

DAYAK STUDIES

Oral Literature Series, No. 1



KING SILIMAN AND OTHER BIDAYUH FOLK TALES

*RAJA SILIMAN PAS TINGAH
TANUN BIDAYUH DA BUKUN*

Compiled by

Robert Sulis Ridu • Ritikos Jitab • Jonas Noeb

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UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK
The Institute of East Asian Studies

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Compiled by

ROBERT SULIS RIDU • RITIKOS JITAB • JONAS NOEB

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK • DAYAK STUDIES
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PREFACE

Since the formation of the Majlis Adat Istiadat in 1974, staff members of its research section have collected amongst others, a large number of folk stories of the Dayak peoples. From this large collection only one volume of Iban folk stories, *Jerita Tuai Enggau Ensera*, was published in 1995 in Iban language by the Social Development Council.

The present volume contains ten Bidayuh dondan (folk stories), taken from the collection in the Bidayuh research section. The publication of this volume differs from the earlier publication in that the volume is published in Bidayuh the original version and English, the translated version.

The Majlis takes pride in the fact that this volume is published by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), a seat of learning for Sarawak. I would like to express my thanks to the Institute of East Asian Studies and the Dayak Chair for making it possible to publish this volume as a UNIMAS publication.

This volume would not have become a reality had it not been for the contribution of the storytellers. To them I say, "Thank You" I would also like to express my appreciation to Robert Sulis Ridu, Ritikos Jitab & Jonas Noeb for transcribing these stories in Bidayuh, translating them into English and compiling them into the present volume.

Before the introduction of TV to the rural areas, folk stories such as these used to be a source of entertainment. Some folk stories also have moral implications for society. They are a product of a creative mind.

I have great pleasure in commending this collection of Bidayuh folk stories.

DATUK TRA ZEHNDER

Ketua Majlis

Majlis Adat Istiadat, Sarawak

SINDA PONGIDIO

Tan Majlis Adat Istiadat mo tiguru' daang sowa 1974, bala pegawai do bigian karik-prosa (Research) mo oggi, antara do bokon, nguruk bogo masam sirita son suo ruk Daya'. Son ruk do mo obuah ngarang do munu ndi goh buk dondan Iban, Jerita Tuai Enggau Ensera, daang sinda Iban, mo obuah nulis do buk daang sowa 1995 da Majlis Pembangunan Sosial.

Buk do itis noh tirisi' da simuung dondan Bidayuh, son sirita do mo nguruk do bigian karik-prosa Bidayuh. Buk itis idoh di' kodda do dio sebab do buk itis asal sirita do munu obuah nulis pakai sinda Bidayuh duoh nukar ado pakai sinda Biputis.

Majlis sun ayuh hormat sebab buk itis mo morui jadi da Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), otak pingajar suo Sarawak. Oku suka ngin terima kasih do Institute of East Asian Studies duoh Dayak Chair sebab mo dapod kijadi buk itis do UNIMAS.

Ako doii pinambah pingungin suo bala pinusia buk itis doii oh dapod morui. Do yoh do muti oku ngin, "Trima Kasih". Oku rasa birutang budi goh daang Robert Sulis Ridu, Ritikos Jitab duoh Jonas Noeb sebab mo nulis dondan do muti pakai sinda Bidayuh duoh sinda Biputis baya nguruk oh do buk itis.

Sibayuh T.V. ndog otak torun, dondan-dondan kodda do muti roh do jagin puun pongiribur. Oggi goh dondan do ngin ajar prinsip-prinsip pingidip do paguh. Do munu' roh pingundun pimikir do bigorak.

Dengan sonang otin oku ngibonar buk dondan Bidayuh itis.

DATUK TRA ZEHNDER

Ketua Majlis

Majlis Adat Istiadat, Sarawak

Foreword

Dayak Studies and the Dayak Studies Oral Literature Series

The Dayak Studies Program was inaugurated at the Universiti Malaysia Sarawak in January 2001. Constituted within the Institute of East Asian Studies, and sustained by an endowment from the Dayak Cultural Foundation, the program was established for the purpose of promoting long-term research on issues confronting the Dayak communities of Sarawak and of the island of Borneo more generally.

In this connection, the Dayak Studies Program has initiated two publication series: 1) a Contemporary Society Series (comprised of data papers and monographs relating to issues of current concern), and 2) an Oral Literature Series.

