PLACE, PERSON AND POWER:
LUNDAYEH/LUN BAWANG AND POST-
CHRISTIAN NARRATIVES

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PRE- AND POST-CHRISTIAN NARRATIVES

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This article explores how modernity for the upland peoples of north central Borneo provided new opportunities and presented new challenges to the cultural construction of place, person and power. To the traditional migration tale, which had authenticated both the distribution of communities and their relationships, was added the mission tale, which authenticated membership of individuals and communities into the kingdom of God. In recent years Pentecostal revivals have collapsed the distinction between these types of tales. Tales of spiritual visions deriving from these revivals link place, person and power in ways which transcend the tension between traditional and modern versions of power. Below, we describe and discuss some features of continuity in three narrative texts, the themes within these textual constructions politically embedded discourses. Our analysis situates these narratives within the colonial and post-colonial discourses about Lundayeh/Lun Bawang society. We then compare varying constructions of place, person and power in pre- and post-Christian spiritual narratives and discuss how these narratives are enacted as various forms of social practice.

During the past 60 years Lundayeh/Lun Bawang oral tradition has undergone three transformations. Pre-Christian oral traditions expressed themes of creation, migration, and the relationships between communities. Mission tales followed the arrival of the missionaries and expressed themes of authenticating the membership of individuals
and communities in the Christian church. Lasdy, recent Pentecostal tales - which relate encounters with the Holy Spirit - foreground the trials and tribulations of individuals seeking a path to salvation. Each of these narrative traditions exemplify forms of moral imagination linking person, place and power (Beidleman, 1993). Today - as both oral performances and written texts - these tales (which we here label pre-modern, modern and postmodern) have become contemporaneous with each other and constitute alternative media through which people both construct themselves, their communities and pursue differing goals within these communities.

**Pre-Modern Period and Oral Literature**

The Lundayeh/Lun Bawang consider the remote highland valleys and tablelands of north-central Borneo their homeland from which they have been migrating into the surrounding lower valleys during the last three hundred years. Numbering approximately 40,000, they today reside in the states of Sabah and Sarawak (Malaysia), the province of East Kalimantan (Indonesia), and Temburong District (Brunei Darussalam) (Crain, 1978; Datan, 1989).

In the colonial era, the geo-political situation of the Lundayeh/ Lun Bawang was unique (Crain and Pearson-Rounds, 1997). Although many tribal groups in Southeast Asia found themselves straddling European-drawn state and international boundaries, the communities of the *Apad Wat* were divided by a remote border separating two rival colonial systems - the British and Dutch. These communities had lived for centuries in the upland plateau region of north central Borneo where they possessed salt springs, grew vast surpluses of rice, and were capable of living without the reliance on or interference of other tribes. Living above the limits of navigable streams, these interior communities were beyond the reach of the usual raiding parties which terrorised the existence of so many Borneo communities in the past. Their highly centralised and quite efficient system of irrigated fields sustained communities of some size, located near one another.³
Traditional oral literature reflects the nature of the basic structural features of Lundayeh/Lun Bawang society; competition for influence - traditionally in the form of sponsoring great feasts and work projects associated with marriage and death - was the engine driving this society. This was especially the case in the Ba areas, those intensively cultivated upland interior valleys. There, large surpluses of rice and water buffalo, combined with relative freedom from marauding outsiders, provided both the means and opportunity for motivated families to compete for influence. These families interacted within a system of competition over the control of people, by sponsoring elaborate marriages involving large-scale exchanges of labour and valuables or labour intensive mortuary monuments such as nabang or kawang (Crain, 1992). These relationships were defined, described, and reflected upon in the pre-modern oral literature.

Langub divides Lundayeh/Lun Bawang traditional oral literature into three overlapping categories: serita mon, laba' and buek. Serita mon comprise both Lundayeh/Lun Bawang myths and legends, narratives of supernatural or imaginary persons grappling with natural or social phenomena (Langub, 1992). Laba' span the entire range of Lundayeh/Lun Bawang oral literature (Maxwell, 1989: 173), take from half an hour to two hours to complete, and are stylistically earthly and humorous. Buek comprise the majority of the sung or chanted literature, long sung pieces which contain both history and myth, the performer using a specialised and archaic vocabulary.

