

# **Ancestor Power: Marriage Rituals of a Hakka Community in Sarawak, Malaysia**

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## **Abstract**

This paper discusses marriage rituals in a Hakka community in a resettlement village in Sarawak, Malaysia. Modernity has changed the lifestyles of the villagers. They have access to improved infrastructure, greater exposure to the mass media, higher education attainment and increased social mobility especially amongst the young people working outside the village. Despite the social changes due to modernization, marriage rituals have remained traditional in form.

The study will examine the reasons behind the continuance of such rituals and my hypothesis is that the villagers still uphold a worldview that marriage does not only involve themselves (the living), but also the supernatural beings in the other world (their dead ancestors). The legitimacy of the union in marriage is acknowledged after the blessings of the ancestors have been sought. Although on the surface, ancestor worship is an expression obligation, they actually connote the eternal alliance between the dead and the living. As suggested by Turner (1974: 57), ritual does not act just as “social glue” that holds the community together or put social order into place. I thus examine further the symbolic representation of ancestor worship in marriage rituals. I use the term “emulating process” to describe how the future is moulded to gratify the past because one will become a past in the future. It is performed to ensure that the family lineage is carried on, as has been past down by their ancestors.

**Key words:** ancestor worship, marriage rituals, Hakka.

## **Introduction**

Ancestor worship forms part of the culture that has been practised in Chinese societies and has been one of the central institutions of the Chinese regardless of time and space. Although a common form of ritual among ethnic Chinese in Malaysia, ancestor worship is a neglected area of research and often regarded as a simple continuation of the Chinese system (Clarke, 2000:273). Practised in many ceremonies by different dialect groups, the significance of ancestor worship has never been clearly understood and deciphered.

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This study relates the role of ancestor worship in marriage rites so as to put it in a better perspective. The Chinese are more familiar with ancestor worship as it is practised during major traditional ceremonies connected with the departed such as Ching Ming (Tomb Sweeping) Festival and the Hungry Ghosts Festival. Ancestor worship and its relevance to felicitous occasions such as marriage is recognized but hardly given serious thought, let alone studied. By means of a study on a Hakka community and their marriage rituals conducted in a small village-town in Sarawak, known as Tabidu<sup>1</sup> in the paper, the purpose is to investigate the reasons behind the incorporation of ancestor worship into marriage rituals and the significance and importance of the practice to the wellbeing of the bride and her family as well as the community as a whole.

### **The Village Setting**

The Hakka people of Tabidu were resettled in this village during the 1960s under a campaign to contain communist threats known as Operation Hammer. Historically, communism was a national security problem and groups of Chinese settlers were blamed for propagating such movements. Hence, they were re-located into centralized settlements, one of them being Tabidu, where the people live in an enclosed setting, although movements were not entirely prohibited (Porritt, 2001: 43). The threats were eventually overcome in the 1980s. Being vegetable farmers and livestock keepers, the people of Tabidu have since become the main pioneers of large-scale vegetable farming in the Kuching-Samarahan Division. The community of Hakka embraces a syncretic “Chinese religion” which incorporates elements of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism as well as ancestor worship (Tong and Kong, 2000: 41).

In 2006, the population of Tabidu was around 2,500 people living in 485 households (DSS, 2007). Families of Hakka origin account for about 97 per cent of the population. Most of the males and females in the 18 to 45 age groups, probably numbering 1,200, have moved out of the village to work in Singapore, Brunei, Kuala Lumpur or in foreign countries.<sup>2</sup> Wherever they may be, they maintain a strong identity of their village of origin as most would return to Tabidu after working abroad and to perform important events of their life such as marriage.

How the people who originated here identify Tabidu as their home may be traced to their common upbringing in a close community. Close relationships were developed in the past because of various factors. They were once exposed to the risks of communist insurgency during which everyone came under the watchful eyes of the authorities. They had remained united to counter the bad publicity associated with them as well as the threats of the insurgents. These threats having been removed, many among the younger generation have left to work overseas. Their parents continue to live in the village while their wandering sons

strive to save up before returning to the village to try their luck in small businesses. Most have found foreign places of work to be lacking in the social environment. Life in Singapore, for instance, one of the preferred places of work, is seen as stressful, where the people are less than friendly and overly materialistic, and where the cost of living is excessive. It is a place only to earn money and to maintain in constant contact with their families in the village. They work among many whom they have known since their childhood and some were relatives and neighbours. This clustering is the result of the diffusion of information on employment prospects by word of mouth from early batches of workers from the village. The scenario is different in other cities such as Kuching where the services from work agencies rather than inter-personal relationships and acquaintances are relied upon.

