

# Equatorial Biomass Society

## Reports from Project Members

Preliminary joint research in Kemena/Tatau riverine area, Sarawak, Malaysia  
Noboru Ishikawa / Ryoji Soda ..... 1

Feedback on Preliminary Research in Sarawak, Malaysia  
Yucho Sadamichi ..... 4

A report on joint research in Sarawak: the possibilities for the study of ethnic Chinese  
 by researchers and scholars from different fields  
Tetsu Ichikawa ..... 6

**Events and Activities** ..... 10

**About Our Website** ..... 13

**The List of Project Members** ..... 14

Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (S)

### **Planted Forests in Equatorial Southeast Asia:**

### **Human-nature Interactions in High Biomass Society**



## Reports from Project Members

### Preliminary joint research in Kemena/Tatau riverine area, Sarawak, Malaysia

Noboru Ishikawa

(CSEAS, Kyoto University)

Ryoji Soda

(Graduate School of Literature and Human Sciences, Osaka City University)

It is easy to claim that this project integrates the humanities and science. However, the phrases “academic integration” or “cross-disciplinary field study” are used too often and now they have become somewhat clichéd. With this in mind, we planned our researches with much discussion. But soon it became clear that deskbound discussions were leading us nowhere. What should we do?

So, for better or worse, we decided to hit the road. As members of this project, we ate and drank together; bathed together in rivers keeping our eyes open for crocodiles, and were packed together into a little boat watching the ever-changing landscape while being baked by the sun. At a longhouse, we listened actively and took notes while other members conducted interviews with local residents. We believe it is worth a try to transcend our specialties in order to share things we found interesting. And we do it as often as possible while traveling together. From the beginning of this project, we planned to gather and conduct joint research at least once a year. We conducted our preliminary research in the riverine of northern Sarawak, Bintulu area from August 15 to 25 in 2010. Our group, including participants other than the project members, consisted of 15 people that went on the excursion. The following is the report of the trip.

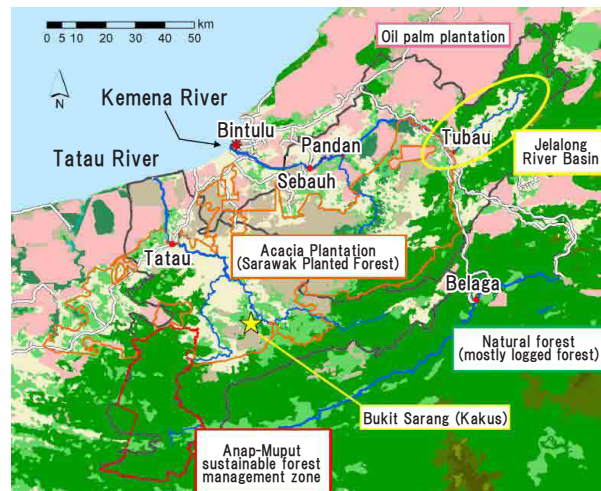
#### Aug. 15-18 Kemena/Jelalong

N. Ishikawa, H. Samejima, M. Fujita, N. Tokuchi, N. Badenoch, Y. Sadamichi, K. Sakuma, K. Nagaoka (all from Kyoto Univ.), M. Uchibori (The Open Univ. of Japan), K. Okuno (J. F. Overlin Univ.), R. Soda (Osaka

City Univ.), S. Otake (Moi), T. Watakabe (Univ. of the Ryukyus), S. Logie (Forest Dept. Sarawak)

#### Aug. 19-21 Anap-Muput logging area

N. Ishikawa, H. Samejima, M. Fujita, Y. Sadamichi, M. Uchibori, K. Okuno, R. Soda, S. Otake, J. Hon (Kyoto Univ.), T. Ichikawa (Rikkyo Univ.)



Map of our research regions

#### Aug. 23-25 Kakus/Bukit Sarang

N. Ishikawa, H. Samejima, M. Fujita, Y. Sadamichi, K. Sakuma, J. Hon, S. Otake, T. Ichikawa

At Kemena/Jelalong, the first night we stayed in the longhouse of Penans mixed with Ibans. The following night we stayed in Iban longhouse. On the third day, we stayed in the bazaar at Tubau. Our objective was to take a journey together and to share the sentiments and the atmosphere of our study region. On the return to Bintulu, we split into several groups according to each member’s research interests. Members studying water quality or fluvial landscape took a boat while members studying vegetation or birds’ distribution drove to Bintulu.

