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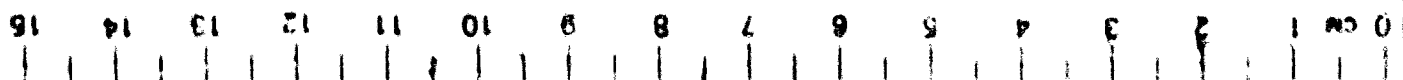
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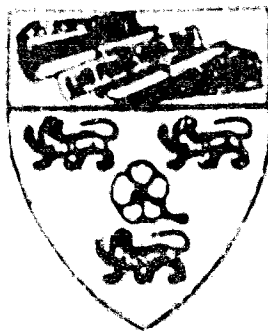
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**POPULATION OF SABAH**

**by**

**Al' Alim bin Mchd. Ibrahim**

**Graduation Exercise submitted as part  
fulfillment towards the degree of Bachelor of Arts  
in Economics (Statistics)**

**820028**

**Division of Statistics  
Faculty of Economics and Administration  
University of Malaya.**

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This report covers the growth of the population of Sabah. The first report covered the growth and distribution of the population. The period then covered is from 1901 to 1960. Growth has been in a steady phenomenon, with the population figures increasing by around 10% since 1901 in a period of only 2 decades. It is especially true for the Chinese community, those on the west coast particularly show a more rapid rate of growth. Community growth also shows differential rates with the Chinese exhibiting the fastest rate of increase. The natives have increased at a moderate pace.

The distribution of the population follows the general pattern of the development of Sabah. Regions of greatest settlement and density occur mainly on the west coast portions and some east coast areas.

The distribution of the population by age indicates it to be a young one and present rates of growth emphasize this point. Children below 15 years of age make up over 40% of the population in 1960. An analysis by the main communities and by rural and urban distribution is considered. Finally an assessment of the Age distribution is made.

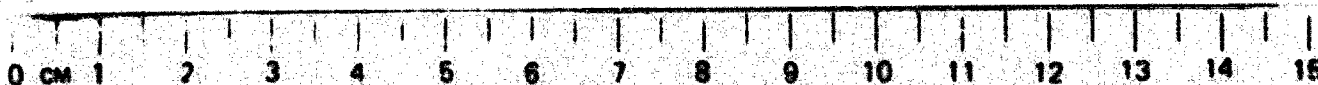
Chapter three looks into the Sex and Marital Status characteristics of the population. Sex-ratios point out that between the two main immigrant groups in Sabah, the Chinese have taken well to Sabah and show signs of becoming a permanently settled community. The other group, consisting mainly of Indonesians and Filipinos, is still immigrant in character. Marital status figures show that in 1960, around 37% of the population were single, around 37% were married and the rest either widowed or divorced.

The question of literacy and religion is taken up next. Analysis of the latest census data reveals that the Chinese are the most literate, the education of the Malays is still a long way to go, and finally the most common language of literacy is the Chinese language, followed by Malay and English.

Figures on Religion indicate greater number people are turning to Christianity rather than Islam.

Data on the Labour Force is dealt with in the final chapter. Within the working age-group of 15-64 years, it is to be noted that 70% were economically active. In the age-group of 45 and over, almost 65% were recorded as active economically. A large proportion of the female sex were also enumerated as active. The greater part of the active population were recorded as Own Account and Family Workers. For the country as a whole, the variety of occupations was rather limited.

That, in brief, is the total coverage of the exercise.



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Introduction:

British North Borneo, called Sabah by the natives, lies in the extreme north of the island of Borneo, situated about latitude 4° N and longitude 117° E. It is insular in nature but this insularity did not lead to any rapid growth of the population by migration as happened in other insular South-east Asian countries. Prior to the first population census, taken in 1891, accounts of the North Borneo population were rather vague. Since 1891, the taking of the census of the population decennially has increased this knowledge vastly, with the character of the census questionnaire growing more and more complex as defects were eliminated and improvements installed. There was a break in 1941 when the outbreak of the second world war prevented an enumeration. The last census was carried out on 10th August 1960 in conjunction with the censuses of Sarawak and Brunei, following a decision to carry out a combined operation by the three states involved.

The organisation and administration of the 1960 census was quite a simple affair, since the territorial area of Sabah had not changed at all between 1951 (when the first census after the war was taken) and 1960. Census enumeration followed a division of the country into various census districts based upon the then existing administrative districts. The country was divided into a total of 22 census districts. A map of North Borneo is given on the following page showing the various census districts and showing further the density distribution of the population in 1960 and also the main urban centres.

This work is divided into 5 chapters, each of which deals with a different aspect of the population of Sabah. Though they have been treated in such a manner, it would be worthwhile not to forget that these various aspects are all inter-linked and inter-dependent, and none of them can be viewed properly in isolation. The first chapter deals with the growth of the population, from 1891 till the present time. The chapter concludes with some comments on the distribution of the population in 1960.

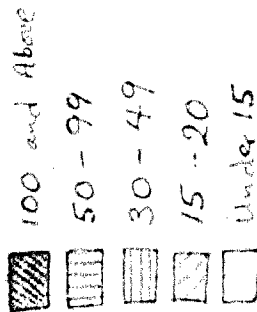
Next an analysis of age data is made. Where possible comparisons with early census data is carried out. The third aspect dealt with is sex and marital status data. These two are reviewed in one chapter because of the close connection between sex data and data on marital status. Following this, chapter four investigates the conditions of literacy in North Borneo. For an under-developed country, questions dealing with literacy are important in the sense they help to evaluate the extent of the existence of educated labour (and hence skilled labour) which directly influences the productivity of the nation. The distribution of the population by the various

religions is also looked into in this chapter. The last chapter deals with labour force statistics. No discussion on population would be complete if the labour force aspect is not looked into

The map of Sabah is given on the following page: below is the index to the map:

<u>No.</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>District</u>
1	Labuan	11	Tuaran
2	Kuala Penyu	12	Kota Belud
3	Beaufort	13	Kudat
4	Sipitang	14	Labuk
5	Tenem	15	Sandakan (Town & Rural)
6	Keningau	16	Kinabatangan
7	Tambunan	17	Lahad Datu
8	Ranau	18	Seemperza
9	Papar	19	Tawau
10	Jessellton (Town and Rural)	20	Pensiangan

PERSONS PER SQ. MILE

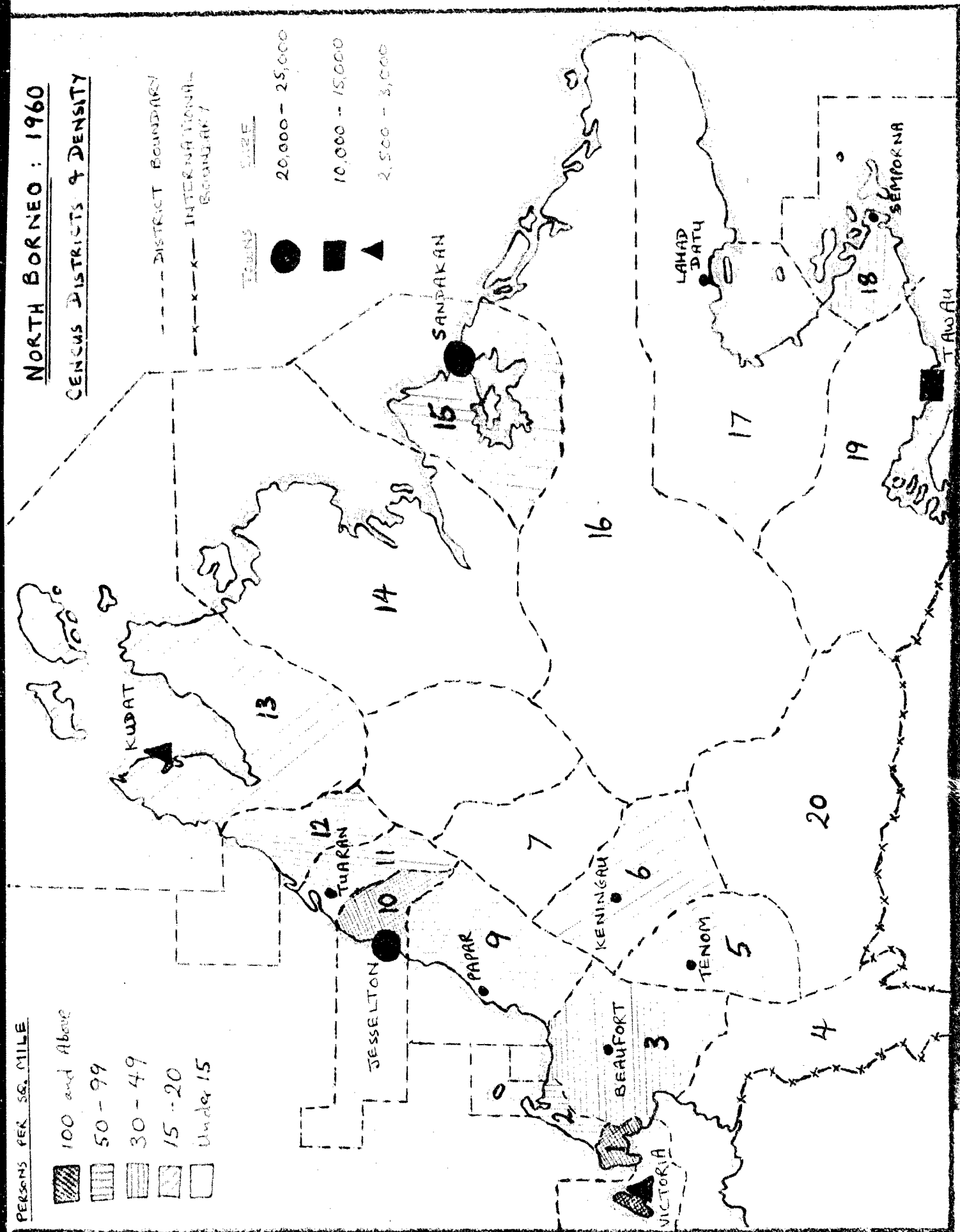


# **NORTH BORNEO : 1960** **CENSUS DISTRICTS & DENSITY**

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## CHAPTER I

### Population Growth and Distribution

#### I. Population Growth of Sabah

The population of Sabah was rather sparse at the beginning of the 20th century. Vast tracts of land were more or less completely void of inhabitants. The first ever census of the population, taken in 1891, yielded an estimate of around 67,000 inhabitants. But since then, that is the period when the colonial powers took over Sabah, great strides have been made, and in 1960, the census figures for the total population stood at 454,421. Naturally it is not possible to compare the former figures with the latter since there are doubts as to the accuracy of the former. But they do provide a useful basis for evaluating the growth of the population of Sabah since the inception of the first population census. The growth is tabulated below, the figures ranging from the first census in 1891 to the last census which was held on 10th August 1960:

TABLE 1.1

#### GROWTH OF POPULATION IN SABAH: 1891 - 1960

*Census Year	Population	Per Cent Increase	Annual Rate of Growth (%)
1891	67,062	-	-
1901	104,157	(105.7)	(4.3)
1911	214,279	(53.3)	(7.3)
1921	263,252	22.6	2.1
1931	277,476	5.4	0.5
1951	334,141	20.4	0.7
1960	454,421	36.0	3.0

\*: No census was taken in 1941 because of the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1940.

Note: Figures in parenthesis are estimates since the census did not have as full coverage as after 1911.

A proper evaluation of the above figures is, in reality, not possible, especially an evaluation of the figures for the first three censuses whose accuracy is gravely in doubt, considering the circumstances under which the census of the population was undertaken. The governing body at that period did not have a complete administration over

the whole of Sabah and neither did its servants penetrate deep into the interior of the country. The figures therefore merely indicate the population with whom the administration had some contact. Therefore it is possible that the growth of the population was much smaller than indicated by the computed values. Further, the population growth was greatly influenced or aided by the wide extent of early immigration, especially Chinese immigration before the second world war, leading up to its outbreak in 1940. This means that the evaluation of the per cent increase and the per cent growth rate figures prior to 1931 do not have much meaning and it would therefore be misleading to attach any importance to them. (That is why earlier values for these are given in parenthesis in table). The effect of immigration can be realised from the following statement which shows the number of aliens in Sabah from the earliest census up to 1931:

<u>Census</u>	<u>Total Number of Aliens</u>	<u>Per Cent of Total Population</u>
1891	15,604	23.3
1901	20,831	20
1911	42,856	20
1921	60,211	22.9
1931	72,258	26.0

The proportion of aliens has not wavered much beyond being 1/5 of the total population though in 1931 it rose to being slightly over it. Although the proportion of aliens has tended to be stable, the actual figures more than quadrupled between 1891 and 1931. It is possible to assume that the census figures for the aliens are quite accurate since these people usually clustered around the trading centres and other places of reach. This shows that the proportion of immigrants in the composition of the population has remained at a high level for several decades, thereby exerting undeniable influence on the growth of the population. This therefore nullifies the complete acceptance of the computed values for the rate of growth of the population. However, in recent times, especially after 1951 when the population of Sabah had stabilised, in terms of settlement, to some extent, the population figures have recorded high and increasing growth rates. Between 1931 and 1951 the rate of growth

- 
- 1: Owing to the reason that I have been unable to get the actual values, I have based my estimates of the immigrants in Sabah in 1901 and 1911 on the assumption the proportion of aliens was stable at about 20%.

was a mere 0.7 per cent per annum while between 1951 and 1960, it had climbed to 3.0 per cent per annum. And it is highly likely that this high growth rate will be maintained for some years to come.

#### a) Population Growth by Districts

The census districts adopted by the census authorities were, for many of the censuses, based on the administrative districts. The census of 1960 used the 20 administrative districts and by dividing the administrative districts of Sandakan and Jesselton into two census districts each (town and rural), the census authorities thus effectively divided the whole of Sabah into 22 census districts. Each of these 22 districts vary to a great extent in size and in the composition of the population. And each of these districts have recorded different rates of increase of population, some showing great increases and others showing insignificant increase, and still others showing decreases.

Table 1.2 presents a concise picture of the trend of growth of the population in the various districts between 1921 and 1960. Most of the districts have gained in population numbers, though there are a few district which have lost their population to other and more prosperous districts. It is essential that the background to this uneven development should be kept in mind in analysing the differential growth of the population in the various districts, and this is essayed briefly below.

The end of the first world war brought with it a shortage of rice to North Borneo which had the effect of inflating the prices of other local commodities, especially rubber. This resulted in a movement of farm workers to the estates which further depressed the local production of rice. But the boom in rubber was not long-lived and with the decline of rubber prices in 1921, a reverse movement of workers back to the farms occurred. The natives returned to their villages and the Chinese returned to their market-gardening. During this period of general slack, immigration figures fell drastically too. The slump continued for a couple of years. The period between 1925 and 1930 saw better times again and immigration increased under these prosperous conditions. But once again a depression hit North Borneo in the early 1930s, that is the world depression of the 1930s was keenly felt in North Borneo. Rubber exports declined to an acute degree. At this period, Sabah had a large number of recruited labour, especially from Java, and

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1. Refer to the map given at the end of the Introduction.

