total social whole. Another scholar of peasantry, Eric Wolf, emphasizes the implications of the structural peasant-state relationships, one of which is the perpetual subjugation of peasantry to outside executive powers deriving from the centers of the state. To my mind, these scholars of peasantry see the systematic integration of peasantry into the total social whole as the most important structural reality that must be fully reckoned with, before attempting to explain and understand the subjugated peasant world: See Kroeber, A.L. *Anthropology*, Harcourt, Brace New York, 1948 p. 284; Redfield, R. *Peasant Society & Culture* 1969: 36–37; Shanin. T. "Peasantry As a Political Factor" in *Peasants And Peasant Societies* (ed) Shanin. T. Penguin Modern Sociology Readings, Hatzel Watson & Viney Ltd, 1973 (First edition 1971), pp. 238–263; Saul, J.S. & Woods, R. "African Peasants", in *ibid* pp. 104; Wolf. E. *Peasants*, Prentice-Hall Inc., New Jersey 1966 pp. 2–4.

[9]The term *peasant*, in an anthropological approach, is not without problems. Kroeber's idea of "part-society with part-culture" as being the principal element in all peasant communities is generally accepted, but as much as Krober's idea becomes the starting point in peasantry studies, it is also the point of departure among later scholars of peasantry as they pursue the subject into detail. The debate on the looseness of the term has warranted Foster to review current thinking on this subject, and out of it, there appear two perspectives in looking at what constitutes a peasant. One perspective, dominantly advocated by Redfield, Wolf, Shanin, emphasizes, among other factors, the relationship to land as a factor of production as being very crucial, while the other perspective advanced by Firth and Foster views a broader relationship to factors and scale of production, with relationship to land included. The first group looks upon peasants as mainly small-scale agriculturalists living at or below the sub-

II

MONOGRAPHS

MONOGRAPHS on micro-analyses of village communities in Peninsular Malaysia are limited in the sense that they do not provide selected areas of studies of the rural-peasant sector. This has been rightly pointed out by Professor Swift (1967, p. 242) who suggests that it is then not possible to "form a random sample of Malay villages". Nonetheless, it is not impossible to make "a prima facie case for generalization about recent trends" in this sector[10] by examining some available monographs.

To facilitate examination and analysis of this sector, we shall divide it into three sub-sectors namely the peasant fishing industry, the peasant rice-growing industry and the peasant, small-holding rubber and mixed industry. It must be noted that, regionwise, the peasant fishing industry is the major primary industry of the coastal, rural society in the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia, particularly Kelantan and Trengganu. Information on this industry is largely based upon Firth's monograph,[11] and to be supple-

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sistence level, while the second group includes non-agriculturalists who share the same fate as the agricultural peasants, as peasants. In this paper, I am adopting the second perspective as adopted by Firth. For details into the debates on this subject, see Redfield, R. *Peasant Society and Culture,* 1969 (5th Impression); Redfield, R. *The Little Community: Peasant Society and Culture,* Pheonix Books, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 1967 (5th Edition); Potter, J.M. Diaz, M.N. & Foster, G.M. (eds) *Peasant Society: A Reader,* The Boston, Little Brown Company, 1967; Shanin, T. (ed) *Peasants and Peasant Societies* 1973 (First Print 1971); Firth, R. "Capital, Saving and Credit In Peasant Societies: A Viewpoint from Economic Anthropology" in *Capital, Saving and Credit In Peasant Societies* (eds) Firth, Yamey, B.S. London, 1964; pp. 14–18; Firth. R. *Malay Fishermen: Their Peasant Economy,* (2nd Edition), London, 1966; Swift, M.G. "Economic Concentration And Malay Peasant Society" in *Social Organization,* London, 1967; Mohd Dahlan HjAman, "Theories and Policies of Modernization. . ." cf: "The Rural Peasant Sector" M.A. Thesis (unpublished), Dept. of Anthropology & Sociology, Monash University, 1973 pp. 105–109.

[10] See SWIFT, M.G. "Malay Peasants" in *The Role of Savings and Wealth in Southern Asia and the West,* eds. Lambert, R.D. & Hoselitz, B. 1962; and "Economic Concentration and Malay Peasant Society" in *Social Organization,* ed. Freedman, M., London, 1967.

[11] FIRTH, R., *Malay Fishermen,* 2nd Edition, London, 1966.

mented by Fraser's work.[12] The rice growing industry is to be found in the rural sector throughout Peninsular Malaysia, but it is the principal peasant industry of the rice bowl states of Northern Malaya, particularly Perlis, and Kedah. A comprehensive study of the sector has been made by Wilson.[13] This sector does not, in a sense, give problems for generalization because a large amount of research has been carried out in it.[14] The small-holding rubber and mixed industry is the dominant peasant, primary industry in the tin and rubber belt states. Generalization about trends in this sector will be derived from three monographs[15] and to be supplemented by other works on or references to, this sector.

III

UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF PEASANT FISHING INDUSTRY

THE peasant, fishing community shows two systems of orientations: an emergent individualistic-type orientation in the economic sphere and a dominant communalistic-type orientations in the socio-cultural and religious spheres. Firth (First edition, 1946) reported some elements of folk society in the belief system of coastal, rural society in Kelantan and Trengganu, but after his re-study of the area (2nd edition, 1966) he reported that it was no longer appropriate to label the economy a peasant one as it was in 1940.[16] This must imply that the individualistic-type

[12] FRASER, T.M. Jr., *Rusembilan: A Malay Fishing Village in Southern Thailand*, Cornell University Press, New York, 1960. Rusembilan is a Malay fishing community in Patani which is in the immediate vicinity of Firth's operation area.

[13] WILSON, T.A., *The Economics of Padi Production in North Malaya.* Part I, The Department of Agriculture, Kuala Lumpur, June 1958.

[14] For instance, see the following: LIM CHONG-YAH, *Economic Development of Modern Malaya.* Part 11, Ch. 6; UNGKU AZIZ, "The Causes of Poverty in Malayan Agriculture" in *Problems of Malayan Economy*, (ed) Lim Tay Boh, Singapore, 1956; *Rencana*$_2$ Ekonomi dan Kemiskinan, Singapore, 1959; and Selvadurai S. Arope, Nik Hassan Mohammad, (eds) *Socio-Economic Survey of Padi Farms in Kemubu Area of Kelantan,* Kuala Lumpur, October 1968.

[15] S. HUSIN ALI, *Social Stratification in Kampong Bagan,* Singapore, 1964; SWIFT, M.G. *Malay Peasant Society in Jelebu,* London, 1965; WILSON, P.J. *A Malay Village in Malaysia; Values and Rural Development,* New Haven, 1966.

[16] I have elsewhere argued that Firth was right not to call their economy as peasant economy in so far as he was referring to the economic activities of a small group of

orientations have subverted the communalistic-type orientations, though the new economic orientations have not wiped out the elaborate network of traditional kinship ties, as he writes:

> "(The economic processes of capitalistic development). . . were not cushioned to any apparent degree by the elaborate network of kinship ties in the local social system"
>
> (Firth, 1966, p. 348)

This community is remote from urban facilities, but economically, it had already been incorporated in a larger capitalist society through market relationships. Urban contacts take place through physical markets where both urban and rural buyers assemble. In this sense, the market plays a double role: a place of interaction and of economic transactions, beyond the confines of their parochial communities. Firth and Fraser emphasize that relations with urban centers are supplementary to rather than in opposition to, their social sector. These market relations invariably generate exploitative monopoly-monopsony intermediate situations, identified with predominantly Chinese wholesalers-middlemen in Patani

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fishermen and non-fishermen who have achieved upward economic and social mobility through effective control over factors of production involved in a large-scale, heavily-mechanised fishing industry. I call these rural-folk as comprising the emerging rural urbanites, either existing as rural mercantilist class or a rural-salariat urbanite class. The rest of the majority of *orang kampung* (village folk), be they agriculturalists, petty traders, shopkeepers, or fisherfolk, are still peasants in their subculture or life-styles. They may be engaged in large-scale mechanised fishing operations or in commercialized tobacco growing or other forms of agricultural or non-agricultural activities, but as a social-type in Redfield's tradition, they still exist as a subgroup with a peasantry subculture. Firth's materials amply provide evidence about the movement of fisherfolk into the *lumpenproletariat*. Firth's re-evaluation of Malay fishermen's economy as not peasant has the danger of implying gradual disappearance of peasants as a social-type in the rural population sector, while the empirical reality in Malaysian countryside still shows greater encapsulation of peasant villages. The point I am emphasizing here is that peasants as a social-type in the Malaysian countryside generally still exist, and as a class they are undergoing greater differentiation and stratification in the wake of greater and monopolistic control over factors of production by a few in the mercantilist class. See Mohd Dahlan HjAman, "The Socio-Cultural Significance of Traditional Gathering Centers In Peasant Fishing Community in Malaysia", A Research Paper prepared for the *Comparative Popular Culture Research Seminar on Traditional Media*, East-West Communication Institute, Hawaii, July 7 – August, 1975 pp. 1–8.

and predominantly Malay wholesalers-middlemen in Kelantan and Trengganu.[17]

Firth (1966) notes that the community life of this sector was becoming increasingly insulated from the development of modernization reported in the urban centers.[18] He observes that in the wake of greater penetration of capitalism in these areas, the ordinary fishermen were close to poverty line where, ". . . it is not a matter of being unable to afford luxuries, but of having to worry where one's next meal is coming from" (Firth, 1966 p. 335). This indicates that the ordinary fisherman's income level is low in comparison with the cost of living and his economic position. Fraser (1960) offers an interesting comparison in his findings that the economically displaced fishermen in Rusembilan were able to retreat inland where they could take up peasant agriculture. This situation in Rusembilan was catching up with early development in Peninsular Malaysia when ". . . the avenue for conversion of one's labour directly into capital is not closed . . ." (Swift, 1967, p. 259).

The poverty line appearing in the ordinary fishermen sector is best illustrated by Firth in four samples of household income:

Sample 1:

A household of husband-fisherman, his wife and 4 children. Owns a small boat and a piece of rice land. Total income is as follows:

Fsihing	(R)	150.00 p.a.	
Others	(R)	10.00 p.a.	
Total	(R)	160.00 p.a.	
Expenditure	(R)	115.00 p.a.	
Balance	(R)	45.00 p.a.	on Social affairs.

[17] FIRTH (1966) later reports that with greater capitalization of the fishing industry and the opening up of financial-credit institutions in these areas, a substantial increase of Chinese-middlemen significantly alters the capital structure of the economy by ethnic groups. For a general description of monopoly-monopsony structure in the countryside of Peninsular Malaysia, see WHARTON, C. "Marketing, Merchandising and Moneylending: A Note on Middlemen Monopsony in Malaya" in *Malayan Economic Review*, Vol. VII, No. 2, October, 1962.

[18] Viewed from a totalising perspective of structural peasant-centre/state relationships, the encapsulation of peasant communities generally demonstrates the underdog position of peasantry in the wake of integration into the broader orbit of social life.

Sample 2:
A household of husband-fisherman, and his wife. Owns a small drift-net, but no boat. A lift-net expert. Total income is as follows:

Fishing	(R)	100.00	p.a.	from lift-net and drift-net.
Additional	(R)	20.00	p.a.	from mackeral fishing.
Total	(R)	120.00	p.a.	

(Other income from his coco-nut palms, about (R)7 to (R)8.00 p.a. and also from his rice land. His industrious wife also contributes to the total income. This comes to about (R)40.00 p.a.)

Total income	(R)	160.00	p.a.	
Expenditure	(R)	60.00	p.a.	
Balance	(R)	100.00	p.a.	for social affairs.

Sample 3:
A household of husband-fisherman, his wife and 4 children. Owns a house near his rice-fields; a large boat; and several nets (lift-nets and sprat netting). Eldest son employed as a crew-man. Rice-field rented to others. Has coconut palms. Total income is derived from his fishing, his son's fishing and his wife's industry.

Total Family income	(R)	150.00	p.a.	
Expenditure	(R)	120.00	p.a.	
Balance	(R)	30.00	p.a.	for social affairs.

Sample 4:
A household of husband-fisherman, his wife and one small child. Owns 10 padi fields, of which he works only five and the rest rented to his brother. Grows vegetables. Equally divides his time between agriculture and fishing, but puts more emphasis in the former. Total income is as follows:

Fishing	(R)	30.00 to (R) 40.00 p.a.
Others	(R)	35.00 to (R) 45.00 p.a.

Total income	(R)	75.00	p.a.
Expenditure	(R)	40.00	p.a.
Balance	(R)	35.00	p.a. for social affairs.

(Note: R refers to Ringgit, i.e. Malaysian dollars)

Each of the above samples shows a meagre balance over ordinary household-routine expenditure, excluding expenditure on items like clothing, contribution to feasts, travel expenses in visiting relatives, education and health. The margin for saving is then too small and restricted, and when subject to 'extra-ordinary expenditure'[19], like expenditure on marriage, funeral and other unforeseen contingencies, it is hardly sufficient to meet the needs of the situation. Many have to resort to financial borrowing, which once entered into, has caused, to a great majority, a vicious spiral of rising credit indebtedness.

Firth's analysis (1966) further reveals a growing gap between a new, *taukeh* class (i.e. an incipient but increasingly growing mercantile class comprising mainly capitalist-entrepreneurs, in a rural environment) and the ordinary propertyless fishermen who formed the bulk of the fishing population. The *taukeh* class consisted of two groups namely, a fisherman-cum-capitalist group and a financier-capitalist group, and has emerged as "economic aristocrat of the fishing community" (Firth, 1966 p. 344). Economic concentration and differentiation in the peasant fishing community tended to be marked with the adoption of heavy capitalization and mechanization (radical technological changes) in the industry, with economic and property concentration to be confined to the hands of a few.

Firth's analysis clearly reveals that the process of greater differentiation in levels of wealth had already begun by 1940. This differentiation had produced a large proportion of the ordinary fishermen finding difficulties to exist at subsistence level. The colonial period recorded the growth of

[19] FIRTH (Firth & Yamey, 1964, p. 21) says that peasants' patterns of consumption do not operate as a simple negative to the propensity to save. They have strong positive sanctions, which are of social as well as an individual order. Swift (1967, pp. 250–1) on the other hand points out that extra-ordinary expenditure is one of the major causes of the sale of land/property by the peasant.

the population, especially in the rural-peasant sector. More importantly, the colonial situation had gradually extended the economic frontier of the peasant, fishing community through the extension of communications and with the entry of wheeled transport operated to develop newer and larger markets. The integration of the peasant sector into the total, capitalist system ultimately led to the attraction and introduction of wider opportunities for capital investment in the industry. Capitalist penetration of this industry brought about two significant developments: firstly, the creation of a petty capitalist class which tended to restrict itself more and more to capital control, and the entry of Chinese capital into an otherwise predominantly Malay primary industry: and secondly, the proletariatization of the ordinary, propertyless fishermen.[20] The latter class further suffered social and material degradation when the new, capitalistic environment not only introduced competing wants, values, and requirements in the modes of production and marketing of the fishing industry but it also entailed new habits of consumption.[21] The shift in new wants, values and requirements did not simultaneously move with any upward change in their limited margin for saving. Thus, the capitalistic integration of the rural-peasant fishing industry from the 1940's to 1960's had produced a harmonious contradictory development within the center-periphery system where a rise in capital invesmtent and an economic concentration were recorded to have taken place among the few rich in the centres, and a growing impoverishment befalling upon the large majority of the fishing population in the peripheries.

Firth's and Fraser's findings illuminate an interesting trend, that as the peasant-fishing community was increasingly penetrated by the capitalist center, it moved, at varying speeds from an *undeveloped* stage to an *underdeveloped* one. This illustrates Frank's[22] hypothesis that countries/

[20] This material encourages us to conclude that a general process of movement of ordinary fishermen into other occupations or into the *lumpenproletariat* becomes inevitable with greater capitalistic investment in fishing industry.

[21] See Rosemary Firth, *Housekeeping among Malay Peasants*, London 1943. Note that the rise in peasants' level of consumption was not effectively accompanied by any rise in their subsistence income.

[22] See A.G. FRANK "The Development of Underdevelopment" in *Imperialism and Underdevelopment* (ed) R. RHODES, Monthly Review Press, 1970.

sectors that obtain the greatest degree of contact with the capitalist centers are the ones that are most underdeveloped. Firth clearly indicates the crystallization of capitalist interests in the fishing industry of Kelantan and Trengganu by reference to the consolidation of the mercantile class, especially the large-scale capitalist fish-dealers, who entered deeply into the scheme of production. Greater capitalization and mechanization in the industry promoted the emergence of non-seagoing entrepreneurs who almost completely dominated the means of production, and the marketing outlets. Changes in economic and transport infrastructure and technology reinforced further take-over of peasant resources by the new mercantile class. Firth reports that by 1963, Kelantan and Trengganu were already linked with major commercial centres like Kuala lumpur, Penang and Singapore with the extension of the physical infrastructure in communication, motor transport systems and the entry of more complex business infrastructure especially relating to corporate finance structure (Firth, 1966, pp. 304–6, 308, 311–13). Thus the situation of lack of capital and technology (stage of 'un-development') in the fishing production of 1940, was then replaced by one with a rising technological level and a preponderance of high capital investment in large equipments (e.g. boats, nets, etc.) dominated by a few (stage of underdevelopment). As a result, the fishing industry was then approximating the business enterprise of other types, rather than Malay peasant agriculture (Firth, 1966 p. 7). The Rusembilan situation as reported by Fraser had not reached the stage experienced by the peasant fishermen of Kelantan and Trengganu. The forces of capitalism were reported to have taken place: the emergence of a small group of entrepreneurs, land/wealth accumulation by the successful fishermen, seasonal wage earners (among the unsuccessful fishermen) and the control of marketing transactions by Chinese wholesalers-cum-middlemen. Rusembilan had then become an appendage to the urban-commercial center of Patani. But unlike the situation in Kelantan and Trengganu, the capitalistic integration of Rusembilan had not yet then produced an aggressive capitalist-entrepreneurial class to initiate money-lending and credit institutions based on corporate, legal systems. At this stage of creeping capitalism in Rusembilan, a process of economic concentration was already underway, but due to availability of and accessibility to, land in the interior and a relatively less intense impact of the new system upon the existing, egalitarian orientations of the community, the unsuccessful, ordinary fishermen could still rely upon the existing traditional credit

system. But the stress and tensions were already showing in the peasant system when the *orang baik*,[23] some of the *hajis*[24] and religious leaders started investing heavily in both land and capital goods of the fishing industry. At this stage of capitalization and mechanization in Rusembilan fishing community, innovations involving heavy capital outlay in fishing equipments were not possible because of the possible difficulty of mobilizing the large amounts of capital required. Fraser's emphasis on lack of secondary adaptation and adjustment at the social level, to explain the "rejection" of *perahu-kolek*[25] or motor-tow boats in Rusembilan, really evades the fundamental cause to the persistence of tighly structured boat groups which were apparently satisfied with outboard motors. Fraser was in fact *describing* a situation why Rusembilan community remained as it was, in the wake of capitalistic integration by showing how the community survived to function within a traditional, peasant framework under the new economic system. But, he would have *explained* differently the reality of the situation had he addressed himself to the movement of the new economic system from the total whole, of which Rusembilan community was an integrated part but still at the early stage of integration in the total system. He would have shown that the persistence of tightly structured boat groups was the product of a situation in which large-scale capitalist alternatives have yet to come about.[26]

[23] "Orang baik" refers to a group of innovators-entrepreneurs or the economically well-off group in the community. They manipulate their economic and social positions by making a judicious balance between the individualistic-type orientations and the communalistic orientations. FRASER, T.M. Jr., *Rusembilan* . . . Op. cit. p. 226.

[24] "Hajis" refers to those Muslims who have performed the *haj* (pilgrimage to Mecca). Religious leaders need not necessarily be *haji*.