At Kemena/Jelalong, we observed the multi-ethnic environment (composite ethnoscape) of Iban, Penan, Kayan, ethnic Chinese, Vaie Segan and other ethnic groups. We witnessed heterogeneous landscapes with



Traveling up the Jelalong River by longboat



Indonesian workers at a logging site in Anap-Muput



Upstream of the Jelalong River: Mr. Otake (L) and Prof. Ishikawa (R)



A shack in a logging camp at Anap-Muput: the shack is built on huge logs. A bulldozer is used to shift it along as camp sites move to other areas.

various vegetations, comprised of swidden land, fallowed secondary forest, oil palm plantations, pepper fields and logged forest.

In Anap-Muput, we visited logging sites and the offices of logging camp sites, the longhouses near logging areas as well as Bukit Kana Field Station under the guidance of Zedtee, the logging company, which conducts low impact logging operation in this area. We stayed overnight in a longhouse and Zedtee's Field Station. During this stay we had a chance to see the process of the logging operation. At the longhouse we had the opportunity to ask the residents about their views on the logging operation in this area. In the Zedtee Field Station we held a seminar on low impact logging operation.

Our primary objective in Kakus was to visit a cave

in Bukit Sarang to observe swiftlets' nesting and to interview the residents of a longhouse who hold ownership of the cave's birds' nests. On this trip, we received help from the Sarawak Planted Forest and Grand Perfect which conduct acacia planting operations in this area. With their help we stayed in Bukit Sarang Field Station and from there we reached the cave and conducted our research. The path to the cave was quite taxing as the entire area was flooded and the water flowed into the cave as well. We managed ourselves to walk through the cave and climb to the peak of Bukit Sarang. On the final day, we were guided to the acacia plantation by the staff of Sarawak Planted Forest and saw a large-scale acacia nursery as well as attended a lecture on the tree planting program in this area.

We found these trips to be quite significant. We had the rare opportunity to travel with other researchers having different fields of study or interest. We witnessed the local situation together and shared our thoughts and opinions while freely discussing what we could do for this project. We would like to devise a detailed plan for the next research trip to share each member's experience in the field and to facilitate our cross-sectoral communication. We hope our project provides us with an opportunity to send our message from the field of interdisciplinary study.

This article is reprinted from the 2<sup>nd</sup> issue of Japanese newsletter of this project



At the top of Bukit Sarang Photo : Joanes Unggang



Into the cave at Bukit Sarang



Lecture by a Filipino supervisor in the acacia plantation



Swiftlets' nests in the cave at Bukit Sarang Photo : Motoko Fujita

## Feedback on Preliminary Research in Sarawak, Malaysia

**Yucho Sadamichi**

(AIST, The National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology)

I have been working on environmental assessment, called Life Cycle Assessment (LCA), and in particular on the analysis of greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions resulting from the use of biofuels. LCA is based on a cradle-to-grave approach, covering land preparation, cultivation, transportation, biomass-to-energy conversion, distribution and consumption in the case of biofuels.



In the past couple of years, I have visited factories and plantations in Southeast Asia to conduct LCA analyses for enterprises and governments, mainly focusing on how to reduce GHG emissions induced by their activities. This year I joined this project and visited Sarawak to evaluate the environmental impact resulting from acacia and oil palm plantations. The following is my brief report from the summer investigation at Sarawak in 2010.

At the beginning of our field trip, we visited villages where the local residents live deep in the forest of Sarawak. On the way to the forest, we discovered a few longhouses along the river. We stayed at some of them for a few days to conduct our researches. Since it was my first time to visit a longhouse in Sarawak, I was deeply impressed by the people living there in terms of their economical and functional lives, and found the life and culture of the longhouse in Sarawak may share some common culture with northern Thailand where I had been working previously.

In this project, my interest is how acacia and oil palm plantations impact on the environment and society of local people and communities. For example,

global warming is frequently referred to as a symbol of the environmental issues in Japan, but the question is not only the amount of carbon dioxide, but also how it impacts on our lives. The conversation with the residents of the longhouse brought me to understand how closely-correlated the plantations and people's lives are and its complexity and diversity.

