

The three volume series is a convenient and well-organized resource for scholars interested in the evolution in strategies of the textualization of folk literature utilized in China since 1949. Many of the authors are among the few people who are proficient in the Sani scripts and most have participated in actual fieldwork on the Ashima material, in some cases over a span of several decades. The inclusion of both oral and written sources acknowledges the relation between writing and oral performance in Yi culture, although it would have been useful to have the original Sani texts and transcriptions presented in the volume on primary data. In all, this is a landmark collection on Ashima studies.

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### *SOUTHEAST ASIA*

EGHENTER, CRISTINA, BERNARD SELLATO, G. SIMON DEVUNG, Editors. *Social Science Research and Conservation Management in the Interior of Borneo: Unravelling Past and Present Interactions of People and Forests*. Jakarta: Center for International Forestry Research, 2003. xviii + 297 pages. Maps, photographs, line drawings, tables, references. Paper n. p.; ISBN 979-3361-02-6.

The Kayan Mentarang conservation area in the interior of East Kalimantan, Indonesia, where the Kenyah have a long history of settlement, is one of the largest rainforests in Southeast Asia. In the past, the Indonesian government tried to appoint the area as a nature reserve in which no human activities are basically permitted. However, thanks to the efforts of members of the Culture and Conservation Research Program (C&C), instead of a nature reserve, the government designated the area as a National Park in which indigenous people are allowed to live and use the natural environment in "traditional" ways.

This edited volume is a collection of articles about the Kenyahs' relationships to their natural environment in the past and present, based on six years of research conducted by the C&C. The book is divided into four sections and contains a variety of topics. The first section includes articles discussing individuals' choice of rice seeds (Setyawati); activities and cooperation in swidden agriculture (Sindju); uses, management, and processing of rattan from the rainforests (Sirait); and eaglewood collecting activities and related socio-economic relationships (Konradus). Each of these four chapters partly describes the economic impact caused by social change. Especially, Konradus argues how Kenyah management regulations of forests, which are deeply connected with village social organization and belief systems, came to be ignored for commercial purposes. In the second section, two of the three chapters (Frans, and Lamis, Kanyan, and Bunde) discuss complimentary (and sometimes conflicting) relations between *adat* (customary law) and Indonesian national law in relation to land tenure. Also, Devung discusses the subsistence economy and the collection of forest products for commercial purposes. He compares types of economic activities and cooperation and concludes that villagers often deviate from *adat* when only limited cooperative activities are required in both the subsistence and commercial economies. In this section, all three chapters claim that *adat* and its institutions still provide effective means of controlling land use. In the third section, regional histories are discussed. Both Anau and Lawai reconstruct regional histories from narratives and describe Kenyah experiences of migration since the eighteenth century and other historical experiences, such as colonial domination, Indonesian Independence, and Christianization. Additionally, Arifin and Sellato analyze four megalithic sites. These three

articles indicate that Kenyahs have lived and used the natural resources in the conservation area for a long time; this means that moving them to other areas can lead to abuse of their human rights, as Eghenter and Sellato argue. In the fourth section, "Research output back to local communities: Strengthening cultural identity and traditional rights?," there are descriptions of narratives (Ngabut) and folk music (Lawing), which people are going to abandon. In relation to nature conservation, Ngabut's article may be especially important. Ngabut records a variety of narratives and claims that they contain useful viewpoints concerning nature conservation and the harmonious relationship between human beings and nature.

As seen in the above, while the focus is on indigenous people's relationships to natural resources, the volume covers quite a broad range of topics; in doing so it seems to lack coherence. In addition, Eghenter and Sellato note that no single chapter "is totally self-explanatory or self-contained as an independent article should be" (19). However, they suggest that readers must read the entire book because this is a multidimensional approach to Kenyah society, in which each chapter is "one facet of a complex prism" (19), which reflects other facets or articles. For this reason, rather than commenting on each chapter, I shall comment on the entire book.

