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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

THE present collection of Dusun, Bajau, and Illanun stories was made in the years 1910 and 1911, during parts of which I was stationed in the two adjoining districts of Tuaran and Tempassuk; while the material contained in the first paper, that on customs and beliefs of the "Orang Dusun," was collected partly at the same time as the folk-stories, partly on a short visit which I paid to the Tempassuk District in 1915. The Tempassuk is inhabited by three different peoples, the Dusuns, Bajaus and Illanuns, and it is chiefly from the first of these that the tales have been collected; for, since both the Bajaus and Illanuns are Mohammedans, their folk-lore is not nearly so extensive as that of their Dusun neighbours, who are pagans. The Mohammedans, roughly speaking, form the coastal and estuarine population, while the Dusuns, with the exception of those of a few large villages on the plains, which border on the Bajau zone, are confined to the foot-hills and mountainous portions of the area. The Tuaran District is also divided between Bajaus and Dusuns, but here Illanuns are wanting.

It would seem that the Dusuns are the original inhabitants of the country, and that the Bajaus and Illanuns, both Proto-Malayan peoples, are later arrivals who have driven the first-named inland. This is known to be a fact in the case of the Illanuns, who are a piratical tribe of Mindanao in the Philippines; of whom small roving parties have settled in Borneo.
The origin of the Bajaus¹ is, I believe, unknown, but they are widely spread along the coasts of North Borneo. However, as far as the Tempassuk is concerned, tradition asserts that they first came in trading boats from the direction of Kudat, and eventually fought the Dusuns and formed settlements in the country.

It is often said by Europeans resident in North Borneo, without, I think, sufficient evidence, that the Dusuns have a large admixture of Chinese blood. What the Dusuns would seem to be is a primitive Indonesian people, with some strain of Mongolian (not modern Chinese) blood. The up-country Dusun is generally short, sturdy, and light in colour, with a face which is often broad and flat, showing great development of the angle of the lower jaw. The nose is broad, and its bridge and root depressed. The head is long as compared with that of the Bajau.

"Orang Dusun," which, literally translated, means "people of the orchards," is a name which was originally used by the Malays to denote large sections of the Indonesian population of British North Borneo, which they considered to be of similar habits and culture. The term is loose, but useful, and has consequently been adopted by Europeans, and, for this reason, I also retain it.

In those parts of the country which I know, it cannot be said that the Dusuns have any tribal organization, the village community being the unit. In the Tempassuk District the Dusuns style themselves Tindal, while I believe that the up-country Tuaran natives do the same. Around Tuaran Settlement, however, they seem to call themselves Song² (or Swong) Latud (people of the country; i.e. the developed country as opposed to the jungle). These Tuaran villagers differ somewhat in their customs from the Tempassuk natives. It must be understood that in these papers I deal only with the Tempassuk.

¹ In the Tempassuk they call themselves "Sama." Some of them claim to have originally come from Johore. If this is true they are probably of the same race as the Jakun and the Orang Laut of the Malay Peninsula. The Bajaus of the East Coast of Borneo are still sea-nomads, or partly so.

² This word seems to have the same meaning as the Malay isi, "contents."
passuk District and with the villages immediately surrounding the Government post at Tuaran. I have never visited the upland villages of the Tuaran Valley, though I have met many of their inhabitants. The villagers of the hinterland of the coast between the mouth of the Tuaran River and Jesselton are absolutely unknown to me.

(i) SOME CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS OF THE "ORANG DUSUN"*