About the Oral Literature Series

A major challenge facing Dayak communities today is that of maintaining, or, in some cases, of rediscovering the vitality of community cultural institutions and identities. Traditionally, the verbal and expressive arts—storytelling, epics, sacred and historical narratives—all formed a central and cherished part of Dayak life and embodied many of the most important values on which cultural identities were founded. Today, in the face of rapid change, many of these narrative forms are in danger of being lost. Others are being radically reshaped or are assuming new cultural roles and meanings.

The purpose of this series is to make possible the recording and publication of some part of this rich and rapidly changing corpus of oral literature. It is intended not only to preserve a record of traditional examples of oral literature threatened with loss, but also to record and document changing forms of contemporary Dayak expressive culture. Each volume is introduced by its author(s)/ compiler(s) with an account identifying the narrator or storyteller and describing the context in which recording was carried out. Texts are presented in both the original language in which they were narrated and in English

translation. Where relevant, particular genres are described and their cultural significance within the community is explained as a background to the texts.

In addition to the publication of this series, a further objective of the Dayak Studies Program is to preserve original recordings of Dayak oral literature, including oral history, biography and life-history narratives, in a permanent sound archive, maintained in co-operation by the Majlis Adat Istiadat, the Tun Jugah Foundation, the Dayak Cultural Foundation, and the Institute of East Asian Studies. It is intended that most of the texts presented in this series (as well as others) will also be available in the form of sound recordings, so that it will be possible to listen to the actual words spoken or sung, as well as to read them on the printed page. In some cases, as indicated in individual volumes, this is already possible in our existing recording collections. In the future, we hope to make it universally so.

Professor Clifford Sather
Chair, Dayak Studies
Institute of East Asian Studies, UNIMAS

Pimu'un Sanda

Pingilajar Pasal Kaum Dayak (Dayak Studies)

Pingilajar Pasal Kaum Dayak mbũh udog kubũrũt ngajah atur adat da' mbũh kiyũ udog tundah dangan batul da' Universiti Malaysia Sarawak wang buran January 2001. Udog tundah da' rungan kuasa Institute of East Asian Studies dangan udog jugon bantu duit masu Dayak Cultural Foundation, Program ti udog tundah dangan tuju nũh supaya kireja-kireja selidik da' kekal tuhai dapat udog tundah ngantũk hal-hal da' bisangkut dangan kaum-kaum Dayak da' Sarawak, dangan da' Pulau Borneo.

Bisangkut dangan ti, Program Pasal Dayak Studies ti mbũh tiguru ngichap duwũh macham siri tanũn 1) Siri hal-hal Semasa kaum (birisi dangan pikara-pikara da' bisangkut dangan kaum), dangan 2) Siri tanũn-tanũn da' udog pida'an namba tu'uh.

Siri Tanũn-Tanũn da' udog pida'an namba tu'uh.

Pinyusah da' mangka' kaum-kaum Dayak da' iti nũh sien incheh pasal nyaga, ato da' bũkũn pasal jaran tinan magau sen napud bauh pinagap pimandũg adat asal dangan asih sibatul nũh kaum adũp. Ngajah pimudip da' sani nũh, anih-anih da' tinanũn, mung pidaan giũtũ, tanũn, barih dangan tanũn-tanũn da' bũkũn - simua rangti jaji pu'un pimudip da' ngaan nũh sũ'ũt nintu kaum Dayak da' pijaji tingkah ulah basa da' biguna rayũ, dangan masu' ain adat asal timbu. Da' timpuh iti nũh, masa kita ngadang pingubah pimudip da' pantas, ihong tanũn dangan adat asal da' udog pida'an namba tu'uh udog pangka' pinyusah ira udog rarap. Da' bũkũn udog nubah dangan kai tantu pasal ato pun mbũh birubah jaji adat asal dangan tuju sireta rati da'bauh.

