

**BORNEO RESEARCH COUNCIL**  
**ANNUAL NEWSLETTER REPORTING THE ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR 2014**

**September 2014**

**DEAR FELLOWS AND MEMBERS:**

The 12th Biennial Conference of the Borneo Research Council was hosted by the the Kadazan Chair and the School of Social Sciences of the Universiti Malaysia Sabah. Professor Jacqueline Pugh-Kitingan organized the Conference. As usual, with Dr. Jacquie's leadership, it was a splendid meeting.

Renewals: It is the season to renew your Fellowship or Membership status. We have enclosed your invoice and a list of books available from the BRC that includes exciting new items.

**Fellows/Members: Please Note – PDF copies of BRC publications:**

All publications are available in PDF format with the exception of Psychiatric Research Among the Iban and the Iban Diaries of Monica Freeman. This makes them available for searches.

Fellows/Members may request free of charge any five items in our publication list. If Fellows/Members want additional items, we will a charge US \$10 for each additional set of five. Please send requests to [brc@borneoresearchcouncil.org](mailto:brc@borneoresearchcouncil.org).

These PDF-formatted items are not available to those who are not Fellows/Members.

**NEW PUBLICATIONS**

Blust, Robert, and Alexander D. Smith.

2014 A Bibliography of the Languages of Borneo (and Madagascar), Borneo Research Council Reference Series No. 2. Price \$35.00. ISBN #1-929900-15-5 (Includes PDF of text on CD).

This is a very valuable and well edited volume with a CD that allows searching for specific information!

## **PUBLICATIONS IN PREPARATION**

Pudarno Binchin

- n.d. Singing Siram Ditaan: Composition, Performance and Transmission of Epic Tales of Derato in Brunei Dusun Society. Borneo Research Council Monograph Series No. 14.

Sercombe, Peter, Michael Boutin, and Adrian Clynes, eds.

- n.d. Advances in Research on Linguistic and Cultural Practices in Borneo. Memorial Volume for Peter Martin.

### ***New series: BRC Material Culture Series***

Heppell, Michael

- 2014 The Seductive Warp Thread: An Evolutionary History of Ibanic Weaving. Borneo Research Council Material Culture Series No. 1. (*Available in late 2014*)
- n.d. Communing with the Dark Side: Borneo's Masks and Masquerades. Borneo Research Council Material Culture Series No. 2.

We are also hoping sometime in the coming year to bring to press the very important collected articles and papers of Dr. Clifford Sather.

Laura and I have been encouraged to prepare a monograph on the Rungus people of Northern Sabah under the title: "The Rungus Momogun of Borneo: Trance, Death and Sexual Equality in Cognatic Society." It will be ready for publication by this time next year.

## **THE FUTURE IS TRULY EXCITING:**

The Borneo Research Bulletin prospers under the great editorship of Cliff Sather, for which we are most thankful. It has contained many significant and important papers. We are getting more and more requests for copies of its articles.

We have a very sound book list in our Monographs Series, Proceedings Series, Occasional Papers, Reference Series and our new Material Culture Series. The scholarly contribution of our publications is manifested in the increasing income from permissions and royalties.

We need more reviews of the status of research in those disciplines and sciences that are critical to a full understanding of Borneo, past and present, physically, socially, historically, medically, biologically, and botanically. Let me encourage all of you to ask your colleagues in related disciplines to undertake such reviews.

There are two publications of great interest. These are the translations and annotations of two Iban ceremonies, which provide critical insight into Iban thought and ceremonial organization. The first of the two is:

Sutlive, Vinson H., ed.; Joanne Sutlive, Associate Editor

2011 *Seeds of Sorrow, Words of Hope: An Ethnographic Study of Iban Death Chants*. With Patricia Matusky, Contributing Editor, Assistant Editors Janang Ensiring, Jantan, Uambat, Robert Menua Saleh, Shirley Vilin, Siah Tun Jugah and Walter Wong. Kuching: Tun Jugah Foundation.