The religion of the Dusuns is largely animistic, though with it is combined a belief in a supreme deity, who has a wife, and in minor deities or major spirits. Their ceremonies, as might be expected, are chiefly concerned with those supernatural beings who may, according to their ideas, affect human affairs favourably or unfavourably, these ranging from the positively malevolent to the potentially, or actually, beneficent. Those which are implacably hostile must be driven away by means of magic, for, in their case, bribery is of no avail, among them being included, I think, the body-snatching spirits, and those which cause some acute diseases, such as small-pox. To induce others, less malevolent and more venal, to quit the haunts of mankind, a mixture of magic and bribery or cajolery may be employed, as, for instance, in the annual ceremonies for purging villages of evil influences, and in some Tempassuk District methods of dealing with the ghosts of the newly buried. Again, there are spirits who will remain neutral if they are propitiated, and among them, perhaps, are to be placed those of rivers; while there would seem to be a few which will be positively friendly if well treated, such as the spirits of the sacred jars which the Tuaran Dusuns treasure and the spirits of the rice; but even these become bad tempered when neglected. If no offerings or sacrifices were made to the jar spirits, they would certainly take their revenge by bringing all sorts of misfortunes upon those who had slighted them; and what would happen to the crops of a man whose rice-souls were offended with him?

1 Vide two papers of mine published in The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, vols. XLII. and XLVII.
The propitiation of the Dusuns' chief deity, Kinharingan, and his wife Munsumundok does not, I believe, form any considerable part of their ritual, and, though the former is called upon to be a witness to oaths, he is, probably, regarded as being too far away to take any very great interest in everyday matters.

A curious feature of Dusun religious ceremonies is the prominent part played by priestesses, initiated women, upon whom rests the responsibility for the successful carrying out of the rites. Men, though present, usually play only a subordinate part in such performances, the duty assigned to them being that of providing a musical accompaniment for the women's chants. At Tuaran there are regular fixed fees for young women who wish to enter the ranks of the initiated, and their instruction covers a period of over three months. The fees received by the instructresses are, at the present day, generally paid in money, though formerly payment was made in goods. I have been told by natives that the women use a secret language in their chants, and thus the mysteries of their conjurations are safeguarded from becoming public property.

Certain more or less fixed yearly festivals and ceremonies are observed by the Dusuns of both districts, but there is considerable difference in custom between the Tuaran people and those of the Tempassuk, and, indeed, between the Tempassuk highlanders and lowlanders, if not even between neighbouring villages.

Various animals are regarded as omens, either of good or evil portent, and these, some of which I treat of below, have a considerable influence on the people's daily life.

Head-hunting was prevalent in both districts, until prohibited by the British North Borneo Company, but certain rites connected with it are still carried out at Tuaran, and probably elsewhere. On taking a head a warrior was entitled to be tattooed in a particular manner, but with the prohibition of head-hunting tattooing has become practically obsolete.
Deities

Some details with regard to Kinharingan, the Creator, and Munsumundok, his wife, will be found among the notes on the Tempassuk area, the belief in these two divinities being common to both districts. Two Tuaran Dusun legends of the creation will be found among the folk-tales on pp. 45 and 46.

The Cult of Sacred Jars

The Dusuns of Tuaran, Papar, and, I believe, of some other places commonly worship certain jars, which are regarded as being sacred. Various kinds of old jars of foreign manufacture, most, if not all, of which are of Chinese origin, are regarded as being valuable property by many of the pagan peoples (and also by some of the Mohamedans) of Borneo, but the Dusuns think that certain varieties\(^1\) of them are tenanted by indwelling spirits, and are hence worthy of reverence. It is to a kind called *gusi* in particular that sacrifice and prayer are made at Tuaran; and families vie with one another to obtain a specimen, from two to three thousand dollars being no uncommon price to pay for one. Each member of a family has often a small share in such a jar, and, owing to the frequent and complicated lawsuits which formerly arose in consequence, it became necessary that such cases should be stopped; a notification, therefore, was issued by the then Governor of British North Borneo, which prohibited legal proceedings with regard to *gusi*, except with a view to enforcing the rights of the *waris* (members of the families of owners) as defined in the notification\(^2\).

The *gusi* is a pot-bellied jar of a greenish-brown colour, and has often a crackled skin, but whether this crackle is due to age, or was produced in manufacture, I am not certain. It appears to be of Chinese make, and specimens may vary considerably in size. *Gusi* are often kept in a railed-off enclosure in one of the

\(^1\) Vide also a folk-story on p. 52.