There are three types of buek: mumuh, arin and dadai Upai Semaring — Lundayeh/Lun Bawang epics, taking more than eight hours and spreading over many days or nights. Mumuh characterise war expeditions, historical and mythical heroic adventures of men and women, and are told using an archaic, rhyming, metaphorical vocabulary. Arin subject matter is the same as mumuh but the characters' names differ as well as the tune. Dadai Upai Semaring (the song of Upai Semaring) refer to the adventures and exploits of the
hero and first Lundayeh/Lun Bawang Upai Semaring and also contain specialised and archaic vocabulary (Langub, 1992: 6-7). Shorter buek forms, taking less than half an hour to perform, are the siga’, benging, ukui and tidum. The siga’ is sung about a person, place, event, situation and courtship and could be serious or humorous; some texts pass from generation to generation while others are improvisational. The benging are similar to siga’ regarding subject matter, the difference found in the tune and presentation style. The ukui was sung when raising the ceremonial pole, nui ulung, at a feast held for the taking of a head to recount a man’s bravery, and were created at the event. Tidum are children’s lullabies. People performed siga’ or ukui at irau held to celebrate the return of a headhunting party from a successful raid or when a person wanted to hold a big celebration for any reason. When siga’ was organised, an image of a crocodile was carved in earth and an ulung pole was raised. Any man or woman could sing the siga’ or ukui supported by the chorus of the participants, but only a person competent in siga’ or ukui would be the lead singer. Contents of the narrative would depend on the occasion. For instance, if a man wanted to ngalap ngadan (“make a name”) for himself, he would organise an irau, carve a crocodile and raise an ulung. Singers who came to the irau would sing siga’ or ukui to praise the person for his deeds and greatness. At celebrations to welcome a successful raid, singers would sing praise to the warriors and create verse condemning the victims (Langub, 1998).

During pre-modern times Lundayeh/LunBawang oral literature functioned as a major form of entertainment. Mumuh, arin and dadai Upai Semaring were sung to entertain farmers working in cooperative work groups. Many types oibuek and labd’ were told on the longhouse gallery to pass away the evening while people wove mats, carved parang handles and cared for children, when the old could pass stories on to the young. Their oral literature encompassed their norms, values, history, social mores, their ethos - mediums expressing ideas and talents (Langub, 1992: 9-10).
Missionary Period and Oral Literature

Lundayeh/LunBawang were influenced by two missionary evangelical groups entering their world from two different directions (Crain, 1992). Canadians and Americans of the Christian Missionary Alliance worked on the Dutch side of the island and Australians of the Borneo Evangelical Mission worked in Sarawak. Arrival of these missionaries in the 1930s precipitated a shift in Lundayeh/Lun Bawang moral imagination and as a result, the modern "mission tale" was born.

Within the colonial literature of Sarawak, the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang are constructed as troublesome, immoral, warlike drunkards, a theme taken up with enthusiasm by Borneo Evangelical Mission workers (Lees, 1979). Unlike the Catholics and Anglicans who tried to fit their religions into their converts' worlds, the Fundamentalist missionaries made it clear that the old ways would have to be abandoned. No longer could the people make and drink rice wine (borak), use tobacco, the power of dreams, omens and omen birds. Songs, prayers, and the six-day week replaced their former way of life. Many today still describe their pre-Christian society as evil and licentious - almost a trope, translated word-for-word from Drunk Before Dawn.