Tuju siri ti incheh supaya pingiraja tanũn-tanũn ti dapat udog ngirikod sireta tundah jaji buku. Kai chuma tuju nũh ira ngirikod tanũn-tanũn da' mangka' pinyusah ira udog rarap, pak ira ngirikod lagih simua macham sanda-sanda da' bibunga, sanda pangkau ato sanda sinder

kaum Dayak. Tiap-tiap volum ira udog pidaan bada' inya da' pala nulis ato da' pala' pida'an tanŭn, sireta dangan tanŭn pasal inya da' pala pidaan tanŭn sien. Mung-sien lagih mung-anih tanŭn tanŭn udog tumbit. Tanŭn tanŭn udog piluah minan sanda asal wang nŭh udog tinanŭn dangan udog sinalin ndŭg English. Si-ingan ingan dapat macham tanŭn ira udog pidaan sireta dangan guna rati nŭh ndŭg kaum.

Lapas masu ngichap piluah siri-siri ti, tuju da' bŭkŭn lagi sien incheh ira ngekal adat asal Kaum Dayak da' mbŭh kubŭnŭt da' rikod, gulai tanŭn-tanŭn asal, tanŭn-tanŭn pimudip inya da' biganan, supaya nŭh udog kubaik da' nŭhŭn da' manah sireta tagap, udog jinaga samah samah bada' Majlis Adat Istiadat, Tun Jugah Foundation, Dayak Cultural Foundation dangan Institute of East Asian Studies.

Professor Clifford Sather
Chair, Dayak Studies
Institute of East Asian Studies, UNIMAS

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The Bear went to look for a rhinoceros to suck the water from the pool. 58

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“We have no power to provide sustenance to human beings. We are just additional food for them,” answered all the plants in a chorus. 62

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The Storytellers

1. The late **Arthur Atos Langgi** hailed from Kampung Ta'ee, Serian. He was a teacher and was later attached to the former Upper Sadong District Council as an Administrative Assistant. From there he was transferred to work in the Education Department. Despite spending most of his adult life in town areas, he never lost touch with folk traditions, especially the art of telling folk stories. The Bidayuh Section of the Majlis Adat Istiadat has a large collection of his folk stories. He died at the age of seventy five on 3 July 1988.
2. The late **Gabriel ak Nogek** hailed from Kampung Sagah, Singai. He was a padi farmer and rubber gardener. He had no formal education, but learned how to read and write from a local catechist during his free time at night. For a number of years he was an unpaid village scribe for the people of his village. He was also one of his village's storytellers. Later, he was appointed as a school servant attached to St. John's School, Singai. He was seventy-six years old when he passed away in August 1999.
3. **Naming ak Baren** is a farmer. He was born in 1913 and is one of the oldest people in Kampung Anggo, Siratau, Kuching. In his young days, he was Tua Kampung. Such being the case, he is well versed in the *adat* of the community. A good storyteller, he also has a wide knowledge of Bidayuh legends and oral history.
4. **Nori ak Ginyon** was born in 1925 in Kampung Siga, Kuching. In his younger days, he was a *tua gawai* or bard of the ancient rites. As a bard, he has a wide knowledge of Bidayuh legends, oral history, and folk stories.
5. **Atoda ak Makoi** hails from Kampung Quop, Kuching. He learned how to read and write from the Quop village school. Being a village elder and storyteller, he is well respected by the village people. He was born in 1926.

