

GONG AND SEKAFI DANCES OF LUNDAYEH IN KEMABONG, SABAH:

A WAY TO UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF LUNDAYEH

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ABSTRACT: Lundayeh populations are found in the areas of Tenom, Sipitang and Long Pa Sia, along the west coast of Sabah, Malaysia. Lundayeh dance forms and systems have gone through changes and variations since their existence in Borneo. This paper looks into a variety of aspects, including music, costumes, movements, functions and stories of the traditional dances practiced in today's Lundayeh communities in Kemabong, Sabah. The surviving traditional dances found to have stemmed from the core of Lundayeh cultural, social and religious aspects of life. The study leads to the discovery of the thinking patterns, life philosophies and world perspectives of Lundayeh that are strongly influenced by their religion and ancient culture. Dance music ultimately serves as a tool to understand the nature of Lundayeh people as one of the minor ethnic groups in Malaysia. The understanding of the nature of Lundayeh would further contribute toward sharing and discovering another dimension of human knowledge and wisdom.

KEYWORDS: Lundayeh Traditional Dances, *Gong* and *Sekafi* Dances



Figure 1. Mountain Sights and Landscapes in Kemabong. Photo: author.

Introduction

Lundayehs are one of the Borneo's oldest tribe with their original homes in the central highlands near the Krian River that is now part of Kalimantan, Indonesia (Quoted by Shim, 2007: 289). The population of Lundayeh are distributed in different parts of Borneo. The Lundayehs can also be called as Lundayo in Sabah or as Lun Bawang in Lawas and Limbang, Sarawak (Shim, 2007: 2). Other names such as Lun Dayu, Lun Lod, Lun Daya, Lun Daye, Lun Dayoh, and Southern Murut are known separately in Brunei, Kalimantan and other parts of Indonesia.

According to the old stories relayed among Sabahan Lundayeh communities, Lundayeh ancestors migrated to the lands of North Borneo for better survival in the early 1900s (Padan[a], 2012). The communities disperse mainly along the southern-west coast of Sabah, in Keningau, Kemabong, Long Pa Sia, Sipitang and Tawau (Lundayeh residing here originated from Kemabong).

Today, the Lundayehs in Sabah retain part of their own customs while assimilating Malay and Christian traditions as they journeyed through the evolution of their traditions. In their life, dances have been indispensable cultural arts serving their communities since about 100 years of their existence in Sabah (Pugh-Kitingan, 2004: 5). To Lundayeh people, dances were created due to the needs to be entertained and to release boredom and pressures in life. They also dance to express and

pass on their inner spiritual experiences and world views intending to protect their invaluable knowledge and wisdom that are difficult to be grasped through descriptions of words.

This study aims to find out the values and wisdom lying beneath the traditional dances of Lundayeh from the perspectives of the native people. It aims to analyse, with methods of observation-participation, live-in, field recordings, interviews and formation of close relationship with Lundayeh villagers. By looking into the traditional dances of Lundayeh that are still preserved in the communities of Lundayeh in Kemabong, it finds deeper interests in revealing the factors that result in the present systems of the dances and in looking into the reasons for the dances to be choreographed in particular forms and movements. The research analyses, based primarily on different aspects of dances, to delve into the intimate relationship between the mentality of Lundayeh people and their dances, in aspiration to take a further step to divulge the innate nature of Lundayeh as one of the minority ethnic group in Malaysia.

Literature Review

In Jacqueline Pugh-Kitingan's "Selected Paper on music in Sabah" and "A brief Introduction to Sabah's Culture and Music", as well as I.H.N. Evan's "Among Primitive Peoples in Borneo", there are brief introductions of background and origin of Lundayeh in Sabah. Several researchers such as Edward N. Frame, Joseph Guntavid, Judeth John-Baptist, Rita Lasimbang, Junaidah Ibrahim, Richard Liew, Ambrose Mudi and Patricia Matusky have publications that provide general information on the musical instruments of Lundayeh. A worth mention is Jacqueline's "Cultural Dances of Sabah" which provides useful information on Lundayeh traditional dances. However, the information book does not provide in depth description or analysis on the dances as it was written primarily for Sabah exhibition at Pesta '90 Malaysia, in promoting Sabah tourism. Jacqueline's "Group Instrumental Music and Dance in Sabah, Malaysia: ritual and non-ritual contexts" is another paper which touches the dances of Lundayeh, but not in depth. It is adequate only to provide initial information on the traditional Lundayeh dances.