Modern Lundayeh/Lun Bawang writers have suggested other factors which influenced their conversion. Sia argues that prior to their conversion, the Lundayeh/LunBawang were looking for something to revive their society dying out and suffering from government restrictions on headhunting activities (Sia, 1989: 104-105). These restrictions disrupted traditional ways of living ending the associated rituals significant in reaffirming village solidarity. A general loss of members' loyalty to their village or regional areas followed the banning of feuds. Village and regional headmen lost some of their influence with followers. Conversion was rapid as the people adopted this different way of life filling the gap created by these changes (Langub, 1984: 77, 79).
Regardless of cause, the adoption of Fundamentalist Christianity between 1933 and 1938 affected many aspects of Lundayeh/Lun Bawang life, particularly the lives of women, members of church congregations within their communities. Women had access to the same roles as men, serving as both, gambala (pastors) and pelayan (deacons). Prior to becoming Christian it was uncommon for women to address a gathering of people. The church, the people, the movement were narrated in their stories of this time. People sought not only to distance themselves from the old pagan ways, but to emulate the missionary zeal of the Australians. Stories told at evening gatherings were accounts of Lundayeh/Lun Bawang missionaries working in the service of the movement to bring Christian conversion to other tribes. Concerns of bringing as many sheep into the Christian fold were reflected in their oral narratives - personalised accounts of individual salvation. Redemption narratives recount how the teachings of the Lord once adapted to one’s own life, served individuals and acted as reinforcement to gather many to this new found way. Missionary teachings were passed from individual to individual, village to village, written upon black boards and expressed in simple drawings, for the majority of listeners could not read or write. It would be the missionaries who pushed for and supported literacy among the people, and ultimately translated the Bible into the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang language.

**Postmodern Pentecostalism and Oral Tradition**

In 1973, beginning among a group of school-aged individuals in the Kelabit highlands in Bario, a revival began to spread as the Holy Spirit moved from individual to individual. People spoke in tongues, fell into trance. Some exposed secret sins and problems, charms and fetishes (Bulan, 1996:41). Six teams of people (students and villagers) quickly moved to share the revival with other communities in the Fifth Division (Bulan, 1996: 37). In 1975 a second revival occurred, followed by those in 1979 and 1985. It was the revival of 1979 that lead to the use of prayer mountains as locations for prayer groups. The
emergence of the numerous revivals loosened rigid spiritual authority; the participation of young people and women became even more accepted. While the shape of the ministry changed, so too did the actions of the ministered. The uniformity of both church structure and practice — elected officials maintaining spiritual authority — was now being challenged by this notion that God can use "any willing vessel" (Bulan, 1996: 61). Pentecostalism - the speaking in tongues, the outward displays of repentance, the intercessions with the Holy Spirit, manifestations of the Devil, the interpretation of signs, and the use of prayer mountains — were all outward displays that had not been part of the Christian script. Those who found themselves inclined to the less demonstrable forms of Christian expression as well as the more traditional channels of spiritual authority found themselves in the lama (old) camp. Evangelical followers were labelled baru, new.

Pentecostal oral tradition expresses the spiritual journeys of the tellers, individuals who experience the workings of the Holy Spirit, interpret various miracles, act as intermediaries for congregations and the Lord, have contact with the dead, groups (of mainly women) prayer warriors who fervently pray to keep evil away. Prophets and prayer warriors relate their tales to congregations and to individuals who have spread their narratives widely in newspaper articles and books, tales described as journeys of spiritual encounters, personal accounts of inspiration, moral imperatives for the individual, the village, the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang, humankind.

**Upai Kasan and Pentecostal Narratives**

While on the surface what appears to be a shift from a "pagan" belief system guiding Lundayeh/Lun Bawang practice to an imported "western" model of Christianity, upon closer examination an enduring system is revealed, reproduced rather than produced anew (Bourdieu, 1995: 36), the productions, themselves products of history, the individuals, and collective practices (Bourdieu, 1995: 82). When
comparing a pre-Christian narrative, Upai Kasan, and the narratives of two Pentecostal prayer warriors the distinction between the types of these tales collapses, based on similarities of place, person and power.