Where conditions permit, these sojourners return to Tabidu at least once a year during the Chinese New Year, which is the first day of the lunar calendar year during which the atmosphere in the village turns lively. Families are reunited on the eve of the new year, to gather at the reunion dinner. Additionally, many may make another trip home during the Ching Ming Festival. This is a day of obligation to pay respects to departed ancestors, and is a family matter taken seriously as a form of filial piety and a day of remembrance for the departed.

### **A Local Definition of Ancestors**

Freedman (1957:71) mentioned that two persons of the same surname from one localized lineage in China can be assumed to have a common descent that could be traced if genealogical records were available. These ancient ancestors can be defined as those who continued the lineage through the generations and who could be traced through the lineage registry book called *zupu* (族谱).<sup>3</sup> At the apex of the lineage is a recognized founding father. The village residents remember the more recent ancestors who were buried in the local cemetery and pay their respect to them during major festive occasions. Ancestor “worship” is performed on Ching Ming Festival to pay their respect to the dead, and on the Hungry Ghost period on the Seventh Moon to pay respect to wandering ghosts. On both occasions, prayers are offered at the cemetery where deceased family members are buried. The local cemetery, situated 4km from the village, was established before Tabidu village came into being in 1963. It is learned that the oldest grave dates back 150 years.

Freedman (1970:166) stated that in principle, domestic ancestor worship works on a cycle in which the youngest living generation offers prayers to their ancestors four generations before. This practice is consistent with the Chinese abstraction that the core of agnatic kinship is formed by those related within the patrilineal system of “five mourning grades” or *Wu Fu*

(五服). This is the general structural arrangements of Chinese ancestor worship, either by offering prayers to the deceased person on the date of his death or collectively to “all the ancestors” during major annual festivals.

In Tabidu, the villagers do not keep tablets of their ancestors in the house. Many householders confess that it is troublesome to do so, as this practice would oblige one to offer prayers on the first and fifteenth days of each month in the Chinese calendar and to burn incense sticks to place before the tablet. They are also too busy to commit themselves to this mandatory practice and failure to do so is a failure in upholding one’s filial duties and, worse still, there is always the fear of one being inflicted by misfortunes or illness. Hence the practice of keeping ancestral tablets in the house is becoming less common than before. Freedman (1970: 173) wrote that the collective worship of ancestors does not necessarily have to be performed before the tablets. Thus, prayers offered to individual ancestors also do not have to be performed in front of the tablets.

According to Freedman (1957: 53), ancestral tablets may be kept elsewhere such as in a temple. This, he attributed to the fact that the houses in which people live in “Nanyang” are not genuine homes as they are not “the milieux of continuance, generation after generation, of the kinship line”. The Hakka people migrated from north to southeast China and have been constantly on the move since then. As such, they did not stay put at specific places for long periods and have gradually abandoned the practice of keeping tablets in their houses.

Ancestor worship is also incorporated into marriage ritual as a unique form of practice by which ancestors are “invited” to the house. A medium acts as an intermediary to communicate between the living and departed beings. Under normal circumstances, ancestor worship takes place in the cemetery where a medium is not usually present or required. In a marriage ritual, the spirits of the dead are “invited” to the auspicious event to witness and solemnize a marriage. The roles and reasons behind this custom will be discussed in the later part of this study.

### **The Practice of Ancestor Worship**

A discussion of two major festivals in Tabidu that are linked directly to the veneration of ancestors will put into perspective this practice in marriage rituals. These two festivals are the Ching Ming Festival and Hungry Ghosts Festival which are looked upon as important dates in the Chinese calendar.

### **Ching Ming Festival**

The Ching Ming Festival falls normally on the first or second week of the third month of the lunar calendar. The villagers make a clear distinction between the Chinese and the Gregorian calendars. The date of this festival is usually fixed in the lunar calendar in relation to the winter solstice and arrives 104 days later. Ching Ming is itself a day to remember the recently dead persons. On the day itself or even before its arrival, the villagers visit the grave(s) of their ancestor(s) and to scrap away mosses and dirt that have accumulated on the tombstones since their last visit and to cut the tall grasses and shrubs. Some would apply a new coat of paint to the tombstone. Food and drinks are laid out and “paper or ghost money” is burned as offerings to the dead.

