12.
Kenyah Bakung oral literature: An introduction

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INTRODUCTION
This contribution focuses on the Kenyah Bakung who are at present living in the village of Long Apan Baru (Long Aran) in the district of Pujungan. These people originally came from Lasan Adie (Iwan River) and subsequently moved to Long Bakung on the Pujungan River (on the history of the Bakung, see Ngindra, in Eghenter and Sellato 1999, and Rousseau 1990). More recently, a group of Bakung living in Long Apan (on the Lurah River) finally moved to Long Aran in about 1969. Because they came from Long Apan, the village of Long Aran is better known as Long Apan Baru. From Long Aran, some of the people moved again to Sa’jau, while others moved to Long Bang on the lower Kayan River.

So far, the oral literature of the Bakung has been little documented. In 1992, Paternus Hanye was able to examine some examples of oral literature and made some cassette recordings (see Hanye 1995). Yet, it is almost certain that this literature will disappear if no efforts are made to preserve it. Today, only very few people remain who have mastered the literature, and they are generally already advanced in age. The younger generations appear to be uninterested in this heritage. Furthermore, the occasions for using the literature have decreased considerably as the traditional adat and religion have been abandoned by the Bakung themselves. Thus, it is clear that the oral literature of the Bakung must be studied and recorded and efforts be made to save it from extinction. It is hoped that this article will be of use in drawing attention to this rich and imperilled heritage.
The research is intended to 1) inventory the types of oral literature in existence; 2) learn the position and the function of oral literature; 3) save the *tekena’* (folktales) of the Bakung from disappearance by recording, transcribing, and translating various types of *tekena’* into Indonesian; 4) analyse and describe basic themes and the characters and characterisation in the *tekena’*; 5) return the literary manuscripts to the Bakung in the form of printed books; and 6) stimulate interest among the Bakung themselves in taking over the preservation of their own oral literature. It is hoped that this article can contribute to the efforts of the Culture & Conservation Program in preserving the oral literature of the Kenyah, and especially that the Kenyah themselves will eventually take over the preservation efforts.1

**The Body of Oral Literature**

Because of the short research time, the writer restricted himself to studying the prose known as *tekena’*. Nine texts were recorded, but as the writer’s assistants were not much available and the writer himself had but a limited command of the Bakung language, not all of them have been transcribed. In addition to these recordings, the writer was also able to obtain two *tekena’* recorded by Hanye in 1991. The *tekena’* that could be transcribed and freely translated are *Tekena’ Laking Kuyang ngan Lenjau*, *Tekena’ Jalung Merang*, and *Tekena’ Balan Tempau*. Some *tekena’* were only transcribed and translated literally: *Tekena’ Tamen Burin Batu Tusun*, *Tekena’ Sigau Belawan*, and *Tekena’ Payau ngan Pelanuk*. Other texts were only transcribed: *Tekena’ Uyau Apan*, *Tekena’ Mering Belawan*, and *Tekena’ Baya’ ngan Lenjau*. For one, the *Tekena’ Uyau Apan*, an abstract had been made by Hanye (1995), and for two more, abstracts were made by the researcher and informants.

Some texts were not transcribed—*Tekena’ Sigau Belawan ngan Jalung Ila* and *Tekena’ Mending Orang Sakit*. The former, as its title resembles that of other texts already translated (*Tekena’ Sigau Belawan* and *Tekena’ Balan Tempau*), is believed to tell the same story as these two other texts, staging the same individual hero, Jalung Ila. As for the latter, it is not a pure *tekena’*, since its content describes the *mending* ceremony for treating the sick (see Ngindra 1995b and in Eghenter and Sellato 1999).

**Research Methodology**

The writer’s informants were native speakers of the Bakung language, who lived in the village of Long Aran. The writer first sought information regarding potential informants, and the informants finally selected were a number of old people who could still tell the stories well, without difficulties in speaking. The writer visited the informants by appointment in the evenings to record them. To gather additional information regarding types of oral literature and the situation of the Bakung generally, informal interviews were conducted with informants while they were casually relaxing.

1 A large quantity of recordings of Bakung oral literature (and also of the literatures of other Kenyah subgroups in the area) were made during the years of the Culture & Conservation Program. A substantial part of them has been transcribed, at least cursorily, and some translated into Indonesian. One, at least, the story of *Laking Kuyang ngan Lenjau*, was published as an illustrated booklet (1997) with both the Bakung and Indonesian texts, for use in elementary schools in the area. Furthermore, in the framework of the C&C program, Stephanie Morgan produced a preliminary Bakung-Indonesian dictionary (1996), the only existing dictionary of a Kenyah language in Kalimantan to date.
at home, planting in the fields, and on other occasions that did not interfere with the informants’ activities. While interviewing, the researcher did not use any electronic recording equipment.

Data gathered through recordings were subsequently processed in three stages: transcription, translation, and analysis. The writer was assisted by four persons: one main assistant for transcription and translation, one person who helped transcribing only one tekena’, and two others for literal translation. The free translation and the writing of the abstract were done by the writer. In this article, only the three tekena’ that had passed through the stage of free translation are analysed (see the abstracts of these three tekena’ in the Appendix). They are Tekena’ Laking Kuyang ngan Lenjau (The Orangutan and the Tiger), Tekena’ Jalung Merang (The Story of Jalung Merang), and Tekena’ Balan Tempau (The Story of Balan Tempau).

After the transcription had been done solely by the writer’s assistant, it was checked by the writer, who again listened to the cassette. For translation needs, the transcription was also used by the writer’s colleagues, i.e., language specialists, in their studies of Bakung phonology, morphology, and syntax, and it represents a contribution to the vocabulary of the Bakung dictionary (see Sri Munawarah 1995, Morgan et al. 1996). The translation of the tekena’ was done in two stages, beginning with a word-for-word literal translation, followed by a free translation. The literal translation was used as a step toward the final goal, a free translation acceptable to general readers. When the writer studied the literal translation of the tekena’, it was clear that certain aspects—usually found at the beginning and simultaneously serving as an introduction—did not need to be retained. In the final transcription and translation, these aspects were omitted because they did not contribute to the completeness of the story, or facilitate enjoyment of the story. Nevertheless, this information was retained in the recording and in the early transcription and translation to document the process toward the final transcription and translation.

The following quotations from Tekena’ Jalung Merang illustrate the process in which the data were treated. The first line is a transcription in the Bakung language, the second is a word-for-word translation, and the third line is the free translation in Indonesian (followed in the fourth line by the English translation).

(1) Aun ne dau Jalung Merang mudip kiang batu tusan
Adapun si Jalung Merang hidup di tebing batu jurang
Jalung Merang hidup dan
Jalung Merang lived and

(2) mudip kapau le’ mande lepusut bunyau jangin nuyan
hidup di atas gunung kata mereka jeruk pegunungan tembaga buatan
tinggal di daratan sebuah pegunungan.
made his home on a flat in the mountainous highlands

(3) Uba’ ketai umen selai mendang liran le mande
ingin pergi merantau melihat-lihat orang yang kata mereka
la ingin pergi merantau untuk melihat-lihat orang yang tinggal
He wanted to travel and visit the people who lived
(4) ri' ke daya alo Mara rene' kanan nde' mande. Nane
di hulu arus sungai Mara yang dipakai kata mereka. Itulah
di daerah hulu Sungai Mara. Ia
on the Upper Mara River. He

(5) dau katai pisu inai re nguleng jelai latung pudan.
pergi tanya namanya kalung jelai perhiasan badan.
menanyakan ibunya apakah ia diperbolehkan.
went and asked his mother for permission.

The analysis of the tekena’ contents was aimed at finding themes, protagonists,
and characterisations in the various stories. In addition, the analysis was also used to
determine connections between the stories’ content, themes, and protagonists and
their titles and social and natural environmental conditions at present and in the past.

ORAL LITERATURE OF THE BAKUNG
The oral literature of the Bakung comprises those literary works of the Bakung speaking
people, which are passed from mouth to mouth, spread orally and anonymously, and
which describe the life of the Bakung in the past.

Position and Function
As a regional literature, the oral literature of the Bakung has four functions. First, it
is a means of entertainment and is used to fill free time. The literature meant to
meet this function usually is funny and humorous, such as is found in legends. Second,
it serves as a means of education and of transmitting ancestral values. Stories serving
this function are useful, not only for children but also for adults and old people. Stories
of this type usually display positive values that are suitable for handing down, as well
as undesirable values and attitudes that must eliminated. Third, it serves as a means
of stating intentions and declaring wishes in connection with magical forces. For this,
the oral literary forms used are mantra, used when fishing, taking honey, and treating
the sick (mending ceremony). Fourth, it serves to tighten the relationship or
acquaintance with a newcomer, which is usually done through singing (kendau or tiang).