Once a forest is converted into an oil palm plantation, it would affect the regional atmosphere, water, soil and plants and animals. If the quality of water in the river was deteriorated, the number of edible fish might decrease and it might damage fishery. The increased number of wild pigs who eat oil palm might decrease other plants and animals. All of these kinds of events might affect some change in the local com-



Passing through a swollen stream on a boat to visit a longhouse



Many oil palm plantations have their own owls: Owls are expected to feed on rats, which damage oil palm fruit.

munities. The dispute between villagers and plantation companies over the ownership of the land is one of the typical issues that occur around their plantations. Other impacts include many villagers giving up farming due to new works in the plantation to earn more money or others opening oil palm plantations on their own. Oil palms are sometimes planted in peat land which is said to absorb carbon dioxide. When the land is converted into plantation: 1. Anticipated carbon sinks would be lost 2. Some of the stored carbon in the soil would be released into the air in the form of carbon dioxide. All of these events could be directly connected to the global warming issue. I am planning to quantify the various impacts, both negative and positive, of oil palm plantations on human society, hoping it can provide us with clues on how to improve the situation.

During our stay, we visited timber companies and acacia plantation companies. I was so impressed there by the immensity of forests. Although we imagine trees in the mountain as forest, here in Sarawak many trees were grouped together in a vast area at just around 100 m above sea level. Timber companies cut trees in accordance with the government guideline. The sizes of the trees, species, etc. are now strictly recorded in detail. Those logged trees are gathered and carried by skidders. The timber is processed and shipped overseas to countries such as Japan. I plan to start with an estimation of greenhouse gas emissions of these entire activities including logging, transporting, and use in Japan.

Although our two-week investigation in Sarawak cannot be summarized in this short report, one thing I would like to add concerns the diverse members in this project who engage in a variety of study fields. Some focus on ethnic groups, some river water, some soils and some animals. Through discussions and activities with those members, I would like to take this opportunity to obtain more ideas for my study to contribute to this project. those members, I would like to take this opportunity to get more ideas for my study

to contribute this project.

This article is reprinted from the 2 <sup>nd</sup> issue of Japanese newsletter of this project
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**A report on joint research in Sarawak: the possibilities for study of ethnic Chinese by researchers and scholars from different fields**

**Tetsu Ichikawa**  
(College of Tourism, Rikkyo University)

My study in Sarawak mainly focuses on the ethnic Chinese groups in that area. I have conducted the research, paying attention to the interactions between the ethnic Chinese and indigenous people in Sarawak. The interactions include business, mixed marriage, adoption and so forth. From the perspective of research experience in Sarawak, I would like to elucidate some of the characteristics of the research, performed by a team of researchers that integrate the humanities and science.



The major benefit for me to take part in this joint research was the possibilities it created for working together with other researchers from different study fields. Most social science researchers, including myself, conduct field work on their own. Solo research is invaluable as it affords information and experience that researchers cannot obtain in other ways. It is rare in the field of social science studies for a large number of staff to conduct research together. Even when it is necessary to work as a large team, it is usually limited to work in a capital city or in urban settings to take advantage of the scale. Researchers usually take an independent approach to conduct more in-depth research. As such, the style of this joint research - working together constantly with a group of about 10 researchers, both Arts and Science - gave me an opportunity that I had never experienced before. Before joining this project, I felt some doubt but with the help of Dr. Ishikawa and Dr. Soda, as well as the other members, I gained invaluable experience.

Looking back at the joint research from the perspective of the ethnic Chinese study, the great merit of this

team research activity is that it lowered the suspicions of the local people toward the researchers. It may sound like a cliché but it is an actual problem that in Sarawak many ethnic Chinese view researchers with a great degree of suspicion. As a result, in many cases an announced visit for research is not welcomed. To avoid this, many researchers rely on local Chinese acquaintances to make arrangements for research at the local level. In Sarawak as well as the whole of Malaysia, ethnic Chinese tend to conduct their business and live in urban areas and this also makes it difficult to conduct hands-on research at the local level in Sarawak.