A Pre-modern Narrative

The tale "Upai Kasan: a Lun Bawang Folktale" transcribed and translated by James Deegan and Robin Usad (Deegan and Usad, 1972) tells of Upai’s encounters with animals and jungle nature which give him guidance to the proper path and the ultimate reward with the life as a Racha’s son. Upai originates as a mystical being, found as a half-fish by a childless man who turns into the son of this poor couple living alone in the jungle. While quite young both parents die leaving Upai to wander through the jungle, ending up working as a servant for the Racha, a powerful man in the area. While in his service the Racha believes a piece of his gold has been stolen and threatens death to the servants unless it is returned. Upai gets guidance from a snake and finds the culprit, a chicken who has eaten the gold. The Racha rewards Upai and grants him his wishes. Upai is counselled by a voice (that no one else hears) to ask for the best sword in the land, the smallest rat and the ability to travel to far places. His wishes are granted. Upai’s journey during a years time takes him to a waterfall which instructs him to walk ten days and nights to retrieve a bamboo water container located in the ground underneath a fire burning near a shack. At the house he encounters Tuk Ada Rayeh, a demon that threatens him and changes form. Upai is tied up. With the help of his rat he is freed. He beheads the demon, retrieves the bamboo container, and walks back to the waterfall, where he is instructed to fill it with water and walk back to the house. He does this and buries the bamboo. From a large cloud of smoke appears a very handsome man, son of the Racha, who had been changed into water years ago by the demon. The snake has now transformed into the second son of the Racha. Both are so grateful for Upais help that they make him their brother. All three live happily and peacefully in a better home than all the other Rachas.
Two Postmodern Pentecostal Narratives

The two Pentecostal narratives are texts narrated by two women prayer warriors from Ba' Kelalan, Sarawak, now published in the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang language in a booklet entitled Kebala Tuhan ("The Lord Said"), by GaritTagal Franklin.

The first testimony was narrated by Maria Gugkang and described her initial Pentecostal experience in 1973 when she was "slain" for more than 24 hours during the Ba' Kelalan revival. She described how God revealed to her all of her sins in visual images and physical manifestations. While angels took her for a walk she was asked if she wanted to see the crown of life. She saw many glittering crowns of different sizes. The angels told her the crown of life would only be given to the faithful. She was moved to another house where many people were not able to stand up straight, the light purplish. These were the doubtful. She was reminded that the one sin she had not yet confessed was that of doubt, and was warned that if she did not confess she would end up in that house, with those dead doubters. She was tested with further questions and then confessed her sins, was brought back home where she became conscious. Maria then described how God revealed various things to her everyday. One time the Spirit asked her if she wanted to look into hell. She was lifted away from her children and husband who slept with her. Accompanied by four angels she arrived at a very high hill which overlooked a deep hole with concrete edges and fire. People moved up and down with the flames, screaming and suffering. Maria was thrown into the hole by an angel. She called for a long time to get out. A voice told her that if she was not faithful she would enter hell. Maria then saw herself walking along a road with four junctions, a person standing at each. Two people on her right told her to use a road, which she did. She was told that she would receive life. She awoke and heard her child crying as she had been told. Another time she heard calling, saw herself standing in a field, heard the grass saying that God created us, but does not love us.
The trees and fields said the same thing. Whoever was created by God had better praise him. The rocks, stones, worms, bugs, animals, earth and water said the same thing. A different voice warned of the need to praise God. Maria answered that it is human beings that need to love God. God also revealed to her that those with many possessions do not sleep well at night and those with land are actually only guests who stay temporarily. She told of how Satan came knocking at her door one night while she was lying next to her children. She looked out the window, called, but heard nothing. Satan wanted to give her spiritual power, power to pray for her blind father. She rebuffed him and yelled at him to leave. She was told by the Lord’s spirit to be strong and not be discouraged and for the next few months she was approached again with offers of power, to see other countries and places, to walk on the walls of the house, to fly to Lawas, to walk on water, to make clothes, money from the limbs of trees. Each time she rebuffed Satan. He tied her up with rope and tried to stab her. She called on Jesus and was saved.