TABLE 1.2

## PER CENT CHANGE IN POPULATION BY DISTRICTS: 1921 - 1960

Census Districts	Per Cent Change		
	1921-1931	1931-1951	1951-1960
Tawau	+19.4	+76.6	+89.9
Lahad Datu Semporna	+25.2	+40.7	+59.3
Kinabatangan	- 2.2	-19.5	+23.2
Sandakan Town	+16.0	+ 5.7	+70.2
Sandakan Rural	+47.9	+26.9	
Labuk	+ 0.2	+19.5	+ 7.6
Kudat	- 0.2	+39.1	+24.4
Ranau Tambunan	+ 0.9	-10.7	+12.7 - 2.9
Kota Belud	.	.	+27.0
Tuaran	.	.	+22.3
Jesselton Town	+18.9	+154.8	+85.6
Jesselton Rural	.	+ 46.4	+11.4
Papar	.	+20.4	+32.1
Beaufort	- 8.8	+22.8	.
Kuala Penyu	+ 4.6	+13.8	.
Sipitang	+ 0.6	+ 5.7	+40.3
Tenom	.	+34.6	+50.3
Pensilangau	.	-35.0	-21.1
Beeringau	-18.6	-11.7	+79.6
Labuan	+27.1	+17.0	.
N. Borneo	+ 5.4	+20.4	+36.0

\* - The change is not significant owing to a change in the boundary of the district.

the repatriation of this labour affected labour conditions at home. After 1934 conditions again improved and Chinese immigration continued to increase until the outbreak of the second world war. The Japanese occupation of Sabah left in its wake ruin and chaos, with the economy virtually at a standstill for a year or so. But the return to prosperity began when rubber prices rose in the early 1950s. Later timber replaced rubber as the boom product and this saw an influx of logging camp labour into Sabah from Indonesia and the Philippines after 1946.

This brief resume of the development should help us understand the growth of the population. The east coast districts of Tawau and Sandakan have recorded consistently high increases of population since 1921. Between 1951 and 1960, their increases in population were among the highest for any census district in Sabah. Tawau had 89.9 per cent increase while Sandakan expanded by 70.2 per cent. By itself, Tawau, the fourth largest district in Sabah, has had its population size raised by about 300 per cent between 1921 and 1960, a period of only 39 years. Between 1951 and 1960, the Chinese and the Indigenous population of Tawau experienced 3.1 per cent per annum and 2.9 per cent per annum rate of growth respectively. This can be related to tremendous expansion of its economy as a result of a great influx of Indonesian and Philippine labour seeking work. The population of Sandakan increased by 2½ times between 1921 and 1960. This increase would have been greater but for the ravages of the Japanese occupation. It would have also been high in recent years had it not been for the fact that the capital of Sabah was transferred to Jesselton. The other east coast districts, Lahad Datu and Semporna, reflect similar upward trends in population sizes. For Kinabatangan, the numbers disseminated to other districts between 1921 and 1951.

Along the west coast, genuine increases have occurred in the districts of Jesselton, Beaufort and Labuan. This does not imply that other west coast districts have had no increases but that their increases are not as significant as in the case of the former three districts. The population of Jesselton town in 1951 was only 34 per cent of what it was in 1960. But the period of greatest increase was not 1951 - 1960 but 1931 - 1951. During the latter period the recorded change was 154.8 per cent! This unique growth can be traced to the influence of rubber and the effect of its world price on the economy of Sabah. An inflow of Chinese immigrants took place<sub>1</sub>. This same economic factor also affected

- 
1. Between 1931 and 1951, the Chinese population grew by 24,318. Most of these newcomers most probably entered Sabah before 1940 because the war and the Japanese occupation in the 1940s stopped migration into Sabah. This fact coupled with boom conditions after 1934 brought in larger numbers of migrants.

Beauforts' progress in numbers. Beaufort has been and is the centre of the rubber industry. The intercensal period of 1921 - 1931 saw a decline in the figures by 8.8 per cent. This decrease can be attributed solely to the depression conditions of the late 1920s and the early 1930s. During these slack periods immigrants left the district to seek their livelihood elsewhere. Boom conditions in 1951 saw an inflow of new labour. The majority of these were, surprisingly natives, probably from Tambunan and Pensiangan.

Within the interior districts of Keningau, Tenom and Sipitang, over 21,000 more persons were enumerated in 1960 than in 1951. If this actual increase is compared with the population in these districts in 1931 (that is 24,000) then the great significance of the growth can be immediately acknowledged. Individually, the careers of these three districts are somewhat chequered, especially that of Keningau's. Between 1921-1931 and 1931-1951, the number of persons in Keningau dropped 12.6 per cent and 11.7 per cent respectively. But the period of 1951-1960 saw a growth by 80 per cent. The earlier decline in numbers seems to have followed a general decline in numbers of a certain section of the native population (that is the Muruts, which will be shown later in this chapter). Since 1921, the population has doubled in Tenom and Sipitang with the main contributors to this increase being the Chinese in-migrants.

Within the rest of the other districts, three have recorded a net decrease in the population figures between 1951 and 1960. These three districts are Pensiangan, Tambunan and Kuala Penyu. These declines are due to the fact that they hold no attraction at all for settlement and further the greater development of the coastal districts has tended to act as a centripetal force for the movement of the population.

All the other districts have predominantly native population whose slow growth has been a major factor in the slow growth of the population in these districts.

#### b) Population Growth by Communities

The population of Sabah is a complex mixture of native indigenes and immigrants. The structural composition of the population seems to strike a balance between these two groups. Any

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2. Both these districts showed decreases in numbers between 1951 and 1960. Cf. Table 1.2

analysis of the growth of the people of Sabah requires therefore an individual study of the growth of these two types of communities. We shall deal with the immigrant population first.

The immigrants divide into two natural groups of people, that is the Chinese, and the Others under whom we can classify the Indonesians, Philipinos, Europeans, Eurasians, Indians etc. But before we look into the growth of the individual races, it would be of value to obtain an idea of the overall growth of all the main communities. Table 1.3 provides figures denoting the per cent changes in the sizes of the various groups between 1911 and 1960. One notes that the pattern of growth is similar for the three categories of communities. The increase during the two extreme periods indicated in the table is higher than that during the middle periods, that is if we take the change occurring by decades. The degree of change varies for each of the three groups, with the 'Others' recording the most drastic changes, indicating they are the most unsettled group in Sabah. The highest and steadiest changes seems to have been maintained by the Chinese alone.

The table does not allow further extraction of information on growth other than what has been outlined above. One important reason for this is that whilst the growth of the natives is a natural growth or increase, the growth of the immigrant groups is the result of an inflow of fresh migrants in earlier periods mixed with some natural increase in recent years. This therefore calls for an individual analysis of their growths.

TABLE 1.3

PER CENT INCREASE OF POPULATION BY MAIN COMMUNITIES: 1911-1960

Community	1911-1921	1921-1931	1931-1951	1951-1960
Indigenous	17.6	1.1	18.4	26.1
Chinese	41.2	27.5	48.6	40.6
Others	46.1	6.0	-24.5	158.9

#### 1) The Chinese:

The Chinese are without doubt the most important of the various immigrant communities, not only because of their large numbers but also because of their impact upon the economy of Sabah.

While there have been some links between North Borneo and China several centuries before the arrival of the British, it was not until the advent of the latter in North Borneo in the 1880s that the Chinese injections into Sabah increased in volume. Many of the early Chinese were government sponsored immigrants and were financially induced to penetrate the interior of North Borneo. Most of the early Chinese were tobacco-estate labourers, traders and shop-keepers. Many settled down along the more fertile coastal regions. The earliest available figures of the Chinese, that is from the census of 1891, indicated there were 7,156 persons of the Chinese race in Sabah. Between then and now, the numbers have grown tremendously. In 1960, the census tallies 104,542 Chinese, forming almost  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the population of Sabah:

TABLE 1.4

PER CENT GROWTH OF THE CHINESE POPULATION: 1891-1960

Census Year	Population	Increase		Annual Rate of Growth (%)
		Number	Per Cent	
1891	7,156	-	-	-
1901	13,897	6,741	94.2	6.8
1911	27,801	13,904	100.0	7.0
1921	39,256	11,455	41.2	3.5
1931	50,056	10,800	27.5	2.5
1951	74,374	24,318	48.6	2.0
1960	104,542	30,168	40.6	1.8

The per cent change in numbers of the Chinese in the early intercensal decades was much higher than at the later (or present) intercensal decades. Between 1891 and 1911, the population kept doubling every 10 years. Correspondingly the rates of growth were exceptionally high, over 6 $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent per annum! But after 1911, there can be observed a decline in the rate of growth of the numbers. It is not difficult to deduce the reasons for this obvious change in the trend of growth. A couple of years after 1911, the western nations got entangled in a war which had vast repercussions upon the whole world. Following this, a series of depressions hit the world, depressions which hit primary producing countries to a great extent. We saw earlier the effects of the changes in the world price of rubber upon the labour of North Borneo and the extent of the immigration. This turmoil in the economic field changed to one on the physical field when war broke out again in 1940s. North Borneo was, like many other countries, directly involved and hit badly by



the chaos of destruction. Chinese immigration reached its lowest ebb during this period. The rate of growth of the Chinese between 1931 and 1951 was only 2 per cent per annum while the per cent change in numbers averaged only 24.5 per cent decade between this same period.

The return of calm in the 1950s once again was a signal for the dramatic change in the pattern of growth. This pattern of growth must, however, be differentiated from the earlier trends. By 1931 the Chinese were quite a well settled community in Sabah. The Chinese growth between 1951 and 1960 was more of a natural growth than a growth resulting from an inflow of immigrants. In fact migration played a very minor role in the change in the decade after 1951. This is emphatically substantiated by the net figure of 496 Chinese arrivals over departures between 1951 and 1960. Therefore the 40.6 per cent increase in numbers in the 9 years of this last intercensal period was more of a natural increase. The per cent rate of growth of the Chinese population was higher than the rate of growth of the population of Sabah (the former rate is 3.8 per cent per annum while the latter one is 3.0 per cent per annum). In point of fact the Chinese recorded the highest rate of natural increase among the various communities in Sabah. This will become evident later.

#### ii) The Others:

The most important of the Other immigrant communities are the Indonesians. These Indonesians form the only other group of immigrants who have come in considerable numbers to North Borneo. The early colonial days saw the arrival of significant numbers of Javanese as estate labourers who later became permanent settlers in Sabah owing to the encouragement and inducement offered them by the colonial government. Later came other streams of Indonesian immigrants. Generally, the Indonesian immigration occurred in three major streams. The first stream consisted of those who were transported over as a result of an agreement between the Dutch officials in Java and the British in Sabah. This took place in the period between the two wars. Most of these immigrants were, as stated above, Javanese farming estate labour mainly. This influx as a result of inter-government agreement and importation is quite plain in the sudden and sharp increase in the numbers of Indonesians in Sabah in 1921 to 11,223. This can be contrasted with the figure of 5,510 in 1911. Between these two census years, the rate of inflow of the Indonesians was 7.3 per cent per annum. But however this inflow was not long-lived. The unstable conditions between 1921 and 1931 led to a decline in the number of Indonesians, at the rate

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1. Lee Yon Leng: N. Borneo: Study in Settlement Geography page 49.

## POPULATION GROWTH OF THE INDONESIAN POPULATION: 1911-1960

Census Year	Population	Change		Annual Rate of Growth (%)
		Number	Per Cent	
1911	5,510	-	-	-
1921	11,227	5,715	+103.7	7.3
1931	10,014	-1,209	- 10.3	-1.1
1951	7,961	-2,053	- 30.5	-1.1
1960	24,784	16,823	+211.3	13.1

of 1.1 per cent per annum and this continued for the next two decades also, and the numbers reached a minimum for this downward trend in 1951. In 1951, the census total for Indonesians was only 7,961. On the average, the number of Indonesians decreased by about 10 per cent every decade between 1921 and 1951.

But after 1951, the pattern changes radically, as in the case of the Chinese. The main factors responsible for this upward drift after 1951 were the two other major streams via which Indonesians flocked into Sabah. The first of these latter two streams, or routes to be more accurate, is the land traffic across the border with Kalimantan. Secondly there exists the sea trade route between the east coast parts of Sabah, Kalimantan and Celebes. Through these channels came groups of voluntary migrants in search of temporary work, particularly between 1951 and 1960 when the boom in the timber industry brought with it increased opportunities for employment for loggers. The development of the east coast of Sabah must be attributed to the Indonesians and other immigrant labour who provided the labour in this region which lacks a reservoir of native labour.

Other than the Indonesians, the natives of Sarawak and Brunei, Malays, Indians, Philipinos and other minority groups are also classified generally as Others. Most of these minority groups have recorded substantial increases except the Malays whose numbers declined from 6,305 in 1911 to 1,645 in 1960. The Philipinos should be noted for their great increase between 1951 and 1960, 291.3 per cent. Their numbers expanded from 1,910 in 1951 to 7,473 in 1960. But it can be expected that most of these will return to their own country when they have earned enough. The Indians, and other minority groups, unlike the Indonesians and Philipinos, are more permanently

settled groups of some importance in the economy.

iii) The Indigenous Population:

The pattern of the Indigenous population growth is remarkably different from that of the other communities. While all the other communities have had vigorous growth or increases, the indigenes are steadily becoming numerically a less important component of the population of Sabah. This is due to the small and sadate percentage increase in numbers which has occurred among the natives, as verifiable in the following statement:

Per Cent Change in Numbers among the Main Communities

	<u>1931-1951</u>	<u>1951-1960</u>
Indigenous	+18.4	+26.1
Chinese	+48.6	+40.6
Others	-27.9	+166.9

The total number of natives has hardly doubled since 1911. In the census of 1911, 172,584 natives were enumerated while during the 1960 census 306,498 were enumerated. The proportion of the natives to the total population of Sabah has declined from 81.4 per cent to 67.4 per cent, a rather substantial decrease:

TABLE 1.6

PER CENT GROWTH OF THE NATIVES POPULATION: 1911-1960

Census	Population	Per Cent of Total Popula- tion	Per Cent Increase	Annual Rate of Growth
1911	172,584	81.4	-	-
1921	203,041	77.6	17.7	2.7
1931	205,218	75.7	1.1	0.1
1951	243,009	72.7	18.4	1.4
1960	306,498	67.4	26.1	3.2

Before we delve further into the evaluation of the figures presented in the above table, it is necessary to consider and remedy certain short-comings present in the figures. Certain adjustments must be made to the actual figures of the total Indigenous population so as to obtain a more realistic picture of the growth of the natives. In reality two adjustments are necessary:

a) Prior to 1931, the natives in Labuan were not included in North Borneo which means that the native population figures for 1951 and 1960 are not comparable with earlier figures. The adjustment is a simple process here. We can either disregard the natives figures for Labuan for 1951 and 1960, or conversely we can make adjustments on the earlier figures. Since the latter procedure seems more reasonable, we shall adopt that. In 1951, 6/7s of the population of Labuan were Indigenous. We can therefore, without fear of incurring too great an error, assume this was the case prior to 1951.

b) Secondly, prior to 1931, all Sulus and Bajaus were regarded as natives without any differentiation between the local born and the foreign born. When such a differentiation was made in the census of 1931, only 2/3s of the total number of Sulus enumerated were really Indigenous in the true sense. If we assume this was the case before 1931 and make the proper adjustments, the final adjusted figures would come out as presented in the statement below:

<u>Census of:</u>	<u>Numbers (Adjusted)</u>	<u>Per Cent Increase (Adjusted)</u>
1911	174,770	-
1921	204,333	16.9
1931	210,057	2.6
1951	243,009	15.7
1960	306,498	26.1

The important point to note in the above adjustments is the difference in the per cent increase computed values. In table 1.6, growth between 1911 and 1921 is noted as 17.7 per cent while the adjusted figure above is only 16.9 per cent. The difference does not seem large but it still is there. The increase in the next intercensal period, as computed per census figures (unadjusted), is 1.1 per cent whereas in actual fact it was probably near 2.6 per cent as indicated by the adjusted figures. Thirdly the expansion of the population between 1931 and 1951 is seen to be 18.4 per cent in the table. But after adjustment, the increase is found to be not so large, in fact it was only 15.7 per cent. The discrepancy here between the unadjusted and adjusted values is greater. If we assume that the adjusted figures are more accurate, then the natives have been increasing more rapidly than appeared to be the situation

originally which means that the rate of growth of the natives between 1951 and 1960, that is 5.2 per cent per annum, is much more significant. The rates of growth for the earlier intercensal periods would definitely be a bit lower than seems to be the case.