\(^2\) Vide a critique of a former paper of mine in *The British N. Borneo Herald* of October 1st, 1914. In this will be found some interesting and original notes on the Dusuns, Major E. O. Rutter being responsible for them.
inner rooms of a Dusun house, and annual sacrifices are made to them at a festival called *Mengahau*, about which a few particulars will be found below. I have it on the authority of a Tuaran Dusun, named Omboi, that the old women go to a *gusi* and wipe its mouth, saying at the same time, "Do not be angry with me, for I have given you food." The spirits that dwell in the *gusi*, one in each jar, the same informant told me, are those of ancestors. They are thought to be evilly disposed unless kept in a good temper by sacrifices, when they may be actually beneficent. Offerings are made to the *gusi* when there is sickness in the house or village. The *buluhon* is a kind of *gusi* which the Dusuns say that Kinharangan let down to the earth by a cord from an open window in the sky. A species of banyan (*Ficus*) is reported to be the abode of a spirit, and it is said that men coming suddenly upon a tree of this kind have seen many *gusis* standing below it, but when they have looked again, the jars have vanished for the spirit has snatched them up into the tree.

**Religious Ceremonies**

(i) One of the most, or the most, important yearly ceremony of the Tuaran Dusuns is that which is called *Mobog*, when all evil spirits which may have collected in the village during the previous year are solemnly expelled. In September, 1910, I was lucky enough to see a part of these rites carried out. The chief performers, as is the case in all Dusun religious ceremonies, were women, the minor parts, of drum- or gong-beaters, being assigned to the men. A procession of women, in full ceremonial dress, goes from house to house, stopping at each to go through a performance. It is preceded by a boy carrying a spear on which is impaled a large parcel containing

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*1 The Bahnars, Sedangs and Jurais of Indo-China also have sacred jars, which are thought to contain indwelling spirits. Their mouths are coated with blood and rice-wine on holidays. As among the Dusuns old jars are considered to be wealth* (Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, vol. III. "Indo-China," p. 230).

*Certain old Chinese jars which are found in the Philippines are said to be able to talk, vide Fay-Cooper Cole's Chinese Pottery in the Philippines, p. 12 (Publication 162 of the Field Museum of Chicago).*
rice, the wrapping of which is a piece of palm-spathe; next follow two men bearing between them a drum and a large gong of the variety known as *tawag-tawag*, these being slung from a bamboo pole, the ends of which rest on their shoulders. After them come the women, one of whom carries on her back a small sucking-pig in a basket. Each woman holds a wand in her right hand, which has a spiral strip of bark, running from end to end, removed from it. These wands, I was told, are used for beating the sucking-pig, and the name of *Mobog*, meaning "beating," is given to the ceremony because the pig is maltreated in this manner\(^1\). In addition to the wands the women also bring with them bunches of small brass bells, which are shaken in time with their movements, while performing posturing dances, by quick backward and forward jerks of their wrists, and, as well as these, somewhat castanet-like instruments called *tetubit*, consisting of two discs of brass attached by a string to a handle, which is usually made from a back-plate of a soft-turtle (*Trionyx*). The *tetubit* is used to beat time during chanting\(^2\), the discs being clanked together against the base of the thumb of the right hand on its inner surface. On arrival at a house, mats are spread near it by some girls. A man then brings the stalk of a coconut-palm leaf, and having bent the proximal and broader end at right angles to the rest of the stalk, he sharpens the distal end slightly, and plants it firmly in the ground at the end of the mats which is nearest to the door of the house. In front of this the spear—mentioned above—is set, point upwards, and at the base of the leaf-stalk is placed the packet wrapped in palm-spathe. The women then take their places on the mats, and the ceremony begins.

This consists partly of chant, partly of dance and chant combined. At one time the women are moving slowly round in a circle from left to right, chanting the while, and empha-

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\(^1\) The squeals of the pig, I understand, attract the spirits.

\(^2\) It may, perhaps, have a magical use as well. *Vide* p. 22, with reference to the use of a somewhat similar instrument, the *gunding*, in the Tempassuk District.