The second narrative was told by Tusi Agong and began with her encounter with the Holy Spirit for one day and one night in 1973. At this time all her sins were revealed to her. While she looked into a big hole one of many locusts stung her. She later learned that she was stung because she was not marked with the Holy Spirit and was made an example. A few days later she realised that she could hear but not speak. This affliction stayed with her for five months during which time the people in the village believed her mad and did not care for her. At this time the Lord’s spirit told her about her sins. She was also able to hear the prayers said by a pastor and a women who lived in a village far away. She faced many tests and was not able to care for herself or her children, had various encounters with the Devil. During the fifth month of muteness she witnessed the conflicting powers of Jesus and Satan. Sent to a hospital in Lawas to determine the cause of her muteness, on the plane ride Satan told her that her children were dead and that she was being taken to a big prison. She witnessed her
children's blood flowing while riding on the plane. Jesus told her to go where the people instructed her. God instructed her not to be shy and even if they put a knife to her throat to let them do it. When she laid down at the doctor's request Satan pushed her and she fell upside down. After examining her the doctor told her that she was not sick and that if she did not speak they would operate on her. He put a knife to her throat to scare her. The next day she was sent to Limbang Hospital and Satan told her she would be thrown into the ocean. Again he mentioned that her children were dead and that the prison awaiting her was big and deep. As Jesus had told her, people came and prayed for her and she was able to move her tongue. They give her husband money as they were quite poor. After a night of their praying she suddenly was able to speak to her husband. She was told that the Devil's power was like the form of a deer and has been thrown into the sea. She prayed and the person next to her became well. Another who was to be operated on also was cured, as well as a person with a heart problem. Skeptics were in awe. It was not until she was made mute that she was able to really hear, travelling an interior solo journey in front of all those who could not see this.

**Patterns of Continuity**

Both the pre-Christian and postmodern Pentecostal tales are products of different historical periods, reflect different, if you will, photographic negatives of the "natives". The tales from both these time periods attest to authenticate their Lundayehness/Lun Bawangness, narrative models for negotiating social relations. What appears to be two very distinct types of tales, when placed side-by-side reveal many intriguing similarities. Both the tale of Upai Kasan and the prayer warrior narratives speak to forms of Lundayeh/Lun Bawang morality using similar mechanisms. The protagonists of these tales act as intermediaries between higher powers and the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang people. It is Upai's miraculous birth, sanctioned by higher powers (Deegan, 1972: 108), and the rebirth of the prayer warriors, as
a result of their encounters with the Holy Spirit, that situate them as intermediary agents.

Both Upai and the prayer warriors show extraordinary strength, courage and endurance, trusting the guidance given them by the supernatural, Upai on his jungle treks and the prayer warriors while on their journeys under the possession of the Holy Spirit. Both Upai and Maria faced similar experiences in that they were tied up with rope by demons. Upai was saved by his companion rat, as a result of his faith in nature; Maria rebuffed Satan as he tied her up with rope and tried to stab her. It was her faith in Jesus that saved her. Both must trust the voices of things they cannot see be it the voices of nature or that of God. It is because of Upai’s willingness to help others that he found himself facing adversity. The prayer warriors defined their journeys as the means to enlightenment, their lessons learned to be shared with others to help them receive a state of grace.

While on his journey Upai encountered a physical landscape filled with mystical beings. The prayer warriors elaborated not only on the physical landscape but on the landscapes in their minds, the encounters with devils and the Holy Spirit. Upai Kasan and the prayer warriors interpreted similar symbolic guides and clues which they encountered - snakes, glittering objects, water (a metaphor for transformation - a waterfall in the Kasan tale and the sea in Tusi’s narrative), and demons. The three were ultimately rewarded by the end of their narratives but in very different ways. For his bravery and faith in nature Upai was rewarded with material wealth and status with his new position in the Rachas family. Maria preached the evils of material wealth, how it leads one away from salvation; her reward, and for those following on the path she has taken, comes in the afterlife.

Upai Kasan was raised by a lower class family, and both prayer warriors referred to themselves in their testimonies as illiterate and poor - without intelligence. But, it is the experiences defined in their narratives that attest to their positions as moral agents, people to be
listened to. Throughout each tale the three encountered demons that attempted to disrupt the social order. Ultimately it was restored by Upai, Maria and Tusi who risked themselves for the sake of others.