Having noted the broad trend of growth of the natives, we can now consider the growth of the main tribes of which there are three, that is the Dusuns, the Muruts and the Bajaus. The largest and most important group are the Dusuns whose pattern of growth is outlined below:

<u>Census Year</u>	<u>Numbers</u>	<u>Per Cent Increase</u>
1911	90,267	-
1921	104,665	16.2
1931	110,483	5.4
1951	117,867	6.7
1960	145,229	23.2

The period of greatest expansion falls between 1951 and 1960. Between 1931 and 1951, the increase in numbers was only 7,384, over a span of 20 years. This contrasts sharply with the increase of 27,362 between 1951 and 1960 or over a span of 9 years only!

The next important group are the Muruts whose numbers actually declined from 30,355 in 1921 to 18,724 in 1951. Though depopulation of the Muruts seems to have stopped now, no really valid reasons have been found other than surmises. It has been suggested that the decline was a result of low fertility rates amongst them. It has also been suggested that the Muruts have been killed off by diseases to which they had not developed any resistance and which they might have contracted when they came in contact with other races. Whatever the reason may be, the fear of the Muruts becoming extinct can be dropped now. Between the last two censuses, Muruts have shown signs of recovery as their numbers increased by 18.25 per cent to stand at 22,138 in 1960.

The Bajaus at present form the second biggest single native group in Sabah. Their growth since the earliest censuses has been consistently one of the highest among the native groups:

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1. Lee Yon Leng, op. cit. page 49.

<u>Census Year</u>	<u>Numbers</u>	<u>Per Cent Increase</u>
1911	24,228	-
1921	33,070	36.5
1931	34,099	3.1
1951	44,728	31.2
1960	59,710	33.5

In 1911, the Bajaus formed only 1/7 of the total native population. In 1960, however, their size had increased to form around 1/5 of the total number of Indigenes. Between 1921 and 1931, the Bajaus increased by 3.1 per cent only. This small increase was due to the fact that in the year 1931, the census officials decided to differentiate between local born Bajaus and foreign born Bajaus. This has resulted in a more accurate count of the Bajaus in 1951 and 1960, and further has made the later increases more significant.

All the other native groups together form, at present, about 4 of the total indigenous population (census of 1960), whereas in 1921, they proportioned only 17.2 per cent of the total Indigenes. Their greatest growth occurred, not between 1951 and 1960, but between 1931 and 1951 when the percentage increase was 70.5.

## 11: Distribution of the Population:

### 1) By Districts

The total population of Sabah distributed by districts, during various census years, dating from 1911, is shown in table 1.7. The various districts of Sabah fall into 3 natural groups, firstly the West Coast districts, secondly the East Coast districts and finally the Interior districts. The west coast districts comprise Kudat, Kota Belud, Tuaran, Jesselton (Town and Rural), Papar, Kuala Penyu, Labuan and Beaufort. About 50 per cent of the population was enumerated in these districts in 1960. This relatively large number can be attributed to the west coast region being a well developed one with a lot of rice and rubber cultivation, and well connected up by roads and railways. The rise of Jesselton after the second world war, both as the seat of the Government and as the centre of commercial activity in Sabah, has played a significant role in fixing a large proportion of the total population in the west coast belt.

The east coast belt, comprising more than half the total area of Sabah, is mainly jungle. This region contains the districts of Tawau, Sandakan (Town and Rural), Lahad Datu, Semporna, Kinabatangan

and Labuk. Large parts of it are uninhabited. Communications are very poor. Most of the population (about 1/3 of the total) is to be found along the coastal areas and river valleys. Commercial activity centres round the main industry, that is timber.

The interior belt, that is to say, Ranau, Tambunan, Keningau, Tenom, and Sipitang districts contain less than 1/6 of the population of Sabah. In terms of Size, the interior districts form around 3 of the total area of North Borneo. This varies markedly from west coast belt which, as stated above, contains about 50% of the population even though its area is about equal to area of the interior belt. The position of the interior belt is relatively similar to that of the west coast belt which contains about 1/3 of the population of Sabah in an area covering more than half the size of North Borneo.

However the actual population sizes of the various districts cannot be compared with one another individually. This is mainly because the physical sizes of the districts vary to a great extent. Conclusions as to where greatest concentrations of populations occur can be made by looking at the density distribution of the population (1960), as presented in the statement below:

<u>District</u>	<u>Persons per Square Mile</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Persons per Square Mile</u>
Jesselton (Town & Rural)	168	Keningau	13
Labuan	121	Tawau	13
Kuala Penyu	83	Tambunan	13
Tuaran	78	Ranau	11
Sandakan (Town & Rural)	52	Lahad Datu	7
Kota Belud	51	Labuk	6
Papar	50	Sipitang	5
Semporna	37	Kinabatangan	2
Beaufort	33	Pensiangan	2
Kudat	28		
Tenom	22		
		<b>North Borneo</b>	<b>16</b>

TABLE 1.7

## DISTRIBUTION OF THE TOTAL POPULATION BY DISTRICTS: 1911-1960

District	1911	1921	1931	1951	1960
Tawau	3,857	8,823	10,536	18,610	35,290
Lahad Datu Semporna	11,473	12,976	16,249	22,865	19,534 16,895
Kinabatangan	8,873	10,754	10,513	8,460	10,423
Sandakan Town	4,485	11,828	13,723	14,499	28,806
Sandakan Rural	4,485	6,459	9,555	12,121	16,490
Labuk	18,402	14,151	14,184	16,943	18,224
Kudat	24,612	29,626	29,555	41,112	51,156
Ranau Tambunan	26,374	28,369	28,636	15,117 10,461	17,033 10,163
Kota Belud	15,152	17,982	23,049	21,895	27,814
Tuaran	23,067	20,555	18,894	25,984	31,766
Jesselton Town	2,686	3,864	4,594	11,704	21,719
Jesselton Rural	8,470	8,453	17,624	25,807	28,752
Papar	10,934	25,188	17,731	21,352	28,120
Beaufort	11,257	13,926	12,702	15,593	25,408
Kuala Penyu	6,381	9,048	9,464	10,767	6,125
Sipitang	4,966	5,473	5,508	5,822	8,168
Tenom	7,292	7,055	8,970	12,073	18,147
Pensiangan	*	11,477	9,252	6,018	4,749
Keningau	11,477	11,337	9,230	8,154	14,645
Labuan	*	5,908	7,507	8,784	14,904
North Borneo	208,183	263,232	277,476	334,141	454,421

\* : Not classified.



The greatest densities occur in Jesselton, Labuan, Kuala Penyu and Tuaran, all of which are very small in area and belong to the west coast belt of districts. This therefore confirms our earlier conclusion that the greatest concentrations of population occur in the well-developed west coast.

The largest districts, by physical size, that is Tawau, Lahad Datu, Kinabatangan, Labuk, Kudat, Ranau, Sipitang and Pensiangan, all of which are over 1,500 square miles in area, have less than the average density of population for the whole of Sabah or less than 16 persons per square mile. These districts form the major portion of the east coast and interior belts. This shows that a greater part of North Borneo is very sparsely populated. We have already noted the reasons for this disparity in the concentrations of population in the various districts and these can be chiefly attributed to the geographical division of the country and secondly the extent of development of the various districts.

#### 11) By Communities

In considering the distribution of the total population by main communities and districts, it is only necessary to show which districts are dominated by which communal groups and how is this related to the economic conditions in that particular district. It cannot be denied that the natives are to be found in all districts of Sabah but their degree of concentration varies between the various districts. One outstanding feature in the above table is that while the Chinese and the Other communities seem to concentrate more in the urban districts, the natives show three degrees of concentration. Very high concentrations of the natives are found in the districts of Kudat, Kota Belud, Tuaran, Jesselton Rural and Papar all of which had native population of over 20,000 persons in 1960. It is to be noted that all these districts are part of the west coast region which as we have seen before is the more developed section of Sabah. Further, population density in each of these districts is higher than the average density for Sabah. It must also be noted that the size of these districts are small in relation to the size of many of the Interior and East coast districts (see map) except for Kudat.

Neither high nor low concentrations of the native peoples are to be found in Bemporna, Labuk, Ranau, Beaufort, Tena, Keningau and Tambunan which all contain between 10,000 to 20,000 natives each. Recent developments in the economic field has been the source of attraction to the natives to settle down on a more permanent basis in Beaufort, Tena and Keningau while the logging industry, and thereby employment, in the other districts has been the chief incentive for inward movement.

All other districts, other than those mentioned above but including the urban districts, contain less than 10,000 Indigenes

TABLE 1.8

## DISTRIBUTION OF MAIN COMMUNITIES BY DISTRICTS: 1951 and 1960

District	1951			1960		
	Natives	Chinese	Others	Natives	Chinese	Others
Tawau	4,314	11,113	3,178	5,633	14,821	14,776
Lahad Datu	16,113	4,168	2,562	6,904	4,808	7,822
Semporna				14,457	985	1,453
Kinabatangan	8,037	260	113	9,345	330	498
Sandakan Town	1,682	11,513	1,299	4,413	21,515	3,078
Sandakan Rural	4,502	6,314	1,305	7,884	5,327	3,279
Labuk	15,905	547	591	17,031	645	550
Kudat	33,069	7,265	778	41,668	8,570	918
Runau	15,076	28	13	16,840	147	46
Kota Belud	21,355	410	130	26,929	675	209
Tuaran	23,019	2,651	314	27,400	3,774	592
Jesselton Town	2,723	7,539	1,422	4,643	14,529	2,547
Jesselton Rural	19,522	5,511	774	22,870	5,171	811
Papar	16,037	4,311	1,004	21,516	9,370	1,324
Beaufort	10,424	4,011	1,152	18,830	4,618	1,860
Kuala Penyu	10,312	295	160	9,919	163	43
Sipitang	5,013	654	155	7,246	756	166
Tenom	7,336	4,055	682	10,043	6,131	1,973
Pensiangan	5,973	40	5	4,708	32	9
Keningau	2,443	538	602	12,777	1,582	286
Tambunan	10,363	86	12	10,045	110	8
Labuan	4,819	3,005	960	9,097	4,574	1,233

each. The urban districts of Jesselton Town and Sandakan Town particularly, contain less than 5,000 natives each. On the other hand, a large proportion of the Chinese population live in these two towns. Between them they contain almost 4/5 of the total Chinese population in Sabah. This goes to show that the Chinese prefer urban surroundings which has certain facilities denied those living in the rural regions. For example better education and health or medical facilities are available in urban centres as also are greater opportunities for employment. It is possible to say that the towns of North Borneo were made by the Chinese. Other than these two urban districts large groups of Chinese exist in Tawau, Kudat, Tenom, Lahad Datu, Tuaran and Beaufort. The impetus of economic growth lies behind the large number of Chinese in Tawau. A very high proportion of the Others have also settled here, that is over 14,000 persons. New roads have been opened, capital has come in and estates, logging companies and small holdings have continued to prosper and expand. The only odd characteristic concerning Tawau is the lack of a large reservoir of native labour though Chinese, Indonesian, Philippine and other labour is not lacking.

The obvious conclusion which arises is that wherever large numbers of Chinese and Others are found, economic activity has been enlivened and growth of the district has had an impetus given it. The interior districts are still largely undeveloped, backward and sparsely populated.

## CHAPTER II

### Age Statistics

Data on "Age" of any kind was first collected in North Borneo during the census of 1901. This information was, however, classified in a crude way. The total population was tabulated into adults and children, that is, into two age-groups of "over 15 years" and "15 years and under":

#### Population of North Borneo by Age Groups: 1901

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Number</u>
15 years and under	55,120
Over 15 years	68,407
<u>All Ages</u>	<u>104,527</u>

Such an over-simplified statement above offers no information other than the number of adults, and children below 15 years in the population.

So then until 1951, no proper information or material on Age was collected. Whatever data that was obtained was used merely to classify the total population into adults and children. Another defect was, whatever data was collected, was rendered valueless owing to the procedure employed to collect it. In North Borneo, prior to the census of 1951, a 'Schedule A', which was a shortened version of the complete schedule was employed in certain districts. This abridged version did not include any question on Age! It was presumed that certain districts were completely illiterate and that the few questions in 'Schedule A' sufficed to extract information from the people. Detailed compilation of Age statistics was only carried out during the census of 1951 and therefore whatever analysis is made can only be based upon the tables on Age statistics of the last two censuses.

The total population, distributed by age groups in the two census years 1951 and 1960, is shown in table 2.1. It is plain the actual distribution indicates a young population. That the population is young and growing is more evident in the case of the figures for 1960. The per cent distribution figures bear this out. The conclusion we drew earlier is more plain now. In 1951, of the total, 39.5 per cent of the population were below 15 years of age,

and in 1960 the corresponding figure was 43.3 per cent. Out of this young group, in 1951 almost 15 per cent were below 5 years of age while in 1960 the corresponding figure was 18 per cent. In a period of nine years only, the number of persons below 15 years had increased by 11.2 per cent. The working group population, that is those between 15 - 44 years, however showed a slight decrease, from 47.4 to 43.8 per cent. In considering these two age groups, what is really significant is that the younger group covers an age range of only 15 years while the second and older age-group covers an age range of 30 years. That the population has grown more young is strikingly brought to the fore, since the old people of age 60 and over have not changed in size between the intervening period, remaining at 3.9 per cent for both periods while those in the 15-59 age-group have decreased by 4 per cent.