Tukang Tanŭn

1. Turang jawa' Arthur Atos Langgi, asal nŭh masu' Kampung Ta'ee, Serian. Umbŭh sien mŭlŭ nŭh kireja jaji guru, pak mbŭh sien nŭh kireja jaji Pinulung Pegawai Tadbir da' Opis Upper Sadong District Council. Masu' Council sien bidahan kireja da' Ŭndŭ Opis Pendidikan. Saja pan nŭh mbŭh matan labih tuhai masa da' sikambuh umur nŭh da' pasar, sien maseh rajin ngingat sireta tŭrŭp pimpinan pasal tanŭn girŭtŭ. Dangan ti Majlis Adat Istiadat adŭh kubaik ihong macham tanŭn-tanŭn da' udog ginumpul nŭh. Sien untagan dunya, umur nŭh iju puru rimuh sawa, wang 3 andu buran July 1988.
2. Turang jawa' Gabriel ak Nogek, asal nŭh masu' Kampung Sagah, Singai. Namba ti tukang ŭmpuruh padi dangan mutung pŭtŭk. Anyap nŭh bilajar da' Sikulah, pak sien bilajar macha dangan nulis wang bingarŭ masu' indi' urang Katikis. Sani' ngamin nŭh, namba ti silalu tinjam inya bada' nulis surat dangan kai ngira bi-upah. Umbŭh sien nŭh kiraja jaji tukang kebon da' sikulah St. John, Singai. Sien untagan dunya, umur nŭh iju puru ŭnŭm sawa, wang buran August sawa 1999.
3. Naming ak Beren inya tukang birumuh. Inya ti incheh da' pala' tu'uh rayŭ da' Kampung Siratau, sŭsŭk Kuching. Wang nŭh lagih maseh ungod ngamin nŭh, sien mbŭh jaji Ketua Kampung. Namba ti mŭnŭ mŭnŭ pandai pasal tanŭn-tanŭn, girŭtŭ dangan adat asal mung adat gawai birumuh, piramin, masau-manŭh dangan adat da' bŭkŭn-bŭkŭn.
4. Nori ak Ginyon mayan da' Kampung Siga, sŭsŭk Kuching wang sawa 1925. Wang nŭh maseh lagih ungod sien magŭh kireja jaji Tua Gawai atau Tukang Tabur. Masu' jaji Tukang Tabur, sien ŭmpuan ihong tanŭn-girŭtŭ, legenda dangan sejarah Bidayuh.
5. Atoda ak Makoi, asal nŭh masu' Kampung Quop, kai juho masu' Pasar Kuching. Inya ti' bilajar macha dangan nulis masu' sikulah da' kampung nŭh. Inya kampung isŭn hormat dangan namba ti ngin nŭh ba'ak pinu'uh kampung. Sien pan inya da' pala' ŭmpuan tanŭn-girŭtŭ da' binua sien.

Introduction

Like most Bornean people in the olden days, the Bidayuh were swidden cultivators. As such, their way of life was intricately interwoven with the forest environment. Their customs, practices, and much else were land and forest based. Indeed, to the Bidayuh, the jungle of Borneo was their “Garden of Eden.”

Folk stories used to be told at night on the gallery of the longhouse (*botang romin*), in the garden house (*plaman*), the farm hut (*bori omuh*), or in the ceremonial house (*baruk*). When a story was told on the gallery of the longhouse, the audience was larger and mixed, comprised of adults, young boys and girls. When a story was told in a *plaman* or *bori omuh*, it was usually told by an elderly woman to her children and grandchildren. When the story was told in the *baruk*, the audience was restricted to teenage boys. This was because the *baruk* was specially reserved for male activities.

Some ancient Bidayuh interactions with their environment are brought alive for us through oral tradition. Folklore is part of this tradition and the Bidayuh have a rich variety of folklore forms.

Thus, there are several categories of Bidayuh folklore. Among these are *sasia* (ethnohistory), *susud toga* (genealogy), and *dondan* (legends and fables).

The present volume comprises a collection of ten stories belonging to the category of *dondan*. The common feature in all these stories is that each contains an explanation of social relationships, the “dos” and “don’ts” of society, and other moral values.

The main function of folk stories is to entertain an audience. However, there are also other uses of folk stories. They can be a source of basic information on ways of life, norms and values and other mytho-historical matters.

All of the stories presented here were recorded in the village, in most cases in the storyteller’s home. The original recordings, and, in some cases, second recordings made after the teller had listened to transcriptions of the original recordings and had made minor changes or additions to the texts, are available in the Majlis Adat Istiadat’s tape-recording collections.

In the compilation of this volume various people have contributed their knowledge, ideas, and suggestions. First and foremost we would like to express our thanks to the storytellers without whom this volume would not have become a reality. We would like to acknowledge our gratitude to the late Arthur Atos Langgi, the late Gabriel ak Nogeik, Naming ak Baren, Nori ak Ginyon and Atoda ak Makoi.

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Robert Sulis Ridu
Ritikos Jitab
Jonas Noeb

*Majlis Adat Istiadat
Chief Minister's Department
Kuching, Sarawak
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Pinarang

Sani' ngamin nŭh, mung ihong bangsa asal da bŭkŭn da' Borneo, Bidayuh birumuh-bikenyang. Pimudip nŭh mung da' udog nanyam dangan simua kayuh da' ngiluling tu'aan. Adat, batan asal dangan hal da' bŭkŭn adŭh bisangkit-paut dangan tana' pas tu'aan. Simŭnŭ nŭh, ndŭg Bidayuh sani' ngamin nŭh tu'aan da' Borneo incheh jaji kabon "Garden of Eden" bala adŭp nŭh.

