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THE ORIGIN OF DAYAK BIDAYUH OR THE HISTORY OF DAYAK BIDAYUH**Michael M. Aman**

To the readers of this paper and fellow Bidayuh I must from the very beginning declare that I am not a historian nor will I claim to be an expert or authority on the subject of Dayak Bidayuh. Further I would urge the readers and fellow participants of this Seminar to have an open mind when reading through this 'paper' because as you go along, this paper may sound 'incredible' and at times very 'controversial'. However, if I have provoked some thoughts and inspire imagination amongst us, then I believe the objective of this paper is achieved.

The preparation of this paper would not have been possible without the material provided by Babai William Nais in particular and also from records written by the late Mr Benedict Sandin and a few other fellow Bidayuh.

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by

Michael M. Aman

FOREWARD

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INTRODUCTION

The Land Dayak or the Dayak Bidayuh as we know today comprises four main dialectical divisions or groups. These are namely Bisadung/Bibukar, Biannah/Biatah, Bijagoi/Bisingai and Selako/Lara.

The group comprising the Bisadung/Bibukar is largely centred in Serian district; the Biannah/Biatah in Kuching district; Bijagoi/Bisingai in Bau district while the Selako/Lara Bidayuh is found in Lundu district.

During the last two decades or so there have been movements of young and educated Bidayuh to the other divisions in Sarawak, initially through transfers for those in the civil service and later by others seeking employment. There are already a sizeable number of Bidayuh in the main towns of Sibu, Bintulu and Miri. Some have made these towns as their homes.

According to the 1980 Population Census, there are now 291 Bidayuh villages centred largely in the 1st Division with a population of 107,500. It can be roughly estimated that in 1988, we have a population of approximately 127,000 Bidayuh with an annual birth rate of 2% per annum.