TABLE 2.1

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY AGE: 1951 AND 1960

Age Group	Population		Per Cent		Change in Per Cent
	1951	1960	1951	1960	1951 - 1960
0 - 4	48,966	81,423	14.7	17.9	+3.2
5 - 14	83,072	116,406	24.8	25.6	+8.0
15 - 44	158,488	199,091	47.4	43.8	-3.6
45 - 59	30,717	39,826	9.2	8.8	-0.4
60 & Over	12,898	17,678	3.9	3.9	0

The importance of the young population in a rapidly growing population can never be underestimated. It would therefore be no digression if we studied the young people in some detail. It is usually assumed or taken for granted that the normal distribution of a growing population will show a comparatively large number of very young children. But the 1960 census showed a somewhat peculiar distribution:

Population under 10 years: 1960

Age:	0	1	2	3	4	Total Under 5	5-9	Total Under 10
Numbers:	14,987	14,085	17,789	17,701	16,861	81,423	72,340	153,763
Distribution per 1000:	97	92	116	115	110	530	470	1000

Population under 10 years: 1951

But once again the same curious pattern occurs. It is therefore obvious that the figures must have a certain degree of inaccuracy. This is not surprising since age-reporting, especially in underdeveloped countries was never noted for its accuracy. We know well enough that the number of children has increased between the two census periods in spite of the trend indicated in the preceding statements. What the error is and how it originated will be discussed in full at the close of this chapter.

TABLE 2.2

[illegible]

No better comments than that given in the Census Report of 1960 with respect to the above figures can be made: "It might be thought that every community was on the decline because there are fewer children in the youngest ages, but just as this is unlikely to be happening in the case of the whole population, so it is equally unlikely in any particular community. Indeed the Muruts, we know, were decreasing earlier but are now increasing again and yet many fewer children were declared in 1960 to be less than 12 months and one year old than two and three years; this is good evidence that the peculiar pattern is caused not by a decline in the number of children but by some other reason. The other reason is most certainly incorrect age-reporting. The small number of children aged one is particularly noticeable. It might be expected in the Chinese community because of the Chinese system of reckoning age, but it is surprising in the Indigenous communities who have, naturally, no system of their own based on Chinese New Year even though many of them are aware of the Chinese system and their thought is perhaps influenced by it." A further comment can be added. This peculiarity was more obvious in 1960 for the Indigenous communities than it was in 1951 while it was very distinct for the Chinese in both years!

#### 1) Community Age Distribution

It is natural that we should now look into the age-distribution of the whole population of Sabah by its various communities. It will be noticed that a great deal of variation among the communities for the two census periods exists for certain age-groups only. What these age-groups are can be seen in table 2.3. Once again the immediate observation to be made is the great increase in the number of children for most of the communities concerned. In the 0 - 4 age group, particularly the Muruts (while having the lowest actual number of children) have doubled their numbers in the nine year intercensal period. Their distribution per 1000 Murut population had increased from 87 per 1000 in 1951 to 160 per 1000 in 1960. We saw earlier that the Murut population had been on the decline. That it has started on the upward trend is clearly verifiable in the difference between the figures for the Muruts for the two census years of 1951 and 1960. In spite of the increase in the Murut population, indicating more children, the population below 15 years in 1960 only amounted to  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the total number of Muruts. In the case of the other natives and also the Chinese, the proportion was over  $\frac{2}{5}$  in every case. If we look at actual values, the number of Murut children in 1960 was far outnumbered by the number of children of any one of the other native groups. In 1960, Muruts below 15 years

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1. Report, op. cit. page 58.

numbered about 7,700 whereas, for example the Rajau children numbered over 27,000 while the Chinese children numbered about 49,000!

The next outstanding observation that can be made from the table is the unusual age-distribution of the All Others community. But this unusual fact agrees with an earlier finding. We have noted before that their total numbers had escalated greatly between the two years. The greatest increase we now note is in the working age of 15-44 years. The numbers in this group rose from a mere 8,745 in 1951 to 24,527 in 1960! And accordingly the permillage has risen from 521 to 566 per 1000. The greater part of the newcomers in this group were Indonesians and Philipinos who have come over to earn a living in the estates and logging camps, particularly in east Sabah. It is unnecessary to state that such immigrants seldom if ever bring their families down with them and still less their other relations. This then accounts for their great numbers in this age group, and also the unusually small proportion of old people. Only 29 per 1000 were over 60 years of age in 1960.

The final remarkable feature in the table is the distribution of the Chinese population. In 1951, the Chinese below 15 years of age were about equal in size to those who fell into the 15-44 age group, the difference being about 1 per cent (this can be disregarded because of the difference in the age range). A very small number of very young children were reported in 1951, only 152 per 1000 Chinese population in the 0-4 age group, while the 5-15 age group figure was 261 per 1000. In 1960, corresponding figures were 165 and 304 per 1000. The second figure (that is 304 per 1000) is out of agreement with the normal pattern expected, assuming that the 1951 figure for the 0-4 age group was correct. There is obviously a clear indication of bad age-reporting among the Chinese children. This distorts the whole picture of the Chinese population.

In conclusion, the trend indicated by the table is towards more children and a smaller proportion in the working population. By 1970, this radical change should be more obvious. By 1970 also, the pattern of population distribution would have enlarged the problems of education and employment and this is definite to have great impact upon the economic policies of the government.

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1. It is not possible that the number of births between 1951 and 1956 (these would also fall into the 5-14 ages in 1960) could have been so large that it influenced the size of the 5-14 age-group of the 1960 census. The Report does not assess the extent of error resulting from the Chinese method of reckoning age.



TABLE 2.3

DISTRIBUTION BY COMMUNITY AND AGE: 1951 AND 1960  
(Per 1000 Population)

COMMUNITY	1951						1960					
	All Ages	0-4	5-14	15-44	45-59	60 & Over	All Ages	0-4	5-14	15-44	45-59	60 & Over
Dusun	1000	143	242	497	35	33	1000	184	234	493	85	34
Marut	1000	37	183	579	116	35	1000	160	189	492	124	35
Bajau	1000	157	259	463	76	35	1000	195	252	432	75	35
Other Indig.	1000	161	271	451	79	38	1000	197	271	413	75	39
Chinese	1000	152	261	427	111	49	1000	165	304	572	106	53
All Others	1000	136	173	521	121	49	1000	151	185	556	69	29
All Communities	1000	146	243	474	92	43	1000	179	256	499	83	39

## 11) Urban and Rural Age Distribution

While the great majority of the natives live in rural regions, the few that live in urban centres do not justify an analysis of them by such division since such an analysis would have no meaning and the conclusions drawn might be misleading. But in the case of the Chinese who are more or less distributed evenly between urban and rural areas, some interesting results can be gleaned from an analysis showing the distribution by age groups:

TABLE 2.4

### DISTRIBUTION OF CHINESE POPULATION BY AGE: URBAN AND RURAL: 1960

Age Groups	Permillage		
	Urban	Rural	N. Borneo
0 - 4	162	167	164
5 - 14	291	315	303
15 - 29	237	201	219
30 - 44	164	146	153
45 - 59	100	112	106
60 & Over	46	59	53
All Ages	1000	1000	1000

First point to note is the proportionately greater amount of working Chinese in urban areas and conversely smaller number of children and old people. Children under 15 in urban areas amount to 453 per 1000 in contrast to 432 per 1000 in the rural areas. However one expects the sex-ratio of an immigrant group to be poor, especially so in the interior of the country of immigration. This should result in there being less number of children of the immigrants being born in rural areas of the new country. Such would be the case unless a number of intermarriages has taken place and settlement has been going on for sometime. This was obviously so in the case of Sabah where a number of the Chinese who settled in rural areas must have intermarried. Hence the greater number of Chinese children in rural areas. The larger proportion of Chinese between 15 and 44 years in the urban districts is, not unnaturally, due to the greater attraction of urban centres, with their better employment opportunities and better facilities. The younger Chinese tend to be quite mobile and there is usually a drift from the rural to urban centres. Because of this, the proportion of older Chinese in rural areas tends to become exaggerated.

The question on Age is very essential in any census of population. Answers to such will provide the necessary data to calculate and find out the growth of the population, and the pattern of such growth so as to be able to predict to some extent the impact of population growth upon the economy. As such, therefore, the collection of accurate age statistics becomes of primary importance. But the data on Age-collected during the censuses of 1951 and 1960 in North Borneo show doubt as to their complete accuracy. The errors that resulted were, in general terms, an overstatement or understatement due to poor education, lack of proper records, and lastly, in the case of the Chinese, their traditional system of reckoning age. The illiterate usually cannot remember their ages nor do they have any means or knowledge of calculating it and therefore tend to guess their age thereby providing biased and inaccurate answers. The older the population the greater the error. The traditional Chinese system of reckoning age usually results in a person being, according to the Gregorian Calendar, a year or two older than he or she really is. A Chinese child can never be below the age of 1 year according to this system, since it becomes a year old when it is born! To complicate matters, it becomes two years old on the first Chinese New Year, after it is born! In North Borneo, the result of the Chinese using their own calendar was that, very few of the Chinese children were aged 0 and 1 year old. The highest numbers recorded were in the 2 years and 3 years brackets. In 1960, attempts to rectify errors in Chinese age reporting by asking for the animal year of birth proved a complete failure.

Since generally the younger population age reports were bad, it might have been thought, why were not they checked with the figures from the registration of births. Checking could have been done if there was complete and accurate registration. But registration itself was far from being well developed. There was no complete coverage. There was a great deal of variation between the figures collected during the census and the figures obtained from registration, as can be seen below:

TABLE 2.5

## VARIATION BETWEEN CENSUS DATA AND BIRTH REGISTRATION DATA

Year of Birth and Age	All Communities	Indigenous	Chinese
Born in 1959	13,376	8,136	4,172
Age 1	14,025	10,237	2,702
Born in 1958	16,130	10,188	5,129
Age 2	17,789	12,707	3,645
Born in 1957	14,816	9,111	5,048
Age 3	17,701	12,369	3,938
Born in 1956	22,455	7,381	4,184
Age 4	16,861	11,517	4,052
Born in 1955	11,780	6,441	4,370
Age 5	15,656	10,497	3,983

Until and unless birth registration becomes accurate and reliable, it serves no purpose, not even for checking other collected data.

Another type of error that was found in the 1960 census of North Borneo, in age-reporting, was a massive preference for ages terminating in 0 and 5. The following illustration proves the point beyond a doubt:

TABLE 2.6  
DIGITAL PREFERENCE BIAS IN CHINESE DATA

Age	All Communities	Dusun	Chinese
19	7,536	2,252	1,714
20	12,980	4,214	1,921
21	5,852	1,670	1,396
24	5,878	1,800	1,400
25	12,395	4,047	1,372
26	5,840	1,933	1,122
29	5,757	2,065	1,072
30	15,207	5,645	1,574
31	3,440	921	293
49	2,399	715	346
50	7,936	2,914	1,204
51	1,382	274	635

It seems that the older the person, the greater the preference for 0 and 5 as the terminal digits. It is not surprising that the bias is greater among the natives (illiteracy being greater amongst them), the Dusuns above being an example only, than among the Chinese or others. But such errors are remedied by grouping several single ages together to form one age-group.

The basic lack that leads to errors and inaccuracy in age data is the unfamiliarity with the concept of age among enumerators. All enumerators should have a minimum level of education so that they are able to grasp well, during their training, the technique of ascertaining age data accurately, and are also able to cope up with any problems that arise during the enumeration. It is imperative that, in future, greater emphasis should be given to the explanation of the concept of Age.

Sex and Marital Status1. Sex

One of the most important questions in any census schedule or questionnaire is the question on sex. This is important, basically because it enables the statistician to divide the population into the two sex groups and analyse their inter-relationship. With the aid of the individual figures for the males and females in a population, whether by community, type of activity or any other classification, certain values eg. the sex-ratio, can be calculated and such calculated values are of immense help in analysing the population accurately. For example the sex-ratio provides the basis from which it can be concluded whether an immigrant community (the ratio being that for this community) has settled in the new country or is still in the process of adapting itself to the new environment. A comparison of such sex-ratios for several periods enables one to do this.

In Sabah, the first tables of the population by sex classification were published after the census of 1901. Since then the tables have grown more sophisticated and more and more complex. This sophistication enables one to obtain a greater amount of information from the last census classification of the population by sex and other details. The growth of the two sexes since 1901 for the whole of Sabah is given in table 3.1. As is immediately evident from the table, the actual values of the population have increased by about 4½ times while in contrast the female sex has grown to 5 times its size, in 1960. The growth differential is not too wide apart. The increase of the male sex is about equivalent to the increase of the total population of Sabah since 1901 which is roughly 4 times also.

TABLE 3.1

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL POPULATION BY SEX, AND GROWTH: 1901-1960

Census Year	Population by Sex		Per Cent by Sex		Per Cent Annual Rate of Growth	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1901	59,936	44,591	57.3	42.7	-	-
1911	118,577	96,152	55.2	44.8	7.1	7.9
1921	143,425	119,827	54.5	45.5	2.9	2.6
1931	147,099	130,377	53.1	46.9	0.3	0.8
1951	172,353	161,783	51.6	48.4	0.8	1.1
1960	263,616	217,835	52.1	47.9	4.8	3.4

The per cent distribution of the sex groupings of the population tells a more revealing story. Since the taking of the first of the early censuses, that is within six decades the proportion of males and females has been approaching greater equality. But the figures for the earlier census dates are slightly misleading in that the gap between the number of males and females could not have been that great. It is very likely that less women than men presented themselves to be enumerated. But the established trend has been and still is leading towards a normal sex-ratio. The 57.3 per cent of males in the total population in 1901 had reduced, somewhat, to 51.6 per cent in 1951 though it increased to 52.1 in 1960. The opposite sex, however grew from 42.7 per cent in 1901 (the actual value should really be more since this early census was not completely accurate and it did not have complete coverage) to 48 per cent in 1960. The last two columns of the above table bear out what has been said so far. Until the intercensal period of 1951 - 1960, the growth rate of the female sex has been greater than the rate for the males. However this rate of growth is not a true one. We have noted that there was no complete coverage of females previously. More accurate data now has led to the computation of more accurate rates. The males were increasing at the rate of 4.3 per cent per annum in contrast to the 3.4 per cent per annum for the females in 1960. Does this mean that the trend is towards a greater male population? One has to be careful before concluding so, since we know that the rate has been inflated by some special circumstances. These are the sudden inflows of Indonesians and Philippines into Sabah between 1951 and 1960. Most of these immigrants are in the working age-group and are, in the majority, males. Therefore immigration has influenced the male growth rate and we cannot take it at its face value. It is more likely that, assuming stability in the present growth rate, the females will outnumber the males within the next couple of decades. This is all the more likely as the female survival rate is greater in a normal population.