[25] "Perahu kolek" are few in Rusembilan, but the most highly prized ones, socially and economically. Measuring about 35 to 40 feet long, they are used only for deep-sea fish, kembong, and large prawns. It costs about $(American 750.00 each.) Fraser records 14 *kolek* in Rusembilan: 2 shared by partners; 5 owned in combine; 7 *individually owned. See Ibid.* pp. 38–39. Note that motorboats came to Rusembilan in 1956.

[26] Fraser's "explanatory error" stems from his functional-holistic epistemic viewpoint.

Firth (1966 p. 25) is quick to show that capitalistic domination of the peasant-fishing industry had created a dualism in the industry: a traditional-equipment sector, and a technological-equipment sector with increased output per head. The traditional-equipment sector was made up of ordinary, propertyless fishermen who must now worry about subsistence. He points out the error of assuming that an increased quality and quantity of production will by itself bring better conditions to the "proletariatized" primary producers or the *lumpenproletariat* because increased turnover would only give higher profits to those middlemen-entrepreneurs who virtually control the factors of production and the wholesale market.[27] These middlemen-entrepreneurs formed the technological-equipment sector of the industry. In the 1940s, the labour earnings constituted over 60% of the total earnings, the entrepreneurial earnings about 27%, and fish lures about 10%. But in the 1960s, the situation was reversed in favour of the entrepreneurs: 30% of the total earnings to the entrepreneurs as returns on capital (boats, nets, etc.) and only a little more than 40% of the total to labour. Firth writes:

> "Much greater returns to fishing in modern conditions accompanied by or resulting from much greater capitalization, has resulted in a marked drop in the percentage of earnings going to labour."
>
> (Firth, 1966 p. 323)

Capitalization permits greater mechanization in productive methods. The striking trend is for greater utilization of more capital-intensive productive methods. The capital value of a motorboat (1963) was in the range of (R)3,000/- to (R)10,000/; purse-seine (R)10,000/— to (R)12,000/— and a motor-van about (R)4,000/—. A conservative estimate of total capital value of productive assets was around (R)30,000/— to (R)40,000/—.

[27]The relationship to factors of production is crucial in determining the mobility process among ordinary fishermen. In my survey in Perupok (February – May 1975), it was clear that the general complaint from this class of fishermen is that they have to surrender so much from the gross returns of their catch to their *taukeh* i.e. local financiers who control/own the boats and nets, that in the end there is hardly enough left for their share. For an example, a catch that brings a gross return of (R) 22.00 will give them (fishermen) a net share of (R)2.00. Many of them, they assert, often return home empty-handed. See Mohd Dahlan HjAman, "The Socio-Cultural Significance of Traditional Gathering Centers In Peasant Fishing Community In Malaysia" 1975 p. 54.

Ownership of large equipments with high capital outlay tended to be restricted to the *taukeh* class or middlemen dealers. This individualized ownership of equipments broke down the equalitarian control over the means of production. The change in capital structure in the industry produced, at least, three significant developments: firstly, corporate finance companies (Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Singapore) began to enter directly into the industry as suppliers and financiers; secondly, it altered the structure of income distribution and thirdly, it tended to involve a more remote control of the major fishing equipment. These developments had a disastrous effect upon the "unsuccessful" fishermen, and that effect was impoverishment.

The piece-rate employee-fishermen belonged to the income bracket category of (R)20/- to (R)90/- per month. The net income of ordinary fishermen in the purse-seine boat group was around (R)17/- per month. The less successful fishermen (some of them were once lift-net experts) were kept out of business. They had bought small individually operated drift-boats and were drawing an arithmetical average of (R)3/- per man per day. The ordinary, poor fishermen simply had no capital to invest in boats or nets, and their income depended totally upon their returns on physical services (*bahagian tubuh*). Firth (1966 p. 334) puts the average gross income of these fishermen around (R)50/- per month (unskilful ones), and around (R)100/- per month (skilful ones). Such an income level leaves very little margin for saving. It must also be noted that credit and finance facilities were only accessible to fishermen with security and/or property. Poor fishermen were virtually unable to secure credit or finance in the way of improving their economic position.

The new capital structure, more importantly, had produced a dominant mercantile class. They served and maintained the interests of the outside commercial world with which they had established business connections, in as much as they dominated the proletariat sector of the fishing community to make them serve and promote their mercantile class interests. This class consolidated its interests by performing the role of middlemen operating in monopoly-monopsony networks. They were wholesalers, fish-dealers and financiers in one. Their investments covered nearly every aspect of the industry: boat, net, transport, finance and property. The emergence of this class radically altered the market structure, and the fish market and the wholesale market came virtually under its control.

These accounts demonstrate an underlying contradictory process of development, following the integration of this industry into the dominant, capitalist system – that there was the development of the technological-equipment sector on the one side, and the underdevelopment of the traditional-equipment sector on the other, within the total movement of the system.

Firth's study has shown the failure of government sponsored development programmes directed to elevate the financial position of fishermen, and to improve their command of capital as well as to remove them from the burden of indebtedness. In the 1957 scheme for the east coast, the Malayan government spent (R)1¾ million dollars on fishermen's co-operative credit and marketing societies. As it turned out, the scheme tended to favour the already rich and successful fishermen, especially the net-owners. This failure aptly illustrates Myrdal's (1971) contention that injection of capital or aid into the poor sector or region without simultaneously putting checks to the free play of market forces tends only to create, rather than correct, inequalities. Firth suggests that a policy of development for this sector should be aimed at making a contribution to the welfare of the vast majority of the depressed and poor fishermen. The effort to improve the lot of the mass of poor fishermen is not confined wholly to the evasion of the control of the market by wholesaling middlemen. Efforts towards effective achievement of technical and economic changes by the traditional-equipment sector of the industry must depend on two things: an improvement of resources and progressive social changes or enlightened ideas.

Problems of small boat fishermen and the wealthier fish trap owners are also common among the fishermen in the west coast of West Malaysia (Swift, 1967 p. 258). In no way are the problems of east coast fishermen and west coast fishermen the same, but where peasant-fishermen are confronted with capitalism, they more or less face similar problems and the difference may be in their "version of common problems."

The rate of modernization (i.e. capitalization and mechanization) of this industry is higher in the predominantly non-Malay west coast of Peninsular Malaysia than in the predominantly Malay east coast. By 1966, about 60.4% of the total number of boats in Peninsular Malaysia had been powered. (cf. *Table 1*). The development of mechanization in this industry tended to favour the adoption of the high-capital-value inboard engines. This suggests that modernization of this industry in future would follow intensive

Table 1

Mechanization of Fishing Boats: Peninsular Malaysia

Year	Total No. of Boats	Powered Boats Inboard	Outboard	Total
1963	22,754	28.2%	17.8%	46.0%
1964	21,630	32.8%	17.3%	40.6%
1966	20,712	44.9%	15.45%	60.3%

Source: 1963 & 1964 figures from *Malaysia Year Book 1966/7*
1966 figures from *Malaysia: Buku Resmi Tahunan 1966.*

capitalization. Even Kelantan and Trengganu had already achieved 45% mechanization of the total fishing crafts (Firth, 1966 p. 28) by 1963.

Table 1 shows that as mechanization increases, the total number of boats decreases. This could mean either mechanization has entailed fewer boats which could accommodate the displaced ordinary fishermen in larger modern boat-groups, or mechanization had not only reduced the number of boats going to sea but also had caused the displaced fishermen to enter new areas of occupation. But I believe that the latter case is more probable than the former, especially in view of possible attractions to state-sponsored or Federal-sponsored land development schemes. But limitations must be recognized, that not every one of the displaced, unsuccessful fishermen would be lucky enough to get a place in those schemes.

In conclusion, Firth's and Fraser's fishing villages have experienced a fundamental change following the consolidation of the capitalist mode of production, in that the introduction of the new mode of production had caused an economic concentration in the hands of a few identified with the mercantile class, and a proletariatization of the large majority of the fishing population. A process of polarization in the fishing population, — as a result of class division between a capital owning sector on the one side, and labour owning/"*bahagian tubuh*" sector on the other — developed progressively between the wealth/property-owning class and the

propertyless class. As mechanization/modernization of the industry brings increasing returns to the technological-equipment sector, the great mass of the traditional equipment sector are reduced to poverty lines or underdevelopment. The capitalistic integration of the industry has produced a radically altered capital structure, marketing structure and income distribution structure, which cumulatively have displaced a large proportion of the poor and unsuccessful fishermen who are forced to emigrate or enter new areas of occupation. The proletariatized, propertyless especially "*the bahagian tubuh*" class must suffer further social and material degration when, under average circumstances, their net income balance to be spent on social affairs, including the bare necessities like education and health for survival in open, competitive world, is far too limited. This class is further subject to strangulation by a ring of monopoly-monopsony whole-saling middlemen who are created by the system of relations between the rural-peasant sector (the periphery) and the mercantile-urban centers (the center) within the total whole.

Socio-economic differentiation and stratification, accentuated by increasing economic concentration in the fishing community under capitalistic development, can only and will further, create structural inadequacies in the proletariatized, propertyless sector of the community.

IV

UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF PEASANT RICE GROWING INDUSTRY

ONE economist, Lim Chong-Yah (1967, pp. 28–29) says that this industry is one of the most important in the self-sufficient sector: relatively stable but having a low level of income. Yet this sector remained ". . . an important passive (weak) player . . . in the Malayan economy . . .. The winds of an export induced boom do not sweep across the rice plains." (ibid, p. 25). This is an apt analogy to describe the relative insulation of community life in this sector.[28] 19% of the economically active population (Peninsular Malaysia) are to be found in this sector. In terms of labour and land utilization, it is only second to rubber industry (*Malaysia*

[28] For a discussion on the insulation of village community life in the wake of British Colonisation in Semenanjung Malaysia see Mohd Dahlan HjAman "The Entry of Pax Britannica: The Emergence of Satellite Community in Malaya" in *Jernal Antropologi dan Sosiologi* Jilid 111, 1973/74 pp. 1–22.

Year Book 1969, p. 136). The 1960 per capita labour force income shows an income per labour per month in three sectors as follows (R)230/- in rubber sector, (R)561/- in tin sector, and (R)48/- in rice sector. It clearly shows that per capital labour force income in rice industry is very low compared with the other sectors. While it has shown a physical productivity (1947–1960 period), it still lags far behind the rubber and tin sectors in terms of revenue productivity.

Rice industry in Peninsular Malaysia is almost completely a peasant, primary industry. Wilson (1958, p. 67) reported that there were no economies of scale existing in the management of Malayan padi land for any one owner. Underdevelopment of this sector has been attributed to a constellation of interlocking factors namely, system of land tenure, insecure tenancy, absentee landlordism, land fragmentation, and credit indebtedness (Wilson, 1958, Ungku Aziz 1956, 1959; Puthucheary 1960; Lim Chong-Yah 1967).

Wilson reported that there were six basic types of land tenure in rice land, as shown in Table 2 below. Table 2 shows that between 1/2 and 2/3 of the rice peasants are tenanted.

Table 2

Padi Land Area Under Various Types of Tenure

State/ District	Period	Owner Farmed	Fixed Padi	Rental Cash	Lease	Crop Sharing	Loan	Mort-gage
Perlis	1955/56	53.2%	38.3%	0.7%	2.0%	5.8%	–	–
Kedah	1955/56	44.0%	41.0%	7.7%	6.2%	0.4%	–	–
Prov. Wellesley	1955/56	38.0%	57.3%	0.6%	3.8%	0.3%	–	–
Krian	1955/56	56.7%	34.9%	5.4%	1.5%	1.0%	0.4%	0.1%
(West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia)								
Kelantan	1955/56	50.9%	1.8%	0.1%	–	47.0%	0.2%	–
(East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia)								
All	1955/56	47.8%	31.5%	4.5%	3.5%	12.6%	0.1%	–

Source: WILSON, T.B. *Ibid* p. 11.

Another micro-survey[29] of rice area in Kelantan (1968), confirms the general trend of extensive tenancy and a widely and unevenly scattered ownership. In the rice area of Kemubu, there are 59% owner-farmers operating 51% of the total padi lands, therefore the remainder 21% tenant peasants and 20% owner-tenant peasants operating 49% of the rest of padi lands. It also reports that crop-sharing tenure still predominates. Out of 36% land tenanted, 32% are rented for kind (crop-sharing), and the rest 4% are rented for cash. Wilson (1958) predicted that the introduction of double-cropping would make the lease tenure more popular and would cause the levels of rent to rise. These systems (leasing and fixed rental) would be favoured by landlords as they served their interests more effectively. The situation in Kemubu supports Wilson's prediction.

The average size of a padi farm is around 2 acres. In the Kemubu Area (Kelantan), the average size of an owner-peasant's farm is 1.90 acres, a tenant-peasant's farm 2.38 acres, and owner-tenant peasant's farm 2.87 acres. Padi holdings vary in size from states to states: Kedah less than 5 acres, Kelantan less than one acre (Wilson, 1958 p. 97). The Kemubu Survey reports that the average farming household is 5.2 persons, which comes very close to the average FELDA farming-household in Kelantan.[30] These data reveal some important developments. Firstly, the large average farming-household and a relatively small farm-unit must indicate under-utilization of labour. High rural human fertility rates and scarcity of farm-unit would inevitably lead to disguised employment in the rural agricultural sector. Secondly, the high percentage of tenant-peasants (Kemubu; 1968, 49%) reflects the domination of absentee landlords in rice

[29] SELVADUARAI, S. et. al., *Socio-Economic Study... Op. cit.* Kemubu Area contains about 22,000 padi holdings. 75% of its population are engaged in padi cultivation. Tenancy is also widespread among padi peasants in the MUDA scheme. See Afifuddin Haji Omar, *Some Aspects of the Socio-Economic Value System of the MUDA Rice Farmers in Development Perspectives*, MUDA Agricultural Development Authority, MADA Publication No. 24, Kedah, August 1974 pp. 21–22; 75–80, also his, *Some Aspects of Labour Utilization in the MUDA Scheme*, MUDA Agricultural Development Authority, MADA Publication No. 26, Kedah, August 1974 pp. 1–2.

[30] The average FELDA farming-household is 5 persons. FELDA is Federal Land Development Authority. See Wikkramatileke, R. "State Aided Rural Land Colonialization in Malaya: An Appraisal of the F.E.L.D.A. Program's in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 5, 1965.

production. A large proportion of rice-peasants have to depend on the production resources provided by absentee landlords, and these peasants belong to the class of landless tenant peasants and owner-tenant peasants who have to supplement income from their minute padi holdings. On the principle of supply and demand, particularly in a situation of surplus labour and impoverishment, these peasants would be left to the mercy of absentee landlords, especially those landlords-cum-middlemen. This is already manifest in insecure tenancy, rising rents and a preference to the lease tenure. Wilson (1958 p. 97) reported that these tenant-peasants had to pay up concealed rents (tea-money/cash deposits, *zakat* (i.e. annual religious tithe), transport costs, and other costs incurred by double-cropping) expected by the landlords.

The Peninsular Malaysian peasant rice industry in many ways approximates to the minifundios of Latin America, but lacks its counterpart, the latifundios. One approximate index of low income and unemployment is the over-crowding of the rural labour force on small-sized farm units. The average farm size is far too small to be physically productive to ensure high revenue turnover, and at the same time far too little for the attainment of reasonable level of income by Malaysian standards. Padi peasants live on incomes that are equal to one half or even less than the incomes of rubber peasants and vegetable peasants (Ungku Aziz, 1956). The Kemubu Survey reports that the farm income is (R)361/- per (annum) per farmer, and if he has an off-farm income (about (R)286/- p.a.) his average net income per annum would come to (R)647/-. Cash deficits are normally 'financed' by loans or advances by landlords or middlemen, who are, more often than not, the wholesaling-cum-middlemen. This tends to perpetuate the vicious circle of low incomes and credit indebtedness among the landless-tenant peasants.[31] The *Padi Kunca System* or the *Padi Ratus System* (under which the peasant obtains his credit in advance, either in cash or kind, and agrees to pay back to the creditor so many *kunca*[32] of padi at a price fixed much below the current or market price) practised by padi peasants in North Malaya institutionalizes peasant-client and landlord-cum-middlemen-patron relationships.

[31] Ernest Feder reports similar financial straits among the minifundistas and farm workers in Latin American countries. See FEDER, E. *The Rape of the Peasantry*, New York, 1971, c.f. 'What is 'Rural Poor"?, pp. 8–19.

[32] One *kuncha* is equal to 160 *gantangs* or 85½ lbs.

The Kemubu Survey reports that the average cumulative debt is high, about (R)347/-. It is safe to say that the landless tenant-peasants with large families will find difficulty to escape from credit indebtedness. Professor Feder's argument for "the permanent debt situation" of small producers and farm workers in the Latin American countryside is also valid for the case of rural padi peasants in Malaysia if not for all peasants:

> "It is obvious that the financial straits of the minifundistas and farm workers are not the result of extravagant living or abnormal appetites. They are the result of totally insufficient incomes."
>
> (Feder, 1971 p. 18)

But it must, at the same time, be recognized that low incomes, credit indebtedness and impoverishment are products of capitalistic integration of this sector into the national economy, especially when it is deluged by forces of consumerism generated by the center. This integration is the outcome of the primary change that has brought this sector under the dominant, *laissez-faire*, capitalist structure. Therefore, the existing structure, *ipso facto* would generate further impoverishment or involution,[33] unless it is immediately rectified.

Institutional reforms[34] have been taken since 1956 in order to ameliorate shortcomings in the fields of land tenure, credit, the processing of agricultural commodities and marketing (*First Malaysia Plan*, 1966–70 pp. 105–106). These institutional reforms reflect a universal recognition of problems of high fixed rentals, insecure tenure, uneconomic farm size, low incomes, and rural indebtedness as by themselves, being the causes of underdevelopment of this sector. These reforms must have been the result of theoretical thinking which has not transcended what it is (i.e. the conditions of impoverishment as they exist presently) to what has caused

[33] The idea of involution has been elaborated and applied by Geertz in his study of the downswing underdevelopment of Javanese padi peasants in Indonesia. See GEERTZ, C. *Agricultural Involution*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1970.

[34] Such reforms are: See *Federation of Malay Rice Committee* 1956, advocating re-distribution of land as a means of raising tenants to ownership and increasing the size of farm-unit; *First Malaysia Plan 1966–70* introducing Agricultural Bank of Malaysia 1969, Federal Agricultural Authority (FAMA) 1965, Farmers' Association 1967. All these acts are designed to provide checks to insecure tenure, rural indebtedness, uneconomic farm size as well as to provide better educational and marketing facilities to farmers.

what it is (i.e. the causes to the existing conditions). It is an error of confusing empirical reality with structural reality.

Unfortunately, I do not possess, at this moment, empirical evidence to indicate the impact of government-sponsored institutional agencies, especially those associated with the improvement of rural credit and land tenure, upon the traditional credit patterns among the tenant-peasants. But I suspect that, as evidenced by the credit pattern[35] reported by the Kemubu Survey, these institutional agencies would only benefit the relatively rich farmers under the existing structure. They would, in effect, reinforce the economic position of absentee landlords and other economically well-off owner-operators and owner-non-operators.

The other side to the process of impoverishment constitutes the problems of ownership, tenure, and land fragmentation. These problems are directly related to two developments: in the politico-economic sphere, there is the "agglomeration process"[36] of concentration of ownership (private ownership) among the economically well-off farmers and in the socio-cultural sphere, there is the physical subdivisions and co-sharing, of padi holdings caused by traditional mode of inheritance or *Adat*, (i.e. customary mode of inheritance). Fragmentation[37] of padi holdings, more often than not, entails sale of these holdings to the more well-to-do farmers, thereby reinforcing the agglomeration process. These two interrelated de-

[35]The Survey reports that only 28% of the Kemubu padi peasants are free of debt. The average debt is (R)347/- but some as high as (R)540/-. The Government-sponsored Rural Co-operative Credit Society has been used by only a small minority of the peasants. Is also reports that about 70% of them still send their padi to middlemen markets. This seems to confirm the traditional pattern of rural credit with the operation of middlemen markets.