And secondly, Cliff Sather will be completing this coming year his important volume on the Iban ceremony, the Sugi Sakit, which is the cumulation of 10 years of work.

The BRC continues to be a viable, active, important scholarly institution that is making major contributions to Bornean knowledge. We want to express our deep thanks to all our Fellows and Members that have made this possible.

## **FRIENDS OF THE SARAWAK MUSEUM**

Louise Macul has formed the Friends of the Sarawak Museum ([fosmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:fosmuseum@gmail.com)), which promotes an appreciation of Sarawak's heritage through its museums.

The Friends holds regular meetings and lectures that vary from scholars talking about biodiversity to scholars giving talks on local adat and archaeology, to the presentation of the work of local artists, etc.

Louise was of immense help at the BRC conference in taking care of our table.

## **THE CONCEPT OF RESILIENCE**

Resilience: this is now a popular concept in ecology and it is also applied to social movements and social ecology. I draw your attention to this as there has been an article published on Borneo research entitled:

Alcorn, Janis B., et al.

2002 *Keeping Ecological Resilience Afloat in Cross-Scale Turbulence: An Indigenous Social Movement Navigates Change in Indonesia*. In *Navigating Social-Ecological Systems*. Fikret Berkes, Johan Colding, and Carl Folke, eds. Pp. 299-327. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

What is resilience? The definitions of resilience are varied and to my mind contradictory

which makes the use of this concept rather confusing. In a limited sense it is a measure of adaptive capacity of an ecosystem. However, the definitions involve more complex concepts. For example:

Ecological resilience is a bundle of concepts or ideas developed to explain complex system dynamics.

Gunderson, et al 2010:423

When forces external to the system stress or perturb the system, the system enters the next phase of the adaptive cycle: a period of creative destruction...The destruction phase is quickly followed by a reorganization... where a new system emerges, leading to the growth phase of a new cycle. The phases of creative destruction and reorganization are the phases of this cycle in which ecological resilience is expressed. The period of reorganization... is when the system will flip into an alternative regime. That flip can be idiosyncratic and random, a result of what types of colonizers, invaders, entrepreneurs, or organizers establish and take hold for the next phases of growth and development. This is the period where novelty in the system is likely to emerge as new combinations of old and new elements.

Gunderson, et al 2010:430

Reference:

Gunderson, Lance H., Craig R. Allen, and C. S. Holling  
2010 The Evolution of an Idea – Past, Present, and Future of Ecological Resilience.  
*In* Foundations of Ecological Resilience. Gunderson, Lance H., Craig R. Allen,  
and C. S. Holling. Washington: Island Press.

I raise the question of 'how can an ecosystem be resilient when it transforms into a completely different ecosystem as a result of innovation'.

But my real quarrel with the concept is that it has become a fad in environmental planning. This leaves ecosystems with little resilience unnoticed, while they may in fact have important genetic material. In a sense a concept of resilience is in conflict with concerns over biodiversity.

## **NEW FELLOWS AND MEMBERS**

The BRC would like to recruit more Fellows and Members, particularly in those disciplines that are not well represented among our membership. Let me encourage you to nominate individuals to become Fellows and Members. Also, please encourage your colleagues to join.

## **STATUS OF THE BORNEO RESEARCH BULLETIN**

Volume Forty-four (2013) of the *Borneo Research Bulletin* was published earlier this year. It again is an important volume under the superb editorship of Cliff Sather. Volume Forty-five is now in the works.

## TRANSPACIFIC PRESS

This press has some publications relevant to Borneo research:

### **Trans Pacific Press**

PO Box 164  
Balwyn North Victoria 3104  
Australia  
Phone: +61 3 9859 1112  
Email: tpp.mail@gmail.com  
Web: <http://www.transpacificpress.com/>

Gomes, Albert

2004 *Looking for Money: Capitalism and Modernity in an Orang Asli Village.* Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press. (\$29.95)

Nobuta, Toshihiro

2008 *Living on the Periphery: Development and the Islamization of the Orang Asli.* Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press. (\$114.95)

Soda, Ryoji

2007 *People on the Move: Rural-Urban Interactions in Sarawak.* Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press. (\$109.95)

Tsubouchi, Yoshihiro

2001 *One Malay Village: A Thirty-Year Community Study.* Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press. (\$44.95)

Tuck-po, Lye, Wil de Jong, and Ken-ichi Abe, eds.