#### 1) Sex Distribution by Communities

The distribution of the total population by the various communities and by sex brings to light some interesting developments. Table 3.2 indicates that the number of indigenous females has been greater than the males since 1921. It would not be very wrong to say that such must have been the case earlier though values in the table indicate otherwise. We know that more women tended to avoid the enumerator in the early censuses. In 1960, out of the total of 206,498 natives there were about equal number of males and females, though the negligible difference between them of 740 was in favour of the female sex. This means that throughout the several decades the proportion of native males and females has not fluctuated much. The males have retained the figure of around 49 per cent ever since 1921.

TABLE 3.2

## DISTRIBUTION OF THE TOTAL POPULATION BY COMMUNITY AND SEX: 1911-1960

Community	1911		1921		1931		1951		1960	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Indigenous	86,393	86,191	101,024	102,017	101,863	103,350	120,703	122,301	152,379	153,619
Chinese	22,772	5,029	28,712	10,544	31,990	13,066	41,437	32,347	55,589	48,953
Others	9,412	4,932	13,639	7,266	13,241	8,961	10,213	6,540	28,148	15,233
Total	118,577	96,152	143,425	119,827	147,094	130,377	172,333	161,788	236,616	217,305

The Chinese, the main immigrant community have shown a characteristic pattern towards becoming more and more a permanently settled community in Sabah. This trend is inherent in the fact that the number in each of the two sexes has moved towards greater parity, leading to a more normal sex-ratio. A normal sex-ratio, meaning about equal number of males and females, means a settled community. In 1911, out of about 27,000 Chinese in the country, over 3/4 were of the male sex. The small number of females meant that among the early Chinese immigrants, there were many who came to make some money and return home. But as time passed and development became more the order of the day, more and more Chinese made Sabah their permanent home. And therefore a more balanced distribution of the sexes has resulted. In 1960, there were 48,953 females to 55,589 Chinese males which is a far cry from the 5,029 females to 22,772 Chinese males in 1911! While the males have merely doubled in numbers, the female sex has more than quadrupled. From being 82 per cent of the total Chinese in 1911, the males have dropped to being only 53 per cent in 1960.

The third group, the Others, consisting mainly of Indonesians and Philipinos have remained immigrant in character even to the present day. There is no positive evidence yet that they are settling down in Sabah in large numbers. The males proportion has remained around 65 per cent of the total Others population since 1911. Their activity seems to bear out the conclusion that they will remain immigrant in character for another decade or so.

TABLE 3.3  
SEX-RATIO OF THE MAIN COMMUNITIES: 1911-1960  
(Females per 1000 Males)

Community	Census Year				
	1911	1921	1931	1951	1960
Indigenes	998	1010	1014	1013	1005
Chinese	221	367	565	795	881
Others	524	531	677	640	541
All Commn.	381	835	886	938	920

1. This balance in numbers between the sexes should not be attributed to the arrival of more immigrant Chinese women in the earlier periods. Inter-marriage, between the Chinese (especially the Hakka who settled in greater numbers in rural districts) and the native women probably resulted in the offsprings adopting the ways of the father. It is more reasonable to consider this the deciding factor, for the resulting parity in the numbers between the sexes among the Chinese.



In 1960 the sex ratio, meaning the number of females per 1000 males which has been adopted here, was rather less than what it was in 1951. This decline in 1960 seems counter to the earlier upward trend. It was only after 1951, that the ratio which had been in the 800s broke through to become 938 in 1951. What then was the cause of the decline in 1960? This calls for a scrutiny of the individual sex-ratios of the communities. Throughout the various censuses, the sex ratio of the natives has been maintained at a high figure. Since 1911, the Chinese sex ratio has shown tremendous improvement, increasing from 321 females per 1000 males in 1911 to 381 females per 1000 males in 1960. The improvement of the sex-ratio of the whole of North Borneo can therefore be attributed to the improvement of the Chinese sex-ratio. The slight decrease of the ratio for North Borneo between 1951 and 1960 is the direct result of the sudden and unexpected increase in the number of Indonesian and Philippine male labour between the same period. This increase decreased the ratio of the Others from 640 in 1951 to 541 in 1960. While the sex ratio of the Chinese points to a group adapting itself more and more to its new environment, the ratio of the Others indicates its inherent immigrant nature. Assuming that a greater part of the new immigrants settle down in Sabah, there is no reason why the sex-ratio should not become normal within the next decade, thereby making the sex-ratio of Sabah approach the normal faster.

Analysing the community sex distribution and sex-ratio in greater detail, more valuable conclusions can be drawn. The tables of values are given from 1921 only since earlier figures give rise to some doubts as to their accuracy.

The distribution of the Chinese by dialectic groups and sex since 1921 is as follows:

TABLE 3.4  
PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF CHINESE DIALECTIC GROUPS BY SEX:  
1921-1960

Group	1921		1931		1951		1960	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Hakka	66.0	34.0	58.7	41.3	53.7	46.3	51.9	48.1
Cantonese	80.3	19.7	71.8	29.2	57.8	42.2	54.7	45.3
Hokkien	69.8	30.2	62.6	37.4	58.1	41.9	54.2	45.8
All Others	84.4	15.6	73.7	26.3	60.1	39.9	55.0	45.0
Total Chinese	73.2	26.8	63.9	36.1	55.7	44.3	53.2	46.8

The Hakka who are the largest group among the Chinese immigrants were the earliest to make Sabah their permanent home. By 1931 the numbers in the two sexes were adjusting to each other quite well. By 1951 all the various Chinese dialectic groups had had the sex proportions made more equitable. At this point a table on the sex-ratio would prove of more value and clarify the whole situation:

### PAGE 3.5

#### SEX-RATIO OF THE CHINESE GROUPS: 1921-1960 (Females per 1000 Males)

Community	Census Year			
	1921	1931	1951	1960
Hakka	515	704	862	927
Cantonese	245	393	730	828
Hokkien	432	598	722	845
All Others	185	364	664	818

A great majority of All Other Chinese were males in 1921 showing that they were still largely very much unsettled. The Cantonese were also in a similar position. Only the Hakka seemed to possess considerable numbers of females. Around 1/2 of the total Hakkas were females. And within 40 years their sex-ratio had increased much more, to 927 females per 1000 males in 1960. Generally speaking however all of the Chinese groups have shown phenomenal improvements in their sex-ratio. This provides some proof to the great adaptability that the Chinese have for new environments. The Chinese today form the economic backbone of Sabah.

The distribution of the natives by sex and various groups shows some variation in the figures. We have noted before that the native females have normally outnumbered the males. This same pattern exists within the various native communities but in certain groups it stands out much more distinctly. Since the first population enumeration began in Sabah, the Dusun women have always been larger in numbers than their menfolk. Similar situations have prevailed for both the Muruts (after 1921) and the Bajaus. It is odd that the Muruts, who until 1951 had shown a downward trend or a decline in numbers should also show a female majority. This contradiction can be understood if we realise that the males who provide the food for their family by hunting and fishing, lead a more vigorous and dangerous life, and we would not be far from the truth if we assumed that mortality was greater among the Murut males. Hence in spite of the decline in total numbers, the females still outnumbered the males.

NOTA

DOKUMEN ASAL

TIDAK TERANG.

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NOTE

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TABLE 3.6

## DISTRIBUTION OF THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES BY SEX: 1911 - 1960

	1911		1921		1931		1951		1960	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Dusun	44,920	45,347	51,925	52,940	54,721	55,762	58,107	59,760	71,757	73,472
Murut	13,699	13,527	15,222	15,133	12,090	12,354	9,192	9,532	10,920	11,218
Bajau	12,009	12,213	16,369	16,701	16,934	17,165	22,389	22,339	29,872	29,838
Other Indig.	15,765	15,098	17,508	17,243	18,123	18,069	31,020	30,670	40,330	39,091

TABLE 3.7

SEX-RATIO OF THE INDIGENES: 1911 - 1960  
(Females per 1000 Males)

Community	Census Year				
	1911	1921	1931	1951	1960
Dusun	1,009	1,020	1,019	1,029	1,024
Murut	937	994	1,022	1,037	1,027
Bajau	1,016	1,020	1,014	993	999
Other Indig.	958	985	998	989	969

The one group which does not conform to this pattern among the natives is the Other Indigenes. In 1960 the Bajaus also recorded a majority of males, the direct reversal of what had been the situation even up to the census of 1951.

The sex-ratios, females per 1000 males, of the natives are markedly different from the sex-ratios of all other communities. The high Dusun ratio verifies our original conclusion that the Dusun women have remained in majority since 1911 and even earlier possibly. Greater mortality among the males in the older population group is one cause of this and probably the main cause. The Murut sex-ratio shows an upward trend till 1951 after which it declines slightly, though by normal considerations it is still very high, 1027 females per 1000 males. The Bajaus and Other Indigenes have had small fluctuations, but there is nothing remarkable in this.

### III: Marital Status:

The question of marital status distinguishes between four states, that is, a person can be either single, married, widowed or divorced. In North Borneo, the total population distributed by Marital Status, between 1931 and 1960, was as follows in the table below:

TABLE 3.8

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL POPULATION BY SEX AND MARITAL STATUS:  
1931-1960

Marital Status	1931		1951		1960	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Single	58.9	49.5	57.4	49.2	59.9	52.6
Married	36.3	42.8	38.4	40.7	36.9	39.5
Widowed	2.3	7.1	3.0	8.5	2.1	6.7
Divorced	0.5	0.6	1.2	1.6	1.1	1.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

In 1931, about 55 per cent of the total population were single while around 40 per cent were married. The rest were mainly widowed persons. This pattern has not changed much since then nor is there any indication that it will change. Only the proportion of widowed and divorced persons has increased but only slightly. There was also a slight increase in the proportion of singles in 1960 over 1951, an increase of 2.5 per cent. This latter increase was due mainly to the increase in the number of children between the intercensal period of 1951-1960.

If we consider marital status by the sexes individually, we note immediately the difference in distribution that exists for the males and females. The proportion of single males has not deviated much from around 58 per cent of the total number of males. In the case of the females it has increased from over 49 per cent to almost 53 per cent. The proportion of married males has remained near 38 per cent while for the females it has dropped from 43 per cent in 1951 to 39.5 per cent in 1960. It is difficult to explain this decline. Comparatively, more widowed and divorced persons are to be found among the female population. For example, in 1960 only 3.2 per cent of the males were either divorced or widowed while the percentage for the female sex was more than twice that for the males!

We noted in the paragraph preceding the one above that the marital status figures for 1960 were influenced by the increase in the number of children between 1951 and 1960. But if we consider the marital status of the population aged 10 years and above, we shall note a change in the pattern. The figures considered are only for the census years of 1951 and 1960:

TABLE 3.9

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AGED 10 AND OVER BY SEX AND MARITAL STATUS: 1951-1960

Marital Status	1951		1960	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Single	41.3	29.7	40.0	27.6
Married	32.9	56.3	53.2	60.4
Widowed	4.1	11.8	3.2	10.2
Divorced	1.7	2.2	1.6	1.8

A great deal of difference between this table and the last one can be noted. The proportion of single persons dropped to about only 35 per cent in 1951 and even less in 1960. The proportion of single males dropped to 40 per cent for both years while it was around 28 per cent for the single females. Married females were greater in numbers, being over 60 per cent in 1960 in contrast to the males figure of 55 per cent. The greatest change has occurred among the percentage of widowed and divorced persons. Figures were higher for 1951, as can be seen in the table. Widowed persons among the female sex figured heavily for both years. This high value, especially in 1951 can, without doubt, be attributed to the Second World War.

Sabah was still recuperating from the experiences of the war, several years earlier, in 1951.

An analysis of the same population in table 3.10 by the various communities gives forth more details about marital status. Among both the male and female sexes, the Muruts recorded lowest per cent of single persons, 25 per cent among the males and only 14 per cent among the females! Such low percentages seem to suggest that there could have been some error in marriage reporting among the Muruts, especially among the female sex. But such a conclusion

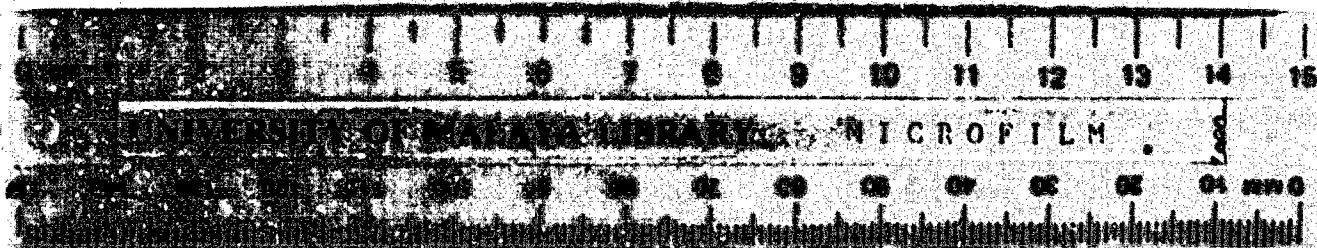
TABLE 3.10

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AGED 10 AND ABOVE BY  
SEX, COMMUNITY AND MARITAL STATUS  
1960

Community	Marital Status							
	Single		Married		Widowed		Divorced	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Dusun	33.7	23.1	60.6	62.8	4.0	12.0	1.7	2.1
Murut	24.9	14.0	71.8	73.7	2.4	10.8	0.9	1.5
Bajau	35.9	25.6	59.5	62.1	3.0	9.6	1.6	2.7
Other Indig.	39.9	27.3	55.2	62.0	3.3	8.7	1.0	2.0
Chinese	49.1	40.3	46.8	49.4	3.1	9.8	2.6	0.5
Others	47.1	25.3	48.3	66.5	2.0	6.2	1.6	2.0

can be ruled out since among the Muruts the proportion of young people is the lowest considering the various communities in Sabah, as we noted in the last Chapter. There is therefore nothing abnormal in the recorded figure. Conversely the Muruts were recorded as the most married community in Sabah, 72 per cent of the male sex and 74 per cent of the female sex being married. But among the female sex almost 11 per cent of the Muruts were widowed. Only the per cent value for the Dusun females topped this figure. Generally, among the natives population, the per cent value for single males and females was below 40 and below 30 respectively while the married persons numbered over 55 per cent and over 60 per cent respectively. The Chinese make a contrasting difference. Almost half the Chinese males were single and more than 40 per cent of the females were in the same

state. This means that the properties of married Chinese males and females is correspondingly smaller. But this is not surprising since the Chinese have a tendency to marry rather late. The pattern of the Others is similar to that of the Chinese. Finally, it is very significant that the female sex of all the communities has very high figures for the number of widows, as can be observed. These figures are three times the similar figures for the males! The same situation can be found to exist in many other communities outside Sabah and therefore there is nothing odd in this.