[36]The concept of "agglomeration" was developed by Prof. Ungku Aziz. It shows the cumulative concentration of increasingly fragmented holdings in the hands of the few well-to-do farmers. See UNGKU AZIZ, *Concepts of Agglomeration and Consolidation and Related Research Methodology*, Ref. Paper LTC of FAO/59/8/6194. An example of the actual operation of this process is reported in S. HUSIN ALI, *Social Stratification in Kampong Bagan*, 1964.

[37]Fragmentation manifests in three forms namely (i) physical fragmentation by sub-division, (ii) theoretical fragmentation by co-ownership and (iii) actual fragmentation by co-farming. Wilson (1958) reports that fragmentation in rice areas has reached the advanced stage, i.e. fragmentation by co-sharing.

velopments reflect, on the one side, the structural underdevelopment of the landless-tenant peasants who constitute 1/2 to 2/3 of the total rice population, and on the other, the development of the economically well-off owner-operators and owner-nonoperators-cum-landlords/landlords-cum-wholesaling middlemen. Fragmentation does seem to be an accelerator of dysfunction to stable, private ownership of economic farm size. It is commonly argued that fragmentation of padi holdings has been fundamentally caused by traditional mode of inheritance, especially *firaid* (i.e. Islamic law of inheritance). There is, however, a danger in this argument because, while it is conceded that *firaid* or *adat* might be a causative factor in fragmentation, it is only secondary to the more dysfunctional factors in a situation of very restricted resources, aggravated further by high rural fertility rates, large farm-household size, low incomes and very restricted margin, if ever there is any, for saving. The fundamental cause of the reality of fragmentation and the consequent economic concentration in the few economically well-off individual farmers, must exist in the social system that radically alters the egalitarian values of social cohesion and systemic integration, and that legitimizes the economically positive class, and landlords, as the most esteemed class and class status in the new socio-economic stratification systems of the community. Fragmentation promotes landlordism and is a severe situation of rural indebtedness. Landlordism *ipso-facto* is a cause of rural poverty (Ungku Aziz, 1956; Lim Chong-Yah 1967). This tacitly recognizes that capitalistic integration of the rice sector has maimed the large-sized, farm-households especially among the landless-tenant peasants who are totally dependent upon an income below the conservative subsistence level, to practically sustain their small farm-holdings indefinitely in a situation of free market competition and expanding forces of consumerism.[38] As early as 1958, Wilson reported that individual ownership of rice lands in North Malaya was very unevenly distributed, with a predominant proportion of the rice land area concentrated into relatively few large properties, owned by a few rich

[38] It is important to give emphasis on peasant relationships to factors of production. In a situation where this relationship has rendered it practically impossible for a peasant to have any control over factors of production, it becomes a natural phenomenon for this class of peasants to undergo downward mobility in socio-economic terms. Their poverty is then a reflection of this movement.

individuals (Wilson, 1958 pp. 67; 97). He cited a case in the Krian Area where three landlords together owned 1020 acres out of the total area of 1825 acres.

Who are these landlords? Essentially they constitute the wealth/property-owning class variably called the new economic aristocrats/the incipient mercantile class in rural environment (Firth, 1966), or the rich men of the village *(orang kaya kampung)* who have accumulated wealth/property through inheritance and/or personal enterprise (S. Husin Ali, 1964; Swift, 1965). More often than not, they are also the money-lending middlemen and/or the monopoly-monopsony wholesaling middlemen. The emergence of this group of rentier-entrepreneurs could be described as the rise of property-wealth-owning Estate in the socio-economic stratification system of the present day rural community. The existence of this Estate has produced an element of monopsony into the general supply and demand conditions.[39] The emergence and rise of absentee landlordism has been generated by the penetration and domination of domestic capitalism in the rice industry, and under the existing structure, the movement of landlordism would further cause "take-over" of the poor peasants' farm-holdings. In an open, *laissez-faire* economy, such an economic concentration is a natural phenomenon and there is no force to stagnate this movement unless the existing structure that maintains and is maintained by, this Estate is radically altered.

In conclusion, poverty as a manifestation of rural underdevelopment in this sector, has reached quite a severe stage, particularly among the landless-tenant peasants — so much so, that poverty has become its own cause. It illustrates Myrdal's hypothesis of "circular and cumulative causation" in development and underdevelopment under laissez-faire systems.[40] The rise of capitalism and commercialization in this sector has released the primary change which produces a dominant wealth/property-owning class and an impoverished landless-tenant/labour-owning class. Like in the peasant

[39]See WHARTON, C. "Marketing Merchandising and Money Lending: A note on Middlemen Monopsony in Malaya" in *Malayan Economic Review*," Vol. 11, No. 2, October 1962.

[40]See MYRDAL, G. "The Principle of Circular and Cumulative Causation" in *Economic Development And Social Change* (ed) DALTON, G., New York, 1971. pp. 375–385.

fishing sector, a polarization in rice-population in terms of class distinctions has appeared between the wealth/property-owning class and the great majority of the labour-owning class. The non-economic factors like the effects of poverty on fertility, the distribution of active (economically) age-groups, the grossly inferior schools and the lack of health and welfare services in these areas, as well as the general value-attitude systems of the community, tend to reinforce the whole chain of poverty-generating process.

V

UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF PEASANT SMALL-HOLDING RUBBER INDUSTRY AND PEASANT MIXED ECONOMY

OUR main monograph references are the following studies of village communities: a village in Johor (Kg. Bagan) by S. Husin Ali (1964), Negeri Sembilan (Jelebu) by Swift (1965), and Selangor (Jenderam) by Wilson (1966). These villages have one factor in common, that is, land is the basis of production. Peasant small-holding rubber industry is a dominant primary agriculture, but it is significantly supplemented by other primary cash crop agriculture, such as orchards (a very significant source of income in Jelebu), coconut and arecanuts (a significant source of income in Kg. Bagan), and a mixture of these crops in Jenderam. Peasant rice industry is found in all these villages but it is a declining sector manifest in the decreasing number of peasants in the rice fields (Swift, 1965; Wilson, 1966).

These villages constitute a region located in the passive sector to the most exploited, and developed sector constituting the rural-modern sectors (large scale estate agriculture, and mining sectors) and the urban-modern sectors (trade, mercantile, services, manufacturing sectors) within the tin and rubber belt states. It is interesting to note that the "rich regions" were developed on foreign capital and labour, the "poor regions" identified with peasant smallholding primary industry were developed on "immigrant" Malay enterprise labour.[41]

[41] "Immigrant" Malays include immigrants from the Netherland Indies. Kg. Bagan contains a predominant Javanese population, Jelebu a predominant Minangkabau population and Jenderam a predominant "Sumatran Malays" population.

These monographs show that these village communities are increasingly becoming socially and economically differentiated. They also reveal that the socio-economic stratification systems of these village communities are fundamentally based on class criterion, with religio-social factors as exceptional factors. This means that even at village level, it has become a rule rather than an exception, for the economically well-off individuals to achieve a niche in the maturing economically-oriented elite system. This stratification system reflects changes that are taking place at the national level, which are now penetrating village communities. That religio-social factors have not been totally subverted by factors of economic achievements or individualistic-type orientations is in part explained by the relative insulation of rural society from developments of modernization that are occurring in the urban-industrial modern sectors (Swift, 1965 p. 148; Wilson, 1966 p. 65).

There is a general tendency for peasants in this sector to concentrate more on cash-crop production, especially rubber, and be prepared to buy rice. A large proportion of these peasants are tenant-peasants or share-croppers, and landless-tenant-labourers. The relationships between these landless-tenant peasants and the landlords produce the client-patron system. The situation of credit indebtedness in this sector is, however, not as severe as that in the rice sector or in the fishing sector. Nonetheless, the situation has caused the universal agglomeration process through sale of land by poor peasants to wholesaling-middlemen-cum-landlords or to the new urban-salariat middle class. As a result, there is an increasing trend towards economic imbalance due to maldistribution of land (S. Husin Ali, 1964; Swift, 1965, 1967). This trend is only paralleled by a tendency for ownership of village assets to pass from the poor peasants to other groups, of which lately the educated-salariat middle class is the most dominant. This illustrates a situation where the adoption of urban-based material subculture has produced a concentration of land-ownership in the hands of a few.

Enterprising middlemen, and urban-salariat middle class have appeared to form the absentee-landlord group. Absentee landlordism has always been one of the fundamental factors producing the vicious circle of poverty in all areas of economy in the rural-peasant sector. The rise of landlordism in rural society is further reinforced by a great social value (besides the economic value in itself) attached to land, as a source of status. But, with the super-imposition of values of material capitalistic sub-

culture upon the weakening peasant equalitarian system, land becomes both a social and economic investment. In these villages, it is reported that sale of land is caused by a situation of unforeseen contingencies (S. Husin Ali, 1964 p. 130), of extra-ordinary expenditure (Swift 1967) or is the result of physical fragmentation into uneconomic farm size due to traditional modes of inheritance *(Firaid* or *Adat).* Sale of land is also reported to be the result of leases.[42] The point to be made here is that where there is a rise in landlordism, there is also the process of underdevelopment at the base of the society – or the acquisition of wealth/property by the landlord group or the salariat group must reflect the dispossession of wealth/property from the peasants.

At the base of rural community are three categories of peasants. Firstly, there are a few owner-operators who are not rich enough to reach the elite, wealth/property-owning class-status, then there are the owner-tenant operators whose private landholdings are of uneconomic farm size, and therefore have to sell labour to the landowning class, and finally there are the landless-tenant workers who have to depend on the capital resources of the landowning class. The last category could be subdivided into two groups namely, the landless tenant-peasants and the landless tenant-cum-odd-jobmen. At the apex of rural community are two groups of rentier-entrepreneurs namely the landowning wholesaling-middlemen-cum-landlords and the landowning, salariat middle class. Based on the modes they derive their incomes, two classes of peasants have emerged in the rural environment: firstly, there are the landlords who derive their incomes through owning land and secondly, the ordinary and landless peasants who derive their incomes from selling labour, except the owner-operators. This class division shows a significant polarization between a landowning exploiting class and a mass of tenants and labourers (Swift, 1967 p. 241). Related to this class division is the fact that while the landowning (wealthy) peasants have a surplus capital for investment or for immediate purchase of lands, the mass of tenants and labourers possess restricted means for saving and investment.

[42] Prof. Swift cites two investigations, undertaken by A.R. Mokhzani, which confirm the sale and accumulation of padi farm units. Mokhzani from the Department of Economics & Public Administration, University of Malaya, conducted his investigations in Perlis and Tanjung Karang in Selangor. See SWIFT, M.G. "Economic Concentration And Malay Peasant Society" op. cit. pp. 242–243.

VI

CONSISTENT FEATURES OF VILLAGE COMMUNITIES

OTHER problems leading to the improverishment of the peasantry in the village sector generally are shortage of land due to population pressure; tenancy and the small units of production; under-utilization of surplus labour; the migration of unemployed landless peasants to urban centers (where most of them become unemployable); the rural-urban drift of the certificate-holding class; the lack of educational, health and welfare facilities; and the prevalence of monopolist-monopsonist middlemen who keep their peasant clients in a permanent debt situation. These rural peasant sectors, experience a leadership drain in the sense that nearly all members of the educated/certificate-holding class from these sectors are gainfully employed in the urban-industrial sectors. In this sense the rural educated class does not present an alternative of effective, legitimate leadership to the existing traditional one.[43] My own study of *Adat* Administration in Wilayah Naning (Malacca)[44] concludes that while there is great prestige given to governmental positions (bureaucratic positions) and to education in itself, there is yet a lack of clear system of legitimate, formal authority at village level. Wilson (1966) rightly suggests that this is because the educated class (emerging as "urban" salariat, middle class) tends to be separated from the non-educated peasants, and furthermore, nearly all of the educated class are gainfully employed in the urban centers.

Village communities since their integration into the national, capitalist system, have become open communities (Mokhzani 1965; S. Husin Ali 1964), as evidenced by mobility especially in the aspect of social mobility that is, an upward or downward change in class and status. The agglomeration process at village level, on the one hand, reflects the movement of upward mobility into the landlord class and on the other, the movement into the dispossessed labour-owning class. In the new mobility system, education seems to be the universal factor for achiecing upward mobility among the labour-owning peasants. But, in a situation where the develop-

[43] See SWIFT, M.G. *Malay Peasant Society in Jelebu*; 1965, and S. HUSIN ALI *Patterns of Rural Leadership* (mimeograph) 1966.

[44] Mohd. Dahlan HjAman, "Pentadbiran Adat Ke Atas Sistem Tanah Di Naning (Melaka)," unpublished B.A. Dissertation, Jabatan Pengajian Melayu, Universiti Malaya, 1968.

ment of education has been and is urban-biased, education as such would be beyond the reach of those on the peripheries: thereby insulating these peripheries from participating fully in the main educational development. As a result, only those rural peasants who could afford urban-centered English education for their children managed to achieve individual, upward mobility for their children. This means that generational, individual upward mobility among the peasants depend upon their economic position. This also means that only the sons of landlords and salariat middle class could effectively achieve individual, upward mobility. The sons of the dispossessed, labour-owning peasants are then destined to be stuck with primary, vernacular education[45] which does not provide the upward lever in the new mobility system. I believe that while education (meaning "education" that possesses an economic value in terms of the national employment structure) does play an important role in rural modernization, it is not, by itself, the effective force that could narrow the gap between the few rich propertied individuals and the poor on the peripheries, as the great bulk of landless labour-owning peasants will not be obviated by an educational system that provides graduates who are of marginal value to industrial sectors, or that tends to support the selective migration of the educated class to the urban centers. It will much less be of any help to general-purpose, oriented graduates of rural schools when the national, industrial employment structure discriminates against the general purpose certificate holders. It has already become a dominant trend for the young generation of peasants to leave their villages whenever there is an alternative situation existing in the urban centers (Wilson, 1966 p. 61). But, the question is: where are they gainfully employed? Swift (1965) reports that most of the rural youths in Jelebu dream of joining the "services" (the lower ranks in department bureaucracy, in the army, and police). If geographical mobility does not generate individual upward mobility, education that so provides the mobility lever has not achieved much for the labour-owning peasants.

S. Husin Ali (1964) has shown a trend of upward mobility among the rich peasants who could afford to send their children to the urban-

[45] Note that prior to 1956, there was not any Malay secondary school education. Also there was not any English secondary school education in rural areas, and in most cases there were no primary English schools as well.

centered quality schools. As a result, he observes that the general pattern of mobility (in Kg. Bagan) is for the lower classes, comprising the ordinary and landless labour-owning peasants, to move into lower classes. Cases of lower classes moving into better classes are not only limited but difficult. Status mobility is then very such dependent upon economic position. Professor Swift (1965) has shown a tendency for the urban, salariat middle class to invest in village property. In view of this, I believe, that so long as the vicious circle of poverty still dominates the great bulk of the landless labour-owning peasants, education as a cumulative force of mobility in an open community, would only further enhance the general trend of disparities of property ownership, and therefore would deepen the widening gap between the landowning class and the labour-owning peasants.

Other scholars[46] have related to impoverishment of the peasantry as a whole, factors like low level of nutrition and inadequate intake of proteins[47] Viewed within the poverty-generating vicious circle these factors would affect the educational and economic performances of the peasantry.

Another central but controversial factor that has been claimed to have caused rural ecnomic retardation is a conflict of traditional, communal values and capitalist, individualistic values. Parkinson (1967 pp. 32, 44, 46) believes that this conflict, which has been expressed passively in ambivalence, has rendered slow progress of change in the rural Malay society. But Parkinson has been unduly ultra-racialist in his approach, as he tends to view rural stagnation as being caused by national characteristics of a particular racial group. While he has admitted that structural, economic factors form one side of the coin (i.e. underdevelopment), he has not tried to explain how this side of the coin is related to the other side of the coin (i.e. the influence of man on his environment). He fails to emphasize that in all cases of capitalistic integration, the in-

[46]See Robert Ho, "Land Settlement Projects in Malaya: An Assessment of the role of the FELDA." *in The Journal of Tropical Geography*, Vol. 20, Jun, 1965.

[47]The daily average intake of food calories required to balance the expenditures of energy a man incurs in his daily output of labour is roughly between 2000 and 3000 calories per person per day. The average daily ration among peasants throughout the world falls far below this average. See WOLF, E.R. *Peasants*, Prentice-Hall Inc., New Jersey, 1966, pp. 4–6.

digenous population (as against the immigrant population) in the satellite countries/sectors were practically forced to accept and live under the new material (capitalist) conditions, without their being given simultaneously the opportunities and facilities by which they could develop their adaptive culture.[48] We have noted earlier that while the capitalist modern sectors in the urban centers were provided with modern developments such as "superior" education, communication, economic and industrial infrastructure and health and welfare services, the rural-peasant sectors were practically insulated from these developments. As a result, it is only to be expected that "cultural lag"[49] would develop in the peasant sectors. This lag is manifest in the general value-attitude systems of the rural population, to the extent that the adaptive culture of rural peasants seems to be more harmoniously related to the displaced than to the new material (capitalist) conditions. Therefore, it is commonly argued, rural peasants have to adopt a new adaptive culture that would enable them to meet the maximizing postulates required by the capitalist environment.

The three monographs show that village communities lacked the so-called Weberian Protestant ethics and the attitudes of experimentation, initiative and innovation. The general character of rural society seems to be made up of the following elements: the liking for security which is related to dislike for full-time specialization (S. Husin Ali, 1964 p. 120; Swift, 1965 pp. 30–31; Parkinson, 1967 pp. 36–39;) the contingent character of bargains and obligations (Swift, 1962, 1965: S. Husin Ali,

[48] "Adaptive culture" refers to that portion of nonmaterial culture that deals with 'those ways of adjustment' to material conditions. See OGBURN, W.F. *Social Change*, New York, 1922 pp. 200–212: also appearing as "The Hypothesis of Cultural Lag" in *Social Change* (eds) ETZIONI, A & ETZIONI E, New York, 1964 pp. 459–462.

[49] In the sense used by Ogburn, "cultural lag" refers to a situation of change where the adaptive culture (the non material culture) has not adjusted harmoniously to the new, changed, material conditions. The assumption of this hypothesis is that a primary change in one part of Parsonian functional whole occasions changes in other parts, but the change in the latter (dependent variables) produces a maladjusted correlation with the independent variables (primary change). See OGBURN, W.F. "The Hypothesis of Cultural lag", *Ibid*: I, however, believe that cultural lag only demonstrates how a section of a total social whole fares within the same historical movement, but *fails to explain sufficiently* why that section is reduced to its present state of affairs.

1964, Wilson, 1966); fatalism, *rezeki* (the divinely inspired economic lot); and usury as derived from Islam as practised by Malays (Swift, 1962, 1963, 1965; S. Husin Ali, 1964; Wilson, 1966; Parkinson, 1967); hierarchical authority restricting individual initiative (Parkinson, 1967); conspicuous consumption or high social consumption (Mokhzani, 1965; Wilson, 1966; Djamour, 1959; Lim Chong-Yah, 1967); and lack of motivational propensities and self-reliance as related to early socialization patterns (Djamour, 1959; Swift, 1962; Wilson 1966; Parkinson, 1967; Abu Hassan Othman, 1971). These values-attitudes are, indeed, the antithesis of the capitalist, individualistic values that support the maximizing postulates of material success.

These monographs on the other hand, do not attempt to explain why these features are prevalent in these village communities. Parkinson has in fact wrongly attributed these features as causes of economic retardation at the village level. Caution must be exercised here if we are to understand and explain the persistence of these features in the context of change within the total system. These features, in fact, simply reflect the insulation or encapsulation of these peasant part-wholes from the total integrated system, namely the center-biased capitalistic politico-economic development.