At the early stage of this joint research, I was worried about creating suspicion among the ethnic Chinese by visiting their residential area with a comparatively-large research team of 10 people. Fortunately, my worries turned out to be groundless. Truth be known, I witnessed friendlier interactions between the researchers and local ethnic Chinese than when conducting solo researches. I guess when they see a team of Japanese people moving around their residential area in groups, curiosity may overcome suspicion. During this research trip, I obtained information that I could not have gathered if I had worked alone.

Aside from the theme of the project, this experience of working with other researchers as a team provided me with a good opportunity to examine the merit of group research. The following presents various findings and the possibilities for future researches.



**A Chinese store at Sagan:** the owner of this store is a first-generation ethnic Chinese who married an Iban woman in Sarawak

## 1. Interactions between ethnic Chinese and other ethnic groups

By collaborating with other researchers, I was delighted to gain further knowledge of interactions between ethnic Chinese and other ethnic groups. I visited various locations including urban areas such as Bintulu, Tatau, and Sangan, and other locations such as a logging site in Anap Muput, an Iban longhouse and a cave in Kakus in which swiftlets build their edible nests. I worked with researchers who had been studying indigenous ethnic groups such as Malays, Iban or Punan and this opportunity gave me a chance to see the patterns of interactions between ethnic Chinese and other groups and their perspectives toward the ethnic Chinese.

During this joint research I was unable to conduct self-observation of interactions between ethnic Chinese and other groups or to perform any hearing investigations to collect comprehensive data. However, I found it invaluable to have useful information and advice for future research in this area.

The interactions between ethnic Chinese and other groups in business establishments, companies and schools in urban areas is something that can be seen every day not only in Sarawak, but across the whole of Malaysia. In Malaysia, there is no dissociation among each of the ethnic groups in terms of public affairs or in business. In everyday life, however, each group differs markedly from the next. This also holds true for the researchers who have been studying the ethnic groups in Malaysia. There is not much chance



At an acacia plantation: beehives owned by Chinese beekeepers

for us to know about any ethnic groups other than the group of our research subject. This is a common difficulty that all cultural and social science researchers confront. Accumulating detailed and in-depth knowledge of other ethnic groups is not an easy task for researchers who study multiracial society. To understand Malaysian society or narrow it down to Sarawak society, it is necessary to carry out a series of researches and studies on certain ethnic groups but this is insufficient without understanding the social positions or their correlations in the communities. This trip made me realize how effective it is to work with other ethnic group specialists. To overcome various research difficulties, I found it useful to cooperate with other researchers in the form of joint research rather than cooperative study.

## 2. Ethnic Chinese community and their activities in the upper reaches of the river

During this trip I gained various clues for future research on ethnic Chinese, their activities and communities, in the inland region of Sarawak, in particular the upper reaches of the river. To my regret, I missed an opportunity to join the group visiting the upper region of the Jelalong River but I was informed about the ethnic Chinese people who live in the longhouses. So far, all we have is fragmentary information about these groups of Chinese people who leave urban areas or Chinese communities and end up living in the communities of ingenious people. There is virtually no comprehensive study on these ethnic Chinese people. I believe the study of ethnic Chinese who live among the ingenious communities would be a great help in understanding the community characteristics of Sarawak ethnic Chinese. Many of the antecedent researches on Sarawak Chinese communities have paid attention to the various ethnic groups that settle along the river. Those riverine communities mediate other communities of coastal areas, urban areas, and inland areas and researchers have been focusing on the role of ethnic Chinese in those communities. Most studies are dominated by the history of those communities



and not many of them have identified contemporary issues such as the activities and the way of life of ethnic Chinese along the river in Sarawak. I believe, however, in order to deepen the understanding of local characteristics of Chinese communities in Sarawak, an effective approach would be to conduct research not only on large Chinese communities in cities, but also on smaller Chinese communities in upstream areas where Chinese people more actively interact with indigenous people in various ways. By choosing a certain river area as a research site, and conducting a series of researches by a group of researchers according to their disciplines and issue awareness, I believe this project provides us with a valuable angle to the study of ethnic Chinese in Sarawak.

