

Penan di Bintulu dan Miri: Satu Kajian Awal

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ABSTRACT

The coexistence of a multi-racial community in Sarawak makes it a unique state in Malaysia. The Ibans are the largest group that makes the community followed by the Malay and the Chinese. Sarawak is resided by more than 40 ethnic groups in all. The Penans are one of the minorities in the whole population. They belong to the bigger group of what is known as the Orang Ulu, an ethnic named after the location of their population that reside nearby the headwaters of the river. The Penans are commonly found in the midlands and the northern part of the state. One half of the Penan community still practices the nomadic and semi nomadic lifestyle and the other half lives in a more permanent populated area. From the perspectives of past researchers, this ethnicity can be divided into the Eastern Penan and the Western Penan. From the geographical angle the Eastern Penan lives in Bintulu while the Western Penan lives in Miri. This study is an ethnographic study and the research methodology includes participant observations whereby the researcher is involved in active fieldwork living amongst the Penans. The chosen location for fieldwork is Kampung Penan Batu 12^{1/2} Jalan Bintulu-Miri and Kampung Long Latei', Marudi Miri. The main reason for the researcher to embark on the fieldwork is to be able to observe the ways of life of the Penans first-handedly and thus able to experience and investigate their traditions, beliefs, language use, and their reactions in adapting to the society surrounding them. The findings have shown that the Penans in Bintulu have no longer use their own mother tongue when communicating and in replacement they are using the Vaie language as their mother tongue. The Vaie language is owned by the Vaie community in Bintulu. Language shift is evident among the Penans in Bintulu whereby the Penan language is taken over by the Vaie language. Thus it can be concluded that the Penan in Bintulu uses Vaie language as their mother tongue and have converted to Islam. On the contrary the Penans in Miri, still uses their Penan language as their mother tongue and most are still Christians. In addition it is observed that the lifestyles of both groups differed from one another.

Keywords: *Penan, Ethnography, Sarawak, Bintulu, Miri*

PENDAHULUAN

Suku Penan Di Sarawak kebanyakannya tinggal di kawasan hutan hujan tropika iaitu di kawasan tadahan air di daerah Baram dan sungai Rejang. Menurut Langgub (1989), kira-kira 78 petempatan suku Penan di Sarawak. Makanakala, menurut maklumat yang diperolehi daripada Pejabat Residen Bahagian Miri (2008) penempatan suku Penan kini telah bertambah menjadi kira-kira 121 petempatan. Menurut Needham (1953 dlm Langgub 1989), etnik Penan terbahagi kepada tiga kumpulan yang berbeza iaitu 'Punan', 'Penan' dan 'Punan Bah'. Jika dilihat dari sudut geografinya pula, suku ini dikategorikan kepada dua bahagian iaitu Penan Timur dan Penan Barat. Ada juga yang mengkategorikan suku ini kepada cara hidup yang diamalkan iaitu kumpulan yang hidup berpindah randah atau diberi terminologi 'semi-nomadik' dan kumpulan yang tinggal secara tetap di suatu kawasan. (Bibi Aminah, Justin Dit, Mawi Taip, 2009). Suku Penan semi nomadik ini tinggal di suatu kawasan untuk satu tempoh tertentu dan akan berpindah dari satu kawasan ke kawasan yang lain atas beberapa faktor. Antara faktor yang dinyatakan ialah apabila kehabisan sumber makanan contohnya tiada lagi haiwan buruan serta hasil hutan yang lain untuk kelangsungan kehidupan di situ.