

**A HISTORY OF  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
RAJANG BASIN IN SARAWAK**

**BY FONG HON KAH**

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION  
BY  
JULITTA LIM SHAU HUA**

**PUBLISHED BY  
THE CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMITTEE,  
DEWAN SUARAH, SIBU, SARAWAK, MALAYSIA.  
1996**

Cataloguing in Publication Data

Author: FONG, HON-KAH

English Translator: LIM, JULITTA SHAU-HUA

A HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
RAJANG BASIN IN SARAWAK

I. MALAYSIA - SARAWAK - RAJANG BASIN

959.543 (DC20)

First Edition: 1996  
ISBN: 983-99207-1-5

Cover design by:  
Aloysius Ho Boo Chiang

APB 68669

M  
959.543  
FON

06 AUG 1997

NASKAH PEMELIHARAN  
PERPUSTAKAAN NEGARA MALAYSIA

Printed by:  
The Sarawak Press Sdn. Bhd.  
Lot 231, Jalan Nipah, Off Jalan Abell, 93100 Kuching.

# A HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF RAJANG BASIN IN SARAWAK

CONTENT	PAGE
Foreword by Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, Chief Minister of Sarawak	v
Message from Tan Sri Datuk Amar Dr Wong Soon Kai, Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak	vi
Introduction by Datuk Lau Hui Kang, Chairman of the Cultural Heritage Committee, Dewan Suarah, Sibü, Sarawak.	viii
Preface	x
Translator's Notes	xiii
1. Geographical Features of Sarawak	1
2. Ancient History of Sarawak	7
3. Founding of Modern Sarawak by the First White Rajah	21
4. Development of Sarawak under the Second White Rajah	51
5. Third White Rajah and the End of the Brooke Raj	73
6. Natives of the Rajang Basin	93
(a) Melanaus	
(b) Malays	
(c) Ibans	
(d) Orang Ulu	
7. Early Chinese Settlers at the Lower Rajang	117
8. Sibü in the Early 20th Century	129
9. Background of the Chinese Settlers of the Early 20th Century	137
10. Fuzhou (Foochow) Agricultural Settlement, Sibü	157

11. Guangdong (Cantonese) Agricultural Settlement, Sibul	175
12. Xinghua (Henghua) Agricultural Settlement, Sibul	185
13. Native Society of the Rajang Basin before World War II	191
14. Chinese Society of the Rajang Basin before World War II	207
15. Rajang Basin under the Japanese Occupation	221
16. Impact of Cession	239
17. Sarawak during the British Colonial Days	261
18. Influence of the Korean War	285
19. Anti-imperialist and Anti-colonialist Movement	295
20. Formation of the Federation of Malaysia	309
21. Ten Year Turbulence	323
22. Sri Aman Movement	339
23. Beginning of Peaceful Reconstruction of Society	353
24. Political Development and the Rise of Natives (Bumiputras)	363
25. Rajang Basin during the 1970's	371
26. Development beyond the Rajang Basin	391
27. New Look of the Rajang Basin	401
28. Leaders of Development in the Rajang Basin	433
29. Conclusion	473
Epilogue	478
About the Author	479
About the Translator	480
Acknowledgements	481
Bibliography	482

## FOREWORD

*I would like to congratulate The Cultural Heritage Committee, Dewan Suarrah Sibū for taking the remarkable step of sponsoring the writing of this book entitled "A History of the Development of Rajang Basin in Sarawak" by Fong Hon Kah.*

*The book, written originally in Chinese, has been translated into Bahasa Malaysia by Encik Mohamad Haji Arsat and into English by Madam Julitta Lim Shau-Hua both of whom are Lecturers from the Batu Lintang Teachers' College, Kuching. These translations will make the book more widely accessible to all interested in the affairs of Sarawak.*

*Besides containing narration on the early history of Sarawak from the days of Brooke rule, which have been well documented in a number of publications, the book traces the socio-economic contribution by the various communities who had resided in the Rajang Basin over the past one hundred or so years. Although there had been short tumultuous periods in the early days of the Rajang Basin development, the various races had by and large lived in exemplary harmony and had assisted and co-operated with one another in their search for a better life. With political stability, great strides have been made in the economic development of the Rajang Basin, and the fortunes of the peoples in the area continue to flourish right to the present day.*

*There is still a dearth of books on Sarawak, written or authored by Malaysians of Sarawak origin. This publication will serve as a valuable reference text for further scholarship. I sincerely hope it will provoke a positive reaction from other local writers to come forward to conduct further research and produce publications on Sarawak which can contribute towards the pool of knowledge on the State.*



(DATUK PATINGGI TAN SRI [DR] HAJI ABDUL TAIB MAHMUD)  
Chief Minister of Sarawak