Visiting the grave during Ching Ming is an important affair, especially for the sons, who lead the family in prayers to the departed ancestors. A son who fails to join his siblings is enjoined to make the visit to the cemetery with his own family on another day. Lest absence creates uneasy feelings and, therefore, all would strive to join the siblings on the appointed day. Members who work overseas are informed of the arrival of Ching Ming in advance. Cleaning the graveyards of ancestors and offering prayers are seen as an act of filial piety to parents who are still living. Ching Ming is a day of the year when the dead are remembered by the community. It is a day when the living show their respect for their ancestors and to appease their souls through prayers and offerings especially of food. At the end of the rites, it is natural that offerings of food are taken home for consumption and not left to waste.

### **Hungry Ghosts Festival**

The Hungry Ghosts Festival is observed in the seventh month of the Chinese lunar calendar, reaching its climax on the 15th day when the main rituals are conducted. Some villagers call the entire month the “Ghost month”. During this festival, the belief is that the gates of hell are opened for a month to let out hungry ghosts to roam in the human world. These hungry ghosts are referred to as “good brothers” but more usually known as “those things”. Villagers normally refrain from uttering phrases that are considered as “dirty or polluting” during the entire month. Many do not look upon this month with favour, and consider it as the most inauspicious month of the year, because of the “pollution” caused by the presence of “those things”. Marriages in particular are avoided with studied care.

Coming into the human world during this time are also the wandering ghosts or the spirits of those who have died tragic or violent deaths would come to the human world to haunt those who have caused their death or to find others to replace them by taking their lives. Consequently, many villagers do not make long journeys or venture out at night, and the younger ones are strongly advised to stay indoor after dark. Family members also do not

engage in quarrels or gossips, because they believe that the spirits of their ancestors would be visiting and would haunt them if they broke the harmony of the house.

The climax of the Hungry Ghosts Festival for the villagers of Tabidu is the celebration on the 15th day to appease the souls of their ancestors and that of wandering ghosts. Food and drinks are offered, joss sticks and “paper money” burned, and prayers chanted for the benefit of the dead. A bamboo platform is erected in the hall of the cemetery and decorated with firecrackers and on which is displayed a variety of food comprising chickens and ducks, slices of pork and pigs’ heads, fish of every kind, rice cakes, bananas, pineapples, and melons. The spirit medium in charge of the ceremony beats a drum to invite the ghosts to feast on the offerings. After the feast, the ghosts are sent away for the villagers to partake in the ceremony. The spirit medium will first chant some prayers and then performs what the villagers have been waiting for anxiously, the beating of the drum, as a signal to scramble for the offerings on display.

### **Marriage Rituals**

Ancestor worship forms an essential component of the marriage ritual. On the wedding day, ancestor worship rituals are performed out of family obligations and for personal assurance to ensure a good marriage, whereby the ancestors are “invited” to witness and then to solemnize the marriage. Families that choose not to perform these rituals run the risk of ostracism, gossips, and other sanctions by the villager community and these are to be avoided at all cost.

Ancestor worship in a marriage is conducted in stages, starting in the bride’s house and ending in the groom’s. A day before the wedding, an ancestor worship ceremony is conducted at the bride’s house. Various restrictions are imposed on the bride on the wedding day, one of which is that ancestors should not be worshipped, hence the ceremony at the bride’s house the day before. The ceremony is held outside of the house because daughters are treated as temporary members of the family who will eventually be married out into another family (Chai, 2009:62). Turner (1969: 109) calls this “the powers of the weak” whereby there are many restrictions on what can and cannot be done despite what appears to be honorific treatments of welcoming the bride. Ancestor worship is mediated by a medium who initiates the ceremony by lighting up three pairs of red candles and a bundle of joss sticks. He then starts chanting to “invite” the ancestors of the lineage to the ceremony, seeking at the same time for the help of the God of Earth (伯公) to lead the ancestors in their journey. The ancestors would be told that a female member of the lineage will be marrying during this auspicious occasion. Blessings are asked from the ancestors for the outgoing daughter that she may have a good and fruitful married life. Blessings are also sought to protect the lineage and to ensure their

good health and prosperity. Meat, rice cakes, and alcohol are served to appease the spirits of the ancestors. “Paper money” and incense are burnt to thank and to send off the ancestors.