Genres of Oral Literature
Among the genres in prose of the oral literature of the Bakung are tekena’ (folktales),
ngidau (lamenting the dead or saying a mantra when treating a patient), bon-bon usa
talon (when taking honey from a tall tree), tuba la’it tuba sanit (when catching fish
using tuba poison), and kelap ta’ penyakit kini (to drive out evil spirits from the
village; see Hanye 1995).

The tekena’ that have been collected (see Figure 12.1) can be divided into two
categories: heroic tekena’ (epics) and regular, entertaining tekena’. Heroic tekena’
in fact are neither myths nor legends, nor are they fairy tales. The titles of some
heroic tekena’ are Tamen Burin Batu Tusan, Mering Belawan, Balan Tempau, and Baya’
ngan Lenjau; while the titles of entertaining tekena’ are Sigau Belawan, Jalung Merang,
Laking Kuyang ngan Lenjau, and Payau ngan Pelanuk. Three tekena’ seem to be fables,
featuring animal characters: Laking Kuyau ngan Lenjau (The Orangutan and the Tiger),

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Payau ngan Pelanuk (The Deer and the Mouse Deer), and Baya’ ngan Lenjau (The Crocodile and the Tiger). In fact, however, only the Tekena’ Payau ngan Pelanuk is an animal story. In the case of the other two, the indications of the titles are not followed through in the content of the stories.

**Figure 12.1** Pui PeAnye’ Usat singing a tekena’ in the usual lying position

Poetry, as a literary form, can be divided into two categories, the *kendau* and the *tiang* (see Figure 12.2). Both forms are songs and are only distinguished according to the number of participants. If a song is performed by a solo singer, it is called *kendau*; if more than one singer is involved, it is a *tiang*. Both *kendau* and *tiang* are usually performed when receiving guests or as special performances when getting acquainted. Sometimes *kendau* are sung while people are relaxing. The content of *kendau* and *tiang* is generally fitted to the situation, including a focus on the person for whom the song is sung.

Tekena’, as a lyrical genre, are prose that have been turned into song. Basically, all *tekena’* can be grouped into the two categories above, because the singers use songs and rhythm in telling a story, in an effort to beautify and add interest to the content of the story. In telling a *tekena’*, singers tend to slip into *silun*, which are certain parts of the story especially made into songs. The telling of *tekena’* with song and rhythm as grouped according to these lyrics depends very much on the style and the abilities of the singer himself. The researcher’s main informant, Aga La’ing (better known as PeNgang), who had a special secret for telling *tekena’*, used songs and followed a beat from the beginning to the end of the story.
ANALYSIS OF TEKENA’ CONTENTS
Below will be discussed the themes, the protagonists, and the characterisation, the relationship of the content of tekena’ with tradition and social conditions in the past and at present, and, finally, the relationship of society to its natural environment. The full stories appear in the Appendix.

Tekena’ Themes
The theme is a problem or an idea that the writer expresses through his literary work. A theme reflects the writer’s view of life or his goals. Every tekena’ has a basic theme that is supported by subthemes or secondary themes. The present analysis, then, will endeavour to describe the basic themes and the supporting themes of the three tekena’ for which free translations were completed.

Tekena’ Laking Kuyang ngan Lenjau
In this story of the Orangutan and the Tiger, the basic theme, ‘A real effort will have the expected result’, is evident in Belawan Lenjau’s longing to meet his father, a goal pursued through persistent efforts to trace his father. He makes this effort because he has never known his father, who vanished while hunting for the feast to name his
son, and because his friends ridiculed him as an illegitimate child. In the end, he meets his father and is appointed a *paren* (leader) of his father’s longhouse by its inhabitants.

Secondary themes are ‘Arrogance will bring disaster’ and ‘Unexpected benefits’. The first is expressed in the arrogance of Lenjau (Tiger), who considers Laking Kuyang (Orangutan) incapable of defeating him in a fight over the traditional territory of their ancestors. Orangutan repeatedly offers peace and says that war is not the best way to settle a problem. When they finally do go to war, Orangutan defeats Tiger by throwing him into the middle of the a great and deep river, where he immediately sinks to the bottom. Unexpectedly, Tiger lands on the veranda of the house of Baya’ (Crocodile), who has a daughter named Bungan Baya’. This girl is amazed at the handsome Tiger and endeavours to make him her husband. In the end, they marry and have a child named Belawan Lenjau. These events represent the second subsidiary theme.

**Tekena’ Jalung Merang**

The basic theme, ‘Friendship and restraint of feelings are more important than hostility’, is expressed at the time of Jalung Bilung’s (JB) arrival. The hero from the mouth of the Mara Rian River stops at Jalung Merang’s (JM) village on his way to ask for the hand of the beautiful Urai Belawan on the upper Mara Rian. JM had previously asked his mother for permission to go and woo Urai Belawan, but his mother was not ready to allow this because she still needed his help for the farm work. When he hears the reason for JB’s arrival, JM is very angry with his mother, and when JB asks him to come along, he refuses on the grounds that he (JM) is busy. Although he is very angry and annoyed, JM does not say anything to JB. His hostility develops after JB and his friends leave next day, but JM does not say anything openly. With the help of his mother’s magic powers, he changes himself into a hornbill and the rope of his machete into a *tudo* *bala pipa bala* (a snake with a red tail and head), a very bad omen that forces JB to abort his journey. Starting on his own journey, JM flies upriver and asks for Urai Belawan’s hand.

When JB finally reaches the upper Mara Rian River to ask for his beloved Urai Belawan, he develops feelings of hostility when he learns that JM has already married her. JB has no reason to be angry at JM, because he never clearly stated the goal of his journey. In the end, the latent hostility ends with feeling of friendship and the establishment of family ties when JB marries JM’s sister.

The secondary theme, ‘Marriage partners are determined by Fate’, is expressed in the fact that we learn that the parents of Urai Belawan had already, since her childhood, promised her to JM’s parents. So it was not by chance that JM, who assumed the shape of a hornbill, became their daughter’s husband. If JB had succeeded in arriving first, the agreement already made with the parents of JM would necessarily have been violated.

**Tekena’ Balan Tempau**

The basic theme of this story is ‘If there is a will, there certainly will be a way.’ It is expressed in the complications of the struggle and journey of Uyau Balan Tempau in search of the enemy who abducted his wife almost without leaving a trace, until he finally meets an old woman in a dream. She tells him that his wife’s abductor came
from the sky, and she orders him to make a blowgun with as many darts as possible. Failing repeatedly, because the darts cannot hit the sun, Balan Tempau finally remembers his wife's belongings and, among them, he finds three large needles. He makes these into arrows, which finally hit the sun. The three arrows are connected to the other arrows to form a ladder leading to the sky.

After he has managed to reach the sky and arrives at the sun, he meets Ulau Tau (the Protector of the Sun), who helps him by advising him to pursue Jalung Ila. On his journey, he unexpectedly meets his older sister, who was abducted long ago by Kiring Jalung. His sister and brother-in-law then fix Balan Tempau with magic to enable him to defeat his enemy. He finally finds Mening Nyanding, his wife, whom Jalung Ila has not been able to convince to become his wife. Very determined, he then kills all the residents of Jalung Ila's longhouse, and kills Jalung Ila himself by tying a rope around his neck. He and his wife return to earth, bringing along all valuables in a flying boat.

Secondary themes are ‘Crime is repaid in like measure’, ‘Arrogance brings disaster’, ‘Negligence brings disaster’, and ‘Unexpected meetings’. The first is expressed in the defeat of Jalung Ila in his war with Balan Tempau. The second is evident in the arrogance of the father of Usun Garing Luran and Awing Liwen, who underestimates Uyau Balan Tempau's capabilities in claiming invincibility. In the end, however, he is killed by Uyau Balan Tempau. The third theme is expressed in the carelessness of Mening Nyanding, the wife of Uyau Balan Tempau, who mentions Uyau Mo's name when he pretends to be Uyau Balan Tempau. This carelessness revives the enemies' courage and they kill Uyau Mo' who was about to win the fight. The enemies actually were about to surrender or flee, because the power of Uyau Balan Tempau was already widely known. Because of this blunder, Uyau Mo' is killed and Mening Nyanding is carried off to the sky. The fourth theme is the unexpected meeting of Balan Tempau with his older sister. The two had never met before because she was kidnapped long before Balan Tempau was born. As a result of this meeting, Balan Tempau obtains special powers from his relatives and is able to deal with all challenges and enemies.