It must be recalled that the hypothesis of cultural lag assumes that material conditions precede changes in the adaptive culture. This further takes for granted that the new material culture has brought about a new environment under which man is and has been, able to get equal opportunities to compete in the capitalistic market society. But in the case of Peninsular Malaysia, the situation of new material culture has produced an insulated rural-peasant community beset with problems of underdevelopment in the form of an interlocking vicious circle of poverty, and this situation *ipso facto* is the cause of cultural lag as much as the product of the capitalistic integration of this sector into the capitalist orbit. Under such a situation where the peasants' material culture has been no more than a subculture of poverty at the national level, these non-economic factors that constitute the adaptive culture, would only act upon the structural, economic factors of underdevelopment, so as to produce, consequently, a further downward economic and social retardation in the encapsulated rural peasant areas. It is, indeed, important and necessary for policy makers and planners of rural modernization to be equally concerned with the adaptive culture as with the manner by which the material

plane could be best introduced into the rural-peasant sectors without perpetuating the rural sub-culture of poverty. In my view, this would ultimately involve a total dismantling of the existing center-periphery systematic integration.

VII

REALITIES OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT: CONCLUSION

THE facts of underdevelopment in the rural, peasant primary sectors are derived from a fundamental reality that these sectors have been fully integrated in the national, capitalist system. The insulation of these sectors from the developments of modernization in the so-called modern sector reflects a situation where the peasant sectors have become peripheries to the modern sectors/centers within the total movement of the national, capitalist system. The insulation of these sectors has produced a universal subculture of poverty.

The insulation of the peripheries has further produced the development of a vicious circle of underdevelopment sweeping the whole countryside, except the rural-modern sectors identified with large-scale economies of concentration. A polarization of a land-owning class (wholesaling middleman-landlord/salariat-landlord) and the great mass of labour-owning class has already emerged, and this trend, under the existing structure, is expected to worsen with greater inflow of urban investments in village assets through the urban salariat middle class.

The constellation of factors forming the vicious circle of poverty in the rural-peasant sectors is fundamentally related to the capitalistic integration of these sectors into the wider capitalist orbit. The cultural lag that develops in these sectors is created by the basis of center-periphery systemic integration under the existing structure. When and where there are to be found peasant values and attitudes prevailing upon and affecting the economic behaviour and performances of these sectors, they are not accelerators of dysfunction in *absolute terms:* they are acting upon the structural economic factors of rural socio-economic retardation, and together consequently, are producing the rural subculture of poverty.

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RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION: A CASE STUDY IN BANDAR MAHARANI

This essay is, in most part, extracted from the writer's M.A. thesis, "Proses Pembandaran Orang-orang Melayu Ke Bandar Maharani", submitted to the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. (Unpublished) 1971.

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I

BANDAR Maharani, which is situated at the mouth of the Muar River, plays an important role as the administrative centre of Muar District. Its ideal position has enabled her to play an important role as a port in north Johore since its opening in 1884. Historical events have shown that this town had indeed become the focal point for commercial ships.[1] Businessmen from Singapore, Malacca, Pahang, Selangor, Siak, Palembang, Jambi, Rawa, Batu Ara, Acheh, Brunei, Banjarmasin and Thailand congregated there to carry out commercial activities.

Such economic activities, among others, nave undoubtedly stimulated its development. The convergence of businessmen to this town was not only due to its position as the district administrative centre and port, but also because of its prosperous hinterland where agricultural products were cultivated for export. The entry of about 10,000 Javanese to open up areca-nut, coconut and coffee plantations at Padang (a plain stretching to the south of this town) and 12,000 Chinese to open up pepper and gambier plantations in the upland area was sponsored by the sultan of Johore. This gave Bandar Maharani an opportunity to play an increasingly important role as a centre for collecting and distributing agricultural products. Foreign investors from Europe and other Asian nations were encouraged to jointly help in the development of the town and its surrounding areas so that within a short span of time it flourished into a cosmopolitan centre. Datuk Mohd. Salleh bin Perang, the then *Datuk Bentara Luar* of Johore, was commissioned to draw a Master Plan for the development of the town. He called his wealthy Chinese friends to invest

[1] A veteran historian, Haji Abdul Shukor Ismail, the ex-inspectorate of Schools for Muar District, has been collecting available records on Muar history. He intends to publish a book on "Sejarah Muar" shortly. The writer is indebted to him for the loan of some of his collections.

and help in its development. Among those who responded and put in immense contributions were Eng Ah Si, Tai Joo Hong, Ah Hoo and Ah Hock.

Besides this wealthy Chinese group, (who at present settled along Jalan Sisi) there were two other groups under the leadership of Orang Kaya Jonid and Orang Kaya Jabbar. They put in lots of effort in developing those areas along the beach and Jalan Arab respectively. As such, they were only busy with agricultural activities; whereas the wealthy Chinese group not only indulged in business and commercial activities but also in opening up the pepper and gambiar estate in the upland areas, especially in Bukit Kangkar, about ten miles to the northwest.

The determination to develop Bandar Maharani especially in the role it should play after its opening, was an important basis for the consequent intensive process of its expansion. Among the indices which may be used here to prove this point is, of course, its total population which had increased from 5,000 in 1890 to 13,327 in 1921; 20, 338 in 1931; 32,228 in 1947; 39,050 in 1957 and 60,000 in 1970. This demographic change is undoubtedly a result of two main factors, namely, natural increase and the mass immigration from other areas.[2]

Both of these may be considered to be normal in any democratic society. Its importance then was even more emphasised when the Sultan initiated efforts to bring in more Javanese and Chinese people on a large scale. Historical records have also shown that in the year 1887 more than one thousand families (husbands and wives) from Kelantan, had settled in Bandar Maharani.[3]

[2]Every country in Southeast Asia has experienced the rural-urban migration at very rapid rate, especially after World War II. In the 1954 census 73% of heads of families interviewed in Djakarta had their place of birth outside the city; in Bangkok (1960) about 26.6% of the population were born outside the city; about 47.7% in Phnom Penh; 34% in Singapore and 50% in Kuala Lumpur. See Mc Gee, T.G. *The Urbanization Process in the Third World*, Bell and Sons, Ltd. London, 1971 and "The Urbanization Process: Western Theory and Southeast Asian Experience." *SEADAG PAPERS* No. 59, March 24, 1969.

[3]Roff, W. *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, University of Malaya Press, KL. 1967, pp. 11.

II

BANDAR Maharani is undergoing very rapid growth, especially in its demographic composition. This short paper attempts to analyse the problems related to this. However, only the aspect of migration will be emphasised. In migration studies, there are at least two important dimensions to be taken into consideration. Firstly, one has to realise that migration may occur from one town to another or from one village to another; and secondly, migration may also take place from village to town or vice versa. In other words, people from one community may change their place of residence to another community either of the same type or of an entirely different kind from that of the original.

Bearing in mind that migration or population movement is so general and may involve various dimensions, it is not possible to proceed with the discussion without narrowing down the scope of analysis. The discussion in this paper is, therefore, specifically oriented only to problems related to rural-urban migration. With this limitation, however, we can still make use of migration concepts used by either sociologists or demographers. Both groups recognise that migration will, in most cases, involve a socio-demographic process, especially when it considers the change of place of residence as well as crossing the boundary line between rural and urban. As such, rural-urban migrants have no way out but to make sure that they will ultimately force themselves to understand and accept urbanism as their way of life.

It is widely accepted that questions pertaining to rural-urban migration are very relevant to the definition of urbanisation. Kingsley Davis, for example, defines the term urbanisation as a change from "a spread out pattern of human settlement to one of concentration in urban centers".[4] Clyde Mitchell also defines this subject as "the process of moving to cities, changing from agriculture to other pursuits common for cities, and corresponding changing of behaviour patterns."[5]

With these definitions we may build up a framework for this paper. Such a framework will try to relate migration to urbanisation. Since rural-

[4]Kingsley Davis, "The Urbanization of the Human Population" in *Scientific American*, 213 (Sept. 1965) pp. 40–53.

[5]Breese, G. *Urbanization In Newly Developing Countries*, Prentice-Hall Inc. New Jersey, p. 3.

urban migration is taken to be the fundamental theme in the study of urbanisation, we will examine the sociological implications that may arise from the rural-urban migration process, especially with regard to the ability of the migrants concerned to adapt and adjust themselves to the pattern of life in Bandar Maharani. In other words, we shall try to determine how far the migrants have succeeded in adjusting themselves to the urban environment.

III

RURAL-urban migration is important in the socio-demographic process, specifically in the context of urbanisation.[6] Research on rural-urban migration normally begins by asking questions related to socio-demographic aspects. For example, we may wish to know who are the rural folks who actually have migrated to cities. Or how many farmers are involved in this process and lastly, what are the causes that lead them to make the decision. Having collected this information we may also ask, finally, what are the demographic effects on both urban and rural areas.

One of the major problems encountered in trying to answer these questions is the lack of relevant information on population movements, over time and space. In Bandar Maharani, even today, there is no special office or institution which records population movements. The Registration Department which is supposed to undertake this task does only the registration of births and deaths, the issuing of identity cards and citizenship certificate. It is true that there is a rule which requires those who have changed their addresses, to report to the Registration Department. However this rule is not strictly adhered to by everyone. This problem is, furthermore, complicated by circumstances where procedures for

[6]To cite a few, see the following, P. Weintraub, "Demographic Aspects of Rural-Urban Migration in European Countries Since the Second World War" in *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* Vol. 184, 1973. He specifically deals with the urbanisation case of Europe after the Second World War. In the case of Asian urbanisation, See McGee, T.G. *The urbanisation process in the Third World*, Bell and Sons, Ltd. London, 1971 and "The Urbanisation Process: Western Theory and Southeast Asian Experience," SEADAG PAPERS No. 59, March 24, 1969; and in the case of urbanisation in Africa, See Caldwell, J.C. "Determinants of Rural-Urban Migration in Ghana" in *Population Studies*, 22 (Nov. 1968), and his book *African Rural-Urban Migration*, ANU Press, 1969; Kenneth Little, *West African Urbanization*, Cambridge U. Press, London. *1965*.

reporting changes of address involve interaction with government officials who are enslaved by bureaucratic norms. Such a procedure obviously consumes a great deal of time. It is in itself a discouraging factor and as such, it encourages those who have migrated not to report to the Registration Department. Consequently no data on rural-urban migration are available in Bandar Maharani.

Taking these problems into consideration, especially on matters related to unavailability of official record on rural-urban migration, the writer has nothing to rely on for the purpose of this discussion. To overcome this difficulty therefore, an individual survey has to be carried out so that relevant data and information can be collected. To start with, a pilot survey was launched whereby 68 students from Muar High School, Sultan Abu Bakar Girls' School and the Convent Secondary School lent a helping hand in locating those who came from the rural areas and are now living in Bandar Maharani. These students went from house to house in order to get information about respondents' place of origin.

This survey is however subject to three limitations. Firstly, it is confined only to Malay families.[9] Secondly, it records only those who have left their villages between 1945–68. This decision was taken solely because rural-urban migration in this country occurred very rapidly after the Second World War.[10] Thirdly, the facts recorded are merely based on respondents' memories and hence the reliability is somehow questionable. Based on this limitation finally a total of 1,439 families were found and recorded as those groups who had migrated from rural areas to Bandar Maharani within the period of 1945–1968.

Assuming that those who had migrated from villages to Bandar Maharani within a period of 5–20 years have attained a certain degree of adaption to the urban way of life, it is therefore presumed that they may

[9]I have to limit this survey to cover only the Malay ethnic group because of three important factors. Firstly, to enable communication flow very easily especially during interview session. Secondly, this survey was carried out immediately after the racial riot (13.5.69) and since the researcher is of Malay origin it is believed to be of safety measure to concentrate only to Malay population. Lastly, Malay urbanisation and migration from rural to urban was given strong emphasis so that the Malays could take active part in urban economic activities *(see Second Malaysia Plan 1971–75).*

[10]T.G. McGee, *op. cit.*

be able to give more reliable information regarding their past experiences, and thus, a sample of 131 families was selected through interviews among those rural migrant families.

IV

FROM the data collected it is possible to determine whether or not Bandar Maharani is selective in recruiting people from rural areas. If the answer is positive, one may thus want to make further enquiries especially on matters related to the basis of selection. These questions are interesting and may only be answered by presenting the demographic structure of the 131 families studied.

Table I shows clearly two important aspects: firstly, the extent that the male population dominates the process of rural-urban migration, and secondly, the extent that youth exceeds other groups that have moved to Bandar Maharani. These evidences are obvious if we study the figures listed under the male and female columns where the percentage is 87.8 and 12.2 respectively. Looking at the age composition, it is undoubtedly clear that

Table 1

Age of 131 beads of families at the time they migrated from the rural area to Bandar Maharani

Age Group		Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Less than	15	12	2	14	10.7
	15–19	7	8	15	11.4
	20–24	22	2	24	18.3
	25–29	27	3	30	23.4
	30–34	17	1	18	13.7
	35–39	10	–	10	7.6
	40–44	7	–	7	5.4
More than	45	13	–	13	9.9
Total		115	16	131	100.0

Source: Notes from respondents.

the majority of the migrants are concentrated in the 15–34 years age group. They represent about 66.4%.

The essence of this finding is that it confirms similar trends that have been reported elsewhere. Several social scientists have done various researches in other places on rural-urban migration.[11] Hornell Hart,[12] for example, has carried out a similar research by using data available from the year 1890 to 1910. The result seems to indicate that more than half of the rural-urban migrants were those within the 20–29 year age-group. Whelpton[13] on the other hand had shown that more than 50% of the rural-urban migrants were concentrated in the 15–30 year age-group.

Having considered this evidence it is not surprising if there are others who would like to question as to why the phenomenon of rural-urban migration is concentrated within this age group. The only rational explanation on this matter is, at this stage, that the process of moving from one place to another requires energy, adaptability and adult judgement. Sorokin and Zimmerman even concluded that "... only the adults who have accumulated the energy, are still in the adaptable stage, and are sufficiently mature to take care of themselves, leave the local community and seek a new opening for life."[14]

Nonetheless, the males that exceed the females, as shown above, seem to be quite different from the situation as shown by empirical data in Western communities.[15] Thus the rural-urban migration in the Western World, among others, can be considered as a process of feminisation of the urban populace. In the case of Bandar Maharani, however, the data seem to indicate that the rural-urban process here is somewhat similar to that in other places in Southeast Asia. McGee has outlined excellent work[16] on this subject.

[11] Pitirim Sorokin & Carle C. Zimmerman, *Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology*, Kaus Pepriut Co. New York, 1969. Part V, pp. 525–636.

[12] H. Hart., "Selective Migration," University of Iowa Studies No. 53, 1921.

[13] P.K. Whelpton, "Population of the U.S. 1925–1975", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 34, Sept. 1928.

[14] *Op.Cit.* pp. 544.

[15] Sorokin & Zimmerman, *op. cit.*, pp. 546.

[16] *Op. cit.* pp. 13–119.

V

BANDAR Maharani is selective in recruiting migrants from rural areas by age and sex, it is important to look into their socio-cultural background, especially their economic position, training and skill. Such information is vital because it will not only portray their economic background but more

Table 2

Economic background of villages where the 131 head of families come from

Economic base	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Rubber	42	4	46	35.1
Paddy	3	—	3	2.3
Coconut	2	—	2	1.5
Mixture of rubber-coconut — paddy	24	5	29	22.1
Mixture of rubber-coconut —paddy — orchards, fishing and wage earners	44	7	51	39.0
Total	115	16	131	100.00

Source: Notes from respondents.

so they will, at the same time, enlighten us as to what extent differences in their economic structure may eventually lead them to migrate to urban areas.

The above data (table 2) clearly reveal that 35.1% of the migrants came from rural areas, where the economy is wholly based on small-holding rubber, 22.1% from rural areas with mixed economy, that is rubber, coconut and paddy (small-holdings), and another 39.0% from rural areas with a wider base of economic activities, that is a form of mixed economy which includes rubber, coconut, paddy, fishing, vegetables, orchards and *makan gaji.*[17] Very few of them came from villages with coconut and paddy as

[17] The term *makan gaji* is here used to refer to the section of the work and get paid in cash. Their pay can be made either on a monthly basis or on a daily basis.

their main economic activities. This constituted only 2.5% and 1.5% respectively.

These figures may enable us to conclude on the nature of the society from which the migrants come. When it is shown that very few of them come from villages where the main economic activities are paddy and coconut, we may assume that those villages in fact have a very stable society as compared to those with rubber and mixture of various economic activities.

Rural societies which are not stable may in themselves, among other things, be considered as the main driving froce which motivates rural folks to look for alternative places of residence elsewhere. Such societies are assumed to be more dominant in areas where the population are more exposed to cash economy. Rural areas with traditional economic activities such as paddy and coconut, are not likely to produce mobile people, simply because of the fact that personality growth under that economic environment is dominated by traditional values. One of the notable characteristics of traditional society is self-sufficient economy and traditional people tend to be rigidly attuned to it. It is therefore not very uncommon that the proportion of rural-urban migrants who come from villages with paddy and coconut as their main economic activities, is small.

VI

OTHER important problems that need to be discussed here concern the qualification and training of rural-urban migrants. Empirical evidence on this subject may be of useful guide for us to establish the reason why they decide to leave rural areas. In order to collect relevant data on this subject, several questions, especially those referring to the level and types of education were asked.

Figures in table 3 clearly reveal that a total of 80.2% of the migrants received their education and training only at the primary level. The term "primary level" is here used to mean somewhat similar to the one used by the Ministry of Education. The entire classification shown in table 3 is arranged according to the system used by the Ministry of Education. With this understanding, it is safe to determine that migrants who have completed their formal education only up to the primary level, never sat in classes beyond standard six in whatever type of primary school available, that is, either Malay primary, English primary or even Arabic/Religious primary.

Table 3

Educational Level of 131 heads of families at the time when they moved to Bandar Maharani

Level of Schooling	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Primary	94	11	105	80.2
Lower Secondary	13	3	16	12.2
Upper Secondary	5	1	6	4.6
Colleges	3	1	4	3.1
University	—	—	—	—
Total	115	16	131	100.1

Source: Notes from respondents.

"Lower Secondary School" is a term to denote a level of formal education between Form One and Form Three. Only those who have completed primary school are allowed to proceed to this level. In this study, it is shown that 12.2% of the migrants are in this category. However not all of them have completed Form Three, the highest form in this level. A closer analysis of the data reveals that there are cases where they did complete up to Form Three, whereas others only managed to reach Form One or Form Two.

The number is obviously small (4.6%) amongst migrants who have completed the Upper Secondary School or have completed the Malaysian School Certificate (MCE or SPM) examination. The percentage is even smaller (only 3.1%) if we consider those who have received formal education up to College level. None of them reached university.

The above illustration on education and training however does not give us a true picture of the highest possible level that respective migrants may achieve. This is obvious because of the educational policy in this country which, initially, does not allow rural children to acquire formal education up to the highest possible level. In fact the policy before 1957, when this country was still under the British administration, was obviously aimed at making peasants' children a little cleverer than their parents. It is thus unavoidable that their distribution into various types of schools, as seen in

table 4, are concentrated only to Malay and Religious Schools. Both schools accounted for 70.2% and very few of them were lucky enough to be able to go to English School.

Table 4

Type of education amongst 131 heads of families at the time they moved to Bandar Maharani

Type of School	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Malay School	24	3	27	20.6
English School	4	—	4	3.1
Malay School + English	10	2	12	9.1
Malay School + English + Religious	14	1	15	11.4
English School + Religious	3	—	3	2.3
Malay School + Religious	58	7	65	49.6
Religious School	2	3	5	3.9
Total	115	16	131	100.0

Source: Notes from respondents

The essence of the above discussion seems to confirm the established fact that English schools, especially during the colonial period, were only to be found in urban areas. The rural population therefore have only Malay vernacular schools to go to. The highest grade in this type of school was standard six. However, very few students, on completion standard six, were recruited as teachers. The men-teachers were then sent to the Sultan Idris Training College in Tanjung Malim and the women-teachers to the Malay Women Training College in Malacca.