On the wedding day itself, ancestor worship is performed inside the groom’s family house, in contrast to the ceremony held outside of the bride’s house the day before. Orchestrated by a medium, the ceremony “invites” the presence of the ancestors to witness and bless the occasion. The medium tosses a silver piece for divination purpose made up of two silver clams-like ornaments about the size of twenty cent coins tied together with a red string to announce the arrival of the ancestors, again guided by the God of Earth. If the ornaments end up in a similar position, it indicates that the ancestors have not arrived or are waiting for more to arrive. Complete arrival is signified when one of the ornament faces upward and the other faces downward. Only then will the medium starts his chanting and invites the ancestors to feast on the food and drinks served on the table.

The newly-weds are guided by the medium to pay their respect to the groom’s ancestors. Their first act is to make three bows: first to heaven and earth; second to the ancestors; and third to each other. Then, the medium pours tea into three glasses on a tray held by the groom. The bride will symbolically present them to the ancestors and utter words of respect to invite the ancestors to drink. The medium then passes her a red packet filled with money (红包). The bride serves the tea three times and receives three red packets in return. When this is done, the couple retreats to the bridal room where the groom will perform the unveiling of the bride. The couple emerges again to the living room and continues with the next series of rituals. Each holding three joss sticks, the couple bows: first to the heaven and earth; second to the ancestors; and the third to the God of Earth. The final action is to send the ancestors off and to thank them and the God of Earth for their blessings and protection by burning “paper money” offerings.

There have been instances in which ancestor worship has not been properly observed in the marriage rituals. In one instance, ancestor worship was performed in the bride’s house but not in the groom’s house as the latter has embraced Christianity. This famous incident is known as the “Li Suk (Uncle Li) ‘selling daughter’ to a Christian son-in-law” case in Tabidu, involving a couple who is working and has settled down in Singapore. A few days after their wedding, many peculiar things were known to have happened in the groom’s home in Tabidu. The chickens which the family kept died and the mother and grandmother of the groom fell sick. One of the young grandchildren in the family came across strange people and also played with them. This child fell sick soon after. The mother of the child consulted a spirit medium for advice. In his trance, the spirit medium attributed the unfortunate events to the failure to pay proper respect to the ancestors on the wedding day. This prompted the immediate response of the family to choose another auspicious day after the actual wedding

so that ancestor worship could be carried out to appease the angered ancestors.

On another occasion, ancestor worship ceremony was performed but the name of one ancestor was inadvertently omitted. This was groom's grandmother who died about 20 years ago. During the ceremony, names of the deceased were revoked in pairs. That the groom's grandfather was still alive might have led to the spirit medium's failure to mention the grandmother's name. That night, an apparition of an old lady appeared in the bridal chamber, as witnessed and told by the bride, but vanished as the groom was woken up. The groom believed that his wife was exhausted and had imagined things. Several nights later, the bride saw an old woman leaving the living room where members of the family were watching television. Her "sighting" was a puzzle to all who were present then. Her description of an old woman dressed in purplish Chinese costume and arranging her hair in a bun confirmed, to everyone's anxiety, that the grandmother had "returned" home. The following morning, the groom's mother visited the village temple to seek the help of the spirit medium. The medium went into a trance and conveyed the message from a god that the grandmother was unhappy for being left out to "witness" the marriage of her grandson. Upon the advice of the spirit medium, the family performed a ceremony in the house in an attempt to placate the spirit for the old lady.

The above instances confirm the importance of ancestor worship that is held to appease the soul of the dead and their relevance to the affairs of the living. Hence it is believed that the living need to seek the "advice" of their ancestors through rituals performed before and during the marriage. Their presence is therefore necessary to "witness" important events of the family such as marriage.