Characters and Characterisation
The characters in the tekena’ stories of the Bakung are consistent with the titles, when these reflect the story's basic content. This analysis will discuss the protagonists, as well as the supporting characters.

**Tekena’ Laking Kuyang ngan Lenjau**
The characters in this story, as indicated by the title, are Laking Kuyang (Orangutan) and Lenjau (Tiger), as well as others, such as Belawan Lenjau, the son of Lenjau. A supporting character is Bungan Baya’, the mother of Belawan Lenjau.

Laking Kuyang is a character who is not arrogant because of his power, which is invisible to others. Instead, he is humble and maintains that he is not good in war. Continuously pressured by Lenjau to fight, he is finally forced to accept the challenge. He wins the fight by throwing Lenjau far out into a large river. Lenjau, on the other hand, feels that he is much stronger than Laking Kuyang and continues to challenge him to fight, until he is finally defeated. Lenjau is still lucky because when he is thrown into the river, he lands on the veranda of the house of Bungan Baya’, daughter of the Crocodile, and falls in love with her.
Belawan Lenjau, the son of Lenjau and Bungan Baya’, is a strong and determined figure who searches for his father, whom he does not know. His search bears fruit, and he finally meets his father in his home village, where he is appointed leader of a longhouse. Bungan Baya’ represents someone who unexpectedly meets her life partner. In the beginning, she is lucky but eventually she is abandoned by her husband while he is hunting to procure food for their child’s naming ceremony. She is startled when her son asks who and where is father is and then sets out to find him.

Tekena’ Jalung Merang
The main characters in this story are Jalung Merang, Jalung Bilung, and Urai Belawan, while Jalung Merang’s mother is a supporting character. Jalung Merang is strong and determined to woo Urai Belawan, who is famous for her beauty. He forces his mother to allow him to ask for Urai’s hand, even though she has in fact already been promised to him since childhood. He has sufficient self-restraint and does not tell Jalung Bilung that he also wants Urai Belawan. Taking the shape of a hornbill, he is able to defeat the purpose of Jalung Bilung’s journey to ask for her. He then flies to the upper Mara Rian and, in his bird form, he is captured by Urai Belawan and at once returns to his human form.

Jalung Bilung is able to restrain his jealous feelings and nurtures great feelings of friendship. On his first journey to ask for Urai Belawan, he stops overnight in the house of Jalung Merang and asks him to come along. When his journey is aborted by bad omens, he again stops, on his second trip, at Jalung Merang’s house. He shows restraint in not becoming angry immediately when he learns that Urai Belawan has already become the wife of Jalung Merang. His feelings of friendship return with his readiness to marry the younger sister of Jalung Merang. Urai Belawan is a pretty and polite girl. She is not aware of the competition between Jalung Merang and Jalung Bilung over her. Jalung Merang’s mother is a woman who pays close attention to the interests of her son. She feels that she was wrong in delaying her son’s departure to ask for the girl he loves. And so, she magically turns her son into a hornbill to enable him to fly after Jalung Bilung. To defeat the purpose of Jalung Bilung’s trip and to smooth the road for her son, Jalung Merang’s mother tells her son to read a mantra to turn the string on his sword into a snake with a red head and tail. This type of snake is a sign that a journey cannot be continued.

Tekena’ Balan Tempau
The main characters in this story are Uyau Balan Tempau, the father of Usun Garing Luran and Awing Liwen, Mening Nyanding, and Jalung Ila. Supporting characters are Uyau Mo’, Ulau Tau, Kirin Jalung, and his wife. Uyau Balan Tempau is a strong and confident figure, who is convinced that he will be able to persuade the father of Usun Garing Luran and Awing Liwen (and the murderer of his father) and to find the man who carried off his wife and that he will be able to kill them. The father of Usun Garing Luran and Awing Liwen (two girls living on a beran tree) tends to underestimate the strength of his enemies. He is convinced that he is invincible. Because of this attitude, he eventually loses the struggle with Uyau Balan Tempau.

Mening Nyanding, the wife of Balan Tempau is careless in the beginning, when she says: ‘Never mind, Uyau Mo’, let’s run away’, even though the enemy already has accepted his claim that he is Uyau Balan Tempau. This carelessness on the part of
Mening Nyanding has a fatal outcome, i.e., Uyau Mo' is killed and Mening herself is carried off to the sky. She dares to defend her love for her husband and does not want to be touched by Jalung Ila, and for approximately one year she remains on the veranda of Jalung Ila’s house until her husband arrives. Jalung Ila does not understand why Mening Nyanding suddenly changes behaviour. He does not suspect that people from earth like Uyau Balan Tempau can pursue him up to the sky.

Uyau Mo’ believes that people will waver before Uyau Balan Tempau. By claiming to be Uyau Balan Tempau, he confuse the enemies and fights them. He is almost able to defeat all the enemies, when his identity is revealed, and they no longer fear him. Ulau Tau, as the guardian of the sun, is a kind person and helps Balan Tempau, when he faints from the heat, by cooking porridge for him. After Balan Tempau regains his strength, Ulau Tau shows him the direction in which he must go.

It is appropriate for Kiring Jalung and his wife to help her younger brother. Jalung Kiring’s wife, older sister of Balan Tempau, was kidnapped long ago and carried off to the sky. These two people do not want to let her brother leave until they are sure that he can defeat Jalung Ila. They give him special powers to enable him to defeat Jalung and take his wife back home to earth.

Relationship to Society in the Past

Through the tekena’ that have been handed down from generation to generation, the social conditions and traditions of the Bakung can be studied.

The name of a child is always followed by the name of his or her father. Thus, even though two Kenyah persons may have the same second name, they are not necessarily siblings. It is possible that two people have given their children the same name. In the past, the use of tekonyms, such as uko’ (grandfather), tamen (father), tinen (mother), and of necronyms, such as uyau (orphan), was prevalent among the Bakung. Children were given names in a ceremony for which the basic food requirements (meat, fish, vegetables, and fruits) were gathered cooperatively (pengayeng) by the people. Pengayeng was used because the people did in fact live together in a longhouse. Marriages were arranged by parents when the children were still young, as was the case in the marriage of Jalung Merang and Urai Belawan.

Interethnic wars were frequent. Wars were fought over land rights or settlements, or because of a wish to test the ability or defend the honour of a group, a wish for revenge, and so on. War, better known as mengayau, cannot be equated with savagery, as is often done by outsiders. The movement of people from one village to another resulted from the wishes of the paren to be leaders, from feelings of insecurity, from misfortune, or from defeat in war (in Tekena’ Balan Tempau and Tekena’ Tamen Burin Batu Tusan).

Ceremonies of meeting with or parting from a guest or outsiders were often accompanied by dances. Usually, the host first demonstrated his dancing ability, both in solo dances and in group dancing, and then gave the guest an opportunity to dance (see Figures 12.3 and 12.4). All present were expected to participate in these dancing activities. Invitations for wedding ceremonies, meeting guests, or other social activities were delivered orally. This task was carried out by Asang (a kind of assistant/messenger). When calling for meetings to decide on important matters, such as war plans, the paren (leaders of the longhouse) beat a drum on a beat that the people recognised.
Tolerance or restraint and feelings of friendship were very strong within the community. The people joined in greeting and sending off guests. Problems between individuals were not mentioned directly to the person involved. In war, people who considered themselves invincible preferred that those who came to attack them abort their plans (cf. the father of Usun and Awing Liwen with regard to Uyau Balan Tempau and his group). Friendship and restraint were also expressed in the behaviour of characters toward people who had been killed, yet were not considered as having been wrong. These people who were not wrong were revived through magic by Balan Tempau and the father of Burin Batu Tusun.

Popular belief in omens (amen-amen) and dreams as guidelines for those involved was very strong. This was related to adat customs, like the calling of certain animals such as the kite (pelaki) and isit to ask for advice. Neglecting adat may have a fatal result for someone, as in the case of the death of Mering Belawan in the war against the father of Usun and Awing Liwen. The same was true for the popular belief in prohibitions or taboos. A journey had to be abandoned if the traveller met a snake with a red head and tail (tudo' bala pipa bala). If someone was departing for war, a white rooster was sacrificed and its blood rubbed on his arms to prevent sickness. Victory in war was always celebrated with a mamat festival (the greatest adat ceremony). When conditions were difficult, the people believed in mantras and in the readiness of the ancestors to help their descendants. For example, Balan Tempau in his effort to destroy the war gear of his enemy, the father of Usun and Awing Liwen, who has a glowing fire, calls on the ancestral spirits Uko’ Baya (Grandfather or Grandmother Crocodile) and asks for wet clothing.
Relevance to Modern Social Conditions

The social conditions and the traditions of the past still have an influence on modern social conditions. Several facts found in the tekena’ still apply today.