The research on Lundayeh traditional dances is still very rare and limited. This paper focuses on the functions, meanings and values of the dances through the dance movements, choreographs, story-lines, functions and teaching process, which are not yet widely explored by other researchers.

Lundayeh Communities in Kemabong

Crossing the high beautiful hills and magnificent mountains along the southwest coast of Sabah for more than 3 hours or 163 kilometres in distance from Kota Kinabalu, we finally reached Tenom, the prominent town 31 kilometres away from Kemabong. Kemabong was our actual destination, where Lundayeh villages can be found. There are three major Lundayeh villages in Kemabong: Kampung Kalibatang Baru, Kampung Baru Jumpa and Kampung Sugiang Baru. Kampung Baru Jumpa consists of four small villages: Kampung Jumpa Ulu, Kampung Jumpa Tengah, Kampung Jumpa Seberang and Kampung Belumbung. There are other smaller Lundayeh villages nearby such as Kampung Meluyan Lulu.



Figure 2. Location of Kemabong in Sabah. (<http://www.worldplaces.net>)

While Murut is the major ethnic group in Tenom, Lundayeh people largely distribute and settle within Kemabong. Kemabong is a very small town, a central point connecting to Sapong, Tomani, Sipitang and Long Pa Sia. Local government has provided necessary facilities such as clinics, schools, police station in the district. Most Lundayeh people in Kemabong involve mostly in agriculture as economic resources such as wet *padi* (rice), fruits, vegetables, coco, coffee and rubber for self-sustained incomes. Besides providing sufficient consumption for their own families, the harvested and processed crops, especially coco, rubber and coffee are sold and exported to big cities such as Tenom, Keningau, Kota Kinabalu, other parts of Malaysia and nearby foreign countries. Oil palm plantation owned by Sime Darby Company, stretching all the way from Kemabong and Sapong to Tenom, has also become the important work place and source of income for Lundayeh. However, many youngsters have left their villages, travelling far to big cities such as Kuala Lumpur, Kota Kinabalu, Singapore or the west countries in search for better job opportunities and tertiary studies (Sakai, 2012).

Older Lundayeh in Kemabong believe that their people had followed two routes from the border of Kalimantan travelling by foot to Sabah around 1940s and 1950s. It took approximately 14 days to reach the new lands of North Borneo. The first route crossed through Pensiangan and Keningau before they reached Sapong or Kemabong, whereas the second route followed along the rivers and settled in Sipitang and Long Pa Sia, but some went southwest bound to Lawas and Limbang via Ranau (Padan[a], 2012). According to Anna (2012), an old lady about 63 years old from Kampung Sugiang Baru (established in 1940s), Lundayeh is one of the subgroups of “Lundayeh Dayak” in Kalimantan. Langub Padan, first village head of Kampung Baru Jumpa about 73 years old, related that some old Lundayeh above 70 years old in their village were born in the small villages at the border areas of Kalimantan, Indonesia, such as Kampung Long Lombuto, Kampung Long Sumpayan, Kampung Tadulan, Kampung Pak Barang and Kampung Pak Sinapan¹ (Shim, 2007: 289; Padan, 2012).

¹ These villages have been buried in heavy forests and no longer exist today.

Lundayeh people had gone through tremendous change since they migrated to Sabah and Sarawak. In the past, they adopted aggressive living practices and systems. During the old time in Kalimantan, Lundayeh people had many enemies such as the Murut, iban Bidayuh (from Long Pa Sia) and far away Lundayeh groups, and fought a lot in fierce and bloodshed wars where they were famous as head hunters, a significant and highly respected heroic symbol for the bravest and most powerful men among their people (Sulutan, 2011).