This volume attempts to apply methodologies of the social sciences, especially anthropology, to practical use, such as preserving nature and "promoting and protecting the social, cultural, and economic interests" of indigenous people in the conservation area (1). Making indigenous people conscious of their culture and strengthening their cultural as well as ethnic identity is another important purpose, as the title of the fourth section implies, and this is closely connected to the first purpose. The C&C attempted to strengthen the indigenous people's cultural identity in order to incorporate the "traditional" knowledge of nature management and make indigenous people participate in conservation. In fact, many of the articles in this volume suggest that "traditional" ways of land management and the use of natural resources regulated by *adat* usually allow people to maintain harmonious relationships with nature, although some negative aspects, such as the domination of a specific class or social group protected by *adat*, are also mentioned. However, the problem with this approach is that it reflects power relationships between the authors and the indigenous people and may lead to the controlling of their culture. The C&C actively hired and trained local people in order to make them interested in nature conservation. Yet when we consider whether the researchers' participation accorded them specific social status within the local communities or not, what sort of authority the original members of the program or the trainers, including researchers, had over the local people, and how payments may have influenced relationships between local researchers and the original members, the fact that local people did participate does not necessarily mean that the C&C did not influence the outcome of the project. Thus, this project's application of anthropological methodology to practical situations might result in what recent anthropology has criticized.

The second problem is that there is no discussion about what is meant by the word "traditional." Some of the authors of this volume undoubtedly translate *masyarakat adat* (*adat* society) as traditional society, and many Indonesians believe that *adat* does not change. However, does *adat* or the interpretation of *adat* really not change? Another problem in relation to the concept of "tradition" is whether economic activities under *adat* can be completely distinguished from those of a market economy. The volume does not examine any continuity or similarity between indigenous people's economic activities in the market economy and those conducted before the market economy became influential in Kenyah society. Many anthropologists have suggested that individuals' competitions and strategies under market economies are often similar to those carried out before those economies began to have deep influence within societies. If so, these matters must be examined in order to protect and promote the economic interests of indigenous people living in natural conservation areas.

The third problem is that the descriptions of individual Kenyahs' strategies and choices are missing from the illustrations of their participation in the market economy. Although Devung discusses their strategies, he does not focus on individuals. Because individual members' understanding of the world and experiences vary even within one community, such differences constitute a variety of interests and therefore the taking into account of individuals' choices and strategies is critical in order to understand the limitations of "traditional" lives in the current environment of the globalized economy and modernization.

Despite these problems, overall this volume is rich in cultural detail and documents well the Kenyahs' relationships to their natural environment. The book as a whole creates a polyphonic picture of Kenyah culture and society and provides comprehensive as well as multi-dimensional information about them. As it provides information which is not processed by theories, even if readers do not have any anthropological or other specific academic trainings, they can easily understand the present situations of the people. Furthermore, the volume significantly contributes to ethnographies of Southeast Asia through recording oral literature and reconstructing regional histories from narratives. Documenting narratives on history is especially crucial because publications of the history of the Kenyah, whose society is non-literate, by Kenyahs themselves are very rare.

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### PAPUA NEW GUINEA

SLONE, THOMAS H., translator, editor. *One Thousand One Papua New Guinean Nights: Folktales from Wantok Newspaper*. Oakland, CA 94611-2058: Masalai Press, 2001. *Volume 1: Tales from 1972–1985*, xxviii + 500 pages. Paper US\$39.95; ISBN 0-9714127-0-7, *Volume 2: Tales from 1986–1997*. xx + 590 pages. Indices, glossary, references, maps, illustrations. Paper US\$44.95; ISBN 0-9714127-1-5.

Thomas H. Slone, a staff scientist on cancer research, has made a strong entry into the field of Oceanic folkloristics. In addition to these extensive volumes, he has also placed on the World Wide Web two bibliographies, one on Melanesian-English dictionaries, the other on Papua New Guinea folktales. The indices completing the second volume include the tale tellers (or writers), their villages, languages, maps of the provinces, a glossary of flora and fauna, and a motif index of thirty-five pages.

A quick glance at the index reveals that Slone has leaned heavily on Bacil KIRTLEY's two indices (1971, 1995). This in turn bears out Kirtley's contention that the folktales of Polynesia, Melanesia, and Micronesia are strongly interrelated on the motif level. William LESSA's extensive comparative study of Ulithian tales reinforces Kirtley's work by tying his Micronesian tales from Ulithi Atoll to the rest of Oceania, both on the motif and tale level (LESSA, 1961). In my own work, I made extensive use of the above scholars, leaving me little reason to doubt the interrelationship of narratives from the above three culture areas (MITCHELL 1973, 1990).

Slone states (xxii) that he had studied Tok Pisin (Papua New Guinea Pidgin English) prior to his three trips to Papua New Guinea, where he encountered the local newspaper *Wantok*, with its standard feature on *Stori Tumbuna*, or Ancestor Tales. He decided they should be translated.