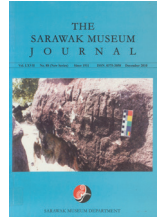




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THE CULTURED RAINFOREST PROJECT ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS IN THE THIRD (2009) SEASON OF FIELDWORK IN THE KELABIT HIGHLANDS OF SARAWAK

Lindsay Lloyd-Smith, Graeme Barker, Huw Barton, Ipoi Datan, Chris Gosden, Borbala Nyiri, Monica Janowski, and Eliza Preston

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This paper describes archaeological fieldwork carried out in the Kelabit Highlands of Sarawak between June and August 2009 (Figs. 1, 2). This work comprised the archaeological component of third and final season of the Cultured Rainforest Project, a project that is seeking to chart the great time-depth of human action that has shaped the rainforests of Southeast Asia, and to reveal its changing character (Barker et al., 2008, 2009). The project involves a collaboration of disciplines, with anthropologists and historians providing a detailed picture of human-rainforest relations today and in the recent past, and archaeologists and palaeoecologists teasing out sequences of long-term landscape change. The Kelabit Highlands have been selected as the case study because they are inhabited today by both rice farmers (Kelabit people) and hunter-gatherers in the process of settling down (Penan). The antiquity of rice growing and the role of other crops in the past in highland Borneo were unknown before the project, though a wide range of (undated) archaeological monuments implied that human habitation in the forest here might be of some antiquity.

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A series of sediment cores taken in 2007 for pollen analysis, including a 4 m core in peat swamp near Bario in the northern Highlands and shorter cores in fallow wet-rice fields in in-filled palaeochannels in the southern Highlands, have provided a 50,000-year perspective (albeit not fully continuous) on vegetation history

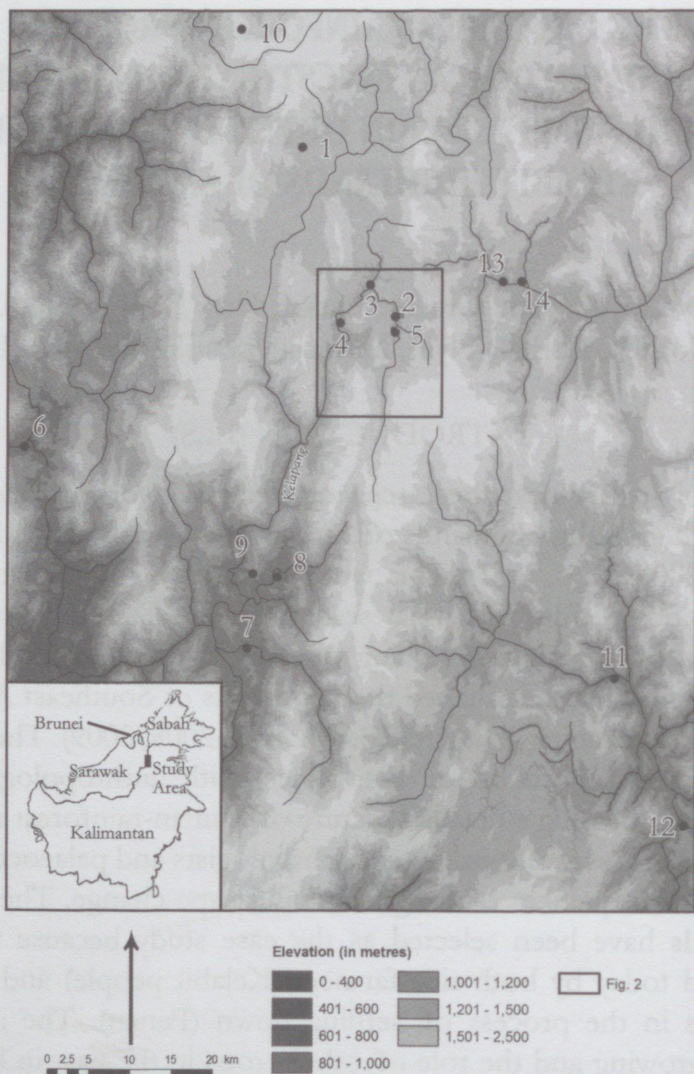


Fig. 1: Map showing location of core study area in the upper Kelapang valley in the southern Kelabit Highlands, and Kelabit longhouses mentioned in the text. Also shown is the rock shelter site of Batu Salit located close to Penan settlement of Long Beruang to the south of the highlands proper, and the Batu Lawi peaks to the northwest of the Kelabit Highlands, and four megalithic sites in Kalimantan Indonesia mentioned in the text: 1. Bario; 2. Pa' Dalih; 3. Pa' Mada; 4. Ramudu; 5. Batu Patong; 6. Long Lellang; 7. Long Peluan; 8. Long Beruang; 9. Batu Salit; 10. Batu Lawi; 11. Kampong Tempu; 12. Long Pulung; 13. Menatoh Long Kururen; 14. Menatoh Long Kuyur. (Illustration: L. Farr)



Fig. 2: Core study area in the upper Kelapang valley in the southern Kelabit Highlands, Sarawak, showing the sites mentioned in the text: 1. Long Kelit sites including Ruma Ma'on Daka, Ruma Ma'on Taa Payo, Perupun Long Kelit, Menatoh Long Kelit; 2. Menatoh Long Diit; 3. Pa' Mada; 4. Ramudu; 5. Ruma Ma'on Teramaan; 6. Batu Balio, Ruma Ma'on Batu Balio; 7. Pa' Dalih and cultural sites in the village area including Batu Liban, Perupun Pa' Rabiung, Batu Kating, Batu Nangan Pa' Rabiung, Nabang Pa' Dalih; 8. Menatoh Arur Tara; 9. Menatoh Pa' Badong; 10. Menatoh Pa' Daan, Batu Senuped Long Daan; 11. Batu Kelabet; 12. Menatoh Rayeh Pa' Bangar; 13. Menatoh Long Pait; 14. Menatoh Sembariew Pa' Bangar; 15. Menatoh Pa' Berang; 16. Main Abu Ra'an Teramaan; 17. Lepo Batu; 18. Ruma Ma'on Pelumau, Ruma Ma'on Bua Laam, Ruma Ma'on Rabruh Manok; 19. Ruma Ma'on Long Remenid; 20. Ruma Ma'on Long Teretong, Lobang Olong; 21. Ruma Ma'on Long Kersu; 22. Nabang Long Diit; 23. Lobang Klio; 24. Batu Tenarang. (Illustration: L. Farr)