### 3. Regarding “hybrid” ethnic Chinese of Sarawak

During this joint-research I met one person who has both ethnic Chinese and indigenous parents and an indigenous person who was adopted by a Chinese family as a child. As a result, I identified a possible new research area that encompasses those hybrid Chinese and Chinese-adopted aboriginals. I met a man in Sangan who has an Iban mother. His father was the first generation of ethnic Chinese in that area and he could speak both Iban and Fujian Chinese. One ethnic Chinese person I was introduced to in Kakus was a birds’ nest supervisor. He told me that he was born into an Iban family but was adopted by an ethnic Chinese family when he was a child and was raised as a member of the ethnic Chinese community. Although they are in no way unique in Sarawak, during my week’s stay I met more of those hybrid persons than ever before.

As stated above, my colleagues who visited the upper river basin of the Jelalong River told me that they met a few ethnic Chinese who lived in the longhouse because they married indigenous people. Some of them have ethnic Chinese and indigenous parents. Although this is nothing out of the ordinary in the upstream areas of both the Kemena and the Jelalong River, conducting research on these hybrid ethnic Chinese

would help to understand the process of indigenization and the relationship between ethnic Chinese and indigenous inhabitants.

Unlike Peranakan or Kadazan, hybrid ethnic Chinese in Sarawak have never drawn much attention and there have not been many model studies done on this subject. Focusing on people who have Chinese and indigenous parents would help to understand the characteristics of the interaction of ethnic Chinese in Sarawak with other ethnic groups. This trip gave me the opportunity to consider the possibility of future research on this issue.

### 4. Over the Sarawak boundary

Before launching the study on Malaysia, I had been conducting fieldwork in Papua New Guinea. Today, a variety of Chinese immigrants from mainland China, Indonesia, or other East and Southeast Asian countries flow into Papua New Guinea. Of all others, the number of Chinese from Malaysia was the standout. Since then, I’ve had an interest in their transnational activities. During this trip I came to realize that transnational flows of goods as well as people would give me a clue to understanding the transborder activities of ethnic Chinese in Malaysia.

A typical case of transnational flow of goods that Malaysian Chinese mainly control is edible birds’ nests. It is a well-known fact that swallow nests are highly prized in Chinese cooking. Not many areas in China can produce birds’ nests so the majority of them are gathered from outside of China. I am par-



At Kakus: travelling on the swollen stream in longboats to visit a cave in which swiftlets make their nests.

ticularly interested in birds' nests which have the role of binding together Sarawak and the societies beyond its boundary. I had heard about the birds' nests in a shop in an urban area but had never pursued the topic in depth. I had little knowledge of where those nests come from or how the nests are distributed to the market. On this trip, I worked together with specialists of other fields on the research of birds' nests. During this research I ascertained the direction in which study on the establishment of relationship-building between Chinese and other ethnic groups should proceed. While we were at Kakus, we visited a cave where local Punal Kakus collect the birds' nests. We obtained information on how they own and use the cave in which swallows build their nests. We also understood the role of the Chinese, how they sustain the cave in order to enable continuous harvesting of birds' nests. Practically no ethnographic studies on the topic of the harvesting, distribution, and consumption of birds' nests in Southeast Asia based on a field study have been conducted. I believe the birds' nests could bring a fresh angle to the study when focusing on the relation between Sarawak and the societies beyond its border because this commodity plays a part in correlating more than one ethnic group and local communities in the process of its gathering, distribution and consumption.

I have concentrated on four topics here but I believe that future research could reveal many more angles. Researchers from different study fields working to-

gether in watershed areas of a certain geographical range will make a significant contribution to the study of Sarawak Chinese communities and Chinese society in Malaysia as well.

Most antecedent researches dealing with Chinese society in Malaysia focus on peninsula areas and few focus on Sabah or Sarawak. However, there are some interesting study examples on ethnic Chinese in East Malaysia including the classic work of T'ien Ju-Kang, and historical monographs by Daniel Chew or Danny Wong. In the course of the Malaysia Studies, local ethnic Chinese is one of the popular research areas. However, not many of them focus on the ethnic Chinese societies in Sabah or Sarawak, and how they interact with other ethnic communities. In cities like Kuching or Sibul, it is evident that many Chinese live inside the Chinese communities. Sarawak, however, has a geographically and historically different background and its ethnic composition is also different from that of the peninsula area. I believe the study of Sarawak Chinese, and their process of interactions with other ethnic groups, could contribute not only to the Sarawak area studies, but to the Malaysian studies as well. This joint research has provided me with an opportunity to re-examine the potential of the study on ethnic Chinese societies in East Malaysia.