In the early 19th century, British and Dutch governments signed the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824 to exchange trading ports under their controls and assert spheres of influence, in which indirectly set apart the two parts of Borneo into British and Dutch controlled areas. Kalimantan was under the power and reign of Dutch. The foreign rulers had forbidden the Lundayeh people to kill and hunt the heads of enemies. In 1922, Dutch Christian missionaries spread through Indonesia and converted the Lundayeh from their animistic belief into Christianity and educated them with values of humanity and holy teachings of GOD. Therefore, the first Lundayeh generation that arrived in North Borneo brought along with them the belief and philosophy of Christian Holy God. Besides Christianity, Malaysian laws after procurement of independence from the British had forbidden the Lundayeh people to kill any human being. Today, Lundayeh people are very grateful to the Dutch and Christian missionaries who had changed their concepts of living. Lundayeh no longer hunt for enemies' heads and they have been living in a stable condition of social and economy, placing stronger emphasis on spirituality and humanity as the backbone for the future advancement, prosperity and peace of their communities (Padan[b], 2011).

Reflection of Lundayeh Nature

According to Langub Padan (2012), the ancient dances that are still remembered by the elder Lundayeh in Kemabong from their ancient culture are *gong*, *sekafi*, *busak bakok*, *ruding* and *monyet* dances. *Monyet* dance does no longer exist in Kemabong, whereas *busak bakok* dance is rarely performed nowadays as it is only known by the older Lundayeh villagers. The only traditional dances

that are still surviving and being preserved are *gong* and *sekafi* dances. These two dances originated from Kalimantan and are still practiced in Kampung Sugiang Baru and Kampung Kalibatang Baru. *Gong* dance is the genuine and original Lundayeh dance whereas *sekafi* dance was adopted from Lundayeh Dayak subgroups, Dayak Kenya and Dayak Iban, in Kalimantan during the old days.

In the past, Lundayeh traditional dances were used in celebrations and rituals mainly to strengthen the unity and ties among their people. The dances were also part of social and cultural activities that functioned as entertainment to bring joy and happiness to the communities. The role of musical arts in strengthening the spirits of villages is very much needed and may help their people to maintain cohesiveness and energy for continuous of hard life in the villages (Tongkul, 2002: 60). Besides, dances were also meant for rituals and festivals, welcoming and honouring their honourable guests, especially to celebrate and honour the victories of the warriors. Usually, the dances would be followed by drinking of “*tuak*” (wine) until drunk (Basar, 2012).

Gong Dance

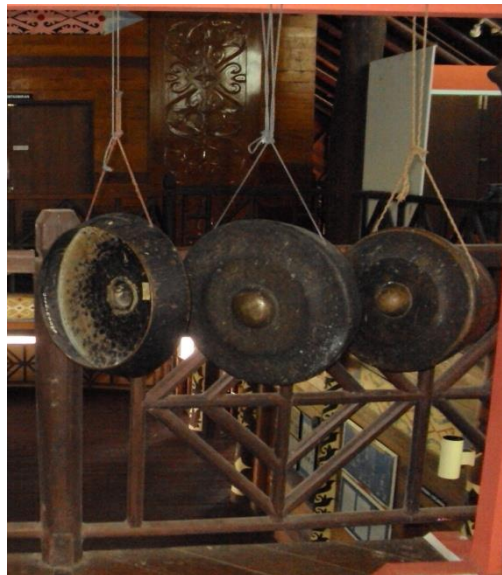


Figure 3. *Gongs* used in *Gong* dance. Photo: author.



Figure 4. Langub Padan Holding a Five-Stringed Chordophone: *Talab Buluh* on his Left Hand. Photo: author.



Figure 5. Gong Dance: Female and Male Dancers. Photo: author.

Today, the *gong* dance can be found only in Kampung Sugiang Baru and Kampung Kalibatang Baru, Kemabong. The name *gong* indicates “*keagungan*” or great innate qualities of humans (Yamat, 2012).