## CHAPTER IV

### Literacy and Religion

Census authorities in Sabah first posed the question on literacy in 1921. Since then greater details with respect to literacy have been compiled, and the definition of the term literacy has been made more and more refined. But it was only in the last two censuses (the censuses of 1951 and 1960) that almost identical definitions of the concept of literacy were used so that only the figures of these censuses are comparable. In Sabah the concept of literacy is very much complicated by the numerous communities that are to be found there. To the natives, literacy may mean knowing how to read and write in their own language, or in the case where they are being ruled by a colonial power, knowing how to read and write in the language of their foreign ruler (in this case English). For the immigrant communities like the Indonesians, Chinese etc., literacy may mean the ability to understand and write in their mother tongues. Still for many others, it means a mastery over Malay. The difficulty in defining literacy is therefore resolved into the question of whether literacy includes only the official language of the country or does it include all the languages. This problem however is quite easily solved. By adopting the definition (in the last two censuses) of literacy as "Ability to read and write a letter" the problem was done away with. But this definition is still not precise enough. It begs the question. One can ask of the definition, what type of letter does it refer to, or what is the length of the letter? Everybody knows that there is a world of difference between a government or official letter or bill, a business letter and a personal letter. Which did the census adopt? There was no answer to this, such questions should be looked into in the future before the framing of a definition.

#### 1) Growth of Literacy by Main Communities

The development of literacy has been quite exceptional in North Borneo ever since the recording and tabulation of literacy began in 1921. Literacy was tabulated for the population aged 10 years and above. In 1921, out of the total aged 10 years and over (out of 258,894 persons) only 17,734 were counted as literate. This is merely around 7 per cent, that is less than 1/10 of the population was literate. But since then, literacy has been growing by leaps and bounds. In 1960, a total of 72,919 were counted as literate or around 29 per cent of the population aged 10 years and above. The increase is unique for a country like Sabah, and this has taken place within a period of 39 years only!

TABLE 4.1

## TOTAL POPULATION AGED 10 AND OVER BY MAIN COMMUNITIES AND LITERACY: 1921 - 1960

Community	1921		1931		1951		1960	
	Literate	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate
Indigenous	3,342	193,516	5,461	199,737	13,211	161,841	22,804	177,418
Chinese	11,640	26,216	16,119	31,853	22,366	30,982	38,158	30,691
All Others	2,552	20,338	2,661	15,272	3,118	9,077	11,937	19,630
Total	17,734	240,070	24,241	246,882	38,695	201,900	72,919	227,739

TABLE 4.2

## GROWTH OF LITERACY BY COMMUNITIES: 1921 - 1960

Community	Increase: 1921 - 1960		Annual Rate of Growth (Per Cent)
	Numbers	Per Cent	
Indigenous	19,262	543.7	4.9
Chinese	26,518	227.6	3.1
All Others	9,405	368.5	4.0
All Communities	55,185	311.2	3.7

The percentage increase over the interval 1921 - 1960 for the whole of North Borneo is over 300 per cent! This is all the more remarkable as the population has only increased by 16.2 per cent. The growth of literacy was greater than the growth rate of the population, the former being 3.7 per cent per annum while the latter was only a mere 0.4 per cent per annum<sup>1</sup>.

Considering individually the growth of literacy by communities, one is immediately struck by the immense strides that have been taken by all of them. The natives have recorded the greatest increase in proportion, though not in numbers. In 39 years, the whole indigenous community has had its number of literates increased by 543.7 per cent or in terms of annual rate of growth, they have recorded 5 per cent per annum which is a fantastically high figure. The per cent increase of the Chinese literates was less than half that of the natives while their growth rate was 3 per cent per annum which figure is smaller than that for the whole of Sabah. Finally, the third group, that is the "All Others" together increased by 368.3 per cent, their rate of growth being 4.0 per cent per annum, occupying an intermediate position between the natives and the Chinese.

Though we have outlined the progress of literacy since its first tabulation, in reality the actual increase in the number of literates only took place after 1951, as is obvious in table 4.1. Further the survey authorities in Sabah tabled comparable values of literacy only for the last two censuses, so that we are forced to limit our discussion from this point onwards to figures which are related to 1951 and 1960.

We have seen in Chapter one that the total population of Sabah increased by 36 per cent between 1951 and 1960. The population aged 10 years and above grew by 24 per cent. The number of literate persons, however, expanded by 58 per cent between the same period. If we take the distribution of literacy per 1000 population aged 10 and above, in 1960 almost 25 per cent of them were literate while nine years earlier only 1/6 were counted as literate!

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1. The growth rate of the population computed is for the period 1921-1960

TABLE 4.3

**DISTRIBUTION OF LITERACY PER 1000 POPULATION BY SEX AND AGE-GROUPS:  
1951 AND 1960 (For Population Aged 10 and Over)**

Age Groups	1951			1960		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
10 - 14	139	69	106	329	235	284
15 - 19	289	106	193	494	249	373
20 - 24	332	85	204	455	175	321
25 - 29	286	97	168	352	97	223
30 - 34	284	50	169	315	94	213
35 - 39	271	43	166	275	76	182
40 - 44	279	32	170	284	72	187
45 - 49	273	32	166	287	53	182
50 - 54	244	20	147	261	39	163
55 & Over	211	23	123	214	26	126
All Ages	254	60	160	342	132	243

The table above easily proves our case that literacy has had phenomenal growth in the short intercensal period between 1951 and 1960. The proportion of literate males above 9 years of age rose from  $\frac{1}{4}$  in 1951 to over  $\frac{1}{2}$  in 1960. The female sex had higher increase, from 60 per 1000 to 132 per 1000, or a doubling of the proportion of literates. This proves beyond dispute that literacy has had a faster growth than the size of the population. The praise for such progress should, without doubt, be given to the education system.

**11) Analysis of Literacy by Age-groups**

Individual figures by age-groups provide further testimony to the remarkable growth of literacy. We know that the population of Sabah is a fast growing one and as such it is a young population, relatively speaking. Further, as literacy is progressing fast, it would not be wrong to expect literacy rates (per 1000) to be high for the younger set of the population. Such was exactly the situation in Sabah in 1960. The number of literate persons in the 10 - 14 age group rose from 106 per 1000 to 284 per 1000 in the short period of

nine years between the censuses. The second age-group set, those between 15 and 19 years old, also increased in the same proportion almost, from 193 per 1000 in 1951 to 373 per 1000 in 1960. It should be noted that children below 10 years have not been included or mentioned so far. If we did so, the increase in literacy among the younger population would shoot up higher still! For the two age-groups mentioned above, individual figures for the two sexes reveal much higher increases, especially for the female sex. Even among the higher age groups, the per mille figures for 1960 are an improvement over the figures for 1951, though the improvement does not stand out so well as in the case of the younger population. If a curve is traced, using the values in the table, they will dip suddenly for the 25 - 29 age group and then flatten out at low levels for the last age groups whose literacy figures did not vary much between the two periods. While this pattern exists in general, the patterns of the individual sexes vary a lot. The males present a more even distribution while the females range from 26 per 1000 for the '55 and over' age group to 249 per 1000 for the 15 - 19 age group (1960). The pattern was similar for 1951. It is these low rates for the female sex that resulted in the low rates of literacy for population (both male and female together) aged 55 and over! In 1951, when the census was being taken, the postwar situation was still showing its after effects. Schooling had virtually stopped during the war days and the direct result of this was that the literacy rates for the younger age-groups, when computed, after the census, turned out to be low. The education system was still in a state of unbalance as was the rest of the country. But by 1960 some degree of progress had been attained.

The distribution of literacy of the various communities by sex shows interesting variations:-

TABLE 4.4

DISTRIBUTION OF LITERACY BY COMMUNITY AND SEX (Per 1000): 1951-1960

Community	1951		1960	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Dusun	116	10	166	39
Murut	94	2	171	21
Bajan	113	7	138	12
Other Indig.	225	24	289	59
Chinese	348	235	673	407
All Others	341	102	653	569

Variations among the female sex are much greater. And the differences between the rates for the natives and the other communities also stand out. Among the indigenous peoples, the least literate people were the Bajaus with figures of 138 per 1000 and 12 per 1000 for the males and females respectively in 1960. This is different from the situation in 1960 in that, at that time, the Muruts were enumerated as the most illiterate group, with rates of 94 per 1000 and 2 per 1000 for the male and female sexes respectively. But by 1960 the Muruts had taken a great stride forward. The Dusuns, who are the biggest native group showed, rather surprisingly a small increase only. The most literate of the natives were the Other Indigenous.

The proportion of literate persons among the Chinese and the Other communities far outweighs that of the natives. The literate males in the former communities doubled during the intercensal period while the female literates increased more than five times. But one has to remember that migration among these groups has effected their figures very much and any conclusion that is made must be toned down. Among the Chinese people, the women showed better progress than the men. And for the first time the number of literates among the Chinese aged 10 and above was more than half the total number of Chinese in Sabah. (See table 4.1).

At this point I would like to digress a bit and refer again to table 4.3. As noted that the 15 - 19 age group had the highest rate of literacy in 1960. This value was true for the males and females individually, and also for both sexes together. This is rather unique and calls for further investigation. However, the lower rates for the 10 - 14 age group does not mean that literacy will decrease in the future. It merely indicates that the proportion of children, below 10 years of age, schooling in 1951 was quite a large one. It could be possible that in 1960 there was some slight inaccuracy in the reporting of literacy in the lowest age-group shown in the table. Whatever the reason for this state of affairs, it would be a mistake if we did not consider a more careful analysis of the conditions of literacy within the 15 - 19 age group by the communities. This might reveal whether any one community's figure had influenced this age-group's figures. Table 4.5 throws light upon this question. This was exactly the case as is evident in the table. The Chinese figures have surely influenced the figure for this particular age-group. Slightly more than half the number of literates were Chinese. Of this lot more than half as much again were males. Among the literate men, around half were Chinese while among the women 3,193 of the 4,746 literate women were Chinese. Clearly the Chinese have influenced the literacy rates of this group to a great extent. The rate of 806 per 1000 far outranks the rates of the other communities. As literacy goes, for this group the future will only show a very similar pattern. Generally, the table indicates that the male sex is more literate than the female and the education of girls in Sabah

therefore has a long way to go still. For example among the Bajans, only 23 out of every 1000 girls between 15 - 19 years were able to read and write. And in table 4.4, for the whole of Sabah or for all age groups, the proportion of educated Bajan women enumerated is shown to be only 12 per 1000! But however the generalisation concerning the extent of the progress of the education of the female sex in Sabah holds good only for the Indigenous communities and not for the Chinese or the Others.

#### 11) Analysis of Literacy by Languages

The extent of the distribution of literacy in North Borneo was tabulated according to three language groups, that is English, Malay, and Other Languages. The reports do not divide "Other Languages", into specific languages like Chinese or Dusun and no tables are given, although it is commonly known that, for example Chinese is widely spoken. This means that the proportion of Chinese literate in their mother tongue is unknown. This is a big shortcoming in the census report tables on literacy by languages.

TABLE 4.5

LITERACY RATES (Per 1000) IN THE 15 - 19 AGE GROUP BY MAIN COMMUNITIES AND SEX: 1960

Community	Numbers			*Distribution Per 1000		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Dusun	2,451	1,854	597	196	311	91
Murut	386	335	51	245	406	68
Bajan	638	578	60	129	247	23
Other Indig.	1,985	1,567	418	283	458	116
Chinese	7,328	4,135	3,193	806	865	741
All Others	1,657	1,230	427	465	523	346
All Communities	14,445	9,699	4,746	373	494	249

\* The rates for each particular community and each sex were computed as follows: eg. Dusuns:

Total (196) =  $\frac{\text{Total Literate Dusun Population in age-group 15-19}}{\text{Total Number of Dusuns in age-group (15-19)}} \times 1000$

Male (311) =  $\frac{\text{Total Literate Male Dusun Population in age-group 15-19}}{\text{Total Number of Male Dusuns in age group 15-19}} \times 1000$

Similarly for the females, and for the various other communities.

In 1951 and 1960, the number of literate persons by the various languages (with details of the 'Other Languages' being given here) is given in the following statement:

TABLE 4.6 a)

**DISTRIBUTION OF LITERACY BY LANGUAGES: 1951 AND 1960**

Census Year	English	Malay	Other Languages		
			Chinese	Dusun	Others
1951	7,207	15,931	20,620	912	2,090
1960	22,537	28,664	34,801	1,562	4,493
Increase 1951 - 1960	15,330	12,733	14,181	650	2,403
Per Cent Increase	213	80	69	71	115

Though the Chinese language is grouped together with some native, other Asian and other foreign languages under 'Other Languages' group, it is spoken by more persons than those who speak English or Malay, the two official languages recognised in Sabah. Therefore Chinese was the most common language of literacy in both 1951 and 1960, followed by Malay and then English in that order. The most surprising fact in the table is that the Dusun language had only 1,562 literate in it in 1960, and this is so inspite of the fact that the Dusun form one of the biggest communities in Sabah. There seems to be some error in this figure because it is very probable that there are a number of Dusuns (and may be others) who know how to read and write Romanized Dusun but who do not like to think of themselves as literate in that language. This same argument can be applied to other native languages too, so that the actual potential of literates in the native languages is unknown. The table also shows that literacy in English had the biggest increase between the two census periods in actual numbers (15,330) as well as percentage-wise (213 per cent). A better picture of literacy distribution by languages is provided in the table below. This table provides the final proof that the most common language of literacy was not English or Malay but Chinese. For both census years, the Chinese people had the highest rates of literacy (in the Chinese Language without doubt) in the "Other Languages" group. The Chinese as a community had the highest proportion of literates in the English Language. Generally the native population seem more conversant with reading and writing the Malay Language than any other language. The Others community



TABLE 4.6 b)

**DISTRIBUTION OF LITERACY BY COMMUNITY & LANGUAGE, 1951 AND 1960**  
(Per 1000 Population)

Community	1951			1960		
	English	Malay	Other Lang.	English	Malay	Other Lang.
Dusun	11	38	62	33	82	16
Harut	1	47	1	5	93	4
Bajan	2	36	17	9	73	3
Other Indig.	17	109	19	37	152	20
Chinese	85	24	380	173	18	503
Others	71	199	99	129	238	100
All Commn.	30	66	97	72	95	136

seem to understand and write Malay much more than the other languages. Curiously, among the Chinese, literacy in Malay seems to have decreased between 1951 and 1960! There is no valid reason to be found for this decrease. Another odd thing is that the proportion of literates in Other Languages among the Dusuns and Bajans seems also to have dropped!

Though individual figures tell different tales, generally literacy seems to have made great advances in Sabah (see tables 4.2 and 4.6a) in the nine year intercensal period of 1951 - 1960, even after allowing for the complete collapse of formal education during the Japanese Occupation. Although all communities shared in this increase, it was more widespread amongst the Chinese than among the natives. The natives have yet to place great value or as much value on education as do the Chinese, and this I believe has important repercussions on the progress of the community concerned. Literacy in English made the most rapid advance, and doubtless the growth of literacy in the urban regions was much greater and more rapid than in the rural areas.

## II: Religion

No census results would be complete without the tabulation of figures on religion. The question on religion cannot be rejected on the grounds that it would serve no purpose and that it would involve

unnecessary expenses, especially in underdeveloped countries. Religion plays a vital role in the lives of human beings in such regions and also there exists some correlation between the extent of economic development of a country and the progress of religion.