Besides these vernacular schools, there were also Arabic/Religious schools administered by the State Religious Affairs Department.[18] This

[18]The State of Johore has a formal Religious School System administered by the state Department of Religious Affairs. School lessons are held in the afternoon, using the premise of Malay Vernacular School. Normally a student who has reached

school normally operates in the afternoon (between 2.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m.) by using the premises of the Malay vernacular school which operates only in the morning. The educational attainment of the majority of the migrants did not exceed the primary level. Only Children of rural elites and wealthy peasants[19] could afford to attend urban centered secondary, mainly English, schools.

They represent a small group who have the means to send their children to English Schools. Consequently these children manage to secure opportunities leading to Upper Secondary level, and thereafter accessible to better occupational opportunities.

VII

TAKING the socio-cultural background of the migrants into consideration, it is very interesting if we can examine them in detail, especially those problems that lead them to eventually decide to leave their rural folks and start a new life in the urban environment. Social scientists usually use the Push-Pull Model in trying to analyse rural-urban migration. However it should be realised that this does not mean that it is the only one suitable for explaining all kinds of migration from rural to urban places.

In this study, the writer asked several questions to enable him to establish the prime reason why they decided to choose Bandar Maharani as a place of residence after leaving their respective villages. Various answers were collected at the end, which were then classified into several groups. The result seems to be very interesting (see table 5). The data clearly shows seven different reasons which motivate them to move to urban areas. However four of these reasons are related to occupational endeavour. The other three involving 11.4%, were related to marriage, family conflict and other reasons. 17.6% of them had to migrate to this town because of change of working place or job transfers; 29.7% of them

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standard III in Malay Vernacular School will be joining Standard I in Religious School, and the highest grade in religious education offered by this school is Special Class (darjah khas) which sometimes also being referred to as Standard VII. Anyone who has passed Special Class examination with good grade is eligible to apply for religious teaching post with the Johore State Government.

[19] For a full ethnographic account of this situation, see Husin Ali, *Social Stratification in Kg. Bagan*, JMBRAS Monograph, Singapore, 1964.

Table 5

Main reasons motivating the 131 heads of families to migrate to Bandar Maharani

Reasons	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
I. To seek non-agriculture employment	31	—	31	23.6
II. Change of Working place				
(a) government officer	10	—	10	7.7
(b) self-employed	13	—	13	9.9
III. To start a new job				
(a) Government job (first time)	21	6	27	20.6
(b) Promotion	8		8	6.1
(c) Business	4	—	4	3.0
IV. To seek facilities				
(a) for children's education	6	2	8	6.1
(b) for individual educational improvement	12	—	12	9.2
(c) for job-oriented training.	4	—	4	3.0
V. Marriage	1	7	8	6.1
VI. Family Conflict	4	—	4	3.0
VII. Others	2	1	3	2.3
Total	115	16	131	100.0

because of taking up new jobs here and 18.3% came to this town in search for educational and training facilities. This latter groups was probably motivated by their belief that urban areas can offer them facilities to develop their skill and improve their qualification.

The second interesting point to note here is that the majority of those who have been classified to change their place of work (government officials), to start new jobs (on promotion), and to seek better facilities for themselves and their children's schooling are teachers. Ten of those who have to change their place of work were Malay teachers who were sent on transfer to Malay Vernacular Schools around Bandar Maharani. Eight of those who have to start new jobs (because of promotion) were also Malay teachers of whom five have been made headmasters and three school inspectorates. Of the 27 who accepted employment in the government agencies, three were in the teaching profession, six in the clerical service, seven in the police and armed forces; five were attached to a ferry company, three were hospital assistants, and three labourers in government department.

Another 31 migrants, on the other hand, did not wait until they received any offer for jobs in Bandar Maharani. They hoped to secure employment there. The rest of them, except four who had family conflict and were teachers, had to live in this town because of their daily business activities of all sorts. However five respondents refused to respond, and they, therefore, cannot be classified into any of the above mentioned schemes. As such they were separated and classified into "other reasons".

VIII

FROM the above classification, it seems possible to conclude that the Push-Pull Model is perhaps a useful framework. It is suitable for the purpose of analysing the cause that leads the migrants to decide to move to Bandar Maharani. Realising that the rural-urban migration is largely the phenomenon of male youth (see table 1) who somehow have been exposed to modern and formal education (see tables 3 & 4) it is therefore not surprising to note that their movement has a meaningful effect. Firstly on the migrants themselves, in terms of their experiences as a group or as individual; and secondly, the so-called societal effects. This latter effect may be viewed on both ends, that is, from the perspective of the society that they have left behind, or the new society of their destination (the

urban).[20] The former is rural and the latter urban.

However the writer does not intend here to discuss the effect of this rural-urban migration on either urban or rural society. The effect that would be emphasised here relates to the migrants' attempt to adapt the urban way of life in Bandar Maharani. Hopefully the result would be useful to anyone who is looking for explanations on the process of migrants' adjustment in urban society. This process is normally referred to as urbanization.

One important factor to bear in mind throughout this discussion is that the migrants have made their decision to live in urban environment and as such they have no choice but to assume new roles in a more complex urban social structure. The writer is interested to analyze what roles they play immediately upon arrival in Bandar Maharani. While discussing the migrants' role in the urban social structure it is also implied that we are going to determine the social class in which they were associating with initially. This task is however not an easy one. The complexity of urban social structure whereby individuals have to assume multiple roles in various forms of activity, economic, social or politics, is in itself a problem to anyone who would like to understand the forms of urban social stratification. Moreover the appropriate roles to be assumed by individuals are guided by the philosophy of specialization and division of labour where one's ability and skill in specific areas is important.

Secondly it is also felt important to focus the study on the adjustment process of the migrants to the urban way of life. This process could be easily traced by taking into account changes that had happened to every one from the very day they arrived in Bandar Maharani until the time when this survey was carried out.

The relevant data collected were then classified and analysed. Figures in table 4 provided the starting point in answering questions relating to the social class with which the migrants were associating themselves as soon as they arrived in urban areas. If occupational activities are used as the

[20] Eisentadt has said that ". . . migration from the countryside to urban centers, has often disorganised both rural communities and the older type of urban setting, and has created, especially in its initial phases, many manifestations of social disorganization and sheer misery". See his book, *Modernization: Protest and Change*, Prentice-Hall Inc. New Jersey, 1966 pp. 20.

Table 6

Occupational differences of the 131 heads of families during their last stay in their respective villages and upon arrival in Bandar Maharani

Types of Occupation	Their Last Job in Rural Areas				Their First Job in Bandar Maharani			
	Male	Female	Total	Percentage	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
I. Wage Earners								
(a) School Teachers	31	5	36	27.5	31	7	38	29.0
(b) Clerks	8	–	8	6.1	13	1	14	10.7
(c) Police-Armforces	3	–	3	2.3	10	–	10	7.7
(d) Motor Mechanics	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	1.5
(e) Labourers	6	–	6	4.6	26	2	28	21.3
II. Businessmen	–	–	–	–	4	–	4	3.1
III. Farmers/Peasants								
(a) Rubber tappers	8	–	8	6.1	–	–	–	–
(b) Paddy growers	4	–	4	3.1	–	–	–	–
(c) Fishing	1	–	1	0.8	–	–	–	–
IV. Taxi Drivers	4	–	4	3.1	4	–	4	3.1
V. Unemployed (both disguised and undisguised)	50	11	61	46.5	29	6	35	26.7
Total	115	16	131	100.1	115	16	131	100.0

criterion for differentiating social class, it is obvious that the 131 migrants could be easily divided into five categories, namely *makan gaji* (wage earners), businessmen, farmers, taxi drivers and the unemployed.

With this categorisation, it is clear that the migrants' experience, especially in aspects related to occupational changes as soon as they begin to get themselves involved in urban economic activities, could be summarised by comparing their economic participation in both columns namely "their last job in rural areas" and "their first job in Bandar Maharani". It is interesting to note that the white collar wage earners' (or *makan gaji*) group, for example teachers and clerks, seemed to continue their activities.[21] In fact its number had increased from 33.6% to 39.7%. It can therefore be assumed that this group is incorporated into the white collar wage earners' working class.

The same pattern is also pertinent amongst the uniformed workers group, namely the police and armed forces. About 7.7% of the migrants, including 2.3% who were already in this profession while they were still in their respective villages, and 5.4% who have for the first time had been offered the job, directly associate themselves to the uniformed working class.

The above two categories are in actual fact comprised of the relatively highly qualified migrants. The others with relatively low qualification have to look for other jobs (see table 3).

One very obvious phenomenon to note here is that the number of migrants who have associated themselves with socially low status occupation such as labourers *(buruh kasar)* or the blue-collar job, is increasing. This group was initially only 4.6% but it rose up to 21.3% as seen in table 4. This means that those who have been working as labourers *(buruh kasar)* in rural areas were continuing their jobs, whereas those who were farmers or unemployed could only manage to join the labourers' working class due to their very low formal educational qualification. Only two of them succeeded in holding the post of motor mechanic, but they are also still being classified as the blue-collar working class.

[21] C.W. Mill believed that they may be categorised into middle class, because this group include three types of occupation, namely managers for small business activities, certain professional people and government officials (white collar). See C.W. Mill. "The Middle Classes-Middle Sized Cities," *American Sociological Review*. Vol. XI, Oct. 1946, pp. 520–29.

There are also migrants who have been actively involved in the business sector. There are four of them in our samples. Although their number is small and all of them seem to have concentrated their activities in food selling business, such as *satay*, *mee bandong* and *ketupat lodeh*, it can also be considered as encouraging. At least there are migrants who are interested to join the business world and consequently enter the business group. Then, there are four other migrants who continued their former jobs as taxi drivers, but they have changed their original area of coverage from taking only passengers within the district of Muar to a much longer journey such as going as far as Kuala Lumpur, Johore Bahru and Singapore. They believed that by taking longer journeying passengers, they would be in a better position to increase their daily collection.

Since the basis of the urban economy relies on secondary and tertiary level of activities, therefore it is logical to observe that none continued to exist in the farming class in Bandar Maharani, though 10% of them were originally farmers. The unemployed had also decreased from 46.5% to 26.7% and hence this evidence proves that only 26.7% of the migrants were unemployed whereas others have succeeded, depending on their skill and ability, in being employed in various forms of economic activities.

However, this 26.7% of unemployed come from the educated group, who have very strong motivation and therefore wider choice of employment opportunities. As a matter of fact, they represent the pace-setters of change in traditional rural societies. Unfortunately, the very nature of such societies where traditional values still dominate in itself contributes towards the very slow change. Since it seems impossible to change their rural environment at an ideal pace, they felt frustrated and consequently left their respective villages to live in urban areas. They are better prepared than those with low educational attainment, to face problems of adjustment that urbanism generates.

IX

THE entry of these migrants into their respective social classes as determined by their occupational status can be considered as the beginning of their adjustment process in urban environment. Whether or not they succeed in adjusting themselves could only be seen after a long period of involvement in urban social system.

As had been discussed earlier, it is very clear that the main reason which makes these migrants to decide moving to an urban environment is their

high aspiration and motivation. That is to say that they want to experience a dramatic change in their life style. The first step taken by the writer to see how far they succeeded in changing their life style, several questions were asked. These questions which enquire into "their present way of life as compared to that of their parents and relatives in rural areas" were designed in such a way that they would enable us to grasp this problem in depth.

Having analysed all answers collected, it was found that 83 migrants expressed satisfaction with their current way of life, which, by their definition is far better off than that of their relatives and parents who still continue as peasants back in the villages. Another 31 reported that their present way of life in the urban areas is just as good as that of their parents and relatives. However, only three indicated that their urban way of life is so difficult and makes it harder for them to live there, and 12 did not respond to our enquiries.

Those who claimed that life in an urban environment is difficult and they do not even enjoy the same life-chances as their parents and relatives, were in fact from the labourers' group. These migrants have the lowest educational qualification and thus were not able to secure better paying jobs whereas their parents and relatives can, by rural standard, be considered as relatively better off. They own large tracts of agricultural land[23] and would therefore be grouped as the rich peasants. The uncooperative respondents, however, seemed to live comfortably in better residential areas with moderate-size house, modern furnitures and clothings. As such, there is a great possibility that their current life-styles are, in fact, much better than the normal life patterns in rural areas.

The life-styles in urban areas summarised above are achieved by migrants who had worked hard in trying to adjust themselves with the urban social processes in Bandar Maharani. This means that the rural-urban migrants have experienced various forms of change – some through evolution and others revolution throughout their efforts to become urbanised. Such processes may, in certain circumstances, involve personality disorganisation, either as individual or as a group. It is unavoidable because

[23]Their parents' monthly average income in rural areas varies from $350 to $800, whereas in Bandar Maharani this group work as labourers and secure incomes between $150 and $250 per month.

of the obvious rural-urban differentials in terms of their life-styles and and their social systems from which they originally come from.

One important example is on the selection of the in-group. Every individual always wants to communicate with others outside his own family circle. They will, for this purpose, consciously find ways and means to form the in-group. This shows that they have to learn, unlearn and relearn throughout the process. Normally there are, at least, two ways by which they could begin their work. Firstly, they may choose their area of residence considered to be suitable and secondly, they have to mix freely with colleagues in their working place.

Table 7

Choice of place of residence of the 131 heads of families on arrival in Bandar Maharani

	Place of Residence	Number	Percentage
I.	Where there are many people coming from the same village	21	16.0
II.	Where there are friends	108	82.4
III.	Complete Strangers	2	1.6
Total		131	100.0

Source: Notes from respondents.

The data collected in this survey (see table 7) reveal that the majority of the migrants were strongly motivated by the presence of individuals already known to them in the whole process of choosing their place of residence. In fact, the influence of those people is even greater if they were "*orang kampungnya*" (folk from the same village) who have

settled earlier in Bandar Maharani.[24] From thereon, they begin to widen their horizon to know more about the urban social system and at the same time get themselves involved in urban activities.

Although such principles of choosing their place of residence seemed to be very dominant, there were migrants who could not easily adapt themselves, especially at the initial stage. This problem is basically due to differences arising from two conflicting systems and processes, namely, the rural from which they came, and the urban to which they have to adapt themselves. Many have already complained about being lonely in their new environment – the urban crowd. Their social intercourse was limited to few individuals who were their friends. Such a situation made them think that the concept on "neighbourhood" in urban society should not be only confined to the place of residence but should also include working friends who may be living somewhere else.[25]

At the same time, these migrants also had to face problems related to the psycho-motor pattern's adjustment, such as bathing and sanitation. In rural areas, they enjoyed all the freedom to take their bath either in rivers or nearby wells. But the moment they came in Bandar Maharani their movement as far as these two activities are concerned, were restricted. The unfortunate ones who could only live in houses where there were no pipe water facilities, have no choice but to take their own water supply from nearby standpipes or wells. One common complaint coming from this group was that they did not get enough satisfaction in bathing because the supply of water available to them had to be reserved for more essential usage, such as drinking, cooking and washing.

[24]This fact is clearly manifested amongst those who could only secure job as labourers as they moved to Bandar Maharani. The rest of the migrants who became teachers, clerks etc. are white collars and they seemed to have their choice wide open and are less susceptible to such influence. They live in government quarters and as such will depend more on vacancies rather than on friends or relatives. However, since they, by nature of their job, have established a wide circle of friends in the city, they then do not find it difficult to secure residence next to that of their friends.

[25]G.C. Homans believed that "If the frequency of interaction between two or more persons increases, the degree of their liking for one another will increase and vice-versa". See his book *The Human Group*, Harcourt, Brace & Co., N.Y. 1950. pp. 112. See also W. Bell and M. Boat, "Urban Neighbourhood and Informal Social Relations," in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 62 (1956–57) pp. 391–98.

The nature of the rural environment, where the area is sparsely populated and its man-land ratio is relatively very low, allows people the liberty to empty their bowels in the bushes or behind a big tree. But the urban environment does not allow this. Houses are built in such a way that they have to fully utilise whatever piece of land is available. Houses are built in close proximity. Every unit therefore has to have a special place for depositing waste products. Lavatories are built where the water-closet is attached.

The urban setting, which is different from the rural setting, requires that every urban individual be properly entrenched in urbanism. This requires adjustments on the part of rural migrants. The learning process towards this end is time-consuming. However, it is not so difficult if one started from a younger age. The migrants, on the other hand, have already spent the important part of their socialisation in rural areas. Therefore on arrival at Bandar Maharani, they have to shoulder a dual task, that is, to learn the urban culture and at the same time to unlearn the rural habits. These tasks cannot be achieved in one or two years. It requires a longer span of time. As such, it seems impossible for the rural-urban migrants to adjust themselves, especially at the beginning of their urban involvement. However after some time, they have to accept urban norms and ways of life and ultimately recognise that the urban tradition has to be accepted.

X

BASED on this case study, it may be concluded that the urbanisation process has tremendous effects on the migrants. Migrants have to face various problems, especially those adjustment problems related to urbanism. However, there is a category of migrants whom Sorokin and Zimmermen[26] considered to be easily adaptable to new environment: they are the ones with high motivation and having a relatively high educational attainment. Majority of them are in the youth age-group.

From this point of view, it is clear that the 1439 who came from rural areas during 1945–1968 period, were undergoing the urbanisation process. They constituted a minority of Bandar Maharani's population of about 60,000. The urban folkways and mores in Bandar Maharani pose great

[26] *Op. Cit.*

constraints on these people upon their arrival in urban setting. Not only have they to face the uncertainities of socio-economic existence, but also to wrestle with psychological adjustments. This evidence is however not quite the same with what had happened in Cairo as reported by Janet Abu-Lughod.[27] Abu-Lughod found out that 1/3 of the population in Cairo were rural migrants and hence they could influence the urban life pattern by continuing to practise their traditional rural way of life. As such, Cairo eventually underwent the process of ruralisation, which is the reverse process of what had happened in Bandar Maharani.

The case study in Bandar Maharani indicates strongly that rural-urban migrants are prepared and willing to accomodate themselves to urban values and to behave in a way that is acceptable by the urban norms. This means that these migrants, despite the odds against them, are prepared to change their life-styles that are compatible to an open and complex urban system. Will and courage these people may have, but the ultimate measure of their place in urban society like Bandar Maharani, depends a lot on their emplacement in the employment hierarchy in their environment of existence.

[27] Janet Abu-Lughod, "Migrant Adjustment to City Life: The Egyptian Case," in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 67 (July 1961) pp. 22–32.

ABDUL MAULUD YUSOF

AN URBANIZING MALAY VILLAGE: SOME ASPECTS OF ITS SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

This paper is an amended version of a chapter of a successful Doctoral dessertation titled "Cultural Adaptations in an Urbanizing Malay Community", submitted to Rice University, Houston, May 1976. This dissertation is based on a research conducted in Kampong Sungei Penchala, located within the Federal territory (city) of Kuala Lumpur, in the period of 1973 and 1974. Supporting ethnographic materials for this dissertation were obtained from research done in other parts of the country in 1975, namely in Perlis, Langkawi, Kedah, Negri Sembilan, Malacca and Pahang.

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IN any community, rural or urban, social organization includes the primary institutional means of integrating the activities of individuals, validating claims of leadership, and organizing such basic needs as protection, food, shelter and the biological perpetuation of the community. The social organization of a village consists of that total set of structured arrangements comprising social actions, interactions, rights, obligations, economic activities, marriage and residence rules, and patterns of leadership.

In a rural community, social organization is firmly based on kinship and territory. Kin relationships determine many of a villager's rights, obligations and roles. Territory in the form of land may become common property if a group finds that economic resources are too scarce. Where land is abundant in relation to the size of the rural population, individual property ownership is a common feature. Rural or peasant communities often believe that economic resources are limited, and that no amount of hard work or resourcefulness on the part of the individual can produce more without depriving another.