The belief that the paren symbolically are the descendants of strong and powerful animals is still evident in the tendency of parents to name children Baya’ (Crocodile), Lenjau (Tiger), and so on. A child’s name is always followed by the name of his father, and there is as yet no effort to adopt one name as a family name. Similarly, tekonyms and necronyms are still used consistently.

Forms of cooperation such as village collective work (Indonesian gotong royong) are maintained in almost all aspects of social life, and the social awareness of the people is rather high. They join together to help if any member of the community needs assistance, as for example in building a house. This is also true for farming, hunting, and other activities. Even though the longhouse organisation no longer exists in Long Apan Baru, its basic characteristics endure. The villagers formerly were part of one longhouse, which eventually split up into three longhouses. Today these three longhouses are recognised in three blocks of individual houses (Block I, II, and III; the Block is an administrative unit on the same level as an RT, Rukun Tetangga, or neighbourhood unit).

Ceremonies introducing or seeing off guests with dancing are still found, but they have been brought into line with modern conditions. Invitations for village meetings are delivered orally by a messenger or pelawa, who runs through the whole village shouting the invitation. The pelawa who replaced the dignitary Asang in the tekena’ is paid in kind.

Friendship is expressed by collectively seeing off someone about to depart, and gifts no matter how small are often given to acquaintances whom one may not meet again. Restraint and friendship are still cultivated among the people. A person who is thought to have violated adat and must be fined will not personally attend the meeting of the village officials. The decision of the meeting is delivered to the individual concerned by one or two messengers, while the meeting rests awaiting the response of the accused. Only after that does the meeting continue.

Relationship to Nature in the Past and Today

Several aspects of the relationship between society and the natural environment in the past can be seen in the tekena’. Nature provides various facilities for meeting the daily necessities of society, such as meat, fish, vegetables, fruits, and various other useful articles, which the people can obtain easily. The people use objects in space (the sun and the moon) to determine the farming schedule: for example, they set up a palan tau (gnomon, a pole to measure shadows at noon) to determine when to begin planting; and the phase of the moon is also observed.

The tekena’ indicate a close and harmonious relationship between man and animals and among animals. Man and animals seem to speak the same language and are able to help each other. Because of this connection, land animals can live in harmony with river animals. They can even marry and have human offspring. Not surprisingly, in the tekena’, human beings turning into animals and the reverse is common. Birds often help people to overcome the problems facing them. In several tekena’, the kite, isit, hornbill, as well as the chicken, help or advise human beings about what they must do, even showing them how to reach the sky. The hornbill (temengang) is the best friend of human beings, as is often stated in the silun.
The content of the *tekena’* shows that, today, nature still continues to provide various means for meeting social and individual needs. The harvest of the fields is always adequate as long as people make a satisfactory effort. The same is true for the product of the hunt, or other forest products. Even though all the residents of Long Aran have already abandoned the old beliefs, remnants of these beliefs are still found in present-day society, as for example in setting up a *palan tau* in front of the house of one of the residents to determine the beginning of the planting season. These beliefs clearly are related to the fertility of the soil and the eventual product of the harvest.

The same applies to the belief that the harvest will fail if a woman gives birth unexpectedly in the hut of another person. The offender must inform the village head and pay a fine of two machetes to the owner of the hut, in hopes of expunging the violation and thereby annulling its effect on the harvest.

**CONCLUSION**

The analysis of the *tekena’* contents above, in fact, only serves a subsidiary purpose. The main purpose of the research is to save the *tekena’* from extinction. The product of our work in recording, transcribing, and translating such oral texts will later be returned to the Bakung people. Further research must be done to seek more accurate and more precise information from informants through interviews or other promising techniques. This article, it is hoped, will stimulate the interest of members of the Bakung community themselves, to study and value more highly their own culture. Because the research team came from outside, it could not possibly remain very long at the location, and it would be of great advantage if the collection and preservation of oral literature were done by people who are native speakers of the language of that literature. For this purpose, special training in collecting and preserving oral literature should be given to those interested parties who have helped so far to make the research a success, including, among others, Noh La’ing and Gun Upa.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The author wishes to express his gratitude to the *tekena’* performers (PeNgang, PeDate Upa, PeNjau Igau, and Pui PeDau La’ing), his assistants (Gun Upa, Yamos Ncuk, Hendri Lie, Imang Usat), and all the people of Long Apan Baru.
1. Tekena’ Laking Kuyang ngan Lenjau (Orangutan and Tiger), Abstract

An orangutan and a tiger lived and worked for their livelihood in the area inherited from their ancestors. Each of them claimed the area belonged to him. The tiger invited the orangutan to fight for the area, but the orangutan refused on the grounds that he could not fight. The tiger continued to challenge him until he was forced to accept the challenge.

The two of them took their weapons and began to fight. They pursued each other, attacked, and evaded each other’s hostile moves. After they had fought for a long time, they felt weak. Then suddenly the orangutan captured the tiger’s hand, swung him, and threw him far out into a large and deep river. He sank and fell right into the yard of the house of Bungan Baya’. Bungan Baya’ was attracted to the dashing tiger.

The mother of Bungan Baya’, on first seeing the tiger, asked his name, but he was unwilling to reveal it. In the end, he did say that his name was Tiger. The parents of Bungan Baya’ politely presented their guest with food and asked Tiger to remain with them in the river and marry their daughter.

In the evening Bungan Baya’ asked Tiger to dance to get to know each other. They both expected to have a turn to dance. Bungan appeared to be very suitable as Tiger’s future wife. This was the hope and opinion of her friends. In the afternoon, Baya’ invited the village elders to discuss his daughter’s marriage plans. The day for the wedding was set and the people helped to prepare the wedding by hunting and fishing. All villagers worked voluntarily.

Not long afterward, Bungan became pregnant and gave birth to her son, Belawan Lenjau. The naming had to be accomplished by a ceremony. For the needs of the ceremony, the villagers, including the child’s father, Tiger, went hunting in the forest. Unfortunately, Tiger did not know how to return to the bottom of the river. In the end, he was forced to remain on land.

The child grew up and could already play with his friends, spinning tops and fighting cocks and young dogs. He always won because his top was made of metal, his chicken was a civet, and his dog a bear. Because they were annoyed at losing, the children called Belawan Lenjau an illegitimate child who did not have a father. When he came home, he asked his mother who his father really was. His mother explained what had happened to his father while hunting.

Belawan Lenjau then became determined to search for his father on the land, even though he had no idea where to go. He walked without any definite direction. Finally, he arrived at a high mountain, at the edge of a deep ravine. He was uncertain about how to climb the mountain. The only way was to climb the roots of the banyan tree to a cave. He climbed up and arrived at the cave. There he found a variety of animal skeletons and heard a frightening roar from inside the cave. That was the voice of Tiger. Belawan was very afraid, but he resigned himself to whatever was about to happen.

‘Hey, stupid child, why did you come here?’ ‘I miss my father very much, Tiger!’ he answered, ‘That is why I came here.’ ‘What’s your name?’ Tiger asked again. ‘Belawan Lenjau,’ he answered, and Tiger realised that this was his own son.
Tiger then took off his clothes and became human. Crying, he embraced his son. In fact, there were many people in the area and Belawan Lenjau then settled in the village and married his beloved Mening Nyanding. In the end he became a great leader of that village.

2. Tekena’ Jalung Merang, Abstract
Jalung Merang and his parents lived in the fertile mountainous area at the edge of the Mara Rian River. He wanted to ask for the hand of Urai Belawan on the upper reaches of the river, but his parents asked that he first help them with the farm work. Jalung Merang grumbled to his mother: ‘In that case, when am I going to get married?’

In the meantime, Jalung Bilung and his followers came from downstream. This nobleman from the mouth of the river stayed overnight in Jalung Merang’s house and informed them that the purpose of his journey was to see the beauty of Urai Belawan. When he heard this, Jalung Merang became very angry. Yet, he kept his anger in his heart, but when Jalung Bilung asked him to come along, he refused.