The three main classes of religion in North Borneo are Islam, Christianity and Other Religions. Under the latter group fall Paganism as practised by some native communities, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism and other Chinese traditional beliefs, Hinduism etc. There was no separate tabulation of the number of Buddhists and followers of traditional Chinese beliefs which have a very wide following among the Chinese. It will be shown later that a large number of Chinese are classified as practising Other Religions, and it would not be erroneous to assume that the majority of them are Buddhists and therefore require separate tabulation. This is one of the defects in the tables on Sabah. The second big defect is that no attempt was made to differentiate between the two major Christian groups, that is the Catholics and the Protestants. While one agrees with the Report (1960) that a classification of Christians by their various sects and churches would be quite confusing and serve very little purpose, it would be useful to recognize between the two major Christian groups. The third defect in the tables is, while religion is classified by community and sex, no other classification was attempted eg. tabulation of religion by industry and status etc. Such classification would lead to some interesting conclusions with respect to the extent of the active population and the status of employment within religious groups. It is hoped that future censuses will look into this matter.

TABLE 4.7

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL POPULATION BY RELIGION: 1921-1960

Census Year	Numbers			Per Cent		
	Christian	Islam	Other Religion	Christian	Islam	Other Religion
1921	6,980	81,886	168,938	2.7	31.8	65.5
1931	10,454	86,713	173,056	3.0	31.8	64.0
1951	29,092	115,126	189,923	8.7	34.5	56.8
1960	75,247	172,324	206,850	16.6	37.9	45.5

A brief perusal of the table given above gives the casual observer what he thinks is a clear cut impression of the composition of the various religions groups in Sabah. This is not an entirely incorrect impression but there is a great deal more in the figures than is visible to the casual observer. But in the range of 40 years given

in the table, the composition of the religious groups has changed radically. The Christian religion has recorded the greatest increase in numbers, from 6,980 in 1921 to over 75,000 in 1960 or an increase of more than 10 times over the figure for 1921. In contrast the figures for the Muslims merely doubled in the 40 years between the two census dates mentioned. It is difficult to surmise from the figures what advances the Other Religious group made but its gradual increase in numbers suggests that the adherents of its various components must have been leaving it. That this group as a whole has been shrinking in size since 1921 is precluded in the fact that it constricted from being almosts 2/3 of the total population to less than 1/4 in 1960. The actual percentage decrease was 20.

It is to be noted that the proportion of people who profess to follow the Islamic religion hardly changed between 1921 and 1951. The slight increase between 1951 and 1960 was, without doubt due to the inflow of Indonesians and Philipines, who are mainly Muslims (the Philipines come from the southern islands which come under some Muslim rulers). This stagnancy in the growth of the believers of Islam is due to their lack of active proselytising. Islam is merely a loosely organised faith, well established along the coastal belts but hardly active in either educational or missionary work. On the other hand the Christian religion has grown by leaps and bounds from a mere 2.7 per cent in 1921 to almost 17 per cent of the total population in 1960. It is an energetic and vital educational influence, and the Christian churches are widespread, well organised and very active in their missionary work. This accounts for their rapid growth and widespread influence.

The division of the main communities by religion is detailed in the next table (table 4.8):

TABLE 4.8

DISTRIBUTION OF THE TOTAL POPULATION BY COMMUNITY AND RELIGION: 1951 AND 1960

Community	1951			1960		
	Christian	Islam	Other Religion	Christian	Islam	Other Religion
Dusun	9,975	5,093	102,792	36,148	9,880	99,201
Murut	675	523	17,526	4,598	687	16,853
Bajau	2	44,491	235	12	59,421	277
Other Indig.	1,329	50,959	9,402	2,113	69,035	8,273
	15,372	237	58,765	24,352	520	79,670
All Others	1,739	13,823	1,196	8,024	32,781	2,576
Total	29,092	115,126	189,923	75,247	172,324	206,850

Christianity seems to have a greater attraction for the Dusuns and Muruts than Islam. The more energetic and forceful approach of Christianity makes it a more dynamic religion and thus it has gained more converts among the Dusuns and Muruts. The number of Dusun Christians jumped from 9,975 in 1951 to 36,148 in 1960 and the increase for the Muruts was much greater relatively. These figures testify to the great amount of Christian missionary activity that has been going on in Sabah. Despite this, there were quite a large number of these two native groups still practicing their pagan rites, though these decreased slightly in 1960.

More than 9/10 of the Bajaus and around 5/6 of the Other Indigenes are Muslims. The number of converts into Islam between 1951 and 1960 was very little, not comparable at all with the number of christian converts among the natives.

The proportion of Chinese Christians has not changed between the two census periods but has remained around 1/3 of the total Chinese population of Sabah. Around 2/3 are denoted as followers of Other Religions. There is no doubt that most of these latter are Buddhists or a mixture of Buddhists and Taoists. These numbered over 58,000 in 1951 and almost 80,000 in 1960. Yet no attempt was made to place them in a separate category of religion, in spite of their large size. If size is not a criteria for separate grouping, then consideration should have been given to the fact that Buddhism is a major religion in Asia and in the world too!

The Other communities figure mainly as belonging to the Islamic group, especially so in 1960. This is further evidence to the large inflow of the Indonesians and Philippines in the 1951 - 1960 intercensal period.

To conclude, a bare picture of the religious composition of the people of Sabah is presented by the tables. The Muslims are mainly coastal and riverine dwellers in eastern Sabah and they are increasing at a moderate pace. The Christians, found around mission centres, are growing in numbers rapidly and will soon equal the Muslims in numbers in a number of decades. The pagan religions of the natives are dwindling under the positive influence of both Islam and Christianity. But it is most satisfying to note that people of all creeds are living side by side in amity and with no trace of religious intolerance.<sup>1</sup>

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1. 1960 Report: op. cit. page 99.

Labour Force Statistics

Detailed information on the country's labour force was first collected in 1951 in Sabah. But these figures while forming useful data were not of immediate value then and were merely experimental in nature. In 1951 Sabah was not engaged in any economic development planning but rather involved in recovering from the effects of the war. Owing to the fact that this type of data was only begun to be collected in 1951, the definitions and the labour force classifications employed then were not quite the same as those employed during the census of 1960. More up to date classifications were used in 1960 and therefore these later figures are not comparable with the earlier ones. The tables for the census of 1951 showed only 23 industries cross-tabulated by community and sex, and it is surprising that no tabulation by activity, status or occupation in the proper sense of the terms was ever attempted. This means that whatever analysis is attempted can only be based on the latest figures, that is from the labour force report in the census taken in 1960.

During the census taking in 1960, three questions, to extract information about the labour force in the country, were put forward to the respondents, that is, questions on occupation, industry and finally occupational status. The Report differentiates between the economically active and the economically inactive population while it did not give any figures as to the total number of persons employed and the total number unemployed. On this, the Report says "No attempt was made to assess unemployment, partly because unemployment, regarded as a problem of more developed countries, hardly exists, and partly because it would have been particularly difficult to investigate."<sup>2</sup>

In the Report all the figures on the labour force, tabulated with respect to community and sex, refer to the population aged 15 years and above. This again calls for an explanation as it is definitely known that in underdeveloped countries, in South East Asia particularly that children (once they reach the age of 6 or 7 years) help in the work of the families to a large extent, especially in the rural regions where it is not uncommon to find boys and girls below 15 years of age helping the parents in the running of the farm or in selling the produce of the farm. This is

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1. The definitions and interpretations of these terms are to be found in the census Report (1960) pages 107-108.

2. Ibid. page 108.

very true in the case of market-gardeners where normally the women-folk and the children carry the produce to the market to be sold or bartered. In urban areas, small-Chinese business men usually have the help of their children in the running of their businesses or shops. Therefore are the census authorities justified in setting the age limit at 15 years? Part of the justification, the 1960 Report says, lies in the fact that the dividing line of 15 years is the usually accepted practice or the norm. Partly, the justification also lies in the fact that an inquiry into the work of children, which is normally part-time, -- probably of little value. Further, it is difficult to connote proper instructions and practical definitions of what part-time work is with respect to the children.

#### 1) Analysis of Economically Active and Inactive Population

On the census day, the division of the population aged 15 years and above into the Economically Active and the Non-Economically Active groups was as given in table 5.1 a). More than two-thirds of this population were enumerated as economically active in 1960, the actual percentage value being 68.8. This rather high proportion of active persons in Sabah was due mainly to the influence of a high proportion of females of all ages above 15 years being active, that is

TABLE 5.1 a)

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL POPULATION AGED 15 AND OVER BY ACTIVITY AND SEX: 1960

Activity	Numbers			Per Cent		
	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Econ. Active	176,626	123,317	53,309	68.8	91.3	43.9
Non-Econ. Active	79,969	11,751	68,218	31.2	8.7	56.1
Total	256,595	135,068	121,527	100	100	100

44 per cent. This, coupled with the value of 91 per cent of active males, accounts for the high proportion of active persons for the whole of Sabah.

If the tabulated values for the Economically Active and the Non-Economically Active population were cross-tabulated with respect to main age-groups and sex, the following facts can be noted.

TABLE 5.1 b)

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY SEX AND AGE-GROUPS

Activity	15 - 44			45 and Over		
	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Econ. Active	70.0	92.2	45.8	64.8	88.2	37.0
Non-Econ. Active	30.0	7.8	54.2	35.2	11.8	63.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

The percentage figures of the economically active males and females in the 15-44 age-category is, in all cases, slightly higher than the averages for the whole of Sabah found in table 5.1 a). Greater insight on the labour force conditions is afforded by the second broad age-group (45 years and over) in the table. Among the persons aged over 44 years, almost 65 per cent stated themselves as doing some work, and of the males in this age-group, almost 90 per cent were actively employed while 37 per cent of the women reported as contributing towards the gross national product. These high figures for the active population of Sabah seem to support the census authorities assertion that unemployment was virtually non-existent in Sabah and therefore there was no need for such a tabulation. This great amount of activity in Sabah augurs well for its future.

The tabulation of the same active and inactive population by the main communities in Sabah shows significant variations, the proportion of active persons ranging from as high as 81.4 per cent for the Muruts to as low as 37.5 per cent for the Other Indigenous people. The other communities range somewhat unevenly between these two limits. Among the natives population of age 15 years and above, the attitude of the women towards work affects the proportion of active native women. It is immediately apparent that the Dusuns and Muruts are still more backward socially than the other Indigenes. These two Indigenous communities have a high proportion of their women doing work. Since the natives are rural dwellers, it would not

TABLE 5.2

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE AND THE NON-ECONOMICALLY  
ACTIVE POPULATION BY MAIN COMMUNITIES AND SEX

Communities	Population			Per Cent					
	Total		Inactive	Total		Males		Females	
	Active	Inactive		Active	Inactive	Active	Inactive	Active	Inactive
Dusun	83,161	66,313	16,848	79.7	20.3	94.0	6.0	66.6	33.4
Murut	14,423	11,735	2,688	81.4	18.6	94.2	5.8	69.4	30.6
Bajan	32,436	20,120	12,316	62.0	38.0	94.0	6.0	31.4	68.6
Other Indig.	42,216	24,281	17,935	57.5	42.5	91.5	8.5	23.1	76.9
Chinese	55,558	32,563	22,995	58.6	41.4	82.3	17.7	29.8	70.2
All Others	28,801	21,614	7,187	75.1	24.9	96.1	3.9	21.5	78.5



be untrue to conclude that these female Dasuns and Muruts must be engaged in tilling the soil mainly. For all the other communities only between 21 per cent and 52 per cent of the total number of females were recorded as active economically.

The proportion of active males among the Indigenous communities is in all cases quite high. All the native groups have over 90 per cent of their males engaged in some economic activity. The Chinese figure is surprisingly small compared with the computed values for the natives and Others, being only 82.3 per cent. This must imply that the Chinese community has comparatively more students, old-aged and retired persons than the all other communities. The All Others community group has an exceptionally high figure owing to a disproportionate distribution by age-groups, which we noted earlier. There was a heavy preponderance of newcomers looking for work and hence by falling with the working age-group, they have inflated the proportion of active persons within the group to the high figure of 96.1 per cent.

Finally, one must acknowledge that there is a clear distinction between the Muslim natives and the non-Muslims, especially the proportion active and inactive persons among the women. For the native Muslim communities, among the Bajaus and the Other Indonesians, the percentage of inactive women is comparatively high, being 68.6 per cent and 76.9 per cent respectively. Similar figures for the non-Muslim Dasuns and Muruts were less than half the above mentioned figures. It is interesting to note that the Chinese figures for the proportion of inactive women among them is almost the same as for the native Muslim groups. Most probably these high figures are influenced by the need to look after children and the urge to take care of the home. This is particularly so for the Chinese women of child-bearing age and less so in the case of the native Muslim women.

The economically active population must be differentiated from the rest in that they contribute directly towards the country's output of goods and services. In this connection the position of the housewives poses quite a problem. There is no doubt that by keeping their homes in order, they contribute indirectly towards the national output. But for all practical purposes, they are usually classified as economically inactive.

In order to appreciate what the terms "economically active" and "economically inactive" really mean, we shall have to look at each of these two groups separately.

The economically inactive population are categorised under the following headings, that is home-houseworkers, students, retired persons, those who are doing no work, inmates of prisons, hospitals

and other institutions etc. The distribution of such persons in Sabah in 1960 can be seen in the table below:

TABLE 5.3 a)

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF THE ECONOMICALLY INACTIVE POPULATION BY SEX AND AGE-GROUPS: 1960

STATUS	15 - 44			45 and over		
	Total Numbers	Per Cent		Total Numbers	Per Cent	
		Males	Females		Males	Females
Home House - worker	48,386	0.5	99.5	12,143	1.8	98.2
Student	8,397	70.4	29.6	-	-	-
Retired Persons	23	52.2	47.8	3,328	45.9	54.1
Others	2,208	65.6	34.4	4,784	40.3	59.7
Total	59,718	13.5	86.5	20,255	18.1	81.9

Noughly 3/4 of all inactive population of all ages are home-house-workers, around 1/10 are students and the rest are either retired or not doing any work. Among the 3/4s doing home-housework, it is curious that 0.5 per cent were males in the '15 - 44' age group while 1.8 per cent were males in the 45 and over age group; though relatively more of the older males were classified as home-houseworkers, as apparent in the table above, the actual distribution reveals 239 males in the 15 - 44 age-group doing housework while only 221 males doing housework fall in 45 and Over age-group, making a total of 460. This figure is likely to be quite accurate since it would be difficult to assume that these males gave erroneous information. But it is possible that older males here could have been mistaken from being retired persons.

Within the category of retired persons, 23 are stated as falling between the ages of 15 and 44 years, half of these being males and the other half females. One is apt to conclude that retirement occurring while one is in the working age group is rather odd and calls for an explanation. It is possible that the persons concerned could have been confused about the meaning of the term 'retired'. However, against all conviction, these figures are correct because a glance at

Table 19 in the Census Report 1960 ("Total Population Aged 15 years and Over by Type of Activity, Sex, Status and Age"), shows that the youngest of the retired persons are to be found in the 40 to 44 age group. This makes it reasonable that there were some retired people in the working age-group.