I begin the discussion of the social organization of Kampong Sungei Penchala with a general comment of the village as a social unit, particular stress being placed on the ways in which residents interact with each other in an increasingly urbanized social space. In the next two sections of the paper I consider the topics of kinship and marriage, and land ownership and inheritance. I then review the nature and scope of the subethnic associations and conclude with a survey of social network.

THE VILLAGE AS A SOCIAL UNIT

A Malay village has a territorial basis, most of which consists of land for cultivation or for homesteads. The Malay concept of a village, however, is often derived from the existence of institutions such as the mosque, *surau*, or the primary school. A villager may claim that he belongs to a certain village where a mosque or a *surau* is located even though he resides in another locality. Approached geographically, however, the Malay village may be linear, nucleated or scattered.

A village is linear if homesteads are erected along river banks, a ridge or a road. There is frequently no clear boundary between one particular linear village and another. The nucleated Malay village is a cluster of homesteads surrounded by rice fields or rubber plots, or both, with another similar village located some distance away. There are also villages whose constituent households are scattered about the landscape with no fixed pattern. In this type of village, homesteads are founded on a ridge, on the banks of river mouths, or along the edges of rice fields. Kampong Sungei Penchala generally fits the first pattern, that of a nucleated village with well defined boundary. Several houses, however, especially in the interior, are scattered randomly among the orchards.

S. Husin Ali has suggested that "The Malay village appears to be a community or a coherent social unit within which all kinds of ties and interactions occur; and although its territorial basis may not be very clearly defined, nonetheless it is quite often definable" (1975:42). Kampong Sungei Penchala is a coherent social unit that is clearly defined by distinctive patterns of cooperation, leadership and entrepreneurship. Its territorial basis is well-defined. The village mosque, *surau*, primary school, and health clinic are institutions which bind the people as a coherent social unit. Even though the inhabitants belong to two major sub-ethnic communities, namely those of Javanese origin and Minangkabau origin, they call themselves *orang* Sungei Penchala (people of Sungei Penchala). Finally, there is intensive interaction among the rubber producers, urban wage earners and the village entrepreneurs.

Subethnic identity does not correlate with occupational status except as regards entrepreneurship. In this village all the grocery stores are owned and run by Sumatran Malays. This is due to incidental historical factors rather than to some sort of ethnic specialization. Sumatran Malays moved into the village much earlier than the Javanese Malays; by the time the Javanese arrived, the Sumatran Malays had already established their

business in the village. Since the village is relatively small and located quite close to the city, the Javanese did not initiate their own enterprises. They can easily purchase goods from the village shops and the stores in town. There is also no evidence of discrimination against the Javanese by the Sumatran businessmen in the village.

The village entrepreneurs do, however, discriminate against the non-urban working inhabitants. Rubber producers and unemployed persons do not obtain credit easily from the village store owners. In contrast, urban wage earners, irrespective of whether they are Javanese Malays or Minangkabau Malays, easily obtain credit from the storeowners. The urban workers are also politely treated by the village storeowner when they patronize their stores. Entrepreneurs claim that it is very difficult for them to extend credit to the rubber producers or the unemployed because they have no ready means of repaying their debts. On the other hand, the urban workers have to be treated politely because they constitute the major buying force in the village. The urban workers can also purchase goods from Petaling Jaya if the village storeowners do not give them good treatment. There are a few cases of urban workers who have changed their regular village suppliers. These individuals claim that their former supplier, by asking them to pay their debts, had insulted their integrity.

There is also no correlation between subethnicity and urban employment. Sumatran Malays and Javanese Malays have attained essentially the same level of education. Employers in both the government and private sectors do not discriminate between the two groups. Employers regard them only as Malays. Since both groups possess only a low level of education they are absorbed into the unskilled factory and low paying government jobs.

The urban workers obtain their jobs, not on the basis of education, but on the basis of prior knowledge about the availability of unfilled positions. There is a strong tendency to assist members of one's family in obtaining jobs before passing the same information on to relatives and neighbours. The headman of the village, who works as a security guard for a steel industry in Petaling Jaya, obtained a job for his son as an unskilled labourer in the same plant. A driver of a tobacco processing company likewise obtained a job as salesman for his younger brother in the same industry. These individuals claim that it is only fair for one to help one's kinsmen first before extending such assistance to others in the village. Employment for kinsmen means a lightened burden on the working heads

of household or other supporting adults. Urban workers also try to befriend the personnel officers of their establishments so they can more readily secure positions for their kinsmen and friends.

One of the major elements of the social organization of the village is cooperation among its inhabitants. They cooperate in projects and social activities in a manner usually considered to be typical of rural communities. They call these activities *gotong royong* (mutual self-help), *kerja sama* (working together) or *tolong menolong* (being helpful). The inhabitants claim that *gotong royong* is part of the Malay way of life and they consider it a religious duty for members of the community to help others in as many ways as possible. Since *gotong royong* benefits many people, such cooperation falls well within the Malay definition of virtuous acts. Some of the visible products of *gotong royong* activities are a water tank constructed several years ago, the construction and regular maintenance of the five foot paths which connect the main road with households in the interior, the clearing of the village cemetary, and the construction of small bridges and prayer houses.

In 1968 the village development committee managed to persuade the state government to provide them with materials to construct a water tank. Labour was provided by the villagers and the work was supervised by a technical officer of the Public Works Department. This water tank serves about a third of the population of the village. It was constructed more or less in the center of the village and close to the river bank. Water is pumped up into the tank, which rests on a twelve foot platform, so that there is sufficient pressure for the water to flow into the pipe stands situated along the main road. A few families which could afford to buy steel pipes installed them between their houses and the main water line. Most families, however, obtain their water from the communal pipe stand on the side of the road.

The villagers have also constructed roads on a *gotong royong* basis to connect the interior with the main road. Trucks and simple equipment such as shovels have been provided by the government and the villagers have provided the labor. Most of the road construction and repairs have been undertaken on Sundays when most adults are not working. Such roads are not paved.

During the course of the study, a new prayer house was constructed on a *gotong royong* basis. The state government provided a grant of M$10,000.00 to purchase such materials as cement, planks, and steel.

Labor was again provided free by the adults of the village, but some of the construction was contracted out to a Chinese builder because the inhabitants could not find the time to complete the job themselves. Nevertheless, nearly all of the male adults of the village participated in the construction of this particular prayer house.

Gotong royong activities are also organized during wedding feasts and *khenduri* (ritual feasts). Weddings are more elaborate and expensive than an ordinary feast like the *khenduri arwah* (feasting the soul of the dead). Preparation for a wedding requires more labor and time and includes the erection of guest tents, the furnishing of a bridal room, the preparation of cooking facilities, and the collecting of firewood and decorative trimmings. In all the wedding feasts which I attended, the adult inhabitants of the village participated as volunteers in such activities as waiting on guests, serving food, cooking and washing. Villagers assert that they participate in these *gotong royong* activities because it is their tradition (*adat*) to help each other, to contribute to activities for the common good and thereby to enhance village life (*hidup sekampung* . They believe that village life necessarily entails cooperation with each other on all appropriate occasions. To a large extent they have lived up to this ideal. The richest man of the village even received free labor during his daughter's wedding despite the fact that he was more than able to pay for the help required.

In spite of such cooperation among the inhabitants, there are cases of conflict between them. Some of the conflicts take the form of minor fights between youths. Older people show their disagreement with others by boycotting certain events or avoiding certain families. There are also conflicts of opinion between youths and elders. Villagers claim that these conflicts are quite normal in any community. There have been no conflicts between the two major subethnic groups, the Sumatran Malays and the Javanese Malays.

The minor fights between youngsters took place mostly before the stationing of the policeman in the village in 1968. In one case, a few youths were alleged to have stolen some chickens from a family. The youths were also alleged to have disturbed some young girls. The youths denied the allegation. Later a first fight broke out between the youths and the young sons of the affected families. The village headman managed to restore peace between the conflicting parties by having a small *khenduri* in his house. Although peace was reestablished, a few families and individuals considered themselves enemies of each other for some time thereafter.

replenish their inventories and that it is not their intention to belittle anybody in the village. Moreover, they feel strongly that the villagers who owe them money are obliged to repay them.

Most of the individuals who are indebted to the storeowners are rubber producers. The urban workers do owe them some money, but on the whole, they quickly pay off their debts. Most urban workers feel that they should repay debts as soon as possible. They say that they feel ashamed (*malu*) if they do not repay their debts since they earn money and also recognize that the village entrepreneurs are doing them a favour by providing them with goods on credit.

Leadership in the village does not greatly affect the lives of many villagers because the majority of the adults work in urban areas and are therefore accustomed to respecting those in positions of authority much more than their village headman or the elders. Both formal and informal leadership exists in the village. Formal leadership is represented by the village headman who is popularly elected by the residents and endorsed by the state government. Another type of formal leadership is to be found in the political parties. There are branch organizations of two major political parties in the village, namely UMNO[1] and PAS[2]. The majority of the adult inhabitants of the village are members of UMNO.

There has not been very much political activity in the village. The people attribute this to the fact that the majority of the residents are poor urban workers who are more concerned about their jobs and salaries than political activities. Another reason given is that both political parties are Malay political parties. Residents believe that if they involve themselves too much in party politics, they stand to lose because the state government may not provide them with development projects. The government will only provide these amenities if the villagers as a whole show some form of solidarity among themselves. The people of the village have been successful in showing the government their support in the form of *gotong*

[1] UMNO is a Malay political party and is presently the ruling party in the coalition running the Federal Government. It emphasizes economic development and the redistribution of wealth.

[2] PAS is the abbreviation for the Pan Malayan Islamic Party, a political party for Malays in which Islamic teachings form the basis of its political philosophy.

Elders claim that young people have generally lost respect for them and the customs of the village (adat kampung). The elders cite, in support of their contention, occasions when young people, both boys and girls, hold birthday parties in their homes and play loud Western music and local pop music. The youths react by saying that the elders are narrowminded and that, while they hold parties to have fun, they do not miss Friday prayers.

The village elders also claim that the girls, especially those who are working in the city, have become too modern by wearing mini-skirts and flirting with boys. The elders resent young people who spend their weekends or holidays in the movie or at the various recreational grounds in the city. They would prefer teenagers to do productive work in the village such as clearing house compounds or family orchards. The young people, however, reply that it is only fair for them to relax in thier own ways on the weekends after putting in six days of work in the factories. Nevertheless, if there are *gotong royong* activities in the village such as weddings or cemetary clean up, most of the young people participate actively even though all of these activities take place during the weekends. Some young men also participate in ritual feasts in the prayer houses during the fasting month to show the elders that they are not totally modern or discarding the old ways.

Some families do not visit each other. A few claim that some families have arrogant children. Others say they do not visit certain households or families becuase they once quarrelled and have not made up. Most of these family feuds are caused by petty quarrels among the young boys in which parents side with their children, thus bringing the other parents into the conflict. There have not, however, been any cases of physical violence between individuals or families, except for a few fist fights between young boys on the school playground.

A few inhabitants do not visit the homes of some of the storeowners because they claim that the village entrepreneurs are rich and arrogant people. They even try to avoid the local businessmen whenever there are such gatherings as feasts in the *surau* or weddings. Store-owners claim that individuals who do not speak to them owe them money for goods bought on credit and that the debtors only became unfriendly after the store-owners asked them to pay their debts. Debtors feel that storeowners belittle them when they ask for repayment of their money. Storeowners, however, assert that as businessmen they have to ask for repayment so that they can continue their business. They claim that they need the cash to

royong activities such as the construction of secondary roads and prayer houses. These activities save government money and serve the common good.

Popularity was a major criterion for the selection of the present headman. There was an election in late 1972 which was contested by five individuals, including the present headman and a businessman. The businessman is the son-in-law of the former headman. He lost to the winner only by a narrow margin. The occupation of the winner is merely that of a security guard in the steel industry in Petaling Jaya.

The people of Kampung Sungei Penchala found it difficult to explain why they chose the security guard rather than the businessman to be their leader. Apparently the loser is quite wealthy by village standards and his father-in-law was head of the village for more than thirty years. The businessman is also the *imam* of the village mosque and a member of all the important committees in the village. Both candidates are about the same age. The village *imam* has more education. He studied in both Malay and Arabic schools, whereas the security guard only went through the fourth grade of the Malay primary school. Both are long time residents in the village and both were born in the village of Damansara.

In daily conversation with both men, it was found that the present village headman in fact knows less of affairs outside the village and in the city. He expressed only vague ideas about urban jobs and related matters. The *imam*, in contrast, knows about urban jobs and related matters such as unemployment, inflation, and prices of goods because he is a businessman.

Status and ranking are important in rural Malay society. In the village high status is accorded to these individuals with an extensive religious background. The *imam* enjoys great respect from the people, even though he is not the village headman. During feasts and weedings he takes precedent over other individuals. During such ritual feasts as circumcisions (*bersunat*) he leads the group in the ceremonies and in offering prayers. The village headman just mingles with a few guests under the trees, and only joins the whole group when the feasting begins.

The village headman seems to play the role of showing young people how to conduct themselves during important ceremonies. For example, during the grand wedding of the daughter of the retired village headman, the present headman played the role of receptionist and coordinator of activities so that guests were properly seated and fed.

The *surau* religious leader known as the *bilal* is accorded high status when there are various celebrations in the *surau*, mosque or private homes. He usually sits in the *serambi*, the most prestigious corner of the house. This is normally in the front room of the house and to the far right as the guests enter the house through the main door. Village elders are also given high respects and they are also seated in the *serambi* area during a ritual feasts and other related events.

KINSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

KIN relationships consist of that network of social relations determined by either blood ties or marriage arrangements. Relationships between individuals instituted by marriage are known as affinal, whereas relationship determined by blood ties are known as consanguineal. Table below shows the various terms for consanguineal relatives in the villages; the terminology is Hawaiian.

The people of Kampung Sungei Penchala recognize three distinct ascending and descending generations and four different ascending and descending ranks. The fourth descending rank and the third descending generation term *cicit* (great grandson or great granddaughter) is not applicable to anyone among the 201 households. The fourth ascending rank and third ascending generation term *moyang* (great grandparent) is also not applicable to anyone. Another kin term which is absent among the 201 households is *angkat* (adopted). This normally refers to such adopted relatives as the *bapak angkat* (adopted father) and *emak angkat* (adopted mother).

Inhabitants often use the term *saudara* which ordinarily refers to collateral, as opposed to lineal, relatives. The *saudara* may be younger or older than ego. The use of the term *saudara* does not necessarily indicate specific kin. *Bapak saudara*, for example, may mean a mother's brother or a father's brother. Among the matrilineal Malays of Negri Sembilan, however, the term for mother's brother is *buapak* (Swift, 1965), while among the Minangkabau Malays, the term is *mamak*. *Ibu saudara* can mean either mother's sister or father's sister and is also used to refer to female cousin of a parent.

Table 1

Consanguineal Kin and Rank Terminology

Generation	Rank	Female Referant	Male Referant
3rd Ascending	4	moyang	moyang
2nd Ascending	3	nenek, nen nenek saudara	datuk, datuk saudara
1st Ascending	2	ibu, ibu saudara	ayah, ayah saudara
Same-older	1	kakak, kakak saudara	abang, abang saudara
	Ego (male or female)		
Same-younger	1	adek perempuan, adik saudara perempuan	adik lelaki, adik saudara lelaki
1st Descending	2	anak perempuan anak saudara perempuan	anak lelaki, anak saudara lelaki
2nd Descending	3	cucu perempuan, cucu saudara perempuan	cucu lelaki, cucu saudara lelaki
3rd Descending	4	cicit	cicit

Ego regards his mother's brother's son or daughter as his *saudara sepupu* (first cousin). If this individual is younger than ego, he or she is referred to as *adik saudara sepupu.* If he or she is older than ego, he is referred to as *abang saudara sepupu*, and she as *kakak saudara sepupu.* Second and third cousins are also referred to as *saudara sepupu*. If the relationships between cousins is affectionate, they regard each other as siblings; if not, they simply regard each other as *saudara* or relatives.

In Malay society common affinal terms are the *mertua* and the *ipar.* A third common term is the *bisan,* used reciprocally between the parents of a husband and wife. *Kakak ipar* means

the village for a long time. The community, therefore, has institutions which support the social networks of which each individual is a part.

Economically individuals are quite dependent on family and non-family relations within the village because the majority of them earn very low wages and the cost of living is very high. They are also socially dependent. An individual has numerous responsibilities to his kinsmen, friends and neighbours. There are many events and activities which he has to attend. There are times when he needs the assistance of his kinsmen, his parents, his friends and the members of the community as a whole.

Wolf has suggested that peasant or rural communities which are situated close to complex urban areas can be classified as "closed cooperate . . . where . . . the central power does not or cannot intervene in direct administration, but where certain collective tasks in taxation and corvee are imposed on the village as a whole, and where the local village retains or builds administrative devices of its own natural and social resources" (Wolf 1966:4). Politically the village is part of the state and residents have an obligation to pay land tax. If an owner does not pay his yearly land tax, his land is liable to be confiscated by the state. The peasants in the village also depend on the city markets and bureaucrats. The urban workers are dependent on the city for their wages. When an industry closes down some of them are severely affected.

Even though the village is situated on the outskirts of the city, the influence of the city is at times strongly felt by the people. For example, when the city proposed to develop the land into a new and modern housing area, the people could only express their disagreement, but they could not have stopped the proposed project if the city authorities had really wanted to go on with the idea.

Social networks and kin relations are among the few institutional devices which these fringe urbanites have that enable them to adjust to urban influences in the village. The major focus of kin relationships is that network of relationships between individuals and their immediate families. Spouses, parents, children, in-laws and siblings constitute the most important points in this network.

In Kampong Sungei Penchala, the individual regards his nearest kinsmen, particularly his siblings and parents as important sources of support in any crisis or during the course of daily life. The degree of support becomes less and less important as one moves towards the outer circle of one's network of kin relationships. These relationships are expressed in the

and the oldest uncle is referred to as *pak long*. Another common nickname is *ngah*, derived from the word *tengah* (middle); thus a third sibling in the family would often be referred to as *bang ngah* by his or her younger siblings.

In all known societies, kin relationships exist because people marry or enter into some form of socially approved relationship in order to perpetuate the species. The nuclear family as a basic social unit consisting of a married couple and their unmarried children is found in many societies around the world.[1] Linton (1936: 152) describes families as the "... internally organized cooperative units intermediate between the individual and the total society of which he is a part". In Malay society, the nuclear family is the most important kin group and is responsible for a number of social functions. It is the fundamental reproductive unit in the social system. It protects and socializes the young, so that they become accepted members of the community. The family is also a primary economic unit.

Children in Kampong Sungei Penchala are taught and guided by parents and older siblings in all the essentials of becoming a member of the community. The basic vocabulary for, and knowledge of appropriate usage of kin terms such as *ayah* (father), *emak* (mother), *abang* (brother), adek (younger sibling), and *kakak* (older sister), are taught to individuals from the time they are babies. Table 2 indicates the common affinal and rank terminologies that are found in Kampong Sungei Penchala.

Folk stories, such as *Batu Belah Batu Bertaup* (a cave which opens and closes) are often narrated to inculcate the proper feeling of respect for parents. Such stories also potray the love of parents for their children. *Batu Belah Batu Bertaup* is the story of a child who is extremely naughty and ungrateful. One day his mother is so hurt by his thoughtlessness that she runs away from home and enters a cave whose entrance disappears completely as soon as she has entered. This young boy has an older sister who loves her mother and younger brother dearly. When their father is killed by lightening, both the boy and the older sister are brought up by an old lady who works as a part time palace maid. In her dreams, the older sister meets the mother who tells her that if she or her brother ever need help desparately, they should visit her in the cave and she will help. The

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[1] The Nayar of India constitute the most obvious of a growing number of exceptions known to anthropologists.

boy grows up and marries a princess, but is taken seriously ill because of a charm placed on him by a rejected suiter of the princes. The boy and his sister accordingly visit their mother's grave in the cave. The spirit of the mother blesses her son and he is cured and lives happily ever after.