2003 *The Political Ecology of Tropical Forests in Southeast Asia.* Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press. (\$54.95)

Urano, Mariko

2010 *The Limits of Tradition: Peasants and Land Conflicts in Indonesia.* Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press. (\$104.95)

Yamamoto, Hiroyuki, Anthony Milner, Midori Kawashima, and Kasuhiko Arai, eds.

2011 *Bangsa and Umma: Development of People-grouping Concepts in Islamized Southeast Asia.* Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press. (\$84.95)

## **HELP NEEDED TO REPLY TO INQUIRIES**

The BRC office is constantly getting requests for information, almost all of which are beyond my competence. I would like to form a committee of scholars and others to be of help when this occurs so that I can forward on to them such requests. Please let us know if you would be willing to help on these inquiries by sending us your email address.

## **REVIEWS OF RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY LITERATURE IN VARIOUS DISCIPLINES**

The BRC was founded on the principle that in Borneo the various scientific and scholarly disciplines are closely intertwined. The success of the queries of any discipline is interdependent on the findings of many other disciplines. Consequently, when the BRC was formed, it was on the basis of advancing research in the social, biological, and medical sciences in Borneo.

However, since that time, the various disciplines have grown immensely so that it is impossible for a scholar to keep up with developments in related disciplines that may have relevance to one's own research. Therefore, it was decided to establish a new series of publications to review the status of research and scholarly publications in various fields.

If these reviews are lengthy they will be published as Occasional Papers; if shorter in length, they will appear in the BRB.

Reviews which have already appeared in the Borneo Research Bulletin:

Volume 36 (2005):

- Menno Schilthuis, "After the Sarawak Law: Evolutionary Biology in Borneo Since 1855."
- Nicolas Tarling, "Further Notes on the Historiography of British Borneo."

Volume 40 (2009):

- Francis Q. Brearley, "Forest Ecology Research in Borneo, 2003-2008."

We want to express our thanks to these authors for their excellent work!

We hope that these publications will stimulate new research and communication between the various disciplines as well as produce additional comments in the BRB.

Please send any offers to prepare a review, or suggestions and nominations to: brb-editor@comcast.net.

We need reviews of the linguistic situation in Borneo, research done by Japanese scholars and published in Japanese, historical research in Kalimantan, etc.

## **FELLOWSHIPS FOR THE COLLECTION OF ORAL LITERATURE AND TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE**

The BRC has been in contact with a foundation that is willing to award fellowships to support the collection of oral literature and traditional ecological knowledge. If this is of interest to anyone please contact the: [brc@borneoresearchcouncil.org](mailto:brc@borneoresearchcouncil.org).

**BRC WEBSITE:** [www.borneoresearchcouncil.org](http://www.borneoresearchcouncil.org)

Dee Baer brought to my attention an item on our website that was no longer appropriate. In investigating that I discovered that much of the website is out of date. We are now in the process of updating it. But as this is all done on a volunteer basis, it takes time. Help is always appreciated!

## **CONTRIBUTIONS**

We wish to thank the following individuals for their contributions to the BRC:

### **Contributions to the BRC Endowment Fund**

Dr. Clare Boulanger, Dr. Jay B. Crain, Professor Ian Douglas, Dr. Michael R. Dove, Ms. Valerie Mashman, Professor H. Arlo Nimmo, Dr. Anne Schiller, Dr. Phillip Thomas, and Dr. W. D. Wilder.

### **Contributions to the BRC Operating Fund**

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## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The operating statement is attached.

G. N. Appell, Ph.D.  
September 2014