Among those age 45 and over, we find an equal number of retired males and females. There is every likelihood that the figures for those persons are not accurate, especially for the men (they formed only 45.9 per cent of the total retired persons aged 45 and over). There is every possibility that many among the men could have been entered in the "Others" category of the economically inactive population. Further, among the public it is more common to regard a retired person as one who has completed a government career or any other paid employment, and very few would ever think of a farmer or a small businessman as retired.

As a corollary to the above discussion, a table on the distribution of the economically inactive population by communities, sex and status is given below:

TABLE 5.3 b)

DISTRIBUTION BY SEX AND COMMUNITY

	Home- Houseworker		Student		Retired		Others	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Busun	120	12,367	1,101	262	355	665	818	1,152
Murut	14	1,956	169	16	52	91	167	223
Bajau	65	10,685	238	20	111	108	538	551
Other Indig.	58	14,957	634	121	343	441	759	622
Chinese	177	14,182	3,519	1,942	552	446	1,145	1,027
All Others	26	5,922	254	116	115	64	411	279

1. Report op. cit page 246.

The figures for the 'Students' and 'Retired' persons deserve some comment. Among the natives, only the Dusuns display a considerable number of persons attending schools and other educational institutions, the total being 1,363. The only other natives group with any number of students as one if its chief constituents is the Other Indigenes group whose total, though, is only around half that of the Dusuns. Against this, the Chinese figure of 5,466 seems huge. One does not have to look far in seeking for an explanation for this vast difference. The natives dwell mostly in rural areas where opportunities and institutions for an above average education are few. The Chinese on the other hand are urban dwellers where there are better educational facilities. Finally, the fact that a very small proportion of the Student population in the above table is female cannot escape anyone's notice. This has been noted before, especially among the natives. About 4/5 of the total female students are Chinese which goes to show how advanced the Chinese are compared to all the other communities!

An extraordinary characteristic is to be noted among all the retired Indigenes, that is, more of the women are reported as having completed a career or having retired from a job. This is completely incompatible with our knowledge of the natives. This rather unorthodox pattern is most probably the result of an incomplete understanding of the term "retired" among the natives and this can be related to the fact that there has, undoubtedly, been a mix-up with the term "home-houseworker" though how this could have happen is difficult to imagine. It is possible that many of the older women who are being taken care of by their children consider themselves as retired in spite of the fact that they have only stopped from being "home-houseworkers".

#### 21) Analysis of the Economically Active by Status.

A fairly accurate situation of the total number of economically active population by their status is presented in table 5.4 a), as it existed in 1960. The general comment that can be made is that there seems to be an equal number of Employees, Own-Account Workers and Family Workers among the working population. Without doubt family enterprise seems to be the most important factor in the economy of Sabah since almost 2/3 of the workers are engaged in family businesses (this includes both Own Account Workers and Family Workers). Own Account Workers and Family Workers together contribute some 64.2 per cent or 113,425 of the total labour force in Sabah towards family enterprises. There seems to be a great amount of variation between the total proportion of male and female workers engaged in family businesses. The running of the family business is shouldered more by women workers than by male workers relatively, since over 80 per cent of all female labour is family

TABLE 5.4 a)

## PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF THE ACTIVE POPULATION BY SEX AND STATUS: 1960

STATUS	Population			Per Cent		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Employer	2,620	2,445	175	1.5	2.0	0.3
Employee	60,581	52,517	8,064	34.3	42.6	15.1
Own-Account Worker	58,224	52,137	6,087	33.0	42.3	11.4
Family Worker	55,201	16,218	38,983	31.2	13.1	73.2
Total	176,626	123,317	53,309	100	100	100

enterprise labour while only 55.4 per cent of all male labour is employed in any family work. Among the female labour, only about 1/7 of it is paid labour. However this is quite a significant proportion for a country which had just begun its economic development policies.

The total number of employers formed a very insignificant proportion of the total economically active population.

TABLE 5.4 b)

## PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF THE ACTIVE POPULATION BY COMMUNITY AND STATUS

Community	Employer	Employee	Own Account Worker	Family Worker	Total
Busun	0.3	12.0	39.3	48.2	100
Murut	0.1	13.2	36.5	45.2	100
Bajau	0.3	21.8	44.3	33.6	100
Other Indig.	0.7	38.3	36.6	24.4	100
Chinese	6.3	55.9	24.2	13.6	100
All Others	0.8	35.9	9.3	3.6	100
Total	1.5	34.3	33.0	31.2	100

From the socio-economic point of view the Chinese are more advanced than any of the other races. This is evidently the case since, firstly quite a large proportion of the Chinese come under the category of 'Employers', 6.3 per cent of the total active Chinese. This must be viewed relative to the position of the other community workers, and hardly 1 per cent of any of the other communities' labour force has been classified as 'Employers'. The enterprising trait present in the Chinese, no matter where they settle, reveals itself in such conspicuous terms always. Secondly, almost 56 per cent of the Chinese active population is paid labour and their percentage is only exceeded by that of the All Others community group. In the latter group around 86 per cent turned out to be paid labour. But this large proportion is due to the large number of newly arrived workers. It follows from here that the amount of Own Account Workers and Family Workers must be small among the Chinese and the All Other community. Among the Indigenous people the situation is more or less the reverse. Among the Muruts and Dusuns, over 4 of their active population are in family enterprises with Family-workers showing a slight majority over Own-Account Workers. The Bajaus and Other Indigenes have over 60 per cent of their economically active doing family work. These high figures can be attributed to the great majority of Indigenous women being family workers, eg. the Dusun, Murut and Bajau communities each showed over 80 per cent of their active women as family workers, while among the males over 60 per cent in each group were Own-Account workers. In contrast very few of the natives are Employees.

Further proof to the economic standing (and better education) of the Chinese is afforded by the fact that over 2/5 of the active Chinese females were paid workers. "This, like the whole pattern of economic activity among the Chinese, linked with other facts about this community which we have found earlier - a liking for the towns and their environs and a higher standard of education."<sup>1</sup>

#### 111) Distribution of Active Population by Industries

Earlier it was clearly stated that because the basis of classification of industries in the census of 1951 was different from that in 1960, it was not possible to compare the tabulated figures of these two censuses. This is a gross loss since tabulation of the labour force began in 1951 in earnest. However owing to the fact that most industries are organised on a simple basis, a very crude comparison is possible and the main trend in the distribution of the labour force by industries can be traced:

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1. Census Report op. cit. page 116.

TABLE 5.5 a)

## DISTRIBUTION OF ACTIVE POPULATION BY INDUSTRIES: 1951 &amp; 1960

INDUSTRIES	Population		Per Cent	
	1951	1960	1951	1960
Rice or mainly rice	74,040	77,681	52.6	44.0
Logging	3,637	9,301	2.6	5.3
Fishing	5,452	6,175	3.9	3.5
Rubber Production & Processing	20,331	25,378	14.4	14.4
Tobacco and Hemp	1,785	3,793	1.3	2.1
Coconut and Copra Production	3,373	7,525	2.4	4.3
Other Agriculture	10,779	12,258	7.7	6.9
Commerce	6,037	7,734	4.3	4.4
Transport	2,345	4,657	1.6	2.6
Building & Construction	1,642	4,488	1.2	2.5
Manufacturing	1,387	6,237	1.0	3.8
Other Industries	9,848	10,897	7.0	6.2
All Agriculture	119,370	142,113	84.9	80.5
All Other Industries	21,259	34,513	15.1	19.5
All Industries	140,629	176,626	100	100

While one gathers no definite information on the trend of the pattern of the labour force distribution between the various industries, a small computation will reveal that while the number in the agricultural industries has increased by only 19 per cent, that for all other industries has increased by 62 per cent! The pattern is therefore definite, that is, the trend of the employment is moving towards larger numbers in commerce and industry while it is decreasing, though at a very slow pace, for agriculture. And this is so in spite of the majority of the active population being still engaged in agriculture. The ratio for the latter has decreased from 84.9 per cent in 1951 to 80.5 per cent in 1960 which meant that almost 1/3 of the working population was employed in industry and commerce in 1960.

Changes in each individual industries are varied. Between 1951 and 1960, the proportion working in the rice fields declined from 32.6 per cent to 44.0 per cent. The Report notes of this change in the following manner, "These particular figures are of significance for this is the first time in known history that less than half the working population is planting rice." The logging or lumber industry doubled its figures in the nine years between the censuses. Lumber is the boom industry in Sabah at the moment. Manufacturing, Building and Construction and Commerce were engaging more persons in 1960. Fishing and Other Agricultural industries showed a certain amount of decline.

Table 3.5 b) shows how the various communities were distributed between the various industries in 1960. As expected the Indigenes dominate agricultural activity. Over 90 per cent of their active population is employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting. A high proportion of the others were also engaged in agricultural activity, 76.7 per cent. But we must differentiate between the Indigenes and the All Others. Most of the latter, the Indonesians and Philipinos were engaged by timber camps or rubber estates. Among the Chinese a maximum of only 2/5s of their active population were involved with some form of agricultural work. The rest were either Manufacturing, Building and Construction, Commerce, Transport and Communications or Service workers.

#### iv) Occupational Distribution

That North Borneo is largely agricultural cannot be denied. We have noted that 80 per cent of its population is engaged in agriculture. Therefore in terms of occupations, the main stream would consist of farm workers, fishermen, rubber estate and other



TABLE 5.5 b)

## PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF ACTIVE POPULATION BY COMMUNITY &amp; INDUSTRY 1960

Industry	Community		
	Indigenous	Chinese	All Others
Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing	92.0	39.5	76.7
Mining and Quarrying	0.2	0.3	1.0
Manufacturing	1.8	11.5	3.4
Building and Construction	1.1	7.2	3.8
Services	2.3	16.1	7.9
Commerce	0.7	19.4	2.7
Transport and Communication	1.4	6.0	4.5
All Industries	100	100	100

TABLE 5.6

## DISTRIBUTION OF THE ACTIVE POPULATION BY SEX AND OCCUPATION: 1960

Occupation	Population			Per Cent		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Agric., Forest-workers and fishermen	136,967	88,920	47,647	77.3	72.1	89.4
Craftsmen, Production Workers & Labour not elsewhere classified	17,130	15,446	1,684	9.7	12.5	3.1
Sales Worker	3,915	4,914	1,001	3.4	4.0	1.9
Transport & Comm. Workers	3,936	3,904	32	2.2	3.2	0.1
Clerical Workers	3,522	3,153	364	2.0	2.6	0.7
Technical Workers	3,176	2,232	944	1.8	1.8	1.8
Other Workers	764	744	20	0.4	0.6	0
All Occupations	176,626	123,317	53,309	100	100	100

plantation labourers, timber camp workers, market-gardeners, hunters and other forest workers etc. In terms of figures, out of a total of 176,626 of the working force, 136,367 or slightly over 3/4s of the employed are agricultural workers. Out of this total of 77.3 per cent, more than 88,000, are male workers. This total for the males, if seen in juxtaposition with the total number of male active population, amounts to 72.1 per cent. On the other hand while around 3 of all agricultural workers are of the female sex, they total 89.4 per cent of the total female labour!

The rest of the 4 of the total labour force of Sabah is unevenly distributed among the other occupations. Out of this 40,059 workers, both male and female, nearly half are craftsmen, production workers and labourers comprising 9.7 per cent of the total working force. Most of these workers are of the male sex. The pattern of distribution of the total number of workers among the various occupations is similar to the distribution of all male workers amongst these same occupations. The pattern for the females seems to suggest that they have no preference for jobs as transport and communications workers or clerks. Of the few females who are not agricultural workers, the greater portion are sales and service workers, and also production workers or labour not classified elsewhere. Only 20 women held executive, managerial or administrative posts, compared to 744 from among the men. From this one can conclude that in general the male workers practise a greater variety of occupations than the females. However for the country as a whole, the variety of occupations seems limited also.

But our analysis of the active population distributed occupationally does not end there. The distribution by the various communities within the various occupations indicates the extent of the differences between themselves. The Indigenous seem to show a strong bias towards certain jobs while the Chinese do not care what job they do as long as they can earn a living.

Out of every 10 Indigenous workers, 5 are agriculturists, forest workers or fishermen. Among the Chinese, between 3 and 4 out of 10 workers have such similar occupations. Among the Others, 6 out of 10 seem to follow such occupations. A dominant number of the craftsmen and production workers come from the Chinese community and a relatively large number come from the Others groups, 23.5 per cent and 19.2 per cent respectively. In fact for every occupation other than agriculture, a higher proportion of the Chinese community seems to occupy it. And one must note particularly the very few numbers of Indigenous who possess clerical, technical or other posts.

At the present moment, the general pattern of the occupations, industry and status varies to a great extent between the different races. All indications seem to point out that this pattern will not change for some time to come. The country is still far from developed, by western standards, to show any definite trend in the change of the composition of the labour force.

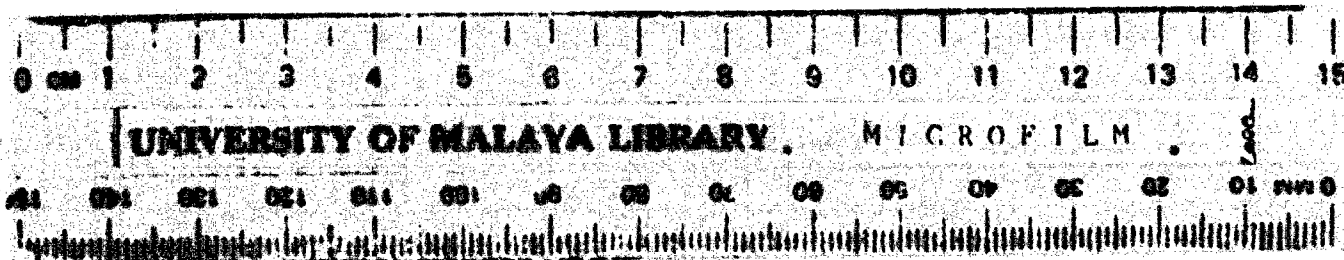
TABLE 5.7

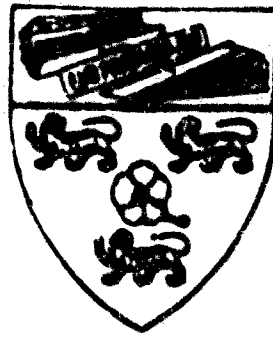
PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF THE ACTIVE POPULATION BY COMMUNITY AND  
OCCUPATION: 1960

Occupation	Community		
	Indigenous	Chinese	All Others
Agriculture, Forest-workers and Fishermen	91.1	34.7	63.3
Craftsmen, Production workers and Labour not elsewhere classified	4.4	23.5	19.2
Sales Workers	0.5	15.3	1.5
Service Workers	1.4	9.4	4.0
Transport & Communication Workers	1.3	4.3	4.4
Clerical Workers	0.5	6.9	3.1
Technical Workers	0.7	4.9	3.4
Others	0.1	1.0	1.1
All Occupations	100	100	100

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