

Acknowledgements

The research is supported by funds from the University of Malaya (Malaysia) under grants PS215/2008B and PS440/2010A.

I am deeply grateful to my supervisor Professor Lee Chai Peng at the Malaya University, who has been an invaluable support and inspiration in my research. I thank my second supervisor Dr. Ros Fatimah Muhammad for her encouragement and support throughout the preparation of this thesis. My special thanks and appreciation to Lord Cranbrook for his invaluable advice and enlightening discussions throughout the whole study. He has shown considerable interest in my PhD research and supported my research in London and the Netherlands. My special thanks to Mr. Lim Tze Tshen, for his invaluable help, discussions, suggestions and guidance on caves and fossils.

I also wish to thank Mr. Lim Teckwyn (Resource Stewardship Consultants- Malaysia) for help in drafting maps of the caves and Dr. Ng Tham Fatt (Geology Department, University of Malaya) for improving the photographs of specimens.

My sincere appreciation goes to Dr. Kira Westaway (Department of Environment and Geography, Macquarie University, Australia), Professor Jiax-xin Zhao (Radiogenic Isotope Laboratory, Centre for Microscopy and Microanalysis, University of Queensland, Australia) for their help in dating the cave deposits.

I am very grateful to Dr. John de Vos from the National Museum of Natural History (Leiden, Netherlands) for his guidance and help in providing access to the modern skulls collection in their Terrestrial Zoology Department, and Dr. Louise Humphrey from the Department of Earth Sciences, the Natural History Museum, London for her advice and help to identified the Orangutan specimens during my visit to Leiden and London.

My appreciation goes to Dr. Yaowalak Chaimanee (University of Poitiers) for her help to identify the microvertebrate fossils, Dr. Philip Piper (The Australian National University, Canberra) for his advice and providing photographs of modern specimens, Ismail bin Jaafar, the manager of Swamp Cave for access to his property.

My thanks goes to the staff in the Natural History Museum (London): Dr. Andy Currant, Dr. Chris Stringer, Dr. Tim Compton of the Paleontology Department and Mr. Roberto Portela Miguez of the Zoology Department, the staff in the Zoological Museum of University of Malaya, the staff in the National Museum of Malaysia: Mr. Kamarul Baharin (Director of Department of Museum Malaysia), Mr. Degor Johia (Curator of Department of Museum Malaysia/Putrajaya).

My visit to Europe was kindly supported by the financial support from Orangutan Foundation (UK) and the World Land Trust (UK).

My deepest gratitude goes to my friends Dr. Mohammed Hail and Yien Lim Wong for their help and accompanying me to the field.