This article is reprinted from the 3<sup>rd</sup> issue of Japanese newsletter of this project



**Downtown Bintulu:** a commercial building, whose upper floors are converted into a bird house

## Events and Activities

### A report on joint research in Sarawak: the possibilities for study of ethnic Chinese by researchers and scholars from different fields

**Dr. Riwanto Tirtosudarmo**

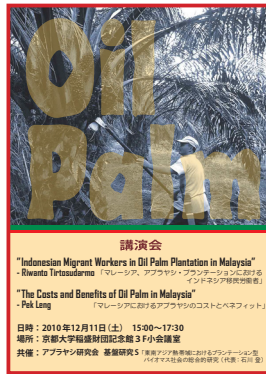
December 11, 2010 at CSEAS, Kyoto University

On Dec. 11 2010, for the 15th Oil Palm Research Meeting at Kyoto University, we invited Dr. Riwanto Tirtosudarmo of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) to share his thoughts and views. Since completing his doctorates at the

Australian National University, Dr. Riwanto has been a senior research fellow of LIPI. His field of study is political demography and he has been studying population mobility in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. In this meeting, he introduced his latest study outcomes, the circumstances and the backgrounds of Indonesian labor in the plantations of Malaysia.

#### Current state of foreign workers in Malaysia

The statistical data of 2005 tells us that Indonesians constitute the largest group of foreign labor in Malaysia. They occupy 68% (1.21 million) of all foreign workers and the number will rise to 2 million if we take into account undocumented, illegal workers. Among the Indonesian workers in Malaysia, plantation labor consists of the largest group with 26% followed by domestic workers (24%) and construction workers (18%). Economic disparity between Indonesia and Malaysia is the key factor in the continuing labor migration. Common problems the labor force is facing in every sector of work are: low wages, the confiscation of passports by employers and poor living environment. The labor force in construction and manufacturing in many cases has to work in hazardous conditions. The turnover rate of construction workers is quite high, and those who quit often drift to planta-



tion sites. The service industry, such as hotels and restaurants, also has many problems and in the worst case, it is connected with human trafficking.

#### Plantation industry and Indonesian workers

Malaysia's plantation industry relies heavily on Indonesian labor. Work in the plantations is known for its low wages, passport control by the employers, long hours of back-breaking work and exploitation by the brokers. In many cases, workers are placed in a harsh and isolated environment with minimal shelter so many of them quit and find work on construction sites. Indonesian workers earn 25-60 ringgit a day in construction jobs while they make 25-40 ringgit in plantation sites. The Malaysian government plans to reduce the number of foreign labor in Malaysia from 2.1 million in 2008 to 1.7 million by the year of 2015. Regarding the plantation industry, however, the government plans to raise the percentage of foreign workers from 16% in 2008 to 20% in 2015.

#### Palm oil industry in Malaysia

Today, Malaysia is the 2nd largest exporter of palm oil in the world. Of all palm oil produced in Malaysia, roughly 60% of it is exported to China, European countries, Pakistan and so forth. In 2008, Malaysia produced 17.7 million tons of palm oil from 4.5 million hectares of oil palm plantations. Much of the farmland used to grow rubber, cocoa, and coconut was turned into oil palm plantations and the growing area of oil palm continues to increase. In Malaysia, there are 153 estates and 67% of them are concentrated in the peninsula area. Of all the 580 thousand workers in the plantations, 350 thousand of them come from other countries. Allegedly, 90% of the labor force in Sabah state is Indonesian.

#### Oil palm plantations in Sabah

In Sabah, oil palm is cultivated in more than 700 thousand hectares and there are 58 palm oil mills. Those plantations are spreading around both the Sandakan and Tawau division. Sabah produces the largest portion of palm oil in Malaysia, 25% of its total pro-



Dr. Riwanto Tirtosudarmo

duction. Sabah's production accounts for 30% of palm oil export earnings of the whole of Malaysia. Javanese and Chinese made up the majority of foreign labor in Sabah before Malaysian independence while the number of Indonesian and Filipino workers has become dominant since its independence. Java comprises the majority of Indonesian workers in Sabah, followed by Bugis and Traja. This Indonesian labor inflow has continued, while local residents are facing hardship in finding good job opportunities. Even the impoverished local residents are unwilling to find jobs in plantations due to the poor working conditions. A monthly wage of 600 ringgit is too low for the local residents. Poor living conditions and physically demanding jobs are the reasons why they are reluctant to find jobs in plantations.