Ancestor worship is taken seriously by the people of Tabidu. The belief in its significance on the living is deeply ingrained in the minds especially of the elderly. Through experience, the people believe that, when properly executed, ancestor worship may ensure that the family and its members are free from many problems. But if it is carried out improperly, the ancestors will feel slighted by the lack of respect of their descendants. Two cases of the improper execution of ancestor worship during marriage remain in the memory of the people of Tabidu. In both cases, the couples paid the "penalty" of not being blessed with sons. Having a male descendant is of utmost importance in a family as he will carry on the lineage and continue the family's surname. One of the couples ended up having four girls but without a single boy to show after years of efforts. The popular belief is that the bride, who was then a Christian, was half hearted when performing the ancestor worship ceremony during the marriage ritual. It was learned that she lacked sincerity when seeking the blessings of the ancestors and was consequently made to pay for this affront. In another case that occurred 20 years ago, the ancestor worship was completed with indifference. The offerings had shown an absence of

respect. An elderly male villager who witnessed the ceremony lamented that neither meat nor chicken was served to the ancestors but merely some rice cakes, a few local oranges and some peanuts. He pointed out that even ordinary guests may not be pleased with the simple items, let alone the ancestors. Hence the couple was made to suffer by having eight daughters and could only have a son by adopting one.

Table 1. Comparison between the Objectives of Ancestor Worship Practised on Different Occasions in Tabidu

Objectives	Ching Ming	Hungry Ghosts	Marriage
Person(s) worshipped	Own grandparents, parents	Others' parents, grandparents, those who died of bad deaths	Own ancestors
Trail of ancestors	Still in memory or at most two generations removed	Forgotten or two generations removed	In memory – 18 to 22 generations removed and those not known to be blood relatives
Venue	Cemetery	Cemetery	House
Requests	Blessing for family's prosperity, harmony, safety	Blessing for community and family's prosperity, harmony, safety	Blessing for family, future descendants
Emotions	Respect, filial obligation	Fear, respect	Anxiety, respect
Participation	All in family (except pregnant women)	Entire community (except pregnant women)	All in family (except pregnant women and those who are in mourning)
Taboos	No calling of names of person, or else the spirit will follow the person back to the house	No calling of names of person, or else the spirit will follow the person back to the house	There is no identifiable taboo except that the ancestors are ideally sent off immediately after they have witnessed and blessed the occasion and feasted on the food. It is widely rumoured that if the ancestors were invited into the house for a longer period, some "mischievous" ancestors might hide in the corners of the house and did not want to return to their world. They might cause much mischief to the living.
Period of ritual	3-6 hours	Half a day	3-4 hours

### Significance of the Date of Marriage

The marriage cycle in Tabidu is tied to the lunar calendar. Discussion of a marriage is initiated by the future groom's family when it presents his horoscopic data (八字) to the

girl's family. The compatibility of the couple is sought by consulting a spirit medium or an elderly person who is well versed in the Chinese Almanac or *Tung Shu* (通书). *Tung Shu*, which literally means a “book of everything”, is an almanac which contains information on auspicious and inauspicious dates for carrying out important events. Many prefer to consult a medium as they are believed to be more accurate and reliable. Furthermore, few in Tabidu are able to understand the almanac as most of the elderly are illiterate and the young are even more unfamiliar with the difficult text.

The timing of the marriage proposal, like the marriage rituals, is made to avoid certain months of the year as they are considered as inauspicious. Inauspicious months for marriage are the third, sixth and seventh months of the Chinese lunar calendar. These months are avoided as a sign of respect to the ancestors. The third month coincides with the Ching Ming Festival and the seventh month coincides with the Hungry Ghosts Festival. It is unlikely that one will insist on getting married during any of these months and run the risk of the bride being labelled a “Ghost Bride” (鬼新娘). The villagers believe that marriage during these months would invite accidents that might be fatal to the bride. Marriage in the sixth month is avoided so that the married couple does not end up as a “half-year-couple” arising from the loss of the bride in either half of the year. My time spent in the field during these months confirms that marriages are indeed avoided at this time. Even the discussion on the proposed marriage is done outside of these months.

According to a well-known spirit medium in Tabidu, there are basically two “good” dates in each month to conduct marriage rituals. In actual fact, the “goodness” here does not stand for anything good at all. They are actually inauspicious dates, said euphemistically to counter adverse consequences. Events relating to deaths are referred to in a similar fashion. When making arrangements for a funeral, a bereaved family is assumed to be preparing a “good event”. The “good” dates in weddings are determined by the months of the year, which is divided into three four-month periods called *xun* (旬), a term that refers to the nodes of the bamboo to signify intersections. The first four months of the lunar calendar year are called the early part (上旬) and the third and seventh days of these months are avoided for marriage. The next four months are called middle part (中旬) and the final four months make up the lower part (下旬). The 13th and 18th days in the middle months and the 22nd and 28th days of the year-end month are inauspicious dates for weddings and the conduct of marriage rituals.