The next day Jalung Bilung left. After that, Jalung Merang told his mother of his annoyance. Feeling that she was in the wrong, she acceded to her son’s request and endeavoured to abort Jalung Bilung’s journey. She changed Jalung Merang into a hornbill bird, who then flew after the boat of Jalung Bilung. He perched on the boat to obstruct their journey.

This attempt did not succeed. The hornbill then recited a mantra that changed the string of Jalung Bilung’s machete into a snake with a red head and a red tail. Meeting with a snake of this type was a taboo or a sign that it was not good to continue the journey. For this reason, Jalung Bilung turned his boat around and went home. He was not aware that the obstacle was Jalung Merang, who then flew straight to the village of Urai Belawan.

When he arrived in Jalung Merang’s village, Jalung Bilung stayed overnight again. Of course, Jalung Merang was not at home. Jalung Bilung told Jalung Merang’s mother why they had returned. From his story, she learned that Jalung Merang’s efforts had been successful.

Still in the shape of hornbill, Jalung Merang was captured by Urai Belawan. Only then did he change back to his human form. Urai Belawan accepted him as a suitor. Accompanied by a group of young people led by Sigau Belawan, Jalung Merang went home taking along his future wife.

The wedding was held immediately. After the wedding, Sigau Belawan and his group returned home. When they had just left, Jalung Bilung and his followers came again from downstream. He was surprised to hear that Urai Belawan had already married Jalung Merang.

Jalung Bilung was very angry, but he did not say anything directly to Jalung Merang and his family. Restraining his anger, he remembered that he had never expressly stated that the purpose in his earlier journey had been to ask for the hand of Urai Belawan.

Aware of their fault, the family of Jalung Merang tried to restore friendly relations with Jalung Bilung. In the end, Jalung Bilung married the younger sister of Jalung Merang and took her to his home downriver.
Long ago, Uyau Balan Tempau fought with the father of Awing Liwen and Usun Garing Liwen, whose weapon in war was a fiery flame. As was usual before fighting, the people held an adat ceremony to call the isit bird and the kite to ask whether they would win or lose. The advice was received by Balan Tempau.

During his journey to the place of Awing Liwen’s father, he was confronted by the latter’s defences, a mynah bird that pecked everyone who passed and sharpened bamboo that could walk on their own and pierce the body of the enemy. He was able to overcome these two obstacles by reciting mantras. After they had been fighting for a long time, they climbed up to a flat land and saw weapons shining on top of a beran tree. This was their destination.

They took turns climbing up, but failed. Then Balan Tempau, who in fact was the descendant of a tiger, tried to climb and succeeded. Everyone followed him like ants in a line, except for Pambo’ Baat, who was fat.

At that time, the father of Awing Liwen was out hunting. His wife called him when she saw the enemy attacking her two children. Awing Liwen’s father came home, but he did not immediately go to the house of his children because he used to underestimate all enemies. When he arrived at the beran tree, he met Pambo’ Baat and attacked him. Pambo’ lost because he was struck by the fiery flame. After climbing the tree, Awing Liwen’s father said, ‘Go on down, there’s no need to fight with me, there is no chance that you will be able to defeat me!’ Balan Tempau and his friends were determined and they started to fight. Everyone fell down, hit by the weapon of Awing Liwen’s father, except for Balan Tempau and Balan Tiling, his brother-in-law.

Balan Tempau asked the spirit of his ancestors, the crocodile, to give him wet clothing, and the spirit fulfilled his request. The war continued, but the burning weapon could not harm Balan Tempau. Awing Liwen’s father lost. In line with the instructions of Awing Liwen’s father, Balan Tempau met the two children and asked for magic to revive his friends and then made the two girls smaller so that they could be taken back home.

When they arrived at their village, a victory celebration was held, which included spearing the head of Awing Liwen’s father. During the night, Balan Tempau dreamed of a landslide as a sign that an enemy was about to attack. The celebration was postponed to be continued on the next night. Balan Tempau’s wife, Mening Nyanding, and Uyau Mo’ went to the upstream end of the village to cut sugarcane for the coming celebration. In a riverbed full of large stones, they saw a large group of enemies.

Uyau Mo’, who claimed to be Balan Tempau, had almost won the fight, when Mening Nyanding mentioned his name. The enemy attacked again and defeated Uyau Mo’. Uyau Mo’s body floated away in the boat, while Mening Nyanding was carried off to the sky.

Uyau Balan Tempau was very angry and tried to track down the people who had carried off his wife. He did not find any sign, until he met an old woman in his dream, who told him that his wife had been carried off to the sky and that he had to make a blowgun. He made the blowgun, but none of his arrows could hit the sun. Then Balan Tempau looked through his wife’s things and found three large needles, which he made into arrows. He shot the first needle and it hit the sun. Then he shot with ordinary arrows and connected them all the way down. He did the same with the second needle, and the third. These connected arrows were then shaken until they became an iron ladder. With this ladder he was able to reach the sun.
After reaching the sun, he fainted because of the heat. He was assisted by Ulau Tau, the guardian of the sun, who showed him the way to his elder sister’s house, who had also been carried off to the sky long ago. His sister was very happy, and she and her husband gave him extraordinary powers to enable him to defeat Jalung Ila. After testing his strength, he was allowed to continue his journey.

He climbed a mountain and reached a stone wall that was his destination. There was no road leading further, except via the roots of a banyan tree, which was still rather small. He waited there a long time, until those roots had grown large enough and could be climbed. Below there was the house of Jalung Ila. Fortunately there was a gibbon. He jumped into the animal’s mouth to be carried down. Mening Nyanding was sitting in front of the house, near the drying area. She was thin and very dirty. From inside the mouth of the gibbon Balan Tempau watched his wife.

Balan Tempau told his wife to do whatever she had been told to do by Jalung Ila, including inviting all residents to dance and entertain her. When they had all assembled for the dance, Balan Tempau called on his ancestral spirit to tell a white rooster to crow. When the rooster crowed, he immediately jumped into its mouth.

While people were dancing, Balan Tempau found a way to enable the rooster to fly to the upriver and downriver ends of Jalung Ila’s longhouse. All those who were touched by the flapping wings died immediately, except for Jalung Ila and Mening Nyanding. Uyau Balan Tempau emerged from the mouth of the rooster and pulled the hand of Jalung Ila to fight and test their respective levels of nobility. Jalung Ila used his weapons, while Balan Tempau was without any weapon. In the end, Balan Tempau won the fight and he tied a rope around the neck of Jalung Ila till he was dead.

Balan Tempau and his wife then gathered all the goods and valuable objects from the village storehouse and placed them into a flying ship. Then they flew home. The two of them were welcomed joyfully in their village because the evil deeds had been avenged.
13.
Folk songs of the Kenyah Leppo’ Ma’ut: A study of text and music

Daniel Lawing

INTRODUCTION
Not surprisingly, traditional songs and music play a prominent role in the daily life of the Kenyah Leppo’ Ma’ut. Demonstrably, almost every daily activity is accompanied by songs and musical performances. The importance of songs and music can also be measured by the great variety of songs and music of the Leppo’ Ma’ut. Nevertheless, the traditional culture of the Leppo’ Ma’ut is disappearing, and this includes their traditional songs and music. Thus, it is very important to document these and make as complete as possible an inventory and classify them according to the context in which they are used.

This article focuses on the village of Long Alango, in the district of Pujungan. The majority of the village population (415 people or 60 family heads) belong to the Leppo’ Ma’ut group. On several short visits to the villages of Long Kemuat and Long Berini, not far from Long Alango and also inhabited by Leppo’ Ma’ut, the writer was able to obtain comparative materials. Research was carried out through interviews with old people well versed in the culture of the Leppo’ Ma’ut and especially familiar with their oral literature, folk songs, and traditional musical instruments. These elderly experts included three individuals from Long Alango, ten from Kemuat, and nine from Long Berini. Some of the folk songs and music were recorded.
GENRES OF FOLK SONGS

The Leppo’ Ma’ut are familiar with nine types of folk songs, which can be classified into five categories (see Table 13.1). The songs and music use both the pentatonic scale (limited to 5–7 notes) and the diatonic scale (for songs using a full octave). The rhyme of Leppo’ Ma’ut folk songs generally follows an A-A-B-B pattern. The five categories and their types are as follows: 1) belian songs include three types: belian kenai ndok, belian suket, and belian sakit; 2) silun songs consist of three types: silun tidau, silun ketena’, and silun menjaeng; 3) londe’; 4) uyau along; and 5) melalo’.