The telling of narratives provide for "agency play" allowing the actors to exceed their cultural mandates (Battaglia, 1997: 507). Pre-Christian tales, such as Upai Kasan, were expressions of mythic heroes, exploits of head hunters, told in the third person, expressed in a first person male voice. The mission tales, tales of Christ, were expressed in third person, followed by the oral and written conversion tales, expressed by both males and females in the first person. Finally, the oral and written Pentecostal tales are spiritual journeys told in the first person. Not only has the narrative agent shifted from third person to first person, but from male to female. While the pre-Christian tales for the most part described the power of male agents, the Pentecostal testimonies of the prayer warriors, mostly female, framed as possession cult, exemplified the struggles of women for new positions within both the larger society and their community and church. Here we see the spiritual gifts of women being tested against biblical referents by male pastors, perhaps male attempts to control the mystical power of women? The visions of these modern prophets/prophetesses, once again recounted in the first person, revive the head hunters quest for mystical power. However, now it is the women, the prayer warriors, who are coming back from the perilous journeys. Further, while the pre-Christian narratives described the dangerous task of retrieving a head, embedded in these tales is the notion of "other" be it in the next valley, river system, or those who spoke another dialect or language, living within the varying boundaries defined by European colonials. It is the Pentecostal tales of the postmodern prayer warriors which have collapsed these old distinctions tantamount to these male dominated societies of the past.

There are today four differing perspectives on pre-modern tales. 1) A rural "modernist" perspective derived from the original conversion
to Christianity. Those who practise this include the first and second generation farmers still celebrating the church as Lundayeh/Lun Bawang and singing the psalm of *Drunk before Dawn*. For these, the traditional tales represent the values and heathen practices discarded at the time people embraced Christianity. 2) An urban "modernist" perspective is practised by those members of the first generation educated in schools and universities of modern Malaysia, England and America. These writers collect tales to authenticate the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang as an ethnic community vis-a-vis Iban, Kadazan, etc. 3) An urban "postmodernist" perspective is practised by these for whom the old tales, indeed ethnicity itself has become irrelevant to those fully Christian in a global sense and for whom the literature and pedagogy of Christianity overwhelms the pre- and post-colonial narratives of person and place. Finally, 4) a rural "postmodernist" perspective is practise by the prayer-warrior-Holy Spirit prophets who reach back into the pre-modern narratives of person, place and power to collapse Christianity into localised expressions of authenticity. Practitioners of each of these perspectives abhor/cherish/ignore/recreate the pre-modern narratives. In so doing they contest the constructions of the other.

**Enactments**

Today pre-modern tales continue as living texts, serve as postmodern templates for social productions - physical enactments, performances of these older narratives. *Ukui* are produced and performed to celebrate special current events - modern greeting songs sung by those urban modernists attempt to integrate traditional practices with contemporary ethnicity. The urban modernists publish transcriptions and translations of pre-modern tales. At cultural celebrations (*pesta*), they erect the *ulung* pole and carve the *buaya* figure from earth, fending off criticisms from the conservative (modernist) church members by saying these are just representations of cultural traditions and make good impressions on visiting dignitaries.
Tales with pre-modern elements are enacted in mountain villages. In Ba Kelalan we were told how a young man was lost in the jungle for two weeks, due to the work of two spirits at Mt. Belingit who gave him a tree root that made him invisible to others.\textsuperscript{16} Spirits prepared a hut for him during which time he believed he was lost in a very flat place. When he saw other people he believed he was seeing wild pigs. Finally the spirits led him out of the jungle and took the root away from him, when he became visible. He was found in his fathers field hut. This event was portrayed as "true", a present-day enactment, a performance of a pre-modern narrative form. Likewise, the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang prophet, Agung Bangau (who passed away in 1992) created a spiritual pageant, replete with costumes, based on directions given him by the Holy Spirit on the \textit{padang} in Buduk Nur (Ba' Kelalan) in order to witness prophesied celestial signs.\textsuperscript{17} This event reenacted the \textit{ngalap ngadan} (name making) celebrations/narratives of pre-modern times.\textsuperscript{18} Like heroes described in pre-modern narratives, Agung played with nature and created miracles.