The dance is accompanied by three gongs or a *talab buluh*. Gongs can be replaced by *talab buluh* when gongs are not available although it sounds softer and more serene comparing to gongs. There are four to 20 female dancers together with one or two male dancers. There is no particular restriction on the number of dancers, although more dancers would look more magnificent and beautiful when they dance to welcome and honour their guests or to hold and create huge joyful celebrations. If it is difficult to recruit adequate number of dancers for a performance, then the number of dancers can be reduced according to the necessary circumstances. However, male dancers are preferred to be small in number as it is very dangerous for them to dance with sharp weapons (ibid.).

The female dancers swing their both arms and twist their hands in several different patterns while dancing. Their feet move in small quiet steps. The light movements of the hands and feet reflect the soft and gentle natures of the females. Lundayeh express that the female dance movements mirror the great humane qualities of their women and girls. The female costumes are white *kuyun dechor* (blouse) and black *tekip* (skirt), decorated with yellow beads on the foreheads, silver coin belts, necklaces and braces made from beads etc. In the interpretations of the Lundayeh, the white *kuyun dechor* reflects the inner purity of the females that they cultivate at their present life, whereas the black *tekip* shows the evil natures of their antagonism in their past that they presently strive to abandon. The accessories symbolize the beauty of the inner hearts and appearances of the females (Kafong, 2012). The solemn and great inner natures of the females can be clearly identified when Lundayeh women care and love for their children and husbands at homes, ensure the harmony and comfortable living conditions of their households and educate their children with unconditional love, understanding and sacrifices.

On the other hand, the male dancers sway their *gayang* or *parang*² in warrior-like *silat* movements as well as hunting and fighting postures. The male dancers wear the ancient costumes, *kuyun talun* (clothes made from skin of the tree or wood) and *chawat* (wrapping cloth for lower part of their body). The *chawat* is in red colour, representing the bloodshed and killing in wars. *Kuyun*

² *Gayang* (Lundayeh term) or *parang* (Malay term) is a kind sword used in villages.

talun made from the skin of wood or tree shows the difficult life within the vast nature that Lundayeh men had to venture through in the past (Kapong, 2012).

In the old days, Lundayeh males worked hard in the rice fields and farms, and hunted bravely in the deep forests. Furthermore, they had to fight with their enemies to protect their territories, as well as to prove their power and bravery. The males very often had to expose themselves to the bad weather and dangerous environments or to battle for their own survivals. Therefore, the dancing movements and choreographs of the male dancers narrate the stories of the brave and undefeatable Lundayeh men marking the *keagungan* (*gong*) of their masculine natures in the past. Through the dance, the stories continue to be transmitted through which their boys are educated to be brave and strong in prevailing over obstacles and difficulties in their life. Therefore, today one may find that Lundayeh men are usually potent and responsible to protect and support their families. They are also very valorous to venture into different new and challenging businesses and adventures. Many Lundayeh men are very successful such as they succeeded in travelling to the West countries to study in well-established universities, in blooming the country's economy with coco factories and rubber estates, etc. Murut people in Tenom insinuate that, comparing to other Sabah ethnic groups in Sabah, Lundayeh people are making advancements at full tilt in their life. However, as modernization rapidly sweeps across throughout the country, many of their young people have effortlessly exposed to modern ramifications that give rise to the decline of Lundayeh cultural values among the young generations (Genang, 2012).

Lundayeh believe that *gongs* were traded by the Chinese from China in Borneo and Indonesia (Padan[a], 2012). *Gong* is believed to have originated from Brunei where *gongs* had been traded in from China and Jawa during the Kingdom of Majepahit in 15th century (Benggong-Charuruks, 1992: 52). The *gongs* are made of bronze or brass and thick with broad rim. Each *gong* has its own pitch, ranging from low to high, depending on the size and thickness of the *gong*. Three *gongs* are tuned in three different tones by ears and they vary from one village to another.

Gongs are able to produce loud, intense and powerful sounds that are capable to uproar the warrior spirits, joy and strength of their people. In addition, the sounds of *gongs* can travel far and able to efficiently announce to other villages of the celebrations and rituals held in a village. These seem to be part of the other reasons why Lundayeh used *gongs* as the main musical instruments for their *gong* dances.