Belian Songs

This category consists of three main song types. The belian kenai ndok are very highly valued because they can be used for nepet (declaring someone’s personal character) and as katok (advice). The belian suket is reserved for healing ceremonies by a traditional healer, who in former times could be possessed by the belian spirits. The belian sakit or dayong is used in healing ceremonies of the Adat Bungan religion. In addition, there is the belian burak, which is sung when welcoming honoured guests at burak (rice wine) drinking ceremonies.

According to the informants, some of the belian songs originated in the adat customs of the Leppo’ Ma’ut who have been living in the upper Bahau River area since the beginning of the 19th century. This is especially true of the songs sung at adat ceremonies and at burak drinking ceremonies. Other songs originated with the Kenyah who lived in Sarawak.

Belian Kenai Ndok Songs

The name kenai ndok means ‘the firewood is coming’ (Figure 13.1). These belian songs have two purposes: nepet and katok. The term nepet refers to a custom in which someone describes at length another person’s personality (his/her shortcomings, special characteristics, and outstanding qualities). The content of the songs can also give high praise to a person, often metaphorically, as in the words: Le pa aki’ matai ka’ nda’ palat taket to’ ia na iku’ te’a (‘I am ready to die under your foot if this makes you happy’). The term katok means ‘advice’. The belian kenai ndok songs have always been used in speeches or sermons to advise other people, to admonish people to do positive things, and to prohibit negative things, for example, in the notong posa (child naming) ceremony. As a sign of respect, these songs may be used to praise a guest and ask guidance or advice from him.

The lyrics of the belian kenai ndok songs (as well as those of the belian burak songs) generally exhort and play on the emotions of the audience during certain social activities, such as inviting an honoured guest to drink burak. The text of these songs and
Table 13.1 Typology of Kenyah Leppo’ Ma’ut songs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Performer</th>
<th>Posture &amp; Costume</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Scale &amp; Rhythm</th>
<th>Mood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belian</td>
<td>B. Kenai Ndok</td>
<td>man or woman</td>
<td>during notong posa and tai pemong rituals</td>
<td>pentatonic</td>
<td>feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>over 35 yr</td>
<td>- standing or sitting</td>
<td>moderato</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- daily clothes</td>
<td>- personal clothing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>during pemong rituals and tai</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Suket</td>
<td>man or woman</td>
<td>during notong posa and tai pemong ritual</td>
<td>pentatonic</td>
<td>enthusiasm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>over 40 yr</td>
<td>- standing or sitting</td>
<td>allegretto</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- daily clothes</td>
<td>- personal clothing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Sakit</td>
<td>man or woman</td>
<td>during belian and dayung</td>
<td>pentatonic</td>
<td>emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>over 45 yr</td>
<td>- standing or sitting</td>
<td>allegretto</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- special clothing</td>
<td>- personal clothing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Silun</td>
<td>S. Tidau</td>
<td>during du matai (mourning)</td>
<td>pentatonic</td>
<td>sadness</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>man or woman</td>
<td>- sitting</td>
<td>grave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>over 45 yr</td>
<td>- good modern clothes</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>during ngetena’ story telling</td>
<td>pentatonic</td>
<td>feeling</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- daily clothes</td>
<td>- personal clothing</td>
<td>largo</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. Ketena’</td>
<td>man or woman</td>
<td>during ngetena’ story telling</td>
<td>pentatonic</td>
<td>feeling</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>over 35 yr</td>
<td>- sitting or lying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- daily clothes</td>
<td>- personal clothing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. Menjaeng</td>
<td>man or woman</td>
<td>during dancing sessions</td>
<td>pentatonic</td>
<td>feeling</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>over 45 yr</td>
<td>- standing</td>
<td>moderato</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- good modern clothes</td>
<td>- personal clothing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Londe’</td>
<td>man or woman</td>
<td>during dancing sessions</td>
<td>diatomic</td>
<td>enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>over 17 yr</td>
<td>- standing, sitting and datun dancing</td>
<td>moderato</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uyau Along</td>
<td>man or woman</td>
<td>at harvest time</td>
<td>pentatonic</td>
<td>feeling</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>over 50 yr</td>
<td>- standing or sitting</td>
<td>adagio</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- romantic sadness</td>
<td>- personal clothing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Melalo’</td>
<td>man or woman</td>
<td>to boost people’s spirits</td>
<td>pentatonic</td>
<td>enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>over 35 yr</td>
<td>- personal clothing</td>
<td>allegro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
their rhythms are very short, while their solo voices are always chasing or answering the choir voices (ngendaeng). These songs have a rather even intonation or melody, and the choir only uses one note, namely 6 (la) low. A solo ends every part on the notes 1, 3, 6 (low). Example:

Solo.....1    Solo.....3  
Choir....6    Choir....6  
Solo.....6    Choir....6

Belian Suket Songs
The belian suket songs (Figure 13.2) differ greatly from the belian kenai ndok. Formerly they were sung especially by a healer who was believed to have a bali belian (belian spirit helper) or to be susceptible to possession by such a spirit. Belian suket songs were performed in special rooms, such as the room of a patient’s family, and were attended by several people who accompanied the solo of the belian suket song, which in the local language is called ngendaeng (accompaniment or choir). The meaning of suket is ‘slowly’, in the sense of doing something in a slow but orderly manner, as is described by this sentence of the song: Nisep ngan sain apan no’ magat (‘Drink slowly so that you will get well and full of energy’). The text of the belian suket songs is long. The solo voices and their choir are like those of the belian kenai ndok, always chasing each other. These songs have a soft intonation that is rather drawn out. The solo voices end on two notes, a high 4 (fa) and a low 1 (do). The choir voices are also marked by two notes, a low 4 (fa) and a middle la (6). Example:

Solo.....4    Solo.....1  
Choir....4    Choir....6

Belian Sakit Songs
These songs are reserved for sick people, and serve to mediate between the patient and Jalong Peselong (The Almighty in the Adat Bungan religion). According to popular belief, a variety of illnesses can be cured with the belian sakit ceremony. The text and the beat are not regular but depend on the preference of the singer (healer); they can be long or short. Furthermore, they are also adjusted to the instructions given by the bali (spirit) of the healer, or who is assigned to help the healer. Any requests made by the bali must be met by the healer and the patient, including words that must be uttered in
the prayer song or the mantra. This song is preceded by a choir (ngendaeng) with a base note of 5 low (sol). After the solo has begun with note 2 (re), the choir follows with 4 (fa) low. The solo only uses 4 notes at the end of each sentence of the song, 2, 3, 4, 6; the choir, on the other hand, only uses one note to the end of the song, 4 (fa) low. Example:

Solo.....2 Solo.....3
Choir....4 Choir....4
Solo.....4 Solo.....6
Choir....4 Choir....4

Before the solo voice begins to sing, it has to start with a rather long sound such as ‘Aaa... Eee...’, and exhale with a long ‘Huss...’, and then the song is started.

Characteristics of the Belian Songs
The belian songs is delivered in the following way: The song (vocal) begins with a solo part, which is then joined at the end of a certain sentence by a choir or ngendaeng. The singer either sits or stands, depending on the situation. For example: 1) while singing, a singer who is sitting holds a glass full of burak that will be offered to the guest or honoured person; the lyrics of the belian burak song are directed at the guest. After the song is finished, the glass of burak is offered to the guest to be drunk. 2) The singer faces the audience, and sings while dancing; the lyrics of the song are directed at the audience, both in the form of nepet or katok, and in the way in which he conveys his humility, e.g., Aki’ uba’ pakalai nyambet, li’i kunia lesa oban nem na’ gelam maki (‘I want to learn how to dance, since you have already given me a dancing costume and it would be a shame to waste it’). 3) In delivering the belian sakit song, the singer faces the audience and the patient, and he may be sitting or standing. The singer always sits when he is telling the story of the bali belian, but he stands when the sacrificial animals (chickens or pigs) are killed.

The language used in the lyrics of the belian songs is a highly metaphorical literary language, and not the language of everyday use. Today’s young generation of Leppo’ Ma’ut are no longer able to understand the meaning of these lyrics, e.g., kusun lilit sada langit anjan, which literally means ‘above the circle of the sky and space’, while its real meaning is ‘the second world in human life other than earth’. Only a few people who are older than 35 can still understand this metaphorical language clearly. The metaphorical language of the belian songs takes many of its metaphors from the names of birds, animals, rivers, and forest plants. For example: the term suwi ta’, which refers to a certain small bird that likes to sit on the tips of leaves or on fruit flowers is used metaphorically to refer to describe the panyen people (the commoner class); the term temenggang (the hornbill bird) is a metaphor for the paren (nobility); the phrase Lenjau Makang, ‘Brave Tiger’, describes heroes, especially those from among the paren; the phrase Kule Sip Mawe Poyan, ‘Leopard with Sharpened Fangs’, is a metaphor for a neat and strong individual, or someone strong and of a noble heart; the phrase Tanyit Lanya Enan, ‘Smooth Tanyit-tree Trunk’, is a metaphor for a tall person with smooth skin; or the phrase Sungai Limun Kanan, ‘Domestic River Water’, must be understood as the area of a river basin owned by a village. The names and characteristics of animals and plants that are closely tied to human life, have been used since olden times as metaphors in the lyrics of the Leppo’ Ma’ut songs as a matter of pride.