The church on Mt. Murud has become a site around which many narratives have been enacted. This church, built in 1992 following a vision twelve years earlier by the prophet Agung, is today the center of postmodern Lundayeh/Lun Bawang Christianity. Narrations of Murud are contested in several ways. The prayer warrior Maria was given spiritual messages as to when people in particular villages should go to the church and pray. The urban church leadership, reaching out beyond ethnic and national boundaries organised ecumenical youth conferences on the mountain and invited Christians from around the world to attend a special Murud prayer meeting. Many of the conservative camp (lama) do not see the need for prayer mountains, arguing that God will manifest himself anywhere one prays and complain that the expense and difficulty of reaching the mountain make it impossible for many to go there. The urban modernists ignore the mountain church and focus on the meaning of the mountain to Lundayeh/Lun Bawang history (Tuie, 1990).
Like pre-modern descriptions of spirits in the jungle, a number of people described the current day spirit, *Puteri Rimba*, a beautiful princess with long hair, bare-feet, and black clothing who was discovered after the church was built living in a cave above the church at Mt. Murut. She identified herself to those gifted by the Holy Spirit and has also taken the form of a water buffalo. During services she took the form of a beautiful woman. Not happy with the activities that took place at the church she was considered an enemy of God. The people chased her away with their prayers but she was seen from time to time.

A significant indicator of the importance of Murud is the quasi-village which has grown there. Families from different villages have built hundreds of cabins near the church for use during prayer vigils. This is reminiscent of the settlement at Tanah Baru next to the old Borneo Evangelical Mission station in Lawas and constitutes a statement of ownership of, or belonging to, this extraordinary place. The settlement of Murud has recently become easier as closer access to the mountain has been made possible by a timber road.

Timber roads, and the inevitable changes these bring, lead us to our concluding point. Just as heroes of pre-modern tales acted as moral intermediaries between the interior communities and coastal kingdoms, the prayer warrior Maria Gugkang warns the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang of the Ba' Kelalan valley of the spiritual perils that will follow from development. As the timber roads open up the interior, a steady stream of Hilux trucks bring up town goods and transport people to the bazaar in Lawas. Maria admonishes those whose homes elaborate this growing reliance on material goods. One of the common items being hauled up are bags of cement. Difficult to transport and costly, cement has become a favoured and widely-used commodity. Perhaps, then, it is no accident that Maria described hell as a deep fiery hole encircled with concrete.
Notes

1 Support for this research has been provided by a research grant and faculty summer fellowships funded by CSU Sacramento, a SEAC grant funded by the Henry Luce Foundation and an Overseas Mission Research Fellowship funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts. This article derives from a larger project carried out in collaboration with Lundayeh-Lun Bawang in Sarawak, Sabah and East Kalimantan (Crain and Pearson-Rounds, 2009). As part of the creation of a dictionary (Ganang, Crain and Pearson-Rounds, 2008), were collecting and annotating texts (media of representation) which were the productions of both native and non-native actors. The publication of these texts provide an accessible compilation of some of the ways the Lundayeh-Lun Bawang have constructed themselves and have been constructed by others (Crain and Pearson-Rounds, 1998). This allows for the re-interpretation (indeed multiple re-interpretations) of the social history of the Lundayeh-Lun Bawang people both from within and without.

2 The self-referent Lundayeh is used in East Kalimantan and Sabah. Lun Bawang is used in Sarawak and Brunei.

3 The villages on both sides of the border resided in what were the last acquired Bornean territories of the Dutch and British; they came relatively late into the process of what we might call politisation. Their long period of relative remoteness, the timing of their arrival into the soon-to-be defunct world of colonial Southeast Asia and their experiences with Christian evangelism guaranteed these people the status of marginal minorities in the independent states which emerged from the hubris of World War II.