In *gong* dance, the *gongs* players produce varied and improvised interlocking patterns. The rhythms intertwine tightly with each other in enchanting layers that combine into melodies reflecting the unity, interdependence and intimacy among the *gongs* and musicians. Each *gong* has its own pitch ranging from low to high depending on the size and thickness of the *gong*. Three *gongs* are tuned in three different tones by ears and they vary from one village to another. At the same time, beautiful resonating and energetic melodies are produced through the tightly interwoven and interlocked tones of each of the *gong*. Therefore, the dance music would not be complete without the three *gongs*. That means, to accomplish the dance music successfully, the three *gong* players are equally important and respected.

Sometimes one *gong* player may be able to play two *gongs* at the same time if the third *gong* player is not available. It is also a challenge and achievement of greater intelligence and excellence in musical skills if the player may be able to play more than one *gong* at one time. This is one of the ways Lundayeh musicians develop their intelligence through musical skills. It displays the nature of Lundayeh that is not afraid of challenges for better development of themselves in life. Through the ensemble *gong* playing, the Lundayeh train their people to cultivate good connections that based on equal respect and spirits of working-together as this social concept reduces problems and promotes harmony and peace in the society. In life, Lundayeh respect each other and are not encouraged to discriminate among themselves on differences of social or political status. In their culture, they also do not nurture the notion of individualism that ends in selfishness and seclusion from others. Hence, the nature of *gong* dance music functionally reflects the tight connection within the social web of Lundayeh society: interdependent, brotherhood and altruism.

When *gongs* are not available, a *talab buluh* is used to substitute the *gongs*. The music produced by *talab buluh* is softer and more serene. However, the same syncopated interlocking rhythmic melodies like the *gongs* are imitated by the instrument. The Lundayeh people intend to present the other side of their soft, peaceful and polite nature through the enchanting melodies of the *talab buluh*. Today, we can find that Lundayeh no longer practice headhunting. They have abandoned their traditional culture of cruelty and antagonism. Goodness and values of humanity as taught by God are very much valued and appreciated in their life with the hope that they may be led by God to admit to the heaven if they practice goodness. With strong faith and devotion in their new religion, they are afraid of going to hell due to evil and wrongful deeds, as taught by the God.

Sekafi Dance



Figure 6. *Sekafi Dance* with Female Dancer dancing on *Gong*.



Figure 7. *Sekafi* Musical Instrument

Traditional *sekafi* dance can be divided into three types, as far as Lundayeh in Kemabong can remember: *sekafi tangan* (hand movements), *sekafi lilin* (candle movements) and *sekafi parang* (sword movements). In Kemabong, only *sekafi tangan* and *sekafi parang* are still practiced in Kampung Sugiang Baru. The dancers, usually about four to fifteen including males and females, possess quite the similar dance movements for all the three types of *sekafi* dances (Kapong, 2012).

The female dancers dance uniquely on the *gongs* - a highly respected and treasured dance symbolizing “*keagungan*” (greatness) of Lundayeh great inner feminine values and qualities. While the females dance on *gongs*, the male dancer would move with a *parang*, mirroring the warrior’s intrepidity and robustness. The only difference between *gong* and *sekafi* dances lies on *sekafi*’s³ complex rhythms and melodies. One or two *sekafi* are utilized to accompany the dance. Today, recorded *sekafi* music in tapes may be obtained from Kalimantan to accompany the dance performances as *sekafi* musicians are hard to find nowadays in the district (Yamat, 2012). Usually the young generations have no interests to learn the aged musical instrument. However, there is still a

³ *Sekafi* is a three stringed music instrument used to accompany *sekafi* dance.

surviving *sekafi* musician and maker in Kampung Baru Jumpa, Encik Andrew, whom the villages around would invite to perform *sekafi* music (Padan[a], 2012).

While the *sekafi* chordophone improvises and varies in its musical rhythms, melodies and patterns among three different *sekafi* dances, *sekafi tangan*, *sekafi lilin* and *sekafi parang*, the dance movements of the three dances remain almost the same. *Sekafi* dances can be performed in pairs or by only females. According to the dance teacher, Rebika Yamat (2012), the dancing on *gongs* in *sekafi* dance signifies the great inner values and attributes of Lundayeh females such as great mother's love and sacrifices, great understandings, care and kindness etc. Lundayeh people respect and feel very grateful to the women who have sacrificed their life for their families and children.