The concept of God, respect for parents, parents' responsibilities, and good neighborliness are slowly taught to the children as soon they can speak and communicate with older people. Sometimes a mother develops feelings of love in the child by giving him most of the things he wants. At times she enlists the assistance of her husband if the child is too demanding. In this community, children are more afraid of their fathers than their mothers. There are times when a father will hit a young son with his bare hands or with a stick if the boy disobeys him. A young girl, on the other hand, seldom gets beaten by the father. If she misbehaves, she is usually scolded by her mother or older siblings.

Teogetherness and basic manners are often inculcated during such family gatherings as lunch or dinner. On these occasions the father sets the example. He washes his fingers in a bowl of water and is the first to put some rice, fried fish or vegetables onto his plate. He is followed by his older children who in turn will be followed by the younger ones. It is considered bad manners if the children begin to eat before the parents do. In this village, the mother and daughters often eat separately in the kitchen. They seldom join the males, but walk back and forth between the kitchen and the major eating place to replenish the food. If there are guests eating with the family, it is considered unusual for the wife and daughters or toddlers of either sex to join the husband and his guests.

Good behaviour, eating technique, respect for older people, and responsibility are taught indirectly but consistently. The father does not joke with the mother in front of their children because it is considered improper to joke with members of the opposite sex. A mother acknowledges a neighbour politely in front of her young children hoping that her children will do the same when they are older. In this village a father is more strict than the mother, and often children take shelter with the mother when their fathers are upset or angry.

An older sibling is obliged to assist the parents. In Kampung Sungei Penchala, there seems to be a clear division of help by sex. An older daughter assists her mother in the kitchen. The male children assist their father in reparing the house or clearing the house compound. The older daughters, especially if they are not married or working, sometimes play

the role of mothers by looking after their younger siblings. If a family has no older female children, then the older sons assume the duties such daughters would have been responsible for. In such cases the older sons both assist their parents and sometimes look after younger siblings if the parents need to be away to attend a *khenduri* or some other affairs outside the home.

There is a tendency for a male child to be affectionate with his older brother and a female child to be affectionate with her older sister. This is because older males prefer to take a younger brother along for a walk to the coffee shop or the grocery store. A male child tends to be more affectionate with his mother than his father. He often tries to persuade his mother to get what he wants and in most cases he succeeds. A female child also tends to be more affectionate with her mother and often persuades her mother to act as intermediary if she wants something from her father.

The father in a family is usually regarded as the symbol of authority and leadership. All major decisions regarding family matters such as deciding whether a child should continue in school or not, are made by the father. The father, however, often consults his employed older sons on many matters such as the sale of land or purchase of household items.

The family provides all basic economic needs, including food, clothing and shelter, for its members. The 201 heads of household in the village constitute the sources through which the goods are obtained, except in the cases of the 14 household heads who are not employed. The families of the unemployed heads of households are subsidized by their working children. Wages, profits from business, and incomes from rubber tapping and the sale of fruit are used to purchase goods. The urban workers uses nearly all his salary to purchase rice, cooking oil, clothes, and other needs. The storeowners obtain their supplies, especially food, at a slightly cheaper price from their own stores. The rubber tapping families use money obtain from the sale of latex to sustain their families.

Unmarried working members of a family contribute to the family in many ways. Some of them buy text books for their younger siblings. Others give cash to their mothers to buy family and daily needs such as fish and vegetables. Sometimes they help their father to purchase materials to repair the house.

Working individuals seem to manage their own financial affairs. An unmarried working female often has put aside substantial savings from her salary. Her male counterpart, on the other hand, has practically no savings.

A man's savings are often expended to cover the cost of a wedding or other major family events. However, an unmarried male, whose father was unemployed, constructed a new house for his parents.

Marriage creates affinal relations, not only between two individuals, but also between their families. The couple in turn produces children and this process creates consanguineal relations between the children and their parents. When a man marries, he creates a network of such kin relations. This network of relations introduces new obligations, rights and expectations. At the same time, these relations widen the circle of possible kin ties to whom he can expect to give, and from whom he can expect to receive, assistance when the need arises. These relations also broaden his possibilities for new personal contact.

For example, the marriage of a bus conductor in Kampong Sungei Penchala to a very distant cousin in Singapore has established new social ties between the groom's family and his wife's kinsmen. Previously distant relationships have been changed and made closer. He is obliged to visit his parents-in-law(*mertua*) in Singapore. From the Islamic point of view it has become his duty to care for his wife and he is now responsible for her behavior. He expects affection and care from his wife and at the same time he expects to be treated as a son-in-law (*menantu*) should by his parents-in-law. He also expects respect from his wife's younger siblings (*adik ipar*). Finally, honor and shame in his wife's family equally affects himself.

The obligations, rights and expectations which have resulted from this marriage are reciprocated. The parents-in-law in Singapore and other affinal relatives are obliged to visit the new relatives in Kampong Sungei Penchala. In this particular case family ties have been strengthened since the couple are distant cousins. The bridegroom and his wife now live in Kampong Sungei Penchala with his parents.

The presence of the bride in this household has also introduced a new pattern of relationships between her and the rest of the household. The siblings of the groom have a new 'sister'. The parents of the groom have a new 'daughter'. The bride addresses her father-in-law as *bapak* or *pak* and sometimes *ayah* (father). She addresses her mother-in-law as *emak*, or just *mak* (mother). The younger siblings of the groom she addresses as *adek* and the older siblings as *abang* or *kakak*.

In another situation, a young man has married a girl from Kuantan in Pahang and settled there. In this case the man's parents in Sungei Penchala feel that they have lost a son. Before marriage their young working son

used to send money home every month and visited the family regularly. Since the marriage there has been less money and fewer visits. The young man has new obligations and responsibilities and his parents understand the situation.

Parents have very little influence in the choice of spouses for their children, except for their non-working daughters. Would-be husbands usually obtain the services of their parents or other close relatives to formally ask the girl's hand in marriage. The chosen relatives of the man ask the girl's parents in person or through a third party, but never approach the girl directly. After an agreement is reached, the girl's father just informs her of the decision and, to date, there have been no cases of a daughter objecting publicly to such an arrangement.

Among young working people, the initiative to get married is theirs. Often, they meet in places of work or elsewhere in the city. Young men seem to have more freedom to choose their brides. The working women usually consult their parents and older male siblings after they found a likely candidate for a husband, because they want the blessings of the parents or older male siblings Without such blessings they might not be able to get married at all. Islamic law requires that the father or an older male sibling give the girl away in marriage. If these two persons are not available, however, the Religious Department official known as the *khadi* is authorized to give the girl away in marriage.

Parents say that if a son can find a spouse of his own, they have no objection provided that the girl is of good character and the girl's parents or relatives have no objections. If a daugher wants to marry, on the other hand, they want to make sure not only that their future son-in-law is a good person, but also that he has a steady income. They are not prepared to marry a daughter off to an unemployed man since this would likely only add another burden to the family. If a son-in-law is working, he can take care of himself and his wife, and later children, and in this way, the burden on the girl's parents is reduced.

Inhabitants in the village assert that, in respect of marriage, it is sometimes easier to have sons than daughters. If a son marries and later divorces, the parents do not have to worry about having a divorcee in the household. Young Malay divorcees bring a certain measure of dishonour on their natal families. Relatives and neighbours often gossip about young divorcees to the effect that they have bad manners, are of poor character and were disloyal to their husbands. Gossips seldom talk adversely about divorced male.

There seems to be no strict residence rule after marriage. Any particular decision apparently depends on the relationships between the parents and their children. If there is a mutual understanding between the bridegroom and his parents, and if he wishes to, he may bring his new bride to live with his parents. If he wishes, instead to live with his bride's family after marriage, he is allowed to do so. Any given arrangement depends essentially on mutual understanding between the parties concerned and the availability of housing accommodation.

Older parents prefer their children to live with them after marriage. A neolocal residence pattern is not common among the newly wed individuals of the village. As the majority of the young workers who are getting married earn low incomes, starting a family with either set of parents is considered desirable due to the savings on rent and other related needs. Moreover, young couples realize that they cannot afford to buy or rent houses outside Kampong Sungei Penchala. Young unmarried males say that they would prefer to live with their parents when they get married. Unmarried females have the same preference, because they believe that their property is still sufficiently abundant to accomodate them in the future.

Peninsular Malays generally have a bilateral kinship system with a slight patrilineal emphasis attributable to Islamic influences. They are also known to be followers of the *adat temenggung*, with the exception of Negri Sembilan Malays who follow the *adat perpatih*, The *adat temenggung* are the customs and rules of marriage and property inheritance which give males a larger share of the family property, and which specify residence to be patrilocal. These customs conform quite closely to the Islamic teaching. The *adat perpatih*, which is still practiced in Negri Sembilan (Swift 1965), are the customs and rules of marriage and property inheritance which give females total ownership customary land, and which specify residence as matrilocal and descent as matrilineal. Such customs do not, of course, conform with the teaching of Islam.

In Kampong Sungei Penchala, the people claim that they follow Selangor custom (*adat Selangor*) and the Islamic teachings regarding marriage and the conduct of kin. They neither follow *adat perpatih* nor do they use the term *adat temenggung*. They believe that *adat Selangor* is in conformity with the teaching of Islam and that it is the best set of customs for them. An inspection of title deeds reveals that nearly all of the land in the village are legally owned by males. Female siblings are only mentioned in the title deeds as part, and never as sole, owners.

There is no general preference for either male or female children. They are considered equally desirable. There is a tendency, however, for families with more female children to encourage their married male children to live elsewhere. On the other hand, if a family has more males. there is no corresponding evidence that the females are encourage to live elsewhere after marriage. One reason for this asymetry, according to the villagers, is that it is easier for males to adapt themselves to new situations. By moving out after marriage there is also more probability of the males acquiring property. Females are not encouraged to live elsewhere because their parents believe that the young couple may contribute financially to the family, especially if their sons-in-law have good jobs. Parents also worry that their daughters may be mistreated in the homes of their *besan* (parents of their sons-in-law). They are also afraid that their future grandchildren will not be properly brought up. Finally, they are convinced that their daughters are closer to the family than the boys in their younger days.

In almost all cases, the head of the family is the father who is regarded as the leader and provider of the household. In one or two instances, the mother plays the leading role, and sometimes when the father is very old or invalid, the eldest married son with children is regarded as the head of the household. If the father is an invalid, and if there is a married daughter with her husband and children living at home, the son-in-law prefers "to discuss things on behalf of his father-in-law", but he seldom behaves as if he is the head of the household.

About 70 per cent of the wives, both young and old, do not work. They stay at home instead and look after the children. A few assist their husbands in their businesses. Children tend to have especially close relationships with such mothers. In such cases, babies and young children are constantly with their mothers, either at home or when they visit neighbours and relatives. During feasts or weddings, for example, these children tag along after their mother wherever she goes. Men regard the care of children as one of the major duties of women. The women bathe their children, feed them, clothe them and pay special attention to them when they are ill. The young housewives who work in the city leave their children at home either with parents or parents-in-law. There are very few instances of working couples leaving children with unrelated people or 'baby sitters'.

Since Kampong Sungei Penchala is a village, an initial assumption at the start of my research was that the majority of the households would have an extended family system. It was also assumed that, since this village is close to urban areas and is experiencing urban influence, the nuclear family would be emerging as the predominant type of household. To my surprise I found that the overwhelming majority of households are what I call "elaborate extended family". By this term is meant a married couple with their married children, their grandchildren, and other relatives, close or distant, all living in the same household. Table 3 shows the four major household types and a residual category of "unusual" family composition.

Table 3

Types of Households

Household Types	Number	%
Elaborate-extended	133	66.1
Nuclear	44	22.0
Couples/households with no children	15	7.5
Extended	7	3.5
Unusual	2	0.9
Total	201	100.0

The elaborate extended family in which there are parents, grandchildren, other relatives,and in some cases close friends of children, exists perhaps because the majority of the people are poor and cannot afford to construct individual houses, even though land for house sites is not particularly scarce. In Kampong Baru, Provencher (1971) found that the majority of owner residents consists of two generation households, whereas in Kampong Sungei Penchala the majority of the households are composed of three generations. The occupants of these households construct rooms adjoining the basic house to provide shelter for distant relatives, brothers-in-law, and friends of working sons.

There are 44 families which can be considered nuclear. In this type of family there are only parents and their unmarried children. One of the major characteristics of the nuclear families in this village is that most of them are young couples. However, they say that they would prefer their children to live with them when the time comes for their children to be married. They contend that, if their married children live with them, they will be secure and will be able to save on the cost of housing and food. Among the nuclear families, there are a few which have children of marriageable age. They are not married because they have not yet found the right spouses. A few of them are working in the city and are likely to be married in the near future.

There are seven families which have their married children, either daughters or sons, living with them. In these cases there is apparently no specific preference to having either daughters-in-law or sons-in-law in their households. If all parties are happy withthe arrangement, either solution is easily arranged. Young couples indicate that they prefer to live in Kampong Sungei Penchala for several reasons. One is that their place of work is often close by. A second is that they can save on rent if they live here. A third is that they have close relatives and friends here with whom they grew up.

In this village there are fifteen households which have no children. They consist mostly of newly married couples. Some of them are renters who work in neighbouring Petaling Jaya. Some have constructed their own houses on land which has been alloted to them by their parents. Since their parents are still alive, they have not yet been legally deeded the piece of land on which they live. Since there are mutual understandings between children and parents regarding the future allocation of family land the children sometimes build a small two bedroom wooden house to one side of their parents' house.

A striking feature in the village is the existence of two households which I have classified as "unusual". The villagers themselves term these as *luar biasa* (abnormal or unusual). They consist of two unmarried couples renting two adjoining units in the village. They are all of marriageable age and are somewhere between 19 and 27 years old. The girls are younger than the men. They are not related and come from different parts of the country. They have been renting the two units for more than a year at the rate of M$30.00 a month.

Unmarried individuals living under the same roof are considered very unreligious by Muslims. They are regarded as having committed *khalwat* (living in close proximity), and this offence is punishable with a prison term or a fine by the Religious Department. The people of Kampong Sungei Penchala, however, do not seem to bother them, nor have they reported the matter to the Religious Department.

Many residents of the village regard them as acting in a way unbecoming to Malays and Muslims. These "unusual" individuals do not mix with the rest of the villagers. In the morning they lock their houses and proceed to work, and in the evening they will return and keep to themselves. The youths in the village also do not bother them, claiming that they are not "children of the village". Nor do the owners of the rental units bother the couples, as long as they pay their rent promptly.

The main reason that the villagers do not bother the two couples or report them to the Religious Department seems to rest on economic grounds. The villagers are slowly trying to entice outsiders to rent in Kampong Sungei Penchala and thus bring more income into the village. In addition, residents perhaps fear that if the "unusual" individuals were to be evicted, they would spread rumours that the inhabitants of Kampong Sungei Penchala are violent people and unfriendly and this might affect employment opportunities in the factories of Petaling Jaya.

LAND OWNERSHIP AND INHERITANCE

ALL of the lands alienated to the villagers are Malay Reserve lands and restricted to agriculture and homesteads (*pertanian dan kampong*). Most of the land was originally divided into four acre lots. At the beginning of the alienation of land in the early 1900's, ownership was limited to males. Ownership has subsequently been transmitted through both males and females, although the principal inheritors in all cases have always been males. Females are entitled to about one-fifth of the total share. A few more plots, however, have been transmitted to females in cases where a family has had no male descendants. Such plots are then handed down to male children in the following generation.

There is no rice land in the village. A large portion of the land is planted in rubber and fruit trees and only about one-fifth of the land has been cleared for housing purposes. Residents have built their homes in the

center of their plots or adjoining a main road or path. A few lots are owned by outsiders who are urban Malays. They visit their property on weekends or occasionally hire workers from the village to look after their land.

One interesting feature of the ownership is that the majority of the owners are not interested in transferring their land to their rightful heirs during the ir lifetime. As a result, many owners have died and left their rightful heirs to face the difficult task of proving their claims in the Land Office in Kuala Lumpur. In some cases, beneficiaries are living in other parts of the country and some of them have died, thereby protracting an otherwise uncomplicated settlement. Furthermore, the claims made by the various children of the deceased also make the process of transmission more difficult. In all cases, however, the heirs have had their names printed on the back of the title deeds by the previous owner to indicate that they have a rightful share in the property.

Owners claims that, as Muslims, they should not cheat on property distribution and inheritance. They believe that if a person has no right to the land, he may succeed in getting a share but will not live long enough to enjoy it. Another interesting feature is that, except for those widows who look after their own land, very few women really know the particulars about their holdings. Even if they do, they often consult their male relatives when any action has to be undertaken. If they have adult sons such individuals normally look after the interests in such matters as the land tax, which is M$12.00 per year for a four acre lot.

During the official hearing on a particular case, the *penghulu* (the government official who oversees several villages in a district) and the village headman testify before the *pegawai daerah* (the district officer) that the rightful claimants are all present and that the plot of land in question is the correct one. If a claimant is absent, the transmission process is normally postponed to another date, unless the district officer is satisfied with a written explanation from the parties concerned.

Very few heirs want postponement of such cases because many of them work and they have to take time off from their employment. For those who earn wages daily the owner sometimes has to reimburse them for the loss of earnings to attend the hearing. Some heirs may have to travel for miles if they work and live outside the village. This too costs the owner money. Some landowners claim that they have had to bribe a few low grade officials in the Kuala Lumpur land office to have their files opened for a hearing.

Before the owners and their children proceed to the land office for transmission cases, they normally have a gathering at home to discuss the issues so that they will not quarrel in the land office. Such quarrelling can influence the officer in his judgement and may lead to postponement. After all matters have been agreed upon at home, the owner seeks the assistance of the village headman and the *penghulu.* Without their co-operation the land distribution case cannot be settled since they must be present during the hearing.

Although the transmission of land taken place many times in the village, there has been no subdivision of such land. A four acre plot remains a four acre plot. One of the reasons is that it is very costly to have the plots subdivided. Ownwers have to pay a fee to a professional survey firm to conduct a proper survey and precisely demarcate the new boundaries. In addition, the government levies several fees for new titles and deeds.

Recently, some discontent has surfaced over the current procedures of inheritance. This is because some young inheritors would like to sell their property, while others like to keep theirs. The price of land is high and this tempts the new "owners" to sell their property. A plot of land that is jointly owned can only be sold if all the owners agree to do so. The plots of about 30 acres which have been recently sold to outsiders were owned individually or by joint owners who managed to come to an agreement.

Owners who have sold land to outsiders are not keen to talk about the exact price of the sale. The village headman relatives of the previous owners, however, estimate that the price of such land has been just slightly lower than the price of land in Petaling Jaya or other fringe areas of Kuala Lumpur. For example, the owner who sold his property to a syndicate of teachers secured a sale price of M$14,000.00 per acre. The money was divided into equal shares among the legal heirs with the shares for minors being taken care of by their parents. Female heirs received equal shares of the cash from this particular sale even though according to Islamic tradition a female may receive only one-fifth of any property. The property boom in the city and the surrounding areas a few years ago created some excitement among the few young owners. A few of them felt that they could cash in on a good deal if they could sell a piece of land, but were prevented from doing so by their parents.

The head of household or the eldest male normally leads the rest of the household members in discussions about land and its disposal. Females

usually just listen and occasionally remark about a sibling who is in Sumatra or in the army who must be contacted. The adult males voice their opinions, often by narrating stories of the profits that their friends have received somewhere else. They also caution the group about the possibilities of being cheated by urban brokers or buyers unless everybody is careful. The village headman or village committee members are not invited to such discussions.