4 Laba' contain subject matter on hunting, courtship, interactions between the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang people (Lundayeh/Lun Bawang and the Sultanate of Brunei - Upai Kasan, PalungSengayan), between Lundayeh/Lun Bawang and their environment (Tuk Laba and the monkeys and Lamu'Anak Mate and the lizards), plants and talking animals (Tuk Pelanuk the mousedeer, TukAbuu the tortoise) and many other things revolving around everyday events (Deegan, 1970: 268). Laba'are told using plain or poetic language, but when not using a poetic style the performer has to mimic and act out the situation in order to amuse the listeners (Langub, 1992: 5-6).

5 Another subtype ofbuek, shorter in length (taking half an hour to two hours to perform) include rini rini (partly sung and narrated, using poetic and rhyming
language that refers to a growing population, migration into new territory and local wars) *Agan Rige* (a story sung about *Agan Rige*, an ordinary man who is wise and a success as a farmer, hunter or whatever else he does), *dul Sagan* (a story of a longhouse community split over a minor dispute with a leader named *Tuk Sagan*, of migration and local wars and is partly narrated and partly sung) and *Tekunuh* (sung to praise folk heroes using archaic, poetic language) (Langub, 1992: 7).

These were sung to children to put them to sleep and were pleasant to listen to; some were passed down from generation to generation, others improvised. These songs addressed the parents’ daily activities in the fields or other lighthearted events (Langub, 1992: 8).

After independence these two organisations moved to establish self-sustaining native churches - on the Malaysian side, the *Sidang Injil Borneo* (SIB), the Borneo Gospel Council; on the Indonesian side developed the *Kemah Injil Gereja Masihi Indonesia Kalimantan Timor* (KINGMI-KALTIM), the Tent Gospel Church of the Messiah of East Kalimantan.

It is interesting that after so many years people are still able to bring out old charms to destroy. Whether these have been kept for use or created for the opportunity to confess, they suggest a continued knowledge of old customs.

The first two waves were initiated by younger people while the last two by the older, the waves getting smaller in size. Each wave had a specific focus: the first (1973) as repentance, reconciliation, and restoration; the second (1976) sharing love, joy, and praising the church; the third (1979) prayer and intercession along with the birth of the prayer mountain phenomenon; and the fourth wave (1985) focused on a worshiping church, and the advent of a signs and wonders phenomenon (Bulan, 1996: 43, 46, 48, 53-4).

It is interesting, in light of what we discuss below about the differing perspectives on pre-modern tales, that Deegan himself later became a re-born Christian and threw away his field notes.

“Prayer warriors” is a term originally given to a small group of women who accompanied the Ba’ Kelalan prophet, Agung Bangau, in his early morning prayer vigils on a series of hills above the airport at Buduk Nur.

These tales reanimate the jungle (now endangered by the civilising forces of forestry, roads and managed nature preserves) and include the imagery of false
beings, todays devil and demons filling the role of the great spirit *(add rayeh)* of the past.

13 If Shirley Lees is the cannon of the *lama* group of the SIB, then the urban modernists' trope is the citation of Runcimans (1960) assertion that the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang are one of the original tribes of Borneo.

14 Examples we have of this include a performance in Long Bawan in 1992 at the inaugural meeting of the *Musyawarah Adat Suku Lundayeh*. The theme involved recounting the experiences of the Krayan Lundayeh since the days of Dutch rule. Another was created to welcome a visiting church group to a congregation in Sipitang in 1997.


16 Interestingly Mt. Belingit was the site of one of the celestial signs prophesied by the prophet Agung in 1985. He commanded the Buduk Nur congregation to climb the mountain and there some 320 people witnessed two lights appearing in the sky for over two hours.

17 The lights seen in the sky recall the common use of words describing things shining, sparkling, glinting which appear in pre-modern tales.

18 As a youth, Agung was said to have been an extraordinary hunter. He was led by spirits to the location of animals in the forest.

19 When Agung first told people his vision about a church on Murud, many people were afraid to go because it was a place reputed to have many bad spirits.
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