The concept of paired dancing in *sekafi* dance reflects the social nature of Lundayeh that emphasizes on the healthy growth and right understandings in social relationship between females and males. The female dancers dance in soft and polite manners while the male dancers move in vigorous manners bearing the intentions to protect the females from dangers. The coupling relationship exhibits the righteous social contact that is required to establish good relationships of love and attraction between two opposite genders. It also displays the right ways to manage healthy relationships between females and males. Through the choreography of the dance, one is able to understand the virtuous social philosophy upheld by Lundayeh who believe that good inner qualities are essential to build happy, loving and long-lasting families.

Cultivation of Lundayeh Nature

In the present modern contexts, Lundayeh traditional dances struggle to retain their ancient spiritual or cultural significant meanings. Today, *gong* and *sekafi* dances are performed scarcely in Annual Lundayeh Cultural Festivals (celebrated in the month of June), *ukui*⁴ ceremony and other events of celebration to express love, respect and longing for their ancestors and also to preserve their

⁴ *Ukui* ritual is an ancient head hunting warrior ritual of Lundayeh celebrating for the victory of headhunters. Enemies' heads are hanged on poles, and dances and singing will be performed in the ritual. Today, the ritual is revived and sacredly led by the oldest and most experienced Lundayeh in a village.

identity and cultural root (Baru, 2012). Both dances are currently more popular in tourist destinations such as Mari-Mari Cultural Village in Inanam, Sabah, for the purposes of attracting tourists and bringing in more business profits. The dances performed for business purposes have been creatively remodelled allowing the Malay, Indonesian, and other Sabah ethnic dancers and choreographers, to take part in the work of innovation.

In real life, Lundayeh people would need healthy and strong physical bodies to ensure they are always fit to work for a difficult life. Therefore in the practices of dances, Lundayeh have put in fathomless considerations to benefit their people.

The *sekafi* female dancers are trained to dance on the *gong* with on one foot for the techniques and skills to control and develop their physical balance and strength. The dancing techniques would help to build up the body and develop the physical endurance against hardships (Kafong, 2012). The skill and strength are very needed when they work, bending their backs and planting small rice plants as quickly and as accurately as they can in equal distance into the water (as they would need to finish four to more plots of rice fields within one day to earn enough money for the day); or withstand the hot sun and hard work in rubber, oil palm plantations or in forests up in the high hills.

The male dancers, on the other hand, are trained to balance and control their dance movements and develop physical efficiency on one tilted foot. Besides that, they would also need to control with sharpness and full concentration to twist their hands, wrists, waists and bodies in hunting, fishing and fighting positions while posing the sword in skilful attacking, landing and defending manners. To Lundayeh people, good dancers and dance should have all the skilfulness competent in right balancing, controlled energy, sensitive wit, sharpness and concentration (Kafong J., 2012). These dance techniques indirectly equip the Lundayeh males the necessary physical and mental faculties to work efficiently and effectively in modern society.

According to the dance teachers in Kampong Sugiang Baru, Rebika Yamat and Samuel Kapong (2012), the dancers are also taught to cultivate patience, team-work, quick-wit, discipline, tolerance, humbleness, spiritual depth and altruism in the process of dance learning. These mental

qualities are indispensable for Lundayeh to become good dancers and to produce good dance performances, as well as to acquire good inner qualities. For Lundayeh, good Lundayeh dances carry the spirits of their souls, or their profound inner values and natures.

Usually in the process of learning dances, the students would need to tolerate the pains, hardships and scolds from the teachers before they are recognized to have the fine skills to perform good dances. The old dance teachers usually instruct in strict manners and use *rotan*⁵ to punish the dance students during the dance practices. The dance students would naturally get very scared of the teachers. This teaching method causes the students to become automatically aware of the disciplines, better behaved, observe good manners in their daily life. Sometimes, the students would need to practice the dance under hot sun or after their hard work helping their parents in the fields and farms. The students would also be taught to put forth the quality of forming a unified whole to achieve unity and mutual understandings. These are important spiritual depth that is meant to be transmitted to the youngsters through the dance.