Land ownership, distribution and sale are directly related to the social organization of the village. Land is owned by individual families. On the average, each family owns about three acres. There are no families which presently own more than eight acres. In each family the males are alloted primary authority over land matters. Even though Islamic tradition dictates that females may receive only one-fifth of the family estate, the males in the village have on the whole been more generous. They usually share the money equally if a piece of land is sold. This has brought about a situation where males are highly regarded by their female siblings. There is also a tendency for working males to allocate equal shares from other proceeds derived from the land, as from the sales of *durian* or rubber, to their non-working female siblings.

The pattern of land ownership in the village seems to be directly related to the degree of solidarity among family members. Villagers explain that they try to be just (*adil*) to both their sons and daughters hoping that after they die their children will continue to live harmoniously. Nevertheless, the Islamic tradition of land inheritance is usually applied if children claim their share after their father dies.

There are, however, instances of minor conflict among siblings whose father owns *durian* orchards. During the *durian* season unemployed adult males get a larger share of the fruit. They guard the plots every night, collect and sell the ripe fruit in the morning and take for themselves more than half of the money from the sale. Parents of such individuals assert that it is only fair that their non-working sons get a bigger share of this seasonal family income, because they have no other source of income. Moreover, the sum they obtain from the sale of the *durian* seldom amounts to a half of the yearly income of their working siblings. The employed adults complain that they are entitled to an equal share from these family assets and further argue that their income from wages is the product of their labor.

There are also cases of minor feuds between working and non-working siblings in a few families. This is the result of the desire of some of the unemployed youths to seel their share of land to obtain money. Their parents, as well as their employed and married siblings, invariably oppose the idea. Both parents and female siblings claim that the land is their only asset. They are convinced that, with the money, they will not be able to purchase other lands around the area, and they are not prepared to move out of the village. Informants point out certain brothers who are not on talking terms with each other because of such conflicts of interest over family land.

While it might seem impressionistically that the village leadership has no effective influence over the daily lives of the villagers, the headman does have potentially significant power when it comes to land distribution and inheritance since he has to be present in the land office to testify during transmission proceedings. Most of the families in the village, however, claim that the village headman has no real powers. He has to be present during hearing on land transmission, they say, only because it is his duty to do so. Moreover, he is an elected official and if he does not do his duty and assist people, the villagers can vote him out. The village headman himself, claims that he is not influential or powerful. In fact, all of the several cases of family feuds over land ownership have been settled amiably without the intervention of the village headman or any other villagers.

Status is not related to landownership because no individuals or families own much more than others. On the average, each individual family owns about three acres, with no more than four families owning more than six acres. Except for a few renter families, the rest of the villagers own the houses and lands they occupy. The local rich man are the entrepreneurs and few junior government officials, but their wealth is not so enormous as to put them in the middle class strata.

SUB-ETHNIC ASSOCIATIONS

ALL the residents of kampong Sungei Penchala are both Malays and Muslims, but they are divided between two major subethnic identities, namely the Sumatrans and the Javanese. There are also in the village a small number of Boyanese, who came from one of the islands of Java. In official matters and everyday life the residents consider themselves as Malays; nevertheless, over the years they have formed very informal sub-ethnic associations.

Malays of Sumatran origin have formed among themselves a very loose organization known as *Persatuan Anak-anak Kuantan* (Association of the children of Kuantan). Kuantan is a Minangkabau area in Sumatra, where the majority of the residents of this village originated. The association does not have any formal constitution or headquarters, nor do its members pay any fees. All who regard themselves as Sumatrans are considered members.

The main objective of the association is to assist members or any other residents who are in difficulty. Members participate in village feasts by contributing labor, cash or goods for the feasts of any member. Cash donations are collected when the need arises. Two reasons are commonly given for the formation of this loose orgnization: to continue the tradition of mutual help among residents and to maintain one's identity as either Minangkabau or Javanese. Residents claim that maintaining one's ethnic or sub-ethnic identity is not divisive, but rather it unites people for common purposes.

A major identifying element of these associations is their *surau* (prayer houses). These prayer houses were jointly built by members of the sub-ethnic community with the assistance of other residents who live close by the *surau* site. To build these prayer houses they reveived government assistance in the form of construction materials such as planks and cement. The government did not, however, provide ready made *surau*. Rather, it was, and is, the aim of the government to unite villagers through some form of mutual help project or common *gotong royong* work. *Gotong royong* and the development of village associations have been encouraged by the government as part of its massive rural development programs since independence.[1]

Even though the *surau* was built on government reserve land with government assistance for a certain sub-ethnic group, it is not monopolized by that particular group. It is open to every resident to conduct prayers and other religious activities in, such as Kuran reading classes for children. During the fasting month, *Ramadan*, residents hold daily feasts to mark the end of a day's fast or to celebrate the end of the fasting month itself. During these celebrations, members and other participants donate in cash or kind. Only a few individuals donate cash. Most donate cakes, milk,

[1] G. Ness in *Rural Development and Bureaucracy in Malaysia*, 1967, University of California Press, provides a detailed analysis of these rural development programs.

sugar, tea or coffee, Some bring fruits, and raw food to be cooked in the *surau* kitchen. The women assume the leading roles in the kitchen while the young men participate in collecting firewood in the nearby brush. The youths also prepare the prayer mats and other needs for the occasion.

The minangkabau sub-ethnic association has collected money to buy cooking utensils and other cookery items for use by its members during weddings or other social gatherings. These items are kept in its *surau* storeroom. They are loaned to members or any other villager without a fee, although if any of these items are missing or broken during the loan period, the member concerned is required to replace them. Since the items are many and heavy, including large cooking pots, heavy frying pans, and about a hundred plates, cups and spoons, the use normally holds a second small *khenduri* (feast) for the women and young men who help him wash the items and return them to the *surau* storeroom.

The Javanese sub-ethnic association has more or less the same pattern of organization as the Minangkabau association. All residents of Javanese descent are automatically members and they are eligible for assistance when they are in need. Mostly they require help when there is a crisis in the family such as death, and in more happy times, when they hold weddings for a daughter or son. They also receive assistance for smaller feasts such as those held for circumcisions.

This association also has its own *surau*, and it is likewise not exclusively Javanese. Since it is situated in an area dominated by Javanese households, most of the members who frequent the *surau* do come from this group. When a Javanese holds a *khenduri* at his home or in the *surau*, mostly members of his sub-ethnic group attend and assist. Nevertheless, non-Javanese residents, especially neighbours and friends, also participate as guests. As a demonstration of solidarity with the family a few guests help in the kitchen/or in the quest area. They eat later with other members of the household.

Each *surau* committee is in regular communication with its counterpart to make sure that there are no two events scheduled for the same time. This is to enable people of different sub-ethnic group to attend most, if not all, of the feasts in the *surau*. Because of this, then, it is possible to say that the *surau* does not constitute a divisive type of organization, but a unifying one.

During feasts such as *khenduri tahlil* (ritual feast for the dead) the same pattern of coperation is followed. Normally, the village *imam* offers the

prayers or leads the congregation in offering the prayers. Prayers typically consists of verses from the *Kuran* and are recited for about fifteen minutes before the food is served to the guests.

Although the *imam* is of Minangkabau descent, he does not discriminate against the Javanese. He attempts to attend all the events to which he is divided. Moreover, he has some free time since he does not hold an urbanjob but runs a grocery store in the village. Whenever he attends to religious affairs his son and wife take care of the store. After each feast ceremony is over the head of the household formally thanks the *imam* for attending and conducting the affair. Other participants are equally appreciated and each shakes hands with the members of the household before leaving.

There are no regular meetings, formal books or accounts for either association. The *bilal* (prayer leader) of the *surau* is often the *ketua* (head) or the *bendahari* (financial officer) of these associations. All property of each association is kept in its *surau* storeroom. Each time items are taken out by members for use, the *bilal* is informed. In several cases, many items were lost or broken and replaced even though promises to replace them were made. Lost and broken items are replaced by members who work to donate to the common good (*sedekah*).

During the major activities such as weddings, ritual feasts such as the *tahlil*, or the official opening of the new *surau*, the young people of both sub-ethnic association pool their resources to provide labor. The girls work in the kitchen. The boys take care of the preparations in the guest areas and other minor details such as the decoration of the building. They also constitute the waiters, receiving guests, finding them suitable seating, and later waiting on them. The older women busy themselves with the preparation of food. A few male elders supervise the youths in caring for guests in the front portion of the building.

The existence of the two major sub-ethnic associations is difficult to deduce from observation of daily life in the village. In no sense do they constitute any kind of dual organization. The yough soccer team and the youth *sepak raga* team both include members of both associations. Residents do not necessarily patronize stores owned by persons of the same sub-ethnic identity. Storeowners similarly seek clients, not on the basis of sub-ethnic origin, but on the basis of ability to pay. People who own rubber plots rent out their land to anyone who meets their terms.

When a family in the village suffers a death, those who come to the funeral do not ask the sub-ethnic identity of the individual who died. The just want to know who died, when and why. All the preparations for the funeral are carried out by those who can attend. Residents who work in town usually rush home on hearing the news of a death to provide assistance since it is an obligation for the Muslims to attend a funeral if they can.

During the wedding of the daugher of the retired village headman. both groups pooled their resources to make it the biggest wedding feast ever held in the village. Nearly all the villagers attended and several guests came from outside the village. Guests began arriving just before noon and continued to do so even after three in the afternoon. The elders of both sub-ethnic associations directed all the preparations. Although the retired village headman is a Minangkabau, all the non-Minangkabau residents responded to his invitation. The young men busied themselves with receiving the guests and collecting the presents. The girls put on their best dresses. The house was lavishly decorated. The village pop music gropu was in attendance and there was continuous music from the nearly morning hours to late afternoon to entertain the guests.

Even though the retired village headman is regarded as the richest man in the village, most of the residents provided him with free labour during this wedding as he had held office for more than thirty years. The division of labour on this occasion was based strictly on age and not on sub-ethnic identity. The young people did most of the hard work while the older ones carried on with the lighter tasks. Those familiar with wedding protocal took care of such formal matters as the *akad nikah* (solominization of vows) and the *bersanding* (presentation of the couple to the guests) ceremonies. The older women simply talked while chewing betel nut and admired the bride and later both the bride and groom.

During the fasting month the sub-ethnic associations carry out certain religious activities such as *Kuran* reading in their respective *surau*. Religious discussions are conducted with the participation of guest speakers from outside the village. For these occasions members donate food, including cooked rice, cakes and iced drinks. The village mosque also holds such gatherings during the fasting month. If the mosque decides to hold such a gathering, however, *surau* members will take care to schedule theirs at non-conflicting times since attendance at the mosque is considered more important.

In 1973, a few individuals put up the idea of a common *surau* for everyone in the village. The main objective was to eliminate the separation because of sub-ethnic origins. Another objective was to attract more young people to religious classes and prevent them from creating mischief in the village as well as outside the village. It was a successful venture because the state government provided a M$10,000.00 grant to build the prayer house.

The idea of a common prayer house was conceived by a few youths who work in the city. They believe that the prayer house would provide opportunities for the residents to meet daily for evening prayers and that in this way the spirit of being Muslims and *Melayu* (Malays) could be further instilled outside the context of the two major sub-ethnic groups. Mosque attendance is a weekly affair whereby most residents attend Friday prayers. The common prayer house, on the other hand, can only accomodate about 120 persons, but this number is considered sufficient to conduct serious and effective discussions on religion. However, residents continue to participate in both their sub-ethnic prayer houses and the common prayer house. Moreover, the original objective of attracting more youths has not been a complete success. At any particular gathering there are seldom more than ten youths among the usual fifty or sixty participants.

Finally, the sub-ethnic associations have not necessarily provided opportunities for unity even within their own organizations. On the contrary, competitive elements have appeared within each sub-ethnic group, especially in the realm of consumer activities. If a family can buy a generator, to be followed by the purchase of a television set, other families begin to accumulate savings to do the same. If one household begins to expand their house or repair their kitchen, others try hard to do the same. While petty jealousies in such matters seem to be minimal since there are no extreme differences of economic and social status within either association, it is clear that residents of the village have begun to practise a pattern of consumption often considered typical of urban dwellers.

SOCIAL NETWORKS AND PATRON-CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

THE people of Kampong Sungei Penchala are not just individuals and they have friends and neighbours. Each breadwinner is important to others who depend on him. Whatever he does affects many people around him. He maintains relationships of friendship, consanguinity, and affinity with many persons in the village. The majority of the population have lived in

Table 2

Affinal Kin and Rank Terminology

Generation	Rank	Female Referant	Male Referant
2nd ascending	3	nenek mertua	datuk mertua
1st ascending	2	ibu mertua	ayah mertua
Same-older	1	kakak ipar	abang ipar
		Ego (male or female)	
Same-younger	1	adik ipar perempuan	adik ipar lelaki
1st descending	2	anak adik ipar perempuan menantu	anak adik ipar lelaki menantu

spouse's sister and *abang ipar* means spouse's older brother. *Ibu Mertua* is the affinal term for ego's mother-in-law, and *ayah mertua* is ego's father-in-law. In Kampong Sungei Penchala, the mothers-in-law, the fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law are the affinal relations which are of greatest importance to a married person. This is because nearly all of these affinal relatives live in one household.

In this village inhabitants use rather formal kin terms both on special social occasions and during routine interactions. A man or a woman often addresses a slightly older male aquaintance as *abang* or by the abbreviated form of *bang*. If the aquaintance is a female and slightly older, she is addressed as *kakak* or *kak*. If ego is about twenty years old or slightly younger and the addressee is forty or more, he or she is addressed as *pak* or *mak* so-and-so. If ego is addressing individuals one or two generations below him, however, he does not use any prefix before the name of the individual. He simply addresses younger individuals by name. The use of nicknames, based on rank and generation, to address individuals is common in Malay society and is also found in Kampong Sungei Penchala. The most common term is *long*, which is derived from *sulong* (oldest sibling or individual). The oldest sibling is often referred to as *bang long*

form of personal interaction, such as discussions at evening meals when an individual informs his father that he has just lost a job or has just bought a motor bike.

Strong kinship ties are also expressed in the form of strict obligations to the family. A man brings home his pay and manages the monthly budget. If he needs immediate cash he seeks it from a working sibling or a father who owns a productive rubber plot. The last resort consists of working friends.

The large number of families classified as elaborate extended indicates that the people of this village regard kin ties as important. While they could build a new house separately on their own specious residential plots, they prefer instead, to build on new rooms to accomodate new members. It costs much less to share the same kitchen and other facilities and this arrangement enhances kin ties. Unity among members of the same family and among related kinsmen is highly regarded. People assert that the larger families face heavy economic burden when most of their members are young. However, they believe that the larger the family the more security there is for members when the children mature and obtain jobs.

The heads of household who are classified as unemployed are maintained by their married sons or daughters. The young working males and females regard it as their duty to look after their aged parents or unemployed siblings. Some school-going children look to their working older brother or sister as their main source of cash with which to purchase school supplies. People feel that if they were united as a family they will be more respected by unrelated neighbours. This good rating by neighbours often brings about such social gains as immediate assistance when there is a crisis or a need for free labour during a feast.

The villagers have also created strong friendship ties with non-kinsmen in the village. There are four principals types of friendship among the villagers. The first is the friendship relationship between elders of the village; the second is that between young people; the third that between urban working individuals; and the fourth is the friendship tie between women of the village.

Friendship is established and maintained when two or more individuals find these relationships to be mutually rewarding. They may share some common personal characteristics such as age and past experiences. The elders, for example, prefer to maintain friendship ties between themselves because they grew up more or less during the same period. Tales of

activities during the way are still discussed in the mosque compound or over tea in the coffee shops. During social gatherings such as feasts, people of the same age tend to gather in their own corner and share special jokes. These types of interactions and relationships bringxpersonal satisfaction and thereby contribute to the mutual maintenance of ties of friendship. In these situations friends often become 'temporary kinsemen'. Friendship ties can also be observed in operation when an individual stops by the roadside to talk earnestly to other individuals and such conversations may continue for some time with interspersed laughter.

The people of the villlage claim that they cannot spend too much time talking to or visiting friends because each person is busy with his or her own work. An urban worker may be too tired to entertain his friend after work, or the shopkeeper may be too busy attending to customers to spare time to discuss frivolous matters with his friends. During the morning, however, several non-working individuals may gather together around a coffee shop table and have a newspaper reading session. Since there is only one issue of the newspaper and everyone is eager to read it at the same time, each individual takes a page and starts reading quietly, occasionally bursting into laughter over funny or unusual stories such as the death of a farmer who swallowed a live fish while fishing in his rice field. The youths always take the page that contains listings of job openings and they normally sigh or murmur words of discontent because they do not meet the qualifications of advertised positions. The older individuals browse through the front pages of national headlines and a few of them comment heartily when a high government official is being investigated on charges of corruption.

The affiliation of individuals with particular friendship groups depends on initiative and some common interest. A few individuals in Kampong Sungei Penchala seem to be loners. Some with very large families rarely mix and unemployed youths often have little to do with their employed peers. There are not, however, any clear cut criteria for deciding who is to be included in, and who excluded from, a particular circle of friends.

A few older individuals are not accepted by their peers because of certain personality characteristics. For example, an unemployed elderly man is shunned by others because he talks too much and boasts that his children have good jobs in the city.

Friendship between working males and females seems to be common. They do not feel uninhibited when they joke at the bus terminal or pass

petty remarks with each other during social gatherings. Friendship between older and younger people, however, apparently does not exist and their patterns of interaction tend to be rather formal. Younger people always address their elders with the term *abang* (brother) or *pak cik* (uncle). If the older person is a female she is addressed as *kakak* (sister) or *mak cik* (aunt).

There is, surprisingly, no evidence of any clearly established patron-client relationships in the village. Village entrepreneurs have the most wealth and rubber producers have the least, but enterprenuers have not become patrons who provide for the well-being of the rest of the community. The urban workers receive their salaries in the towns and they purchase some essential goods in the city. But since their wages are low, some of them cannot obtain credit from city stores. About half of the urban workers purchase most of their basic needs in neighbouring Petaling Jaya or Kuala Lumpur. The other half does not regularly patronize the village stores or the city stores. Whenever they have ready cash they buy their basic needs from the city where some of the prices of these items are cheaper, but when they run out of money, they buy these goods on credit from the village store. Thus the relationship between the shopkeeper and and customer is primarily a simple creditor-debtor one. In a patron-client relationship one groups is totally dependent on the other.

The village stores do not really flourish like the stores in the city do. They open for business in the early morning hours and serve housewives who normally come to buy a few items for the day's meals. There is no bulk buying by these housewives. The volume of total sales is quite small when compared to the overall sales volume of some of the shops in Petaling Jaya.

The village entrepreneur provides services but he does not become a patron and the rest of the community are not his clients. The villagers, either the urban workers or the rubber producers, do not depend on the village entrepreneur for a living. The three groups are quite independent. However, as was pointed out earlier, the villager store is part of the culture of rural Malay society and villagers are bound to it by tradition and history. People go to the store not just to purchase food items as sugar or salted fish, but also to maintain relationships with the rest of the community whom they meet there.

The village store can, in a sense, be regarded as a center of interaction among villagers. When an individual goes to the store, he normally talks

with other customers for some time. In front of most of these stores there are stools for the customers to sit and chat, either with each other or with the storeowners. Friendships are further maintained during the long hours of casual talk in the coffee shops where many go after visiting the grocery stores. These activities are conducted in the evenings and on the weekends. During the weekends or on public holidays, there are large numbers of villagers in the village stores. Some villagers make it a point to sit around the coffee shops to talk to each other or to pass time. A few of them claim that they can really relax in the stores or coffee shops. They cannot do so at home because their children disturb them. Storeowners also admit their sales are much higher during these days. Villagers who have earlier gone to the city or other places in the morning during these public holidays also stopped by the stores after alighting from the bus. It is therefore, apparent that the village stores have become important part of the life of the villagers.

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