Tanŭn-girŭtŭ silalu nŭh udog pidaan wang bingarŭ da' dapih-dapih tampat, mung da' awah ũntangan, da' plaman, da' bari umŭh ato da' balŭ gambang. Wang tanŭn-girŭtŭ udog tinanŭn da' awah ũntangan ihong inya sŭwŭ ũngkaping nŭh, inya da' tu'uh , da' ungod, dari ato dayung. Da' plaman ato da' bari umŭh, silalu nŭh tayung da' ira kudul-kudul nanŭn girŭtŭ ndŭg bala anak sungkuh nŭh. Pak wang tanŭn-girŭtŭ udog pidaan da' balŭ gambang, chuma bala anak inya dari bantŭ saja da' ũngkaping nŭh, ngin balŭ gambang incheh indi' tampat da' tulen nŭh bala dari ngundah simua pingundah bala nŭh.

Masu' tradisi lisan ihong pingundah ato kiraja da' tundah Bidayuh da' bisangkit-paut dangan uhong tarun da' ngiluling adŭp udog takat bada' mudip bauh. Kita simua puan tanŭn-girŭtŭ incheh ayo tradisi lisan, lalu Bidayuh pan kaya-raya da' simua kayuh da' mung-ti'. Aduh ihong kategori tanŭn-tanŭn Bidayuh, mung sasias (ethnohistory), susud toga (geneology) dangan dundan (legend/fables).

Simua tanŭn-girŭtŭ da' buk ti sien mah da' rungan kategori dundan. Anih da' parih dangan anih da' kai parih udog tundah da' u'ah adat bimadis dangan adat birupa bipama' jaji pinyamah da' adŭh da' simua dundan da' simuhung ti. Simua nŭh tanŭn-tanŭn tinan kita pirimpu inya. Pak ihong lagih guna tanŭn-tanŭn da' bŭkŭn da' pida'an norma dangan nilai jaran pimudip dangan batan asal da' bŭkŭn.

Masa ami nulis tanŭn-tanŭn girŭtŭ da' buk ti, ihong bala inya suwŭ nyugon pinapud, pingipuan dangan pincadang adŭp nŭh. Da' sibungas nŭh, ami ira tayŭ nyugon ahi tirima kaseh ndŭg bala tukang tanŭn-girŭtŭ, sabap kan nŭh anyap bala sien kai buk ti dapat marui. Ami rasa birutang budi dangan turang jawa' Arthur Atos Langgi, turang jawa' Gabriel ak Nogeak, Naming ak Beren, Nori ak Ginyon dangan Atoda ak Makoi.

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Robert Sulis Ridu
Ritikos Jitab
Jonas Noeb

Majlis Adat Istiadat,
Jabatan Ketua Menteri
Kuching, Sarawak.
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King Siliman

narrated by

Arthur Atos Langgi
Kampung Ta'ee, Serian

King Siliman was almost a demigod. While he reigned, no human or animal on the surface of the earth, or bird in the air, dared to disobey his orders.

According to legends, the King decided to hold a big festival one day. He invited all the human beings; the animals such as the elephants, the lions, the rhinoceros from the primary and secondary forests and even the smallest animals such as the mice from the bush and their burrows; and all the birds, such as the eagles, the hornbills, the honey birds and the sparrows. Only the sick and the women under confinement were excused from attending the festival. In those far off days, both animals and birds could speak like human beings.

The King asked the Crow to relay the message to all the invited guests. Crow flew everywhere: over the mountains, the valleys, the plains, the oceans and the rivers. The Crow called out,

“Ka’ak! Ka’ak! Ka’ak! Listen all of you human beings, all of you animals, and all my fellow birds! Open your ears; don’t pretend not to hear me. In seven days’ time our King Siliman will invite you to come without fail to a party. He’s going to organize a feast to celebrate the birth of his first child.”

On the seventh day, all the human beings from far and near; all the animals, big and small, of different kinds and shapes; and all the birds, big and small, with all sorts of feathers and colours, came to attend the King’s party. The King’s compound, the fields beyond, and the treetops surrounding the palace were covered with people, animals, and birds. All the guests were excited to hear the message from the King.

The first to come out of the palace were the Elephant and his wife, two of the many servants of the King’s palace. The couple sounded their