#### **Issues faced by migrant workers**

Generally speaking, migrant workers are easy subjects for exploitation. Often their passports are confiscated by the employers so they have no choice but to work with low wages and to get caught up in the vicious cycle of never-ending debt. Christian groups and organizations are dependable institutions for Indonesian workers in Sabah, as they provide assistance and refuge to migrant workers.

(Written by Yumi Kato)

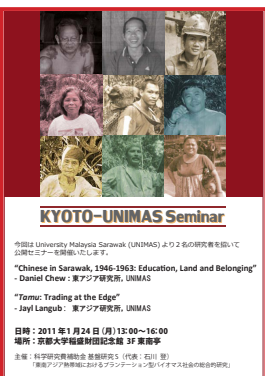
This article is reprinted from the 4<sup>th</sup> issue of Japanese newsletter of this project

**UNIMAS-Kyoto Seminar**  
**Dr. Daniel Chew, Dr. Jayl Langub**  
 January 24, 2011 at CSEAS, Kyoto University

Two researchers from the Institute for East Asian Studies, University of Malaysia Sarawak visited Kyoto University and gave lectures in the “UNIMAS-Kyoto Seminar.”

Dr. Daniel Chew is an eminent historian in Sarawak, who focused on Chinese identity during colonial times. Dr. Jayl Langub, an anthropologist, has an intimate knowledge of indigenous peoples in Sarawak. He talked about the relationships between nomadic hunter-gatherers and longhouse residents through a traditional trading system.

We found that the interests of both speakers are closely related to the focus of our research project, and anticipate working together to accelerate the research in Kemena and Jelalong regions. The titles and abstracts of the lectures are as follows.



(written by Ryoji Soda)

**Chinese in Sarawak, 1946-1963: Education, Land and Belonging**

**Daniel Chew**

(The topic) is on Chinese identity formation in Sarawak during the period of British colonial rule from 1946 to 1963, on how the ethnic Chinese perceived their identity in response to political circumstances and socio-cultural factors. Extraneous factors such as the historical and cultural identity of the Chinese, how China viewed its role in relation to the Chinese overseas, the attitudes and policies of the British colonial government, and the reactions of the indigenous people of Sarawak towards the Chinese, shaped the self perceptions of the Chinese and their sense of belonging to Sarawak. In particular, Chinese education and the demand for land for planting will be examined for their influence on Chinese identity.



Dr. Chew talked about the ethnic Chinese society in Sarawak

**Tamu: Trading at the Edge**

**Jayl Langub**

At the turn of the 20th century, the Brooke government in Sarawak instituted a system of government-supervised trade meetings known as tamu between the nomadic Penan and longhouse-dwelling swidden agriculturalists. This system of trade involved three parties: the Penan, their longhouse neighbours and the government acting as a mediator to ensure fair dealings.

It is a unique system in that it combined governance and fair economic exchange between stronger and weaker groups. The institution is significant in that it revealed much about the Brookes' philosophy and governance towards small and isolated groups such as the Penan. The system is no longer practiced but is still remembered with nostalgia by the Penan, primarily for being respectful and fair to all parties.