Belian songs are a matter of pride for the singer, because not everyone can sing them. The belian songs are in the blood of the Leppo’ Ma’ut, making them feel cheerful
and spirited if someone is able to sing them at the time of an adat ceremony, and they do not feel very uplifted if a ceremony takes place without a belian song. Those attending feel that these songs have represented a special trait of Kenyah culture from olden times until today.

**Silun Songs**

Silun songs are sung when mourning a deceased person (nidau); when singing a historical or epic story (ngetena’); when lamenting, telling a story, or praising something or someone (menjaeng); and also at certain ceremonies such as collective dances, weddings, or births. According to stories, the silun songs were already known when the Leppo’ Ma’ut were living at Tokong Julut (on the Iwan River), Data Pea (Iwan River), and Long Sungai Ma’ut (Lurah River), before they moved to the upper Bahau. They still use them today, but rather infrequently, and only for special ceremonies. Silun songs recall the past or one’s youth, because formerly they were in fact sung by young people almost every evening, and not only at certain ceremonies.

**Silun Tidau Songs**

Silun tidau songs are laments and they are sung at times of death. Their lyrics raise feelings of longing and sadness. They are sung to tell those present about the relationship of human beings to the Almighty (Jalong Peselong in the Bungan religion), and to tell them that after life in this world there is a second, better life in that other world. The silun stories are related to death, as is the one entitled Petapan (‘Lament’), which talks about human beings who must meet their destiny, or Kusun Langit Tawang Deman, which describes another world beyond this earth. Silun tidau also tell the life stories of relatives who have already passed away and, at times, they mention the site of their graves on the upper Bahau and elsewhere. The beat of the silun tidau is short and rather monotonous.

**Silun Ketena’ Songs**

Ketena’ is a story, and ngetena’ means to tell a story (see Figures 13.3 and 13.4). The stories generally are about the families of bali (spirits) who, according to local beliefs, live in the area of Long Berini or on the Berini River. The Berini River, which is called Alo Mararini Marani Kanan or Alo Mara Rian, is located between Apau Ping and Long Kemuat. Other stories are titled Ngayau (‘Attacking the enemy’), Tai Ala’ Letto (‘Go to get your wife back’), Laki Muat (‘The Champion Hero’), Nai Uli’ Anak Da’ Lingu (‘The return of the lost child’), and Letto Mi’ Nai Uli’ (‘The return of the lover’). The silun ketena’ songs are pentatonic and have a rather long and slow beat.
Figure 13.5 Oko’ Asong performing the menjaeng song

Silun Menjaeng Songs
Silun menjaeng are songs (Figure 13.5) sung especially to praise someone, for example, when he dances. The dancer is expected to be more spirited hearing himself praised by the singer (Figures 13.6 to 13.8). The beat or the melody of the silun menjaeng is of two kinds. In the menjaeng ayau, every sentence of the lyrics ends with the rhyme ‘au’, and the song and beat are rather monotonous. Formerly, this type of song was sung in praise of someone who had been successful in ngayau (war). In the menjaeng silun, every sentence of the lyrics must end with the rhyme ‘un’, and this is taken from the word silun. This type of song has a slow long beat that rises and falls.

Characteristics of the Silun Songs
The silun songs generally are full of feeling because they are long and sung slowly by solo singers. In silun tidau and silun ketena’, certain sentences are sung to introduce a story, while in silun menjaeng, entire stories are sung. The lyrics of the silun are often uncertain and depend on the singer. The silun songs are filled with metaphors only rarely used nowadays, except in certain ceremonies, such as du matai (a night wake), ngetena’ (singing a historical epic), or menjaeng (praising someone or something). For example, uweng takin lareng esan, which is metaphorically a strong and well-loved young man.

The melody of the silun tidau is slow and sad. Its beat is repetitive and at the end of each verse the songs always subsides by using only one note, the low
Figure 13.6 Woman performing traditional dance in Long Alango

Figure 13.7 Man performing traditional dance in Long Alango

Figure 13.8 Author and friend in traditional Leppo’ Ma’ut costume
The *silun ketena'* songs resemble the *silun tidau*, but in the second and third verses of some *silun ketena'* the notes rise higher than in the preceding verse. The *silun menjaeng* songs finish the first two verses with note 3 (mi), but end the third verse with low 7 (si). Thereafter the song returns to the beginning note.

**Londe'* Songs**

The term *londe'* carries the meaning of soft, gentle, and beautiful. *Londe'* songs are sung especially at dances and are intended to encourage those present to dance. Before the dancing begins, a *datun* dance is usually held by those organising the event, while awaiting further arrivals. The *datun* dance consists of a long stretched-out line of people who are walking and stomping their feet to the beat of the *londe'* (resembling a polonaise). Singing the *londe'* in the yard or on the veranda of a traditional house means that all residents are invited. This dancing event does not occur at any particular time, but is usually held in the evening; it may also take place in the daytime. The inviting group is usually composed of adults, both men and women. The *londe'* songs are still much sung and people aged 14 and over still know them very well.

Examples of *londe'* songs are *Leleng* and *Kolong Ponai*, which invite people to dance through their lyrics. *Leleng* means to turn or go around while dancing, in accordance with the general Dayak dance pattern of going around in a circle. *Kolong Ponai* means ‘a pet pigeon’, a metaphor for ‘a loved one.’ If after hearing a *Kolong Ponai* song, someone stands up and invites another to dance, the one asked will feel honoured because that one is seen as the *kolong ponai* or loved one of the one inviting. *Londe'* songs, like popular songs, are diatonic. For musical accompaniment, they use plucked or percussion instruments with many notes such as the *sambi'* and *geng galeng*. The *londe'* with free notes use a full octave or more, and are usually accompanied by guitars or other diatonic instruments.

**Uyau Along Songs**

The *Uyau Along* songs have an even beat, use a pentatonic scale, and are romantic in nature if sung in an answering manner, like traditional *pantun* (verses). When the *senguyun* (cooperative work) groups are planting rice together in the dry fields, *Uyau Along* may be sung by a couple (a man and a woman) in an answering manner. These songs can also be sung alone, by someone feeling sad or lonely, because, for example, s/he misses a beloved or remember his/her youth. The words *Uyau Along* are actually taken from a personal name: *uyau* is a term (necronym) for calling a boy whose father has died, while *along* means sad or lonely and is used as a boy’s name. In the *Uyau Along* songs, the beginning of a verse is accompanied by two beats, and then the voice is drawn out to six beats, and only then does it proceed to the following parts of the song.

**Melalo'* Songs**

*Melalo'* songs are connected to *ngayau* (war, headhunting), a frequent activity of men in former times, which involved attacking an enemy with the intention of taking and bringing home their heads.
Melalo’ in Ancient Times
The head was used as a protective agent (lewa) in the melewawa ceremony (the collective cleansing of the village) held at the time of the mamat religious festival. It was meant to protect the residents from illness and danger. Human heads were also used if a member of the nobility (paren) died. During the mourning period, the people wear hats, shirts, and kuaa (women’s skirt), pants (for men; formerly, loincloths), which are all coloured light yellow with a dye made from clay. After taking a human head, the group of men who had gone headhunting returned to the village singing melalo’ songs to dispel sadness, and they took off their mourning clothes. A pet lomo (‘to discard mourning’) ceremony was held, then the mourning clothes were thrown away, and a dancing ceremony was held to the singing of melalo’ songs.

If a mamat festival was being held, or if a member of the nobility had died, when the successful headhunters arrived in their home village, they raised the head high in their left hand and, holding their swords in their right hand, they shouted their victory and joy. They were joined by the other members of their group and were answered by all the villagers together. These cries of victory and joy were formerly referred to as melalo’ This kind of joy was beyond earthly value, because only rarely was a man able to kill an enemy and cut off his head in a face-to-face confrontation. Only someone who was mayeng bali otong (able to endure trials that befall him, who was physically strong, and old enough) could win glory by ngayau or headhunting.