Lundayeh is wise enough to utilize the dance as a medium of education to whittle the virtuous characteristics among their young generations. However, Rebika Yamat (2012) commented that the young children have gradually changed nowadays due to the modern education and exposure they have in the modern life. Most of their children are more difficult to teach and old teaching methods sometimes cause their children to lose interests in learning the dances or to become rebellious. Therefore, the young dance teachers have to accommodate to use softer, more understanding and friendly methods to stir the children's interests, to enhance relationship between teacher and students, and to encourage the children to learn their old dances.

Conclusions

From looking into the divergent aspects of *gong* and *sekafi* dances, it may conclude that Lundayeh people put spiritual cultivation beyond all other mundane pursuits in their life. Throughout

⁵ *Rotan* is a beater made from *rattan*.

their history, they have realized that the values of humanity are the cores to build a good society. Through different forms and designs of their dances, their people are educated and guided toward positive natures. Turning around, their dances are deliberately constructed in positive ways springing from their good mentality and values.

Based on the above analytical discussions on the movements, meanings, learning process and functions of Lundayeh traditional dances, one may come to understand that dances are deliberately implicit reflections of the mentality and natures of Lundayeh people. The females possess softness, gentleness, tolerance, patience, caring, understanding while the males are generally brave, strong, protective, endurable, quick-wit etc. In general, Lundayeh dance is an expression and reflection of Lundayeh people's hearts. Their inner beauty and aesthetics passed down from the past to their children, in hope to continue to travel into the future with graceful embracement of their purest souls. In seeking for peace and happiness in their life, Lundayeh people cultivate the integrity, virtues and values of humanity to bring forth a harmonious and prosperous society.

When I first entered the villages of Lundayeh, the first impression that I received was the softness and serenity of the villages. Lundayeh in Kemabong live in the environment which is surrounded by magnificent hills, thick tropical forests and wonderful nature. Their life is very simple, contented and harmonious. It is very easy to communicate with Lundayeh people as they are very understanding and relaxed. They would easily get entertained, feel joyful and funny when they chat with others. The atmosphere around them is usually very happy, soft and friendly. That is why the Lundayeh villages emit peaceful, harmonious, joyful and relaxed atmosphere, a dreamed living condition definitely contrasting with the big cities full of pressures, stress, crimes and terrors.

I became close with Lundayeh people after about one and a half year. I was convinced that most Lundayeh people are generally good in nature. This is further confirmed when I was told by the heads of the villages that there is no crime such as theft, killing, robbery or rape in their villages. Even someone who gets legally divorced would still seem very strange, inappropriate and rare for them. The first head village of Kampung Baru Jumpa, Langub Padan (2012) said that the only problem that

worry them in their villages is road accidents after getting drunk. This also makes them recall the unethical life they had in the past when most of their warriors like to get drunk and kill.

Marten Baru (2012), present head village of Kampung Kalibatang Baru, related that Lundayeh people are devoted to Christian teachings and they are forbidden to commit wrongful or evil acts. In the past, Lundayeh used the term “*Lun Doh*” for people or warriors who have lands, houses, crops and power. Today this term refers to the highly respected figures who contribute great goodness to their people and communities. Humanity and morality are highly regarded in the cultivation of spirituality. The spiritual upbringing of their children is also vital for their future young generations to have meaningful life and become useful to the societies.

Lundayeh people march into the 21st century realizing the possibility of their ancient wisdom to be swallowed by the modern age (Basar, 2012). Langub Padan (2012), the most respected Lundayeh musician and cultural figure in Kemabong, expressed his wise views and thoughts on the future of Lundayeh people. He remarked that, in the far future, the development based on vicious economic and materialistic benefits would ruin the pure culture of their people. He further expounded that although a good life needs the stability of economy and technology, yet prosperity and peace would only come around if there is a proper growth and genuine cultivation of spirituality and humanity.

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