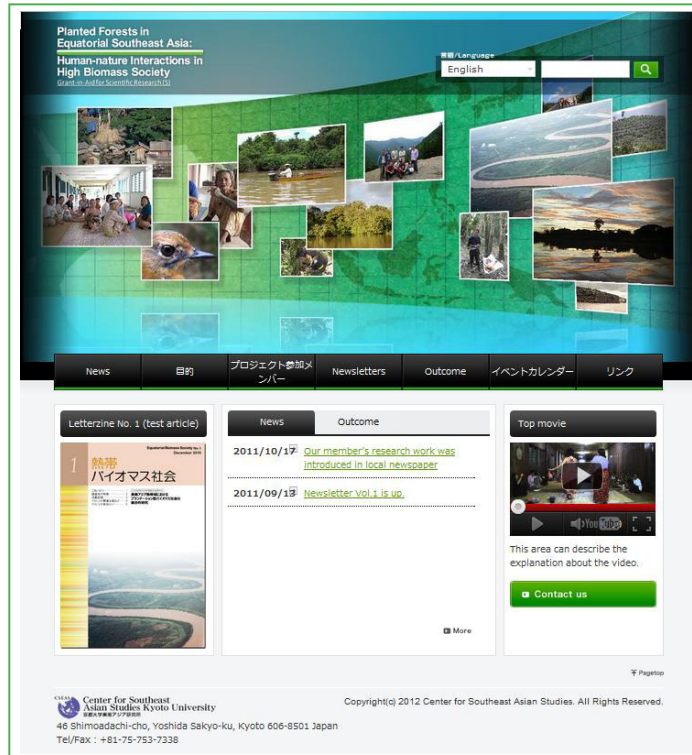


Mr. Jayl Langub shared his story with passion

This article is reprinted from the 4<sup>th</sup> issue of Japanese newsletter of this project

Please visit our website

<http://biomassociety.org/>



Our project, “Planted Forests in Equatorial Southeast Asia: Human-nature Interactions in High Biomass Society” has its own website.

It covers articles, event information, research outcomes newsletters and much more.

Please visit our website to keep up with our latest activities.

## The List of Project Members

Noboru Ishikawa	Anthropology	Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University
Ryoji Soda	Geography	Graduate School of Literature and Human Sciences, Osaka City University
Yasuyuki Kono	Natural Resources Management	Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University
Kaoru Sugihara	Global History	Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University
Kosuke Mizuno	Agricultural Economics	Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University
Naoko Tokuchi	Forest Ecosystem Ecology	Field Science Education and Research Center, Kyoto University
Motomitsu Uchibori	Cultural Anthropology	Faculty of Liberal Arts, The Open University of Japan
Hirimitsu Samejima	Ecology	Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University
Motoko Fujita	Bird Ecology	Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University
Osamu Kozan	Hydrology	Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University
Keitaro Fukushima	Forest Ecosystem Ecology	Field Science Education and Research Center, Kyoto University
Makoto Tsugami	Cultural Anthropology	Liberal Arts, Tohoku Gakuin University
Katsumi Okuno	Cultural Anthropology	College of Liberal Arts, J.F.Oberlin university
Masahiro Ichikawa	Southeast Asian Area Study	Faculty of Agriculture, Kochi University
Miyako Koizumi	Ecological Anthropology	Graduate School of Agriculture, Kyoto University
Fumikazu Ubukata	Natural Resource Economics	Graduate School of Environmental Science, Okayama University
Tetsu Ichikawa	Cultural Anthropology	The Asian Institute for Intellectual Collaboration, Rikkyo University
Yucho Sadamichi	Life Cycle Assessment	The National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology
Nathan Badenoch	Southeast Asian Studies	Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University
Koji Tanaka	Southeast Asian Studies	The Hakubi Center (Young Researcher Development Center), Kyoto University
Kyoko Sakuma	Cultural Anthropology	Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies (ASAFAS) of Kyoto University
Atsushi Kobayashi	Historical Science	Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies (ASAFAS) of Kyoto University
Wil de Jong	Forest Governance	Center for Integrated Area Studies, Kyoto University
Daisuke Naito	Area Studies	Japan Society for the Promotion of Science/ Research Institute for Humanity and Nature
Jason HON Shung Sun	Laboratory of Ecology and Planning	Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies, Kyoto University
Yumi Kato	Cultural Anthropology	Japan Society for the Promotion of Science/ Research Institute for Humanity and Nature
Atsushi Ota	History of Early Modern and Modern Indonesia and the Malay World	Center for Asia-Pacific Area Studies, RCHSS, Academia Sinica

Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University  
46 Shimoadachi-cho, Yoshida Sakyoku, Kyoto 606-8501  
TEL/FAX: +81-75-753-7338  
<http://biomassociety.org>  
E-mail: [nakane@cseas.kyoto-u.ac.jp](mailto:nakane@cseas.kyoto-u.ac.jp)  
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