Melalo’ Today
The melalo’, songs to boost the spirit, are often sung when working together, as when carrying something heavy like a rice mortar or a large boat, or when setting up a belawling (a tall ritual pole). Before a singer begins a belian kenai ndok or belian suket song, he first sings a melalo’ to boost the spirits of the choir members about to sing the belian songs. If anyone is going to dance, melalo’ songs are also sung first by someone who is only sitting and watching. The melalo’ songs really raise the spirits of those who are attending and can create a very emotional mood. They can also evoke memories of the mamat festival, which is no longer held today, and of the past glory of the Leppo’ Ma’ut.

Characteristics of the Melalo’ Songs
The melalo’ songs use pentatonic notes and an even beat that is almost like regular speech. The songs are preceded by a solo that also resembles normal speech. When the solo is completed, it is answered by a choir of many voices following a beat. The lyrics at the beginning of every verse are sung by a solo voice that is joined by the choir at the end of the sentence. The first two verses consist of couplets introducing the story, while the second and third tell the content of the story. Melalo’ can be delivered standing or sitting, but it seems that a sitting position is more common, when, for example, accompanying the feasting of a guest with burak. These songs also use a metaphorical language. For example, sadin mambin baya oban, which means ‘younger sibling’, while in ordinary language it is simply sadin or asri’.
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

The Leppo’ Ma’ut are also familiar with instrumental music as accompaniment to dances, which forces the dancers to coordinate their movements and steps with the beat of the musical instruments. Five types of instruments are known, and they belong to three categories (see Table 13.2): 1) plucked instruments, which include the sambi’, lutung, and odeng talang jaran; 2) percussion instruments, such as geng galeng; 3) wind instruments, such as kediri’ bulu’, which is made of bamboo and used like a harmonica. The researcher did not obtain satisfactory information regarding the kediri’ bulu’, and therefore only the plucked and percussion instruments will be discussed below. The sambi’, lutung, odeng talang jaran, and geng galeng are still used today.

Table 13.2 Typology of Kenyah Leppo’ Ma’ut instruments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Performer</th>
<th>Posture &amp; Costume</th>
<th>Context Costume</th>
<th>Scale &amp; Mood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sambi’</td>
<td>man over 18 yr</td>
<td>sitting</td>
<td>during dancing sessions</td>
<td>pentatonic, moderato, feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutung</td>
<td>man or woman over 40 yr</td>
<td>sitting</td>
<td>during dancing sessions and in quiet, lonely times</td>
<td>pentatonic, moderato, feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odeng talang jaran</td>
<td>man or woman over 50 yr</td>
<td>sitting or standing</td>
<td>in quiet, lonely times</td>
<td>pentatonic, feeling, moderato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geng galeng</td>
<td>man or woman over 40 yr</td>
<td>sitting or standing</td>
<td>in quiet, lonely times</td>
<td>pentatonic, feeling, moderato</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Sambi’

The sambi’ is a type of kecapi (lute) with at least three strings (see Figures 13.9 and 13.10), but it may have up to four or five strings depending on its origins. In other Kenyah languages, it is known as sampe’, and in Kayan it is called sape’. Before plastic and metal strings appeared, fibres from the iman tree (Arenga pinnata, sugar palm) were used as strings for the sambi’. Today, steel wire is much used, it is obtained from the wires of bicycle brakes or from guitar strings. Steel wire is preferred because it is strong, does not break easily, and has a soft but piercing sound. The first string or wire is used to play the melody. To set the notes, small pieces of rattan (1 cm long and 3 mm wide) called nden are placed under the strings, and glued to the body of the sambi’ with odep (a kind of resin). The sambi’ is played by plucking like a guitar: while the left hand presses the strings in accordance with the notes of the song, the right hand plucks the strings. Two or more people may play the sambi’ at the same time (Figure 13.11); the first one plays the melody, the second the accompaniment (pepa). The third and other players play variations of the melody and/or of the accompaniment (to embellish the presentation of the song). The sambi’ can be tuned in different ways depending on whether it is to be played alone or to accompany dancing or singing; Figure 13.12). It can also be tuned to either the pentatonic or diatonic scale.
Figure 13.9 Parts of the sambi’ lute (viewed from the front): 1) kalong ulu, carved head; 2) poreng, pegs; 3) batuk, neck; 4) nden, nut made of rattan; 5) osa, body; 6) batek, soundboard; 7) nden, frets; 8) tali sambi’, strings; 9) nden, frets; 10) pen, end part; 11) odep, spare resin to glue frets.

Figure 13.10 Young man playing the sambi’ at Long Alango

Figure 13.11 Recording Bakung lute music in Long Aran, 1992
The Lutung

The lutung is also a plucked instrument, a zither. It has a five-cornered body and six strings on a pentatonic scale (Figures 13.13 and 13.14). Its size depends on the preference of the user (about 1.25 m long, 18 cm wide at the bottom, and 24 cm wide at the top). In the past, the lutung was cylindrical, because it was made from bamboo, and raised outer fibres of the bamboo were used for strings. Nowadays it is made from dried, lightweight boards and its strings are made from steel wire (from bicycle brakes). This simple instrument also accompanies dances or entertains the player himself when he is lonely. The lutung are usually played by two or more people, with the first player playing the melody and the others the accompaniment (pepa). The scales of the lutung vary according to the songs played. The tuning is done by shifting the location of the nden (the frets or supports for the strings, which determine their notes).

Figure 13.13 Parts of the lutung zither: 1) ulu, head; 2) poreng, pegs; 3) nden, frets made of wood; 4) osa, body; 5) batek atau osok, soundboard; 6) tegaeng, sides; 7) laba, strings; 8) nden, nut made of rattan; 9) pen, end part; 10) likut, back.
The Odeng Talang Jaran

The odeng talang jaran, or jew’s harp, is a plucked instrument made of bamboo that uses the mouth as a sound chamber. The sound produced resembles that of a frog. The shape is not very standardised according to definite measurements. It varies between 22 to 32 cm and can be changed according to preference and comfort of the instrument’s fit to the mouth of the maker or user. There are two types of odeng, a short odeng and a long odeng (see Figure 13.15). This instrument is usually played by older people, both men and women, who are feeling lonely. The odeng talang jaran is usually played by two people, with one playing the melody and the second the accompaniment. The sharp tip of the odeng is plucked, the tail end is the handle, and the tongue part is placed in front of the mouth cavity. The sound produced is louder if the player is toothless, as the mouth cavity then is a more effective sound box.

Figure 13.14  A lutung zither, played by a Bakung woman at Long Aran

Figure 13.15 Short (a) and long (b) odeng talang jaran jew’s harp: 1) ulu, head; 2) jella’, tongue; 3) batok, neck; 4) osa, body; 5) pen, end part.
The Geng Galeng

The *geng galeng* is an instrument that resembles a xylophone. It has seven bars made of light wood and is approximately 20-50 cm long and 5-10 cm wide (see Figures 13.16 and 13.17). If two instruments are used, one *geng galeng* plays the melody and the other the accompaniment. It is also possible for two players to play the melody and the accompaniment alternately to give variation to the song. The *geng galeng* uses a pentatonic scale, but because their number can be increased, the *geng galeng* can also be used for playing songs with a diatonic scale. The *geng galeng* is played sitting on a bench that is 25 cm long and 7-10 cm high. The player’s legs are crossed and his knees up as he faces the instrument. Both hands hold two round pieces of wood as beaters (*tit*), which are 20 cm long and 2-3 cm in diameter. Both hands are equally active.

**Figure 13.16** The pentatonic *geng galeng* xylophone

![Pentatonic xylophone diagram]

**Figure 13.17** Leppo’ Ma’ut musician Oko’ Wak playing the *geng galeng*
The music of the geng galeng is often heard during the planting season, from the time when the fields are burned until the end of the harvest. Since former times, this musical instrument has been made for playing during leisure time (initially it was not intended to accompany songs and dances); it was made from dry pieces of wood left over from the burning of the fields. It was usually played by men. Today, it is often used to accompany dancing or singing, along with the sambi’. It can even be combined with the sound of the guitar, of empty bottles, or of the ribs of palm leaves. The geng galeng can be used for entertaining people who are spending the night in the fields (referred to as todo), especially at weeding time and when harvesting. In the fields, the geng galeng is not only played for entertainment, but also to chase away pest animals (pigs, deer, monkeys, birds, and others) that threaten the crops.
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