### Changing Times and Changing Rituals

As the community changes with the time, so do the rituals. The most obvious among the changes are in the wearing of the white wedding gown by the bride. First-generation women of 75 years and above said that they would be wearing new dresses during the wedding

day. The white colour was strictly taboo then. The white wedding gown has since come into common use, both as a fashion trend and the marketing tactic of bridal shops that offer many choices to suit the tastes of the current generation.

The choice of auspicious time for marriage has also changed. Most couples prefer the eighth month to conclude their nuptials. This is considered the most auspicious month during which most local restaurants will be fully booked to hold wedding dinners. The end of the year is also the season for tying the knot. December is the choicest month as it coincides with the festive season of Christmas and New Year.

Another noticeable change is the type of veil (头纱) that adorns the bride. To the village elders, the putting on of this headgear by the bride marks the onset of a type of malignant force (煞气) that she is believed to possess on her wedding day (Chai, 2009: 59). The veil is put on before the bride leaves her natal home and is lifted off her head after she has offered tea to the ancestors. The serving of tea signifies her acceptance as a member of her husband's lineage as a daughter-in-law. However some brides may fail to remove the headgear out of ignorance of its symbolic significance.

### **Why are the Rituals Continued?**

The reasons for the continued practice of marriage rituals till this day may be examined from the perspective of perpetuating the family lineage. The institution of the family in Tabidu is a strong bonding force. Rituals are performed during a marriage within the family as a unifying agency that binds the family together. More importantly, these rituals are performed to serve the larger interests of the lineage of the family as well as contributing to the community or village identity. In short, they serve to bridge the past and the present and to ensure that the family name is handed down from one generation to another.

An element of fear is involved in performing the rituals of ancestor worship during the wedding ceremony. It is the fear that, if omitted or performed improperly, the ancestors might be so provoked as to bring misfortunes to the family. When misfortunes do strike especially soon after a marriage, they are invariably blamed on the improper performance of ancestor worship. This oversight and disrespect on the part of the current generation is a matter that is related to life and the formation of new families through births and the continuity of the lineage.

The avoidance of social stigma is an important factor in the continued practice of ancestor worship. Failure to fulfil this family obligation will invite the sanction of the entire village. The occurrence of undesirable events in the family will only confirm the conviction of the village of the folly of giving insufficient attention to tradition. The social pressure to uphold tradition has also made ancestor veneration a mandated requirement in the marriage ceremony.

Preparations for ancestor worship in marriage rituals do not require much cost or effort. These rituals are supervised by a medium who often doubles as the matchmaker himself. Through expert guidance means that the family members do not have to learn the details of the rituals. In return the medium or matchmaker receives a small token in the form of a red packet of a sum of money for his services. Although the wedding couple are the main actors in the rituals, they play a passive role by following the instructions from the elders and the medium.

## Conclusion

Marriage is an important episode that shapes the future of the villagers in this Hakka community. It gives rise to a great deal of anxiety to all who are involved especially the groom's family. Through the marriage rituals, the powers of past ancestors are evoked to help ensure that the marrying couple will be blessed with children, especially sons, to continue the family lineage and that the entire family may live in harmony. Ancestor worship is performed by the couple as a filial obligation and as a safeguard for an accident-free future and one that will be blessed with children. Other members of the family, usually the elders, wish to demonstrate the importance attached to ancestor worship, and as a signal that the same practice will be bestowed upon them when they are no longer around. Past practices by previous generations have bore fruits and blessings in the continuation of the family line and the family living in harmony. It only makes sense that performing the rituals will ensure the same extent of success that the family has been blessed hitherto. It is a form of sustaining an age-old tradition as much as a psychological assurance for the continuance of the family lineage.

## Notes

- 1 To preserve the identity of the village and for confidentiality of my respondents, I use a synonym to replace the actual name of the village.
- 2 No statistics are available to show the number of males and females who have moved abroad to work but the figures presented here are the best estimates calculated by the local respondents.
- 3 A copy of the lineage book of the Chai clan was brought by early emigrants to Sarawak and copies of this book are available at the Chai Clan Association.

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